



# SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS BACKGROUND PAPER

FOR THE PURPOSES OF LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18  
CONSULTATION, NOVEMBER 2022 - JANUARY 2023



*better homes • better places*  
EAST HAMPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2021-2040

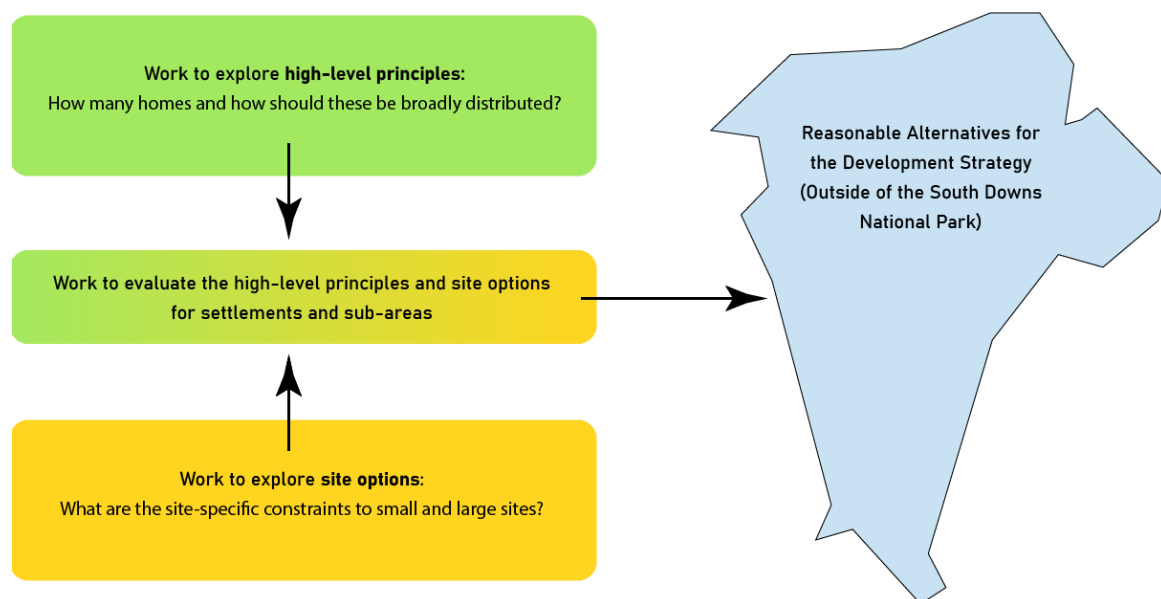
**EAST**  
**HAMPSHIRE**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This background paper supports the first statutory stage of preparing the draft Local Plan 2040, known as Regulation 18 (Part 1). This stage of our public consultation exercise focusses on strategic matters. We will then take account of the feedback we receive to refine the draft Local Plan, on which we will consult again.
- 1.2 A key part of the preparation of any local plan is to identify a strategy as to where new development should be located. Therefore, this paper provides more details as to the spatial options that we are consulting on, in terms of their potential pros and cons, with information that has been collated from the existing Local Plan evidence base.
- 1.3 The basis for this is that the Council will need to find additional land for a minimum of 3,405 new homes by 2040. Land will likely be needed for other kinds of development too – such as for new offices and business units - but the evidence strongly suggests that new housing is likely to require the most land.
- 1.4 It should be noted that this is only part of the process and whilst these four options have been identified, they are high level and the consultation responses may indeed reveal an option not considered here. The actual delivery of any strategy will depend upon the sites available to be identified for development and this will be part of the next consultation on the Local Plan scheduled for mid 2023, once an appropriate strategy has been determined and assessed.
- 1.5 National Planning Policy requires local plans to be examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements and whether they are sound. The soundness tests include reference to the plan being justified – that it includes ‘*an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence*’.
- 1.6 The Council has held previous consultations on the local plan including a proposed development strategy and strategic site options, all of which have been subject to a sustainability appraisal (SA) process. The Council’s procedure for the SA has always been to explore high-level principles for sustainability alongside exploring potential development sites themselves – that is, their site-specific constraints and opportunities, so in effect a top-down and bottom-up approach as illustrated below:



- 1.7 The following assessments in this background paper concern four options for the high-level principles that the Council could follow to develop its reasonable alternatives for the Local Plan through the SA process.
- 1.8 It is the Local Plan strategy taken as a whole and its reasonable alternatives that are will be appraised within the SA<sup>1</sup>. Any high-level principles that would be used to identify the alternative development strategies would not themselves be appraised; but it is important that they are aligned with the SA process in general, so that they are capable of informing alternatives that are reasonable in terms of their potential (whether this is positive or negative) for achieving environmental, economic and social objectives that are relevant to the Local Plan.
- 1.9 A set of broad themes that cover relevant environmental, economic and social considerations for the East Hampshire Local Plan have therefore been used to assess pros and cons for different high-level principles that the Council could follow, when developing its reasonable alternatives for where new development should be located. These pros and cons (expressed below) take into consideration the [evidence](#) base that lies behind the local plan to date and published on the Council's website [Local Plan | East Hampshire District Council \(easthants.gov.uk\)](http://Local Plan | East Hampshire District Council (easthants.gov.uk)).
- 1.10 The evidence used in the following assessments includes:
- East Hampshire Local Plan [SA Scoping Report](#) 2018
  - East Hampshire [Landscape Capacity Study](#) 2018
  - [Settlement Hierarchy](#) background papers, 2018 & 2022

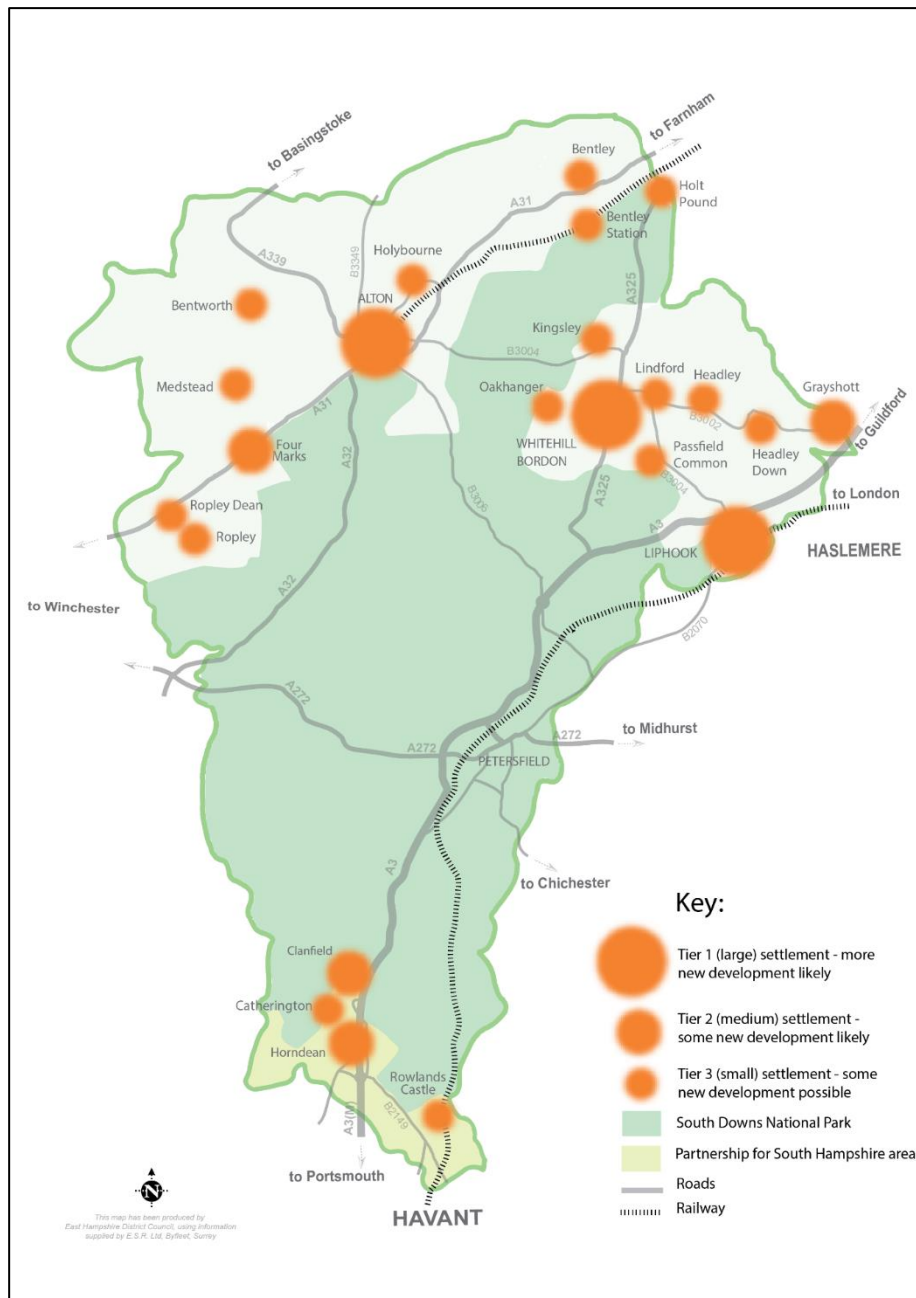
<sup>1</sup> If there are alternatives for how many homes should be built within the planning area, these may also be subject to the SA.

- East Hampshire [Community Facilities Study 2022](#)
- [Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment](#) 2022
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data on internationally and nationally designated sites for biodiversity importance (SPAs, SACs, SSSIs, Ancient Natural Woodland)

## Option 1: Disperse new development to a wider range of settlements

**Summary :** This option would involve the development of new homes in a wider range of settlements (in comparison with Option 2), potentially including some of the smaller villages of the planning area.

A revised settlement hierarchy, based on the concept of '20-minute neighbourhoods' and potential accessibility to local services and facilities by walking and cycling, has been prepared for this consultation. This shows that whilst the largest settlements give people the greatest opportunity for walking and cycling to shops, schools and public transport connections, fewer differences emerge between the smaller settlements. There could be some opportunities to develop new homes close to the existing schools in our villages. The underlying reason for distributing development according to this option would be to make the most of opportunities to increase walking and cycling as modes of transport, for this could help to reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute significantly to emissions in our district.



<b>Option 1</b>		
Topic	Pros of the Option	Cons of the Option
Climate Emergency	Larger settlements in the planning area (particularly Alton, Whitehill & Bordon and Liphook) would be the main focus for growth, helping to manage the need to travel by car, whilst opportunities for development in smaller settlements could be focused in areas where walking and cycling to a key service is possible	Areas of flood risk in Alton, Liphook, Horndean, Holybourne, Rowlands Castle and smaller settlements such as Kingsley and Lindford could affect the ability of new development to adapt to increased flood risks in these locations
Economy & Society	Settlements with important employment areas and access to skills and training opportunities, as well as local medical facilities, would be a main focus for growth, whilst smaller local services (e.g. rural post offices, convenience stores and primary schools) could also be supported by new housing development	Growth would be more widely dispersed, potentially limiting the support for improvements to services, facilities and infrastructure in larger settlements
Housing	More affordable housing in smaller settlements could increase the potential for addressing the housing needs of rural communities where they arise	Fewer affordable homes in the largest settlements could limit the potential for meeting housing needs where they arise
Active Travel	Settlements that would be the main focus for growth (Alton, Whitehill & Bordon, Liphook) have good potential for accessing multiple services and facilities on foot or by bike within their central areas. New development could also support increases to walking and cycling as a	Smaller settlements lack many services and facilities, including access to public transport, which could limit the benefits of new development for active travel and potentially increase the need to travel by car for many purposes

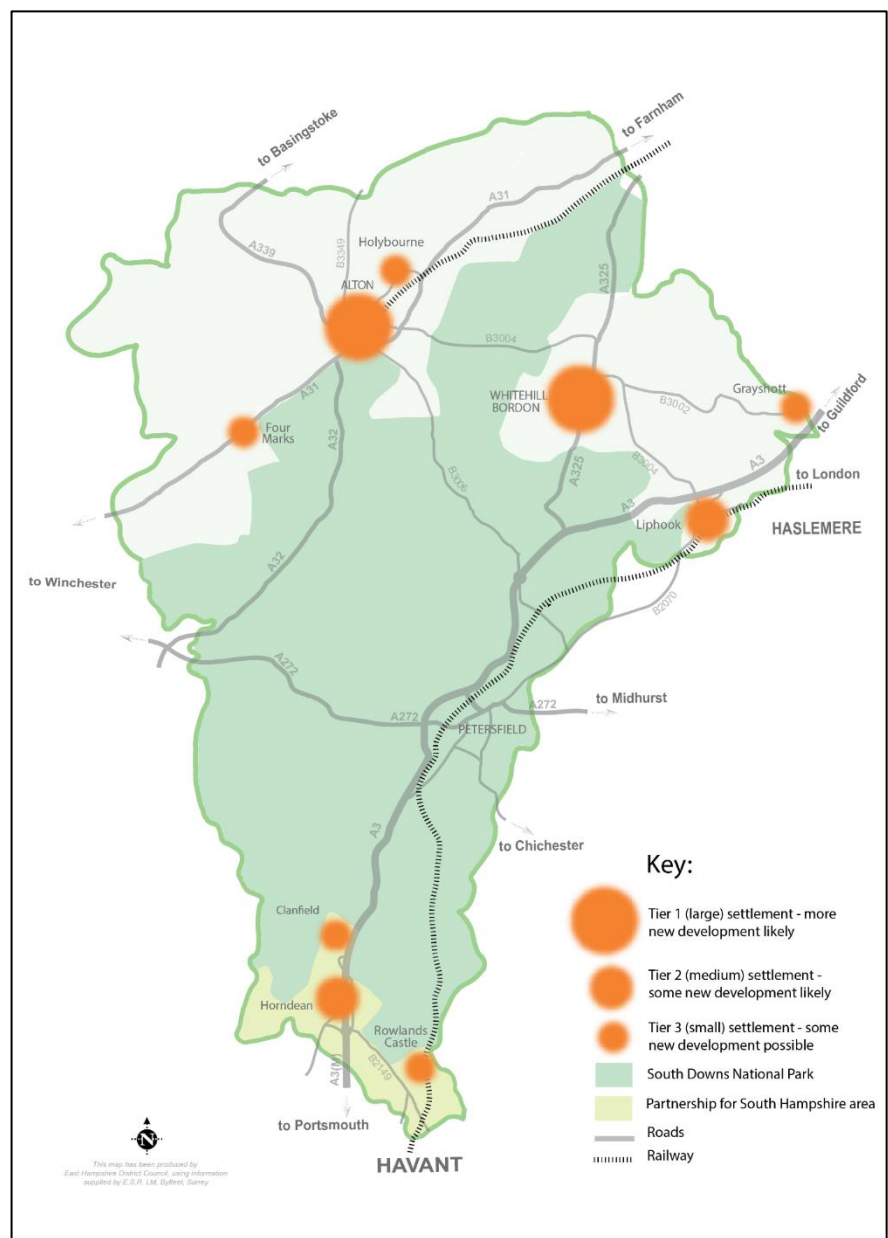
	transport mode in smaller settlements	
Natural Environment	Dispersing development between a wide range of settlements could help to avoid impinging on impact zones for sites designated for their international and national biodiversity significance	Dispersing development could lead to wider and/or more significant impacts on rural landscape character. New development in Whitehill & Bordon, Liphook, Horndean, Rowlands Castle, Headley/Headley Down, Bramshott, Grayshott, Ropley and Bentley/Bentley Station could impinge on impact zones for sites designated for their international and national biodiversity significance



## Option 2: Concentrate new development in the largest settlements

**Summary:** This option would involve concentrating the development of new homes in around ten of the largest settlements of the planning area, which have more facilities and services than the smaller rural villages.

The Draft Local Plan of February 2019 identified potential new housing sites by taking account of a settlement hierarchy, which was based on the presence of and distance to services and facilities for different settlements in the planning area. It would be possible to continue with this approach, which is very similar to that of the adopted Local Plan (only updated to take account of changes to services and facilities). The underlying reason for doing this would be to take account of where people are likely to travel to meet their everyday needs, and provide more housing in areas that are closer to these destinations. This could help to manage the need to travel—but there has been no special focus on accessing services by walking and cycling with this option, so there is a risk that it would continue East Hampshire’s higher-than-average dependence on the car.



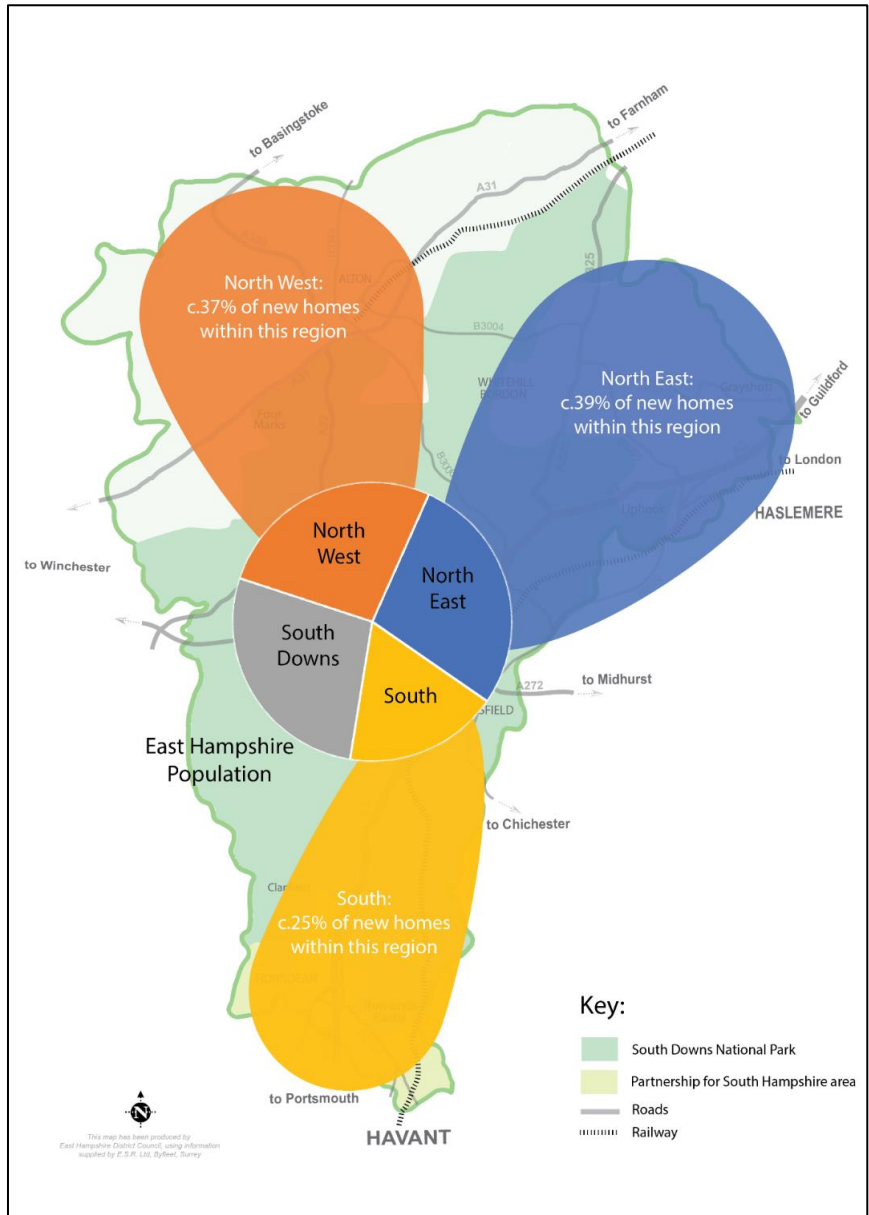
<b>Option 2</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Pros of the Option</b>	<b>Cons of the Option</b>
Climate Emergency	Settlements with the most (existing and planned) services and facilities – Alton and Whitehill & Bordon – would be the predominant focus for growth, helping to manage the need to travel for meeting everyday needs	No priority is given to settlements with better access to services and facilities by foot or cycle, which could limit the potential to mitigate emissions. Areas of flood risk in Alton, Liphook and Horndean could affect the ability of new development to adapt to increased flood risks in these locations
Economy & Society	Settlements with important employment areas and access to skills and training opportunities, as well as local medical facilities, would be the predominant focus for growth	Growth would be concentrated in the largest settlements, limiting the potential for improvements in local services and facilities for smaller settlements
Housing	Delivering more affordable homes in the largest settlements would help to address the needs of the largest communities where they arise	Fewer affordable homes in the smaller settlements would limit the potential for meeting rural housing needs where they arise
Active Travel	Settlements that would be the predominant focus for growth (Alton, Whitehill & Bordon) have good potential for accessing multiple services and facilities on foot or by bike within their central areas	Development on the periphery of Alton or Whitehill & Bordon may not be within convenient walking or cycling distance to many services and facilities. Sites that are closer to key services (e.g. primary schools) in smaller settlements could be overlooked
Natural Environment	Concentrating development in the Alton area could avoid impinging on impact zones for sites designated for their international or national biodiversity	Concentrating development in Whitehill & Bordon, Liphook and Horndean could impinge on impact zones for sites designated for their

	significance. Concentrating new development within fewer settlements could also help to limit impacts on rural landscape character	international or national biodiversity significance
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### Option 3: Distribute new development by population

**Summary :** This option would involve the development of more new homes in areas where population levels are highest.

The Council’s evidence ([HEDNA, 2022](#)) shows that 72.5% of East Hampshire’s population in 2020 was located in its planning area, with the remainder of the population in the South Downs National Park. Different numbers of people live in the North East, the Southern Parishes and the North West parts of the planning area, so it would be possible to identify land for new housing in proportion to these numbers. The underlying reason for doing so would be to place new homes within, or in close proximity to communities that could best accommodate the growth. This could avoid the situation of smaller communities being overwhelmed by large-scale growth. -



<b>Option 3</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Pros of the Option</b>	<b>Cons of the Option</b>
Climate Emergency	Larger population centres in the North West and North East (Alton, Whitehill & Bordon) have more local services and facilities, to help manage the need to travel for meeting everyday needs	Areas of flood risk in the North West (particularly affecting parts of Alton and the North Wey valley) could affect the ability of new development to adapt to increased flood risks
Economy & Society	Larger population centres in the North West and North East (Alton, Whitehill & Bordon) have larger employment areas, access to skills and training opportunities, and local medical facilities	Fewer homes in the Southern Parishes would do less to support the economic growth of the wider South Hampshire Area
Housing	Delivering more affordable homes in the North East and North West would help to address the needs in the areas where they arise	Fewer homes in the Southern Parishes would do less to support the housing needs of the wider South Hampshire Area
Active Travel	Larger population centres in the North West and North East (Alton, Whitehill & Bordon, Liphook) could provide better access from new homes to local services by foot or on bike	Increases to active travel would be highly site-specific, with fewer benefits for sites in more peripheral locations, or in rural parts of the North West or North East
Natural Environment	Large areas of the North West lie beyond the identified impact zones for sites designated for their international or national biodiversity significance	Large areas of the North East lie within impact zones for sites designated for their international or national biodiversity significance

## Option 4: Concentrate development in a new settlement

**Summary** : This option would involve allocating a new settlement for over 1,500 new homes accompanied by new community facilities, employment opportunities and open space, reducing the amount of new housing in or adjoining existing settlements.

In 2019, the Council identified some “[large development sites](#)” that were thought to have potential for 600+ new homes and other supporting development. Some of those large sites might be too small or too constrained to create sustainable new communities in their own right. Others remain as possible site options for the emerging Local Plan.

However, for this consultation, it is important to consider whether there are larger new settlement options that could accommodate 1,500+ new homes. Sites of this scale could follow the principles for developing “[garden villages](#)”.

The underlying reason for concentrating development in a new settlement is that it could enable new infrastructure, services and facilities to be developed in close proximity to new housing. The phased delivery of new development could also be masterplanned to avoid any delay between new homes and the infrastructure that is intended to meet their needs.

In order to fully meet our housing needs, this option would also require further development in other locations.

<b>Option 4</b>		
Topic	Pros of the Option	Cons of the Option
Climate Emergency	Developing new homes in close proximity to new community facilities and new employment opportunities could reduce the need to travel for meeting everyday needs	Areas of flood risk in the North West (particularly affecting the North Wey valley) could affect the ability of new development to adapt to increased flood risks
Economy & Society	Modern business premises could be developed with good access to strategic transport routes, whilst a new local centre could provide local employment opportunities and support a new sense of community	Fewer homes in larger population centres would provide less support for their economic growth, whilst access to existing skills and training opportunities could be less convenient
Housing	Economies of scale could help to maximise the number of affordable homes that would be built, helping to address more of the identified needs	Fewer homes in the North East or Southern Parishes would do less to meet affordable housing needs in these areas, or to support housing needs of the wider South Hampshire Area
Active Travel	Masterplanning could ensure that new homes are within walkable or cyclable distances of new services and facilities within a new settlement or urban extension	Walking and/or cycling might only be possible to new services and facilities, with the potential for car dependency to emerge between a new settlement and existing services/facilities in larger settlements
Natural Environment	Large areas of the North West lie beyond the identified impact zones for sites designated for their	The development of a large new settlement or urban extension, close to the South Downs National Park could have

	international or national biodiversity significance	significant adverse impacts on rural landscape character
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