



**Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Landscape and Biodiversity
Supplementary Planning Document**

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Habitats Regulations Assessment –

January 2018

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 Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.

Following consultation with 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 Landscape and Biodiversity 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 Landscape and Biodiversity SPD

- 2 Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, in its role as Local Planning Authority is producing a Landscape and Biodiversity SPD. It is anticipated that consultation on a draft document will take place in early 2018.
- 3 The purpose of the Landscape and Biodiversity SPD is to provide more detailed guidance regarding the implementation of policies EM1 (Landscape), EM4 (Biodiversity, geodiversity and nature conservation) and EM5 (Green Infrastructure) of the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029) (policies set out in Appendix 1). The SPD seeks to add greater detail to the Local Plan policies and provide guidance on how those policies should be interpreted and implemented. The geographic area covered by the SPD is the borough of Basingstoke and Deane (see appendix 2).

4 It is proposed that the SPD will be structured around four key objectives, for which there will be development principles, that expand upon policies in the Local Plan. These cover:

i. Design quality

Including development principles to ensure that the development (including layout and soft/hard landscape details) is of an appropriate form and nature, respecting and enhancing visual amenity and landscape character.

ii. Retaining Diverse and abundant Biodiversity

Including development principles on how development should respond sensitively to overall biodiversity, with special reference to protected species and habitats, and where feasible seek to enhance the natural environment.

iii. Access to good quality green space to meet the needs of residents for informal recreation and play.

Including quantity, access and design/quality standards for a variety of green spaces delivering a range of informal recreation functions including informal play space, parks and accessible natural green space.

iv. Trees and development

Including development principles to ensure that important trees and woodlands are retained and integrated sustainably into the development and to provide adequate provision for appropriate new tree planting to enhance the natural environment and landscape character.

SEA screening

5 The adopted Local Plan was the subject of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating SEA). This included a specific assessment of policies EM1, EM4 and EM5 as well as assessments of all other 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>

6 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’.

- 7 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;	<p>The SPD will provide guidance on how to apply policy set in the Local Plan (most notably EM1 (Landscape), EM4 (Biodiversity, geodiversity and nature conservation) and EM5 (Green Infrastructure)). It does not establish new policy.</p> <p>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.</p>	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 particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	<p>The adopted Local Plan and other higher level policies set the context for achieving sustainable development in the borough.</p> <p>Options considered through the development of the SPD will not change</p>	No

	<p>the higher level policy requirements which have, in themselves, been subject to SA (inc. SEA).</p> <p>The SPD will assist with meeting the following SA (inc. SEA) objectives:</p> <p>4. To protect, and enhance local biodiversity, flora and fauna; 5. To protect and enhance the distinctiveness and quality of the local landscape, soils, geological and geomorphologic interests. 6. To maintain and improve the quality of water resources in the Borough. 17. To create and sustain vibrant settlements and communities; 18) To promote and improve access to open space and countryside.</p> <p>Given the topics in the SPD, it is not likely that there would be any significant environmental effects arising from the SPD.</p>	
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	<p>The Local Plan SA (inc. SEA) identified that policies EM1, EM4 and EM5 have positive impacts against a number of SA objectives.</p> <p>This included objectives 3 (climate change), 4 (biodiversity), 5 (landscape), 14 (Boroughs attractiveness to visitors), 15 (built environment), 17 (settlements and communities), 18 (countryside) and 20 (health and well-being).</p> <p>The SPD will provide further guidance and reinforce relevant parts of the policies.</p>	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).	<p>It is unlikely that there would be any significant environmental effects resulting from the further guidance on landscape and biodiversity planning matters.</p>	No

Characteristics of the effects likely having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	<p>The SPD includes guidance to support the policies in the Local Plan.</p> <p>The evidence to support the SA (inc. SEA) for the Local Plan continues to be up-to-date and considered the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.</p>	No
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	There are no likely cumulative effects that would result from the production of the SPD.	No
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	There will be no transboundary effects (in relation to other EU member states).	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);	There are unlikely to be any significant risks to human health.	No
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	<p>The spatial extent of policy EM1, EM4 and EM5 of the Local Plan is the borough boundary (see appendix 2).</p> <p>The spatial extent of the SPD will be the borough boundary.</p>	No
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or. (iii) intensive land-use; and	<p>The value and vulnerability of the area covered by the Landscape and Biodiversity SPD has been considered as part of the SA (inc. SEA) of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The SPD will provide further guidance and reinforce relevant parts of the policies.</p>	No
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	<p>Part of the borough is within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p> <p>The SPD guidance will include guidance on landscape matters (which includes the AONB). This is likely to have a positive environmental impact.</p>	No

SEA conclusion

- 8 Policies EM1, EM4 and EM5 of the Local Plan (2011-2029), to which the SPD relates, have been subject to detailed and iterative SA (inc. SEA) as part of the Local Plan process. Taking into account the comments of the statutory consultees (see Appendix 3), the conclusion of the screening process is that as the draft Landscape and Biodiversity SPD does not 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

- 9 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)
- 10 In relation to policies EM1, EM4 and EM5, 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 EM4 - screened out as there is no likely significant effect arising on European sites. The policy is a positive policy regarding European sites.
 - Policy EM5 - screened out – this policy is a positive policy and will assist in reducing impacts (specifically recreational impacts) on European sites.
- 11 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.
- 12 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. Taking into account the comments of the statutory consultees (appendix 3), it is therefore concluded that a full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

13

Conclusion

- 14 Taking into account the comments of the three statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), it is concluded that an SEA is not required for the Landscape and Biodiversity 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, EM4 and EM5 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 through:

- 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 against:

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

Policy EM4 – Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation

1. Development proposals will only be permitted if significant harm to biodiversity and/ or geodiversity resulting from a development can be avoided or, if that is not possible, adequately mitigated and where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- a) There will be no adverse impact on the conservation status of key species; and
- b) There will be no adverse impact on the integrity of designated and proposed European designated sites; and
- c) There will be no harm to nationally designated sites; and
- d) There will be no harm to locally designated sites including Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); and
- e) There will be no loss or deterioration of a key habitat type, including irreplaceable habitats; and
- f) There will be no harm to the integrity of linkages between designated sites and key habitats.

The weight given to the protection of nature conservation interests will depend on the national or local significance and any designation or protection applying to the site, habitat or species concerned.

2. Where development proposals do not comply with the above they will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that there is an overriding public need for the proposal which outweighs the need to safeguard biodiversity and/ or geodiversity and there is no satisfactory alternative with less or no harmful impacts. In such cases, as a last resort, compensatory measures will be secured to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and, where possible, provide a net gain.

3. Applications for development must include adequate and proportionate information to enable a proper assessment of the implications for biodiversity and geodiversity.

4. In order to secure opportunities for biodiversity improvement, relevant development proposals will be required to include proportionate measures to contribute, where possible, to a net gain in biodiversity, through creation, restoration, enhancement and management of habitats and features including measures that help to link key habitats.

Approaches to secure improvements could be achieved through:

- a) A focus on identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and Biodiversity Priority Areas as identified in the councils Green Infrastructure Strategy (and subsequent updates) where appropriate; and through
- b) On-site and/ or off-site provision linked to new development in accordance with the council's adopted green space standards.

6.21 Pressures on local biodiversity resources range from global issues such as climate change to a lack of appropriate local management and pressures from

development. Of the latter, in addition to land take issues, indirect impacts such as recreational pressure, increased pollution and water abstraction all need to be addressed in order to conserve, sustain and re-create biodiversity for current and future generations.

- 6.22 The policy provides a framework for conserving and enhancing the borough's existing biodiversity assets while enabling opportunities to achieve a net gain in biodiversity. The council will work in partnership with the local community, developers, landowners, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and other organisations to conserve, restore and enhance the borough's biodiversity in accordance with the council's natural environment strategy Living Landscapes, the Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plans, South East Biodiversity Strategy and the government's biodiversity strategy Biodiversity 2020 (and any subsequent updates).
- 6.23 The council will be guided in this enabling approach by actively pursuing opportunities for biodiversity improvement within allocated sites and within the relevant Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA) and Biodiversity Priority Areas (BPA), as defined in the borough's Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy. BOAs are large areas of landscape, selected across the southeast of England and represent areas where biodiversity improvements are likely to have the most beneficial results at a strategic scale. BOAs represent extensive tracts of land and they are not intended to represent a constraint to development or other land uses such as farming. BPAs are smaller specific areas deemed to represent the primary opportunities for habitat improvement and restoration in the borough and they include areas of degraded or former key habitat types, areas that serve as an important buffer around existing habitats and areas that have a high potential to create links between existing key habitats.
- 6.24 The council has set meaningful, time-bound targets for habitat creation and restoration within the council's Green Infrastructure Strategy, and where appropriate, will seek improvements to biodiversity through development proposals. The council will also seek habitat creation and management proposals which will expand existing habitats, or link them, either through direct physical connection or by providing 'stepping stone' features. Through this approach the council will seek to avoid a net loss in biodiversity and actively pursue opportunities to achieve a net gain in biodiversity across the borough.
- 6.25 Where it has been clearly demonstrated there is no satisfactory alternative to a development proposal including allocated sites where there could be harm to biodiversity interests, the risks will be mitigated as far as practicable through design, construction management and other measures. Where there is still likely to be a residual loss of biodiversity, compensation measures will be put in place through the creation of like-for-like habitats wherever possible, or features of biodiversity value or through practical conservation works to maintain populations.
- 6.26 When considering mitigation and compensation measures, the council will favour approaches that best serve the interests of biodiversity conservation in

the long-term. This will be through a combination of on-site provision, where there are opportunities to achieve this within areas of open space linked to new development (see the council's adopted green space standards), and/ or off site provision through developer contributions sought in accordance with the Planning Obligations SPD and Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The GI Strategy will guide how developers' contributions will be used and to identify local needs for new habitat creation and enhance existing resources. This may result in consideration being given to compensating any residual impacts through activities elsewhere in the borough rather than through on-site activities or translocation schemes if success is likely to be higher and/or make a greater contribution to the conservation of the species or habitat type concerned. In determining the level of compensation to ensure no net loss of biodiversity, or where possible a net gain, factors including delivery risk and time lags between loss of habitat and the creation of similar quality habitat will be considered.

- 6.27 Separate policies on strategic development allocations set out the strategic expectations for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in respect of individual sites. Additional detail on the means of delivering these sites will be set out in SPDs, masterplans, and development briefs, which will involve consultation and engagement with local communities and interested parties.
- 6.28 The locations of nationally designated sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity (i.e. SSSIs) are identified on the Policies Map. Locally designated sites (such as SINCs and LNRs) are identified within the council's Living Landscapes natural environment strategy. Priority areas for habitat creation and restoration are identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Locally designated sites (SINCs) are designated, amended and /or deleted on an annual basis.
- 6.29 Key habitats, in the context of this policy, are those listed in the council's Living Landscapes natural environment strategy. 'Key species' is an umbrella term to cover legally protected species, Species of Principal Importance in England and Notable Species in Hampshire. Legally protected species mean those given statutory protection for nature conservation reasons. Specifically, this means those species given protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Species of Principal Importance in England are those listed under the provisions of Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Notable Species in Hampshire are listed in the Living Landscapes strategy which can be found on the council website www.basingstoke.gov.uk. Special additional legal considerations apply in determining planning applications that affect European Protected Species (i.e. those protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010).
- 6.30 It should be noted that adverse effects on nature conservation interests are not necessarily limited to the proposal site. Adjacent land, including that outside the Local Plan boundary, must also be considered.

Implementation and Monitoring

The policy will be implemented through:

- advice on and the determination of relevant planning applications; and
- working in partnership with Natural England, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership and Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre.

The policy will be monitored against:

- the condition and extent of SSSIs and extent of council-owned SINCs in the borough
- key semi-natural habitat lost to development
- area of habitat creation/restoration associated with new development or on private land through council initiatives
- increase in the area of council open spaces managed for biodiversity interest.

This monitoring will be reported through an annual Living Landscape Update, incorporating outputs from the relevant strategies/action plans above and relevant indicators arising from Biodiversity 2020 (when available).

Policy EM5 – Green Infrastructure

Development proposals will only be permitted where they do not:

- a) Prejudice the delivery of the council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (and subsequent updates);
- b) Result in the fragmentation of the green infrastructure network by severing important corridors/links; or
- c) Result in undue pressure on the network which cannot be fully mitigated.

The council will support proposals which seek to improve links and remedy identified deficiencies in the green infrastructure network in accordance with the council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

The council will seek to protect and enhance the quality and extent of public open space and public rights of way. Proposals for the redevelopment of public and private open spaces will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- d) Replacement areas will be at least equivalent in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, and there will be no overall negative impact on the provision of green infrastructure; or
- e) A robust assessment clearly demonstrates that the space is surplus to local requirements and will not be needed in the-long term in accordance with the council's local standards; or
- f) The proposal is for alternative recreational provision which meets evidence of local need in such a way as to outweigh the loss.

Development proposals will be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that green infrastructure can be provided and phased to support the requirements of proposed development and be in accordance with the council's adopted green space standards. Green space and equipped play will normally be provided on-site.

Consideration will be given to an off-site financial contribution towards the enhancement of existing facilities, in addition to, or instead of, provision of new green space on site but only where:

- g) The quantity standard for the number of proposed dwellings does not result in a requirement for green space which meets the minimum size standard for a particular type; or
- h) It can be demonstrated that the needs of new residents can be met in this way without adversely impacting on the needs of existing residents.

- 6.31 Green infrastructure is a network of green spaces and other environmental features which provides a multi-functional green space resource. For the purposes of the Local Plan, 'multi-functional' green space can be defined as green space which acts as a focus for the community, contributes to community cohesion and development, landscape conservation, biodiversity conservation, visual amenity and tranquillity, environmental sustainability, active and passive recreation, and the local economy. Examples of multi-functional green space provision can include:

- playing fields
- parks and gardens
- areas used for informal recreation
- courtyards and amenity open space in residential developments including incidental areas of green space such as grass verges
- informal provision for children and young people
- allotments and community gardens
- cemeteries and churchyards
- accessible countryside and woodland (e.g. designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act)
- Public Rights of Way
- Local nature reserves
- green corridors, and
- river corridors.

6.32 The borough's GI Strategy identifies existing greenspace assets which collectively form a multi-functional system connected by footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways and by features which enable the movement of wildlife. The strategy defines where there are opportunities to improve the network at a strategic level, and how these improvements could potentially be funded and maintained over the lifetime of the Local Plan. These will be developed in more detail through a number of subsequent action plans.

6.33 The council will work in partnership with the local community, developers, landowners, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and other organisations to provide, protect, maintain and enhance the borough's network of high quality 'multi-functional' green space. Through this overall approach to green infrastructure the borough will aim to:

- provide, protect and maintain a range of existing green infrastructure assets, ranging from borough-wide to neighbourhood level provision
- provide opportunities for informal recreation and access to nature within appropriate distance thresholds set out in the council's standards
- provide high quality safe green routes for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders linking all accessible green spaces
- develop an integrated network comprising public and private open space, and public rights of way
- support biodiversity conservation through the management of existing accessible natural green space and through the restoration and creation of habitats
- contribute to the conservation and enhancement of local distinctiveness, landscape quality and character, visual amenity and the historic environment including archaeological sites
- mitigate and adapt to climate change through natural drainage, flood water storage, carbon capture, and pollution and microclimate control.

6.34 Basingstoke town is generally well provided for in the amount of green space available and most residents in the town have good access to at least one green space. However, many of these areas are of relatively low value and investment

is required to improve their multi-functionality. There are, however, inequalities in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility of green spaces across the borough with certain areas having a deficiency of open space. The council recognises the need to address the quantity of open space through provision of new green spaces to meet local need and also to address quality through the enhancement of low quality existing green spaces. The council will, from time to time, identify specific local areas of open space, which are afforded protection by this policy.

- 6.35 Proposals that would harm the overall green infrastructure network will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the negative impact arising from the development can be wholly mitigated. In these circumstances the council will require measures including qualitative, quantitative and accessibility improvements to the overall network and for the residents affected by the development. Off-site provision provided as part of mitigation for the loss of green infrastructure will be expected to contain a similar habitat and have at least the same functional value.
- 6.36 The GI Strategy will define areas to guide and target countryside and management initiatives where biodiversity improvements are likely to have the most beneficial benefits at a landscape scale. These areas include BOAs that have been identified throughout the south east of England for this purpose, and include areas where there are local opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity. In addition, the strategy will identify smaller specific BPAs that are considered to represent the primary areas of priority and opportunity in which the council and its partners will actively pursue the restoration, enhancement and management of habitats as well as buffer and reconnect designated sites.
- 6.37 Where suitable, development proposals will be expected to contribute towards the improvement and enhancement of green infrastructure in accordance with the GI Strategy and associated standards. The council will support opportunities for remedying deficiencies in provision and potential to increase open space provision will be set out in the relevant development brief for the allocated sites. This will ensure that developers can incorporate green infrastructure into development proposals at an early stage.
- 6.38 The GI Strategy also identifies other opportunities for future green infrastructure improvements such as the creation of a country park. Currently there is no country park within the borough. The Manydown Country Park is identified in policy SS3.10 and defined on the Policies Map. Manydown Country Park will become a major green infrastructure asset of approximately 100 hectares serving Basingstoke town and the borough as a whole. It will be a multi-functional space for informal recreation, play, nature conservation, education and land management, with ancillary uses including visitor parking and facilities. A masterplan shall be prepared and approved in advance of implementation and it will be funded through CIL. Connections to surrounding areas, using existing public rights of way and new links via the Manydown development, should ensure safe and convenient accessibility by walking and cycling.

6.39 The Leisure and Recreation Needs Assessment (LRNA) (and subsequent updates) includes a comprehensive assessment of the quantity, quality and accessibility of the borough's open spaces. This has been used as a basis for developing locally-derived standards for new provision, in accordance with guidance at a national level. The council's adopted green space, sport and recreation standards are set out in full in appendix 4. This includes an expected quantity standard which all new developments will normally provide, distance thresholds and minimum size thresholds for different green space types.

Implementation and Monitoring

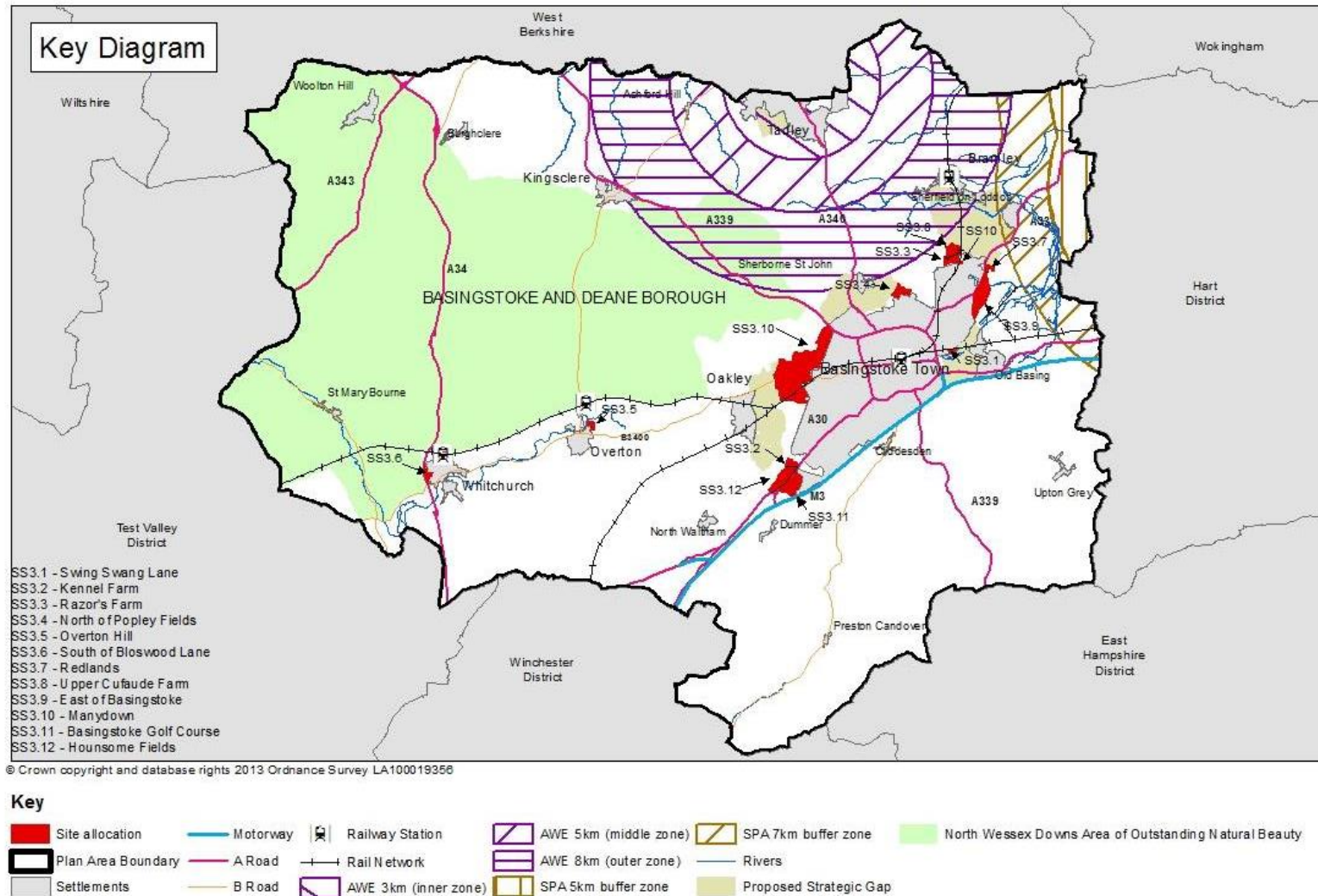
The implementation of this policy will be through:

- Advice on and the determination of relevant planning applications.
- The delivery of the objectives and action plans of the relevant council strategies specifically the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Development proposals contributing towards the improvement and enhancement of green infrastructure in accordance with the council's adopted local standards. Opportunities for remedying deficiencies in provision and potential to increase open space provision will be set out in the relevant masterplan or development brief for the allocated sites in order to ensure that developers can incorporate green infrastructure into development proposals at an early stage.
- Working in partnership with Natural England and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership.

The policy will be monitored against:

- The gains and losses of different types of green spaces (in ha) resulting from development management decisions via the annual monitoring process.
- The implementation and delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and its Action Plan.
- The delivery of provision secured through new development will be actively monitored as appropriate, in line with timescales set out in legal agreements (gains in the amount of open space, amount of developer contributions collected, how monies used off-site etc.).

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



Appendix 3: Responses from Statutory Consultees

From: Planning_THM [mailto:Planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk]

Sent: 03 January 2018 17:37

To: Local Plan <Local.plan@basingstoke.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: SEA and HRA Screening for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

**** PLEASE NOTE: This message has originated from a source external to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council, and has been scanned for viruses. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council reserves the right to store and monitor e-mails ****

Hello Edward,

Thank you for your emails and please accept our apologies for the delay in responding. We are very short of resources within our team at present, and are unable to review these documents in detail. I have however scan read the executive summaries and parts of each document, and agree with your conclusions that these SPDs are unlikely to result in significant effects on the environment.

Kind regards,

Judith Johnson

Planning Specialist - Sustainable Places team

Environment Agency, Thames Area

Goldcrest House, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey. GU10 4LQ

Tel: 020 3025 9495

Team email: planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk



Historic England

Planning Policy Team
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Civic Offices
London Road
Basingstoke, RG21 4AH

Our ref: HD/P5229/

Your ref:

Telephone 01483 252040

Fax

18th December 2017

Dear Sir or Madam,

SEA and HRA Screening for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

Thank you for your e-mail of 13th November seeking the opinion of Historic England on the need or otherwise for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Council's Design and Sustainability SPD, Housing SPD, Parking Standards SPD and Landscape and Biodiversity SPD.

We have reviewed the Council's draft screening opinions for each of these SPDS. We note that none of the four SPDs are expected to have significant environmental effects, although surely it is to be hoped, indeed intended, that the Design and Sustainability SPD and Landscape and Biodiversity SPD would have positive environmental effects, otherwise there would seem little point in their production.

Indeed, the Council recognises that the Landscape and Biodiversity SPD would be likely to have a positive environmental effect on landscape matters. If the Design and Sustainability SPD would help ensure the high quality of design within in or close to the North Wessex Downs AONB, then it too would surely have a positive environmental effect.

The SEA Directive makes no distinction between positive and negative environmental effects, so it could perhaps be argued that the Design and Sustainability SPD and Landscape and Biodiversity SPD should be subject to SEA. However, we note that both supplement parent policies in the Local Plan, which itself was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, and we consider this to be adequate.

We agree that the Housing SPD and Parking Standards SPD are less likely to have significant environmental effects and note that they too follow from parent policies in the Local Plan, which we again consider to be adequate.

Accordingly, we agree with the Council's opinions that Strategic Environmental Assessment is **not required** for any of the four Supplementary Planning Documents .

We hope these comments are helpful. Please contact me if you have any queries.

Thank you again for consulting Historic England.

Yours faithfully,

Martin Small
Principal Adviser, Historic Environment Planning
(Bucks, Oxon, Berks, Hampshire, IoW, South Downs National Park and Chichester)

E-mail: martin.small@historicengland.org.uk

From: Aziz, Rebecca (NE) [<mailto:Rebecca.Aziz@naturalengland.org.uk>]

Sent: 14 December 2017 14:34

To: Local Plan <Local.plan@basingstoke.gov.uk>

Subject: NE consultation response to SEA and HRA Screening for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents (NE ref 231409)

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FAO Edward Rehill

Thank you for consulting me on SEA and HRA screening for four Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents including Design & Sustainability, Housing, Parking Standards and Landscape and Biodiversity.

Natural England concurs with the conclusions of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Habitats Regulations Assessment reports and has no substantive comments to make.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Becky

Becky Aziz

Sustainable Development Lead Advisor

Area 13 - Dorset, Hampshire & IoW

Natural England

Cromwell House, 2nd Floor,

15 Andover Road,

Winchester, SO23 7BT

Tel: 020 8026 0064

Please note my non-working day is Friday

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These services help applicants take appropriate account of environmental considerations at an early stage of project development, reduce uncertainty, reduce the risk of delay and added cost at a later stage, whilst securing good results for the natural environment