

FAQ's



What is a Local Plan?

Local Plans are at the heart of the planning system. The Local Plan is our key planning document, setting out the development aspirations for our area up to 2040.

A Local Plan sets out where new homes, workplaces and other developments should be built to meet the area's future needs, while conserving an area's most valuable environmental and built assets. The Local Plan, when adopted, will provide policies and guidance on how planning applications are determined.

Why do we need a new Local Plan?

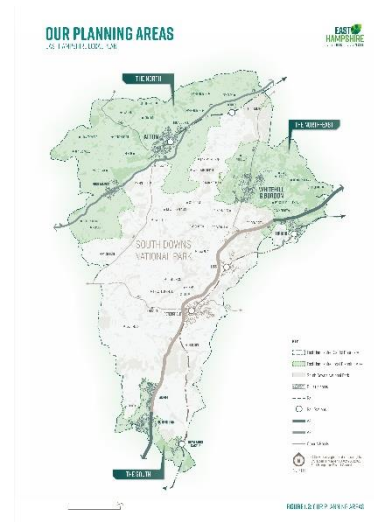
It's important we have an up to date Local Plan to make sure planning decisions are informed by latest evidence and needs, and that we are planning for the future of everyone in our communities. There is also now a legal requirement for Local Plans to be reviewed every five years.

The Local Plan needs to respond to key issues such as responding to the climate emergency and making sure new housing meets our needs, particularly that of an ageing population. We also need to support our local economy and look after our precious environment.

Does the new Local Plan include the South Downs National Park Area?

No. Following the creation of the South Downs National Park Authority, our Local Plan no longer covers the entire district. Instead, only the three separate parts of East Hampshire District as indicated on the map will be covered by the new Local Plan.

The [South Downs National Park](#) creates its own plan for the towns and villages located within its boundaries.



How is the housing target for the district calculated?

Government set out how many new homes need to be provided in the district through a calculation called the 'standard method'. The Council uses the components of the Standard Method to disaggregate the local housing need between the Local Plan Area and the South Downs National Park. The Council must take this figure forward and plan for this level of housing. If that cannot be accommodated, an extremely robust evidence base would be needed to demonstrate why that is the case and the Council would need to explore how the shortfall could be provided in neighbouring authorities. Likewise, the Council may also be requested to meet others housing needs under the Duty to Cooperate.

Why do we need more development in the district?

East Hampshire is a beautiful place to live and work and so people are keen to live here, plus people are living longer.

Most importantly, our young people are finding it very difficult to get on the property ladder as first-time buyers or renters. Nationally, there's been an increase in the number of 20-34 year olds still living with their parents.

We want those who grow up here to have the option to stay here - and so we need to make sure that there are homes of the right price and type, that will enable them to do this.

Unfortunately, there is limited Government funding available for affordable housing. This is why the Local Plan is so important, because it requires developers to deliver a proportion of affordable homes.

We also have an ageing population, and the plan will help provide a range of suitable housing to meet people's needs.

Significantly boosting the supply of homes is a key government objective. To achieve this, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

What is meant by Sustainable Development?

National Planning Policy Framework (2023, para 7) says this of Sustainable Development;

“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection**.”*

*Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly

**Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This Draft Local Plan includes sites. What is the status of those sites?

Sites are proposed in this Draft Local Plan, they are not yet allocated for development. This is because the Draft Local Plan is a draft document for consultation purposes.

The proposed site allocations do not have significant weight for making decisions on planning applications for the development of these sites.

Are developers prevented from submitting planning applications until the new Local Plan is in place?

No. The Council cannot prevent planning applications for new development being submitted and they must be assessed on their own merits, taking into account national and local Planning Policy as well as other material considerations.

Some sites in the Draft Local Plan are currently subject to planning applications, and the number of homes proposed differs. Why is this and what does it mean?

This means there is a difference in opinion at present on how many homes would be suitable on that site. A planning application presents a proposed number of homes – it is for the decision-making process to assess that. The number of homes proposed for sites within the Draft Local Plan is based on the Local Plan’s evidence base.

If sites get planning permission for housing before the next stage of Local Plan preparation, how does this affect the sites and plan?

If this happens before the next iteration of the Local plan is published (Draft Local Plan) the number of homes granted planning permission will be taken into account. A site with planning permission may still be allocated in the Local Plan to ensure there remains specific planning policy considerations for that site, should a further planning application be submitted.

How does this Draft Local Plan relate to neighbourhood plans, and the ongoing work on the Alton Neighbourhood Plan?

There are a number of Neighbourhood Plans already in place – the draft Local Plan sets out a revised development strategy and proposes new sites to be allocated for development. It also includes a number of detailed policies covering a range of topics.

Any Neighbourhood Plans in progress do not need to repeat the emerging policies in the local plan but may wish to add further detail on those local matters of importance.

Once the Local Plan is formally adopted in the future, Neighbourhood Plan groups may wish to update their plans to reflect the revised policies in the local plan.

Alton is in the process of reviewing its Neighbourhood Plan and is keen to identify and allocate new sites for development. The local plan therefore includes a housing requirement for Alton to enable them to use this as a basis for their Neighbourhood Plan. Any sites that fall outside of the defined Neighbourhood Plan Area, albeit lie adjacent to, will be allocated through the Local Plan.

Why are some proposed sites referenced as relating to a settlement, but are within a different parish?

The proposed sites are presented in relation to their host settlements. This is more likely the way the location of the site will be recognised and identified, rather than the Parish/Town boundary. For example, the proposed strategic site 'Neatham Manor Farm' is on the edge of Alton but is in fact within the Parish of Binstead.

Parish/Town boundaries remain entirely relevant for purposes such as Neighbourhood CIL – this approach to referencing sites does not change that.

East Hampshire has run several Local Plan consultations – what has happened to those comments?

All comments made on the previous consultations have been considered. Together with the latest evidence studies, with Government policy and guidance, these have informed the preparation of the new Local Plan issues and priorities document.

All responses received to previous consultations are available on the [website](#).

What about the wider impact of more housing? Won't more roads, public transport, schools and health services be needed?

Yes. We know that for every new house we build the people living there need health services, transport services, road maintenance, waste collections, and schools for their children. We are working closely with infrastructure providers to determine what infrastructure is needed to support the growth planned and are documenting this in the emerging Infrastructure Plan.

Changes to the planning regime introduced in recent years are designed to address the criticism that infrastructure always lags behind development.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) enables us to charge developers for new development. This money means that resources will be available to deal with issues that communities raise. Since 2016, £12,606,437.15 CIL has been collected from development in East Hampshire that can be spent on infrastructure - with so far £8,205,068.16 allocated to infrastructure projects supporting growth, and £2,363,403.45 passed to Parish/Town Councils to spend on infrastructure projects in their area. The details of the projects allocated CIL funding can be viewed on our [website](#).

Why does it take time to prepare a new Local Plan?

Preparing a new Local plan is a technical, legal process, which has set formal stages, including public consultation. When we receive consultation responses, we need to ensure we have considered them before moving forwards. Preparation of technical evidence base takes time, as does the iterative process of working with key stakeholders. Along the way, national planning policy often gets changed.

The timetable for preparation of the Local Plan is available on our [website](#).

What happens after this consultation?

We will review the responses and make changes to the Local Plan where needed. The next formal stage for the Local Plan is consultation on the version of the Local Plan we intend to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. Following that submission, there is an examination process, including formal hearings, which happens to ensure the Local Plan is sound and meets all the legal requirements.

We will keep residents updated as the process moves forwards towards that stage.

What is Commonplace?

Commonplace is an online citizen engagement platform. The Council is using this platform as the primary means of enabling responses to this Local Plan consultation.

Why should I submit my response via the Commonplace platform?

For ease of submission, and analysis of data, we encourage you to register and respond using Commonplace.

How do I participate?

Answer as many questions as you would like to throughout the Commonplace portal. You do not need to answer them all.

Please confirm your comments once submitted on Commonplace. Unconfirmed comments will not be able to be published and formally included in the consultation.

You are welcome to visit our drop-in sessions, but please note, for a response to be considered, it must be made in writing - we cannot accept verbal comments.

If you are unable to respond using online means, you can write to us at:

Planning Policy
East Hampshire District Council
Penns Place
Petersfield
Hampshire
GU31 4EX

If you need this consultation document in an alternative format, please contact us at localplan@easthants.gov.uk.

What information can people see about me?

If you respond using Commonplace and confirm your response, your response will be published on Commonplace. Your name will not be published on Commonplace alongside your representation, but the Council may publish names when presenting consultation responses on its website.

If you respond by email or writing to us, your response will be included in the summary feedback produced by the Council following the consultation.

Is assistance provided for using Commonplace?

At the top of the screen, help is available. Use this for any problems logging in, editing responses etc.

What emails will I receive?

Once you are registered with Commonplace, you will receive notifications relevant to this consultation. If you wish to unsubscribe at any time you can do so at the bottom of any of the emails.

To be kept up to date with the East Hampshire Local Plan; news and future consultations, please sign up at on our [website](#). You can unsubscribe to this at any time.

How is my data processed?

Your data is processed in accordance with the Council's Planning Policy Service [privacy notice](#).