



The Planning Inspectorate

Report to Eastleigh Borough Council

by C Masters MA (Hons) FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Date: 14 March 2022

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

(as amended)

Section 20

Report on the Examination of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036

The Plan was submitted for examination on 31 October 2018

The examination hearings were held between 21 November 2019 and Wednesday 29 January 2020. A subsequent additional hearing took place on Tuesday 5 January 2021

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Abbreviations used in this report

CLLR	Chickenhall Lane Link Road
DtC	Duty to Co-operate
GTAA	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
HCC	Hampshire County Council
HMA	Housing Market Area
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LP	Local Plan
MM	Main Modification
Framework	National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
PfSH	Partnership for South Hampshire
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PPTS	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAEG	Southampton Airport Economic Gateway
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SGO	Strategic Growth Option
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SMS's	Small and Medium Greenfield sites
The Plan	The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan
UCO	Use Classes Order

Non-Technical Summary

This report concludes that the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the Borough, provided that a number of main modifications [MMs] are made to it. Eastleigh Borough Council has specifically requested that I recommend any MMs necessary to enable the Plan to be adopted.

The Council prepared schedules of the proposed modifications and these were subject to public consultation over a six-week period. I have recommended their inclusion in the Plan after considering all the representations made in response to consultation on them. In some cases, I have amended their detailed wording and/or added consequential modifications where necessary.

The Main Modifications that I recommend can be summarised as follows:

- Changes to various elements of strategic policies S2 and S3 reflecting housing land supply, the housing requirement and the housing trajectory to ensure that they reflect the most up-to-date evidence, as well as to ensure that assumptions concerning timing and delivery of certain developments are justified;
- To delete a number of site allocations, and associated infrastructure policies which are unsound or where development has already been completed;
- To delete policy S5 the Strategic Growth Option (SGO) and policy S6 which set out associated infrastructure requirements in the form of a new link road as neither policy is justified;
- To amend policy S1 concerning sustainable development to ensure that the policy provides an appropriate reference to the South Downs National Park as well as ensuring the policy adequately reflects national policy in terms of sustainable travel;
- Modifications to several employment site policies to support the role of these sites in the context of economic growth and to ensure they accurately reflect the changes to the Use Classes Order;
- Changes to various housing allocations to ensure that the policy framework is effective;
- To ensure all site allocations include inset maps so that the applicable policies are consistently and adequately expressed throughout the Plan;
- To amend policy S4 relating to employment land provision as well as the employment land floorspace requirement over the Plan period so it is consistent with the evidence base;
- Modifications to policies E6, E7 and E9 in relation to the provision of the Chickenhall Lane Link Road (CLLR) to ensure the policies are effective;
- Modifications to retail policies DM21 and DM22 to ensure the Plan reflects a justified approach to retail development and town centre uses and to ensure the policies are reflective of the changes to the Use Classes Order;
- Delete policy HE7 relating to the provision of a cemetery at Kanes Hill, Hedge End as the requirement is not justified by the evidence base;
- Add a number of site allocations as individual site allocations with appropriate development criteria to reflect that the sites are no longer listed within policies DM24 and DM25;

- Modify the wording of policy S8 in relation to settlement gaps for clarity and effectiveness;
- Add a new policy concerning the Historic Environment to ensure that the strategic approach to the Borough's historic environment is appropriately reflected within the Plan;
- To provide a comprehensive glossary within the Plan to ensure that the terminology and acronyms used through the Plan are effective;
- To add a monitoring framework at appendix C to ensure the Plan's effectiveness;
- A number of other modifications to the Plan to ensure that the Plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Introduction

1. This report contains my assessment of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It considers first whether the Plan's preparation has complied with the duty to co-operate. It then considers whether the Plan is sound and whether it is compliant with the legal requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (paragraph 182) makes it clear that in order to be sound, a Local Plan should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 and further revised in February 2019 and in 2021. It includes a transitional arrangement in paragraph 214 which indicates that, for the purpose of examining this Plan, the policies in the 2012 NPPF will apply. Similarly, where the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been updated to reflect the revised NPPF, the previous versions of the PPG apply for the purposes of this examination under the transitional arrangement. Therefore, unless stated otherwise, **references in this report are to the 2012 NPPF** and the versions of the PPG which were extant prior to the publication of the 2018 NPPF.
3. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the local planning authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound Plan. The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan submitted in October 2018 is the basis for my examination. It is the same document that was published for consultation on 25 June 2018.

Main Modifications

4. In accordance with section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act the Council requested that I should recommend any main modifications [MMs] necessary to rectify matters that make the Plan unsound or not legally compliant and thus incapable of being adopted. My report explains why the recommended MMs, all of which relate to matters that were discussed at the examination hearings, are necessary. The MMs are referenced in bold in the report in the form **MM1**, **MM2** etc, and are set out in full in appendix 1. In a number of instances, the MMs have resulted in the Council updating the policy references. For the avoidance of doubt, where references have been superseded, the references within this report refer to the policy references as they appear on the MM schedule.
5. Following the examination hearings, the Council prepared a schedule of proposed MMs and produced a Sustainability Appraisal Addendum¹ (SA) and updated the Habitats Regulations Assessment² (HRA). The MM schedule was subject to public consultation for six weeks. I am satisfied that all reasonable steps were taken to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to review these documents and respond if they wished to do so. I have taken account of the consultation responses in coming to my conclusions in this report. I have

¹ ED106 LUC Sustainability Appraisal Addendum, April 2021

² ED107 HRA Report for the Proposed Main Modifications, May 2021

made some amendments to the detailed wording of the main modifications and added consequential modifications where these are necessary for consistency or clarity. None of the amendments significantly alters the content of the modifications as published for consultation or undermines the participatory processes and sustainability appraisal that has been undertaken. Where necessary, I have highlighted these amendments in the report.

Changes to the Use Classes Order (UCO)

6. The Government published The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 1 September 2020. The views of the Council in the context of the Use Classes Order (UCO) changes were sought³ and where appropriate, particularly in relation to a number of the site allocations and town centre policies, modifications to the policies concerned to reflect these changes have been recommended.

Policies Map

7. The Council must maintain an adopted policies map which illustrates geographically the application of the policies in the adopted development plan. When submitting a local plan for examination, the Council is required to provide a submission policies map showing the changes to the adopted policies map that would result from the proposals in the submitted local plan. In this case, the submission policies map comprises the set of plans identified as SUB002a and SUB002b (policies map north and south respectively).
8. The policies map is not defined in statute as a development plan document, and I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to it. However, a number of the published MMs to the Plan's policies require further corresponding changes to be made to the policies map. In addition, there are some instances where the geographic illustration of policies on the submission policies map is not justified and changes to the policies map are needed to ensure that the relevant policies are effective.
9. These further changes to the policies map were published for consultation alongside the MMs in the form of schedule ED109 and policy map modifications identified at documents ED109a-f.
10. When the Plan is adopted, in order to comply with the legislation and give effect to the Plan's policies, the Council will need to update the adopted policies map to include all the changes proposed as set out at schedule ED109 and documents ED109a-f as published alongside the MMs.

Context of the Plan

11. Eastleigh Borough is bounded by Test Valley to the north west, Winchester to the north east and east, Fareham to the south east, and Southampton to the south and west. The main settlement within the Borough comprises Eastleigh

³ ED105 Eastleigh's response to the Inspectors letter (ED76) concerning the changes to the Use Classes Order, October 2020

town, with a number of other notable settlements which are predominantly suburban in character. The Borough contains a number of unique features such as the River Hamble which is used as a sailing venue, as well as the Ageas Bowl and Southampton airport.

12. The Local Plan for Eastleigh has a protracted history. This Plan has been prepared to replace the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2001-2011. A previous Plan which was submitted for examination in July 2014 and covered the period 2011-2029 was found to be unsound for a number of reasons. The Council have therefore prepared this Plan which will, along with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan October 2013, constitute the full development plan for Eastleigh to cover the Plan period 2016-2036. As part of the examination process, I held hearing sessions between November 2019 – January 2020, after which I wrote a post hearing letter⁴.
13. My letter, which I attach at appendix 2 to this report, sets out my detailed findings on a number of significant issues in connection with the soundness of the Plan. In particular, it deals in detail with the proposed strategic growth option (SGO). To avoid unnecessary repetition, sections of that letter are to be read alongside this report. Following further correspondence and action points arising from the hearing sessions, the Council completed additional work to address a number of outstanding concerns. In addition, a further individual hearing session was held in January 2021 concerning proposed site allocation HA2. Consultation on the main modifications took place between 9 June and 21 July 2021.
14. Upon adoption, the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 will replace the saved policies of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011). I acknowledge that the relative certainty that will be provided by finalising this Plan will be beneficial to the Borough in terms of encouraging sustainable development. In light of the detailed findings contained within the report, the Plan includes a commitment to undertake an update to this Plan within 1 year of its adoption. This is a pragmatic approach to allow this Plan to proceed to be adopted on this basis.

Public Sector Equality Duty

15. The Council have produced an Equalities Impact Assessment⁵ which was used to inform the Plan. I have had due regard to the aims expressed in S149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This has included my consideration of several matters during the examination including the delivery of a mix of housing types (policy DM26), specialist housing for older people (policy DM27) and the delivery of sustainable design and transport (policy DM1). My findings in relation to those matters, including where relevant any significant impacts on equalities and groups with protected characteristics, are set out in the subsequent sections of this report.

⁴ ED71 Inspectors post hearings letter, attached as appendix 2 to this report, April 2020

⁵ SUB010 Equalities Impact Assessment, June 2018

Assessment of Duty to Co-operate

16. Section 20(5)(c) of the 2004 Act requires that I consider whether the Council complied with any duty imposed on it by section 33A in respect of the Plan's preparation. In this case, up to the point at which the Council submitted the Plan for examination in October 2018.
17. The Council's Duty to Cooperate Statement⁶ (DtC) identifies the strategic cross boundary issues which are relevant to Eastleigh and the preparation of this Plan. The report confirms that officers have been actively engaged with a number of relevant bodies including but not limited to a number of neighbouring authorities, the Partnership for South Hampshire (formerly PUSH now PfSH), Transport Working Group, Hampshire County Council (HCC) statutory agencies such as Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency as well as other consultees and a number of national agencies and organisations. This demonstrates a clear pattern of joint working in order to consider the important issues relevant to the Plan and demonstrates that clear arrangements are in place for joint working with a number of partner organisations which involved professionals as well as elected members. These issues include but are not limited to population and housing, retail development, economic development, infrastructure provision, conservation of the natural and built environment and transport planning matters.
18. In addition to the above, a number of statements of common ground (SoCG) have been prepared in relation to strategic matters effecting the Borough. These include but are not limited to neighbouring Authorities, the Environment Agency, Natural England as well as HCC. It is clear that the Council have engaged actively and constructively with a wide range of organisations and bodies on a number of cross boundary issues.

Conclusion on duty to cooperate

19. Overall, I am satisfied that where necessary, the Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis on strategic matters effecting the preparation of the Plan. The issues have been resolved effectively and there are no concerns from these authorities and organisations regarding the duty to cooperate. I therefore conclude that the duty to co-operate has been met.

Assessment of Other Aspects of Legal Compliance

Local Development Scheme

20. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Council's approved Local Development Scheme (LDS). This was published in 2016⁷ and updated in 2017. This document set out an expected adoption date of May 2019.

⁶ DTC001 Revised Duty to Co-operate Statement, October 2018

⁷ ORD002 Local Development Scheme, December 2017, ORD003 Local Development Scheme, September 2016

Although the Plan's content is compliant with the LDS, some delays in its progress have occurred. I am satisfied that there is no fundamental conflict with the LDS.

Public consultation and engagement

21. The Council have outlined how public consultation and engagement has taken place in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The evidence presented sets out how the Council has sought the views of the community and others as part of the early stages of the formation of the Plan.
22. I note a number of concerns expressed regarding the consultation which was carried out by the Council during the preparation of the Plan. More specifically, these concerns related to the nature of consultation events and availability and quality of the evidence base as well as the extent to which views in relation to the various growth options were taken into account. However, the consultation on the Plan and the MMs was carried out in compliance with the Council's SCI⁸ which was subsequently updated in light of the coronavirus pandemic. The Plan has evolved through this process of consultation, and the statement of consultation summarises a number of these consultation responses and identifies the Council's actions accordingly.
23. The fact that the preferred SGO proceeded on the basis of the allocation outlined as policy S5 in spite of a high level of opposition does not in itself demonstrate that the Council failed to have regard to the consultation responses made. Positive plan preparation and engagement is not necessarily closely associated with agreement in relation to the issues involved. Moreover, it goes to demonstrate the strength of local opinion as well as outlining that the Council has indeed been successful in engaging with local residents and interest groups in this regard. As a result, I am satisfied that the consultation carried out whilst the Plan was being prepared was legally compliant and that the Council have taken reasonable steps during the plan preparation process.

Sustainability Appraisal

24. During its preparation, the Plan was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA)⁹ as required by the relevant legislation. The SA included a report of the findings of the appraisal, and as required by the relevant legislation, the Council published the report along with the Plan and other submission documents under regulation 19. The SA was subsequently updated to assess the main modifications.¹⁰
25. The SA assessed a number of distinct growth options across the Borough. The first SA¹¹ assessed 23 strategic location options and then went on to assess 8 spatial strategic location options. The latter SA prepared at the pre submission stage of the Plan assessed 5 alternative strategic growth options. The

⁸ SUB014 Statement of Community Involvement, November 2015

⁹ SUB003b Sustainability Appraisal, Main report, June 2018 and SUB016 Sustainability Appraisal Addendum, June 2019

¹⁰ ED106 LUC Sustainability Appraisal Addendum, April 2021

¹¹ ORD007 Sustainability Appraisal, Main Report 2015

assessment of these alternative options is set out within the SA, including an appraisal of emerging policies and approaches as part of the assessment of reasonable alternatives. The analysis undertaken was to a sufficient level of detail given the scale of development at the SGO when compared with the Small and Medium Greenfield Sites (SMS)s¹².

26. In the context of the SMSs, the SA was systematic in utilising the Council's existing evidence base in accordance with relevant legal requirements. The sites were appraised using a systematic process and proportionate information. I consider that the approach adopted demonstrates that the Plan has taken a proportionate and realistic approach to the consideration of alternative options. I am satisfied that the approach to site analysis in terms of the SMS's is a proportionate and justified one and as a result, the SA provides a satisfactory assessment of the Plan's strategy and policies against reasonable alternatives.
27. A fundamental part of the Council's proposed housing strategy from 2024 onwards is the provision of a Strategic Growth Option (SGO) at land north of Bishopstoke and land north and east of Fair Oak. This is set out at policy S5 which allocates these two sites for 1000 and 4300 homes respectively. Approximately 3350 dwellings were anticipated to be delivered from these sites between 2024 and 2036, along with the necessary associated infrastructure which is significant and included a new link road covered by policy S6. The Plan identified that the remaining figure of approximately 2000 dwellings would be delivered beyond this current Plan period.
28. A number of concerns were raised around the suitability of the SA process, with particular regard to the consideration of reasonable alternatives for the SGO and the methodology and conclusions drawn in relation to the various strategic growth options considered. As I have already highlighted to the Council in my post hearing advice letter of April 2020¹³, I raised serious concerns in relation to the assessment of individual reasonable options and secondly, as a result of this, the selection of the preferred SGO option (B/C). On this basis it cannot be demonstrated that the preferred SGO is sound.
29. In light of this conclusion, a number of MMs¹⁴ are necessary to rectify this. The deletion of the SGO from the Plan, along with the associated infrastructure works in the form of policies S5 and S6 and other associated references throughout the Plan to the SGO are necessary for soundness.
30. The SA has been applied iteratively throughout the preparation and examination of the Plan, including an assessment of the main modifications. On this basis I am able to conclude that the appraisal included a proportionate assessment of cumulative impacts, on economic, social and environmental objectives of the Plan as proposed to be modified.

¹² HOU11A Small and Medium Sites Background Paper, July 2018 and HOU18 Small and Medium Sites Background Paper – Supplementary Site Selection Report, November 2017

¹³ ED71 Inspectors letter to Eastleigh Borough Council post hearing, April 2020

¹⁴ MM13,MM14,MM15,MM16,MM17,MM18,MM19,MM20,MM21,MM22,MM23,MM24,MM25, MM63

Habitats Regulations

31. The Plan was subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) during its preparation and was subsequently updated to address the proposed MMs as required by the relevant Regulations. The HRA concludes that the Plan would not affect the integrity of designated sites¹⁵ provided that certain mitigation measures are carried out. Subject to MMs which set out measures to protect the integrity of the sites affected and which I will address in further detail within my report, the Plan includes appropriate policies to secure this mitigation. The Plan also appropriately reflects the SoCG with the Environment Agency and Natural England¹⁶. In reaching this conclusion, I have also had due regard to the responses received in relation to the MM consultation exercise. As a result, I am satisfied that the relevant legal requirements have been met and that the Plan can therefore be adopted in compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Other legal requirements

32. The Plan includes policies to address the strategic priorities for the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area.
33. The Plan also includes policies designed to ensure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. These include, amongst other things, policies which seek to support sustainable transport and development, green infrastructure, sustainable development, zero or low carbon energy and sustainable urban drainage and to minimise/mitigate flood risk. I acknowledge that a number of representors are of the view that the Plan does not respond appropriately to the climate emergency acknowledged by the Council. However, for the reasons I have set out throughout this report, subject to the MMs which I have outlined, I am able to conclude that the Plan is sound, and I am satisfied that in the context of national planning policy, the Plan contains appropriate policies to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.
34. Appendix A to the Plan contains a list of all of the extant development plan policies that will be superseded when the Plan is adopted as required by regulation 8(5) of the 2012 Regulations. The Plan complies with all other relevant legal requirements, including in the 2004 Act (as amended) and the 2012 Regulations.

Conclusion on legal requirements

35. In light of the above, I therefore conclude that, all relevant legal requirements have been complied with during the preparation of the Plan.

¹⁵ River Itchen SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, New Forest SPA, Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar

¹⁶ ED47 SOCG between Eastleigh Borough Council, Environment Agency and Natural England, October 2019

Assessment of Soundness

Main Issues

36. Taking account of all the representations, the written evidence and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings, I have identified a number of main issues upon which the soundness of this Plan depends. This report deals with these main issues. It does not respond to every point or issue raised by representors. Nor does it refer to every policy, policy criterion or allocation in the Plan.

Issue 1 - Whether the Plan's spatial strategy is justified and consistent with national policy with regard to the quantity of development that it aims to accommodate over the plan period

Vision, Objectives and Strategy

37. Chapter 3 of the Plan identifies the Vision, Objectives and Strategy for New Development. The Vision for the Plan is identified clearly at paragraph 3.1. It sets out 13 key objectives, formulated around the characteristics and issues facing Eastleigh which are set out in chapter 2 of the Plan. These objectives cover a number of economic, social and environmental factors and support the objectives of national policy. The Vision and Objectives identified collectively provide the context for the strategic policies contained within the Plan.

38. Chapter 3 of the Plan goes onto outline the strategy for new development over the plan period. **MM5** provides additional text to the development principles section, as without this text the Plan does not accurately reflect the development distribution strategy and principles which the Plan refers to. Overall, the approach to the Vision, Strategy and Objectives is consistent with national policy and the overall objectives of delivering sustainable development during the Plan period. **MM1** and **MM121** amend the reference to the Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH) to ensure it is correctly referenced throughout the Plan. **MM2** is necessary as it deletes references within the reasoned justification to the quantum of greenfield sites in terms of housing delivery which has altered since the Plan was submitted. Additionally, **MM3** updates the overall requirement for new employment floorspace through the Plan period in line with subsequent changes to policy S2 outlined below.

39. Chapter 4 of the Plan sets out the strategic policies for the Plan period, including the preferred development strategy for delivering the growth planned and identified through the Plan over the period 2016 to 2036. The overall context for sustainable development is set out in policy S1. This sets 11-point criteria for the delivery of sustainable development, covering the economic, social and environmental factors which are reflective of national policy in this regard. **MM6** is necessary to amend the wording of a number of criteria to ensure that they are effective in their application, with an additional criterion to be added in relation to the South Downs National Park to ensure that sustainable development has regard to the status given to this area and its designation as an International Dark Skies reserve.

Spatial Distribution of Development

40. The Borough's settlement hierarchy sets the context for the spatial distribution of development across the Borough during the Plan period. It has been informed by a scoring matrix reflecting the existing roles and facilities the centres offer. The principal settlement of Eastleigh represents the main town within the Borough, followed by the two large urban areas of Chandlers Ford and Hedge End. Lower order settlements sit below this tier including the settlements of Botley, Hamble and Bishopstoke and the final tier includes the smallest settlements such as Allbrook and Boorley Green.
41. I expressed concerns regarding the extent to which the evidence base represents the most up to date position in relation to this settlement hierarchy and in particular, whether it reflects the more recent pattern of distribution of development which has occurred in the Borough. As a result, **MM9** is necessary to reflect the evolving role and function of both Boorley Green and Horton Heath given the significant amount of development which has taken place here in recent years. It also adds additional text to the reasoned justification to provide greater clarity in relation to table 1 which identifies the existing settlement hierarchy.
42. Taking this settlement hierarchy as a starting point, the Plan proposes the distribution of new housing growth across existing urban areas, strategic sites, urban extensions and smaller sites to meet more local needs. The Council have clearly defined the factors which have influenced the distribution proposed, in line with the settlement hierarchy. These factors have included, but are not limited to transport and accessibility, landscape and biodiversity and other environmental issues including settlement gaps. **MM4, MM7 and MM8** are necessary to ensure that the Plan accurately reflects the importance of the role and function of the settlement hierarchy in terms of the distribution of development and spatial strategy proposed by the Plan. Subject to these modifications, the approach to the spatial distribution of development is effective and justified.
43. In order to ensure that the key diagram set out at figure 6 is effective, **MM34** addresses a number of changes required for soundness, most notably the deletion of the SGO and associated infrastructure (covered below), whilst also updating the settlement gaps and residential sites.

Strategic Growth Option

44. A fundamental part of the Council's proposed housing strategy from 2024 onwards is the provision of a Strategic Growth Option (SGO) at land north of Bishopstoke and land north and east of Fair Oak. This is set out at policy S5 which proposes to allocate these two sites for 1000 and 4300 homes respectively. Approximately 3350 dwellings were anticipated to be delivered from these sites between 2024 and 2036, along with the necessary associated infrastructure which is significant and included a new link road covered by policy S6. The Plan identified that the remaining figure of approximately 2000 dwellings would be delivered beyond this current Plan period.
45. I raised serious concerns in relation to the assessment of individual reasonable alternatives for the SGO option and secondly, as a result of this, the selection

of the preferred SGO option outlined at policy S5. The full extent of these concerns regarding the soundness of the Plan are set out in my letter at appendix 2 to this report. In summary, the concerns here relate to the sustainability of this site as a SGO when compared with other reasonable alternatives. In particular, the SGO outlined by policy S5 would generate a greater increase in traffic overall on the rural roads within and on the edge of the South Downs National Park¹⁷ when compared to the other SGO options. The rural nature of these roads forms an integral part of the overall National Park experience. Additional traffic at the sort of level predicted by the evidence base could have a detrimental effect on the communities concerned. Given the statutory importance of the National Park, the scale of development proposed and the potential impacts of increases in traffic movements within and on the edge of the National Park, I am unable to conclude that the selected SGO represents the most suitable option when considered against all other reasonable alternatives.

46. In addition to the locational characteristics of the SGO, the evidence base in relation to transport and accessibility does not justify the selection of this SGO for a number of reasons. These include the distance people would need to travel, the ability of people to walk and cycle, the propensity to use public transport and the level of delay on the highway network. Overall, the evidence base does not justify the selection of the SGO as the preferred option in this regard, and as a result, policy S5 would fail to meet the aim set out in paragraph 34 of the Framework, and the overarching principle of promoting sustainable development.
47. As a result, I therefore conclude that the SGO and associated infrastructure is not justified or consistent with national policy. A number of MMs¹⁸ are necessary to rectify this situation. The deletion of the SGO from the Plan, along with the associated infrastructure works in the form of policies S5 and S6 and other associated cross references and reasoned justification throughout the Plan to the SGO are all necessary for soundness. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.
48. The result of the deletion of the SGO is that there will be a shortfall over the Plan period housing requirement of some 2614 dwellings towards the end of the Plan period¹⁹, specifically from 2032 onwards. Paragraph 47 of the Framework requires local planning authorities to identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15. Even with this shortfall the Plan is therefore

¹⁷ SG00023 SGO Comparative Assessment Background Paper: Update on Transport Issues, June 2019

¹⁸ MM13,MM14,MM15,MM16,MM17,MM18,MM19, MM20,MM21,MM22,MM23, MM24,MM25,MM63

¹⁹ ED90 Matter 4: Housing Need, Housing trajectory, housing land supply, five year supply and affordable housing, October 2020

consistent with the Framework and in any event the Council have committed to an early review.

49. Legislation requires a review of the Plan to take place within 5 years from the date of adoption. However, in the case of this Plan, I have concluded that this shortfall will necessitate an early review. This is important for a number of reasons, primarily to ensure that the shortfall is suitably addressed through the Plan making process. This is necessary to ensure that the Plan is sound. **MM11** therefore outlines the requirements for an early review which the Council should commence within 1 year from the adoption of this Plan.
50. I am mindful of the acute need for Eastleigh to have a Plan. Delivering the sites which the Plan identifies will meet the need and requirement for housing for a majority of the Plan period and would be entirely in accordance with the Framework as I have outlined above. Given the level of shortfall involved and the timing which would be for the last 3 years of the Plan period, this is a proportionate and pragmatic response.
51. Taking into account these modifications, I am of the view that the Plan provides an appropriate strategy in terms of the distribution of development proposed, taking into account the existing settlement hierarchy as well as other sustainability factors such as transport accessibility and environmental constraints.

Conclusion

52. Taking into account the MMs set out above, I am satisfied that the Plan's spatial strategy is justified and consistent with national policy with regard to the quantity of development that it aims to accommodate over the plan period.

Issue 2 - Is the strategy for the delivery of new homes across the Plan period soundly based, having particular regard to the housing requirement, the acknowledged shortfall towards the end of the Plan period, and the need to identify a five-year supply of deliverable housing

The Housing Market Area

53. Eastleigh Borough sits completely within the Southampton Housing Market Area (HMA). This HMA also includes Test Valley (in part), Southampton, New Forest (in part) Winchester (in part) and Fareham (Western Wards only). The evidence to support this HMA includes work completed by PfSH²⁰ concerning housing market geographies across the PfSH area as a whole. It took on board a number of factors including but not limited to updated information concerning migration flows, commuting dynamics, socio economic factors and house types and prices. These factors, when considered collectively informed the boundary of the HMA as set out within the SHMA. From the evidence presented, I am satisfied that the HMA has been based on an effective

²⁰ HOU001 PfSH Position Statement, June 2016 HOU002a and HOU002b SHMA and Appendices

evidence base. There is no substantive reason to question the definition of the HMA.

The OAN (Objectively Assessed Need)

54. The approach to the OAN is set out across a number of documents. The Council have used the PFSH SHMA OAN Update 2016, (HOU003) as a starting point. This was subsequently updated by the Objectively Assessed Needs Background Paper (HOU004) as well as the Council responses contained within their matter 4 statement. HOU004 whilst far from ideal in terms of its presentation and format, provides a clear explanation of the local factors which have been taken into account and where necessary, provides supporting evidence for the adjustments made.
55. This evidence takes the trend-based household projections as a starting point. In terms of demographics, the evidence utilised the 2014 -based household projections which were published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in July 2016. These represented the most up-to-date figures available at that time. A number of sensitivity factors including but not limited to, household formation rates, market signals, evidence on local affordability and affordable housing need, labour force and economic growth have then been taken into account. The Council have explained in detail the rationale for the sensitivity testing applied.
56. There was no uplift adjustment made for economic growth potential within the Borough as it was deemed that the demographically derived figure from the OAN did not require adjustment. This was supported by Oxford Economics 2017 Forecasts, providing a forecast figure which sits centrally within the forecasting range. As a result, the employment forecasting suggests a lower level of job growth than that supported by the population outputs of the OAN. I am content that this is a reasonable approach based on the evidence available.
57. A 1.7% adjustment has been made for vacancy and second home ownership. This figure is supported by the use of Council tax data which has been sourced. In addition, a 15% adjustment has been made for market signals and local demographic changes. I note that some representors have quoted higher figures used elsewhere. Whilst I acknowledge that the appropriate scale of such an uplift can be difficult to judge, this approach is both cautious and reasonable.
58. Since the Plan was submitted for examination, the ONS published their 2018-based household projections (2018-2028) on 29 June 2020. I wrote to the Council in August 2020²¹ regarding these new projections and the Council responded²². The PPG recognises that the government's official population and household projections are generally updated every 2 years to take account of the latest demographic trends. Wherever possible, local needs assessments

²¹ ED75 Letter to Eastleigh Borough Council regarding 2018 household projections, August 2020

²² ED77 Letter from Eastleigh Borough Council regarding 2018 household projections, August 2020

should be informed by the latest available information. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Plans should be kept up to date. A meaningful change in the housing situation should be considered in this context, but this does not automatically mean that housing assessments are rendered outdated every time new projections are issued.

59. Utilising the 2018-based projections would result in a reduction of approximately 100 dwellings a year than the annualised OAN figure. Taking into account the fact that this Plan is being examined under the transitional arrangements, as well as the relatively modest difference in the figures before me, I conclude that the 2018 projections do not, in their own right, result in a meaningful change to the housing evidence before me. As a result, the assessment within the housing evidence remains appropriate and robust.
60. To conclude and having regard to the above findings, it is my view that it is appropriate to regard an OAN of 630dpa as representing the Borough's housing need. This figure does not take account of any constraints and has not been influenced by any policy considerations.

The Housing Requirement

61. The Plan sets out a housing requirement at policy S2 of 14,580 for the period 2016-2036 which is informed by the evidence base²³ and subsequent updates following the hearing sessions. This requirement figure includes for two additional matters. Firstly, addressing the shortfall in delivery during the period 2011-2016 (i.e when no Plan was in place). In terms of the shortfall, the Council have applied a target of 650dpa to this time period and identified clearly how the shortfall will be addressed through the housing trajectory. The Council have utilised the PfSH Spatial Position Statement²⁴ which set out 650dpa for the period 2011-2034. For the purpose of identifying delivery performance for the period 2011-2016, relying on this document is reasonable in the absence of an adopted development plan target. Taking into account the evidence presented and the particular circumstances of this Plan, the 650dpa appears to me to be a reasonable target to use for this time period.
62. Secondly, the requirement also includes an additional contribution towards unmet need within the wider HMA. This is identified at 20dpa. In terms of the wider HMA, whilst I acknowledge that the shortfall which exists maybe larger than this within the wider HMA overall, the Council have provided a clear and justified reasoning for arriving at this figure. This includes but is not limited to, the environmental constraints which exist within the Borough and also the more comprehensive approach to reviewing housing needs through the sub regional work being completed by PfSH for both the Portsmouth and Southampton HMAs. I have no objections from the other authorities to this level of contribution²⁵. On this basis, the contribution would appear to me to be reasonable and proportionate. To conclude, I am satisfied that the

²³ HOU004 Eastleigh OAN Background Paper, June 2018

²⁴ HOU001 PfSH Spatial Position Statement 2016

²⁵ ED39 SoCG between Eastleigh Borough Council and PfSH Authorities, August 2019

approach adopted to the housing requirement is a sound one and is justified by the evidence base.

Housing Supply Strategy and Distribution of Growth

63. In terms of strategic policies, policies S2 and S3 set the overall context for housing delivery during the Plan period. Policy S2 states that between 2016-2036, the Council will promote the delivery of a minimum of 14,580 dwellings. The policy goes on to define 4 broad categories of supply. **MM10** is necessary to update the policy so it reflects the most up to date figures in relation to these various elements of supply, update to the affordable housing delivery figure as well as updating the employment development figures which I address under issue 3. The modification also deletes part c of the policy which reflected a 3350-dwelling contribution on the SGO which no longer forms part of the Plan. It also introduces additional text to acknowledge the shortfall which occurs at the end of the Plan period which I have addressed at paragraph 48 above.
64. Subject to this modification, this supply includes existing completions (2572 dwellings), dwellings with planning permission or resolutions to grant planning permission (7187 dwellings) an allowance for windfall development (1475 dwellings) and allocated new sites within the Plan (732 dwellings). The policy also refers to the provision of an average of 200 (net) new affordable homes per annum as part of this supply, I shall return to the matter of affordable housing below. Therefore, the majority of the supply over the Plan period is coming from existing commitments.
65. Policy S2 sets out how the Plan envisages this level of housing will be achieved. Some 2572 dwellings reflect existing completions, a significant proportion (7187) will be on existing sites with planning permission or resolutions to grant planning permission. 1475 is identified as an allowance for windfall development. The Council have provided evidence to justify the approach to the windfall allowance²⁶ and have explained the past delivery rates in relation to windfall. This evidence comprises the Land Availability Monitoring System operated by HCC which makes a distinction between large and small sites. The small site allowance is taken from 2019 and not 2016 (to avoid the inclusion of actual completions) and the large site windfall allowance is counted for the last 7 years of the Plan. I am mindful that the figures presented are in the context of an out of date adopted Plan. However, I am satisfied that there is compelling evidence that the windfall allowance represents a reliable source of supply and the approach to the windfall allowance presents a justified and evidence-based approach.
66. As a result, 732 dwellings would be on new sites allocated through this Plan. Given the significant passage of time since the previous Plan was adopted, it is not an unusual situation that a significant bulk of this supply is coming from existing consents which are either under construction or about to be completed.

²⁶ HOU020 Housing Trajectory Update, June 2019 and ED101 Housing Supply Update, July 2020

67. Policy S3 seeks to direct the location of new housing development in the first instance to locations within the urban areas, and then greenfield sites. Policy S3 goes on to define these sites in broad terms, with an indication of the location and dwelling numbers that each of the locations will contribute towards overall supply. A significant proportion of the housing supply will come from sites under construction, with planning permission or resolutions to grant planning permission. The policy serves to define the broad strategic locations of housing growth. **MM11** is necessary to delete reference to the SGO and update the locations contributing to housing delivery as well as the dwelling numbers where new smaller greenfield sites within and adjoining settlements are to be located. The modification also adds the housing trajectory into the reasoned justification as well as identifying a number of strategic sites with planning permission for clarity. This modification is necessary to ensure the policy is effective. Overall, the approach to housing as proposed by policy S3 is a justified approach and is consistent with national policy.
68. The supply of sites is made up from existing completions, large site resolutions and commitments, new site allocations as well as a small site and windfall allowance. Detailed information has been provided within the evidence base concerning the deliverability, suitability and availability of these sites as well as highlighting relevant opportunities and constraints. This information has been drawn from but not limited to planning application information as well as discussions with landowners and developers. To my mind, it presents a comprehensive and realistic picture of delivery rates.
69. In accordance with paragraph 47 of the Framework, the Plan identifies key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the Plan period, as well as identifying a supply of specific, developable sites for years 6-10. The Plan would provide for sites to meet the identified need for a majority of the Plan period, following the adoption of the Plan. The Council's commitment to a review of this Plan within 1 year of adoption will ensure that the shortfall is fully and properly addressed. Overall, I am of the view that the housing supply strategy and distribution of growth proposed is sound, justified and would accord with the Framework in this regard.
70. The Strategic Land Availability Assessment²⁷ report identified specific deliverable and developable sites within existing built-up areas which have the potential to contribute to the Borough's housing requirements. Each site suitability is considered taking into account a number of factors such as access, ground conditions, flood risk, pollution and effect on landscape features. Leading on from this, the Council's evidence on how sites then moved to site allocations is identified²⁸. In addition, small and medium sites were also subject to their own background paper²⁹ setting out the various criteria used. I acknowledge the concerns raised in relation to these assessments, and in particular in relation to those which were not selected for

²⁷ HOU010a-I inclusive SLAA Report, May 2017

²⁸ HOU009 From SLAA to Site Allocations, May 2017

²⁹ HOU11a Small and Medium Sites Background Paper, July 2018, HOU018 Supplementary Site Selection Report, November 2017 and HOU019 Small and Medium Sites Background Paper, October 2018

allocation within the Plan. I also note that in a number of circumstances sites have been rejected with limited consideration of the extent that issues could be resolved or mitigated against. A number of representors have provided examples of measures to address these factors. It seems to me that there have been some inconsistencies in the Council's evaluation of sites. However, these instances are relatively few and far between, and are not so serious that the entire exercise is undermined. In all cases, these matters are subjective and require planning judgement to be applied. Even bearing in mind the potential mitigation measures suggested by others, I consider the outcome of the site selection process to be reasonable and adequately justified.

Housing Trajectory

71. Document ED61b submitted after the hearing sessions outlines the housing trajectory for the Plan period. This was subsequently updated as ED90. This updates the evidence in relation to housing including the Council's matters Statement. In support of the submitted Plan, the Council outlined what it describes as a 'cautious trajectory'³⁰ with a particular focus on discounting the various components of supply. Whilst I fully understand the reasons provided for taking this approach, it is neither warranted, necessary or an approach supported by the Framework. The evidence concerning past delivery rates is sufficiently clear and sites where doubt remains around their delivery have been addressed.
72. The trajectory identifies a 5% buffer should be applied as the authority does not have a record of persistent under delivery. This is supported by reference to the latest housing delivery test score. I note a number of representors consider that a 20% buffer should be applied. As the Plan is to be assessed under the 2012 Framework, I have taken the guidance within this document concerning under delivery into account. On this basis and taking the past delivery rates over a more extended period of time into account, it is my view that the Council does not have a record of persistent under delivery. The performance is indeed mixed but in my planning judgement this is not reflective of a persistent under delivery situation. As a result, the trajectory for the whole Plan period need only reflect a 5% buffer.
73. The evidence base and indeed the housing numbers which the Council are relying upon have evolved throughout the examination. This is perhaps somewhat inevitable with a lengthy examination. I am mindful of a number of criticisms directed at the Council in this regard. Consistency in terms of the way in which figures have been presented has been an issue. Nevertheless, I am content that the modifications recommended (**MM10** and **MM11**) will remedy any soundness issues in this regard.

³⁰ HOU007a Housing Trajectory and HOU007b Tables 1-22, June 2018 updates HOU020 Housing Trajectory Update, June 2019 and HOU021 Housing Trajectory Appendices June 2019

Can the Plan deliver a five-year housing land supply for Eastleigh?

74. ED61a and ED90 set out the five-year housing supply position. On the basis of the Plan's overall housing requirement of 14,580 dwellings, the five-year housing requirement (1 April 2019 to 31 March 2024) is 3,827 dwellings.
75. A windfall allowance totalling 162 dwellings over the five-year period (applicable to years 3,4 and 5) has also been included. As demonstrated by paragraph 48 of the Framework, local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites within the five-year supply position, if there has been evidence to demonstrate that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply to the housing position. The Council have provided evidence to justify the approach to the windfall allowance³¹ and have explained the past delivery rates in relation to windfall as I have set out above. The approach to the windfall allowance presents a justified and evidence-based approach.
76. The evidence to support the delivery of the five year requirement was scrutinised during the examination and where necessary, amendments made to the trajectory in terms of the delivery timeframe and dwelling numbers. In particular, ED61b provided a comprehensive update on both small site and large site delivery, highlighting where necessary differences between these figures and ED20a. It is also the case that a significant component of supply within the five-year position comprises sites which are under construction. It is my view the elements of supply have been based on reasonable assumptions. Taking into account past delivery rates and the evidence presented, there is in my view a clear prospect that there will be an up-to-date supply of specific deliverable sites which are able to provide five years' worth of housing land against the requirement identified at policy S2 upon adoption of the Plan.

Conclusion

77. In conclusion, and subject to the above-mentioned modifications, the Plan's overall approach to the provision of new housing is soundly based. There is a reasonable prospect of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites on adoption of the Plan. However, given the acknowledged shortfall which will occur in housing supply towards the end of the Plan period, this is an issue which the Council will need to address as part of the review of the Plan. I therefore conclude that in relation to issue 2, the Plan is positively prepared, justified and effective in terms of its approach to housing.

Issue 3 – Whether the Plan's strategy for economic growth including the policies concerning employment sites is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy

78. The evidence base comprises the Employment Background Paper (ECON001), and two subsequent updates in the form of (ECON002), July 2018 as well as

³¹ HOU020 Housing Trajectory Update, June 2019

(ECON008) June 2019. ECON008 explains that the employment floorspace for the Plan period has been derived from, as a starting point, the PfSH Economic and Employment Land Evidence Base Paper ECON005, May 2016. This evidence results in the floorspace target figure as set out at policy S2 of 144,050sqm.

79. However, as acknowledged by the Council, this work included a five year additional margin of supply. ECON002 takes this starting point and factors in market demand, net losses and anticipated future losses as well new sources of supply in terms of committed sites with planning permission. These factors, when considered collectively, provide an overall net position reflected in this evidence base and updates the target to 80,000sqm over the period 2011-2036. This results in a Plan target of 103,511sqm (2016-2036) once completions and losses during the period 2011-2016 have been taken into account. In terms of office development, although omitted from the submitted Plan, the evidence demonstrates that taking into account completions and losses for the period between 2011 and 2016, a local plan target of 56,800 sqm is justified for office development. These figures accord with the evidence set out at ECON002 and present a positive and robust evidence base upon which to identify the floorspace target for the Plan period.
80. The above updates require modifications to policies S2 and S4 to ensure that the policies are effective. Policy S2 defines the strategic approach to new development across the Borough. **MM10** is necessary to update the overall employment development figure so that it is consistent with the evidence base as outlined above and takes account of the deleted SGO which included provision for approximately 30,000 sqm of employment floorspace. In the context of economic growth, the policy notes that the Council will promote the delivery of a minimum of 103,500 sqm (net) of new employment development during the Plan period, of which 56,000sqm would be E(g)(i)/(ii) development. Identifying the overall office development figure within policy S2 supports the approach to the various site allocations which will make up this supply as the quantum for each site is reflected within the site allocation wording. I will deal with the sites which contribute to the overall delivery of this figure later within my report, however the identification of a singular (net) employment delivery figure in the context of the approach to new development represents a justified approach, and one which will enable the Plan to be effective in the context of delivering sustainable economic development.
81. The strategic approach to employment provision across the Borough is set out at policy S4. The policy sets out 6 locations which will be the focus for new employment opportunities. This includes existing employment locations, new employment development within the urban edge, a number of small-scale employment allocations and the regeneration of both Eastleigh town centre and Eastleigh Riverside. The policy goes on to acknowledge that office and retail development will be focused on Eastleigh town centre in the first instance. In principle, the policy is soundly based and once again is reflective of the core planning principle of making the effective use of land.
82. However, in order to ensure the policy is effective, **MM12** is necessary to the policy and reasoned justification to reflect the new use classes classifications and to ensure the correct site allocation policies are cross referenced within this policy. In addition, in order to add greater clarity, the modification clarifies

the residual target and total employment land supply position across the Plan period and sets out how it is anticipated that the employment floorspace identified by policy S2 will be met. It also sets out the application of the sequential approach to office development. This is both necessary and justified given that a number of the employment site allocations are in out of centre locations.

83. Policy S4 outlines the detailed approach to employment provision over the Plan period. The approach is broadly to support sustainable economic growth in a number of defined locations comprising mixed use regeneration, greenfield development, extensions to existing business parks, and new employment allocations within the urban edges and/or the reuse of buildings in the countryside. In addition, the policy also places an emphasis on the contribution existing employment sites can make through intensification.
84. The second part of the policy outlines the approach to office development which aims in the first instance to locate development within Eastleigh Town centre, the wider Eastleigh urban renaissance quarter, Eastleigh Riverside and in district and local centres. This approach accords with both the Framework as well as the PFSH Economic Development Strategy in terms of promoting this type of use in the most sustainable location which is to be supported. **MM12** outlines a number of modifications to the policy in terms of cross referencing allocations within the Plan, and introduces a table which clearly defines the target for the Plan period and the various components of supply. Subject to the modification outlined above at **MM12**, the policy would provide a positive and aspirational response to the employment requirements of the Borough over the Plan period.
85. The Southampton Airport Economic Gateway (SAEG)/Eastleigh Riverside is defined within the evidence base as an employment area of sub regional importance. It comprises three site allocations within the Plan (E6, E7 and E9) These 3 employment sites make up almost 132,000sqm of allocated floorspace. On the one hand, these sites are noted as strategic employment locations of subregional importance³². They are also noted as providing the most significant prime, large scale employment opportunity in southern Hampshire. Indeed, site E6 in particular is extremely well connected to both the town centre and the main railway station within Eastleigh. On the other hand, a number of constraints to the development of these sites are noted, primarily in terms of access and the necessity for the Chickenhall Lane Link Road (CLLR) to provide appropriate access to the sites.
86. I have concerns given the acknowledged long term aspirational nature of some of these SAEG/Eastleigh Riverside sites, having regard to national policy contained within the Framework, namely that long term protection for employment purposes is not reasonable if there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for that purpose (paragraph 22). The additional evidence³³ prepared on this issue by the Council explains that the Council would not need all the potential employment land within the SAEG/Eastleigh Riverside area to

³² ECON006 LEP Transforming Solent Growth Strategy, January 2015

³³ ED103 Employment Provision and the CLLR, October 2020

come forward within the Plan period. Appendix 4 to ED103 also clearly sets out the various components of supply within the Eastleigh Riverside area and the potential access options. On balance, I am content that the longer-term nature of these SAEG/Eastleigh Riverside employment site allocations is a justified approach given the acknowledged infrastructure requirements which would be necessary and the wider benefits that these would deliver to Eastleigh as a whole.

87. In terms of existing employment sites, policy DM15 provides a policy framework to protect major, long established employment sites which are allocated on the policies map and provides a criteria-based approach in order for any redevelopment proposals to be assessed. The policy permits the redevelopment of these allocated sites for employment uses as well as permitting flexibility for other employment uses outside of the B use classes. This is provided certain criteria are met including ensuring the proposals would not have a significant impact on the continued primary use of the site and whether the use would be preferable in terms of the amenity of the area or highways safety. This wording adds flexibility to the policy and avoids a blanket restriction on the loss of employment land which should be avoided. **MM46** is necessary to update the policy in light of the changes to the UCO. On balance, and subject to the modification outlined, the policy presents a proportionate approach to the safeguarding of existing employment sites within the Borough.

Conclusion

88. In conclusion, and subject to the modifications outlined above, the Plan's strategy for economic growth, including the policies concerning employment sites, is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 4 – Whether the Plan's site allocations are justified, deliverable and consistent with national policy

Introduction

89. The site allocations which will contribute to the delivery of the planned level of growth over the Plan period are set out at chapter 6 of the Plan. Within my report, I do not propose to address all of the site allocations, particularly where there is no requirement for main modifications. Where individual site allocations include necessary infrastructure such as schools and public open space, this is reflected within the policy itself.
90. **MM51** and **MM52** delete policy DM24 from the Plan and the associated reasoned justification. This is necessary as the policy merely listed sites which had the benefit of planning permission and these sites are largely under construction or built out. For the same reasons, **MM53** deletes policy DM25 from the Plan. However, where sites are still under construction these have been included as new separate allocations. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.
91. In addition, the following sites identified as individual allocations either have planning permission, have been completed or have been amalgamated with

other allocations within the Plan so are to be deleted through the following main modifications – FO2 (Land North of Mortimers Lane) **MM65**, FO5 (Land East of Knowle Lane) **MM68**, FO6 (Foxholes Farm, Fair Oak) **MM69**, FO7 (Land at Costalot Stables, Blind Lane, Horton Heath) **MM70**, FO8 (Hammerley Farm, Anson Road, Horton Heath) **MM71**, BU6 (Land adjacent to Woodleigh, Windmill Lane, Bursledon) **MM79**, CF3 (Land south of the supermarket and east of Bournemouth Road, Chandlers Ford) **MM91**, E2 (Land at Woodside Avenue, Eastleigh) **MM94**. Furthermore, site allocations BU8 (Open space at Long Lane, Bursledon) **MM82** and HO1 Country Park, (Land south of Bursledon Road) **MM86**.

92. E10 (Land south of M27, junction 5) **MM101** E11 (Western extension to Lakeside Country Park, Eastleigh) and **MM102** are also deleted from the Plan as the proposed open space is complete and open for public use. Site allocation HE7 referred to the provision of a cemetery at Kanes Hill, Hedge End. This policy is not justified by the evidence base as there is no evidence to support such a requirement so has been deleted accordingly from the Plan (**MM111**) along with the necessary associated changes to the reasoned justification. It will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.

Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath

Strategic Growth Option (SGO)

93. A SGO is proposed at policy S5 at land north of Bishopstoke and land north and east of Fair Oak. This policy sought to allocate two sites for 1000 and 4300 homes respectively.
94. I have already set out clearly my reasons for the deletion of the SGO and associated infrastructure from the Plan. Policies S5 and S6 are deleted from the Plan through **MM13 - MM25** inclusive. In order to avoid excessive repetition on this issue, I do not propose to address all of these modifications individually. However, they are all necessary to enable the Plan to be effective.
95. In Bishopstoke, aside from the deleted SGO and associated infrastructure requirements, the only remaining allocation is for healthcare provision in the form of policy Bi1, South of Stokewood Surgery, Bishopstoke. **MM62** provides an inset map for the allocation consistent with how other allocations are referred to within the Plan and adds reasoned justification to outline how the site may provide for additional healthcare needs arising as a result of the planned housing growth in the area, namely land West of Horton Heath which I refer to below. This modification is necessary for the policy to be justified and effective in its application and subject to this modification, the policy is sound.
96. In terms of Fair Oak, apart from the deleted allocations which I have outlined above, there remain 5 site allocations within Fair Oak. Policy FO1 is allocated for residential development at West of Durley Road, Horton Heath. **MM64** amends the reference within the policy to the settlement gaps, provides an appropriate cross reference to policy DM6 and also updates the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery to ensure the policy approach

is justified and effective in this regard. Subject to this modification, the policy is sound.

97. Policy FO3 relates to East of Allington Lane. This is also a site allocated for residential development. **MM66** includes a number of changes to make the policy more effective. As above, these include providing an appropriate cross reference to policy DM6 and also updates the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery to ensure the policy approach is justified and effective in this regard. The approximate number of dwellings has also been increased from 38 to 119 to reflect the most recent planning permission on the site. The reasoned justification is also amended to include a reference to the ecological interest of part of the site. Subject to this modification, the policy is sound.
98. Policy FO4 refers to Lechlade, Burnetts Lane, Horton Heath. **MM67** updates the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery to ensure the policy approach is justified and effective in this regard, and for the same reasons provides an appropriate cross reference to policy DM6 within the policy. Subject to this modification, the policy presents a sound approach.
99. Policy HH1 refers to Land west of Horton Heath and is recommended as **MM73**. This comprises and amalgamates the sites previously allocated under policy DM24 as sites 28 and 39 as well as site FO6. As a single allocation, the site represents a strategic allocation for approximately 1500 dwellings, employment land, open space, retail and associated infrastructure provision. The site has outline planning permission and is now, along with an adjoining site (site allocation FO5) owned by Eastleigh Borough Council who is also the developer. In accordance with the housing trajectory, this site will contribute 210 units to five-year supply and there is clear evidence to support this. The policy presents a detailed criteria led policy, referring to a masterplanning approach for the site and providing detailed guidance in this regard within the reasoned justification. The allocation is reflective of the recent planning permissions on the site and is necessary and justified given the comprehensive criteria based approach which the policy presents. **MM73** also sets out within the reasoned justification reference to the provision of new local facilities for Horton Heath. The allocation will also necessitate the approximate location of necessary highways improvements and open space provision to be illustrated on the policies map. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to this required change. The modification presents a sound approach to the allocation and development of this strategic site in a comprehensive manner which will make a significant and important contribution to housing delivery over the Plan period.

Bursledon, Hamble-le-Rice and Hound

100. Within Bursledon, Policy BU1 allocated a residential development site for approximately 19 dwellings at Land North of Providence Hill. **MM74** updates the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery to ensure the policy approach is justified and effective in this regard, as well as providing an appropriate cross reference to policy DM6. Subject to this modification, the policy is sound.

101. Policy BU2 refers to Heath House Farm and is a further residential site allocated for approximately 38 dwellings. In parallel with BU1 above, **MM75** updates the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery to ensure the policy approach is justified and effective in this regard, as well as providing an appropriate cross reference to policy DM6. It also adds text in relation to supporting the Bechstein's food source (grassland habitat) to ensure that ecological matters in relation to the site are adequately addressed. In light of this modification, the allocation is sound.
102. Policy BU3 allocates a residential development site for approximately 50 dwellings at land lying south east of Windmill Lane. **MM76** updates the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery to ensure the policy approach is justified and effective in this regard, as well as providing an appropriate cross reference to policy DM6. The policy wording has also been strengthened in relation to the adjoining Bursledon Windmill Conservation Area to ensure that the heritage assets are adequately referenced within the policy, to ensure that the policy is effective. Subject to this modification, the policy is sound.
103. **MM77** and **MM78** provide inset maps for the associated allocations at policy BU4 (Tansfield Stud) and BU5 (Land at Heath Green, Heath House Lane, Hedge End). The inset maps are justified to ensure the policies are effective in terms of their application and to ensure the Plan presents a consistent approach in this regard. Subject to these modifications, policies BU4 and BU5 are sound.
104. Finally, policy BU6 allocates the Riverside Boatyard, Blundell Lane, Bursledon for mixed use development. The modification here is addressed by **MM80**, a number of the changes necessary are to ensure a consistency of approach in relation to the two boatyard sites (see policy HA2, Riverside and **MM84** outlined at paragraph 109 below).
105. With **MM80**, the allocation reflects that the Boatyard use itself is protected through policy DM20, and accordingly the site is more accurately described as adjoining the boatyard. The site boundary requires amending to reflect this. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to this required change.
106. An inset map is also necessary to identify the site area, for consistency with how other site allocations are identified within the Plan. Appropriate uses include boatyard and/or hotel use as well as holiday accommodation. These uses are reflective of the potential of the site to accommodate a range of uses identified. A number of development criteria have been amended, in principle these relate to the provision of SuDS, details of buffering required to protect the headwater system and associated waterway as well as specific measures relating to green infrastructure and habitat provision. These modifications are necessary to ensure that the ecological impacts of any proposed development here are adequately addressed. For the same reason, a contribution towards the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership is also identified by the policy as well as the provision of a management plan in order to improve the relationship of the site to the River Hamble and sites designated as being of nature conservation value.

107. I have also amended modification **MM80** following the main modifications consultation to ensure consistency with paragraph 6.2.56 and policy HA2 of the Plan, as there is no evidence of long identified need for a high-quality hotel to be provided within the Hamble Peninsula. The evidence in this regard is both limited and dated and the Council accepted this position in relation to site HA2. As a result, the modification deletes the reasoned justification at 6.2.32.
108. Within Hamble-le-Rice, there are a total of 3 allocations. **MM83** provides an inset map for the associated allocation at policy HA1, Railway station parking, Hamble. **MM85** provides an inset map for Hamble Airfield. In both of these instances, the inset map is justified to ensure the policies are effective in terms of their application and to ensure the Plan presents a consistent approach in this regard. Subject to these modifications, the policy approach is sound.
109. Policy HA2 allocates the Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park for mixed use development. This site was subject to discussion at two separate hearing sessions during the course of the examination. The site is a brownfield site which provides an important function for the local community through the provision of, amongst other things, water sports facilities and uses used by the local sea scouts and sea cadets. The allocation outlines that the site is suitable for a range of uses including marina, holiday accommodation and car parking/boat storage. However, **MM84** deletes the specific reference to hotel use within the policy along with the reasoned justification as there is no evidence to support the long-identified need for a high-quality hotel on the Hamble Peninsula. Accordingly, this element of the policy is not justified by the evidence base.
110. There was significant evidence presented in relation to the viability of a number of development options on this site, as well as more extensive development proposals forming part of a masterplan approach for the site. In order to recognise that alternative uses may be supported here, the modification **MM84** mirrors the wording of policy DM20 in terms of acknowledging that floorspace not restricted to boat related uses maybe suitable on the site. This is necessary for the policy to be justified and positively prepared. In addition, the modification strengthens the reasoned justification in relation to the training facilities for sailing and canoeing and other water sports which use the site, placing an emphasis on not just retaining but enhancing these facilities. Given the widely recognised important community role that these facilities provide this is also necessary for the policy to be justified. Furthermore, the reasoned justification is also amended to emphasise the ecological sensitive locations adjacent to the site and to provide a cross reference to policy DM11 in this regard. Subject to this modification, the allocation at Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park is sound.

Chandler's Ford and Hiltingbury

111. There are three site allocations in total for Chandler's Ford. **MM87** provides for a new policy at CF1 Land at Common Road Industrial Estate, Chandler's Ford. This is an allocation for approximately 30 dwellings, the site was previously listed under policy DM25. It reflects the changing nature of the immediate area, for example the Drapers Tools factory site opposite the site has planning

permission for residential use. The modification provides a criteria-based policy approach, covering such matters as the existing topography and flood risk, vehicular access, a cross reference to policy DM6 in terms of sustainable urban drainage and the requirements for a site level HRA. Overall, the policy presents a justified and effective approach. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to this required change.

112. Policy CF2 is Land to the rear of 75-99 Hiltisbury Road, an allocation for approximately 16 dwellings through **MM88**. This site was also previously listed on the now deleted policy DM25. The policy and reasoned justification reflect a criteria-based approach to the development of the site, and the policy is justified given the sites central location in close proximity to a number of services and facilities. As a result, the policy represents a sound approach. As noted above regarding site CF1, as I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to the required changes.

113. Policy CF3 relates to the Central Precinct in Chandler's Ford. It is allocated for a mixed commercial and residential development, **MM89** amends the identified uses in light of the changes to the UCO, as well as including a cross reference to policy DM22 and referencing the wastewater network. Overall, the allocation presents an appropriate mix of uses within this central location and the policy is sound.

114. Finally, policy CF4 allocates Land at Steele Close, Chandlers Ford for a mixed-use development. It comprises an operational fire station which has been declared surplus to requirements by the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. **MM90** amends the site area and the uses in light of the changes to the UCO and includes a reference to the application of the sequential test given the sites location adjacent to junction 13 of the M3. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes. Overall, the policy subject to the modification outlined, presents a proportionate approach given the site's location and the uses envisaged and the policy is therefore sound.

Eastleigh

115. This is the main town within the Borough, providing the main shopping centre for the Borough as well as a number of significant employment locations. The approach to the site allocations here are to address a number of land use requirements including retail and employment provision over the Plan period. A number of the main modifications are required to reflect the changes to the UCO which have occurred since the Plan was submitted for examination, in particular these changes have had significant impacts on the approach to the designated shopping frontage which I shall set out in further detail below.

116. Policy E1 contains the Land at the Civic Offices, Leigh Road. The site is allocated for a range of uses including offices, employment, education and training with community facilities and residential use also referred to. **MM92** amends the site area, inset map and address to delete the reference to the former Magistrates Court which no longer forms part of the allocation. It will

be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.

117. The modification also places an emphasis on achieving a density of development which optimises the use of the site and deletes the previous reference to a masterplan which is neither justified nor necessary at this site. Corresponding changes to the reasoned justification are also included within the modification. Subject to **MM92**, the site allocation is sound and justified.
118. **MM93** replaces the deleted policy E2 which allocated Land at Woodside Avenue (deleted as site under construction and largely complete) with Land at Toynbee Road for residential development comprising approximately 64 dwellings. This allocation was originally listed under policy DM25 (now deleted). The site includes the vacant Jewsons store and a number of vehicle rental, repair and storage business premises. The site is well located in terms of accessibility to shops and services within the town. The allocation includes a number of development requirements. In terms of permeability, the allocation reflects the fact that the existing footbridge into Archers Road does not meet current standards and as such the allocation includes for a replacement footbridge over the railway line to the immediate north of the site. It will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes. Overall, the allocation is adequately justified by the evidence and is sound.
119. Policy E4 is for the Urban Renaissance Quarter. This is a mixed-use site allocation on the approach to Eastleigh town centre. Recent planning permissions as well as completed developments limit the extent to which opportunities for redevelopment exist in this location, particularly because a number of the individual development sites within the allocation have recently been completed. As a result, the Council will need to revise the boundary as illustrated for the allocation on the policies map to reflect these changes. It will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.
120. **MM96** is necessary to amend the policy in light of these recent permissions and completions. The modification deletes (iii) which was text relating to the Romsey Road frontage. The Plan as a whole places an emphasis on higher density development within Eastleigh. In order to ensure the policies of the Plan support this, **MM96** also amends the wording of criteria (i) to ensure that any residential, office or community development here achieves at least three stories in height. This is necessary for the policy to be effective.
121. Eastleigh River Side (policy E6) relates to an extensive area including existing industrial sites and railway sidings to the east of Eastleigh railway station and extending to Southampton airport to the south. The area also includes currently inaccessible greenfield land to the south of the Fareham railway line. It presents potentially the most significant brownfield development site within the Borough and subject to the necessary infrastructure works outlined within the policy, has the capacity to deliver a significant amount of floorspace and deliver a range of appropriate town centre uses, including residential development. In order to achieve this, the policy requires a masterplan approach, which should emphasise the genuine opportunities for enhanced pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the site and the town centre.

122. Policy E6 identifies appropriate uses and seeks to promote the redevelopment of existing industrial premises subject to a number of detailed policy criteria. In the first instance, the policy would require the preparation of a development brief and masterplan for the site, which could include, mixed use development with opportunities for a variety of land use types as supported by the policy wording. This presents a flexible approach which would allow development proposals to be assessed against a defined set of development criteria which are justified and effective. **MM97** amends the uses which are deemed to be appropriate at the site, reflective of the changes which have occurred to the UCO. The modification adds additional policy wording to the criteria to ensure that provision is made for the relocation or retention of the existing bus depot facility, this is necessary for effectiveness. Furthermore, the modification also ensures that specific reference is made to the area within Eastleigh Riverside which is defined for business and/or industrial development, this is justified in light of the employment evidence base. I outline at paragraphs 85 to 86 the relevance of the CLLR to the development potential of this site, as well as policy E7 and E9. Accordingly, I do not propose to repeat these points here but merely acknowledge the important role the CLLR can play to the long-term vision for this site and the neighbouring site. **MM97** ensures that this key infrastructure component is accurately reflected by the policy and reasoned justification. Subject to this modification, policy E6 is sound.
123. Policy E7 refers to development opportunities adjoining Eastleigh Riverside, specifically east of the railway works. The policy seeks to permit the development of 8.5 hectares of land for employment generating uses provided a number of detailed criteria are met. **MM98** removes text within the policy relating to policy E9 which is not relevant to the policy wording, amends the site area to ensure it is accurate, updates the uses which will be appropriate in light of the changes to the UCO, and includes an appropriate cross reference to the CLLR. The modification also introduces additional reasoned justification to acknowledge the important economic role that the site has. This is a justified approach. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes. Overall, subject to this modification, the policy is sound.
124. Policy E9 relates to the allocation at Southampton Airport. The policy provides a framework for future development at the airport, recognising that the Council will continue to work with the operators to promote its viability and support its expansion subject to a number of development criteria. **MM100** adds an inset map, amends the reference from countryside gaps to settlement gaps for consistency with the rest of the Plan, updates the amount of floorspace envisaged for employment uses and/or airport related activities and updates the uses which are considered appropriate in light of the changes to the UCO (including changes to the reasoned justification) and provides an appropriate cross reference to the CLLR. The modification also adds additional development criteria relating to a site level HRA requirement. This modification is necessary in order to ensure the policy is effective and as a result the policy is sound.
125. **MM103** provides an inset map for the associated allocation at policy E12 Aviary Estate, Eastleigh. The inset map is necessary to ensure the policy is effective in terms of its application and to ensure the Plan presents a

consistent approach in this regard. Subject to this modification, policy E12 is sound.

Allbrook and North Boyatt

126. There are two site allocations at Allbrook, policy AL1, Land east of Allbrook Way and policy AL2, Land west of Allbrook Way. Policy AL1 allocates the site for approximately 95 dwellings. **MM104** deletes the references within the policy to the SGO which no longer forms part of the Plan. As a result, the references within the policy to a new link road are changed to relief road with an appropriate reference to addressing the existing traffic constraints on Allbrook Hill and the requirement for an appropriate transport assessment. This is a justified approach. The modification also introduces a cross reference to policy DM6 and the delivery of the necessary wastewater network reinforcement. Subject to this modification, the policy at AL1 is sound.
127. Policy AL2 allocates a site at Land west of Allbrook Way for approximately 45 dwellings. **MM105** deletes the references within the policy to the SGO which no longer forms part of the Plan. As a result, the references within the policy to a new link road are changed to relief road with an appropriate cross reference to policy AL1 above. The modification also introduces a reference to an appropriate landscape scheme, this is justified to ensure that the impacts of the development are suitably addressed in this regard. The modification also introduces a cross reference to policy DM6 and the delivery of the necessary wastewater network reinforcement. The modification also deletes the reasoned justification set out at paragraph 6.4.73 concerning the SGO which has been deleted through other modifications referred to within this report. Subject to this modification, the approach is sound.

Hedge End, West End and Botley

128. There are 6 key housing site allocations within Hedge End. The town and immediate area have seen a significant amount of new residential development in recent years. It now represents the second largest settlement in the Borough and contributes a significant proportion of employment floorspace, as well as out of town retail development. The allocations here reflect the settlement's exiting provision and look to expand upon the established role the centre has within the Borough.
129. Land West of Woodhouse Lane (HE1) is a strategic site allocation for approximately 605 dwellings and associated infrastructure including a new secondary school, sports facilities, new local centre and public open space. Planning permission has been granted for the development of the site and this is reflected in the latest housing trajectory which envisages 105 dwellings contributing towards five-year supply and there is clear evidence to support this. **MM106** is necessary to ensure the policy reflects the most up to date housing delivery figures, changing the reference from countryside gaps to settlement gaps to ensure consistency with other policies within the Plan, as well as updating the reference to wastewater infrastructure provision and delivery and the addition of a cross reference to policies DM34 and DM6 to ensure the policy approach is justified in this regard.
130. Policies HE2 and HE3 are allocated for approximately 106 and 16 dwellings respectively. Allocation HE2 refers to Land at Sundays Hill and Land north of

Peewit Hill Close, a further site which has planning permission. Policy HE3 refers to Land at Home Farm, St John's Road, Hedge End which will deliver housing beyond the first 5 years of the Plan. Although a majority of the site is safeguarded for sharp sand and gravel in the adopted Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2013), I am content that the site represents an appropriate housing site despite this safeguarding. Both of these sites include detailed criteria-based policies covering a number of matters including housing types and tenure, infrastructure provision and appropriate landscaping measures. **MM107** and **MM108** are necessary to make the policy wording, cross referencing to policies within the Plan and associated reasoned justification more effective and also reflect a consistent approach to wastewater provision across the site allocations.

131. Land off Peewit Hill Close and Dodwell Lane is covered by policy HE4. This is a prominent site located just off junction 8 of the M27 and is allocated for employment purposes. **MM109** is necessary to reduce the site area as the original site area identified is not deliverable. In order to reflect this, a new inset map has been produced and associated updates to the policies map will be necessary. It will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to this required change. In addition, the policy wording will be strengthened to identify the amount of employment floorspace deliverable on the site and include references to the application of a sequential site assessment as well as adding additional references to landscape screening. **MM81** is also necessary to delete the associated reasoned justification for consistency. Subject to these modifications, the policy is sound.
132. **MM110** is necessary to modify policy HE5 Land at Netley Firs, Kanes Hill, Hedge End which is a further employment site to provide greater clarity in relation to the amount of floorspace the site can provide and the changes to the UCO.
133. West End lies to the south western boundary of the Borough adjoining Southampton. It includes a local centre and contains a significant amount of the Borough's employment floorspace. As a result, 3 of the allocations in the West End are for employment purposes with the remaining allocation covering the Ageas Bowl.
134. Policies WE1, WE2 and WE3 are site allocations for employment use at Chalcroft Business Park. The existing business park is covered by policy WE1 whilst policy WE2 represents an opportunity to extend the existing business park provision through a modest extension to the south of the existing allocation. This site is in single ownership and represents an opportunity to deliver employment floorspace during the earlier years of the Plan period. In a similar manner, WE3 allocates land to extend the existing Berrywood Business Park. **MM112, MM113 and MM114** amend the policies so that they are consistent with other site allocations in indicating the site area clearly within the Plan. Additional text to the policies to indicate the application of the sequential approach in relation to any office use is also necessary in light of the Council's overall approach to employment floorspace in out of centre locations. Subject to these modifications, the policies present a sound approach.

135. Policy WE4 allocates the Ageas Bowl and Tennis Centre at Botley Road. Part of this site includes the internationally known cricket facility which is the home of Hampshire County Cricket. The importance of this facility to Eastleigh and beyond is recognised within the Plan, which highlights that the Ageas Bowl along with the Hampshire Tennis and Health club, associated golf course and hotel venue provide a centre of sporting excellence of regional significance.
136. Notwithstanding the recognised regional significance of the facilities located here, there is a need to balance the importance of this site with the wider landscape character of the area. In order to do this, the allocation should seek to provide a positive policy framework for any future development proposals, whilst focusing on the outdoor recreational focus. Given this objective and the site's acknowledged regional and international significance, the current policy wording presents a restrictive approach which is neither justified nor effective. Accordingly, **MM115** seeks to address this by amending the policy wording to provide a positive approach to supporting new development in this location, where it facilitates the important sporting role of the site. The criteria-based policy also recognises that an element of residential development on the north west corner of the site, as defined on the policies map maybe acceptable. However, any development of this nature would need to ensure that the function of the Ageas Bowl as an international cricket ground and events location is not compromised, and the revised policy wording reflects this requirement.
137. For consistency with how other site allocations are referenced within the Plan, the modification also provides an inset map. The site boundary is also extended to reflect the modification proposed. It will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.
138. The modification goes on to provide a greater emphasis on providing high quality design development which respects the existing site and its wider setting, including no adverse impacts on the adjacent Telegraph Woods SINC. Subject to this modification, the policy for the Ageas Bowl and Tennis Centre presents a sound approach.
139. The Parish of Botley is located on the eastern boundary of the Borough, bordering Fair Oak and Horton Heath. There are 4 site allocations for residential development here as follows.
140. Policy BO1 allocates Land south of Maddoxford Lane and east of Crows Nest Lane for residential development. The capacity of the site reflects its rural setting and the development criteria within the policy cover issues such as access, biodiversity and landscaping. **MM116** is necessary to make the policy wording and associated reasoned justification effective and reflects a consistent approach across the site allocations to wastewater provision. Subject to this modification, the policy approach is sound.
141. Policy BO2 is a 26-hectare site on the north eastern side of Winchester Street. It represents one of the larger allocations in Botley for up to 375 dwellings and the site has a resolution to grant planning permission. In accordance with the trajectory, it will contribute 50 units to the five-year supply and there is clear evidence to support this. A number of modifications are necessary for the policy to be justified and effective, there are covered by **MM117**. The site

name has been amended to more accurately reflect the location of the site. It will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.

142. In addition, the number of dwellings the site can deliver has also been amended to more accurately reflect the recent resolution to grant planning permission here. The recent resolution to grant planning permission does not include any employment floorspace and accordingly, the modification seeks to delete this requirement from the policy as this is no longer deliverable. The policy wording in relation to the sustainable drainage strategy has been amended to cross reference policy DM6. The wording in relation to public rights of way has been amended to include reference to the delivery of a section of the new strategic footpath/cycleway/bridleway route between the Winchester Road and Wangfield Lane to link with the proposed Botley to Bishops Waltham rail trail. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map to reflect this route.
143. Finally, the final criterion in relation to wastewater provision is amended through the modification to ensure, amongst other things, the development is phased to align with the delivery of any necessary wastewater network reinforcement. Subject to this modification, the policy presents a sound housing allocation in a suitable location which will play an important role in contributing a number of dwellings to the five-year housing supply.
144. Policies B03 and B04 are smaller housing sites within Botley. B03 is Land east of Kings Copse Avenue and east of Tanhouse Lane and is allocated for approximately 120 dwellings. The site falls within the River Hamble Country Park Estate, and **MM118** amends the policy including the site area and increases the indicative number of dwellings to reflect the most recent evidence produced by the landowner. It also adds a reference to River Hamble Country Park Estate within the reasoned justification. The modification also cross references policy DM6 whilst ensuring that the policy adequately references the wastewater network. **MM119** to policy B04 which is Land north of Myrtle Cottage, Winchester Road also cross references policy DM6 whilst ensuring that the policy adequately references the wastewater network. In both of these cases, the modifications are required to ensure that they are sound.

Conclusion

145. I conclude that subject to the modifications noted above, the Plan's site allocations are justified, deliverable and consistent with national policy.

Issue 5 - Whether the Plan's infrastructure and transport policies and proposals will provide for the planned level of growth identified over the Plan period

Infrastructure

146. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)³⁴ was produced as a Background Paper in June 2018 and subsequently updated in October 2018. It provides a detailed assessment of infrastructure requirements across a broad range of facilities, services and amenities across the Plan period. The IDP outlines indicative costs for individual projects in a clear and precise manner and where possible, identifies the mechanisms which will be used to fund the necessary physical, green, social and community infrastructure required, taking into account the viability and deliverability of new development. These include but are not limited to the use of government grants such as the Transforming Cities Fund, Housing Infrastructure Fund and New Homes Bonus as well as planning obligations. Overall, it presents a comprehensive assessment of the implications of the planned growth in the Local Plan on infrastructure requirements across the Borough.
147. A viability assessment³⁵ was carried out by the Council in line with the advice in national planning policy and guidance. It was scrutinised as part of this examination in relation to other policy matters, noted above. I am satisfied that a robust assessment of viability has been undertaken such that the scale of obligations and policy burdens will not prevent development being delivered in a timely manner.
148. Strategic policies S10 and S11 outline the framework for securing both green infrastructure and community facilities. Both policies provide clear detail on the type of facility envisaged, and the mechanisms which will be used to facilitate such provision. In terms of policy S10, the policy addresses Green Infrastructure which includes spaces and habitats with varying functions such as accessible countryside. The policy aims to enhance, expand and connect green infrastructure and biodiversity networks within the Borough. **MM30** is necessary for clarity to ensure that the policy correctly references the Hampshire ecological network map as well as adding additional text to paragraph 4.67 to correctly reference the Hampshire County Council Physical Activity Strategy 2018-2021. Subject to this modification, the policy presents a suitable framework for supporting green infrastructure provision through the Plan period.
149. Policy S11 addresses community facilities. It seeks to outline how the Council will ensure that adequate provision is made for the needs of the Borough's communities through the Plan period. **MM31** amends the reference from churches to faith groups to ensure that all community needs are suitably addressed. The modification also deletes a number of associated references to community facilities associated with the SGO which is no longer part of the

³⁴ DEL001 Infrastructure Delivery Plan Background Paper June 2018 and DEL002 Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update, October 2018

³⁵ DEL004a and DEL004b Local Plan Viability Study and associated Appendices, June 2018

Plan. This change is necessary to ensure that the policy is effective in its application.

Transport

150. Policy S12 sets the strategic approach to transport infrastructure across the Borough. The policy outlines the key transport infrastructure which will be delivered over the Plan period, which includes a mixture of highways and road improvements, public transport priorities routes, the Eastleigh cycle route network and improved pedestrian and railway enhancements. The approach outlined by both policy S12 and S13 is supported by a considerable amount of evidence submitted by the Council³⁶. In particular, the Eastleigh Strategic Transport Study³⁷ informed the initial stages of the Plan and was subsequently updated by additional evidence³⁸.
151. **MM32** is necessary to improve the clarity and effectiveness of policy S12, by rewording the policy to provide a greater emphasis on sustainable modes of transport and ensuring the cross referencing to other transport related projects within the Plan is consistent and clear. The modification amends the reasoned justification to ensure it is consistent with these objectives. The modification also removes the reference to the provision of a new link road connecting the north of Bishopstoke, Fair Oak SGO with the M3 Junction 12 via Allbrook. In light of my recommended main modifications regarding the deletion of the SGO (policies S5 and S6) this link road is not a justified part of the Plan.
152. Policy S13 provides the strategic policy framework for the creation of new and improving existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleway links across the Borough. A number of these new routes are identified within the policy and subsequently through the key diagram. **MM33** strengthens the policy wording to reference connecting key destinations, whilst additional wording introduces greater flexibility to the precise route of any new proposals so that it can be incorporated within the design development. This additional policy wording is necessary to ensure the policy is effective in its application. This policy is both necessary and justified given the importance of green infrastructure within the Borough as well as the Council's desire to improve the network of multi-functional non-vehicular routes across the Borough. Subject to this modification, policy S13 presents an effective and justified approach which is consistent with the objectives of national policy aimed at promoting sustainable development.
153. Where necessary, specific policies such as B05, B06, HE4, FO9 and E6, E7 and E9 provide the policy framework for the delivery of a number of the key new and improved transport infrastructure projects envisaged by policy S12. A number of these transport infrastructure projects merit further discussion, and

³⁶ TRA001-TRA015 inclusive comprise the evidence base to the Plan on Transport related matters however a number of these documents relate to specific elements of the SGO (policies S5 and S6) which are deleted from the Plan.

³⁷ TRA010a Eastleigh Strategic Transport Study, December 2015 and associated appendices (TRA010a-TRA010g)

³⁸ TRA015 Transport Assessment Update, April 2019

these are addressed below. The conclusions I have drawn in relation to these elements of transport infrastructure have been informed by the policies map, representations, the evidence prepared and where necessary subsequently updated following the hearing sessions. **MM72** amends the reference and title of FO9 to FO4 in light of renumbering which has taken place within the Plan.

Chickenhall Lane Link Road (CLLR)

154. The CLLR is described as a high priority important long term road scheme for the Borough. The road would be located between Bishopstoke Road and Wide Lane, although the precise alignment would be determined as part of a detailed masterplanning exercise. The road would provide a by-pass for Eastleigh Town Centre, which will go some way towards addressing existing significant journey time delays as well as peak hour traffic congestion along the B3037 and A335 and existing air quality problems.
155. Whilst I commend the overall objective to address existing congestion within Eastleigh, the evidence to support the safeguarding of the CLLR was historical and lacked sufficient detail. A great deal of emphasis had been placed on the desire to provide such a link road, without any robust up to date evidence to support the safeguarding of land within the Plan for this purpose. In addition, it was unclear to what extent the road would be necessary to access potential employment site allocations E6, E7 and E9. I have no reason to doubt that the CLLR would be of benefit to the area concerned, however its inclusion within the Plan needs to be based on realistic potential that the road will come forward.
156. Despite the CLLR being desirable to the delivery of a number of site allocations, the Plan was unclear as to what proposals would in effect bring forward the CLLR, whether or not the CLLR was essential in order to bring forward these particular sites and as a result, the overall deliverability of these sites in light of these potential access constraints. The Council have addressed this through the preparation of additional feasibility work with a number of key landowners³⁹. The Council prepared additional evidence concerning the timing, phasing, delivery and funding of the CLLR as well as clarification relating to the necessity of the CLLR to deliver the employment site allocations referred to.
157. This additional evidence⁴⁰ concludes that there is a reasonable prospect of a viable and deliverable road scheme coming forward in the medium term to deliver the part of the road necessary to realise sufficient employment land to meet the Plans target. The evidence is supported by a signed Memorandum of Understanding between the landowners and developers concerned in relation to the delivery of the employment site allocations. This includes exploring options and opportunities to deliver the employment site with the associated infrastructure and providing an indicative timetable.
158. The evidence update explains recent development activity at the employment sites, notably discussions regarding a potential joint venture to facilitate road

³⁹ ED103A Letter from Network Rail re CLLR and Employment Provision, November 2020

⁴⁰ ED103 Eastleigh Borough Council's Position Statement on Employment Provision and the CLLR, October 2020

access to the sites in a comprehensive manner. This to me is a positive indication that a comprehensive scheme can come forward which will prioritise infrastructure delivery in a coordinated manner. **MM97, MM98 and MM100** introduce text to ensure that policies E6, E7, E9 and the reasoned justification clearly reference the provision of the CLLR as part of the any redevelopment proposals.

159. A fully funded programme for the delivery of the CLLR is not available at this present time. Nevertheless, the Council have pointed to recent examples where funding has successfully been secured within the Borough for the delivery of other transport infrastructure projects such as the Botley Bypass and new infrastructure associated with the West Horton Heath development site (site allocation HH1). As a result, I am satisfied that there is a reasonable prospect that funding mechanisms could be utilised for the CLLR during this Plan period. The Council have also outlined potential phasing options for the CLLR although acknowledge that at this stage, the phasing of the CLLR is indicative. Additional reasoned justification included within **MM97** indicates a commitment to a phased approach, with the first phases being those parts of the CLLR necessary to deliver the above employment allocations. This is a justified approach given the relative importance of these employment sites to the longer term overall employment land supply within the Borough.
160. I have addressed all of the modifications necessary to the employment site allocations in detail earlier within my report. However, in the context of the CLLR, the approach to the CLLR is neither justified or effective. In order to rectify this, **MM97, MM98, MM99, MM100** are necessary in order to provide clarity regarding the delivery of the CLLR and the roles of the site allocations in achieving this. To do this, the modifications strengthen the policy wording at policies E6, E7 and E9 as well as the reasoned justification to ensure that development proposals should make reference to a contribution towards the full link road only where there is a reasonable prospect of a full link road being viable and deliverable. Any contribution/funding should be proportionate to the traffic impacts of the proposal and parts of the road should be constructed as part of the new site access arrangements. This modification is necessary for the policies to be effective.
161. Based on the evidence presented and subject to the modifications outlined above, the safeguarding of a route for the proposed CLLR is justified and effective. It would assist in the long-term delivery of a number of employment site allocations which I have already addressed.

Policy BO5 -Botley bypass

162. The Botley bypass comprises a new road to the north of Botley village as well as improvements to Woodhouse Lane. It is identified as a strategic transport project at policy S12 and secured planning permission in 2018. Funding for the delivery of the road has been secured through the Housing Delivery Fund. Policy BO5 sets out various criteria for the delivery of the road, and **MM120** clarifies the requirement to promote traffic management measures within Botley village in association with the bypass. Subject to this modification, the policy is justified and effective.

Conclusion

163. I find that subject to the MMs set out, the Plan's infrastructure and transport policies and proposals will provide for the planned level of growth identified over the Plan period. It is soundly based in terms of transport and infrastructure provision across the Plan period.

Issue 6 – Whether the Plan provides a sound approach towards meeting housing needs across different groups in the community and whether the approach to housing standards is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Affordable Housing

164. As stated by the Framework, the local plan should meet the full objectively assessed need for both market and affordable housing. At its starting point, policy S2 advises the Council will support the provision of an average of 165 (net) new affordable dwellings per annum which equates to at least 3300 new affordable homes over the Plan period. However, the evidence base to support this figure⁴¹ was not based on the most up-to-date requirement for the Plan period 2016-2036. It cannot therefore represent a robust starting point for assessing the level of affordable housing needed for the Borough.

165. At my request, the Council updated this evidence⁴² in the form of the ORS update. This latest evidence takes into account the current unmet need as well as projecting future unmet need, providing a detailed explanation of the various components which make up projected growth for affordable housing. The report concludes that there will be a total need for 4000 affordable dwellings in addition to the current stock, which equates to 200 dwellings per year, or 28% of the requirement. This results in a 35 dwelling per annum increase over and above the requirement of the submitted Plan. The approach adopted accords with both the PPG and the Framework in this regard.

166. Policy DM30 addresses the delivery of affordable housing over the Plan period, the starting point being that 35% affordable housing will be required to be delivered on sites which meet the defined criteria. This percentage is greater than the proportion of affordable homes needed. However, there are good reasons for this. Firstly, the aforementioned 28% figure is net – it is possible that there may be some losses of affordable homes during the Plan period. However, more fundamentally, some sites will not provide the 35% sought by policy DM30. Indeed, the Plan specifically includes a site size threshold for applying this element of the policy, along with a viability clause. Consequently, if there is any chance of the Plan securing 28% affordable housing, it is in my view necessary that the policy requirement is set at a higher level.

167. **MM57** amends the criteria of the policy at i and iii to increase the site size threshold from 0.33ha to 0.5ha and also amends the number of dwellings capable of being accommodated on the site from 11 or more dwellings to 10

⁴¹ HOU006 ORS Assessment of Affordable Housing and Other Housing Types, July 2017

⁴² ED102 Affordable Housing Update ORS, July 2020

or more. The final part of the policy introduces an element of flexibility to these criteria, by acknowledging that there may well be circumstances where a lower proportion of affordable housing is justified in terms of the impacts on the economic viability of the proposed scheme. This approach is in accordance with that outlined at paragraph 50 of the Framework. Whilst this approach may result in some circumstances where affordable housing needs will not be met in full, the policy to my mind sets a realistic and proportionate approach.

168. The threshold levels identified by policy DM30 have been tested through the viability work⁴³ produced as part of the evidence base which considers the viability implications of a threshold level set at 0%, 20% and 35% affordable housing. This evidence demonstrates that in a majority of cases the 35% threshold level would be realistic and achievable, however there were examples where the likelihood of this level being achieved was more questionable, for example on low rise flatted development on brownfield sites. The modification which supports additional flexibility should go some way towards addressing this issue. Taking into account the modification outlined, the Plan's approach to affordable housing is sound.

Gypsies and Travellers

169. The Council published its Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in February 2017 (CD HOU017). This report and the approach adopted including the methodology used to assess requirements over the Plan period accords with the Planning Policy for Travellers Sites (PPTS) 2015. It represents a comprehensive approach and sound part of the evidence base.

170. This report identified the need for five pitches over the Plan period. Since the report was published, one pitch which was previously identified as unauthorised has now been granted full permission and as a result, the residual requirement is now for 4 pitches. Policy DM33 confirms that this need will be met through the allocation of sites through policies BU4 and BU5. The policy goes on to provide a five-part criteria-based policy to assess any further proposals for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople provision over the Plan period.

171. The policy approach to the allocation of gypsy, travellers and travelling show people is suitably worded so as to be effective in its application and justified by the evidence base. The policy is therefore sound.

Residential Space standards

172. Policy DM31 refers to the provision of dwellings with higher access standards. The policy requires that 100% of new dwellings should meet at least Part M4(1) standard and (subject to the modification set out below) sets a target that 80% of dwellings to meet Part M4(2) and 100% of all specialist housing for older people to meet Part M4(3) standard. This is supported by the Accessible Housing and Internal Space Standards Background Paper (HOU013). Criticism levelled at this evidence base centres largely on the fact that not all people over 65 will require their home to be adapted and secondly

⁴³ DEL004a and DEL004b – Local Plan Viability Study and Appendices, April 2018

that there is a difference between the aging of the existing population rather than new residents of this age profile moving to the area.

173. There is some merit in relation to these concerns, particularly given the fact that a number of these residents will be existing residents. Consequently, in accordance with the government guidance on optional technical standards, **MM58** clarifies that the requirements in relation to wheelchair accessible homes only applies to dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live there. In addition, **MM59** amends the reasoned justification to delete a reference to the London Plan which was an error within the submission Plan.

Housing Mix and Density/Self Build Housing

174. The Framework is clear that Plans should have due regard to providing for a range of housing types. As a result, the Plan sets out a number of policies to deal with this objective. Self-Build Housing is addressed by policy DM23 which relates to residential development in urban areas. The final criterion of the policy advises that where possible, residential development sites should include provision for self and custom build development. **MM50** adds additional reasoned justification to paragraph 5.117 in order to make specific reference to the Self Builds and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and to acknowledge the need to make more land available at a range of sites to encourage growth in the self-build sector. The modification is necessary to ensure the policy is effective in its application.
175. Policy DM26 relates to creating a mix of housing. It requires proposals to demonstrate how residential and mixed-use schemes will contribute to the required overall mix of housing within the HMA. In addition, **MM54** seeks to amend the criteria at (b) to require proposals to demonstrate how the scheme will contribute to the provision of properties suitable for a broader range of end users. This wording is justified by the evidence base and necessary in order to make the policy effective in its application.
176. There are a number of policies which address specific types of residential development. Policy DM27 deals with delivering older people's housing which sets out that new development should seek to respond to the aging population by increasing the supply of specialist housing and accessible housing in accordance with policy DM31. DM28 addresses residential extensions and replacement dwellings in the countryside. It advises that the extension or replacement of a permanent dwelling in the countryside will be permitted subject to the application of general development criteria and transport policies contained within the Plan. **MM55** is necessary to correctly cross reference policy DM29 regarding rural workers' dwellings as this is the correct policy under which rural workers' dwellings will be assessed. Policy DM29 sets out a criteria-based approach to the assessment of rural workers' dwellings in the countryside. **MM56** amends criteria i and iii to provide greater clarity regarding viability evidence and adds an additional criterion which seeks to limit the size of a rural workers' dwelling extensions or replacement dwellings. Subject to this modification, the policy presents a sound approach.

Conclusion

177. In conclusion, and subject to the modifications outlined above, the Plan presents a sound approach towards meeting housing needs across different groups in the community. The policies in relation to housing standards are positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 7 - Is the policy approach relating to meeting retail needs and town centres justified, effective and consistent with national policy

178. The retail evidence base takes the form of the Retail Floorspace Provision Background Paper (RTC002) June 2018 as well as the Retail and Leisure needs Assessment (RTC003) July 2017.

179. RTC003 identifies both the convenience and comparison goods floorspace capacity requirement over the Plan period. It identifies the Borough wide residual capacity in five-year time periods. The evidence base notes that in retail planning terms, capacity forecasting beyond a five-year period should be treated with caution. This is due to a variety of factors including consumer demand, the retail property market and the economy generally. I agree that is a proportionate and realistic approach. The report does not envisage any Borough wide residual capacity until 2027 for convenience retail goods floorspace. Similarly, capacity for comparison goods floorspace is only identified beyond 2027. However, this evidence assumes development at a SGO within the Borough. Although at the time the evidence was prepared the preferred location was not selected, in light of my modifications to delete the SGO for the Plan, the residual capacity figures may well be lower towards the latter part of the Plan period.

180. The Framework is clear that local plans should meet objectively assessed needs, allowing for flexibility to adapt to change. **MM48** provides a summary of these floorspace needs for the Borough as a whole and amends the reasoned justification, this is necessary to provide greater clarity. Policy DM21 relates to new retail development. It provides a criteria-based approach, largely focused on the sequential approach with the preference given to Eastleigh Town Centre in the first instance. The retail focus beyond this defined centre is on the remaining defined district and local centres within the Borough. This policy approach is consistent with national policy and will ensure that the vitality and viability of the main centres is maintained.

181. Policy DM22 provides the framework for changes of use which may be proposed within the designated centres and frontages. It provides a criteria-based approach to assessing such applications, and a proportionate approach to the designated core, primary and secondary shopping zones. **MM49** is necessary for the policy to be effective, by making the policy requirements more precise. Corresponding changes are included to the reasoned justification for the same reason.

182. Policy E3 is specific to Eastleigh Town Centre and defines the town centre boundary as shown on the policies map. **MM95** amends the policy wording to ensure it is consistent with the recent changes to the UCO and cross references to policy DM22. Subject to this modification the policy is sound.

Conclusion

183. In conclusion, and subject to the above-mentioned modifications, the Plan's strategy for meeting retail needs and town centres is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 8 - Whether the Plan's approach to settlement gaps and new development in the countryside is sound and justified by the evidence base

Settlement Gaps

184. Maintaining an element of physical separation between settlements can play an important role in terms of maintaining the visual identity of individual settlements. In Eastleigh, there are examples of historical coalescence for example West End and Southampton. The Borough is characterised by a proliferation of lower order settlements which are in some instances bordered by other higher order centres. In light of this, it has become even more important in preventing the coalescence of settlements although the evidence base recognises that any gap should not include more land than is necessary to provide this role.

185. Balancing these objectives, the Plan aims to achieve this through the designation of a number of settlement gaps across the Borough, the general principle being to prevent the coalescence of the settlements in question by providing a visual and physical break in the built environment. I consider this objective to be generally consistent with the Framework and in particular the protection of the natural environment.

186. The evidence base in the form of ENV002 draws on the PfSH criteria⁴⁴ for designated gaps which in essence states that (i) gaps should not include more land than is necessary to prevent the coalescence of settlements and that (ii) land to be included should perform an important role in defining settlement character and separating settlements at risk of coalescence. This assessment includes, amongst other things, a landscape appraisal of the physical and visual attributes of the gaps, an assessment of the settlement pattern and the formation of a gap policy and boundaries. In my view, applying these criteria to the definition of settlement gaps and setting the framework for the overall policy approach around these criteria is in principle an appropriate and sound approach.

187. I raised a number of concerns regarding the evidence in relation to settlement gaps. These focused on the adequacy of the evidence base and as a result, the justification for the gap designations and the extent of the designations as shown in light of the PfSH criteria outlined above. The Council sought to address this in relation to the original evidence base⁴⁵ through an updated assessment⁴⁶. The approach within the updated evidence provides a clear

⁴⁴ HOU001 PfSH Spatial Position Statement, June 2016

⁴⁵ ENVOO2 Countryside Gaps Background Paper, June 2018

⁴⁶ ED84 Eastleigh Borough Settlement Gaps Study, October 2020

justification for the approach adopted, informed by both a desktop study, fieldwork evaluation and detailed analysis. The evaluation includes both an objective and subjective analysis supported by annotated plans as necessary.

188. In particular, the updated work focused specifically on a detailed assessment of the settlement gaps as proposed, and where appropriate, recommended changes to the boundaries as drawn to reflect this updated evidence base. The primary focus being the application of the criteria outlined above and to provide a comprehensive evidence base to support the designations as illustrated.

189. As a result of this updated evidence, a number of amendments are necessary as follows:

- Gaps between the deleted SGO and nearby settlements of Colden Common, Lower Upham/Upham and Fair Oak/Horton Heath as well as between the two communities within the deleted SGO are to be removed;
- the Boyatt Wood and Otterbourne Hill and Allbrook gap are to be deleted from the policy;
- Update gaps to reflect existing developed areas and site allocations and the removal of the allocation for land east of Sovereign Drive where permission has lapsed;
- Remove large areas of woodland from the edge of gaps including woodland related to Manor Farm and Royal Victoria Country Parks;
- Delete various individual parcels of land that do not contribute to gaps, including field parcels, playing fields and mudflats;

190. I acknowledge that a number of representors have expressed concerns that certain areas are still retained within the settlement gap definition. Conversely, I note that a number of representors have raised concerns that areas do not benefit from a settlement gap designation. I am satisfied that the evidence base provides a clear justification for boundaries and presents a proportionate and robust approach to the allocation of settlement gaps within the Plan.

191. As a consequence of this updated evidence, **MM27** is necessary to amend policy S8's reasoned justification to cover a number of issues and ensure the policy is justified and effective. In the first instance the defined list of settlement gaps is to be updated to reflect the 9 defined settlement gaps in the updated evidence. Boundary adjustments are also necessary to all settlement gap proposed designations except for Area H – Horton Heath, Fair Oak, Bishopstoke. In some areas, there has been a reduction in the area designated as a settlement gap, or indeed the removal of the complete gap.

192. Figure 5 which defines the settlement gaps will need to be updated, and the policies map should also be updated to reflect any relevant boundary changes. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes. Subject to this modification, the allocation of the

settlement gaps proposed within the Plan presents a proportionate approach based on an appropriate evidence base.

193. Turning to consider the policy wording, this is unduly onerous in its requirement to reference the 'openness' of the gap. In this respect, the policy is not consistent with national policy or justified. This is addressed through **MM27**. The modification is also necessary to more clearly define the settlement gaps as they appear within Eastleigh. The policy itself has been reworded to set a positive criteria based approach to development within settlement gaps throughout the Borough. Following the main modifications consultation, I have amended the wording at part a as well as the reasoned justification to replace 'diminish' with 'undermine' to reinforce the positive based approach of the policy. These gaps aim to maintain the separate identity of the individual settlements concerned, by providing physical separation and providing a setting for these settlements. With these modifications, the policy approach, which focuses on the key functions of the settlement gaps, is sound.

New Development in the Countryside

194. Policy S7 sets the policy approach towards new development in the countryside. It acknowledges the 'urban fringe' nature of much of the designated countryside within Eastleigh Borough, and identifies a criteria based approach. **MM26** strengthens the policy wording by adding an additional reference to acknowledge the significance of heritage assets, the safeguarding of the best and most versatile agricultural land and soil protection during construction. It also amends the reasoned justification to include a reference to the glossary. This modification is necessary to ensure the policy is applied effectively.

195. Policy DM19 deals with the change of use of buildings in the countryside. The policy provides detailed development criteria against which proposals will be assessed which presents a proportionate and clear approach. In order to ensure the policy is effective, **MM47** updates the criteria in light of the changes to the UCO. Subject to this modification, the policy is sound.

Conclusion

196. Subject to the modifications outlined above which are required to ensure that the policies are justified, effective and consistent with national policy, the policy approach to both settlement gaps and new development in the countryside is sound and justified by the evidence base.

Issue 9 – Whether the Plan's policies in respect of the natural environment are positively-prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy

197. Within Eastleigh Borough, there is a coastline which includes a frontage to Southampton Water between Netley and Hamble Point as well as the western bank of the Hamble estuary to Botley. Policy S9 seeks to protect existing recreational and commercial uses in these locations, as well as protecting and enhancing the landscape, biodiversity and heritage interest of the coast. These objectives are consistent with national policy. **MM28** provides modifications to clarify that the policy applies to all forms of sailing and not just recreational

sailing, as well as additional text to reference the application of the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy to developments affecting SPA functional land. This modification is necessary to make the policy effective.

198. Policy DM11 addresses nature conservation. The policy provides specific development criteria for the various designations applicable throughout Eastleigh which include international and national nature conservation designations, local nature conservation designations as well as other species and habitats. **MM43** is necessary to cover a significant redraft to the policy to ensure that the policy is clear and precise and consistent with national policy. The modification introduces an overall general approach to the determination of planning applications, as well as introducing a greater level of detail to the policy wording relative to the individual designations concerned. The reasoned justification is also updated to reflect the policy changes. This is necessary to ensure the policy is effective. Furthermore, the modification also updates the references to the relevant local and national strategic policies. Subject to this modification, the policy is sound.

199. The protection of recreation and open space facilities is addressed by policy DM34 and these designations are illustrated on the policies map. These designations will require updating to include the Hampshire FA Stoneham Lane Football Complex south of the M27 junction 5 and also the country park on land south of Bursledon Road. Given that I do not have the power to recommend main modifications to the policies map, it will be for the Council to amend the policies map in relation to these required changes.

200. The policy sets out, amongst other things, how the loss of existing or allocated recreation and open space facilities will be assessed. **MM60** strengthens the policy wording to ensure the policy is effective. The provision of recreation and open space facilities as part of new development proposals is addressed by policy DM35. The policy includes a cross reference to the standards contained within the Open Space Needs Assessment, 2017. **MM61** amends the text contained within figure 8 to provide greater clarity to the policy, as well as changing the policy wording within the first part of the policy to replace 'should' with 'shall'. Subject to this modification, the policy and standards sought are consistent with the evidence base and present a sound approach to securing recreational and open space provision as part of any new development.

Conclusion

201. In conclusion, subject to the above-mentioned modifications, the Plan's policies in respect of the natural environment are positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 10 – Other potential soundness issues

Historic environment

202. The Framework is clear that local plans should provide a clear strategic policy in relation to the historic environment. This was not provided as part of the Regulation 19 version of the Plan and accordingly **MM29** addresses this by introducing a new policy S8 concerning the historic environment with associated reasoned justification. The policy provides detail concerning the assessment of proposals which may impact heritage assets with associated reasoned justification. This modification is necessary to ensure the Plan is consistent with national policy.
203. Policy DM12 presents the detailed development management policy which deals with heritage assets. The related strategic and local policies sections are deleted through modification **MM44** as this is no longer necessary in light of policy S8 outlined above. The modification also amends the policy wording by deleting the strategic text now covered by policy S8, and by adding additional text in relation to buildings or heritage assets at risk, both of which are necessary for clarity and effectiveness.

Other Development Management Policies

204. Policy DM1 sets out a general criteria-based approach for new development. **MM35** amends a number of the criteria concerning the natural environment, heritage assets and ensuring the provision of accessibly communities for all. It also makes corresponding changes to the reasoned justification. This modification is necessary in order to ensure the policy is precise and effective.
205. Policy DM2 addresses environmentally sustainable development and identifies a number of defined criteria to assist the Council in securing environmentally sustainable residential development in the Borough. **MM36** is necessary in order to ensure the policy reflects the correct use class, clarifies the size thresholds applicable as well as updating the reasoned justification so it is consistent with the definitions applied. Subject to the modification outlined, the policy presents a sound approach. Policy DM3 outlines how developments should be able to adapt to climate change and includes, amongst other things, a cross reference to policy DM6 (sustainable surface water management and watercourse management) and requirements in relation to a cooling strategy. **MM37** is necessary to provide greater clarity to the policy and ensure the policy accurately reflects the correct use class. Policy DM4 addresses zero or low carbon energy and seeks to support infrastructure development which can generate zero or low carbon energy and/or make more efficient use of energy sources. **MM38** is necessary to make the policy wording more precise in relation to agricultural land and heritage assets. Subject to this modification, the policy presents a sound approach.
206. Managing flood risk is addressed by policy DM5. **MM39** provides additional reasoned justification to add greater clarity to the policy, it also adds an additional reference to utilising natural flood management techniques. Sustainable surface water management and watercourse management is addressed through policy DM6, which provides a criteria-based approach to Sustainable Urban Drainage systems. **MM40** amends the policy wording for precision and to provide greater clarity in relation to the application of the

policy on sites of 1 hectare or more, or within 100m of the River Itchen SAC or Solent Maritime SAC. I have amended the main modification wording to incorporate additional text following the main modifications consultation from the Environment Agency for clarity and effectiveness. The modification also introduces corresponding changes to the reasoned justification for clarity. Finally, policy DM8 addresses pollution. The policy wording is updated through **MM41** to acknowledge the status of the South Downs National Park as an international dark night skies reserve with corresponding changes to the reasoned justification. The modification also updates the reasoned justification regarding the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar sites and supporting habitats. Subject to these modifications, policies DM5, DM6 and DM8 present a sound approach.

207. Policy DM10 deals with water and wastewater. The policy wording is modified through **MM42** to make it more precise and effective. In light of this change, the reasoned justification is also amended through the same modification. Subject to this modification, the policy presents a sound approach.

208. Policy DM14 deals with development proposals and parking provision. The policy sets out parking requirements in accordance with the Parking Standards SPD, with specific references to town, district and local centres as well as proposals in out of centre locations. Finally, the policy provides a criteria-based approach to proposals for new car parks or extensions to existing car parks **MM45** is necessary to amend the policy wording relating to new residential provision for clarity and effectiveness. Subject to the modification outlined the policy presents a sound approach.

Monitoring

209. Appendix C of the Plan sets out how the policies contained within the Plan will be monitored and delivered against a number of identified indicators. In order for the indicators to be effective **MM123** is necessary and justified to make the wording of a number of the key indicators more precise and effective as well as introducing a number of specific targets and timeframes.

210. Subject to the application of the above modifications, the Plan can be effectively monitored.

Glossary

211. The Regulation 19 version of the Plan contained no glossary. A glossary can ensure that the policies are effective in terms of their application. As a result, I recommend **MM122** which provides a comprehensive glossary for the Plan and a number of the key terms used throughout. Where necessary, I have amended this schedule for brevity and clarity.

Conclusion

212. The main modifications relating to the other issues I have set out above are necessary to ensure that the Plan is sound.

Overall Conclusion and Recommendation

213. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in respect of soundness for the reasons set out above, which mean that I recommend non-adoption of it as submitted, in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the 2004 Act. These deficiencies have been explored in the main issues set out above.
214. The Council has requested that I recommend modifications to make the Plan sound and capable of adoption. I conclude that with the recommended main modifications set out in appendix 1 the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.

C Masters

Inspector

This report is accompanied by two appendices containing the Main Modifications Schedule of Main Modifications (appendix 1) and the Inspector's post hearing letter, April 2020 (ED71) (appendix 2).