

**Eastleigh Borough Local Plan:
Proposed Main Modifications consultation**



Consultation 9 June – 21 July 2021

Consultation form

The Council is inviting responses on the Main Modifications to the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan. These will be considered by the Local Plan Inspector as part of the examination in the Local Plan.

The Main Modifications documents and further information on the Local Plan is available at www.eastleigh.gov.uk/localplan2016-2036

Part A – Contact details

Your address/ other contact details will be treated as confidential. However, please note that your name and your comments will be open to view by the general public.

Who is making this representation?

Name:

.....

Organisation (if you are commenting on behalf of an organisation):

.....

.....

E-mail

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Address:

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Telephone (optional):

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Part B - Representation

Name/Organisation Name:

.....

What are you responding to?

Document:		Reference:
Main Modification Schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Proposed Policy Map changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainability Appraisal Addendum	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Habitats Regulations Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Do you support or object (tick box)? Support Object

Is the Main Modification legally compliant (tick box)? Yes No

Is the Main Modification sound (tick box)? Yes No

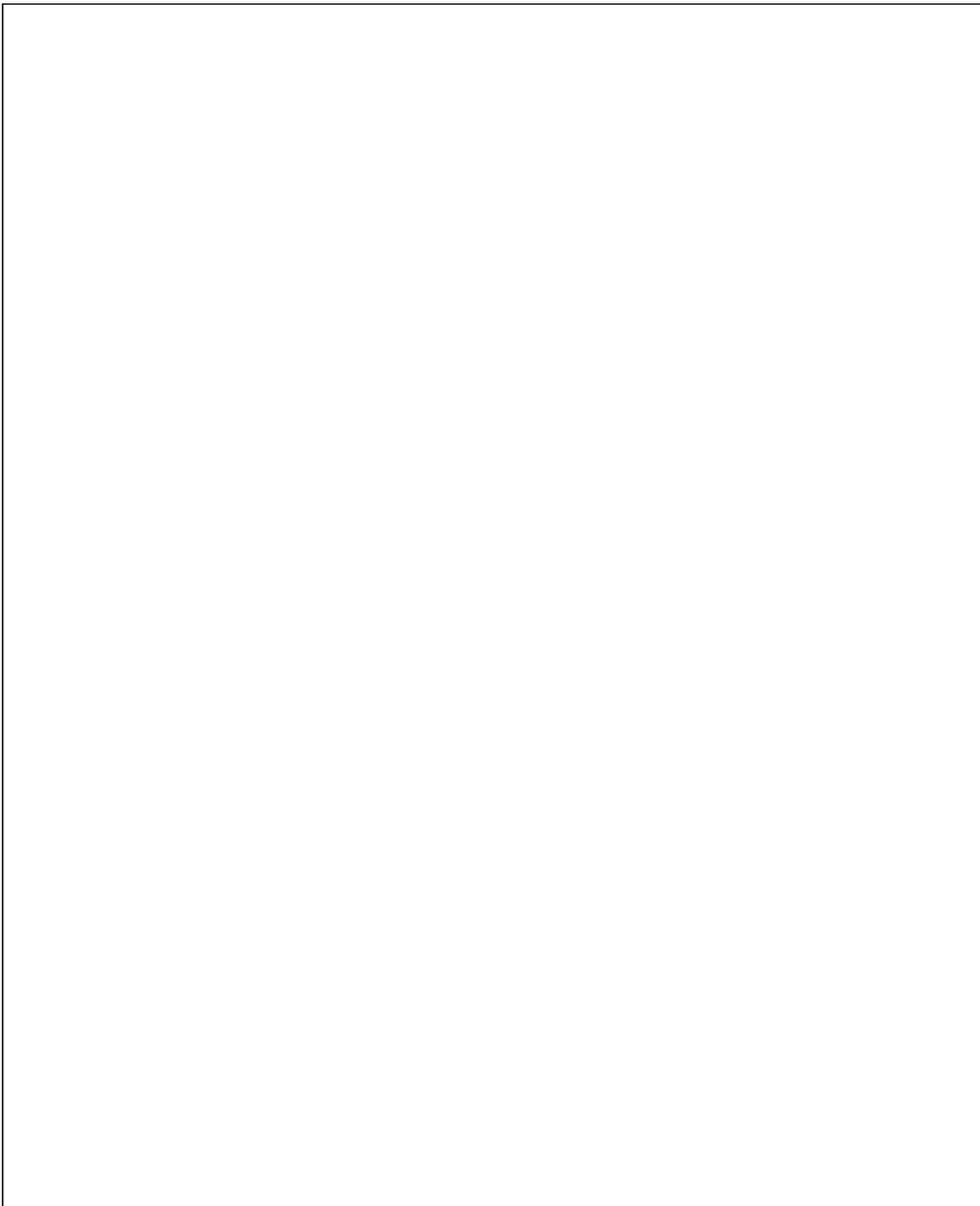
If you do not consider the Local Plan to be sound, please specify on what grounds (tick all that apply):

Positively prepared Justified Effective Consistent with National Policy

Response to the Main Modification

Please explain your comments, including any changes you think are necessary and revised wording (continue overleaf/attach further sheets if necessary)

Response continued



Please return this form by 21 July 2021

You can e-mail it to: localplan@eastleigh.gov.uk

Or return it to: Local Plan Team, Eastleigh Borough Council, Eastleigh House,
Upper Market Street, Eastleigh, SO50 9YN

EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2016-2036 EXAMINATION
MAIN MODIFICATIONS, POLICY MAP MODIFICATIONS, SUSTAINABILITY
APPRAISAL ADDENDUM AND EXAMINATION DOCUMENTS
CONSULTATION STATEMENT
MILLER HOMES
JULY 2021



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This response to consultation is submitted on behalf of Miller Homes Ltd (Miller) in respect to the current Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) Local Plan 2016-2036 Main Modifications. Miller continues to strongly object to the plan on the basis that it is not legally compliant or sound, on account of:

- Failure to allocate the necessary additional housing sites (including affordable) to meet the substantial shortfall (131 dpa) against the plan's identified need
- The flawed and biased approach to identifying housing sites, which means significant question marks remain over the sustainability and deliverability of the proposed allocations
- The continued disproportionate and inconsistent use of settlement gap policy, and flaws with the additional Settlement Gap Study
- Substantial deficiencies with the Sustainability Appraisal, including an inequitable approach to site assessment.

1.2 The first phase of examination hearings was held during November 2019 and January 2020. Following this, the appointed Planning Inspector outlined initial conclusions (ED71) including relation to the SGO, housing trajectory and settlement gaps.

1.3 Accordingly, EBC has reviewed its position and updated and supplemented the evidence base, and is now running a consultation on the following:

- Proposed Main Modifications (MM) to the draft plan
- Policy maps
- Sustainability Appraisal Addendum
- Habitat Regulations Assessment
- Updated and new examination documents
- Additional modifications.

1.4 Miller is continuing to promote land to the north of Hedge End rail station, on the edge of the built-up area and in a general location demonstrated (through the many allocations and permissions in the vicinity) to be sustainable for residential growth (Appendix 1). As outlined in Miller's examination matter statement submissions, the land forms part of the 'strategic development area' previously allocated in the South East Plan. This development area is already part implemented with much of the land having been granted planning permission or allocated. Collectively, these permitted / allocated developments will provide over 3,000 homes together with a wide and comprehensive range of services and infrastructure, as confirmed in the matter statements.

1.5 The additional site is in a demonstrably sustainable location; to the west of Boorley Green (north east of Hedge End) and directly adjacent to Hedge End railway station. The location of the site, fully accords with government guidance that housing provision should be maximised around train stations and sustainable transport hubs. This would be consistent with, and support, proposed policy HE6 (ED33).

2.0 Main Modifications

- 2.1 Miller welcomes the Inspector's findings following the initial examination. However, they strongly object to the proposal to progress the plan to adoption with a substantial shortfall in deliverable and sustainable housing sites. The Inspector has suggested in the post hearing note (ED71, paragraph 42) that the shortfall could be identified through a review of the plan as a pragmatic way forward. However, EBC has not made rapid progress to address matters, and a five year review process from later this year, following potential point of adoption, would now take the new plan base-date to April 2027. The shortfall, is substantially higher and the shortfall arises earlier, leaving the position untenable. As shown below, the time period for adoption of a five-year review plan lies now beyond the time at which planned delivery of sites, to meet the need, is at risk of not meeting need. At that time, reliance would then be placed yet again on speculative applications and the early release of emerging (untested) allocations.
- 2.2 To support the case, Miller would point to EBC's poor track record in progressing a new plan, the history of undersupply against a much lower housing OAN, their dismal record of delivering affordable housing and their flawed and biased approach to site selection, further highlighted by the lack of robust evidence supporting the submitted plan (as exposed during the examination process).
- 2.3 The matters now raised, and additional evidence submitted, do need careful examination and Miller considers that the retrospective fitting of evidence, including with respect to settlement gaps, does justify further hearing sessions to explore whether the gap policy should remain or, on the basis of an unjustifiable and inconsistent approach to the designations, be deleted.
- 2.4 Further, and in any event, given the time that has passed and ongoing gap in allocations to meet the need, Miller considers that there is a real risk the housing needs of Eastleigh Borough will not be met. We understand that it is desirable to put a plan in place, but the reality is that almost all of the allocations have been granted consent already and therefore the plan takes provision no further forward. It would be better at this point in time, if the current plan is to progress, to make additional housing allocations.
- 2.5 Miller continues to have concerns with the evidence base surrounding housing need and the housing trajectory as well as the continued biased and unjustified approach to site selection, including the inconsistent application of settlement gap policy and Sustainability Assessment (SA) scoring. Miller respectfully does not consider that the plan can be found sound.

Strategic Growth Option (MM13 and MM14)

- 2.6 Miller welcomes the Inspector's conclusions on the SGO and its associated link road, and EBC's removal of draft policies S5 and S6 as outlined in MM13 and MM14. These modifications are fully supported.
- 2.7 However, the removal of the SGO will lead to a shortfall of 2,614 homes (130.7dpa) against the plan's overall housing need. Given the LPA's poor track record with housing delivery and bringing forward sound plans, Miller does not consider it a

sound approach to progress the plan on the basis of the LPA identifying further sites through a 5-year review process post adoption.

- 2.8 The examination identified that the LPA’s approach to identifying the SGO was both flawed and biased. Miller considers that this approach is also the case in respect to wider proposed site allocations, inclusive of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which should be examined now, with sites identified to meet the housing shortfall, in order to be certain that the plan is sound and deliverable.

Housing need and trajectory (MM10, MM11, MM13)

- 2.9 MM10 relates to strategic policy S2 (approach to new development) and sets out the policy and revised housing supply figures for the plan period. Paragraph 4.11 sets out that the pattern of delivery proposed results in a shortfall of 2,614 dwellings (18% of the OAN) against a target of 14,580. This equates to 130.7 dpa and would result in a significant shortfall if left to accrue.

- 2.10 Moreover, it is now too late to leave this position to be redressed through a five-year review. Had the Council acted quickly on the post hearing actions there may have been time, but this is no longer the case. The section below demonstrates the point, relative to the point in time when a five year housing land supply shortfall arises (in 2026, before a new local plan would be adopted under a five-year review process).

- 2.11 The risk is further highlighted, if there is no policy requirement to review (i.e. only a mention in the supporting text) and no policy consequence, in terms of site review if a review is not progressed. There is a need for a policy leading to the release of additional sustainable sites, on the edge of the urban area, in circumstances where a review has not taken place.

- 2.12 This position is highlighted by the updated trajectory (ED101) which confirms that there will be a five year supply shortfall emerging at a point before a five-year review plan would be adopted (say 1 April 2027 – just over five years from now). The below table highlights the position at 1 April 2026 (using the EBC’s assumptions regarding delivery), confirming that there would be a significant and substantial five-year HLS shortfall at 1 April 2026, a year before the next plan (under the five year review) would be adopted.

Trajectory position at 1 April 2026:

Requirement	
5x729	3,645
Surplus (delivered pre 1 April 2026)	914
Sum	2,7331
Plus 5%	2,868
Completions per annum	
2026/27	784
2027/28	522
2028/29	375

2029/30	345
2030/31	325
Total	2351
Supply	-516.55
HLS	4.09 years

2.13 In short, the position can no longer be left to plan review, if a plan-led approach is to be put in place in Eastleigh Borough. The situation should be addressed now, through allocation of sites or a permissive policy towards the release of additional sites in sustainable locations adjacent to the urban area.

2.14 Further, MM11 and strategic policy S3 (location of new housing) appear to be in conflict with EBC's evidence base. Specifically, draft policy S3, section 1a, lists the sites that will deliver 5,960 homes against the identified need set out in policy S2. When comparing the housing numbers listed in draft policy S3 with Table 4 of ED101 (EBC Housing Supply update July 2020), it appears that there is a shortfall of 336 net available dwellings, as set out in the table below. If this is the case, the sites listed in draft policy S3, section 1a, are in fact only capable of delivering 5, 624 dwellings, meaning that the plan's housing shortfall is even greater. Miller considers that this reinforces the need for the Inspector to fully review the housing numbers and allocated sites now, as well as requiring EBC to clarify the full extent of the housing shortfall and identify appropriate sites to address this need.

Policy S3 against Table 4 of ED101 (EBC Housing Supply update July 2020):

Site	Policy allocation (from draft policy S3, MM11)	Table 4 ED101 Net available dwellings	Difference
South of Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh at Stoneham Park	1,150	1,131	-19
West of Horton Heath	1,500	1,400	-100
West of Woodhouse Lane, Hedge End	605	605	0
Land north and east of Boorley Green and Botley	1,400	1,190	-210
Land north-west of Hedge End Station	680	680	0
Land at Pembers Hill Farm	250	243	-7
Land north and east of Winchester Street (Uplands Farm)	375	375	0
Total	5,960	5,624	-336

2.15 Miller's lack of confidence in EBC's housing numbers is further supported with reference to the site to the north and east of Winchester Street (Uplands Farm), which is proposed to deliver 375 homes. Within draft policy S3, section 1 part a (vii), the site is referred to as a strategic site with planning permission. However, this is not the case and planning permission is yet to be achieved (O/18/83698). This

reduces, somewhat, the certainty that this site can be relied upon to deliver the quantum suggested.

- 2.16 Further the land west of Horton Heath (1,400 homes) and west of Woodhouse Lane (605 homes) are yet to receive reserved matters consent. There is therefore currently no certainty that the 2,005 homes proposed across both sites can be achieved as the sites have not been subject to detailed design through the reserved matters process to establish the final development quantum.
- 2.17 The revisions to draft policies S2 and S3 as set out within MM10 and MM11 are unhelpful in the way they present the housing numbers across the policies and within the housing trajectory table. Whilst the numbers achieve the same totals, they are not easily comparable. It is also important to note that the housing trajectory date is based from April 2019, which is over two years old and does not appear to align with the most up to date trajectory data provided within EBC's Five-Year Housing Land Supply statement (May 2021).
- 2.18 If these levels of uncertainty and inconsistencies are still apparent within the draft plan and associated evidence base, then Miller considers that there is a pressing need for the Inspector to further examine the robustness of the housing numbers and proposed allocations. Greater flexibility and resilience is required, through additional allocations.
- 2.19 Miller would also like to highlight that the references to Land north-east of Hedge End Station (680 dwellings) in section 1 part a (v) of MM11 and within Table 2 (strategic sites with planning permission) should be referred to as 'Land to the north west of Boorley Green' as per Table 4 of ED101. There is also a mistake in Table 4 of ED101 for this site (site ref. 0348), as it states that development has not started when in fact the planning permission has been implemented, and housing delivery is due commence from 2022. The landowners have received a letter of comfort from EBC confirming the position re implementation. Table 2 within MM11 should also be updated to take account of this.

Affordable housing (MM10)

- 2.20 MM10 sets out that the council will support the provision of an average of 200 (net) new affordable dwellings per annum as part the overall net additional homes provided each year from 2016 to 2036 (4,000 affordable homes over the plan period). This is up from 165dpa originally proposed in the draft plan, which was based on a previous OAN figure.
- 2.21 The ORS 'Assessment of Affordable Housing Update July 2020' (ED102) calculates affordable housing need 2016-2036 using the OAN of 729 dwellings per year, which now aligns with the target set in the emerging local plan, and identifies an average need of 200 dpa.
- 2.22 However, this only equates to 27% of the overall housing total, which does not align with EBC's 35% affordable housing requirement. If basing on the draft policy requirement, 5,103 affordable homes would be needed over the plan period, which equated to 255 dpa. This failure to meet the 35% affordable housing target will result in a shortfall of 1,103 affordable homes over the plan period (55 dpa). Accordingly, Miller sees no reason as to why the draft plan should not be looking to deliver 255 affordable dwellings per year. This demonstrates the plan's deficiencies

and shows that it has not been positively prepared to meet affordable housing requirements.

- 2.23 Further, the ORS 2020 update confirms that the figure is a net need and assumes that the level of housing benefit remains constant, so any losses from the current stock (such as demolition or clearance, or sales through Right to Buy) would further increase the number of affordable dwellings required by an equivalent amount. The ORS 2020 update implies that a higher level of gross need is required on new sites to ensure the target is met.
- 2.24 The ORS 2020 update rightly confirms that not every site in Eastleigh will be capable of delivering affordable housing. In light of this, and in order to meet the plan's proposed target of 200 dpa, it is important to note that the update outlines that a level of provision greater than 27% will be needed on the sites that are capable of delivering affordable housing.
- 2.25 Data relating to affordable housing completions and the proportion of net completions between 2011 and 2020 was provided by EBC as part of their Statement of Case for the appeal at land south of Maddoxford Lane and west of Westfield (APP/W1715/W/20/3265838). It shows that EBC has met or exceeded the 35% target in 3 of the last 5 years (years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20) and that the emerging target of 200 dpa was achieved. However, between 2012/13 to 2016/17 EBC's affordable housing target was not met and highlights significant historic under delivery, with the average rate from 2012/13 through to 2019/20 being just 24%. This is well below the 35% requirement and shows that on average EBC has also failed to meet its latest 27% figure for affordable housing.
- 2.26 Miller therefore considers that the future delivery of affordable housing is highly uncertain. Past delivery has fluctuated considerably, and the delivery of a high number of affordable homes one year does not guarantee this will continue for future years. The supply of affordable housing is affected by local market factors, including the number of sites with planning permission as well as wider national factors including availability of public funding.
- 2.27 EBC's Housing Supply Update (ED101) sets out a revised housing trajectory table including five-year land supply calculation (April 2019 base date), with large commitment sites outlined at Table 4 (p.13) and sites subject to resolution to grant planning permission at and post 1 April 2019 at Table 5 (p.27).
- 2.28 Appendix 2 of this report sets out the affordable housing contributions from each of the sites included at Tables 4 and 5 of ED101. It identifies that out of the 58 large sites included in the forward supply, 25 do not meet the target for 35% and 15 of these are not providing any affordable housing at all. Two sites exceeded the target (with 40% contributions) and seven sites provided an off-site financial contribution.
- 2.29 The permissions for the Table 4 site commitments total 2,784 affordable housing units. This total increases to 2,956 affordable units when including the applications with a resolution to grant in Table 5, well under the lowest level of identified need of 4,000 homes and highest level of need of 9,060 dwellings identified within the 2016 OAHN update (HOU003). Miller therefore concludes that without the release of additional greenfield sites affordable need will not be met.

- 2.30 Whilst the above housing supply figures are based upon the data provided within ED101, it should be noted that there are inconsistencies between the housing land supply table provided within ED101 and the supply table provided within EBC's latest five-year housing land supply statement (May 2021). It is questionable, therefore, as to why EBC did not update ED101 to reflect the latest data ahead of the current consultation.
- 2.31 Overall, the totals for affordable housing contributions from permissions and applications with a resolution to grant within EBC's five-year housing land supply now fall even further short of the latest identified need, which as already highlighted does not reflect the total need over the plan period. The shortfall demonstrates an ongoing need for more affordable housing in the borough and this is an issue that should not be ignored.

Settlement gaps (MM27 and associated map)

- 2.32 The Inspector outlines in ID27 significant concerns relating to settlement gaps, specifically, the supporting evidence base, the approach to site selection and the detailed policy wording. The Inspector concludes in paragraph 32 that there is a need for a further detailed paper on settlement gaps to address the plan's significant shortcomings on this matter.
- 2.33 EBC has produced a Settlement Gap Study (SGS) (ED84) which seeks to address the fundamental concerns identified. MM27 sets out the revisions to the draft settlement gap policy (S6), which states that development within a settlement gap will be permitted provided that:
- a. it would not diminish the physical extent and/or visual separation of settlements; and*
 - b. it would not have an urbanising effect detrimental to:*
 - i. The character of the countryside; or*
 - ii. The separate identity of the adjoining settlements.*
- 2.34 The proposed settlement gaps are also identified in the draft policy, and the land being promoted by Miller to the north of Hedge End falls within the Hedge End - Horton Heath Gap. No changes have been made to this proposed gap as a result of the further study undertaken (ED84).
- 2.35 Miller has undertaken a detailed review (Appendix 3) of the SGS (ED84), and does not consider the study to represent a robust and appropriate response to the concerns set out by the Inspector in ED71. Significantly, the policy is clear that the gap is between Horton Heath and Hedge End, yet the study refers to a gap between Horton Heath, Boorley Green and Hedge End. The starting point in itself is wrong, and perversely the gap study concludes that land between Hedge End and the Winchester Road (not even between Hedge End and Boorley Green) is more important as part of the gap than land actually located between Hedge End and Horton Heath – the named gap (e.g. D3, D4 & D5, all of which are proposed to be removed from the gap). Meanwhile, land not falling between the named settlements, (e.g. parcels D11, D10, D15 & D16) are considered as being more important on the basis of their contribution to visual and physical separation. This cannot possibly be the case.

- 2.36 Specifically, it is considered that there are limitations and shortcomings in the methodology adopted. The study is not considered to be robust or fully transparent on account of its approach to defining the criteria and evaluating the settlement gaps having a number of significant anomalies.
- 2.37 Miller's ongoing concerns relating the proposed settlement gap policy, and its application, remain. As with EBC's approach to site assessment within the SA, Miller considers that the settlement gap policy is being used as an anti-development and anti-growth tool that with prejudice specific sites. It is also important to remind the Inspector that EBC has a long track record of disregarding its own gap policies to support development. Given this context, it is unclear why a gap policy is needed in addition to the draft countryside policy (policy S7).
- 2.38 The settlement gap map included in MM27 continues to demonstrate that it is possible and acceptable to have relatively small and narrow settlement gaps, and the additional evidence document (ED84) does nothing to justify the need for such a large settlement gap between Hedge End and Horton Heath in comparison to other locations. The land to the north of Hedge End offers a suitable and sustainable location for housing, against a shortfall of housing sites, where an appropriately sized green settlement gap could be achieved in perpetuity. As such, Miller does not conclude that the Inspector's significant concerns have been addressed by ED84.

Settlement hierarchy (MM4, MM5, MM7, MM8 and MM9)

- 2.39 Miller considers that the LPA's application of the settlement hierarchy remains flawed. As with the ongoing inconsistent proposals for settlement gaps, certain settlements have been assigned lower status within the hierarchy to prejudice the development of sustainable and deliverable housing sites.
- 2.40 MM4 and MM5 includes criteria for determining the distribution of development. Section B of MM5 states:
- "The borough's settlement hierarchy should be the main consideration in making decisions about the spatial distribution of new development to ensure that development is located in areas which provide the widest range of employment opportunities, community facilities and transport infrastructure and in order to support, enhance and reinvigorate those areas"*
- 2.41 Miller continues to consider that this highlights the flawed and unsound approach to identifying sustainable housing sites, on the basis that settlements have and continue to be incorrectly allocated.
- 2.42 MM8 clarifies that Boorley Green is classified as a category 4 settlement, being a settlement with a more limited range of services and facilities. MM7 proposes the inclusion of a new paragraph to explain the position in respect to settlement hierarchies, and states that the hierarchy will be updated in future local plans to reflect Boorley Green and Horton Heath's respective growth. MM9 proposes to add a footnote to Table 1 to state that the development planned or under construction will affect Boorley Green and Horton Heath's position in the settlement hierarchy, when this development is delivered.

- 2.43 Whilst Miller considers this is a sensible approach for Horton Heath, given that this proposed development site is yet to commence, the approach remains incorrect for Boorley Green. As outlined in Miller's examination responses and Regulation 19 statement (EBCLP-FW-U), as well as within paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5 above, the Boorley Green context has already changed. It is quite clear looking at satellite imagery, as well as the Defra MAGIC map application, that a substantial amount of the Boorley Park development is complete. This is also reflected on EBC's own website press release (6 July 2021) which celebrates the completion and opening of a new play park and MUGA within the Botley Park development, that will also be used by the in situ Boorley Park Primary School. In addition to this, the Boorley Gardens development (ref: O/15/75953, RM/17/81628, RM/18/84466, RM/19/86658) for a further 680 homes, has been implemented with development coming forward from 2022.
- 2.44 This clearly highlights that Boorley Green is already a level 3 settlement, and should be listed as such in Table 1.

LUC Sustainability Appraisal addendum

- 2.45 Miller is extremely pleased to note that the Inspector shares a number of their concerns in respect to the sustainability work; in particular that the assessment of the reasonable alternatives and possible mitigation measures has not been undertaken on a comparable basis, specifically in relation to the issue of settlement gaps (paragraph 40, ED71). It is a positive outcome that the Inspector's concerns over the inadequate consideration of the alternative options within the SA have led to the deletion of policies S5 and S6 relating to the SGO, as its justification was considered to be insufficiently robust (paragraph 41, ED71).
- 2.46 Whilst the Inspector's identification of the SA's significant flaws is heartening, due to the scope of the examination undertaken to date, they are considered in only in the context of the SGO. The evidence presented by Miller Homes in its Regulation 18, 19 and examination statements clearly demonstrate that the same fundamental inconsistencies in the assessment approach also occurred at the site assessment and selection stage of the SA process. As such, the justification for the specific housing sites allocated within the draft local plan is likewise insufficiently robust and must be reviewed prior to adoption and allocation. There is currently no certainty that the sites allocated and proposed to deliver a significant proportion of the plan's housing need are sustainably located, deliverable or will provide the quantum suggested in draft policies S2 and S3.
- 2.47 It is noted that the Inspector identified that the deleted SGO policies would result in a shortfall of housing numbers and uncertainty in housing supply, especially during the latter years of the plan period (paragraph 42, ED71). The Inspector goes on to suggest that given legislation requires a review of the plan to take place within 5 years from date of adoption, the housing supply position could be addressed at this point. As already outlined, Miller has a number of serious concerns with this approach. In respect to the SA, this centres on the fact that the biased approach to site selection cannot be adequately addressed at the 5-year review point.
- 2.48 If the current local plan is adopted, any subsequent site allocation process is likely to be based on the current SA which underpins the local plan process, as the presumption would be that the SA process was sound. However, the SA approach

to the assessment process has been shown to be biased and subjective (as confirmed by the Inspector), thus any sustainable and deliverable sites which had erroneously been scored poorly in the site assessment process, such as the land north of Hedge End, would be heavily prejudiced at the 5-year review stage. It is therefore highly questionable as to whether any 5-year review and further site allocations would be sufficiently robust and justified. The only way to ensure a sound and deliverable plan, is to progress further examination now, including a full review of the SA. The LUC SA Addendum does not deal with all of these issues, and therefore further full review is needed.

Strategic Policy S1 – delivering sustainable development (MM6)

- 2.49 Miller objects to the proposed revisions to strategic policy S1, on the basis that EBC's definition of sustainable development far exceeds that set out in the NPPF (2012).

Policy HH1 – land west of Horton Heath (MM73)

- 2.50 The land to the west of Horton Heath has been promoted for residential development for a significant period of time with a scheme being granted planning permission. However, to date the scheme has not been deliverable on account of viability issues, and Miller does not consider that the draft plan and its accompanying evidence base has demonstrated that this site is now deliverable. As such this highlights the need for the examination process to resume to look at proposed allocations as well as identifying new housing sites to meet the identified shortfall.

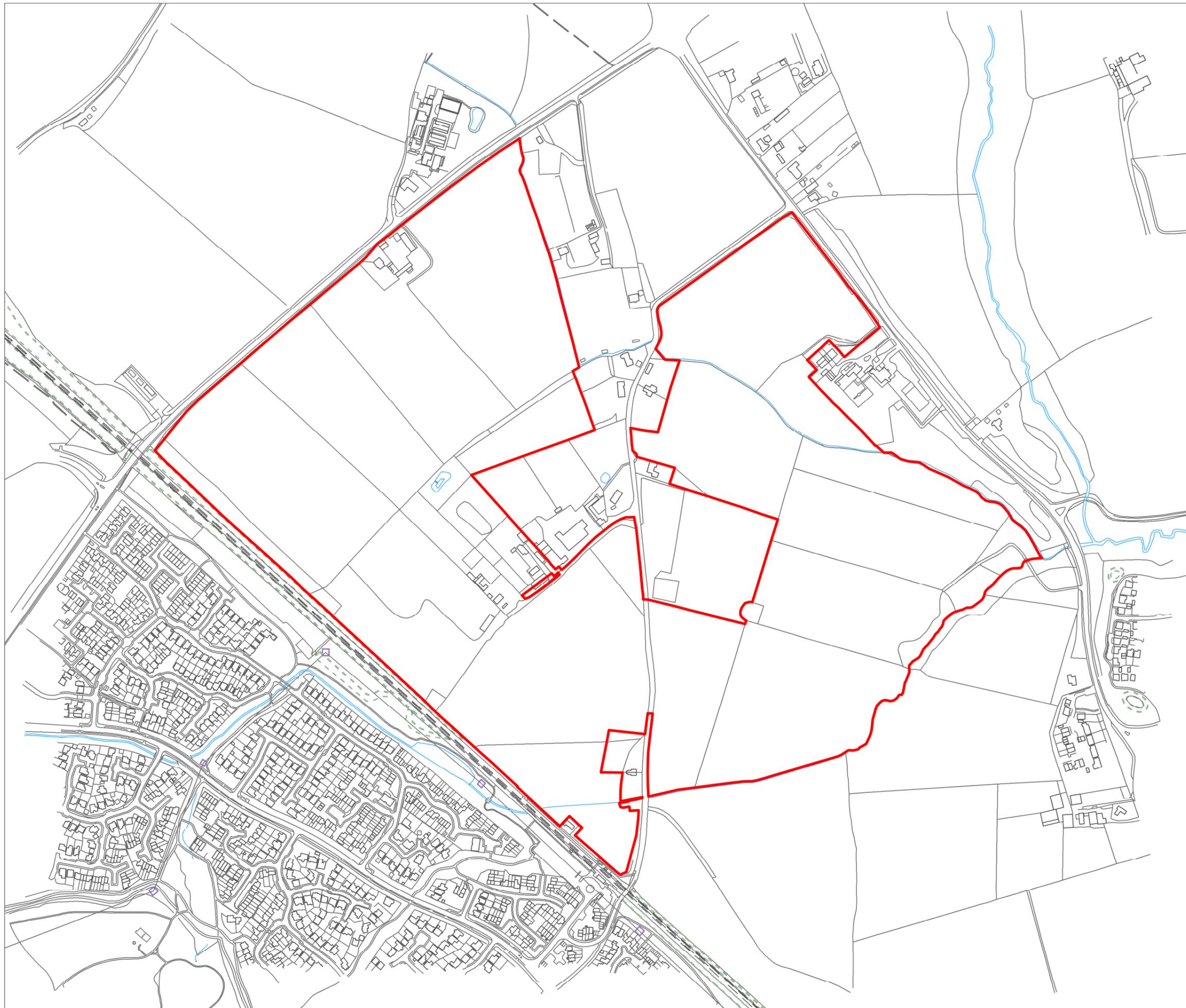
Policy maps (MM34 and PM3)

- 2.51 As highlighted previously, the revised key diagram in MM34 does not accurately reflect the Boorley Gardens development (ref: O/15/75953, RM/17/81628, RM/18/84466, RM/19/86658) which has been implemented, and is due to deliver new homes in 2022. Miller contend that the site should be denoted by the "Urban areas including permitted schemes" annotation. This annotation is used to mark the yet to be implemented Horton Heath strategic site, so to continue to not do the same for the Boorley Gardens development is inconsistent and misleading, and continues to highlight EBC's prejudice to this site and Miller's promoted land immediately to the north.
- 2.52 Proposed policy map modification PM3, revises the draft settlement gap boundaries. In respect to the proposed gap between Hedge End, Botley and Boorley Green some minor revisions are proposed. In respect to the revisions to the gap boundary to the west of Boorley Green between the B3354 and railway line, Miller fundamentally object to this on the basis that this triangular piece of land is subject to planning permission for a strategic scale housing development. No consideration has been given to the outline or Reserved Matters permissions (ref: O/15/75953, RM/17/81628, RM/18/84466, RM/19/86658) in the revision to the boundary, and the proposal to include part of a permitted development site as a settlement gap is a clear conflict as a new policy allocation should not prejudice an existing permission.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 In conclusion, Miller continues to have significant concerns regarding the emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036. The proposed MM and updated evidence base, do not overcome these concerns, and it is considered that they do not sufficiently address the Inspectors issues set out in ED71.
- 3.2 This highlights the inherent need for further examination into the soundness and deliverability of the plan, which should occur ahead of adoption.

Appendix 1



 Site boundary

Hedge End North
Miller Home Strategic Land



Site location

249504B/LO-002	Revision A-2019/JULY/12
Status	16 October 2019
Scale: 1:5,000 @A3	Drawn by: JC Checked by: TS

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Appendix 2



Table 1: Affordable Housing Contribution Table

This table is based upon the sites within Table 4 and 5 of the Eastleigh Borough Council's Housing Supply Update, July 2020 (ED101).

Status for affordable housing contribution is identified by the following:

35% affordable housing target met - green

35% affordable housing target not met - red

35% target exceeded - blue

Affordable housing number not confirmed - orange

Table 4 – HOU021 HOUSING TRAJECTORY TABLE 8: UPDATED TO BE CONSISTENT WITH ED61B - 5YS AT APRIL 2019							
Site ref	Address	Application reference	Total net dwellings	Net avail	5 year supply	Affordable housing contribution	TOR Commentary
0306	ADJ Penarth House. Otterbourne	F/15/77022	20	0	0	Off-site contribution of £86,000	<p>35% target not met within the proposal however off-site affordable housing contributions agreed as proposal relates to supported apartments</p> <p>Amount of affordable housing to be delivered through off-site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online</p> <p>Complete prior to GLH 5YS Trajectory</p>



0166	The Mount Hospital, Church Road, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh	O/12/7100 7; F/13/73226 ; F/14/75061 F/17/80513	217	75	53	<p>The following information is outlined within the relevant S106 agreements:</p> <p>O/12/71007: Off-site contribution of £956,122</p> <p>F/13/73226: Off-site contribution of £433,797</p> <p>F/14/75061: No new legal agreement as changes (slight reduction in units) result in an overpayment from previous S106 contribution</p> <p>F/17/80513: Off-site contribution of £26,250</p>	<p>35% target not met within the proposal however off-site affordable housing contributions agreed as proposal relates to development at a care retirement community</p> <p>Amount of affordable housing to be delivered through off-site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online</p>
0317	Land West & North of Church Road/Breach Lane	O/13/7289 2 R/15/77507	85	57	6	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	<p>35% target met</p> <p>30 affordable dwellings</p>
0345	Land at Fair Oak Road	O/14/7508 6 RM/17/808 62	16	16	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	<p>35% target met</p> <p>6 affordable dwellings</p> <p>Complete prior to GLH 5YS Trajectory</p>
0358	Land North of Church Road	O/16/7946 9 RM/17/819 69	27	27	27	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	<p>35% target met</p> <p>9 affordable dwellings</p>
0315	Land north and east of Boorley Green, Winchester Road, Botley	O/12/7151 4 R/14/74872 R/15/77552 R/15/77595 R/16/79470	1330	1,190	951	30% (outlined within S106 agreement)	<p>35% target not met</p> <p>35% of 1330 = 466</p> <p>420 affordable units provided (stated within RM apps)</p>



							46 homes under affordable target
0338	East of Sovereign Drive & Precosa Road	F/13/73606 APP/W1715/W/14/3001499	103	0	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	Permission lapsed on 21 October 2017 36 affordable dwellings lost
0354	Crows Nest Lane, Boorley Green	O/16/78389	50	50	50	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 18 affordable dwellings
0364	Braxells Farmhouse Winchester Road Boorley Green	F/17/80382	14	14	14	20% (outlined within S106 agreement) The application triggers a 20% affordable housing requirement	35% target not met 2 affordable units provided (to meet with 20% required)
0348	Land north west of Boorley Green, Winchester Road, Botley	O/15/75953 RM/17/81628	680	680	333	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 238 affordable dwellings
0320	Land at Hamble Lane	O/12/71828 R/15/76830	150	113	9	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 53 affordable dwellings
0324	Land at Bridge Road/ Blundell Lane	O/13/73701 R/15/75967	90	26	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 31 affordable dwellings
0340	Rear of Orchard Lodge, Windmill Lane	C/14/74932 C/16/77959 F/16/79496	32	32	24	40% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target exceeded 35% of 33 = 11 40% of provided = 12 (1 home over the affordable target)
0365	Land south of Maddoxford Lane, Boorley Green	O/16/79600	50	50	50	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 18 affordable dwellings



0316	Land east of Dodwell Lane/North of Pylands Lane, Bursledon	O/12/7152 2 R/14/75595 R/15/76606	249	212	104	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 88 affordable dwellings
0355	Land south of Bursledon Road, Bursledon	O/15/77121 F/18/82322	200	200	130	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 70 affordable dwellings
276	Stewart House Sycamore Avenue	F/13/73298	2	2	0	No contribution agreed due to scheme falling below threshold for affordable housing contribution	35% target not met as scheme is below affordable housing contribution threshold Complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory started
0309	Draper Tools Limited, Hursley Road	O/10/6697 8 RM/17/809 52	130	130	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 46 affordable dwellings Site phased beyond GLH 5YS
0349	Woodhill School 59-61 Brownhill Road	F/16/77901 F/17/80370	12	8	0	The following information is outlined within the relevant S106 agreements: F/17/80370: £90,000 towards Off-site Affordable Housing	35% target not met within the proposal however off-site affordable housing contributions agreed Amount of affordable housing to be delivered through off-site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online Site complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory
0249	Allotment Gardens, Kipling Road/Woodside Avenue	O/13/7369 8 R/15/77726	94	94	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 33 affordable dwellings Site complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory



0352	Land north of Cranbury Gardens, Bursledon	O/15/7688 3 RM/19/848 02	45	45	45	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 16 affordable dwellings
0327	Land at Providence Hill, Bursledon	O/14/7432 2	62	62	40	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 22 affordable dwellings
0341	Berry Farm Hamble Lane, Bursledon	F/15/76582	165	131	92	40% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target exceeded 35% of 165 = 58 40% provided = 66 8 homes over the affordable target
0339	North Stoneham Park, Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh	O/15/7602 3 R/17/79892 F/17/81165 F/17/81167 RM/18/845 37	1074	1,131	803	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 378 affordable dwellings
0250	Land at Toynbee Road	F/14/74873	120	3	0	24% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target not met 27 affordable units provided 35% would have provided 42 Site complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory
0329	10-20 Romsey Road, Eastleigh	F/16/77785	49	49	49	Off-site contribution of £250,000 (outlined within Unilateral Undertaking)	35% target not met within the proposal however off-site affordable housing contribution agreed. Proposal is a redevelopment of a mixed use building and lack of provision relates to the cost of providing the on-site accommodation for the charities Amount of affordable housing to be



							delivered through off-site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online
0336	Eastleigh College Annexe, Cranbury Road	O/15/75750	10	10	0	No contribution agreed due to scheme falling below threshold for affordable housing contribution	Permission lapsed on 7 April 2018 Scheme is below affordable housing contribution threshold
F/18/84679	4-6 High Street, Eastleigh	F/18/84679	10	10	10	No contribution agreed due to scheme falling below threshold for affordable housing contribution	35% target not met as scheme is below affordable housing contribution threshold
0330	St. Swithun Wells Church and Adjacent Land, Allington Lane, Fair Oak	O/13/72471 RM/17/81871	72	72	72	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 25 affordable dwellings
0343	Mitchell House, Southampton Road	J/16/78227	67	67	0	0% (outlined within committee report). PD conversion.	35% target not met as scheme is PD and affordable contribution not required 35% would have provided 67
0357	Rivendale 38 Leigh Road	PN/17/81079	10	10	0	0% (outlined within committee report. PD conversion	35% target not met as scheme is PD and affordable contribution not required Complete prior to GLH YS Trajectory
Not provided	John Darling Mall Selbourne Drive	CS/18/82602	18	10	10	0% - application was a consultation. No decision notice or legal documents online to say it was determined.	35% target not met



0326	Land off Winchester Road	O/13/7370 7 R/14/75539 R/15/76118 R/15/77067 R/15/77100 R/16/78543	330	115	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 116 affordable dwellings Site complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory
0332	Corner of Knowle Lane/ Mortimers Lane (East Side)	O/13/7249 0 R/15/77751	73	6	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 26 affordable dwellings Site complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory
0356	Land to the west of Hammerley Farm, Burnetts Lane, Horton Heath (phase 1)	F/15/77500	67	66	66	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 23 affordable dwellings
Not provided	Land to the west of Hammerley Farm, Burnetts Lane, Horton Heath (phase 2)	F/16/79704	37	37	37	21% (8 affordable units sought from S106 agreement) A reduction on the 35% policy due to the application of the Vacant Building Credit	35% target not met as Vacant Building Credit applied 8 affordable units provided 35% would have provided 13 A reduction of 5 affordable units due to Vacant Building Credit
0359	Fir Tree Farm and Victoria Farm, Fir Tree Lane, Horton Heath	O/16/7935 4	450	450	0	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 158 affordable dwellings
0363	Land east of Knowle Lane, Fair Oak	F/17/80640 RM/18/837 37	34	34	34	Off-site contribution of £81,000 (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target not met within the proposal however off-site affordable housing contribution agreed. It appears this is due to the costs associated with the



							<p>redevelopment of a brownfield site</p> <p>Amount of affordable housing to be delivered through off-site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online</p>
0362	CWM, Corner of Mortimers Lane and Knowle Lane, Fair Oak	F/16/78074	27	27	27	Off-site contribution of £58,000 (outlined within S106 agreement)	<p>35% target not met within the proposal however off-site affordable housing contribution agreed.</p> <p>It appears this is due to the costs associated with the redevelopment of a brownfield site</p> <p>Amount of affordable housing to be delivered through off-site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online</p>
Not provided	Pembers Hill Farm, Mortimers Lane, Fair Oak	O/15/77190 RM/18/84195	242	243	243	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	<p>35% target met</p> <p>85 affordable dwellings</p>
0350	Long View, Bursledon Road	F/16/77413 F/16/79326	12	11	11	<p>0% (outlined within S106 agreement)</p> <p>The application triggers a 20% affordable housing requirement</p> <p>Off-site contribution of £107,871</p>	<p>35% target not met.</p> <p>20% requirement on site also not met.</p> <p>Off-site affordable housing contribution agreed.</p> <p>Amount of affordable housing to be delivered through off-</p>



						(outlined within S106 agreement)	site contributions does not appear to be outlined by EBC in any documentation online
0323	Land at St Johns Road & Foord Road and West & North of Waylands Place and Peewit Hill Close	F/15/76804 F/17/80651	106	106	106	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 37 affordable dwellings
0351	Land at Home Farm, St John's Road	F/15/76447	14	14	0	20% (outlined within S106 agreement) The application triggers a 20% affordable housing requirement	35% target not met 3 affordable units provided (20% triggered) Complete prior to GLH 5YS trajectory
Not provided	Land north of Mortimers Lane, Fair Oak (Phase 1)	F/17/82099	59	59	59	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 21 affordable dwellings
Not provided	Fair Oak Lodge, Allington Lane	O/17/8186 4 RM/18/841 95	48	49	49	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 17 affordable dwellings
HE1	Land west of Woodhouse Lane	O/18/8363 4	605	605	150	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 212 affordable dwellings
0361	Land North of Grange Road, Netley Abbey	O/16/7801 4	89	89	89	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 31 affordable dwellings
0318	Abbey Fruit Farm, Grange Road, Netley Abbey	O/16/7946 6 O/13/7289 5	93	93	93	18% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target not met This is based on submitted viability evidence which was accepted by EBC



							17 affordable units provided 35% would have provided 33 A reduction of 16 affordable units due to viability issues
F/17/82001	Osbourne Quarters Policy Training Centre	F/17/82001	30	30	30	0% (outlined within committee report Conversion so does not trigger affordable housing requirement	35% target not met.
337	Land at Dog Kennel Farm, Telegraph Road	F/14/74943	14	10	10	20% (outlined within S106 agreement) The application triggers a 20% affordable housing requirement	35% target not met 3 affordable units provided (20% triggered)
0342	Moorgreen Hospital, Botley Road	F/15/77247	121	43	11	30% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target not met 36 affordable units provided 35% would have provided 42
0353	Land at Hatch Farm, North of Barbe Baker Avenue	F/15/77718	98	98	52	15% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target not met 15 affordable units provided. 35% would have provided 34
0347	Land off Botley Road, West End	O/15/76418 RM/18/82821	100	100	100	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 35 affordable dwellings
0360	Land West and South of Horton Heath	O/14/75735	950	950	210	35% (outlined within S106 agreement)	35% target met 333 affordable dwellings



Table 5: Table 9 of HOU021 updated consistent with ED61B: Resolutions to grant planning permission at and post 1.4.2019

BU1 O/17 /808 99	Land Adjoining 4 Brookfield, Providence Hill, Bursledon, Southampton SO31 8AU	O/17/8089 9	20	20	20	35% (outlined within committee report)	Application was withdrawn on 08/10/20 7 affordable dwellings lost as application withdrawn
FO2 O/17 /811 66	Land north of Mortimers Lane & West of Hall Lands Lane	F/18/83986	26	26	26	35% (outlined within Section 106)	35% target proposed 9 affordable dwellings
BU3 O/17 /811 66	Land Off Providence Hill, Bursledon	O/17/8116 6	92	92	92	35% (outlined within committee report)	35% target proposed 32 affordable dwellings
BO2 O/18 /836 98	Land to The North and East of Winchester Street, Botley	O/18/8369 8	375	375	50	35% (outlined within committee report)	35% target proposed 131 affordable dwellings

Appendix 3

HEDGE END
EASTLEIGH BOROUGH SETTLEMENT GAP STUDY
LOCAL PLAN REPRESENTATIONS
MILLER HOMES
JULY 2021



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HEDGE END
 EASTLEIGH BOROUGH SETTLEMENT GAP STUDY
 LOCAL PLAN REPRESENTATIONS
 MILLER HOMES
 JULY 2021



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1.0 Eastleigh Borough Settlement Gap Study Review

Introduction

- 1.1 Miller Homes is promoting a land parcel that lies to the north of Hedge End, within Eastleigh Borough Council. Terence O'Rourke Ltd has been commissioned to review and appraise Eastleigh Borough Council's recently published Settlement Gap Study (SGS), October 2020 and its analysis of the client's land parcel.
- 1.2 The site lies within one of nine Gaps identified in figure 1 of the SGS and is referred to as Area D Hedge End, Horton Heath, Boorley Green.

Background to the report

- 1.3 Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 Strategic policy S6, Protection of settlement Gaps states that:

"1. Development within a Settlement Gap as set out in the Policies Map will be permitted provided that:

- a. It would not diminish the physical extent and/or visual separation of settlements: and*
- b. It would not have an urbanising effect detrimental to:*

- i. The character of the countryside: or*
- ii. The separate identity of the adjoining settlements.*

Any new development including the intensification or redevelopment of existing activities within gaps should seek opportunities to enhance the function of gap. Consideration will be given to how the proposed siting, design, colours, materials and any storage of materials, lighting, boundary treatment, landscape features, landscape improvements and/or appropriate long term management arrangements serves to ensure the proposed development meets the criteria in policy S6."

- 1.4 This policy and the Gaps shown within the Local Plan proposals map were based on the council's Countryside Gaps background paper (examination library document ENV002, June 2018). The background paper provides supporting information on the need for countryside gaps in the borough and their appropriate boundaries.
- 1.5 Eastleigh Borough Council's Settlement Gap Study, October 2020 (examination document reference number ED84) was prepared following the Inspector's Post Hearing Advice which set out the need to update the Gaps identified in the emerging Local Plan 2016-2036, with a request for a stronger evidence base and a clearer and more robust justification for the proposed Gaps.

General limitations of the SGS methodology

Review of desktop and fieldwork

- 1.6 The SGS states that there is currently *"no detailed published guidance on the assessment of settlement gaps"* and therefore has sought to establish a

methodology through combining the guiding criteria from the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) policy documents, and the council's own assessment of the local built and natural context and good spatial planning practice. Whilst the SGS has sought to develop "a simple assessment process" by creating a clear and logical structure to the methodology (diagram 1), there are two key issues with the study's assessment. Firstly, the desktop study and fieldwork has not fully analysed a number of landscape issues to support its methodology including landscape value, landscape character and landscape sensitivity. Secondly, its approach to defining the criteria and evaluating the settlement Gaps is not considered robust or fully transparent.

- 1.7 A number of published documents have not been taken into consideration within the SGS desktop study, including the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) 3rd Edition, and, for this particular site, the PUSH Landscape Sensitivity Study for Hedge End SDA, June 2010.
- 1.8 Whilst the GLVIA is not directly relevant to the assessment of settlement gaps, its guiding principles help with identifying, understanding and assessing the character and value of a landscape, alongside published landscape character areas (LCA). In describing landscape, paragraph 2.19 of the GLVIA states that, "*Landscape results from the interplay of the physical, natural and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations of these elements and their spatial distribution create the distinctive character of landscapes in different places, allowing different landscapes to be mapped, analysed and described. Character is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of the landscape that make different places distinctive.*"
- 1.9 The GLVIA considers that published LCAs should not be the only source to signify the value of a landscape and that "*it is still likely that it will be necessary to carry out specific and more detailed surveys of the site itself and perhaps its immediate setting or surroundings*". As such it sets out a range of factors that can help identify the value of a landscape (GLVIA, Box 5.1). Within the SGS 'sources of information' it is stated that relevant information from the local and county landscape character assessments and settlements has been referred to and later verified during fieldwork. However, it is not clear how this has been reflected upon in the SGS methodology, as landscape character is not listed within the description of 'mapping and study extents' nor has it been fully considered within the 'Gap description', with the exception of typical landscape features such as topography, land uses and vegetation. With regards to perceptual, aesthetic and experiential aspects, which are considered to form a landscape's character, the SGS methodology states that perceptual aspects were assessed during fieldwork and are described as being the sense of leaving and arriving to the settlements and the perceptions of Gap openness and separation. The PUSH Position statement S1: Strategic Countryside Gaps also identifies that countryside gaps between settlements "*are important in maintaining a sense of place, settlement identity and countryside setting for the sub region and local communities.*" The SGS does not express how the aesthetic and experiential aspects of the landscape character within the settlement Gap study area may contribute to this.
- 1.10 It is not clear in the methodology how the components of the desktop study and fieldwork have been used to inform the evaluation process and the assessment criteria. This would allow the assessor to determine if the settlement Gaps

share any of the local landscape characteristics which contribute to the quality and value of the landscape and its role in providing an important identity and setting between settlements.

- 1.11 Within the SGS each identified Gap has been subdivided into smaller sub areas. There is a lack of clarity on how each of the sub areas within a Gap were identified, i.e. existing field boundaries, transport corridors, change in landscape character. The study states that *“each Gap was subdivided into smaller sub areas that perform a similar function in terms of settlement separation. The sub areas were defined on site by professional judgement of the assessor.”* An example of where the assessment of sub areas is not considered to be successful is the separation of sub areas D11 and D10 which share similar characteristics and can be defined by other stronger physical boundaries. The sub areas should be well defined by strong physical boundaries that can be easily identified and the landscape encompassed by them should share similar characteristics and physical attributes. There should also be a robust and transparent explanation of how the sub areas were identified.
- 1.12 Within the methodology it is explained that the distance measurements have been annotated on the maps to enable an understanding of the physical separation between settlements. Distance alone should not be used in defining the gap between settlements. There may be a mature woodland between settlements, a river valley or an elevated landform that will form a visual and physical separation between settlements.

Review of the evaluation process

- 1.13 The SGS states that the evaluation process has been judged against the principles embedded in the PUSH core criteria. The PUSH Policy Framework for Gaps, December 2008 sets out three criteria for assessing the designation of Gaps. The SGS sets out five core criteria for each sub area, this is represented in an illustrative evaluation matrix (Table 1). The SGS evaluation matrix has subdivided the first PUSH criterion into four separate criteria. The open nature of land between settlements which cannot be retained by other policy designations has been extracted as the SGS first criterion, however the PUSH criterion has been reworded for the purposes of the SGS matrix. The second, fourth and fifth criteria subdivide and reword the second part of the PUSH first criterion, the sense of separation between settlements. The matrix appears to cover this criterion across three varying scales, *“maintain the sense of separation between settlements”*, *“plays an important role in separation of settlements at risk of coalescence”* and *“the land is necessary in preventing the coalescence of settlements.”* We consider that this is a duplication of a single factor/criterion. The land is either considered to perform an important role in separating settlements at risk of coalescence or not. The second PUSH criterion forms the study’s third criterion, but this has also been reworded.
- 1.14 In addition to this, the SGS states that each sub area was assessed against three complementary criteria. These are:
- *“The risk of gap fragmentation...”*
 - *The role of gaps in maintaining countryside setting...*
 - *Consider removing large woodland areas from the edges of gaps...”*

- 1.15 The study states that both the core and complementary criteria were used to provide a *“robust justification in terms of [the sub area’s] retention / removal from the gap”*. However, the study does not state how the complementary criteria are measured or what contribution they make towards assessing and evaluating land within a settlement gap. For example, land identified as possessing a strong unspoilt rural character will perform a more critical role in maintaining the countryside setting.
- 1.16 A critical issue is the lack of clarity on the weighting applied to the criteria. The SGS states that *“there is no hierarchy of importance of the core and complementary criteria.”* However, it goes on to state that *“one criterion may be assessed as carrying enough weight to justify their retention in the Gap despite their ‘under performance’ against other criteria.”* These are conflicting statements. There is no supporting methodology which clearly explains or justifies the proportionate weighting applied to each criterion during the evaluation process.
- 1.17 Another key factor which is referred to in the SGS approach, but where it is not clear how it has been considered or taken account of in the evaluation process, is the third criterion as set out in the PUSH Policy Framework for Gaps 2008, *“In defining the extent of a gap, no more land than is necessary to prevent the coalescence of settlements should be included having regard to maintaining their physical and visual separation.”* It is therefore important that the extent of a Gap should not be larger than is necessary for the purpose for which they are intended, i.e. to maintain the open nature/sense of separation between settlements, and they should not preclude provision being made for development in line with the local planning policies.
- 1.18 With regards to landscape sensitivity, the SGS has failed to assess the findings of relevant published documents. In the case of the site, which lies within Gap Area D, a Landscape Sensitivity Study for Hedge End SDA was prepared by PUSH in June 2010, which formed part of the evidence base for feasibility testing and options for development of the Strategic Development Area North and North East of Hedge End. Although since the document was published, the planning policy context has evolved and the SGS looks at a wider area, the sensitivity study is appropriate reference material to consider against the proposed extent of the settlement gap.

Appraisal of the SGS gap analysis and evaluation for Area D Hedge End, Horton Heath and Boorley Green

- 1.19 The study’s section on *‘Gap analysis for Area D’* begins by analysing the desktop study and fieldwork results and covers issues as set out in the methodology including settlement character, settlement edge character, linkages, sense of arrival/leaving, Gap description/characterisation, sub areas and observations and opportunities for green infrastructure improvements. It provides a number of site photographs to represent features or key views and includes several map-based figures to support the analysis findings.
- 1.20 Figure D2 shows a locally listed parks and gardens (Eastleigh Borough Council - EBC) within Area D. This is also mentioned in the sub area D12 site analysis as Croft House listed park and garden, however, it is not clear what is the source of this information. This data is not shown on the EBC Local Plan 2016-2036 policy map. There is also no data for a locally listed park and garden within the site on the online Hampshire register of historic parks and gardens

maintained by Hampshire Gardens Trust. Interestingly, it is also not mentioned in the analysis for sub area D14 in which Croft House lies.

- 1.21 A number of landscape characteristics and features which were highlighted in the analysis section have not been fully taken account of within the evaluation process. For example, the railway line and associated vegetation to the west of the proposed gap is assessed within the study as providing a defensible and strong landscape edge to Hedge End and is important in maintaining separation between the settlements of Hedge End and Boorley Green. However, this does not appear to have been reflected upon within the evaluation process.
- 1.22 There is a lack of consistency within the analysis as to the role existing development performs when judging the sub areas against the criteria. The SGS states that sub area D14 *“contributes to all the functions of the Gap and is important for the Gap experience of users along Winchester Road.”* However, the area contains *“houses with generous frontages and gardens enclosed by mature boundary vegetation around the plots”* as described within the study’s observations. This is considered to constitute development, yet the study does not take out of this within its analysis of sub area D14. However, existing development within sub areas D4, D5 and D7 and particular D13 and D15 is a factor which is assessed against the criteria. It is therefore considered that D14 does not contribute to *“all functions of the Gap”*. Interestingly, for D9, which is occupied by a caravan storage site, the study states that this *“represents a typical ‘Gap development’”*. There is no definition in the methodology of what constitutes typical gap development.
- 1.23 As noted in paragraph 1.13 of this report, within the study’s methodology core criteria, one criterion is divided into three varying scales, which is not considered to be a sound approach, as this causes duplication. The land is either considered to perform an important role in separating settlements at risk of coalescence or not. This becomes apparent in the evaluation matrix, table D1, as 14 out of the 17 sub areas which are assessed as performing a role in the separation of settlements, meet all three defined scales with the exception of sub area D3. This is considered only to perform against one of the settlements separation criteria. However, there is an inconsistency between the matrix and some of the supporting justification text for sub area D3. It is highlighted as an area which *“helps maintain the sense of separation between settlements”* within the evaluation matrix and within the justification text it is stated that *“the site is not necessary for the separation of Horton Heath from Hedge End”*. This demonstrates that this division of a core criterion into three varying scales is not effective, nor is it necessary.
- 1.24 In table D1, sub area D7 is the only sub area that does not meet any of the study’s core Gap criteria, however it is proposed that it should remain within the Gap on the grounds of risk of fragmentation, which is one of the study’s complementary criteria. However, as raised in paragraph 1.16 of this report, it is not clear how the weighting of the complementary criteria is applied. Another example of disproportionate weighting relates to the third complementary criterion to *“consider removing large woodland areas from the edges of Gaps as they can be protected in their own right and are at less risk of development”*. Sub area D16 is defined as a large woodland block. Whilst the study assesses the woodland as not contributing to the open nature of the gap, it does state that it provides visual and physical separation between settlements of Hedge End and Horton Heath. What is not acknowledged within the evaluation, is how

the third complementary criteria, which is relevant to this sub area, has been taken into consideration as the woodland remains within the proposed Gap.

- 1.25 As set out in the study's methodology, the evaluation process has been assessed against the principles embedded within the PUSH core criteria. Whilst the principles of PUSH criteria 1 and 2 have been included within the evaluation matrix, in varying forms, it is considered that the conclusions of the study do not appear to have fully considered the third PUSH core criteria of defining the extent of a gap, that, *"no more land than is necessary to prevent the coalescence of settlement should be included having regard to maintaining their physical and visual separation."* Two key issues appear to prevent this. Firstly, the complementary criteria associated with the fragmentation of a Gap and secondly the assessment of sub areas in isolation.
- 1.26 The study has assessed a number of the sub areas as contributing to the fragmentation of the Gap and that therefore they should remain within the Gap to *"avoid creating a large island of development in the centre of the Gap"*. This does not reflect a holistic approach to ensuring that the extent of the Gap is not larger than necessary for the purposes that it is intended to serve. It would suggest that the complementary criterion itself is preventing the sub areas from collectively meeting its core purposes. The same issue applies to the evaluation and conclusion of the sub areas. These have been assessed on an individual basis without considering how they contribute collectively to the core principles of a settlement gap, to create a cohesive and comprehensive Gap that fulfils its purpose. An example of this is sub area D17. The study states *"this area strongly contributes to all Gap criteria and must remain in the Gap to ensure the sufficient separation of all three settlements and maintain the open nature of the Gap..."*. Sub area D16 which lies to the west of D17 is described in the analysis text as providing visual and physical separation between Hedge End and Horton Heath and the approved Boorley Green. Sub areas D13 and in part D15, which lie to the north of D17, are assessed as not contributing to the open nature of the Gap. Therefore, how can adjoining sub areas which influence the visual and physical separation between settlements and the open nature of sub area D17, define D17 as strongly contributing to the sense of separation of all three settlements.
- 1.27 In conclusion, it is considered that the SGS fails to fully take account of observations and landscape characterisations as defined through desktop studies and fieldwork within its evaluation process. The study's approach to defining the criteria and evaluating the settlement Gaps has a number of significant anomalies and is not considered to be robust or fully transparent.