



Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
Supplementary Planning Document

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Habitats Regulations Assessment
Screening –**

13 December 2017

Executive Summary

This report details the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or a full Habitats Regulations Assessment to be produced to accompany the Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document.

Subject to the views of the three statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), it concludes that an SEA is not required, and that the SPD would not need to be subject to full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

Introduction

- 1 This report is designed to determine whether the Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD) requires:
 - A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and
 - An assessment against the Habitats Regulations to establish whether there would be any significant effects on European site(s).

Purpose and content of the Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD

- 2 Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, in its role as Local Planning Authority is reviewing all 46no. conservation areas and producing new Appraisal and Management Plan documents to be adopted as SPD. It is anticipated that public consultation on a draft Appraisal and Management Plan for Overton Conservation Area will take place in early 2018.
- 3 The purpose of the Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD is to provide more detailed guidance regarding the implementation of the policies of the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029). The SPD seeks to add

greater detail to the Local Plan policies in relation to the conservation area, designated and non-designated heritage assets and provide guidance on how those policies should be interpreted and implemented. The geographic area covered by the SPD is the Overton Conservation Area

https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/conservationappraisals#elem_33821

- 4 The principle objectives associated with updating the 2003 Overton Conservation Area Appraisal are as follows:
 - i. Local authorities have a **statutory duty** under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to: “from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” and to “designate those areas as conservation areas.”
 - ii. Section 71 of the Act imposes a duty on Local Authorities from time to time to: “formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.”
To provide high quality, well-designed places to live, work and visit with safe, convenient and usable parking provision
 - iii. Section 72 of the Act states that with respect to any buildings or other land within a conservation area, in the exercise of relevant functions under the planning Acts, “**special attention** shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”
 - iv. To ensure a consistent and transparent approach to the assessment of planning applications within and in the setting of Overton Conservation Area.
- 5 The Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD will add detail to the policies of the Local Plan by defining the character of the area, and describing features which contribute to significance as well as guidance relating to change in the conservation area and its setting.

SEA screening

- 6 The adopted Local Plan (2011-2029), and the policies that provide the framework for the SPD, was the subject of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating SEA). This included assessment of all policies within the Local Plan. The Local Plan can be found on the council website at: <http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planningpolicy> and the SA (inc. SEA) can be viewed here: <http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/952.pdf>
- 7 With regard to the need for SA (inc.SEA) for SPDs, the National Planning Policy Guidance (Reference ID: 11-008-20140306) states that:

‘Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan.

‘A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

‘Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority should take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and consult the consultation bodies’.

- 8 The following table therefore assesses the proposed SPD in relation to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations to determine whether it would have a significant effect on the environment.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects of the environment	Potential effects of the SPD	Is there a likely significant effect?
The characteristics of the plan having regard to:		
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The SPD will provide guidance on how to apply policy set out in the Local Plan. The adopted Local Plan was prepared with continuous, iterative input from the SA (inc. SEA). The Local Plan was considered sound by an independent Inspector.	No
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The SPD sits in a hierarchy of documents. It does not directly affect any other plans or programmes but is influenced by the adopted Local Plan and other higher tier planning policy documents including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).	No
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in	The adopted Local Plan and other higher level policies set the context for	No

particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	achieving sustainable development in the borough. Options considered through the development of the SPD will not change the higher level policy requirements which have, in themselves, been subject to SA (inc. SEA).	
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	The Local Plan SA (inc. SEA) identified that policies EM1, EM10 and EM11 will have positive impacts against a number of SA objectives. The SPD will provide further guidance and reinforce relevant parts of the policies.	No
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	It is unlikely that there would be any significant environmental effects resulting from the further guidance relating to Overton Conservation Area.	No
Characteristics of the effects likely having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	The overall impact of the SPD will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative impacts.	No
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	The effect of this SPD will be largely beneficial therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial.	No
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	The effects are limited to developments in Basingstoke and Deane Borough.	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);	No significant risks to human health are envisaged through the application of the SPD.	No
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The SPD is applicable to developments within and around the conservation area of Overton.	No

<p>(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to –</p> <p>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;</p> <p>or.</p> <p>(iii) intensive land-use; and</p>	<p>The value and vulnerability of the Overton Conservation Area covered by the SPD has been considered as part of the SA (inc. SEA) of the Local Plan. The SPD will provide further guidance and reinforce relevant parts of the policies.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The SPD includes specific advice about development in rural areas, which would help to ensure the high quality of development close to the North Wessex Downs AONB.</p>	<p>No</p>

SEA conclusion

- 9 Policies EM1, EM10 and EM11 of the Local Plan (2011-2029), which the SPD particularly relates to, have been subject to detailed and iterative SA (inc. SEA) as part of the Local Plan process. The conclusion of the screening process is that as the draft Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD does not make any material changes to the Council' approach to the conservation area (or its setting) or introduce new planning policy, it will not give rise to significant environmental effects. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not required.

Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening

- 10 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report was undertaken for the adopted Local Plan (2011-2029). The documents can be found on the borough council's website here:
- <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/384.pdf> (HRA April 2014)
 - <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/955.pdf> (HRA Addendum May 2015)
 - <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/1420.pdf> (HRA addendum December 2015)
- 11 In relation to policies EM1, EM10 and EM11, the HRA for the Local Plan (2011-2029) concluded the following:
- Policy EM1 - screened out as there is no likely significant effect arising on European sites
 - Policy EM10 - screened out as there is no likely significant effect arising on European sites
 - Policy EM11 - screened out as there is no likely significant effect arising on European sites
- 12 The HRA for the Local Plan (2011-2029) concluded that there were no likely significant effects arising on European sites, either alone, or in combination with other plans and projects as a result of the Local Plan (2011-2029). The Local Plan (2011-2029) contains an adequate policy framework to avoid or adequately mitigate effects on European sites. The Local Plan (2011-2029) did not therefore require full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.
- 13 Given the SPD does not introduce new planning policy, the SPD, alone or in combination with other plans and programmes, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site. Therefore a full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

Conclusion

- 14 Subject to the views of the three statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), the preliminary screening report indicates that an SEA is not required for the Overton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD. Similarly, it would not need to be subject to full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

Appendix 1: Extract from the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan 2011-2029: Policy EM1, Policy EM10, Policy EM11 and supporting text

Policy EM1 – Landscape

Development will be permitted only where it can be demonstrated, through an appropriate assessment, that the proposals are sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area concerned. Development proposals must respect, enhance and not be detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the landscape likely to be affected, paying particular regard to:

- a) The particular qualities identified within the council's landscape character assessment and any subsequent updates or relevant guidance;
- b) The visual amenity and scenic quality;
- c) The setting of a settlement, including important views to, across, within and out of settlements;
- d) The local character of buildings and settlements, including important open areas;
- e) Trees, ancient woodland, hedgerows, water features such as rivers and other landscape features and their function as ecological networks;
- f) Intrinsically dark landscapes;
- g) Historic landscapes, parks and gardens and features; and
- h) The character of the borough's rivers and tributaries, including the River Loddon and Test, which should be safeguarded.

Development proposals must also respect the sense of place, sense of tranquillity or remoteness, and the quiet enjoyment of the landscape from public rights of way. Development proposals will not be accepted unless they maintain the integrity of existing settlements and prevent their coalescence.

Where appropriate, proposals will be required to include a comprehensive landscaping scheme to ensure that the development would successfully integrate with the landscape and surroundings. The assessment of character and visual quality and the provision of a landscaping scheme should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed.

Designation of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty reflects the national importance of that landscape and its setting. Development proposals in the AONB or its setting will also be determined in accordance with national planning policy and criteria set out in the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan.

- 6.11 The borough is largely rural in character and includes many locally distinctive, high quality landscapes which are greatly valued by both residents and visitors. It is important to conserve and, where possible, enhance the different landscape character areas of the borough, while accommodating the change needed to address social and economic objectives and meet the needs of communities. Attractive environments are essential to the borough's tourism industry and to the wider economic objectives as well as the health and wellbeing of its residents. There is the potential for development, leisure, recreation and tourism pressure to erode the character and nature of the landscape unless properly managed. It is also important to be aware of the broader implications of gradual change through the cumulative effects on character, particularly in terms of the impact on more small-scale or local features.
- 6.12 A comprehensive Landscape Assessment of the borough was undertaken in 2001; this document identified 20 distinct landscape character areas within the borough and summarises the key characteristics, qualities and issues associated with each area. The council has in place a strategy and action plan for dealing with landscape and biodiversity issues set out in the document Living Landscapes (2010). Other relevant documents include community produced Village Design Statements, Neighbourhood Plans and Orders, Countryside Design Summary and the North Wessex Downs Management Plan adopted by the local authorities within the AONB.
- 6.13 A proportionate approach shall be applied to development proposals so that the requirements of policy EM1 will be applied flexibly depending on the nature and scale of the proposals. Where considered necessary by the LPA, as a result of the nature and scale of the proposal, a landscape assessment will be required to demonstrate compliance with the criteria of this policy.

Implementation and Monitoring

The policy will be implemented by:

- the advice on and the determination of relevant planning applications; and
- working in partnership with Natural England, and North Wessex Downs AONB.

The policy will be monitored by:

- the objectives and action plans of the relevant strategies and plans set out in the supporting text of the policy.

Policy EM10 - Delivering High Quality Development

All development proposals will be of high quality, based upon a robust design-led approach.

1. Development proposals (excluding household extensions¹) will be permitted where they:
 - a) Contribute to the provision of neighbourhoods and places for work and leisure that are well connected, accessible, safe, easy for people to find their way around and, function well in practical terms;
 - b) Are accessible to all and promote buildings that are durable, adaptable and able to respond to changing social, environmental, technological and economic conditions;
 - c) Positively contribute to the appearance and use of streets and other public spaces;
 - d) Promote the efficient use of land and achieve appropriate housing densities which respond to the local context, as informed by community documents², and which take into account the urban, suburban or rural location of the site;
 - e) Provide a co-ordinated and comprehensive scheme that does not prejudice the future development or design of adjoining sites; and
 - f) Minimise energy consumption through sustainable approaches to design.
2. All development proposals will be required to respect the local environment and amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with the principles set out below. Development proposals will be permitted where they:
 - a) Positively contribute to local distinctiveness, the sense of place and the existing street scene, taking into account all relevant SPDs and community documents that identify the local character and distinctiveness of an area which is valued by local communities, whilst allowing for innovation where appropriate;
 - b) Provide a high quality of amenity for occupants of developments and neighbouring properties, having regard to such issues as overlooking, access to natural light, outlook and amenity space, in accordance with the Design and Sustainability SPD;

¹ Extensions to residential properties will be assessed using the criteria in list 2 of this policy.

² Community documents include, for example, Village Design Statements, Community Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Orders, Urban Character Studies and Conservation Area Appraisals.

- c) Have due regard to the density, scale, layout, appearance, architectural detailing, materials and history of the surrounding area, and the relationship to neighbouring buildings, landscape features and heritage assets;
- d) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture;
- e) Provide appropriate parking provision (including bicycle storage), in terms of amount, design, layout and location, in accordance with the adopted parking standards; and
- f) Provide appropriate internal and external waste and recycling storage areas and accessible collection points for refuse vehicles, in accordance with the Design and Sustainability SPD, in order to promote effective recycling and disposal of household and commercial waste.

- 6.79 This policy seeks to achieve high quality development across the borough, based upon a robust design-led process and a clear understanding of the local identity and context of development and the contribution better design can make to the creation of successful, inviting places where people want to live, work and enjoy themselves.
- 6.80 The borough contains a wide variety of settlements that vary in size, character, and the role that they play in the local area. The town of Basingstoke contains a vast array of different architectural styles from medieval almshouses to modern landmark office developments. This provides the challenge of responding to the very different design needs of rural and urban areas in terms of density, building styles and materials and highlights the need for a real understanding of the surroundings, local context and character before the design process begins. All future development will be expected to be of the highest quality and design, and respond positively to the local context. The council encourages creative and innovative design where appropriate.
- 6.81 The different towns, villages and landscapes of the borough have a distinctive character. This local distinctiveness of the landscape and built environment is fundamental to creating a 'sense of place' and makes an important contribution to the quality of life enjoyed by the borough's residents and visitors. Developments should positively contribute to this local distinctiveness and sense of place, taking into account the Design and Sustainability SPD, along with designations and locally produced documents that identify the local character and distinctiveness of an area that are valued by local communities.
- 6.82 Future development will assist in the transformation and regeneration of areas such as Basing View and some housing estates to provide them with locally distinctive, high quality environments.

- 6.83 Residential developments will be expected to provide a high quality of amenity for their occupants, including sufficient internal space and external amenity space. Further guidance is provided within the Design and Sustainability SPD including guidance on the subdivision of dwellings and Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs).
- 6.84 Good design relates not only to the appearance of a development but also how well it works in practical terms. Streets and other public spaces must be easy for people to find their way around, stimulating, with high quality street furniture providing a safe environment, in accordance with Secured by Design principles³. Development should also contribute to providing attractive public areas that promote biodiversity and healthy lifestyles. Development should be flexible, accessible to all and should be able to respond to the challenges of climate change. Residential development should be built to a standard capable of adaptation to enable people to remain in their homes until old age.
- 6.85 Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing buildings (with the exception of householder extensions), shall be designed to minimise energy consumption. This requirement encompasses landform, landscaping, as well as layout, design, orientation, massing and materials. These requirements need to respect the local context and any relevant heritage assets. This approach prioritises ‘passive’ solutions in the form of measures such as high standards of insulation, air-tightness and appropriate orientation. However, as part of the council’s positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources, new development should also be designed to facilitate the incorporation of renewable or low carbon technologies.
- 6.86 Developers should engage early and meaningfully with the local community and their representatives including councillors, where appropriate, in accordance with the guidelines set out in the council’s Statement of Community Involvement⁴. Consultation prior to the submission of an application is a valuable and effective exercise in informing and achieving good design. When putting forward development proposals applicants are expected to explain, through an accompanying Design and Access Statement (when required) how they have taken a design-led approach in accordance with the principles set out in this policy and other relevant council design guidance. Other design guidance includes the Design and Sustainability SPD and its appendices as well as community led planning documents, such as Village Design Statements and Neighbourhood Plans. These community led documents describe the distinctive character of an area and set out design principles to demonstrate how local character can be protected and enhanced.

Implementation and Monitoring

³ Secured by Design is a Government-backed document, produced by ACPO, which explains how the design of development can reduce opportunities for crime.

⁴ The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is produced by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and sets out the process for community engagement.

The policy will be implemented through:

- advice on and the determination of planning applications
- design based guidance set out in the Design and Sustainability SPD and other documents such as masterplans, planning briefs and design briefs
- local design advice arrangements providing independent advice on development proposals.

The policy will be monitored through:

- Building for Life assessments.

Building for Life is a government endorsed method of assessing residential design quality, developed by CABE at the Design Council, Design for Homes and the Home Builders Federation. This provides a method against which to assess schemes and to see how effectively this policy is being applied by the council.

Policy EM10 - Delivering High Quality Development

All development proposals will be of high quality, based upon a robust design-led approach.

1. Development proposals (excluding household extensions⁵) will be permitted where they:

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- d) Promote the efficient use of land and achieve appropriate housing densities which respond to the local context, as informed by community documents⁶, and which take into account the urban, suburban or rural location of the site;

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⁶ Community documents include, for example, Village Design Statements, Community Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Orders, Urban Character Studies and Conservation Area Appraisals.

- e) Provide a co-ordinated and comprehensive scheme that does not prejudice the future development or design of adjoining sites; and
- f) Minimise energy consumption through sustainable approaches to design.

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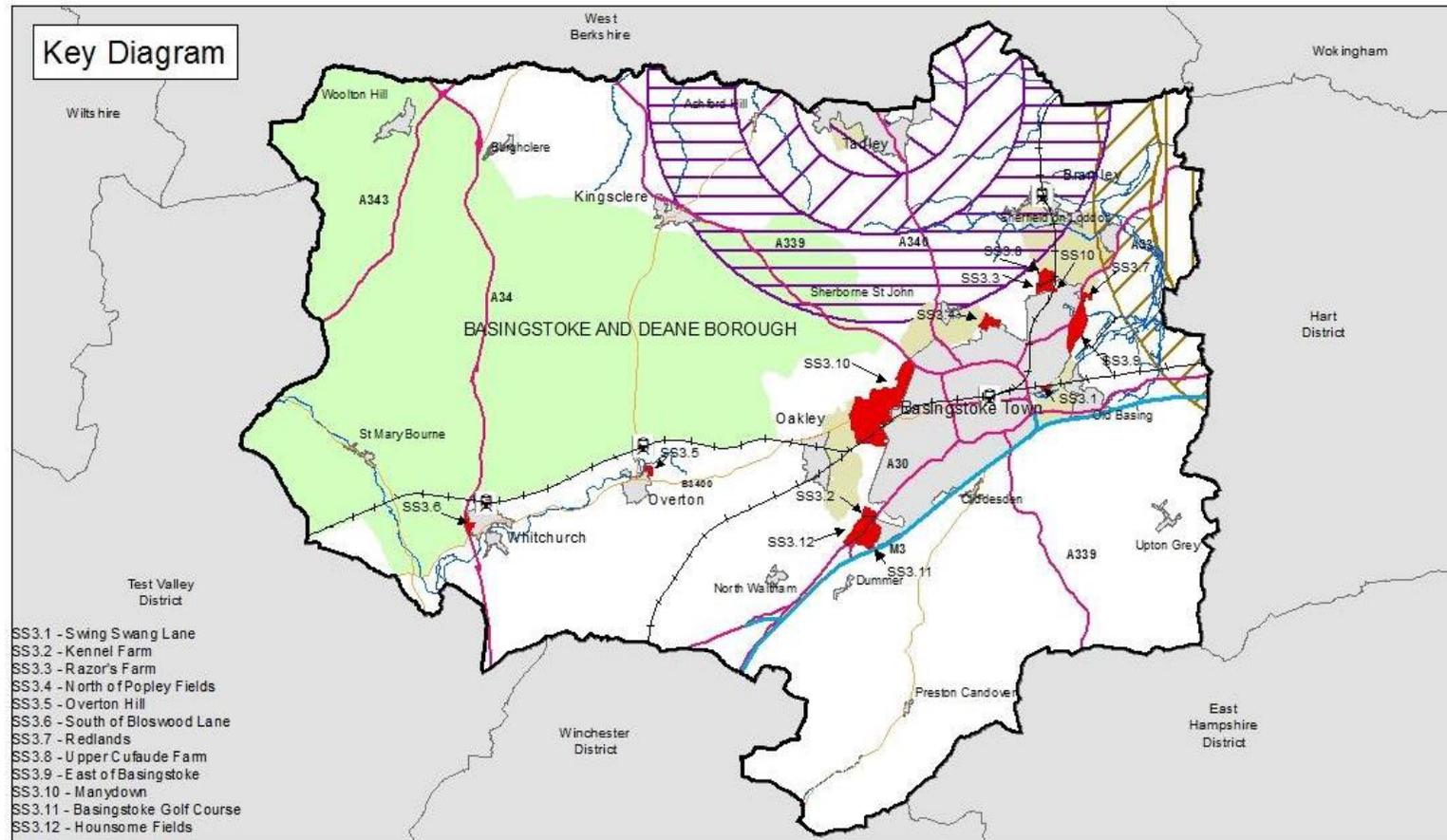
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Appendix 2: Extract from the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan 2011-2029: ‘Key Diagram’ showing the extent of the borough boundary



- SS3.1 - Swing Swan Lane
- SS3.2 - Kennel Farm
- SS3.3 - Razor's Farm
- SS3.4 - North of Popley Fields
- SS3.5 - Overton Hill
- SS3.6 - South of Blosswood Lane
- SS3.7 - Redlands
- SS3.8 - Upper Cufaude Farm
- SS3.9 - East of Basingstoke
- SS3.10 - Manydown
- SS3.11 - Basingstoke Golf Course
- SS3.12 - Hounsome Fields

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Key

Site allocation	Motorway	Railway Station	AWE 5km (middle zone)	SPA 7km buffer zone	North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Plan Area Boundary	A Road	Rail Network	AWE 8km (outer zone)	Rivers	
Settlements	B Road	AWE 3km (inner zone)	SPA 5km buffer zone	Proposed Strategic Gap	