

Strategic Environmental Assessment for the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report
to accompany the
Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan

2nd May 2017

Quality information

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Non-Technical Summary

What is Strategic Environmental Assessment?

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out to inform the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of St Mary Bourne and the quality of life of residents through the Neighbourhood Plan.

What is the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan?

The St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan (SMBNP) presents a plan for St Mary Bourne Parish for the next 15 years. Prepared to be in conformity with the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan, the SMBNP sets out a vision, objectives and a range of policies for the parish. These relate to a range of topics, including, but not limited to housing, local character and distinctiveness and accessibility to services and facilities.

The overarching key aims for the SMBNP are as follows:

1. Provide a framework for sensitive development of the parish, to allow it to continue to grow and therefore to sustain the parish communities and their assets but also to retain the character of the parish.
2. Rebalance the housing stock, to allow development of sufficient homes for those starting out in life and to facilitate older people downsizing.
3. Share the burden of new development in a positive way, to reduce the strain on St Mary Bourne and Stoke and to reinvigorate the Hamlets.
4. Encourage Community Action projects, which whilst not within the technical scope of the SMB Plan, will support and enhance the development of the Parish.

It is currently anticipated that the SMBNP will undergo a referendum in 2017.

Purpose of this Environmental Report

This Environmental Report, which accompanies the Submission version of the SMBNP, is the fourth document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (January 2016), which includes information about St Mary Bourne's environment and community. The second document was an Environmental Report to accompany consultation on an initial consultation draft of the Neighbourhood Plan in April 2016. The third document was an Environmental Report to accompany consultation undertaken on an updated version of the Neighbourhood Plan in November 2016.

The purpose of this current Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Submission version of the SMBNP and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the SMBNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues;
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the SMBNP has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the SMBNP;
- The likely significant environmental effects of the SMBNP;

- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the SMBNP; and
- The next steps for the SMBNP and accompanying SEA process.

Assessment of alternative approaches for the SMBNP

The SMBNP is being prepared in the context of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan. The Local Plan, when adopted, will provide a framework for how future development across Basingstoke and Deane Borough will be planned and delivered.

No housing or employment allocations are included for St Mary Bourne Parish in the Local Plan. However Policy SS6 (New Housing in the Countryside) highlights that the policy has "...sufficient flexibility to support the provision of new homes where they will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and meet identified needs".

To support decision-making on this element of the SMBNP, the SEA process assessed three broad options relating to the scale and size of housing delivery to be taken forward for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan. The three options are as follows:

- **Option 1:** Deliver the minimum requirements of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (i.e. the delivery of no further dwellings in the parish)
- **Option 2:** Delivery of a limited number of dwellings through the SMBNP to meet local needs, focusing on smaller developments of under ten dwellings.
- **Option 3:** Delivery of a more significant number of dwellings through the SMBNP, allowing larger developments.

These options were considered through the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SEA process. The assessment undertaken of these options is presented in Chapter 3 of the Environmental Report.

Following consultation events on the Neighbourhood Plan, it became clear that there is a recognition within the community that small scale development in the parish would be appropriate to support local amenities, meet the housing needs of different age groups and support community vitality. As such the current consultation version of the SMBNP supports housing provision on previously developed and infill sites where the maximum capacity of the site is six homes.

Appraisal of the current version of the SMBNP

Utilising the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SEA, the SEA process appraised the eight policies put forward through the current Submission version of the SMBNP. The Environmental Report has presented the findings of the appraisal under the following themes:

- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Historic environment and landscape
- Land, soil and water resources
- Population and community
- Transport

The assessment has concluded that the current version of the SMBNP is likely to lead to **significant positive effects** in terms of the SEA objectives focusing on improving the quality of life of residents in St Mary Bourne Parish. This will be facilitated through the current version of the plan's impetus on promoting improvements to the public realm, the protection and enhancement of community facilities, and its focus on housing provision which meets local needs and support the vitality of the parish.

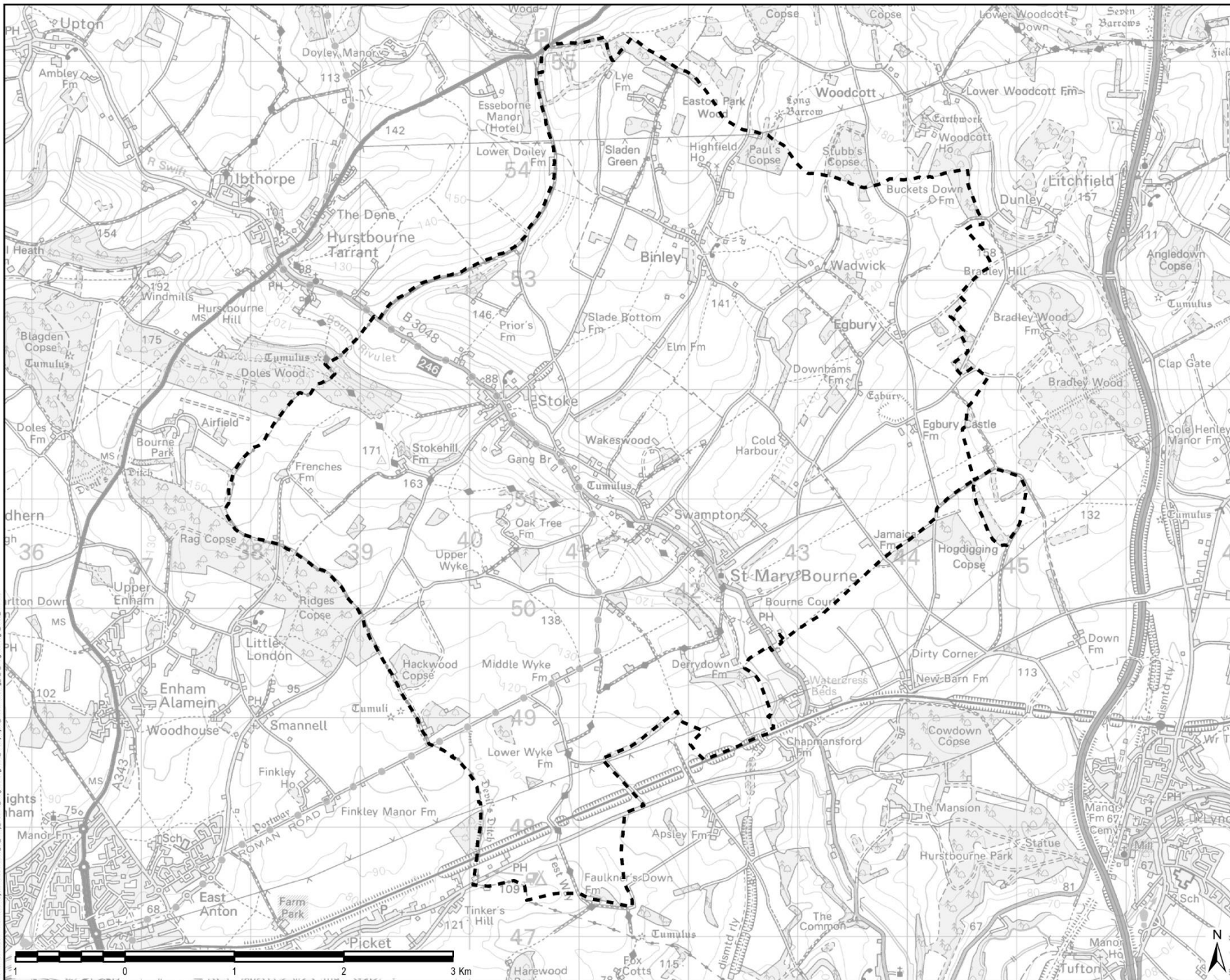
A central and overriding element of the Neighbourhood Plan is the protection and enhancement of landscape character and the character of the village and hamlets, including through the application of the Village Design Statement. The reuse and rejuvenation of historic environment assets in the parish will also be supported through the SMBNP's development strategy. These elements will have **significant positive effects** on the setting of the historic environment and on local distinctiveness in the parish.

The proposed plan approach will help initiate a range of beneficial approaches in relation to the 'biodiversity', 'climate change', 'land, soil and water resources' and 'transport' SEA themes. However, due to the scale of likely positive effects, they are not considered to be significant in the context of the SEA process.

Next steps

The SMBNP has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, for its consideration. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the SMBNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan.

If the subsequent Independent Examination is favourable, the SMBNP will be subject to a referendum, organised by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council with a request it is adopted. Once adopted, the SMBNP will become part of the Development Plan for the area.



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LEGEND

- St. Mary Bourne
- Civil Parish

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Purpose of Issue
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Client
ST MARY BOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Project Title
ST MARY BOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Drawing Title
ST MARY BOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

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FIGURE 1.1

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent strategic environmental assessment in support of St Mary Bourne Parish’s emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

The St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan (SMBNP) is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2012. The SMBNP, which covers St Mary Bourne Parish in Hampshire (Figure 1.1), is being prepared in the context of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan.

The SMBNP was submitted to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in May 2017. This Environmental Report accompanies the Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Key information relating to the SMBNP is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Name of Responsible Authority | St Mary Bourne Parish Council |
| Title of Plan | St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan |
| Subject | Neighbourhood plan |
| Purpose | The St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in conformity with the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan. |
| Timescale | To 2029 |
| Area covered by the plan | St Mary Bourne Parish. (Figure 1.1) |
| Summary of content | The St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and range of policies for the parish. Box 2.1 below presents the vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan |
| Plan contact point | Katie Dixon, Chairperson, St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Steering Group. Email address: katiebdixon@btinternet.com |

1.2 SEA explained

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the SMBNP seeks to maximise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan’s contribution to sustainable development.

The SEA has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive¹. The SMBNP has been 'screened in' to require SEA by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. To meet this requirement, the SMBNP is undergoing an SEA process.

The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.

In line with the SEA Regulations this Environmental Report must essentially answer four questions:

- What's the scope of the SEA?
- What has Plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?
- 'Reasonable alternatives' must have been appraised for the plan.
- What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the Submission version of the plan.
- What happens next?

These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which present 'the information to be provided within the report'. **Table 1.1** presents the linkages between the regulatory requirements and the four SEA questions.

1.3 Structure of the Environmental Report

This document is the Environmental Report for the Submission version of the SMBNP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed above with a view to providing the information required by the Regulations. Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

¹ Directive 2001/42/EC

Table 1.1: Questions that must be answered by the Environmental Report in order to meet Regulatory² requirements

| Environmental Report question | In line with regulations, the report must include... |
|---|--|
| What's the plan seeking to achieve? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes |
| What's the sustainability 'context'? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance |
| What's the scope of the SEA? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment |
| What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the Submission version of the plan. |
| What are the assessment findings at this current stage? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the Submission version of the plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the Submission version of the plan |
| What happens next? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for the plan making / SEA process. |

N.B. The right-hand column of Table 1.1 does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

² Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

2. What is the Scope of the SEA

2.1 What is the plan seeking to achieve?

2.1.1 Context provided for the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan area by the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan

The SMBNP has been prepared in the context of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029. The Local Plan was adopted in May 2016 and provides a framework for how future development across Basingstoke and Deane Borough will be planned and delivered.

The 'development plan' for the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan area will be composed of the adopted Local Plan as well as the Neighbourhood Plan when made. The Local Plan policies will be used to facilitate development and decide planning decisions in the Basingstoke and Deane Borough area at a strategic level, and the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan will decide those at a local level.

The Local Plan provides a framework for how future development across the borough will be planned and delivered. No allocations are included for St Mary Bourne Parish in the Local Plan. However Policy SS6 (New Housing in the Countryside) highlights that the policy has "...sufficient flexibility to support the provision of new homes where they will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and meet identified needs". The SMBNP therefore provides an opportunity for meeting community aspirations within the area while also delivering key objectives of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan.

2.1.2 Aims and objectives for the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan

The aims and objectives for the SMBNP were developed following the review of extensive consultation exercises carried out by the Parish Council and the SMBNP Steering Group. The key aims and objectives for the SMBNP are presented below.

Box 2.1 Key aims and objectives of the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Plan

Key aims

1. Provide a framework for sensitive development of the parish, to allow it to continue to grow and therefore to sustain the parish communities and their assets but also to retain the character of the parish.
2. Rebalance the housing stock, to allow development of sufficient homes for those starting out in life and to facilitate older people downsizing.
3. Share the burden of new development in a positive way, to reduce the strain on St Mary Bourne and Stoke and to reinvigorate the Hamlets.
4. Encourage Community Action projects, which whilst not within the technical scope of the SMB Plan, will support and enhance the development of the Parish.

Objectives

1. Focus on re-developing redundant agricultural buildings, in order to protect greenfield sites, respect sightlines and reduce the burden on infrastructure
2. Support developments which rebalance the housing stock
3. Support lower cost market housing and Rural Exception sites for non-market housing, provided this does not contradict other Policies
4. Ensure that new development is well-designed, helps to create a strong sense of place, and reinforces the distinctive character of the villages and hamlets, and conserves or enhances visual amenity
5. Provide for site types which do not further strain the infrastructure of the village, particularly the sewage and fresh water systems, parking and traffic flows

To support the Neighbourhood Plan's aims and objectives, the SMBNP sets out a number of Neighbourhood Plan policies. The latest iteration (March 2017) of these policies has been appraised in **Chapter 4** of this Environmental Report.

2.2 SEA Scoping

2.2.1 SEA Scoping Report

In late 2015 an SEA Scoping Report was prepared for the SMBNP. The purpose of the Scoping Report was to outline the 'scope' of the SEA through setting out:

- A context review which reviews the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Baseline data against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed;
- The key sustainability issues for the Neighbourhood Plan; and
- An 'SEA Framework' of objectives and assessment questions against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.

The SEA Regulations require that: "*When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*". In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.³ As such, these

³ In-line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because 'by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme'.

authorities were consulted on the Scoping Report in January 2016 and consultation responses were received from all three organisations on the SEA Scoping Report.

These comments, and how they have been considered and addressed, are presented in [Table 2.1](#).

Table 2.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report

| <i>Consultation response</i> | <i>How the response was considered and addressed</i> |
|--|---|
| Historic England | |
| Robert Lloyd-Sweet Historic Places Adviser (South East England) | |
| We were particularly pleased to see the reviews of the conservation area character areas, which help to draw out key features of the area that could be affected by choices in the plan. In considering whether to 'make' the plan the local planning authority will need to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the area's character. As such, being able to demonstrate that this has been given due consideration within the SEA should help to make plan preparation a robust process. | Comment noted. |
| The evidence gathered for an SEA need only be as detailed as is required to assess the potential impact of the options considered for policies and proposals within the plan along with reasonable alternatives. As such the scope of the emerging neighbourhood plan will necessarily determine the scope of the SEA environmental report to a great extent. As such it would help if the plan's scope, particularly with regard to the intention to allocate sites for land uses or to establish settlement boundaries could be clearer. This may be dependent on the stage of plan making that the community have reached, possibly requiring some review of scoping as the plan progresses. | The scope of the Neighbourhood Plan has been set out in this Environmental Report. |
| The historic focus of settlement has been in the floor of the valley with houses and cottages spread along roads either side of the narrow floodplain and with concentrations at Stoke and St Mary Bourne Village. This is reflected in the concentration of listed buildings and the two conservation areas. This is both an historic settlement pattern that contributes to the character of the parish and, contributes to the significance of the conservation area, as well as creating an area of high sensitivity for new development. This suggests that a policy to establish a settlement boundary that focuses new development in this area may also need to include provision to protect the character and appearance of the conservation areas. | Comment fed back to SMBNP Steering Group and considered through assessment process. |
| Outside this focal area, it appears that settlement was historically set on the hilltops either side of the valley, in relatively evenly spaced hamlets. This suggests a pattern of historic landscape division of uncertain origin, although several of these hamlets are recorded as estates in 1535 and therefore of some antiquity and, therefore contributing to the historic and archaeological interest of the area. The distribution of listed buildings reflects this pattern including several historic farm and manor houses, as well as associated historic barns and other farm buildings, which make an important contribution to the rural character of the hamlets. Policies that would focus development in or near these hamlets (either through land allocations or definition of settlement boundaries) should be prepared with awareness for the sensitivity of these buildings to change, including change that would affect the character of their settings, where this makes a contribution to their significance. | Comment fed back to SMBNP Steering Group and considered through assessment process. |

| <i>Consultation response</i> | <i>How the response was considered and addressed</i> |
|--|--|
| <p>A key feature of the character of St Mary Bourne and Stoke conservation areas highlighted in the Village Design Statement are the attractive rural character views both to and from the surrounding countryside setting facilitated by the steep side of the narrow valley and openness of the countryside, including the meadows in the valley floor.</p> <p>Whilst these messages may appear obvious to local people and are reflected in documents such as the Village Design Statement they may be important in helping to establish robust policies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.</p> | <p>Comment fed back to SMBNP Steering Group and considered through assessment process.</p> |
| <p>From a review of the Ordnance Survey map we note that the Portway (a Roman road) is believed to run across the parish. This is an important archaeological feature in its own right (a section just to the north east of the parish is designated as a scheduled monument) but is also a focus of potential for sites of archaeological interest, particularly where it crosses the Bourne rivulet.</p> | <p>Baseline has been updated to include the potential presence of Roman archaeological remains in the parish.</p> |
| <p>A brief search of the Hampshire HER’s online database via Heritage Gateway reveals that the Parish contains a total of 299 records. Several of these are records of the listed buildings otherwise referred to in the report, although there are also numerous records of prehistoric, Roman and medieval finds and sites within the Parish. Using the database’s search mechanism it is interesting to note that this includes a relatively high percentage of Roman finds and sites. Where the neighbourhood plan would have an influence on the choice of locations for new development we would expect the environmental report to include spatial information about the known or predictable location of archaeological remains within the parish and the potential of development options to affect these.</p> | <p>The baseline information presented in the Scoping Report has been updated in this Environmental Report to reflect comments.</p> |
| <p>A general problem, common to most SEA Scoping Reports, is that whilst the Scoping Report predicts that heritage assets will deteriorate over time there is little evidence of the current or predictable future condition of the heritage assets or historic environment of the plan area. This is largely a result of the absence of suitable evidence on which to make a judgment. However, it does affect the ability of the scoping report to influence the choice of plan options that will either help to address issues or avoid contributing to cumulative impacts. We are pleased to see that the national heritage at risk database referred to as a source of evidence on condition, and that it is noted that it does not currently cover Grade II listed buildings (which form the large majority of nationally designated sites). It might also be helpful to note that coverage of conservation areas is dependent on the completion of the annual survey by local authorities and currently very ‘patchy’.</p> <p>Where evidence about the current condition of heritage assets and the historic environment is lacking this should be identified as an evidence gap that should or could be filled through the plan making process where relevant. An example would be to highlight that the conservation area appraisal for St Mary Bourne Conservation Area is now over 15 years old and, as such, any evidence it provides about condition may no longer be current. This should be identified as an evidence gap that could be rapidly filled by a review of the findings of the adopted conservation area appraisal. It might also be possible for the community to undertake a rapid survey of the listed buildings in the parish to identify any that are ‘at risk’ within the parameters of evidence gathering for the neighbourhood plan.</p> | <p>These weaknesses in the data have been acknowledged in the Environmental Report.</p> |

| <i>Consultation response</i> | <i>How the response was considered and addressed</i> |
|---|--|
| <p>More detailed information on the condition of archaeological remains might require analysis that is beyond the scope of the neighbourhood plan, although where these are located in areas of arable farmland or woodland there are some generally predictable impacts that are likely to occur as a result of plough damage or tree growth. This may be assessed from online map and aerial photographs. The County Council archaeological officers may also be able to advise whether there is any known issue of illicit metal-detecting affecting the archaeological interest of any sites in the parish.</p> | <p>Comment noted. Due to the lack of allocations proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan, it would not be appropriate to collect more detailed information on archaeological remains for the purposes of the SEA process.</p> |
| <p>Environment Agency Donatella Cillo Planning Advisor, Sustainable Places - West Thames Area</p> | |
| <p>We are pleased to see the comprehensive baseline assessment of biodiversity, climate change (including flood risk), land and soil resources and water resources. For clarity we feel the SEA Scoping objectives and appraisal questions for biodiversity, climate change (including flood risk), land and soil resources and water resources are adequate and based on a justified evidence base.</p> | <p>Comment noted.</p> |
| <p>As correctly identified in the SEA scoping report, areas of the neighbourhood plan are affected by flood zones 3 and 2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) defined flood zones 3 and 2 as having respectively a 'high and medium probability' of flooding from rivers.</p> | <p>Comment noted.</p> |
| <p>We noted that Figure 4.1 shows the fluvial flood risk using the Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Sea Map available on our website. However, for accuracy, we would like to suggest the use of the Flood Map for Planning available on our website. This will show the extent of flood zone 3 and 2 and therefore the probability of flooding from rivers within the area of the neighbourhood plan. Moreover, this is the map used to assess planning applications and site allocations.</p> | <p>The map has been updated in the baseline section of this Environmental Report to reflect comments.</p> |
| <p>6. Land, soil and water resources As correctly identified in the SEA scoping report, due to the presence of groundwater Source Protection Zones 1 (SPZ1) and 2 (SPZ2) and principle aquifer, the St Mary Bourne area is a high sensitive location with regard to the protection of water quality.</p> | <p>Comment noted. Issues related to water quality considered through assessment process.</p> |
| <p>Therefore, we believe that the SEA objectives and the appraisal questions are adequate and based on a justified evidence base.</p> | <p>Comment noted.</p> |
| <p>Natural England Dr Pauline Holmes, Sustainable Development Lead Adviser Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area Team</p> | |
| <p>Biodiversity and Geology Natural England would advise that the SEA take account of Species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The scoping report currently has not assessed these species and Natural England would advise that they are assessed as part of any future versions of the SEA.</p> | <p>The potential presence of Protected Species has been incorporated within the assessment undertaken for the SEA process relating to biodiversity.</p> |

| <i>Consultation response</i> | <i>How the response was considered and addressed</i> |
|---|---|
| <p>As part of the SEA, Natural England would wish to see details of local landscape character areas mapped at a scale appropriate to the neighbourhood plan as well as any relevant management plans or strategies pertaining to the area. The SEA should include assessments of visual effects on the surrounding area and landscape together with any potential physical effects of the development proposals, such as changes in topography. The European Landscape Convention places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to consider the impacts of landscape when exercising their functions.</p> | <p>The SEA has assessed potential effects of plan proposals and options on local landscape character in the parish.</p> |
| <p>The SEA should include a full assessment of the potential impacts of the proposals on local landscape character using landscape assessment methodologies. We encourage the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), based on the good practice guidelines produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. LCA provides a sound basis for guiding, informing and understanding the ability of any location to accommodate change and to make positive proposals for conserving, enhancing or regenerating character, as detailed proposals are developed.</p> | <p>Due to the lack of allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan, there is less scope for the utilisation of full LCA methodologies.</p> |
| <p>Natural England supports the publication Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management in 2013 (3rd edition). The methodology set out is almost universally used for landscape and visual impact assessment.</p> | <p>Comment noted.</p> |
| <p>In order to foster high quality development that respects, maintains, or enhances, local landscape character and distinctiveness, Natural England encourages all new development to consider the character and distinctiveness of the area, with the siting and design of the proposed development reflecting local design characteristics and, wherever possible, using local materials. The Environmental Impact Assessment process should detail the measures to be taken to ensure the building design will be of a high standard, as well as detail of layout alternatives together with justification of the selected option in terms of landscape impact and benefit. Natural England would recommend that these principles are adopted as part of the neighbourhood plan policies.</p> | <p>Comment fed back to SMBNP Steering Group.</p> |
| <p>Heritage Landscapes You should consider whether there is land in the area affected by the development which qualifies for conditional exemption from capital taxes on the grounds of outstanding scenic, scientific or historic interest. An up-to-date list may be obtained at www.hmrc.gov.uk/heritage/lbsearch.htm and further information can be found on Natural England's landscape pages here.</p> | <p>No allocations are proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. As such the conditional exception issue has not been evaluated through the SEA process.</p> |

| <i>Consultation response</i> | <i>How the response was considered and addressed</i> |
|---|--|
| <p>Access and Recreation</p> <p>Natural England encourages any proposals to incorporate measures to help encourage people to access the countryside for quiet enjoyment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways are to be encouraged. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be incorporated into the neighbourhood plan where appropriate.</p> | <p>Elements related to the expansion and enhancement of green infrastructure provision in St Mary Bourne Parish has been assessed through the SEA process.</p> |
| <p>Rights of Way, Access land, and National Trails</p> <p>The SEA should consider potential impacts on access land, public open land, and rights of way in the vicinity of the development. The National Trails website www.nationaltrail.co.uk provides information including contact details for the National Trail Officer. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated into policies for any adverse impacts. Natural England also recommend reference to the relevant Right of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIP) to identify public rights of way within or adjacent to the proposed site that should be maintained or enhanced.</p> | <p>These elements have been considered through the assessment process.</p> |

2.3 What are the key issues that are a focus for the SEA?

The SEA context review and baseline data was updated to reflect responses received on the Scoping Report and is presented in **Appendix A**.

Drawing on the review of the context review and baseline, the SEA Scoping Report was able to identify a range of sustainability problems / issues that should be a particular focus of SEA, ensuring it remains focused. These issues are as follows.

Key issues: Biodiversity

- Features of biodiversity value such as trees, hedgerows and meadows should be protected from the impacts of future development and where possible enhanced.
- The integrity of the Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation present in and around the Neighbourhood Area should be supported through the SMBNP, with due regard to the key habitats and species present at these sites.
- Enhancements to ecological corridors should be supported through the SMBNP, including through improvements to the parish's green infrastructure networks.

Key issues: Climate change

- Groundwater and fluvial flooding is a significant risk in St Mary Bourne and Stoke.
- There is a need for the SMBNP to support adaptation to the risks associated with climate change in the area, including flood risk.
- The delivery of new housing and employment has the potential to increase overall greenhouse gas emissions.
- Per capita greenhouse gas emissions for Basingstoke and Deane borough continue to be higher than for Hampshire, South East and England averages, and are also falling at a lower rate.

Key issues: Historic environment and landscape

- Inappropriate scale, design and layout of development in the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to affect the integrity of the North Wessex Downs AONB and the St Mary Bourne and Stoke Conservation Area.
- New development has the potential to lead to both beneficial and adverse effects on the historic environment, including through effects on the fabric of cultural heritage assets and supporting landscape/townscape quality.
- New development could lead to pressures on non-designated sites and landscapes/ townscapes, including from loss of key built and natural features.

Key issues: Land, soil and water resources

- Developers should be encouraged to adopt sustainable construction practices, including handling waste arisings, recycling, and disposal in a sustainable manner as part of a life cycle approach to resource use.
- Water conservation and reuse should be supported in lieu of potential future issues linked to the regional availability of water.

Key issues: Population and community

- The Neighbourhood Area, in common with many other areas, is experiencing an ageing population. This will have implications for health service provision and the provision of other services, facilities and amenities.
- New community and employment provision in the Neighbourhood Area should reflect existing and future needs.
- General health in St Mary Bourne Parish as reported through the 2011 census is favourable when compared to Basingstoke and Deane Borough averages.
- Investment in open space, sports facilities and walking and cycling infrastructure should be supported in order to encourage increased physical activity.

Key issues: Transportation

- A significant proportion of the workforce work from home
- Bus services are limited in the parish.
- Traffic calming measures on the Egbury approach road to St Mary Bourne village have been identified as a key consideration by the local community.
- Continued enhancements to public transport and investment in walking and cycling networks should be promoted.

2.3.1 SEA Framework

The key issues outlined above were then translated into an 'SEA Framework' of objectives and assessment questions. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the assessment of likely significant effects on the baseline.

The SEA objectives are set out below, grouped by the six environmental themes through which the SEA information has been presented to date.

The full SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions are subsequently presented in **Appendix B**.

Table 2.2: Environmental themes and SEA objectives

| Environmental theme | SEA Objective |
|---|---|
| Biodiversity | Protect, and where possible enhance all biodiversity features |
| Climate change | Promote climate change mitigation in St Mary Bourne |
| | Support the resilience of St Mary Bourne to the potential effects of climate change |
| Historic environment and landscape | Protect, maintain and enhance St Mary Bourne’s cultural heritage resource, including its historic environment and archaeological assets. |
| | Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes. |
| Land, water and soil resources | Ensure the efficient use of land. |
| | Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste. |
| | Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. |
| Population and community | Cater for existing and future residents’ needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve equality of access to local, high-quality community services and facilities. |
| | Provide a range of housing types appropriate for the local community including; affordable housing and starter homes, specialist housing for older persons, and a mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures. |
| | Improve the health and wellbeing of the parish’s residents. |
| | Enhance the vitality of the Neighbourhood Area and access to employment opportunities |
| Transportation | Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel. |

3. What has plan making / SEA involved up to this point?

3.1 Introduction

In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include...

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.

The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report. Specifically, this section explains how preparation of the current version of the SMBNP has been informed by an appraisal of a number of alternative approaches to housing delivery in the parish.

3.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken since 2012

Plan-making for the SMBNP has been underway since 2012. Initial work incorporated a number of informal and formal consultation exercises carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, including on the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

A range of consultation events have since been carried out for the Neighbourhood Plan. This has included a range of exhibitions, open meetings and questions and answer sessions. This has been accompanied by a number of surveys, articles in the parish magazine and online consultation and blogs. A full public consultation on an initial version of the SMBNP was also undertaken in April 2016.

The following sections discuss the evolution of the SMBNP in association with the SEA process.

3.3 Appraisal of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan

3.3.1 Reasonable alternatives

A key element of the SEA process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the SMBNP. In this context reasonable alternatives have been considered in relation to the scale of housing provision in the parish in the period to 2029.

As highlighted above, the SMBNP is being prepared in the context of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan. The Local Plan, when adopted, will provide a framework for how future development across the borough will be planned and delivered.

No allocations are included for St Mary Bourne Parish in the Local Plan. However Policy SS6 (New Housing in the Countryside) highlights that the policy has "...sufficient flexibility to support the provision of new homes where they will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and meet identified needs".

To support decision-making on this element of the SMBNP, the SEA process considered three broad options relating to the scale and size of housing delivery to be taken forward for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The three options are as follows:

- Option 1: Deliver the minimum requirements of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (i.e. the delivery of no further dwellings in the parish)
- Option 2: Delivery of a limited number of dwellings through the SMBNP to meet local needs, focusing on smaller developments of under ten dwellings.

- Option 3: Delivery of a more significant number of dwellings through the SMBNP, allowing larger developments.

These options were considered through the SEA Framework of objectives and appraisal questions developed during scoping (see Section 2.3.1).

Table 3.1 presents the findings of the appraisal of Option 1 to Option 3 outlined above. These are presented through the six themes discussed in **Section 2.3.1**.

To support the assessment findings, the three options have been ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant theme. It is anticipated that this will provide the reader with a likely indication of the comparative sustainability performance of the three options in relation to each theme.

Table 3.1 Appraisal findings: reasonable alternatives

Option 1: Deliver the minimum requirements of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan

Option 2: Delivery of a limited number of dwellings through the SMBNP to meet local needs, focusing on smaller developments of under ten dwellings

Option 3: Option 3: Delivery of a more significant number of dwellings through the SMBNP, allowing larger developments.

| SEA theme | Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options | Rank of preference | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Opt 1 | Opt 2 | Opt 3 |
| Biodiversity | <p>Effects on biodiversity are likely to be increased through the delivery of a higher level of housing in the parish. In this context, Option 3, through delivering a larger number of dwellings has the potential to lead to an increased magnitude of effects on biodiversity assets locally. This includes through habitat loss and direct and indirect impacts on species. However, a larger scale of housing delivery may increase opportunities for biodiversity enhancements, such as green infrastructure improvements and enhancements to ecological networks.</p> <p>All allocations have the potential to have impacts on biodiversity assets if located inappropriately and have poor design and layout. Likewise all allocations have the potential to promote net gains in biodiversity value. In this context, for all sites, potential effects on biodiversity depend on elements such as the provision of green infrastructure to accompany new development areas and the retention and incorporation of biodiversity features.</p> | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Option 1: Deliver the minimum requirements of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan

Option 2: Delivery of a limited number of dwellings through the SMBNP to meet local needs, focusing on smaller developments of under ten dwellings

Option 3: Option 3: Delivery of a more significant number of dwellings through the SMBNP, allowing larger developments.

| SEA theme | Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options | Rank of preference | | |
|----------------|---|--------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Opt 1 | Opt 2 | Opt 3 |
| Climate change | <p>In terms of climate change mitigation, the options which facilitate an increased level of development (Option 3, and to a lesser extent, Option 2) will lead to an increased level of greenhouse gas emissions due to an enlarged built footprint of the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>Otherwise, in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, road transport is the significant contributor to emissions in the parish. The extent to which the three options have the potential to support climate change mitigation through facilitating a reduced level of car dependency is therefore a key element. In this context, Option 2, through promoting smaller scale housing provision across the plan area, has increased potential to facilitate the development of new housing at locations which are more integrated with the existing built up area of St Mary Bourne. This has the potential to allow at some locations easier access to services and facilities by sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling. However Option 3, through facilitating larger-scale sites, may enable more effective improvements to walking and cycling and public transport links through the infrastructure opportunities afforded by larger allocations.</p> <p>In terms of climate change adaptation, enhancements to the parish's green infrastructure networks will be a key means of helping the plan area adapt to the effects of climate change. This includes through helping to regulate extreme temperatures and regulate surface water run-off. In this context the direct provision of green infrastructure improvements to accompany new development areas may be more achievable through the larger scale development proposed through Options 3, including through mechanisms such as the community infrastructure levy.</p> <p>The effect of new development areas on fluvial, surface water and groundwater flooding depends on their location and the implementation of sustainable urban drainage systems.</p> | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Option 1: Deliver the minimum requirements of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan

Option 2: Delivery of a limited number of dwellings through the SMBNP to meet local needs, focusing on smaller developments of under ten dwellings

Option 3: Option 3: Delivery of a more significant number of dwellings through the SMBNP, allowing larger developments.

| SEA theme | Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options | Rank of preference | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Opt 1 | Opt 2 | Opt 3 |
| Historic environment and landscape | <p>Through increasing the scale of development to be taken forward for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan, Option 3 has increased potential to lead to impacts on landscape character (including the North Wessex Downs AONB) and the setting of the historic environment. This includes through loss of landscape features, visual impacts and impacts on light pollution. In this context Option 1 and 2, through promoting a limited scale of development, is less likely to lead to significant effects on landscape and townscape character.</p> <p>Option 2, through promoting smaller sized developments, increases opportunities for supporting the reuse and rejuvenation of existing heritage assets in St Mary Bourne and surrounding hamlets. This will support the parish's historic environment resource, if high quality design and layout is incorporated within new provision. Similarly Option 2 provides opportunities for enhancing local character and distinctiveness if high quality design is incorporated within new provision. Option 2 therefore provides a balance between providing opportunities to rejuvenate existing underutilised heritage assets whilst protecting landscape character, visual amenity and the setting of the historic environment.</p> | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Land, soil and water resources | <p>Option 3, which will deliver a higher level of development in the parish has the potential to increase development on greenfield land in the Neighbourhood Area. The option also has increased potential to lead to the loss of areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land present in the parish (including, potentially in the parish, Grade 3a land). Whilst Option 1 will restrict new development, Option 2 has increased potential to support the efficient use of land through the reuse of existing structures and rejuvenating previously developed land.</p> <p>In terms of water quality, it is difficult to come to a conclusion regarding the potential for development at any given location to result in negative effects without an understanding of the design measures that will be put in place. For example sustainable drainage systems – SuDS – are an effective means of minimising surface water runoff and hence pollution. However it should be noted that there is likely to be more scope for the implementation of measures such as SuDS within the larger scale of development promoted by Option 3.</p> | 2 | 1 | 3 |

Option 1: Deliver the minimum requirements of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan

Option 2: Delivery of a limited number of dwellings through the SMBNP to meet local needs, focusing on smaller developments of under ten dwellings

Option 3: Option 3: Delivery of a more significant number of dwellings through the SMBNP, allowing larger developments.

| SEA theme | Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options | Rank of preference | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Opt 1 | Opt 2 | Opt 3 |
| Population and community | <p>In terms of affordable housing, such provision may be easier to deliver through the larger allocations delivered through Option 3. Whilst all new developments involving one or more dwellings are liable for the community infrastructure levy, concentrating the delivery of housing at larger sites may help enable the securing of additional contributions to site specific mitigation through Section 106 planning agreements (it should be noted however that such contributions are typically required to make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable). Recent legislation has introduced a 10 unit threshold for affordable housing contributions. As such Option 3 has increased opportunity for delivering affordable housing in the parish.</p> <p>In terms of the provision of services and facilities, the delivery of CIL monies and similar mechanisms are likely to be more achievable through the allocations facilitated through Options 2 and 3. Similarly potential enhancements to the vitality of the parish promoted through population growth facilitated through these options may support the availability and viability of services, facilities and amenities.</p> <p>The delivery of housing provision through larger scale allocations has the potential to concentrate effects on road safety and noise quality from increased traffic flows at certain locations. This may have effects on the health and wellbeing of residents. Effects however depend on the location of new development areas and the integration of elements such as sustainable transport linkages and green infrastructure provision.</p> | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Transport | <p>Option 2, through promoting smaller scale housing provision across the plan area, has increased potential to facilitate the development of new housing at locations which are more integrated with the existing built up area of St Mary Bourne and the outlying hamlets. This has the potential to allow at some locations easier access to services and facilities by sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling.</p> <p>However, the provision of new and improved sustainable transport infrastructure to accompany new housing development, including pedestrian/cycle and public transport links may be more feasible with the larger scale of development proposed through Option 3.</p> | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Following consultation events on the Neighbourhood Plan, it became clear that there is a recognition within the community that small scale development in the parish would be appropriate to support local amenities, meet the housing needs of a broader range of age groups and support community vitality. As such the current version of the SMBNP supports housing provision on brownfield and infill sites where the maximum capacity of the site is six homes.

3.4 Development of Neighbourhood Plan policies and initial Regulation 14 consultation

To support the implementation of the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan discussed in **Section**Error! Reference source not found. **2.1.2**, the SMBNP Steering Group developed a series of policies to guide development in the parish.

In April 2016 an initial 'Regulation 14' version of the SMBNP was released for consultation for a period of six weeks and put forward nine policies to guide development in the parish. These were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering.

To accompany this consultation, an Environmental Report (AECOM, April 2016) was prepared and released alongside the initial Regulation 14 SMBNP.

Three recommendations were made in the Environmental Report for improving the sustainability performance of the SMBNP. These are summarised as follows:

- Whilst the SMBNP set out some provisions relating to the protection and enhancement of key biodiversity assets, there is further scope for the Neighbourhood Plan to clarify how biodiversity networks will be supported in the parish.
- There is potential for the SMBNP to describe in more detail how enhancements to open spaces in the parish can be facilitated through a coordinated 'green infrastructure' approach.
- Whilst the policies presented in the consultation version of the SMBNP will provide a significant degree of protection to the historic environment, there is further potential for plan policies to reinforce the need for new development to consider actual or realized archaeological potential in the parish.

These recommendations were then considered through the next iterations of plan making for the SMBNP.

3.5 Update to the Neighbourhood Plan following initial Regulation 14 consultation

Following consultation on the initial Regulation 14 version of the SMBNP, a range of responses were received from consultees and stakeholders. To reflect these responses, the policies of the SMBNP were updated.

In order to gain the community's views on these changes to the plan, a further Regulation 14 consultation on the SMBNP was undertaken in November 2016, accompanied by an earlier version of this Environmental Report.

3.6 Current version of the Neighbourhood Plan

3.6.1 Updated policies

The current Submission version of the SMBNP puts forward eight policies to guide development in the parish. The policies are as follows:

- Policy P1: Redundant Agricultural Buildings
- Policy P2: Infill housing in Stoke
- Policy P3: Housing Site Mix and Local Connection Pre-emption right
- Policy P4: Rural Exception Sites
- Policy P5: Environmental Factors
- Policy P6: Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects
- Policy P7: Design Requirements
- Policy P8: Allotments

The next chapter considers these policies through appraising the current version of the SMBNP.

4. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the current Submission version of the SMBNP. This chapter is structured as follows:

Sections 4.3 to Section 4.8 present an appraisal of the current Submission version of the SMBNP under the six SEA theme headings; and

Section 4.9 subsequently discusses overall conclusions at this current stage.

4.2 Approach to the appraisal

The appraisal is structured under the six SEA themes.

For each theme 'significant effects' of the draft plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations.⁴ So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

Every effort is made to identify / evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

It is important to note that effects are predicted taking into account the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered (i.e. where the effects of the plan may combine with the effects of other planned or on-going activity that is outside the control of the SMBNP). These effect 'characteristics' are described within the appraisal as appropriate.

4.3 Biodiversity

The Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to indirectly lead to effects on habitats and species at some locations through facilitating infill development in Stoke and the redevelopment of redundant agricultural buildings. However, potential effects are likely to be limited, and potential enhancements secured by the policy approaches proposed through the current version of the SMBNP.

Policy P5 (Environmental Factors) is the key policy in relation to the biodiversity theme. This seeks to ensure that development proposals 'respond positively' to 'trees and plants' and 'wildlife habitats'. Ecological networks in the parish will be further supported by Policy P7 (Design Requirements), which seeks to protect existing hedgerows and encourage the planting of new hedgerows and also encourages the planting of 'species which respond positively to the local area'.

Habitats and species will also be supported through the other SMBNP policies which seek to protect and enhance landscape character. These will have some indirect effects on enhancing biodiversity networks in the parish, including through the retention and improvement of habitats contributing to landscape character.

⁴ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

4.4 Climate change

In relation to renewable energy provision, Policy P6 (Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects) supports smaller scale renewable energy provision if potential effects on landscape and villagescape character can be effectively mitigated and traffic impacts are mitigated.

With regard to residential developments, the scope to set standards for residential building performance was radically curtailed by the Government's Housing Standards Review. The Ministerial Statement published on 25th March 2015 outlines the Government's national planning policy on the setting of technical standards for new dwellings and Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plan making. The Code for Sustainable Homes has been formally withdrawn so targets against this should no longer be set in policy. As such it is recognised that it is not appropriate for the SMBNP to set specific standards relating to the sustainability performance of new housing in the parish.

Whilst a number of the policies will support sustainable transport options (see **Section 4.8**), given the rural nature of the parish, the poor public transport options present locally and the likelihood of ongoing car dependency, effects on limiting greenhouse gas emissions from transport are likely to be restricted.

In terms of climate change adaptation, Policy P4 (Rural Exception Sites) requires that rural exception sites are not built in areas vulnerable to flooding, or on land which would increase the risk of flooding in other locations. This is supported by Policy P5 (Environmental Factors) which seeks to ensure that appropriate sewerage provision is enabled or drainage to the public sewer does not contribute to existing drainage or flooding issues in the parish. These elements will support the provisions of the NPPF regarding the sequential, risk based approach to flood risk.

4.5 Historic environment and landscape

St Mary Bourne Parish has a rich historic environment and distinctive character. A central focus of the policies proposed for the SMBNP is on protecting and enhancing the quality of the public realm, supporting local distinctiveness, protecting landscape character, and supporting the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In this context the current version of the SMBNP provides a robust basis for the conservation and enhancement of landscape character and villagescape in the parish.

A key policy in this regard is Policy P7 (Design Requirements), which sets out a range of provisions for enhancing the existing character of the parish. This includes through: promoting an appropriate scale and density of new development; facilitating the creation of attractive streets and spaces; and through promoting locally distinctive development which complements existing character and which is well integrated within its surroundings. This will be supported by Policy P1 (Redundant Agricultural Buildings), which seeks to ensure that residential development on the site of redundant agricultural buildings is proportionate to its setting and local character and will not lead to the loss of buildings or architectural or historic merit unless due to exceptional circumstances. Policy P2 also sets out a range of provisions relating to infill development in Stoke, seeking to ensure such development in the settlement is sensitive and supportive to local character, and Policy P4 sets out a range of provisions relating to rural exception sites and local character and distinctiveness. Policy P5 (Environmental Factors) further supports local character and the setting of the historic environment through seeking to ensure that new development respects local topography and landscape features, and protects views and vistas.

Central to the protection and enhancement of villagescape and landscape character is the provision within Policy P7 that stipulates that new development in the parish should follow the guidance presented in the St Mary Bourne Village Design Statement. In this context the proposed use of the Village Design Statement as the central element for considering development is an appropriate basis for the protection and enhancement of landscape / village character in St Mary Bourne village and the parish's hamlets and the setting of the historic environment. This includes through setting out the features which local people regard as important and suggesting ways in which these can be maintained and enhanced through a series of development guidelines.

The proposed development strategy for the parish, which limits development to smaller sites of a maximum capacity of six housing units (Policy P1: Redundant Agricultural Buildings), provides opportunities for supporting the reuse and rejuvenation of existing heritage assets in St Mary Bourne and surrounding hamlets. In conjunction with the other policies in the draft plan, the focus on smaller sized previously used sites provide a balance between providing opportunities to rejuvenate existing underutilised heritage assets and protecting landscape character, visual amenity and the setting of the historic environment. This is further supported by Policy P1, which supports development which brings redundant buildings back into use.

With the exception of the south western corner of the parish, the Neighbourhood Area is wholly covered by the nationally designated North Wessex Downs AONB. The St Mary Bourne and Stoke Conservation Area also covers much of St Mary Bourne village and Stoke. These key designations are reflected by the policies presented by the current version of the SMBNP, which have a strong focus on protecting landscape character and local distinctiveness. A minimization of light pollution is also supported by the plan through Policy P7, which will support the integrity of the AONB and the conservation area.

4.6 Land, soil and water resources

In relation to land and soil resources, whilst the current version of the SMBNP acknowledges that it is the Local Plan rather than the Neighbourhood Plan's role to address brownfield land, the plan's focus on the reuse and rejuvenation of redundant agricultural buildings rather than greenfield sites will promote the efficient use of land. This will also help limit the loss of productive agricultural land, including land potentially classified as Grade 3a agricultural land, which is land classified as the 'Best and Most Versatile' agricultural land. Also linked to land and soils resources, Policy P8 will, through supporting the provision of allotments, promote the productivity of land in the parish.

Policy P5 (Environmental Factors) aims to support water quality in the parish through seeking to ensure new development does not adversely affect water quality in the Bourne Rivulet or the quality of groundwater. This will be supported by the policy's provisions for ensuring that existing drainage problems will not be exacerbated by development proposals.

Further facilitating the efficient use of resources in the parish, the supporting text for Policy P5 promotes the use of recycled and/or low embodied energy building materials, environmentally neutral energy systems, grey water recycling and rainwater harvesting.

4.7 Population and community

Baseline information and consultation suggests that there is a need for more affordable housing in the parish and for more dwellings that meet the needs of particular groups (including younger people and older people). Four policies are key in this regard. Policy P1 supports the reuse of Redundant Agricultural Buildings for residential development which meets '*locally agreed housing need*'. Policy P2 (Infill Housing in Stoke) states that where more than one unit is provided, one of the units should be a two bedroom unit, and units consented under this policy should not exceed three bedrooms. This reflects locally determined housing need. Policy P4 (Rural Exception Sites) highlights a support for Rural Exception Sites which deliver affordable housing and which delivers '*locally agreed housing need*'.

Local need will also be facilitated through Policy P3 (Site Mix and Local Connection Pre-emption Right). This seeks to ensure that a priority for local people is established in the parish, through first offering new housing to those with a local connection for a period of six weeks, and those working in key professions in the area (including neighbouring parishes).

In this context these policies will support the SMBNP's aim to facilitate the delivery of housing which helps meet local needs and promote the vitality of the parish.

Policy P5 (Environmental Factors) and Policy P7 (Design Requirements) set out a range of provisions which will support the quality of life of those living in and around new areas of development. This includes through promoting high quality and energy efficient design of new housing, facilitating an attractive public realm, and supporting access and road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The health and wellbeing of residents will be

further promoted by Policy P8, which facilitates the provision of allotments in the parish and the quality of life of residents will be supported by the other SMBNP policies' focus on promoting local distinctiveness (see Section 4.5).

In terms of the economic viability of the parish and access to job opportunities, Policy P1 (Redundant Agricultural Buildings) supports the development of live/work units in the parish and Policy P5 makes provisions for facilitating homeworking. The economic vitality of the parish will be further promoted through the SMBNP's support for enhanced connectivity through improved broadband provision.

In relation to community facilities, the SMBNP sets out the key assets of importance for the parish, namely:

- the school;
- the church;
- the clinic and dispensary;
- village centre;
- recreation ground and bowls green;
- shop;
- play area and tennis court; and
- pubs.

This provides a framework for supporting and protecting the key community facilities located in the parish.

4.8 Transport

Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan's scope limits opportunities for delivering direct transport enhancements through the plan, the SMBNP seeks to address issues related to traffic, parking and road safety.

In terms of traffic, Policy P5 (Environmental Factors) seeks to ensure that new development does not increase traffic issues or parking problems within the centres of St Mary Bourne and Stoke. In relation to parking, the Design Requirements policy (Policy P7) sets out provisions for car parking and limiting the impact of car parking from new development. Policy P1 (Redundant Agricultural Buildings) also seeks to ensure that any live-work units do not contribute to traffic issues and Policy P8 seeks to ensure that new allotments do not contribute to traffic issues in the parish.

More generally, the SMBNP policies' focus on protecting and enhancing the public realm and integrating high quality design within new development will promote accessibility. This includes through facilitating the development of high quality villagescapes which encourage sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling.

4.9 Conclusions at this current stage

4.9.1 Potential significant effects

The assessment has concluded that the current version of the SMBNP is likely to lead to **significant positive effects** in terms of the SEA objectives focusing on improving the quality of life of residents in St Mary Bourne Parish. This will be facilitated through the current version of the plan's impetus on promoting improvements to the public realm, the protection and enhancement of community facilities, and its focus on housing provision which meets local needs and support the vitality of the parish.

A central and overriding element of the Neighbourhood Plan is the protection and enhancement of landscape character and the character of the village and hamlets, including through the application of the Village Design Statement. The reuse and rejuvenation of historic environment assets in the parish will also be supported

through the SMBNP's development strategy. These elements will have **significant positive effects** on the setting of the historic environment and on local distinctiveness in the parish.

The proposed plan approach will help initiate a range of beneficial approaches in relation to the 'biodiversity', 'climate change', 'land, soil and water resources' and 'transport' SEA themes. However, due to the scale of likely positive effects, they are not considered to be significant in the context of the SEA process.

5. What are the next steps?

5.1 Plan finalisation

The SMBNP has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, for its consideration. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the SMBNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Local Plan.

Subject to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's agreement, the SMBNP will then be subject to independent examination. The Examiner will consider whether the plan is appropriate having regard to national policy and whether it is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

The Examiner will be able to recommend that the SMBNP is put forward for a referendum, or that it should be modified or that the proposal should be refused. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will then decide what should be done in light of the Examiner's report. Where the report recommends modifications to the plan, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will invite the SMBNP Steering Group to make modifications to the plan, which will be reflected in an updated SA Report. Where the Examiner's Report recommends that the proposal is to be refused, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will do so.

Where the examination is favourable, the SMBNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council with a request it is adopted. Once adopted, the SMBNP will become part of the Development Plan for the area.

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Appendix A Context review and baseline

Biodiversity

Context

At the European level, the EU Biodiversity Strategy⁵ was adopted in May 2011 in order to deliver an established new Europe-wide target to 'halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020'.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity by minimising impacts and achieving net gains in biodiversity wherever possible.
- Promote the 'preservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats, ecological networks' and the 'protection and recovery of priority species'. Plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.
- Set criteria based policies for the protection of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, giving weight to their importance not just individually but as a part of a wider ecological network.
- Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including green infrastructure (i.e. 'a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities').
- Plan positively planning for 'green infrastructure' as part of planning for 'ecological networks'.
- High quality open spaces should be protected or their loss mitigated, unless a lack of need is established.

The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)⁶ sets out the importance of a healthy, functioning natural environment to sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal well-being. It was in part a response to the UK's failure to halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity by 2010 and it signalled a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity in nature reserves to adopting a landscape approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity. The NEWP also aims to create a green economy in which economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other and markets, business and Government better reflect the value of nature. It includes commitments to:

- Halt biodiversity loss, support functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks by 2020;
- Establish a new voluntary approach to biodiversity offsetting to be tested in pilot areas;
- Enable partnerships of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and conservation organisations to establish new Nature Improvement Areas; and
- Address barriers to using green infrastructure to promote sustainable growth.

At the local level the Biodiversity Action Plan for Hampshire reviews the status of wildlife in Hampshire and sets out a framework for action in two parts.

Volume One, the Strategic Plan sets out the objectives of the Partnership, describes Hampshire's biodiversity, and identifies habitats and species of priority concern. It also presents a strategy for information, data and raising awareness of biodiversity. *Volume Two* contains individual action plans for priority habitats and species and topics that have a considerable influence on the conservation of biodiversity.

Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

No sites internationally designated for their nature conservation interest are present in the parish. The closest European designated site is the Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC, which is located approximately 12.2km to the north of the Neighbourhood Area.

⁵ European Commission (2011) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5b1%5d.pdf

⁶ Defra (2012) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper) [online] available at: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf>

There are also no sites nationally designated for biodiversity importance located within the Neighbourhood Area. The two nearest are: the Sidley Woods SSSI, which is located 300m north of the boundary of the parish, and has been designated for stands of ancient hornbeam coppice; and the River Test SSSI, which is located approximately 3.5km to the south of the parish, which has been designated as one of the most species-rich lowland rivers in England.⁷ The Sidley Woods SSSI is currently in an unfavourable condition, but is considered to be recovering⁸, while the River Test SSSI is currently in a favourable condition.⁹

SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS tool/dataset which maps zones around each SSSI according to the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. No parts of the parish are within the Impact Risk Zones for the two SSSIs relating to the type of development which has the potential to be taken forward through the SMBNP.

The Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies a number of 'Priority Habitats' that are characteristic of Hampshire, and for which Hampshire makes a significant contribution to UK biodiversity objectives.

Three types of BAP Priority Habitat are found within the parish (see Figure below). Numerous areas of Deciduous Woodland are scattered throughout the Neighbourhood Area. Some of this has been identified as Ancient Woodland. This is woodland which has existed since before 1600 in England meaning that it will typically be composed of native species and will have an especially high biodiversity value.¹⁰

Further BAP Priority Habitat present in the Neighbourhood Area includes a number of areas of Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh present along the banks of the Bourne Rivulet, including to the south of St Mary Bourne village and to the north west of Stoke, and a number of small isolated areas of Lowland Calcareous Grassland.

Regarding local biodiversity designations, there is a 4.31ha Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) located at Stoke Down. Hampshire County Council identify and record SINCs. These are designed to safeguard sites that are important for local biodiversity but that are not protected by national or international designations, and make such sites a focus for nature conservation. In relation to geodiversity, there are no geological SSSIs located in the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Area nor are there any regionally important geological and geomorphological sites (RIGS) present.

⁷ Natural England (undated) [online] available at: http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/citation/citation_photo/2000170.pdf

⁸ Natural England (undated) [online] available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=s2000170>

⁹ Natural England (undated) [online] http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/citation/citation_photo/1003372.pdf

¹⁰ Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (2014) *Post note number 456: Ancient woodland*.

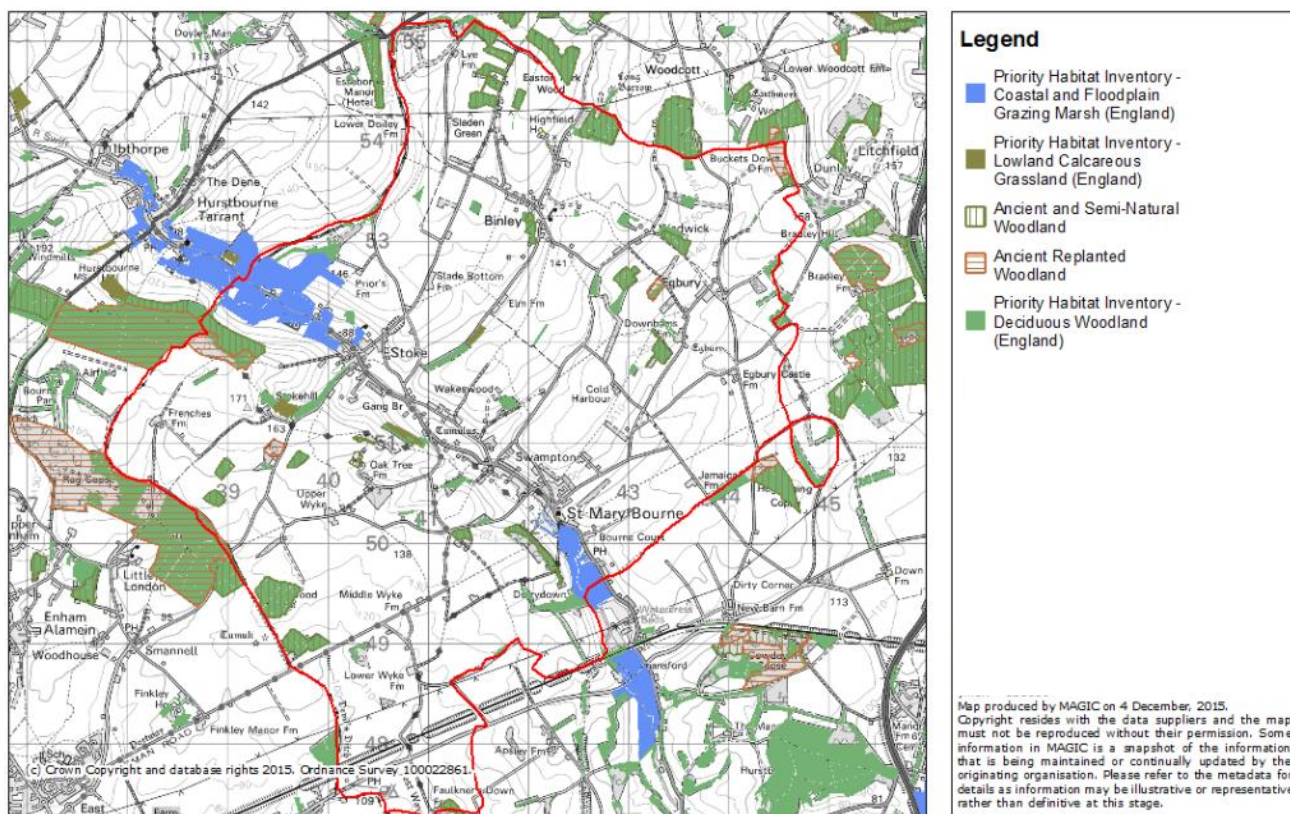


Figure: BAP priority habitat and other biodiversity features present within the parish

Summary of future baseline

Sites of biodiversity importance, such as the areas of BAP Priority Habitat have the potential to come under increasing pressures from an increase in the Neighbourhood Area’s population and associated development. This includes through potential loss of habitats and impacts on biodiversity networks.

Effects on habitats and species may also be exacerbated by the effects of climate change, which has the potential to alter the distribution and abundance of species and change the composition and character of habitats, including those associated with the Bourne Rivulet.

The SMBNP has a role to play in conserving areas of biodiversity value, and could also deliver targeted enhancements to biodiversity through measures (e.g. ‘green infrastructure’) to enhance ecological connectivity.

Climate Change

Context

In its 2007 strategy on climate change, the European Commission assesses the costs and benefits of combating climate change and recommends a package of measures to limit global warming to 2° Celsius.¹¹ In relation to energy, the Commission recommends that the EU’s energy efficiency improves by 20% and the share of renewable energy grows to 20% by 2020.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate as a ‘core planning principle’.
- There is a key role for planning in securing radical reductions in greenhouse gases (GHG), including in terms of meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 200¹². Specifically, planning policy should support the move to a low carbon future through:

¹¹ Commission of the European Communities (2007) Limiting Global Climate Change to two degrees Celsius: The way ahead for 2020 and beyond [online] available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0002:FIN:EN:PDF>

¹² The Climate Change Act 2008 sets targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions through action in the UK of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO₂ emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline.

- planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce GHG emissions;
 - actively supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;
 - setting local requirements for building's sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy;
 - positively promoting renewable energy technologies and considering identifying suitable areas for their construction; and
 - encouraging those transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.
- Direct development away from areas highest at risk of flooding, with development 'not to be allocated if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding'. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing levels of flood risk elsewhere.
 - Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term, taking into account a range of factors including flooding. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

The Flood and Water Management Act¹³ highlights that alternatives to traditional engineering approaches to flood risk management include:

- Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting properties at risk (including historic buildings)
- Utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding, for example through the management of land to reduce runoff and through harnessing the ability of wetlands to store water
- Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere
- Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion
- Creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)¹⁴

Further guidance is provided in the document Planning for SuDs.¹⁵ This report calls for greater recognition of the multiple benefits that water management can present. It suggests that successful SuDS are capable of 'contributing to local quality of life and green infrastructure'.

Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2009 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team¹⁶. UKCP09 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.

As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the South East by 2050 for a medium emissions scenario¹⁷ are likely to be as follows:

- the central estimate of increase in winter mean temperature is 2.2°C and an increase in summer mean temperature of 2.8°C; and
- the central estimate of change in winter mean precipitation is 16% and summer mean precipitation is -19%.
- Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Area. These include:

¹³ Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

¹⁴ N.B. The provisions of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 came into force in October 2012 and makes it mandatory for any development in England or Wales to incorporate SuDs.

¹⁵ CIRIA (2010) Planning for SuDs – making it happen [online] available at: <http://www.ciria.org/service/knowledgebase/AM/ContentManagerNet/ContentDisplay.aspx?Section=knowledgebase&NoTemplate=1&ContentID=18465>

¹⁶ The data was released on 18th June 2009: See: <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/>

¹⁷ UK Climate Projections (2009) South East 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/22290>

- increased incidence of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer;
- increased incidence of illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight (e.g. skin cancer, cataracts);
- increased incidence of pathogen related diseases (e.g. legionella and salmonella);
- increase in health problems related to rise in local ozone levels during summer;
- increased risk of injuries and deaths due to increased number of storm events;
- effects on water resources from climate change;
- reduction in availability of groundwater for abstraction;
- adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- changes in insurance provisions for flood damage;
- a need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- a need to upgrade flood defences;
- soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- deterioration in working conditions due to increased temperatures;
- changes to global supply chain;
- increased difficulty of food preparation, handling and storage due to higher temperatures;
- an increased move by the insurance industry towards a more risk-based approach to insurance underwriting, leading to higher cost premiums for business;
- increased demand for air-conditioning;
- increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- flooding of roads.

Flood risk is a significant issue in the parish. According to the Hampshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)¹⁸, and based on the Environment Agency 'communities at risk' initiative, St Mary Bourne is ranked as the community within Basingstoke and Deane most at risk from flood risk. The LFRMS highlights that 128 residential properties in the parish are within Flood Risk Zone 2 or 3a/3b, with 55 properties at 'significant' or 'moderate' risk of flooding.

Flood risk in the parish is linked to the presence of the Bourne Rivulet and the underlying geology. The village is located over a chalk aquifer and as such can suffer from groundwater flooding. In this context flooding from groundwater occurs in the Bourne Valley when the level of water within the underlying chalk (i.e. the water table) rises, emerging on the surface. This is typically accompanied by fluvial flooding from the Bourne Rivulet. Groundwater flooding can sometimes take place over a longer period of time, with recent flood events taking place over a period of one month or more.

A further element related to flood risk in the parish regards sewerage and foul water provision. During groundwater flood events, infiltration of the groundwater into the foul water sewer can cause the backing up of water. This reduces the ability of the foul water sewer to function effectively through preventing some properties discharging their foul water into the system. St Mary Bourne Parish Council are currently working with Southern Water to address this issue.

The figure below displays the fluvial flood risk present in the Neighbourhood Area. The darker blue denotes the area that could be affected by flooding from a river by a flood that has a 1 per cent (1 in 100) or greater chance of occurring each year. The lighter blue shows the additional extent of an extreme flood. These outlying areas are likely to be affected by a major flood, with up to a 0.1 per cent (1 in 1000) chance of occurring each year. The line denotes the course of the Bourne Rivulet.

¹⁸ Hampshire County Council (July 2013) Hampshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/flooding/floodriskstrategy.htm>



Figure: Fluvial flood risk from the Bourne Rivulet (source, Environment Agency)

In relation to greenhouse gas emissions, source data from the Department of Energy and Climate Change¹⁹ suggests that Basingstoke and Deane borough has had consistently higher per capita emissions than for Hampshire, the South East and England since 2005. The borough has also seen smaller reductions in emissions per capita between 2005 and 2012 (16.5%) compared to Hampshire (23.3%), the South East (18.3%) and England (a 17.7% reduction).

In relation to CO₂ emissions by end user, between 2005 and 2012 the proportion of emissions originating from industrial and commercial sources in the borough fell slightly from 34% to 32%. In the same period the proportion of total emissions from domestic sources increased slightly from 25% to 27% and road transport remained the same.

Summary of future baseline

Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the parish, with increases in mean summer and winter temperatures, increases in mean precipitation in winter and decreases in mean precipitation in summer. The UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team have estimated that under a medium emissions scenario, the central estimate of change in winter mean precipitation is an increase of 16%²⁰, while there is estimated to be an average drop in summer precipitation of 19%. This is likely to increase the risk of flooding in winter months and increase water shortages during summer months with an increased need for resilience and adaptation.

The Climate Change Partnership for the South East has produced a report detailing the risks faced in the region from climate change. Flooding was identified as a major risk, particularly to businesses and the local

¹⁹ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) Official statistics: Local Authority carbon dioxide emissions [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-emissions-estimates>

²⁰ UK climate projections (2009) *South East 2050s medium emissions scenario* [online] available at: <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/23907?emission=medium>

economy, where it could cause damage to assets, stock, and premises. The possibility of un-insurability and reputational damage represent significant threats.²¹

In terms of climate change mitigation, per capita emissions are likely to continue to decrease as energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies become more widely adopted. However increases in the built footprint of the parish may lead to increases in overall emissions.

Historic environment and landscape

Context

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

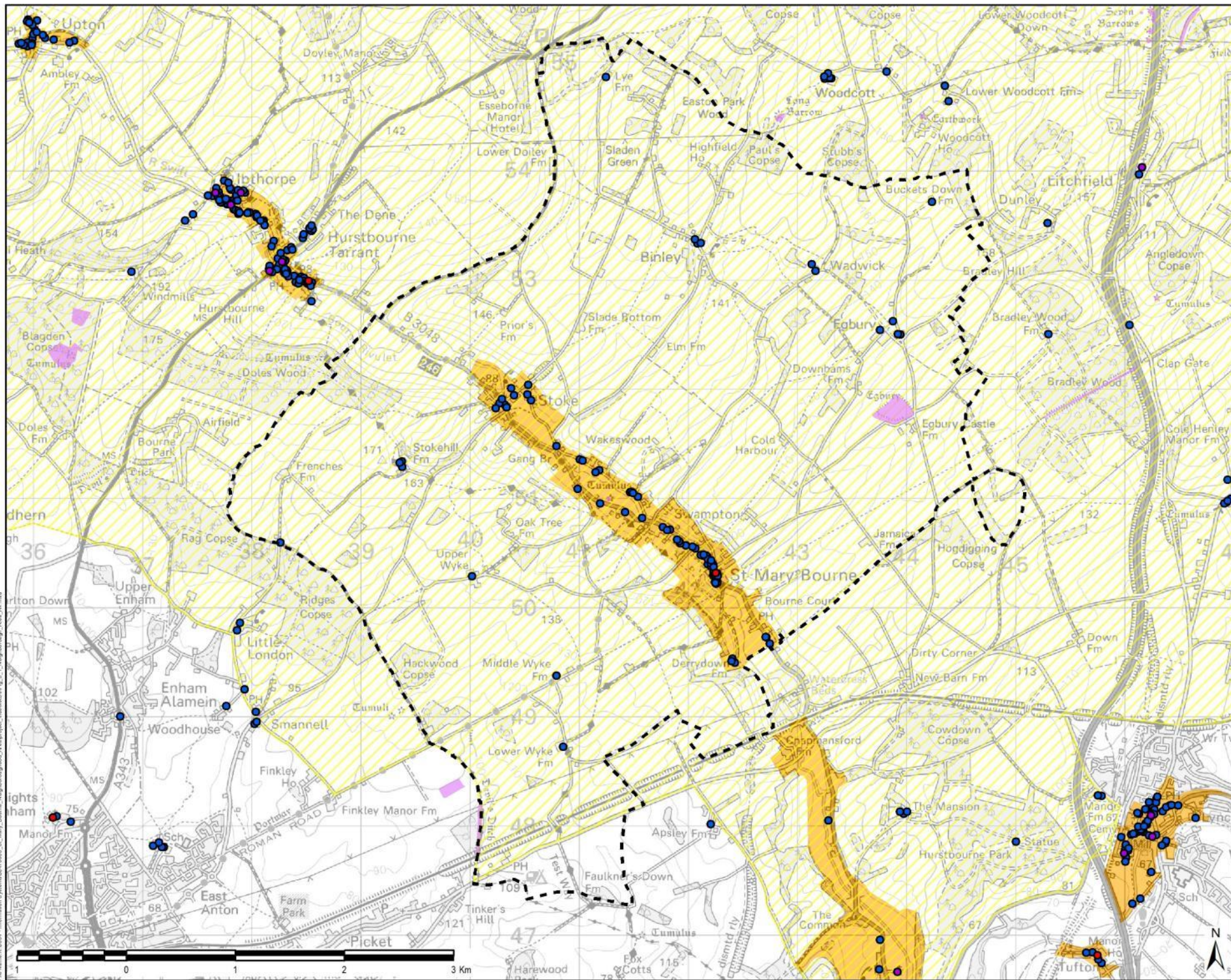
- Protect and enhance valued landscapes, giving particular weight to those identified as being of national importance.
- Heritage assets should be recognised as an ‘irreplaceable resource’ that should be conserved in a ‘manner appropriate to their significance’, taking account of ‘the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits’ of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.
- Set out a ‘positive strategy’ for the ‘conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment’, including those heritage assets that are most at risk.
- Develop ‘robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics’.

The Government’s Statement on the Historic Environment for England²² sets out its vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life.

The Consultation Draft of the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 sets out a wide ranging vision for the AONB, incorporating aspects such as landscape quality and tranquillity; the protection and enhancement of the historic environment; the conservation and improvement of biodiversity, water and soil quality; the development of vibrant economy based on the area’s environmental qualities; thriving rural communities; and sustainable tourism. The Management Plan subsequently presents a series of policies and objectives to achieve this vision in the AONB, and proposes a Delivery Plan of actions.

²¹ Climate South East (2012) *A summary of Climate Change Risks for the South East of England* [online] available at: http://www.climatesoutheast.org.uk/images/uploads/South_East_LOW_RES.pdf

²² HM Government (2010) *The Government’s Statement on the Historic Environment for England* [online] available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6763.aspx



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LEGEND

- St. Mary Bourne
- Civil Parish
- Listed Building
 - Grade I
 - Grade II
 - Grade II*
- Record of Scheduled Monument
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Conservation Area

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Purpose of Issue **DRAFT**

Client **ST MARY BOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**

Project Title **ST MARY BOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Drawing Title **LANDSCAPE AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DESIGNATIONS IN THE ST MARY BOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

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Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

The North Wessex Downs were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1972 under the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949. Following the introduction of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the government confirmed that the landscape qualities of National Parks and AONBs are equivalent. As such the protection given by the land use planning system to natural beauty in both types of area should be equivalent.

With the exception of the south western corner of the parish, the whole of the Neighbourhood Area is located within the AONB (see figure above). The parish contains two landscape character types, as defined by the North Wessex Downs Landscape Character Assessment:

- River Valleys: very distinct linear landscapes, characterised by a rich mix of grazed pastures, water meadows, wetland and woodland. Steeply rising slopes create an intimate and enclosed character
- Downland with Woodland: offering softer contours, woodland cover and a mix of field patterns

The St Mary Bourne Neighbourhood Area has a rich historic environment. Numerous features and areas in the plan area are recognised through historic environment designations. These include statutory listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which are nationally designated, and conservation areas, which are designated at the local level (see figure above). Historic England is the statutory consultee for certain categories of listed building consent and all applications for scheduled monument consent. The historic environment is protected through the planning system, via conditions imposed on developers and other mechanisms.

The Neighbourhood Area contains 88 listed buildings. This includes one Grade I listed building (Church of St Peter), and 87 Grade II listed structures. There are no Grade II* listed buildings present in the parish.

Scheduled monuments are sites of national importance and protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. According to the National Heritage List for England²³, there are three scheduled monuments in the Neighbourhood Area, as follows:

- Egbury Camp;
- Devil's Ditch; and
- Bowl Barrow 120m ESE of The Croft

There are no registered parks and gardens or historic battlefields located in the parish.

Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights the Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings, and scheduled monuments, conservation areas, wreck sites and registered parks and gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. The latest Heritage at Risk Register²⁴ highlights that there are no features or areas deemed to be at risk in the Neighbourhood Area. It is understood that a survey of Grade II listed buildings has not yet been carried out in the parish.

The rich historic environment of the parish is reflected by the designation of the St Mary Bourne and Stoke Conservation Area in 1985 by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the area. A Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared in 2003 and provides detailed information on key features and areas of the conservation area²⁵.

The Conservation Area Appraisal splits the conservation area into five key sub-areas, and provides detailed information on these areas. A summary these areas' special characteristics are as follows:

Area 1: St Mary Bourne: The special appearance of this sub-area is derived from the combination of the gently curving linear development of buildings along the level river valley floor, and a varied mix of properties - the front building lines of these properties are generally tight to the back edge of the pavement. They form distinctive groups interspersed with key spaces. This combination creates a continually changing and varied streetscene beyond each curve in the road. Although the village comprises many individual buildings of intrinsic architectural or historic interest, the appearance of the Conservation Area has a cohesive quality. This is due to the similarity in scale, form, and vernacular building traditions, particular to this part of Hampshire, and notably the contribution made by thatched roofs. Predominantly residential in character, St Mary Bourne still retains a semirural quality given its narrow plan form. The immediate presence of the surrounding landscape

²³ Historic England: Natural Heritage List for England: <http://list.historicengland.org.uk> [accessed 28/08/15].

²⁴ Heritage at Risk Register (2014), <http://risk.historicengland.org.uk/register.aspx> [accessed 28/08/15]

²⁵ Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (2003) *Conservation Area Appraisal, St Mary Bourne and Stoke* [online] available at: <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/page/33873/Conservation%20Area%20Appraisal%20for%20St%20Mary%20Bourne%20and%20Stoke.pdf>

being evident in glimpses between or behind the buildings. The interwoven nature of the river through the settlement is also a distinctive and defining characteristic of the village.

Area 2: Swampton and environs: The special appearance of this sub-area is derived from the distinctive spatial arrangement of the Bourne Rivulet and its environs. It has meadows to the east and a linear development of historic buildings along the B3048 to the west. The loose grain of the settlement is complemented by the pastoral qualities of the natural environment, giving a semi-rural character.

Area 3: Stoke: Stoke has a varied mix of building types and ages, loosely clustered around, and between, two road junctions. The special historic and visual interest of this sub-area is derived from this historic development pattern and the contribution of a few key buildings. The special appearance of Stoke is also inherently related to its open countryside setting and river valley topography. In addition, there are long range views of the buildings across the valley as seen from the north and south of the village. The penetrating landscape views between buildings, reinforces the traditional rural character.

Area 4: Area between Stoke and Swampton: The special interest of this sub-area is based on the divergence of two roads either side of the river valley, and the sporadic arrangement of small clusters of buildings here. This arrangement creates intimate short range views of the buildings along the verdant hedge-lined roads. The buildings also act as focal points for strategic long-range views across the low lying pasture. The character strongly reflects the traditional rural qualities and minimal development of this area.

Area 5: Area to the south of St Mary Bourne: The special interest of this area is based on the long-range views to a few isolated groups of buildings, which punctuate the otherwise flat and uninterrupted flood plain of the river valley. The character is based on the farmed or natural appearance of the landscape, that dominates the buildings.

Whilst the Conservation Area Appraisal is an important source of information for the conservation area, it should be noted that it is now over 15 years old and, as such, any evidence it provides about condition may no longer be current.

It should be noted that not all of the area's historic environment resource is subject to statutory designations, and non-designated features comprise a large part of what people have contact with as part of daily life – whether at home, work or leisure. For example, although not designated, many buildings and areas are of historic interest, and which are seen as important by local communities. Examples of these in the Neighbourhood Area are likely to include St Mary Bourne's green spaces.

Undesignated actual or potential archaeological finds in the area are also of significance. In this context almost 300 records are listed on Hampshire's Historic Environment Record. Within these are numerous records of prehistoric, Roman and medieval finds. This includes a relatively high percentage of Roman finds and sites. This is mirrored by the presence of the Portway, which runs across the parish and is a Roman road. The route of the road is a key area of potential for sites of archaeological interest, particularly where it crosses the Bourne Rivulet.

An Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) covers the main part of St Mary Bourne village, with a further AHAP covering part of Swampton and the western side of Baptist Hill.

Summary of future baseline

New development areas in the parish have the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of cultural heritage assets. This includes through inappropriate design and layout. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations and Local Plan policies will offer a degree of protection to cultural heritage assets and their settings. Also new development need not be harmful to the significance of a heritage asset; new development may be an opportunity to enhance the setting of an asset and better reveal its significance.

New development has the potential to lead to incremental changes in landscape and townscape character and quality in and around the Neighbourhood Area. This includes from the loss of landscape features and visual impact. There may also be potential effects on landscape/townscape character and quality in the vicinity of the road network due to an incremental growth in traffic flows.

There are likely to be small scale and incremental changes in tranquillity in and around the Neighbourhood Area, affected by changes in the levels of light and noise pollution.

Land, Soil and Water resources

Context

The EU's Soil Thematic Strategy²⁶ presents a strategy for protecting soils resources in Europe. The main aim of the strategy is to minimise soil degradation and limit associated detrimental effects linked to water quality and quantity, human health, climate change, biodiversity, and food safety.

The Water Framework Directive drives a catchment-based approach to water management. In England and Wales there are 100 water catchments and it is Defra's intention is to establish a 'framework for integrated catchment management' across England. The Environment Agency is currently seeking to establish 'Significant Water Management Issues' within catchments with a view to presenting second River Basin Management Plans to ministers in 2015. The plans will seek to deliver the objectives of the WFD namely:

- Enhance the status and prevent the further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands which depend on aquatic ecosystems;
- Promote the sustainable use of water;
- Reduce the pollution of water, especially by 'priority' and 'priority hazardous' substances; and
- Ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance soils. The value of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be taken into account.
- Prevent new or existing development from being 'adversely affected' by the presence of 'unacceptable levels' of soil pollution or land instability and be willing to remediate and mitigate 'despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'.
- Encourage the effective use of land' through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, 'provided that this is not of high environmental value'. Whilst there is no longer a national requirement to build at a minimum density, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to 'set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances'.
- Produce strategic policies to deliver the provision of a variety of infrastructure, including that necessary for water supply

With regards to waste, the NPPF does not contain any specific waste policies as waste planning policy will be published as part of the National Waste Management Plan.

Other key documents at the national level include Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England²⁷, which sets out a vision for soil use in England, and the Water White Paper²⁸, which sets out the Government's vision for a more resilient water sector. It states the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources. In terms of waste management, the Government Review of Waste Policy in England²⁹ recognises that environmental benefits and economic growth can be the result of a more sustainable approach to the use of materials

Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

The Agricultural Land Classification classifies land into five grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are the 'best and most versatile' land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. The agricultural land quality of the plan area has not recently been assessed, but the Provisional Agricultural Land Classification established it as Grade 3 land³⁰. As such it is uncertain whether this land comprises areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land. There are some areas of poorer quality grade 4 land located along the banks of the Bourne Rivulet.

²⁶ European Commission (2006) Soil Thematic Policy [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index_en.htm

²⁷ Defra (2009) Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England [online] available at: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/land/soil/documents/soil-strategy.pdf>

²⁸ Defra (2011) Water for life [online] available at <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm82/8230/8230.pdf>

²⁹ Defra (2011) Government Review of Waste Policy in England [online] available at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13540-waste-policy-review110614.pdf>

³⁰ It should be noted that much of the data is from prior to 1976 when the distinction between Grades 3a and 3b was introduced. The maps are intended for strategic use and Natural England state "these maps are not sufficiently accurate for use in assessment of individual fields or sites and any enlargement could be misleading". A soil survey should be undertaken to verify the actual classification 'on the ground' – see <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/141047?category=2595819>

There is no Household Waste and Recycling Centre in the parish. The nearest are located in Basingstoke at Wade Road and Andover at Walworth Industrial Estate. The Village Shop in St Mary Bourne also acts as a drop off point for recycling.

In relation to water availability, the Test and Itchen Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy³¹ highlights that "The Bourne Rivulet, Dever and Wallop Brook have some of the lowest flows and longest ephemeral stretches of all the major tributaries", and that "their intermittent nature has precluded surface water abstraction in their catchments".

In terms of water quality, Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been defined by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. Reflecting the vulnerability of groundwater in the area to pollution, a Zone 1 SPZ underlays St Mary Bourne village, while a Zone 2 extends up the eastern side of the Neighbourhood Area to the northern boundary of the parish.

The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwaters have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwaters are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination. The whole of the plan area is underlain by a eutrophic and groundwater NVZ.

Summary of future baseline

Due to increasing legislative and regulatory requirements, there are increasing pressures to improve recycling and composting rates and move towards zero waste to landfill. However, the population size and level of development foreseen within the parish is unlikely to impose significant pressures on recycling and waste management facilities within Basingstoke and Deane Borough. Furthermore, Defra's estimation for waste growth shows that national waste growth and estimates of future waste arisings are expected to remain consistent with current levels³². This is because widespread initiatives to reduce waste and improve materials reuse and recycling are likely to reduce long-term production of waste.

Water quality is likely to continue to be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies. Further development also has the potential to increase surface water run-off into the Bourne Rivulet which flows through the parish area. However, the requirements of the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued overall improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area.

Water availability in the wider area may be affected by regional increases in population and an increased occurrence of drought, which is estimated to become increasingly prevalent in the South East, as the effects of climate change take hold.³³

Population and Community

Context

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- To 'boost significantly the supply of housing', local planning authorities should meet the 'full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing' in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
- With a view to creating 'sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities' authorities should ensure provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified.
- In rural areas, when exercising the duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate.

³¹ Environment agency (2013) *Test & Itchen Abstraction licensing strategy* [online] available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289879/LIT_2494_0c58d2.pdf

³² Defra (2015) Provisional Statistics on Waste Managed by Local Authorities in England including April to June 2014.

³³ UK Climate Projections (2009) South East 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/22290>

Authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.

- The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It explains how good design is a key aspect in sustainable development, and how development should improve the quality of the area over its lifetime, not just in the short term. Good architecture and landscaping are important, with the use of design codes contributing to the delivery of high quality outcomes. Design should reinforce local distinctiveness, raise the standard more generally in the area and address the connections between people and places.
- The social role of the planning system involves 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities'.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Ensure that developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Places should contain clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.
- Ensuring that there is a 'sufficient choice of school places' is of 'great importance' and there is a need to take a 'proactive, positive and collaborative approach' to bringing forward 'development that will widen choice in education'.

Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

According to the most recent census data available, in 2011 the total population of St Mary Bourne parish was 1,298³⁴. This was an increase of 72 from the 2001 census, or a 5.5% population growth (see table below). The rate of population growth in the parish during this period was below regional and national comparators, and lower than that of borough averages.

Table: Population growth, 2001-2011³⁵

| Date | St Mary Bourne | Basingstoke & Deane | South East | England |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------|------------|
| 2001 | 1,226 | 152,573 | 8,000,645 | 49,138,831 |
| 2011 | 1,298 | 167,799 | 8,634,750 | 53,012,456 |
| Population Change 2001-2011 | 5.5% | 9.98% | 7.93% | 7.88% |

The Neighbourhood Area has a significantly lower proportion of individuals across the 0-44 age range compared to national, regional and borough averages, with a higher proportion of the 45-59 age group within the Neighbourhood Area than all other comparators. There are 346 people aged 60 or over living in the Neighbourhood Area, which comprises 26.7% of the population. This proportion is higher than Basingstoke and Deane, South-East and England comparators.

Census statistics which measure deprivation across the four 'dimensions' of deprivation³⁶ including: any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick; education (no person in the household has at least level 2 education, and no person aged 16-18 is a full-time student); health and disability (any person in the household has general health 'bad or 'very bad' or has a long term health problem); and housing (household's accommodation is either overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating), show that the parish of St Mary Bourne has significantly more households which are not deprived any dimension than all other comparators. There are also fewer households that are deprived in 1, 2, 3, or 4 dimensions than the borough, regional and national averages.

³⁴ Office for National Statistics (2011) Neighbourhood Statistics [online] available at: <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

³⁵ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Population Density, 2001 (UV02)

³⁶ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Households by Deprivation Dimensions, 2011 (QS119EW)

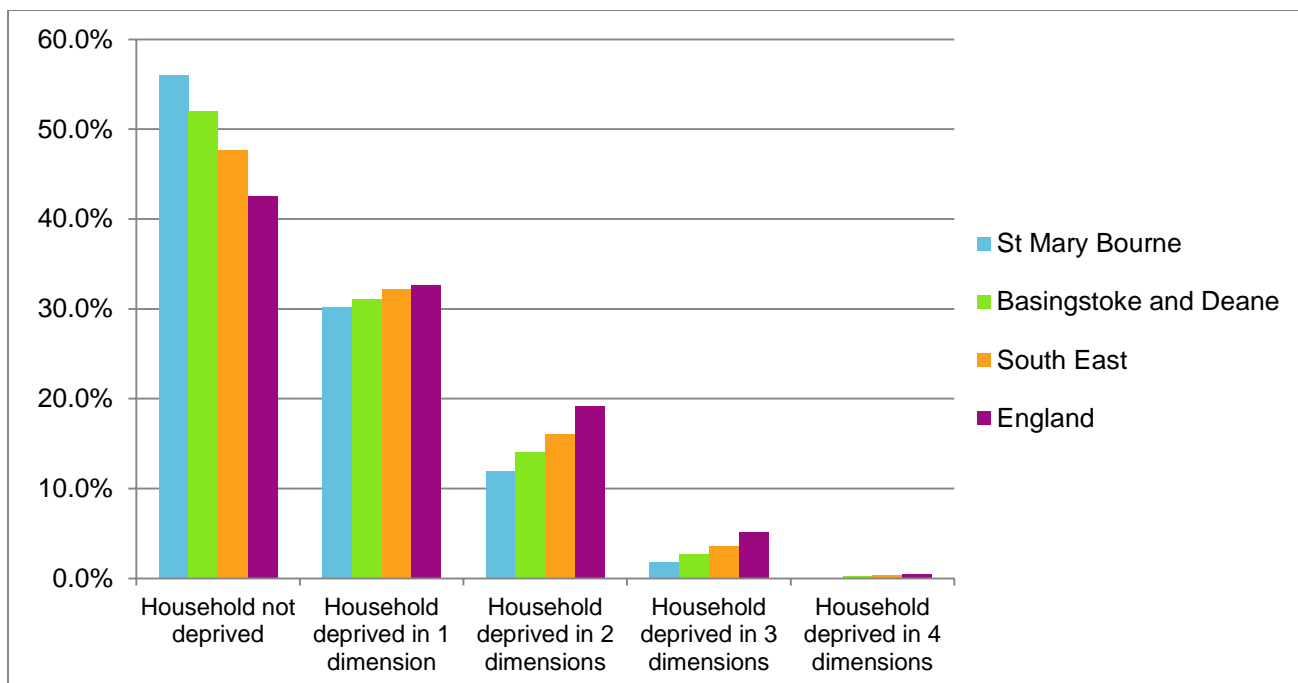


Figure: Relative deprivation dimensions

A broadly similar proportion of the parish’s residents live in housing owned either outright or with a mortgage (68.3% in total) to borough (67.7%) and regional (67.6%) averages. These figures are higher than the national average of 63.3%.

St Mary Bourne Parish has a higher proportion of people that rent privately than at borough level; however this figure is smaller than regional and national averages. The parish has lower proportions of social rented tenures than borough and national averages, with similar levels as South East averages.

In 2013 there were 6,673 households on local authority housing waiting lists in Basingstoke and Deane, an increase of 595 since 2010.³⁷

Health

General health across St Mary Bourne Parish is broadly favourable against all comparators. In this context 54% of people reported that they were in ‘very good’ health³⁸, which is above the comparative averages. The proportion of people in ‘very bad health’ is similar to the borough average, and lower than regional and national averages.

Table: General Health

| | St Mary Bourne | Basingstoke and Deane | South East | England |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------|---------|
| Very Good Health | 54.0% | 50.7% | 49% | 47.2% |
| Good Health | 32.2% | 35.1% | 34.6% | 34.2% |
| Fair Health | 11.0% | 10.8% | 12% | 13.1% |
| Bad Health | 2.2% | 2.7% | 3.4% | 4.2% |
| Very Bad Health | 0.7% | 0.7% | 1 % | 1.2% |

5.2% of residents of St Mary Bourne parish reported that they were limited ‘a lot’ with day to day activities due to long-term health problems or disabilities, with 9.2% or people limited ‘a little’. This is broadly in line with the Basingstoke & Deane average, and significantly more favourable than regional and national averages.

³⁷ DCLG (2012) Statistical data set Live tables on rents, lettings and tenancies. Table 600: numbers of households on local authorities’ housing waiting lists, by district: England 1997 to 2013.

³⁸ ONS (2011) Census 2011, General Health (QS302EW)

No data exists for the Neighbourhood Area for life expectancy and health indicators; however at the borough level the 2014 Health Profile³⁹ shows that life expectancy in Basingstoke and Deane is 80.8 for men and 83.0 for women; slightly above the national average of 79.2 and 83, respectively. Life expectancy is 6.7 years lower for men and 4.7 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Basingstoke and Deane than in the least deprived areas. Local priorities in Basingstoke and Deane include lifestyle risks, healthy ageing, and mental health.

Employment and skills

As the figure below illustrates, economic activity rates in the Neighbourhood Area are broadly in line with regional averages, but lower than borough values.

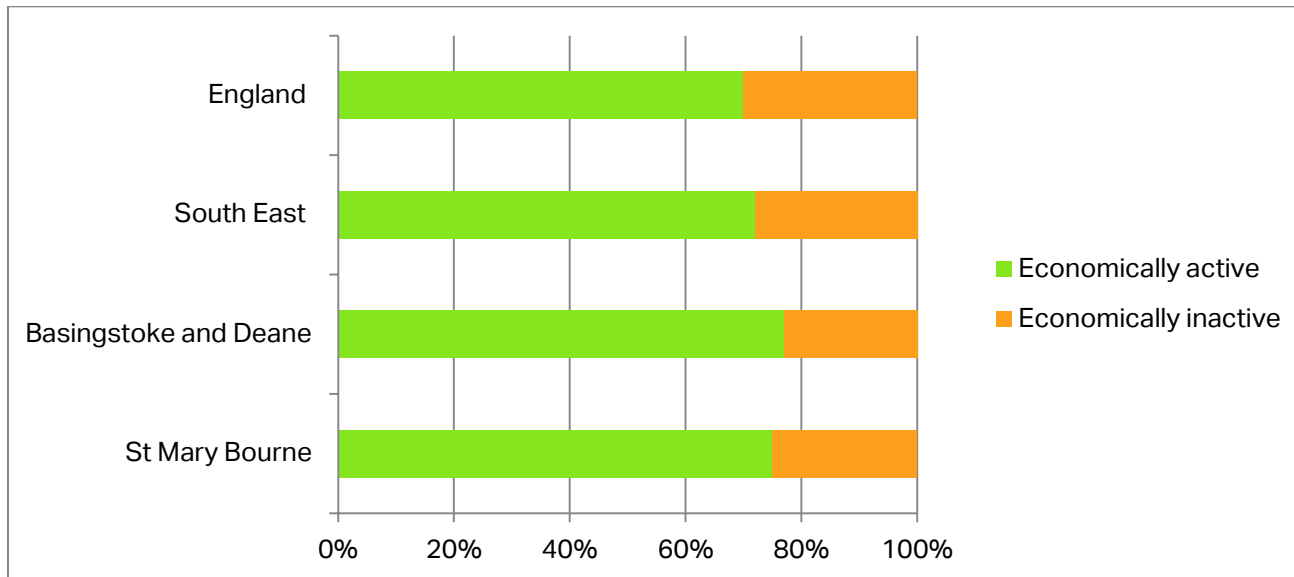


Figure: Percentage of residents aged 16-74 economically active

Rates of full time employment in St Mary Bourne (40%) are lower than across Basingstoke and Deane (47.9%) but are broadly in line with regional (40.5%) and national (38.6%) levels. Rates of part-time employment in St Mary Bourne are lower than the other comparators.

The population of the Neighbourhood Area is generally well qualified, with 37% of residents aged 16 and above having at least a Level 4 Qualification⁴⁰, as shown in the figure below. This is significantly higher than the borough level (30.5%) and regional (29.9%) and national (27.4%) comparators⁴¹. Conversely, fewer people in the parish have no qualifications (15%) than regionally (19.1%) and nationally (22.5%).

³⁹ Public Health England (2014) Health Profile 2014 [online] available at:

<http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=50215&SEARCH=basingstoke%20and%20deane&SPEAR>

⁴⁰ Level 4 and above qualifications cover: Degree (BA, BSc), Higher Degree (MA, PhD, PGCE), NVQ Level 4-5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher Level, Professional Qualifications (Teaching, Nursing, Accountancy).

⁴¹ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Qualifications and Students (KS501EW)

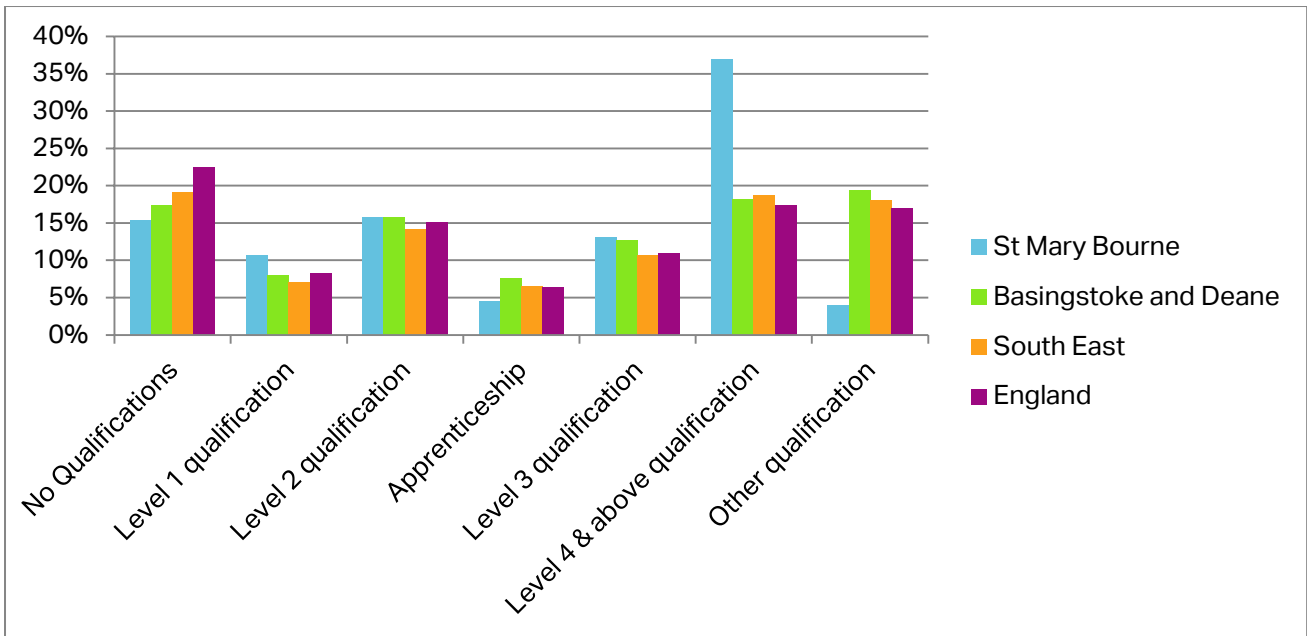


Figure: Highest Level of Qualification⁴²

The figure below shows the occupation of working-age residents. Overall, the occupation profile for St Mary Bourne is broadly aligned with borough, regional and national averages, with some notable exceptions. The Neighbourhood Area has significantly larger proportions of people in 'manager, director and senior official' roles, and significantly fewer in 'sales & customer services' when compared to borough, regional, and national averages.

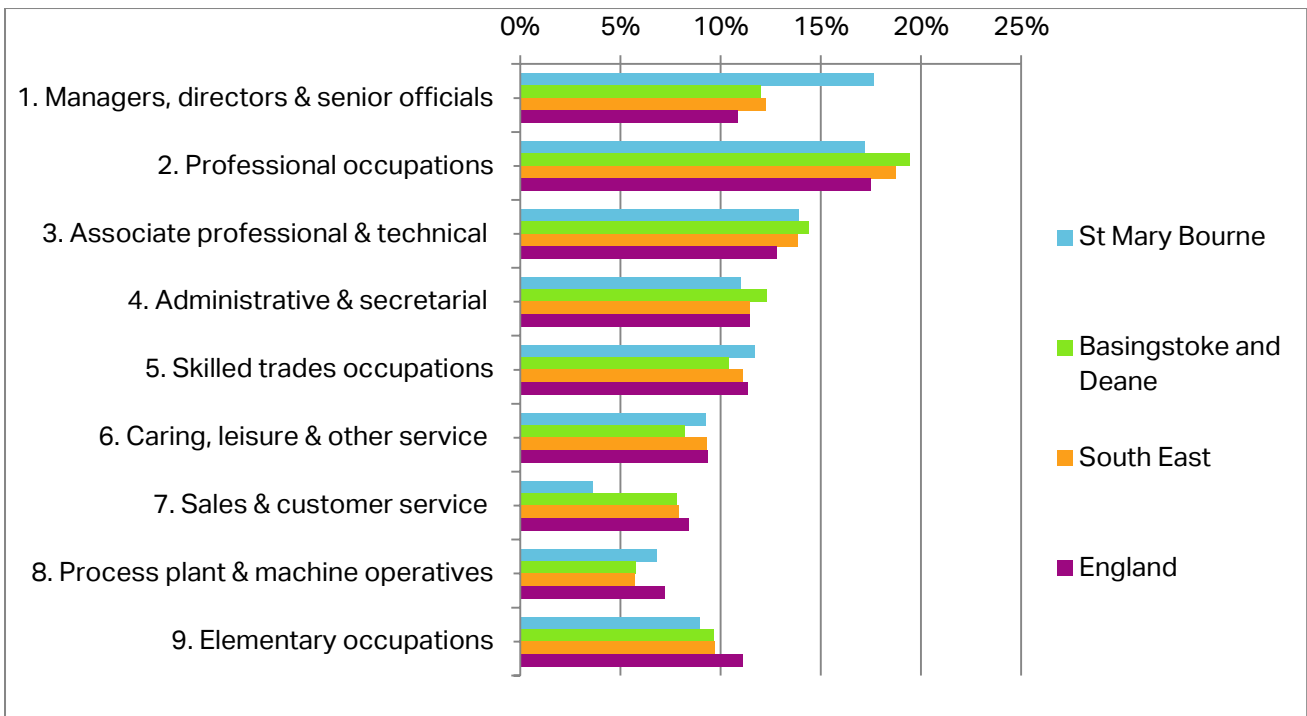


Figure: The occupation of usual residents aged 16 to 74 in employment⁴³

Summary of future baseline

The population of the Neighbourhood Area is likely to continue to grow and age. This will place pressures on existing community facilities, including health services.

The suitability (e.g. size and design) and affordability of housing for local requirements depends on the implementation of appropriate housing policies through the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. Unplanned

⁴² ONS (2011) Census 2011, Highest Level of Qualification (QS501EW)

⁴³ ONS (2011) Occupation 2011 (KS610EW)

development may have wider implications in terms of transport and access to infrastructure, or the natural environment.

Transportation

Context

European and UK transport policies and plans place emphasis on the modernisation and sustainability of the transport network. Specific objectives include reducing pollution and road congestion through improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks and reducing the need to travel. National policy also focuses on the need for the transport network to support sustainable economic growth. The Hampshire Local Transport Plan 2011-31 presents a long term strategy and an implementation plan for the county.

Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Rail network

There is no train station located within the Neighbourhood Area. The nearest station is Whitchurch railway station, which is located approximately 6.5km south east of St Mary Bourne Village.

Whitchurch railway station is located on the London Waterloo to Salisbury / Exeter line, with direct services to London Waterloo (approximately 65 minutes), Andover (8 minutes), Salisbury (29 minutes) and Woking (35 minutes).

Basingstoke station, which is located c.25km from St Mary Bourne village has a wider range of rail services and is located on the main London Waterloo to Southampton / Bournemouth / Weymouth line, the London Waterloo to Salisbury / Exeter line and the Cross Country Trains line to Oxford, Birmingham and the north of England. Direct services include to Winchester (15 minutes), Reading (16 minutes), Woking (18 minutes), Southampton (33 minutes), Salisbury (35 minutes), Oxford (46 minutes), London Waterloo (46 minutes), Bournemouth (1 hour) and Birmingham (c.2hrs).

Bus network

St Mary Bourne is connected to Andover, Enham Alamein, Hurstbourne Tarrant and Longparish via the 'Cango' C3 / C8 bus service operated by Stagecoach. This service runs three times daily. There is no service on bank and public holidays.

Road network and congestion

St Mary Bourne is located west of the A34. Accessed at Litchfield, 6km from St Mary Bourne village, the A34 is the main north-south trunk road from the Midlands (via the M40) to the South Coast (via the M3). The A34 also provides the Neighbourhood Area with good connections to the M4 and the A303.

The main route through the Neighbourhood Area is the B3048. This joins the B3400 to the south (which in turn connects with Whitchurch and Basingstoke to the east, and Andover the west) and the A338 in the north (which connects with Andover and Highclere).

There are existing community concerns as to road safety on the Egbury approach road to St Mary Bourne village.

Availability of cars and vans

The figure below highlights the availability of cars and vans in the Neighbourhood Area. The proportion of households with no access to a car/van is significantly lower than borough, regional, and national averages, whilst the proportion of the population with two or more cars/vans is significantly higher. The proportion of households with three or more vehicles is also higher than all comparators, as is those households with four or more. High car ownership in the Neighbourhood Area reflects the parish's rural nature, limited public transport and relative affluence.

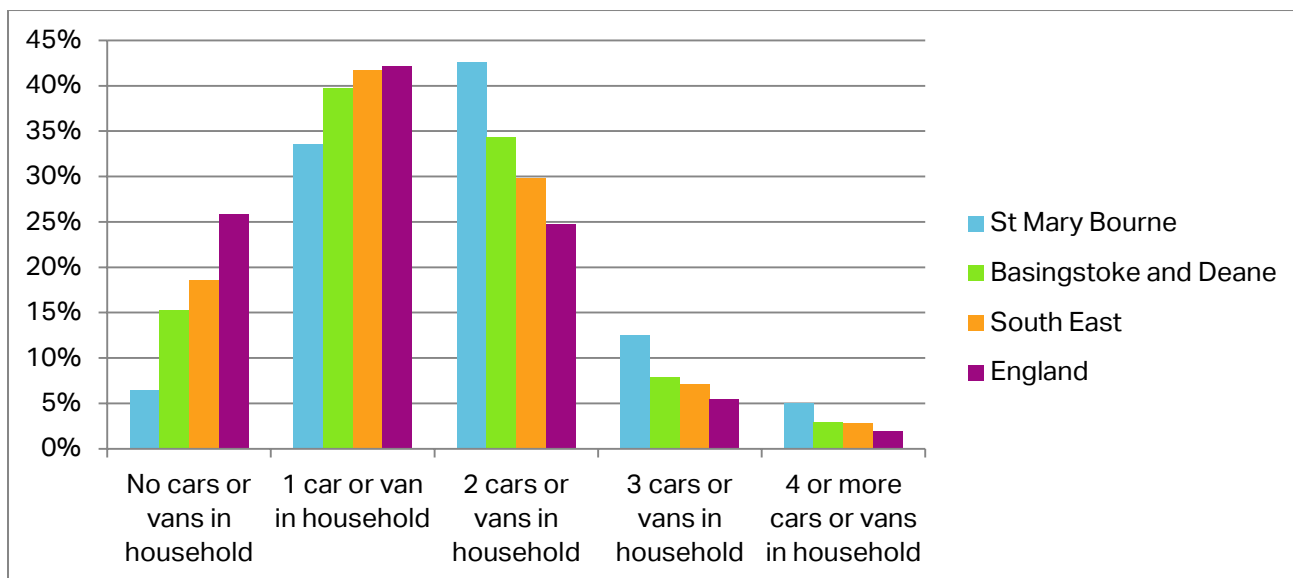


Figure: Car and van ownership⁴⁴

Travel to work

The figure below shows the method of travel to work for residents in the Neighbourhood Area, compared with borough, regional and England averages. As highlighted by the figure, the proportion of people who travel to work driving a car or van is slightly lower than borough values but significantly higher than regional and national comparators. A lower proportion of people travel to work by bicycle or on foot than all other comparable areas. In contrast a considerably higher proportion of St Mary Bourne residents work from home when compared to borough, regional, and national averages.

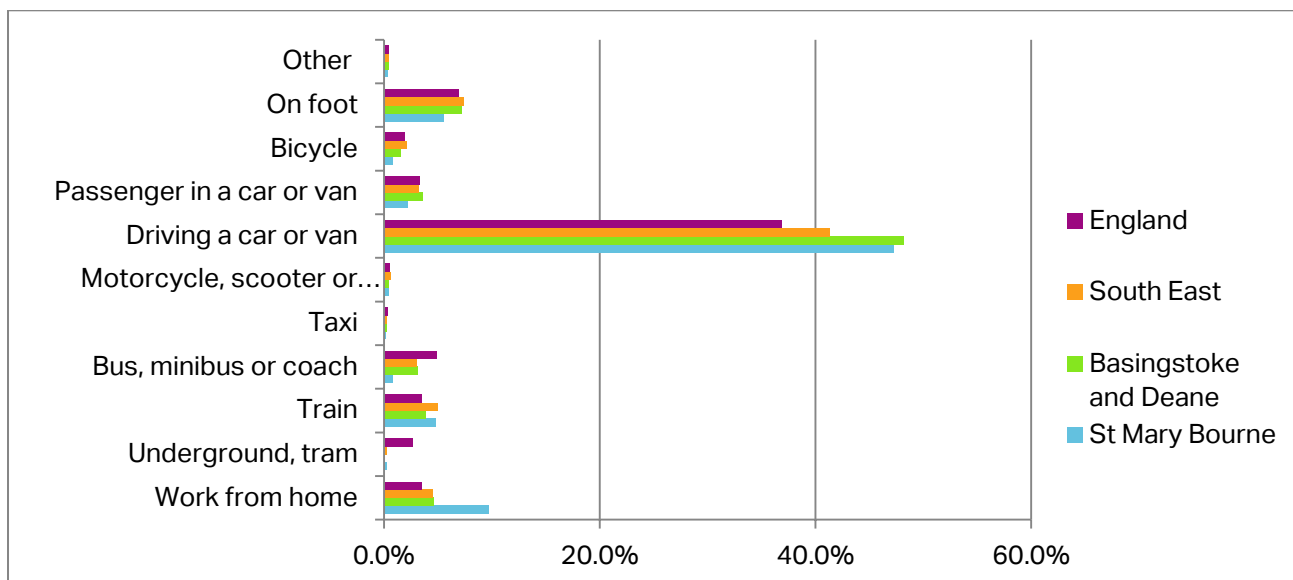


Figure: Method of Travel to Work⁴⁵

Summary of future baseline

An increase in the Neighbourhood Area’s population has the potential to lead to increased traffic and congestion. This has the potential to be at least in part mitigated by measures outlined in the Local Plan and the Hampshire Local Transport Plan.

A considerable proportion of St Mary Bourne residents work from home and this may be supported through measures such as increased provision of high speed broadband internet, and other infrastructure which will support working from home.

The viability of additional bus and rail services may be supported by future population growth. However bus service viability may be undermined by potential cuts to funding.

⁴⁴ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Car or Van Availability (QS416EW)

⁴⁵ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Method of Travel to Work (QS701EW)

Appendix B SEA Framework

| Environmental theme | SEA Objective | Assessment questions Will the option/proposal help to... |
|---|--|---|
| Biodiversity | Protect, and where possible enhance all biodiversity features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect, and where possible, enhance the integrity of the Stoke Down SINC? • Protect and enhance priority habitats, and the habitat of priority species? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks in the parish? |
| Climate change | Promote climate change mitigation in St Mary Bourne | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Reduce the need to travel? • Promote use of energy from low carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption and increase efficiency? |
| | Support the resilience of St Mary Bourne to the potential effects of climate change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that no development takes place in areas at higher risk of flooding, taking into the likely effects of climate change into account? • Sustainably manage water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? |
| Historic environment and landscape | Protect, maintain and enhance St Mary Bourne's cultural heritage resource, including its historic environment and archaeological assets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, and where possible, enhance cultural heritage assets and their settings? • Conserve, and where possible, enhance the St Mary Bourne Conservation Area? • Protect the historic settlement patterns of the village and hamlets in the Neighbourhood Area? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? |
| | Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the integrity of the North Wessex Downs AONB? • Conserve and enhance landscape and townscape features? |
| Land, water and soil resources | Ensure the efficient use of land. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of previously developed land where possible? |
| | Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of waste produced? • Move waste up the waste hierarchy? • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction? |

| Environmental theme | SEA Objective | Assessment questions Will the option/proposal help to... |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| | Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, minimise impact on, and enhance the quality of the Bourne Rivulet and other local water bodies? • Minimise water consumption? • Minimize the risk to groundwater SPZs? |
| Population and community | Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve equality of access to local, high-quality community services and facilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of a range of high quality, accessible community, cultural and leisure facilities? • Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? |
| | Provide a range of housing types appropriate for the local community including; affordable housing and starter homes, specialist housing for older persons, and a mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that best use is made of the existing housing stock? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities? |
| | Improve the health and wellbeing of the parish's residents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities for all age groups? • Encourage healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities? • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards? • Improve access to the countryside for recreation? |
| | Enhance the vitality of the Neighbourhood Area and access to employment opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance the community offer of St Mary Bourne and the range of services and facilities available? • Provide access to employment opportunities and improve access to those which are already available (e.g. facilitate working from home/ improve transport access)? |
| Transportation | Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development? • Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel? • Enable transport infrastructure improvements? • Facilitate working from home and remote working? |

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