

Appendix A - Planning Policy - Under Review

Proposed Planning Policies

- A.1 For details of Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2029 proposals, see www.eastleigh.gov.uk/localplan

Appendix B - Green Infrastructure

The Green Infrastructure Framework

B.1 Theme I: Sustainable economic development, attractive workplaces and desirable tourist destinations

Objective 1 Ensure the design of existing and new workplaces leads to diverse and attractive green environments for businesses wishing to relocate, grow or set-up in the PUSH sub-region.

Objective 2 Complement the resources of existing visitor destinations, facilitate increased tourism opportunities and enhance the visitor economy.

Objective 3 Promote businesses and markets that provide low carbon, multifunctional and cost-effective delivery of Green Infrastructure Themes and Objectives.

B.2 Theme II: Maximising biodiversity opportunities, adapting to change and protecting European sites

Objective 4 Conserve and enhance existing biodiversity: restoring habitats according to Biodiversity Opportunity Area priorities helping deliver Habitat Action Plans and Species Action Plans in BAP and improving connectivity of habitats at all scales and levels of designation.

Objective 5 Contribute to the mitigation of the impacts of growth on European sites using buffer zones, providing alternative recreation destinations and reducing the effects of coastal squeeze by providing new habitat sites.

B.3 Theme III: Landscape quality and diversity, distinctive features, cultural heritage and appreciation of sense of place

Objective 6 Protect the unique quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the sub-region's landscape and heritage.

Objective 7 Maintain and where necessary improve the identity and character of settlements in urban and rural locations.

B.4 Theme IV: Access to the countryside and green spaces, providing recreational opportunities and experiences

Objective 8 Create a network of strategic long distance routes and interconnected green loops that is promoted and maintained to provide a network of linear access for a variety of users.

Objective 9 Address deficiencies in access to greenspace through creation of new or enhanced recreation sites at all scales, enabling use by all sectors of society. All such sites should avoid conflict with established nature conservation land.

B.5 Theme V: Providing high quality water resources, managing flood risk and increasing water retention

Objective 10 Increase natural storage capacity, reduce the run-off rate of storm water and increase onsite water purification and infiltration. Permeability in settlements across the sub-region should be maximised.

Objective 11 Promote river corridor management to provide multifunctional benefits for flood defence, recreation, landscape and biodiversity.

B.6 Theme VI: Climate change adaption and mitigation

Objective 12 Maximise the GI contribution to mitigating urban temperature and prepare for sea level rise.

Objective 13 Facilitate reduced carbon emissions and contribute to the development of south Hampshire's low carbon economy.

B.7 Theme VII: Food, fibre and fuel production

Objective 14 Promote the opportunity to support locally grown products such as food, biomass and construction materials.

Objective 15 Promote, increase and raise awareness of commercial activities, such as farming and forestry, which provide multi-purpose and cost effective delivery of Green Infrastructure Themes and Objectives.

B.8 Theme VIII: Well bring and health

Objective 16 Use GI as a resource for improving the physical and mental well-being of the population of south Hampshire.

Objective 17 Promote the health and well-being benefits of GI.

(Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, pii)

Appendix C - Forest of Bere

The Vision for Countryside Access for the Forest of Bere

- C.1 In support of the *Green Infrastructure Strategy for Urban South Hampshire*, the vision for countryside access in the Forest of Bere area is:
- C.2 To provide local residents and those in the adjacent conurbations with sustainable opportunities to access and enjoy the 'countryside on their doorstep'.
- C.3 In particular the Countryside Access Plan for the Forest of Bere aims to ensure that access opportunities within the area, both new and existing:
- enable local people to access and enjoy high quality countryside in the Forest
 - best meet the needs and demands of users whilst maximising benefits to land managers and owners
 - are promoted to all sections of the community, including information on how to
 - behave responsibly in the countryside and have respect for those who live and work there
 - respect sensitive habitats
- and
- provide opportunities to educate local people about the wider landscape, history and countryside of the Forest (educational access provision).
 -
- C.4 This plan supports the overall vision for the Local Transport Plan of a strategy that enhances quality of life and economic prosperity by connecting people, communities, employment, goods, services and amenities.

(*Countryside Access Plan for the Forest of Bere 2008-2013*, p4)

Appendix D - Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of the Character Areas in the Borough of Eastleigh

National Character Areas

D.1 Character Area 126 (South Coast Plain):

- ~ Major urban developments including Portsmouth, Worthing and Brighton linked by the A27/M27 corridor dominate much of the open, intensively farmed, flat, coastal plain.
- ~ Coastal inlets and 'harbours' contain a diverse landscape of narrow tidal creeks, mudflats, shingle beaches, dunes, grazing marshes and paddocks. From the Downs and coastal plain edge there are long views towards the sea and the Isle of Wight beyond.
- ~ Trees are not a dominant feature - there are some small woods and a few windswept individual trees in the farmland or the occasional poplar shelter belt.
- ~ A pattern of large arable fields, defined by low hedgerows, are often interspersed by horticultural glasshouse 'estates' and isolated remnants of coastal heath.
- ~ The complex series of creeks, mudflats and shingle beaches along the coastal edge becomes less apparent to the east with the intensively-farmed plain increasingly dominated by disordered seaside towns and leisure developments.

D.2 Character Area 128 (South Hampshire Lowlands):

- ~ The gently undulating landscape is characterised by a diversity of features and land uses which reflects changing soil types and local variations of topography.
- ~ Predominantly mixed farmland and woodland, a patchwork of small, intimate and irregular fields defined by hedges, winding lanes and scattered farmsteads.
- ~ Wide lush river valley bottoms, with water meadows and riverine vegetation, afford open views in an otherwise small-scale and intimate landscape.

- ~ The rural character, defined by well-managed farmland and a few historic estates, is being diminished by urban expansion and the busy M27/M3 corridors.
- ~ A dispersed settlement pattern of villages and scattered farmsteads is linked by winding roads and lanes.
- ~ Oaks prevalent within hedgerows and woodlands help to create an impression of a well-wooded landscape.
- ~ Small pockets of horticulture within extensive pasture, with some arable use, are confined to the higher drier ground.

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/areas>

Local Character Areas - from HCC's The Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment 2011

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/planning-the-landscape/landscape-character/hampshire-integrated-character-assessment.htm>

D.3 Netley, Bursledon and Hamble Coastal Plain

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/9dnetley_bursledon_and_hamble_coastal_plain.pdf

Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating and flat landform with a gentle slope to the coastline ending in a low sea wall above the shingle beach.
- A wooded coastal margin, small wooded stream valleys, a central area of farmland with open character and a suburban feel to much of the area.
- Patchwork of ecological habitats and woodland.
- Extremely fertile agricultural soils on the open coastal plain.
- Areas of former sand and gravel and landfill restoration.
- Market gardening, nurseries and horticulture are frequent land uses.
- A landscape which had a well developed medieval field pattern around the small hamlets and huge area of common in the north at the end of the 19th century– now largely overwritten by modern fields and development.
- Frequent views over Southampton water.
- Busy road and minor lane network of slow moving traffic.
- Adjacent coastal biodiversity sites designated for their bird habitats.
- Important historic buildings set within designed grounds.

Physical Characteristics and Land Use

A gently undulating, mixed open coastal plain landscape and enclosed shallow wooded stream valleys, which gently rises from shingle beach to about 60m AOD just north of Bursledon. In the northern parts of the character area it is fairly apparent where the land falls away into the Hamble valley. The western side has more raised gravels making the topography more undulating – this too falls away rapidly to Southampton water, and this slope to the estuary is included in this character area. Restored landfill areas such as part of Westwood park have raised level restorations creating artificial high points in the landscape. The bedrock geology incorporates the silty sandy clay geology of several different bands of the Bracklesham beds which are in turn overlain by the Pleistocene river terrace sand and gravels associated with the terraces of the Solent river. The range in geology is more limited than in the coastal plain landscapes to the east. The fossiliferous Barton clays outcrop on the coast, and the Pleistocene gravels are also fossil rich with molluscs and bivalves. Large trapezoid stones with holes and fissures can be found. These are called Sarsen erratics, of cemented quartz, with the holes formed from roots in the Pleistocene period This is their westernmost extent.

The sandy, gravelly Pleistocene river deposits give rise to a very fertile light sandy silty loam with a high water table, which is termed Aeolian silty drift. There are several former sand and gravel extraction areas on Hound plain and a significant sand and gravel resource. The balance between retaining excellent agricultural soil areas, extraction areas and green spaces as gaps and for local amenity is particularly controversial as there are so few rural areas in this landscape.

The landscape has had large scale mid to late 20th century development (mainly residential), which pervades most of the land use characteristics. Amenity open spaces (both formal and informal) and fields subdivided by temporary fencing to serve a large demand for horsiculture is common, giving an urban fringe character to much of the landscape. There are extensive fields supporting a market gardening tradition which has been increasingly squeezed by suburban influences. These often have farm shops and 'pick your own'. Field boundaries are mixed in character – but poplar shelter belts are a common feature and there is typically a weak hedgerow framework. The shallow stream corridors are well wooded, often with detached and piecemeal development, but offer a contrast to the surrounding intensive farming. The coastal margin is dominated by Hamble and Netley but is surprisingly well wooded (e.g. West wood and Victoria country park).

There are several small streams which flow to Southampton Water and the Hamble. The Westwood rises on Netley common as wet heath flush at Dumbleton's copse (just to the north west of the character area boundary) and winds down through Westwood in a wooded setting. Another heath flush spring rises at Old Netley, and flows through Butlocks Heath to Netley, again in a predominantly narrow wooded setting

The littoral processes are relatively weak on this stretch of coast. Further along the coast towards Hamble point there are low sea wall and gabion reinforcement walling. With a gently sloping shingle and mud beach, the above high water beach is fairly narrow, mostly less than 50m

D.4 Southampton Water

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/11b_southampton_water.pdf

Key Characteristics

- A predominantly straight deep water estuary with a dog leg at the confluence with the river Itchen and Southampton docks.
- Supporting Europe's largest oil refinery and long history of world wide trade, including glamorous ocean liner industry.
- Great variety in shoreline character including: heavily industrial section at the head of the estuary; refinery development; large expanses of intertidal saltmarsh and mudflats; woodland and historic parkland
- Sheltered from predominant southwesterly winds, with very busy shipping, including commercial huge container vessels, tankers and ferries, highspeed vessels, hovercraft testing area and recreational sailing.
- Unique double high water.
- Internationally important for marine and coastal biodiversity with SPA and SAC designations.
- Part of the former Pleistocene Solent river and wooded river valley – with peat deposits and fossilised trees in places.
- Commercially important area for hard shell clam fishing and nursery area associated with the Fawley outfall for bass.
- The relatively sheltered waters made the character area an attractive area for early-mid 20th century uses such as flying boats /sea planes and the British power boat industry which have subsequently died out.
- Long history of reclamation through embankments and hardening of the shore – particularly for the development of the port of Southampton.

Physical Characteristics and Uses

Bedrock of Tertiary deposits including Barton sands and clays to the west and Bracklesham beds to the east. Above this are the periglacial gravel beds of drowned river systems from the Pleistocene (2m to 11,500 yrs ago). The Itchen and Test were conjoined to form a Solent river valley during this period, which extended in a south easterly direction to the east of the Isle of Wight. The gravels were deposited in a series of river terraces. The later soft organic rich estuarine deposits of the Holocene period (post last glaciation – c 11,500 years ago) contains peat deposits, tree remains and bivalves and is of very variable thickness. The deep geology has potential for energy in the form of geothermal power.

Southampton water is a straight deep water estuary with a slight dog leg north of Dibden. The main channel is maintained to an average depth of 12.6m and

is 200m wide. The southern section south east of Fawley is steeply shelving on the west side. The eastern side is less steep sided. North of Fawley the channel sides are less steep again. The area of greatest coastal erosion on the east side occurs mid way between the River Hamble and River Itchen. There is longshore drift both north and south from this point towards these two river mouths. Sediment transfer from the Solent up into Southampton water occurs. The mudflats have generally declined in height, with less sediment being brought down from the rivers into the Solent, and whilst some of the salt marshes increased during the 20th century with colonisation by *Spartina* marsh grass, this process has now ceased with the dieback of the *Spartina* grasses⁴¹. Wave action is generally stronger further south and die back of cord grass in the last 50 years has meant greatest retreat of saltmarsh in areas south of Fawley.

The estuary is very well sheltered from most wind directions – although a heavy chop develops in south east winds greater than force 477. The tidal characteristics are unique here, in that at Spring tides there is a 'double high water' which is slightly lower and about 2 hours after the first high water. The tidal regime of the Solent and particularly Southampton water is one of the most complex in the world. The double high tide results in a prolonged high tide and ebb currents are particularly strong. The tidal range at spring tides is 4m. At mean low water the area covered by water is reduced by about 40%.

Southampton water is a very busy area for navigation, supporting local ferries to ocean going liners. Container vessels ply the length of this deep water channel to the container port. This is one of Britain's major ports and is the second largest container port in the Country. Petrochemical tankers ply the area to Fawley and just north of Hamble point. At Fawley there are two main commercial operations: an oil refinery and a power station. On the east side at Hamble points is the BP oil fuel storage and distribution terminal. The ports are solely used by huge tankers which berth alongside long piers and wharves which reach well into the estuary and characterise this part of character area. There are several marinas, including Hythe and Town Quay ocean village. The density of moorings increases up the river Hamble and above Itchen bridge, and the water is seasonally very busy with recreational craft. Angling areas of moderate use are located around Netley and Hook park. The estuary is an important area for Salmon and Trout migrating to and from the chalk streams of the Itchen and Test –there is no commercial netting of these fish in the estuary. The higher water temperature around the Fawley outfall and upper reaches of Southampton water are important Bass nursery areas. The extreme south of the character area is the start of a substantial oyster producing area around the mouth of the estuary

D.5 Romsey to Eastleigh Wooded Lowland Mosaic

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/2d_romsey_to_eastleigh_wooded_lowland_mosaic.pdf

Key Characteristics

- A sense of elevation above the adjoining coastal and valley landscapes of the

Test and Itchen, and moderately undulating topography with a variety of clay and sandy gravel geology.

- Watershed of the Test and Itchen with chalk fed tributaries and boggy heath and mire, in shallow valleys.
- Predominantly improved grassland, but also significant amount of semi-natural ancient woodland and conifer replanted woodland with internationally-designated damp and boggy acid heath habitat in central area creating a rich biodiversity.
- A predominantly wooded assart landscape of mid medieval origin fragmented and significantly altered by 18th and 19th century enclosures, conifer plantation and extensive expansion northwards of Southampton in the latter half of the 20th century.
- Huge loss of heathy commons and irregular medieval fields to enclosure and development of Romsey, Baddesely and Chandler's Ford in the last 150years.
- Until the 19th century, a landscape with a dispersed settlement pattern relatively little changed since the 14th century.

Physical Characteristics and Land Use

Situated between the Itchen and Test river valleys, this landscape has a relatively elevated feel. The boundary with the Test Valley is about 25 -40m AOD whereas with the Itchen it is 25-30m. The area of Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale Woodland Associated is more undulating and has slightly higher hills of average 60-70m and occasionally over 100m AOD. The Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated landscapes to the south form a series of gently undulating small plateaux 45-60mAOD.

The geology of the area is varied with clays, sand and gravels. A central band of sandy Wittering Beds/ Earnley formation runs east-west. To the north and south is London Clay overlain by sands of the Nursling and Whitecliff members. This geology gives rise to sand with clay soils. The sandiness is a key determinant in identifying the area of Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated type. The sands and clays of the Lutetian stages (including the Earnley formation) is characterised by marine fossils of molluscs and teeth of cartilaginous fish. The soils are of poor agricultural quality but improve towards the boundary with the Test Valley character area.

There is a patchwork of different land uses. Competing with the traditional pattern of heathy commons with bogs and wet meadow, woodland, pasture and arable are more modern urban fringe pressures, including golf courses, nurseries, horse paddocks and liveries. Improved pasture for dairying and woodland dominate but these uses are increasingly fragmented by modernland uses. Fields are typically small and irregular in shape and pattern but more regular on the edge of former commons. Fields are generally larger in the north where the landscape type changes.

The character area is dissected north-south by the watershed for the

Itchen and Test river catchments. There are 2 significant tributaries; Monk's Brook which flows through Chandler's Ford to the Itchen and the Tadburn stream which rises near Ampfield and flows to the Test through Romsey. The relationship of the clay with the adjacent chalk has resulted in a series of springs along this boundary. There are good examples of bogs and mires which form from impeded drainage where clays are present and the topography is conducive. Examples include Emer Bog and Flexford.

D.6 Hamble Valley

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/3d_hamble_valley.pdf

Key Characteristics

- Well defined strong valley landform with dense semi natural woodland which clothes the valley sides and tops.
- A lively, colourful and distinctive yachting character provided by the huge numbers of yachts and boat moorings, yards, and marinas and intensively used waters for recreation.
- Large detached residences set within mature woodland along the valley tops and water's edge with substantial gardens and secluded character.
- The river valley varies from a bustling vibrant yachting scene in the southern reaches to secluded narrow creeks in its upper reaches with woodland overhanging the shore.
- High quality waterside conservation areas – and popular visitor areas..
- An abundance of waterside public access sites.
- Extremely rich and cognitive associations with a long naval boat building and safe anchorage history now supplanted by a vibrant recreational yachting environment.
- International and national wildlife designations associated with the estuary, intertidal habitats and semi natural woodland in upper reaches.

Physical Characteristics and Landuse

The Hamble valley passes through sands and clay formations of the Bracklesham Group at its head, and then through a wide band of London Clay. Moving further south, into the setting of the coastal plain, the geology is mainly of sandsilts and clays overlain by river terrace gravel deposits of the Pleistocene associated with the Solent river. These river terrace gravels extend in patches up the valley (further north than in the surrounding Forest of Bere landscape) and along with the valley floor give rise to brick earth and loamy/clay soils which have a high agricultural soil quality. The valley sides are less distinct than further south and of a varied topography with small hills and ridges creating a small scale landscape. The valley is deepest around Bursledon, around 35m and becomes gradually lower towards the coast. At Warsash the geology and soils are distinctly more sandy and lighter.

The heavily wooded river valley sides are characteristic along the valleys length and heighten the valley side tops creating a strong sense of enclosure.

Below the M27 the valley sides are well settled but in an enduring wooded setting. Further north as well as woodland, permanent pasture is very dominant on the undulating valley sides. The southern area – associated with the eastern side and the sandier lighter soil around Warsash has established as an important area for strawberry cultivation – although the area is much reduced from 20th C development. At harvest time, some of the ship building workforce were employed in the strawberry fields. The river use is also distinctly different along its course. To the south of the motorway, it is dominated by associated recreational boating and yachting with hundreds of moorings and numerous boat yards, marinas and slips. To the north exploitation of the river and shore is minimal with woodland often sweeping down to the shore edge. The river is popular with anglers and bait digging especially on the east side. Commercial shell fishing takes place at the entrance to the estuary – including oyster beds.

The Hamble is a relatively short river with a small catchment area that stretches virtually to the edge of the Meon valley and Horton Heath and Fair Oak. There are several tributaries to the north which are chalk spring fed. To the east tributaries run from Shedfield and from Swanwick in the south and confluence at Curbridge. The water becomes tidal at Botley Mill and there is an insignificant sediment input into the Solent from the Hamble as it has relatively stable discharges. Hook spit is a good example of a recurved spit induced from the northwest direction of long shore drift. It has grown north eastwards constricting the entrance to the Hamble and enclosing Hook lakes.

D.7 Itchen Valley

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/3c_itchen_valley.pdf

Key Characteristics

- The Itchen is a classic chalk stream, running through an area of soft permeable rock, supplied by underground aquifers.
- A valley of contrasts from a small stream to a fast flowing river and then deep estuary but the largely undeveloped floodplain is a unifying feature.
- The stream and some of floodplain is internationally designated as a SAC because of its chalk stream habitat, rich in plants, invertebrates and fish.
- Important concentration of remnant water meadows.
- The valley floor is mainly neutral grassland, a complex mosaic of fen species rich meadow and improved meadows, considered to be the largest assemblage of species rich neutral grassland in England⁶¹.
- The small villages and scattered farms sit comfortably within the valley.
- An extremely rich built heritage and setting to Winchester and developed valley sides in lower reaches.
- Frequent minor crossing points marked by white parapets to bridges.
- The upper reaches support the most important watercress industry in the country⁶¹.
- There is fairly good access to the valley by rights of way, and the Itchen Valley

- path follows the former towpath from Cheriton to Southampton.
- Internationally renowned as a fly fishing river especially for wild brown and rainbow trout.

Physical Characteristics and Landuse

The Itchen Valley passes through chalk in its upper reaches and Tertiary clays south of Otterbourne and Colden Common. The downland section comprises mainly Seaford Chalk, while the valley tops often coincide with the presence of Newhaven Chalk which has greater clay content. North and east of Winchester the top of the valley sides are typically 60m AOD increasing to 90m in the three headwater valleys but vary considerably with underlying geology to as low as 20m AOD towards the coast. At Winchester the valley turns sharply south and cuts through the main South Downs ridge while in the Hampshire lowlands the valley passes through a narrow band of the Lambeth formation, then London Clay followed by narrow bands of Whitecliff and Wittering formations. These coincide with locally undulating and raised topography including where the valley breaks through a minor ridge between Colden Common and Bishopstoke. The valley floor broadens out still further where it meets a large outcrop of London Clay. The river valley floor calcareous alluvium overlies river terrace gravels and is stone free and fertile but seasonally waterlogged. The soil pattern echoes the changes in the geology - the valley sides in the downland section are steep, with shallow flinty soil while south of the spring line settlements of Colden Common and Otterbourne the soils are predominantly stoneless and silty, but of lower agricultural grade than the valley sides in the chalk.

The river valley floor is dominated by permanent pasture and semi or unimproved grassland – often with visible remain of watermeadow features such as field undulations and carriers. Watercress beds particularly around New Alresford and ornamental ponds such as Northington and Avington are a feature of the downland section. The downland section in particular, is world famous for fly fishing of brown trout. Further south and particularly south of Winchester there urban influences increase although the valley floor is extensively pastoral. The M3 and airport take up substantial areas just above on the river terrace. Around Eastleigh and Southampton playing fields are common, often with windbreak planting which include poplars. The valley floor is particularly well wooded in places, typically small copses, scattered trees but few hedges. Moving up the valley slopes in the lowland section the fields are generally small to medium in size and irregular in pattern. In the downland section the fields become more regular in pattern and larger away from settlements and support an increasing arable land use. The fields in the lowland section are generally smaller and have more wooded hedgerows than in the downland section.

The River Itchen is 45km from its source at New Cheriton to Southampton Water, with a catchment area of 400sq km²⁹. For much of its length, the Itchen is divided or naturally 'braided' into two or more channels. This includes

the Itchen Navigation between Winchester and Southampton which has many sluices and man made courses to ensure a permanently filled channel. The Itchen had three main historic uses giving rise to a multiplicity of channels; the harnessing of water power for milling, the use of water meadow systems to provide early growth of pasture and the development of navigation. There are smaller tributaries in the lowland mosaic section due to the comparatively impermeable geology. In extremely wet prolonged weather the chalk aquifers can reach capacity and flooding of low lying settlements (including those further downstream in the hydrological basin) can occur. Summer flows can be maintained in especially dry periods by two boreholes in the Alre and Candover catchments.

D.8 Forest of Bere

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/2e_forest_of_bere_west.pdf

Key Characteristics

- A low lying landscape with shallow undulations, predominantly south sloping.
- Varied geology with permanently saturated heavy clays in the central and southern parts and locally higher sandy outcrops which are more undulating resulting in agriculturally poor soils – conversely rich alluvial especially around tributaries of the Hamble are very high grade..
- Locally popular accessible woodland areas.
- Permanent pasture, plantations woodland and small holdings with secluded, heavily wooded, often ancient origin but replanted, away from the major towns.
- This area is strongly associated with the Royal Forest of Bere, a hunting reserve that retains wooded and to a lesser extent, open commons, assart field and woodland patterns.
- Hedgerows often low but with individual spreading mature oaks, sometimes of ancient origin or lines of oak with no ‘understorey’ hedge and occasionally isolated field specimens.
- Extensive C.20th development, including urban expansion and infilling of common-edge settlements.
- Historically, mixed settlement pattern of very low density, tending towards nucleation along streams and around heath scattered throughout the area.
- Rich biodiversity, including woodland, heathland, grassland and wetland sites.

Physical Characteristics and Landuse

The topography is predominantly gently undulating, but is more steep and varied around the fringes where sand and gravel outcrops. The land gradually rises from the centre of the character area to the east, west and north, and falls away to the south. Soils are seasonally to permanently waterlogged and predominantly heavy clays. However the mixed geology and topography creates some lighter silty soils with better drainage of high to very high agricultural quality particularly around the tributaries of the upper reaches of the Hamble.

There are three dominant bedrock geology formations which run in east- west bands. From north to south they are Lambeth Group (sandy clay which runs along the boundary with the chalk). London clay and Wittering formation (sand). There are a few areas of head and river terrace deposits. Where the Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated occurs this coincides with locally elevated sand and gravel outcrops, such as Shedfield, Shirrell heath and adjacent to West End. There are numerous localised ridges and hills shown in local place names (e.g. Ridge Copse and Thistle Ridge Farm).

Land use is very mixed, with a relatively high proportion of pasture and rough grassland. Farm holdings are predominantly small in size¹⁴. The area is rich in semi natural ancient woodland, and irregular edge, blocky shaped woodland is a particularly defining characteristic – especially in the core Forest area – defined by the Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale Wooded landscape. Field edges (especially on opposite sides from tracks and lanes) are frequently formed from these woodland blocks. Magnificent spreading and sometimes ancient oak trees are a feature of hedgerows, which often have low clipped interconnecting hedges. These hedgerows are most typical in the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale Wooded landscape which contains relatively small fields. There are occasional market gardening and nurseries. Urban fringe uses are more pervasive than in the Forest of Bere East, and typically include golf courses, small retail and commercial areas, horse paddocks, high voltage power lines and scattered housing in medium sized plots.

The great majority of the character area falls within the upper and mid parts of the Hamble catchment. Land in the far east drains to the Meon and west of Horton Heath and Fair oak is part of the Itchen catchment. There is a dense network of chalk springs and small streams which flow south into the Hamble. Field boundary ditches are frequent features. The main tributary flows from Bishops Waltham to Botley. The landscape is less low lying and generally better drained than the Forest of Bere East. There are a few areas of standing water and ponds, especially along the spring line where land falls away from the chalk to the north and meets the lower lying clayey soils of this landscape.

Appendix E - Selection Criteria

Criteria for selecting Sites of importance for Nature Conservation in Hampshire

- E.1 The criteria below define those sites which are considered to be of particular importance for nature conservation within Hampshire. These sites are in addition to the statutorily designated sites and are referred to as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- E.2 Woodland
- 1A Ancient¹ semi-natural² woodlands.
 - 1B Other woodland where there is a significant element of ancient semi-natural woodland surviving.
 - 1C Other semi-natural woodland if;
 - (ii) they comprise important community types of restricted distribution in the County, such as yew woods and alder swamp woods
 - 1D Pasture woodland and wooded commons, not included in any of the above, which are of considerable biological and historical interest.
- 1 Ancient - refers to woodlands which have developed particular ecological characteristics as a result of their long continuity. Those identified to date which are over 2ha are included on the Hampshire Inventory of Ancient Woodlands (Provisional).
- 2 Semi-natural - modified types of vegetation in which the dominant and constant species are accepted natives to Britain and that locality, and the structure of the community conforms to the range of natural vegetation types.
- E.3 Neutral/acid/calcareous grassland
- 2A Agriculturally unimproved grasslands³
 - 2B Semi-improved grasslands which retain a significant element of unimproved grassland.
 - 2D Grasslands which have become impoverished through inappropriate management but which retain sufficient elements of relic unimproved grassland to enable recovery.
 - 3 Agriculturally unimproved grassland - grassland that is composed of a mixed assemblage of indigenous species in essentially semi-natural communities which has been allowed to develop without the major use of herbicides or inorganic fertilisers.
- E.4 Heathland
- 3A Areas of heathland vegetation; including matrices of dwarf shrub, acid grassland, valley mires and scrub.
 - 3B Areas of heathland which are afforested or have succeeded to woodland if;
 - (i) they retain significant remnants of heathland vegetation which would enable

their recovery, or

(ii) they are contiguous with, or form an integral part of an open area of heathland, Coastal habitats

4A Semi-natural coastal and estuarine habitats, including saltmarsh, intertidal mudflats, sand dunes, shingle, brackish ponds, grazing marsh and maritime grasslands.

E.5 Wetlands

5A Areas of open freshwater (eg. lakes, ponds, canals, rivers, streams and ditches) which support outstanding assemblages of floating/submerged/emergent plant species, invertebrates, birds or amphibians.

5B Fens, flushes, seepages, springs, inundation grasslands etc. that support a flora and fauna characteristic of unimproved and waterlogged (seasonal or permanent) conditions.

E.6 Species

6A Sites which support one or more notable species⁴.

6B Sites which regularly support a significant population of a species which has a restricted distribution or has substantially declined in population or range. Such sites may be used seasonally or for only one part of a species life-cycle.

6C Sites which support an outstanding assemblage of species.

4 Notable species include Red Data Book species, Nationally Scarce species, species covered under Schedules 1,5 and 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, Annex 1 of the EC Bird Directive 79/409 and Annex II & 1V of the EC Directive 92/43/EEC 'The Habitats Directive', and those covered by the Bern, Bonn and Ramsar Conventions. Notable species will also include species which are considered 'County Rare' or 'County Scarce'. County Rare = those species recorded in 1% or less tetrads in Hampshire or either of the two vice-counties (11 & 12) separately. County Scarce = 4% or less tetrads.

E.7 Social value

7A Sites of nature conservation interest which occur in areas otherwise deficient in such interest, and/or are known to be of particularly high value to local communities e.g. community wildlife sites.

Sites selected under this criteria will be rigorously confined to those which, if lost, would result in a considerable and demonstrable loss to the local community which would be very difficult/impossible to replace. Because of the widespread distribution of sites of nature conservation interest in Hampshire, and the high threshold used to define critical importance, only a limited number of sites are likely to meet this criteria.

E.8 Geology and geomorphology

8A Sites which have been designated as Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites are sites of regional importance excluding SSSIs.

RIGS are analogous to biological non-statutory sites.

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