

**EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL'S POSITION**  
**ON THE MERCURY MARINA AND RIVERSIDE CAMPING AND CARAVAN PARK, SACHELL LANE,**  
**HAMBLE**  
**(Policy HA2 of the Submitted Local Plan)**  
**September 2020**

## **SUMMARY**

1. Eastleigh Borough Council (the Council) proposed a hotel-led, mixed use allocation at Mercury Marina in its submission Local Plan (policy HA2). This proposed allocation, together with the representations that had been made on it and various proposed modifications, was discussed at a hearing session on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020. This included discussion of proposed amendments by the site owner, Marina Developments Ltd (MDL), to (among other things) delete the hotel from the policy and replace it with a residential-led allocation.
2. Following that session, the Council proposed that the HA2 allocation be deleted from the Plan. However, in a letter of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 (ED73), the Inspector wrote to the Council indicating that she currently intended to recommend that the policy be modified as discussed at the hearing session (i.e. to a residential-led allocation) rather than deleted.
3. At a meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020, the Council's Cabinet resolved to approve the sending of correspondence to the Inspector to progress the examination. As part of this, Cabinet resolved that the correspondence should state the Council's continuing policy position of no residential development on the HA2 site and explain that the Council would like to work with the Inspector through the examination process to seek a Plan which can be found 'sound' and 'adopted' by the Council. The Council subsequently wrote to the Inspector on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to draw her attention to the Cabinet decision (and the Report on which it was founded).
4. Pursuant to the Cabinet resolution of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020, this Statement explains the Council's position on the HA2 allocation. For the reasons set out below, the Council does not support a residential-led mixed use allocation on this site and maintains its view that the allocation should be deleted from the Plan.
5. The reasons why the Council opposes a residential-led proposal are, in essence, as follows:
  - A residential-led proposal would not benefit the tourist economy of the Hamble peninsula, as a hotel-led proposal would.
  - The poor pedestrian / cycle access from the site to the secondary school, health centre and local railway station would adversely affect the travel patterns associated with residential development unacceptably (and far more than a hotel development - hotel residents would not be going to school and are considered less likely to use the health centre or railway station serving local destinations).
  - Whilst the poor vehicular access along Satchell Lane to the site would affect both residential and hotel uses, the residential development would generate more trips.
  - Allocating the site for residential development would significantly increase the number of dwellings / residents in the Satchell Lane area of Hamble which would be affected by these poor transport / access conditions.

- Although a residential-led use of the site would not represent strategic scale development, it would give rise to more widespread traffic issues. The main access to and from the Hamble Peninsula is via the northern end of Hamble Lane and the Windhover roundabout, and this corridor experiences significant congestion. The Hamble peninsula has, and is continuing to experience, significant development. Hampshire County Council (HCC) have identified a scheme for highway / transport improvements along the Hamble Lane corridor, currently largely unfunded, with a Department for Transport decision awaited. These improvements are anticipated to address the current congestion and planned development. In March 2019 HCC decided as a transport authority to oppose any further development in the Hamble peninsula, at least until such time as the improvement scheme were implemented, noting that additional development would negate the benefits of the improvement scheme in addressing existing congestion, with little room to make further improvements.
  - Whilst MDL propose enhancements which would have some ecological benefit, the Council is concerned that there is a clear risk these would not provide the full benefits necessary to be commensurate to the international / national designations as required by the policy, that the potential for further benefits have not been costed and may conflict with MDL's operational requirements, meaning that in practice they may not be delivered.
  - Whilst the mixed-use elements of a residential-led scheme would bring acknowledged benefits if they could be delivered, the Council's review of the financial appraisal indicates there is significant uncertainty that they could be delivered. The Council does not consider these benefits, with this degree of uncertainty attached to them, outweigh the disadvantages of locating residential development on the site.
6. For those reasons, as further explored below, the Council does not support residential development on the site. Although the Council considers that there is much to commend a hotel-led allocation, it accepts that the commercial potential to deliver a hotel on the site is at best uncertain. The Council therefore respectfully maintains its view that the course of action required to secure a 'sound' Plan is for the site (policy HA2) to be deleted.
7. The Council expects that other parties may wish to comment on its position and looks forward to working with the Inspector to allow the issues to be explored and resolved. Furthermore, whilst the Council considers that the site should be deleted from the Plan, the Council would like to work with MDL with regard to the issues they would like to address on their site.

## **BACKGROUND**

### Overall approach to Hamble-le-Rice Parish

8. The submitted Local Plan (SUB001) sets out the context and key issues for Hamble-le-Rice Parish at paragraphs 6.2.42 – 6.2.54, and those most relevant to this site may be summarised as follows.
9. The village is characterised by the marine economy and activities and its historic character. The River Hamble is central to its identity, and has considerable landscape, nature conservation, recreational and heritage interest; and there are tensions between these and with the marine

economy. The section seeks to make more of the village's heritage for the benefit of residents and visitors, and there is said to be a general need for a hotel. The main route into the village, Hamble Lane, is one of the most congested roads into the Borough, and access to the waterfront is via the narrow Satchell Lane. The most pressing issues for the Parish include: traffic; protection of the River Hamble and its environs; and the potential to exploit the marine heritage of the area.

### Submitted Policy HA2

10. The Council's submitted policy for the Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park (policy HA2) allocated the site for a marina, hotel, a range of other holiday accommodation and car parking / boat storage (in addition to the existing boatyard identified by policy DM20). The policy states that development will be subject to a development brief / master plan to require a comprehensive scheme to ensure (in essence):

- i. the hotel shall be of an outstanding design (close to the Old Bursledon Conservation Area and fronting the River Hamble);
- ii. retention of the marina, water sports / visitor facilities / training;
- iii. provision of a public slipway;
- iv. retention / enhancement of the existing holiday accommodation;
- v. ecological restoration of the northern shores commensurate with the international environmental designation;
- vi. management of the "Mound" (SINC) to enhance its nature conservation interest;
- vii. protection of surrounding residential amenity;
- viii. more vulnerable uses are located in areas of lowest flood risk; and
- ix. no adverse effect on the European ecology designations.

11. The policy also states that, if no hotel is developed, the site shall be retained in boatyard use, as identified by policy DM20.

### The Regulation 19 consultation

12. Various representations were made on the policy HA2 allocation in the Regulation 19 consultation on the Plan, including by the site owner, MDL. Its Regulation 19 representation (at paragraph 6.1) proposed an alteration to the Council's submitted policy, with the main effects being: changing the allocation from a hotel to approximately 75 dwellings (including 35% affordable), subject to approval by the Council to the level of residential necessary; guiding the location of the residential uses (i.e. outside of the Conservation Area and flood risk zones 2 and 3); and changing from an "outstanding" to a "suitable" design. The proposed revision also states that "where possible" a suitably designed building will be provided in relation to water sports training / activities; and adds the provision of footpath links within the site and improvements to the highway access to the site from Satchell Lane.

13. In considering the Regulation 19 representation from MDL, the Council did not favour a residential-led scheme. However, it recognised that in financial terms the hotel may not be capable of delivering all of the wider benefits set out in the policy. The Council's proposed

modifications of July 2019 (ED33) therefore deleted criteria 2, 3 and 5 and reduced the site boundary accordingly.

#### The Examination Hearing on Policy HA2 and Post-Hearing Matters

14. The HA2 allocation and the various representations on it were discussed at an examination hearing session on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The modifications proposed by MDL were discussed, but the Council's representative explained that he would need to discuss internally whether in the light of the Inspector's questioning the Council would be willing to change its position to support residential development.
15. Shortly after the hearings, on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020, the Council confirmed by email to the Programme Officer (and copied in to Turleys, MDL's representative) that the Council would not support residential development on the site. In summary this was due to: the sub-optimal rural nature of Satchell Lane in transport / access terms; the ecological sensitivities of the site (the site scoring "very poor" in this regard in the Council's assessment of housing sites [HOU11/12]; and the provision of sufficient housing in the Plan. In the light of this and the lack of evidence indicating any demand for a hotel, the Council proposed that policy HA2 be deleted.
16. On 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 the Inspector wrote to the Council in respect of the site (ED73), setting out the range of evidence which informed the discussion at the hearings; and, in the light of the Council's email of 20<sup>th</sup> January, explained that she had reconsidered whether the policy should be modified or deleted. The Inspector considered that there was insufficient evidence or justification before her to warrant deletion. She noted that the Plan acknowledges that one of the most pressing issues for the area is to exploit its marine and aviation heritage and that the policy provides for more than hotel provision, including general holiday accommodation provision, marina and related uses (including water sport and visitor facilities). She stated that there would be clear benefits in delivering the site for both the commercial marina and for comprehensive redevelopment to deliver the community and recreational benefits. In her view, there was no robust evidence to justify deletion. She considered that deletion was not necessary for soundness and modification would support the Local Plan's approach to the area. Consequently, she explained that she currently intended to recommend the policy be modified rather than deleted and asked the Council how they would like to proceed.
17. On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020 the Council's Cabinet resolved to write to the Inspector explaining it was content to proceed with the examination on the basis of the Inspector's post hearing letters and action points. In relation to policy HA2, the resolution stated that: *"In response to and acknowledging the Inspector's letter of 18th May 2020 regarding policy HA2 (Mercury Marina) this correspondence should also state the Council's continuing policy position of no residential development on the site (as set out in the submitted Local Plan) and explain that the Council would like to work with the Inspector through the examination process to seek a Plan which can be found 'sound' by the Inspector and equally 'adopted' by the Council"*. The Report to Cabinet explained that, in light of the Inspector's recent letter, the Council would like to carefully consider the way forward and assemble further evidence (paragraph 13).

18. In the light of the Inspector's view that there was insufficient evidence or justification before her to justify deleting the policy, and further to the Cabinet resolution of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020, the Council has now reviewed and assembled further evidence, as set out in this Statement, which justifies its view that, to achieve a sound plan, policy HA2 should be deleted rather than modified.

### **THE COUNCIL'S POSITION ON A HOTEL-LED ALLOCATION FOR POLICY HA2**

19. Hamble is a historic village situated in the picturesque Hamble river valley and is a major centre for marinas and leisure yachting, an important part of the local economy. The Council supported the principle of a hotel on the site with the aim of supporting and promoting the tourist and yachting industries in the area. The site is already established as a location for holiday accommodation (the caravan park); and if a hotel could be attracted to the site this would broaden the range of accommodation in an attractive setting (the site runs down to the marina and a tranquil part of the river Hamble).

20. In its Regulation 19 representations and Matter 13 statement, MDL state that the site has been marketed since 2009 for a hotel without any evidence for market demand. Their hotel development partner state that they do not regard the site as commercially viable for a hotel ('upscale' / 4 star or mid-range / budget). (MDL Regulation 19 Representations, Appendix 1, sub Appendix 3 [letter from MDL commercial estates manager] and sub Appendix 4 [letter from Harbour Hotels Group Ltd]).

21. This is disappointing, given the Council's aim. However the Council accepts the legitimacy of this evidence for the period 2009 – 2018; and assumes that this will not change over the short term, not least given the Covid-19 position. Whilst it is possible that the demand for a hotel on the site could change over the Plan period to 2036, the Council recognises that at best this is uncertain, and therefore accepts that a hotel-led allocation is not appropriate at this stage.

### **THE COUNCIL'S POSITION ON A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION FOR POLICY HA2**

22. The remainder of this Statement focuses on the planning merits or otherwise of reallocating the site from a hotel to residential along with the wider mix of uses specified by the policy, taking account of MDL's representations.

### **TRANSPORT ISSUES FOR A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION**

#### **Introduction**

23. In terms of the overall accessibility of the site, the Council's small and medium greenfield sites assessment (HOU11) scored the site as "average". This was based on the overall distance of the site to the village centre, schools and other facilities / public transport services based on the shortest route, and the scale / frequency of those facilities / services. However, this Borough-wide assessment did not take account of the condition of the local routes, a factor which is particularly pertinent to this site.

24. Access to all of these facilities from the site is via Satchell Lane. This is a relatively narrow rural / village lane, as described in further detail below. (The distances to various facilities referred to below are set out in maps in Appendix 1).

#### From the site to the village centre

25. The site lies approximately 1.3 kilometres from Hamble village centre, which is also the location of the nearest bus stop. From the entrance of the site there is a good pedestrian route south along Satchell Lane into the centre, save for an approximately 100 metre stretch immediately south of the site with no pavement. This stretch has gentle bends which slightly reduces visibility on different sides of the road at different times. This is problematic for 75 dwellings and a mix of uses including marina and restaurant, particularly at night time. MDL propose improvements to footpath number 1 to the west (indicating surface improvements) and to open up an informal connection through the Bund to Kingfisher Close (MDL Reg 19 Representations, Appendix 12 [PBA], paragraphs 2.7 – 2.14). The former involves a slightly indirect route and a narrow path, and the latter in particular would be a more informal recreation route. The footpaths are generally not lit and are not particularly overlooked on key sections. The route via the Bund would not form a shorter route from the site to the village centre, as suggested by MDL (Appendix 12, paragraph 2.12). Both routes enable pedestrians to avoid the short stretch of Satchell Lane with no pavement should they wish to do so, albeit by using slightly longer and / or more informal routes which are less likely to be used at night time. Overall day time access from the site into the village centre is considered to be reasonable, although night time access is considered to be suboptimal, which is of increasing relevance in and around the winter months.
26. Cyclists have no separate route into the village centre, and would share Satchell Lane with vehicles. Satchell Lane leading into the village centre is a narrow two way road. In a number of places the white centre lines have not been maintained, which reflects the narrow nature of the road (with vehicles needing to exercise care passing each other and cyclists). There are usually some points where cars are parked on street, meaning that the road effectively becomes single lane in places. This means there are local incidents of conflict between oncoming vehicles, and with cyclists. The provision of 75 dwellings on the site would represent a significant (29%<sup>1</sup>) increase in the total number of dwellings along the stretches of Satchell Lane affected by these conditions, which would exacerbate these local conflicts.

#### From the site to the secondary school, health centre and local railway station

27. The site lies approximately 1.3, 1.5 and 1.8 kilometres from Hamble secondary school, health centre and railway station respectively. These are reached by heading north-west along Satchell Lane, a 30 mph speed limit road. Pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles would all share the road. For almost its entire length this stretch of Satchell Lane is a narrow, unlit, two way road with high hedge lines, no pavement, and no grass verge.

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<sup>1</sup> There are 258 existing dwellings along Satchell Lane and related cul-de-sacs to the north of Crowsport. An additional 75 dwellings represents a 29% increase.

28. The road has a number of gentle, and two sharp, bends. Pedestrians have to walk along the road itself. Given that they are walking along the edge of the road next to a high hedge, pedestrians and oncoming vehicles have limited, in some cases very limited, visibility of each other at a number of points. Cars can pass each other along the lane but need to pull out into oncoming traffic to pass any pedestrians or cyclists, and the relatively winding nature of the lane increases the difficulty in achieving this. Within the urban area of the village there were 2 serious accidents, 1 of which was on Satchell Lane. There have been 1 serious and 2 slight accidents along Satchell Lane (from the village centre to the school) over 5 years (MDL Regulation 19 Representations, Appendix 12 [PBA], paragraphs 2.31 – 2.32).
29. Appendix 1 sets out National Travel Survey data which demonstrates that the area within 1.6km of a secondary school is the core area within which the vast majority of pupils would usually walk or cycle to school. Allowing residential development at Mercury Marina will increase the number of dwellings within the area along Satchell Lane within 1.6km of the school by 57%<sup>2</sup>. This would, therefore, significantly increase the number of pupils who will seek to walk or cycle along this sub-optimal stretch of Hamble Lane to reach school, or who would be deterred from doing so despite otherwise being within an easy walking or cycling distance of the school, thus significantly reducing the otherwise relatively sustainable nature of the site in this regard. The same considerations apply to those seeking to access the health centre or railway station.
30. There is an alternative route to the secondary school, railway station and health centre (also set out in a map in Appendix 1). However this involves heading in the opposite direction towards the village centre before ‘doubling back’. Consequently the distance to the secondary school and health centre are more than double the length at 3.1 – 3.2 km. (The distance to the station is over 40% longer at 2.6 km).

#### Satchell Lane Appeal

31. In December 2018 a Planning Inspector (Inspector Ware) allowed an appeal for up to 70 dwellings at ‘Land at Satchell Lane, Hamble’ (Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/W/18/3194846). The decision letter is reproduced at Appendix 2 of MDL’s hearing statement. The appeal site lies immediately south west of the Mercury Marina on the other side of Satchell Lane.
32. Inspector Ware considered the northern route from the site to the school and other facilities (i.e. Satchell Lane, the same route as for MDL’s site). He disagreed with the appellant that this was a safe walking route, noting that the road is unlit, has no footpaths (and in many places steep banks meaning pedestrians cannot avoid traffic) and tight bends. He noted that the lack of recorded accidents (at that time) may simply be a function of the very limited number of people using an unsafe route. Overall, however, Inspector Ware concluded the site was sustainable in locational terms because there was no policy requirement to use Satchell Lane, and there was an alternative southern route to access the school.

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<sup>2</sup> There are currently 131 dwellings along this area around Satchell Lane, a further 75 dwellings would represent a 57% increase.



33. Nevertheless, this location (specifically the adjacent HA2 site) is now being considered in the context of the overall Local Plan. This is significant, especially given that Inspector Ware placed significant emphasis on the lack of a policy requirement for the direct route, noting he might otherwise have reached a very different view on the issue.
34. The NPPF (2012) states that Local Plans should facilitate sustainable modes of transport, and take account of whether safe and suitable access can be achieved for all people (paragraphs 30, 32). The latest NPPF (2019) contains a similar approach. The Local Plan policy S1 criterion ii states that new development should enhance social equality by ensuring equal and easy access to a range of community facilities and services. Policy DM13 states that all new development must have safe and convenient access to the highway network.
35. Further evidence, as set out in this statement, is now available regarding the alternative route and Appendix 1 sets out the national travel survey data from 2014 on the propensity of pupils to walk or cycle to school.
36. As noted above, the distance to the secondary school by the direct but unsafe route is 1.3 km and the distance by the alternative route is over twice as long at 3.1 km. The direct (unsafe) route is within the 'less than 1.6 km' bracket where, on average, 94% of pupils can be expected to walk or cycle to a secondary school. The alternative (safe) route is within the '1.6km – 3.2km' bracket where, on average, 65% of pupils walk or cycle to school. Where pupils have a choice between a short, direct, route and a long, indirect one, it is inevitable that many, perhaps even most, will choose the former, even if it is less safe.
37. It should also be noted that at 3.1 km the alternative route only just falls within the '1.6km – 3.2km' bracket and so it is reasonable to assume that the proportion of pupils walking or cycling would be lower than 65%.
38. Appendix 1 also sets out the more recent national travel survey data for 2019, which provides data on the total number of walking trips (for all trips of any purpose) over different distances. This demonstrates that people, on average, make 187 walking / cycling trips per year over distances of 1.6 km or less; but only 60 walking / cycling trips per year over distances of 1.6 – 3.2 km. In other words, people are just over 3 times more likely to walk or cycle over the shorter distance.
39. In short, the latest evidence to be taken into account demonstrates that if residential development were to be located on the policy HA2 site, residents would be faced with a direct route which is unsafe, or an alternative route of a considerably longer distance over which they are significantly less likely to walk or cycle. This latest evidence available to this examination does not indicate that the site is in a sustainable location.
40. Finally, it should be noted that the Satchell Lane appeal was allowed on condition that the application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made within one year of the permission. An application for reserved matters was not made within this time period and therefore this permission has expired and cannot be implemented.

## Trip Generation / Highway Impact

41. MDL have assessed trip generation and highway impact (MDL Regulation 19 Representations, Appendix 12 [PBA] section 4). Compared to the existing use, both the submitted Local Plan allocation and MDL's proposal would increase vehicle trips. These are set out by MDL (Appendix 12 beneath paragraph 4.20), and summarised below:

### *Increase in vehicle trips*

	AM Peak	PM Peak	12 hour	Per hour in 10 hour off peak
	(8am – 9am)	(5pm – 6pm)		(EBC calculation)
From existing use to:				
-submitted Local Plan	+21	+13	+191	+15.7
-MDL proposal	+23	+34	+328	+27.1
From submitted Local Plan to MDL proposal	+2	+21	+137	+11.4

42. Clearly, both the Local Plan and the MDL proposal would increase vehicle trips. MDL's proposal would result in an increase in trips which is 72% higher than the Local Plan proposal (i.e. 328 versus 191). The additional EBC calculation indicates that the increases from the baseline in the 'off peak' period are in general terms broadly similar to the 'peak' periods (i.e. lying between the AM and PM peak figures).

43. The trips generated would arrive / leave from the north or south, so would not all fall on the same section of Satchell Lane. MDL set out a split which has previously been agreed with the highway authority (MDL Regulation 19 Representations Appendix 12 Table 14). This shows that at peak times 71% - 100% of traffic would enter / leave via the north, with the exception of PM peak departures, where only 38% of trips would be via the north, with 62% via the south.

44. Most of the increase from MDL's proposal would therefore be felt to the north, although in the PM peak it would also be felt to the south. MDL state (in Appendix 12 to their Regulation 19 representations, section 4) that this would result in one extra trip every 2 or 3 minutes at the Hamble Lane / Satchell Lane junction in peak times (e.g. heading north) (paragraph 4.27). MDL Appendix 12 makes very brief reference to the rural nature of Satchell Lane and / or the 30 mph speed limit (e.g. at paragraph 2.3 and paragraph 3.3). However, the statement does not draw out those aspects of Satchell Lane which are suboptimal in transport / highway terms, in particular the potential for conflict between two oncoming cars and pedestrians / cyclists heading north along almost the entire length of the road to the secondary school (i.e. up to the railway line, approximately 1 kilometre) and the points at which there is potential for conflict between

oncoming vehicles and with cyclists to the south. In this context, an extra 2 or 3 cars per minute will increase the incidences of cars meeting each other at various points along Satchell Lane at locations or situations (e.g. passing cyclists / pedestrians) which would cause conflict. This adds further weight to the Council's main concern regarding the poor pedestrian / cycle access to the secondary school, health centre and railway station.

45. MDL also state that HCC as highway authority did not object: to a pre-application proposal to the site in 2018; to a neighbouring planning application with a similar trip generation; and to a range of other recent planning applications for development which would flow onto Hamble Lane (Appendix 12 paragraphs 4.28 – 4.33). MDL also refer to proposed improvements to Hamble Lane (in Bursledon, heading towards the Windhover roundabout) (paragraphs 4.34 – 4.37).
46. First, whilst the Council do not as a matter of course publish pre-application responses, it should be noted that the Council consider HCC raised significant concerns in its pre-application response regarding this site. HCC referred to significant limitations in regards to access by sustainable modes to the site, particularly to destinations such as the secondary school to the north, noting the poor and dangerous route along Satchell Lane.
47. Second, MDL's references to comments from HCC as highway authority relate to individual planning applications on the Hamble peninsula, when one of the purposes of a Local Plan is to consider, strategically, the cumulative effects of development. Hamble Lane and the Windhover roundabout constitute the main route out of the Hamble peninsula and parts of eastern Southampton to the wider area. As a result Hamble Lane and the Windhover roundabout are congested areas.
48. This position is compounded by general traffic growth and further development. Since 2011 1,425 dwellings have been completed or permitted / allocated in locations along the Hamble peninsula, all of which will feed traffic onto Hamble Lane and / or the Windhover roundabout<sup>3</sup>.
49. As MDL refer, HCC have proposed an improvement scheme to the northern end of Hamble Lane. HCC's website provides a scheme overview:

"The County Council wants to improve the A3025 / B3397 Hamble Lane, focusing on highway capacity and non-motorised user improvements to the northern section between Windhover Roundabout and the Portsmouth Road junction; complementary junction capacity improvements on the wider network; improvements to pedestrian and cycle provision between Hamble Rail Station and Hamble village; and improved facilities at Hamble Rail Station. At peak times, junctions on Hamble Lane are at maximum capacity, which can cause severe journey time delays for residents and commuters".

50. A HCC Executive Member Report (March 2019, approved as recommended) is reproduced at Appendix 2. It states:

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<sup>3</sup> Sites of 25 dwellings or more in Hamble / Bursledon / Netley completed since 2011, outstanding permissions or submitted allocations at 2018 (excluding any which have lapsed). Source: primarily HOU021.

“Hamble Lane is heavily congested throughout much of the day but particularly during peak periods, with the potential to improve the situation being limited by the geographical constraints associated with the peninsula location...” (paragraph 3.1).

“There is a clear need for an improvement to help address existing traffic problems and to help manage future demand associated with background growth. It is considered that additional development along the corridor would compound the existing problems and would negate the benefits of the Scheme, with very limited opportunity to make further improvements to the corridor in the future. Therefore until at least the preferred Scheme for the northern section has been implemented, it is considered inappropriate from a traffic perspective for further development to be allocated or permitted along Hamble Lane” (paragraph 3.2).

51. The Report describes that Highways England are progressing plans for improvements at M27 junction 8 and the Windhover roundabout (paragraph 3.4). The travel plan framework, including rail station car park, is currently unfunded and there are issues to resolve (section 9). The County Council are focussing on improvements from the Windhover roundabout south along Hamble Lane to Lowford Hill and the A27 / Portsmouth Road junction, with an additional improvement further south to the Satchell Lane junction. These total £15.5 million (and could be implemented according to priority). HCC currently have £3 million of developer contributions to fund these schemes (section 10).

52. The latest position on funding is that:

- a. Windhover roundabout / Hamble Lane improvement – HCC submitted a bid to the Department for Transport’s “Pinch Point Fund” in January 2020. Assessment of bids have resumed following Covid-19 delays and an outcome is awaited. If the bid were successful at this stage a further assessment to demonstrate the business case would be required and construction could commence in approximately 2 years.
- b. Improvements associated with Hamble railway station – a bid was submitted as part of the Southampton Transforming Cities Fund but this part of the bid was not successful and so these schemes are on hold.

#### Conclusion on transport Issues for a residential-led allocation

53. Vehicles and cyclists share Satchell Lane into the village centre. Pedestrians also share Satchell Lane for a short section, although otherwise have a dedicated route. The nature of Satchell Lane is such that cyclists (and for a short stretch pedestrians) would experience some conflicts with vehicles.

54. Vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians share Satchell Lane heading north west to the secondary school, health centre and local railway station. The nature of Satchell Lane is such that pedestrians and cyclists would experience conflicts, a clear perception of danger and the potential for actual accidents.

55. At best, this means that the site's residents, when travelling to these important local facilities, would be faced with the choice of walking or cycling along a very unattractive route, or travelling via the alternative significantly longer route, increasing the likelihood that they use a car. This significantly reduces the sustainability of the site. The nature of these local facilities are such that they are of far more relevance to a residential than a hotel development.
56. Satchell Lane is the secondary route into the village, and so is not a busy route, but it is used. If the site were reallocated from hotel to residential use the increase in the number of vehicle trips would be 72% higher, and most of these vehicle trips would head north west along Satchell Lane. In total, relative to existing traffic levels, this would result in one extra vehicle every 2 or 3 minutes (MDL Appendix 12 para. 4.27) along a sub-optimal road over a distance of around 1 kilometre towards the school. This will increase the incidences of conflicts between oncoming vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
57. MDL's proposals for 75 residential units on the site would significantly increase the number of dwellings on the relevant stretches of Satchell Lane which would be subject to these conditions. These local conditions are the main reason why, in transport terms, the Council does not support residential uses on the site.
58. The main route in and out of the Hamble peninsula is heavily congested. This is compounded by background traffic growth and the scale of development which has been completed in recent years or is already proposed. HCC are proposing an improvement scheme. However, this is designed to address existing problems and HCC are of the view that further development would negate its benefits. In any case the scheme, is currently, largely unfunded and the outcome of a bid to the DfT is awaited. HCC's policy as transport authority, since March 2019, is therefore not to support any further development in the Hamble peninsula. MDL's proposals for 75 dwellings would generate an increase in trips which is 72% higher than for a hotel.

## **ECOLOGY ISSUES FOR A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION**

### Introduction

59. The site lies adjacent or in close proximity to a range of international, national and local biodiversity designations:
- International designations: the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Solent & Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar and the Solent & Dorset Coast SPA;
  - National designations: Lincegrove and Hackett's Marshes SSSI; Lee-on-the-Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI;

- Local designations: Marshes Mercury Marina Saltmarsh SINC (the 'Mound' or the 'Bund'); Mercury Marshes Local Nature Reserve; Badnum Copse SINC and Mallards Moor Ancient Woodland.

60. The submission Local Plan, including this site (policy HA2, with hotel), was subject to a habitat regulations assessment (HRA) in respect of the international designations, undertaken by Urban Edge Environmental Consulting (UEEC) (SUB004). The Council has commissioned UEEC to undertake:

- A 'Plan level' HRA for the modifications proposed by MDL (i.e. including residential), also comparing this to the submitted Plan's HRA (i.e. including a hotel) (Appendix 3); and a
- Technical note to address the overall ecological effects on biodiversity objectives (Appendix 4).

61. Both UEEC documents are summarised below.

#### Habitat Regulations

62. The HRA for the submitted Plan concluded that the site (with a hotel) would have no adverse effect on the integrity of international designations taking into account the mitigation in the Plan. The Plan level HRA for the site (with 75 residential units) (Appendix 3) assesses the relevant pathways. UEEC's conclusions on the pathways may be summarised as follows:

- Neither a hotel-led nor a residential-led allocation is likely to have a significant effect with respect to: land outside a European site (but functionally linked, i.e. for waders or brent geese);
- Neither a hotel-led nor a residential-led allocation will have an adverse effect with respect to: atmospheric pollution;
- Both a hotel-led and residential-led allocation have the potential for an adverse effect, but the plan includes measures which will avoid or mitigate this, with respect to: recreational disturbance; site specific hydrological impacts; and water abstraction;
- Both a hotel-led and residential-led allocation have the potential for an adverse effect, and the potential for an adverse effect may be greater for residential, but the Plan includes measures which will avoid or mitigate this for either use, with respect to: noise and vibration; invasive or non-native species; and water pollution.

63. Therefore UEEC conclude that the alterations to policy HA2 proposed by MDL do not alter the conclusions of the HRA and would not result in any adverse effects to the integrity of internationally designated sites taking account of the mitigation incorporated within the Plan.

## Overall Biodiversity

64. The Council's submitted and MDL's proposed revised policy HA2 both require:

- *“the northernmost shores of the site are restored for nature conservation purposes, commensurate with the proximity of national and international nature conservation designations”*
- *“the Mound (the Mercury Marina Saltmarsh Site of Importance for Nature Conservation) adjoining the site is retained and managed to maintain and enhance its nature conservation interest, including the provision if possible of public access subject to there being no adverse impact on nature conservation interests”*

65. MDL's proposals in their Matter 13 Statement may be summarised as:

- Northern shore: removal of houseboats, more restricted / managed access, and enhanced public slipway as primary water sports access (enabling the more sensitive northern shore to be suitably reinstated with appropriate landscape).
- Mound: changing access routes to ensure they don't extend to the shoreline, and interpretation boards at sensitive sites (recreational impacts); bird and bat boxes; woodland and pond management plan.

66. UEEC's Technical Note on the overall ecological effects (Appendix 4) provides, at section 5, a commentary on the proposals, as set out in MDL's regulation 19 representation. In summary these are:

- Northern Shore: the key existing impact is the presence of hardstanding which is eroding the salt marsh habitat by preventing its landward migration. MDL's proposals suggest the hardstanding will be removed, which will be beneficial, but the description implies this will be converted to a landscaped amenity grassland area (which appears to relate to MDL's proposal for an outdoor events space / leisure hub for water sports). This will inhibit the extent to which the salt marsh can expand and have limited ecological benefit. The removal of the houseboats would alleviate some disturbance to birds; but the pontoon at area B would be retained for public use.
- The Mound: MDL's proposals to formalise access routes and restrict access to sensitive areas will have beneficial impacts; as will the provision of a pond if it is designed sensitively and appropriately managed and maintained.

67. UEEC have also commented in section 5 on other aspects of MDL's proposals:

- Northern Parking Zone: this could result in direct habitat loss within Badnam Copse SINC and indirect disturbance.

- Holiday lodges / campground: the re-provision of these facilities in the Chamberlayne field is expected to be relatively neutral in terms of ecological impact.

68. UEEC also provide, in section 6 of their report, recommendations for further enhancements not contained within MDL's proposals, in summary:

- Northern shore: close the pontoon to public access to reduce boating activity / disturbance; screen buildings and access routes; enable the salt marsh habitat to expand naturally instead of creating a grassed landscape area; relocate or remove altogether the northern parking zone.
- The Mound: enhance the linear wetland feature and the pond by linking to the reedbed; thin secondary woodland and remove non native species; expand the salt marsh; provision of bridge, boardwalks and bird hides.

#### Conclusion on Ecology Issues for a residential-led allocation

69. Appendix 3 sets out UEEC's 'plan level' habitat regulations assessment of a residential-led allocation and concludes that this would not result in any adverse effects to the integrity of internationally designated sites taking account of the mitigation incorporated within the Plan.

70. Appendix 4 sets out UEEC's assessment of the overall ecological effects of MDL's proposals taking account of biodiversity objectives and all international, national and local designations. UEEC summarise the overall effect at the end of section 5, and set out conclusions in section 7. They explain that the proposals are likely to deliver a net benefit for the site's ecological features, particularly in relation to the northern shore and the Mound, and describe these as modest improvements. However, they also explain that there is a risk these benefits will be weakened by the direct and indirect impacts on Badnam Copse SINC; and that there are missed opportunities to maximise the ecological benefits such that the proposals may fail to deliver the restoration commensurate with the proximity to national and international designations as required by the overall policy. They conclude that MDL's proposals are likely to achieve modest improvements to the northern shore and the Mound.

71. In the light of this assessment the Council consider there is a clear risk that the proposals will not fully achieve the benefits set out by the policy, and that to do so may add additional costs to those factored in by MDL and / or conflict with their operational aspirations for the site (i.e. expanded car park and leisure hub), making these benefits difficult to achieve in practice.

#### **OTHER BENEFITS OF A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION**

72. MDL's Regulation 19 statement (section 5) sets out other potential benefits of a residential-led allocation. The Council's commentary is as follows:



- Regeneration – it is noted that MDL confirm that the existing site meets the operational needs of the marina / commercial users. The replacement of marine and commercial buildings (i.e. 950 sq m commercial) to provide more modern premises is a benefit (at a relatively modest scale in the context of the overall marine economy of Hamble), although may have some dis-benefit if more affordable commercial premises are removed. The improved ‘quality of place’ and facilities (e.g. enhanced restaurant) for users / visitors are acknowledged benefits.
- Heritage – If the proposed replacement buildings adjacent to the Old Bursledon Conservation Area are of a greater scale than the existing buildings, this would have a greater visual impact. Provided the replacement buildings were of an interesting and bespoke design as suggested by the precedent pictures, this would enhance the setting of the Conservation Area. If basic steel sheds were proposed, this would not be an enhancement.
- Ecology – see above.
- Community / leisure – the Council acknowledges that the existing slipway will be enhanced to the benefit of marine users (noting also the ecology benefits above); and a new building provided which (at least in part) would be available to the existing water sports organisations which operate from the site and is supported by them.
- MDL’s masterplan includes a northern parking zone at Area D – This appears to relate in the overall layout to the replacement commercial buildings, and to the water sports buildings / enhanced slipway forming part of the proposed community / leisure hub. However, the ecology assessment by UEEC as summarised above identifies that this could result in direct habitat loss within Badnam Copse SINC and indirect disturbance. If the car park cannot be delivered this may bring into question these elements of the scheme, or at least operationally affect the extent of leisure improvements realised.
- Recreation – MDL already allow access to the Mound (an existing benefit). The proposals would enable this access to continue through the Mound to link to the promenade and enhanced marina facilities. This is an acknowledged benefit.
- Tourism – MDL propose to relocate the existing caravan park to provide an enhanced lodge / camping area. The existing caravan park appears to provide good quality accommodation in this regard. If there is the commercial demand for these facilities to be further enhanced this will happen in any case. The existing caravan park also falls within the submitted plan’s site allocation and is a well screened site on the ground, whereas the proposed relocation to the Chamberlayne field is to a site which is more visible from Satchell Lane and within the designated settlement gap. This will have an urbanising effect on a further section of countryside leading along Satchell Lane away from the village.
- Housing / affordable housing – The emerging Local Plan is meeting housing needs until 2030/31 on the basis that there will be an early review to meet longer term needs. The provision of housing, and affordable housing (if realised) is in itself a benefit on any site. However, the site is not required to meet housing needs, and the Council does not support residential development on this site for the reasons stated in this statement.

73. In summary, the Council agrees that some of the measures identified by MDL are benefits. Furthermore, the Council does not dispute that the other measures offer at least a degree of benefit, or potential benefit (if they were to be delivered), but considers these benefits should be seen in context.

#### VIABILITY ISSUES FOR A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION

74. MDL have provided a financial appraisal of the alternative hotel and residential schemes (undertaken by Turleys at Appendix 1 of their Regulation 19 representation). This is intended to demonstrate the viability of the residential-led, mixed-use scheme and its ability to deliver the wider benefits envisaged by the policy. The quantitative financial appraisal (for 80 and 74 dwellings) is set out in sub-appendices 9 and 10. These are informed by the preceding commentary and sub-appendices, including an “order of costs” at sub-appendix 8 (undertaken by Evolution 5). This order of costs sets out the preparation and construction costs, including for a range of measures which will relate to habitats mitigation (e.g. drainage) and the potential policy benefits (e.g. environmental restoration / access management, community activities centre, restored slipway, new promenade boardwalk and park, new commercial marine units and replacement marina building with restaurant / bar / café).

75. The order of cost estimate (sub-appendix 8) has not been carried directly through into the financial appraisals (sub-appendices 9 and 10). This makes it difficult to assess whether the estimated costs, including those incurred to deliver the potential policy benefits, have been properly reflected in the overall financial appraisal. The Council has reviewed the costs assumed in sub-appendix 9 and, at least in terms of total costs across the site as a whole, these appear to match those estimated in sub-appendix 8. However, there is a notable disparity in the allocation of costs between marina regeneration, policy benefit and residential construction between sub-appendix 8 and sub-appendix 9.

76. The Council’s in-house development team has reviewed the financial appraisal for 80 dwellings at sub-appendix 9 and provided the following commentary on the following key points (for the purposes of policy advice only).

	Effect on viability		Commentary
Residential Gross Development Value	+£1,900,000	Extra income	The GDV increase reflects anticipated sales of £4,500/m <sup>2</sup> for open market and £2,153/m <sup>2</sup> for affordable.
Reduced land value	+£800,000	Cost saving	Reduction in the land value to reflect the baseline land value of £3.7 million identified in Turley’s report
Residential build cost	-£1,750,000	Extra cost	The uplift equates to an ‘all-in’ net build of £1800/m <sup>2</sup> . It is felt that abnormal cost of building in a marine environment and achieving a high specification that will drive

			the anticipated sales values will easily reach this level.
Increased section 106	-£1,000,000	Extra cost	In general terms, the allowances for (for example) education and transport are significantly below expectation, and no allowance has been made for meeting habitat regulations for nitrate mitigation.
Profit requirement	-£4,000,000	Extra cost	Professional judgement that 20% rather than 10% profit margin is required. A developer is unlikely to undertake high end development in an environment adjacent to the Hamble River for such a low profit margin.
Finance costs	-£300,000	Extra cost	Finance costs appear low for a development of this nature. It is anticipated sales will commence at an advanced stage of construction and after many of the site wide regeneration/improvement costs have been incurred (which do not generate income). As such capital outlay and resulting cost of finance are expected to be higher than suggested by Turley.
Net total effect	-£4,350,000		

77. In overall terms the financial appraisal is considered to significantly overestimate viability of the scheme, indicating it is unlikely to secure the wider planning gain proposed (i.e. the mix of environmental, community, marine employment, leisure and/or affordable homes).

#### **SETTLEMENT GAP ISSUES FOR A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION**

78. The MDL proposal includes relocating the holiday homes / camping provision to the Chamberlayne field. This field lies immediately to the west of the policy HA2 allocation and is designated as part of the settlement gap in the submitted Local Plan. As a result of the Inspector's post hearing letter (ED71), the Council has conducted a review of all the settlement gaps in the Borough, and this review does not recommend any changes to the settlement gap in this area.

79. Satchell Lane is a rural lane which provides a clear break between the village of Hamble and the start of the settlement gap. Policy S8 of the Local Plan (based on the emerging proposed modification) states that development within the gap will be permitted provided that it would not diminish the physical extent of the gap and / or visual separation and would not have an urbanising effect detrimental to the openness of the gap, character of the countryside or separate identity of adjoining settlements. Based on MDL's proposed master plan, this part of the site would not contain 'bricks and mortar' (i.e. residential development), and the southern part of the site is indicated to be a more open camping area. The design, layout and landscaping associated with

specific proposals would need to be carefully considered at planning application stage to determining whether they could comply with the settlement gap policy. However, based on MDL's proposed master plan, the northern part of the field does include a significant number of static lodges which would have an urbanising effect on an additional stretch of countryside along Satchell Lane leading away from the village, and indeed would breach the boundary demarking the start of the settlement gap currently created by the rural nature of Satchell Lane.

## **LANDSCAPE ISSUES FOR A RESIDENTIAL-LED ALLOCATION**

80. There are limited views into the main site from the landward side, although the entrance and MDL's proposed extension to include the Chamberlayne field to the west are clearly visible from Satchell Lane. The main marina site lies adjacent to (and the northern section within) the Old Bursledon Special Policy Area and Conservation Area and within the Hamble Valley. The main site is visible from public footpaths leading down from Old Bursledon, the other side of the River Hamble, and from the river itself.
81. MDL's baseline landscape and visual appraisal (Appendix 2 to its Regulation 19 representations) sets out in section 3 Hampshire County Council's and Eastleigh Borough Council's landscape character appraisals. In brief summary, Hampshire's study describes the Hamble Valley, in which the appraisal site lies, as characterised by a "well defined strong valley landform with dense semi natural woodland which clothes the valley sides and tops; a lively, colourful and distinctive yachting character....high quality conservation areas – and popular visitor areas... [and] wildlife designations associated with the estuary".
82. The intrinsic character within the site is highly typical of its context, and the views out of the site over the river are a defining feature. Therefore, whilst the collection of buildings on site at present are not of intrinsically high visual amenity or architectural character, they are highly appropriate to the site and context in their nature. They form part of the semi-industrial/workshop and marine industry land use in keeping with this location.
83. The key sensitivity of this location with regard to contextual landscape and townscape character therefore primarily includes the waterside setting and watercourse and any future proposals should be appropriate to this specific setting.
84. This special character is recognised by the submitted Plan's policy HA2 requirement for development to be subject to approval by the Council of a development brief and master plan such that development is "of an outstanding design commensurate with its location close to or within the Old Bursledon Conservation Area and fronting the River Hamble"<sup>4</sup>.
85. Given the special character and setting of the site, it would be important for any development to be carefully located and designed to achieve these aims.

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<sup>4</sup> Whilst that part of this requirement relating to an outstanding design commensurate to the river frontage was removed in the Council's proposed modifications of July 2019 (ED33), this was simply a reflection of the reduction in the size of the allocation at this stage, removing the area adjacent to the water frontage.

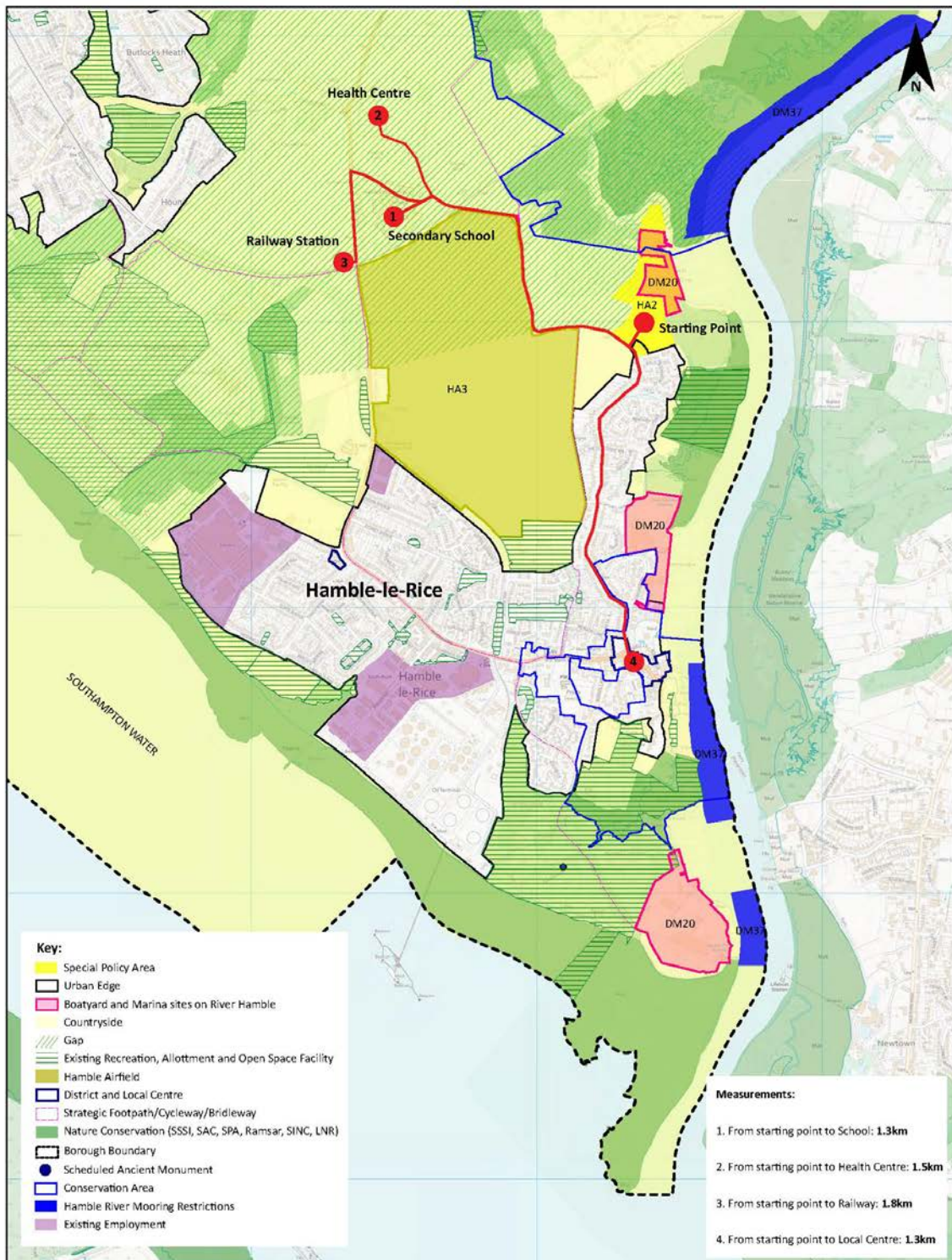
## **OVERALL CONCLUSION**

86. In the submitted version of the Local Plan, the Council allocated the HA2 site for hotel-led development in order to support and promote the local tourism and marine economy. As the policy identifies, the Council also promoted a number of other benefits on the site. Following the examination hearings, the Council accepts that there is currently no clear evidence either that there is the demand for a hotel, or that if such demand was realised it would bring about the other site benefits. The Council therefore accepts that a hotel-led allocation is not appropriate at this time.
87. As for MDL's revisions for a residential-led allocation on the site, the Council considers that such an allocation would considerably exacerbate the transport / access issues in the area, particularly the local issues related to Satchell Lane, but also more widespread traffic issues (on which the Council notes in particular the current approach of HCC to object to further development on the Hamble peninsula on transport grounds). The Council therefore considers that a residential use would be inappropriate on transport grounds. In light of the UEEC's assessment, the Council considers it is unlikely that MDL's proposals will fully meet the requirements for ecology benefits set out by the policy. Furthermore, the Council's review of MDL's financial assessment indicates that it is unlikely that a residential use would bring about the wider mix of site benefits identified by the policy. The Council therefore considers that there are strong reasons why residential development should not be supported and would not bring about wider benefits.
88. For these reasons, the Council respectfully suggests that, in order for the Plan to be found 'sound', policy HA2 should now be deleted from the Plan and residential development should not be supported on the site.
89. The Council expects that other parties may wish to comment on its position and looks forward to working with the Inspector to allow the issues to be explored and resolved. Furthermore, whilst the Council considers that the site should be deleted from the Plan, the Council would like to work with MDL with regard to the issues they would like to address on their site.



## APPENDIX 1: TRANSPORT INFORMATION

### Distances from Policy HA2 site to key facilities via direct route



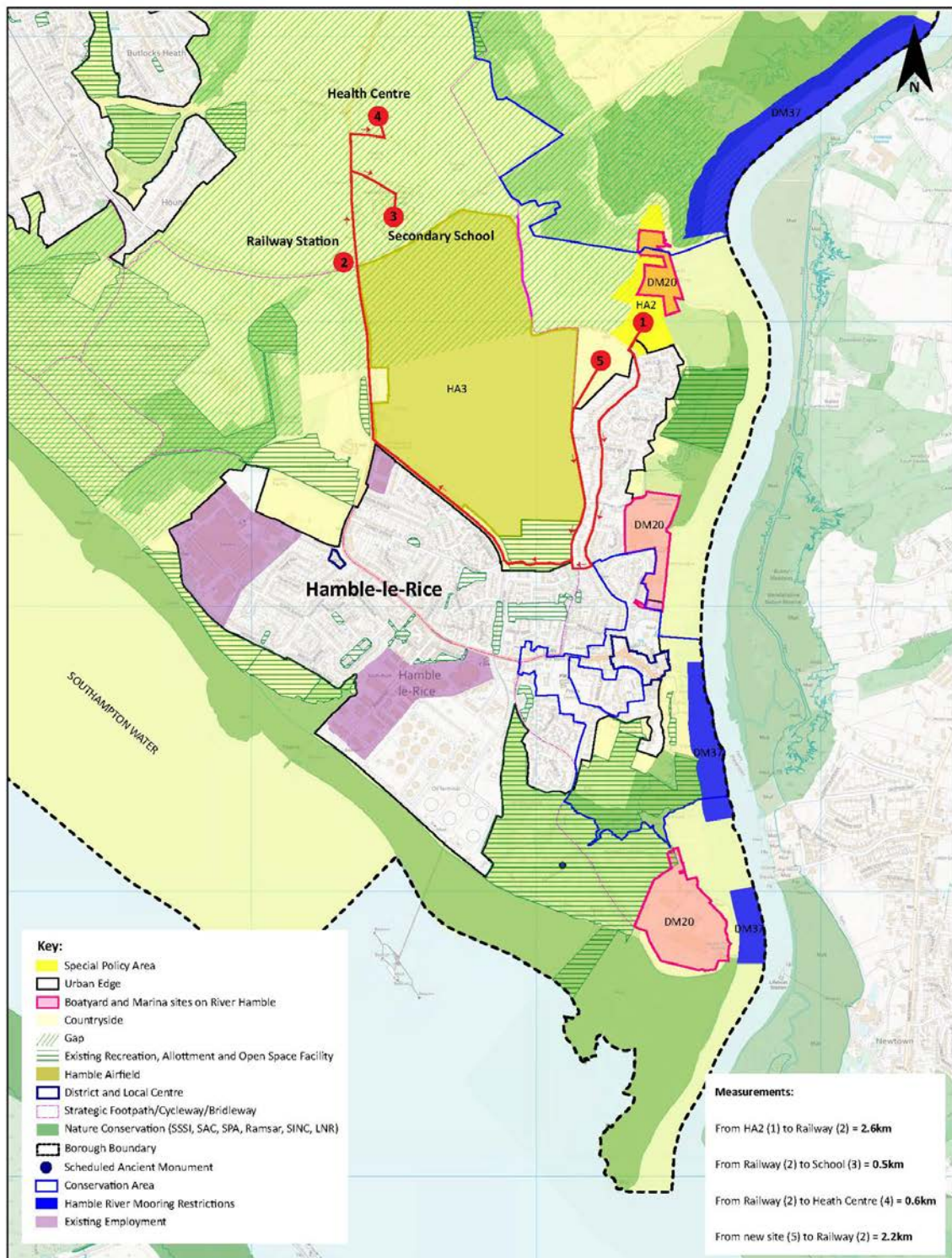
**Policy HA2, Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park - Map 1**

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Scale: NTS | Date: August 2020



Distances from Policy HA2 site to railway station / secondary school / health centre via indirect route



Policy HA2, Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park - Map 4

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Scale: NTS | Date: August 2020





National Travel Survey Data:

Column 2 sets out the data from the 2014 national travel survey. This provides data specifically for trips to secondary schools, and shows the percentage of pupils who walk or cycle to secondary school over different distances.

Column 3 sets out the data from the 2019 national travel survey. This provides more general data for all walking and cycling trips (i.e. any trip for any purpose). It shows the rate of walking or cycling trips over different distances.

1	2	3
Distance	% who walk or cycle to secondary school	Walking or cycling trips per person per year (all trips for all purposes)
	NTS (2014)	NTS (2019)
Less than 1.6 km (1 mile)	94%	187
1.6 km – 3.2 km (1 – 2 miles)	65%	60
3.2 – 8 km (2 – 5 miles)	11%	16

**APPENDIX 2:**

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**DECISION REPORT ON HAMBLE LAND IMPROVEMENTS – MARCH 2019**

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
<b>Date:</b>	12 March 2019
<b>Title:</b>	Hamble Lane Improvements
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

**Contact name:** Jason Tipler

**Tel:** 01962 667978

**Email:** [jason.tipler@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jason.tipler@hants.gov.uk)

#### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the feedback from the second public consultation and the overall high level of support for the preferred improvement scheme for Hamble Lane (the Scheme), as outlined in this report, is noted.
- 1.2. That minor modifications to the preferred Scheme (outlined in this report), which have been informed by comments from key stakeholders and responses to the public consultation, are approved.
- 1.3. That the order of priority for the progression of different elements of the preferred Scheme (as outlined in this report and informed by the public consultation results), is approved in principle, but that this remains flexible to enable the timely delivery of elements of the Scheme should funding become available. Changes to the order of progression would be made in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.
- 1.4 That a review be carried out of the Eastleigh Borough Transport Statement 2012 in respect of future development off Hamble Lane, in order to best secure the opportunity to deliver the proposed Hamble Lane improvements in conjunction with the emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2036.
- 1.5 That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to progress the Scheme development, design, and any necessary planning and environmental processes to a state of readiness so that when funding becomes available, elements of the Scheme can be quickly progressed towards delivery.
- 1.6 That approval is given to progress all appropriate funding and bidding opportunities for the different elements of the Scheme, and to prepare and submit business cases where appropriate, in order to try to secure implementation in a timely manner.

- 1.7 That authority is delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment and the Head of Legal Services to progress all appropriate orders, notices, consents, permissions, rights and easements that are necessary to enable the delivery of different elements of the Scheme, and to commence informal negotiations with affected third party landowners.

## **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 On 14 November 2017 the Executive Member for Environment and Transport (EMET) gave approval to undertake a public consultation exercise on the extent and nature of potential improvements to Hamble Lane, and approval to develop a preferred scheme following analysis of the consultation feedback. This public consultation took place from 27 November 2017 to 7 January 2018, with a total of 683 responses being received.

- 2.2 On 17 July 2018 the EMET gave approval to undertake a second public consultation on the preferred improvement scheme for Hamble Lane (which was developed following the first consultation), to seek views on the prioritisation of different elements of the scheme and to modify the preferred scheme if required following the consultation.

- 2.3 The second public consultation took place from 3 September 2018 to 14 October 2018, with a total of 354 responses being received. The purpose of this paper is to:

- Provide a brief context for the report;
- Report back on the results of the second public consultation;
- Provide a detailed summary of the consultation process, the quantitative and qualitative results and responses received, and a summary of the key issues and concerns for residents;
- Provide the County Council's response to the main comments and issues that were raised in the consultation;
- Outline the modifications that have been made to the preferred scheme following the public consultation and feedback from other key stakeholders;
- Present an order of priority for different elements of the preferred scheme, to be delivered as and when funding is secured;
- Seek approval to progress all funding and bidding opportunities for the Scheme and to prepare business cases where appropriate;
- Seek approval to progress all necessary work, legal documentation and processes that are required to deliver the Scheme, once sufficient funding for the different elements of the Scheme is secured; and
- Outline the future direction of the Scheme.

### **3. Contextual Information**

- 3.1 Hamble Lane is heavily congested throughout much of the day but particularly during peak periods, with the potential to improve the situation being limited by the geographical constraints associated with the peninsula location. The need for the scheme has been defined in two previous reports to the EMET, in November 2017 and July 2018, and these should be referred to for further details of the Scheme objectives and rationale behind the proposed improvements.
- 3.2 There is a clear need to for an improvement to help address existing traffic problems and to help manage future demand associated with background growth. It is considered that additional development along the corridor would compound the existing problems and would negate the benefits of the Scheme, with very limited opportunity to make further improvements to the corridor in the future. Therefore until at least the preferred Scheme for the northern section has been implemented, it is considered inappropriate from a traffic perspective for further development to be allocated or permitted along Hamble Lane.
- 3.3 Work on developing an improvement scheme for the northern section of Hamble Lane (the A3025) began in 2016/17 and two public consultations have subsequently taken place to ascertain the public's views initially on the need for improvements and then on the preferred Scheme that has been developed.
- 3.4 Improvements to Hamble Lane are to a large extent reliant upon the effective operation of adjacent links and junctions particularly those at Windhover roundabout and also M27 Junction 8. Highways England (HE) is progressing improvement schemes for both of these junctions which will help unblock the points of delay at the northern end of Hamble Lane. The HE improvements form a key part of the bigger picture, which is aiming to improve traffic flows on Hamble Lane and across the wider area, by reducing the need for the rat-running that occurs because of congestion on Hamble Lane and at Windhover roundabout and M27 Junction 8. The M27 Smart Motorways project will also help to reduce congestion in the area, and on the A27 in particular, by providing additional capacity on the motorway to ensure that more strategic journeys are made on the motorway, rather than by using parallel roads due to congestion on the M27.
- 3.5 Since the previous EMET report in July 2018 the second public consultation has taken place (from 3 September 2018 to 14 October 2018), and in tandem and following on from this, minor modifications have been made to the preferred Scheme design. These modifications have been made to optimise the design and in light of comments received from key stakeholders and via the public consultation.
- 3.6 The remainder of this report provides details of the results of the second consultation exercise; details of the modifications to the preferred Scheme;

discusses sustainable transport measures; and considers the future direction for the project.

#### **4. Second Public Consultation – Overview**

- 4.1 The second public consultation provided an opportunity for local residents, businesses and other stakeholders to share their views on the different elements of the preferred improvement Scheme, and potential travel-planning initiatives for the wider Hamble Peninsula. People were able to respond to the consultation either on-line, in paper format, or to submit unstructured views via letter or email.
- 4.2. Three drop-in exhibitions were held in the local area at Pilands Wood Centre in Bursledon, Hamble Village Memorial Hall in Hamble, and Abbey Hall in Netley. Any interested parties could view detailed plans for the preferred Scheme and other information on exhibition boards and ask questions of the project team.
- 4.3 A consultation Information Pack, the Exhibition boards, draft Travel Plan Framework, and Questionnaire Response Form were made available to view, print, and download from the County Council's website at [www.hants.gov.uk/hamblelane](http://www.hants.gov.uk/hamblelane). Responses could be submitted through the on-line response form accessed via this web-site, or paper response forms were handed out at the exhibition events together with pre-paid envelopes to post the forms back to the Council. The response form and a copy of the Information Pack were also placed in the Lowford Library in Bursledon, the Netley Library, the Pilands Wood Centre and at the Hamble Parish Council offices.
- 4.4 The consultation and associated exhibition events were advertised by flyers placed in the local area, via the County Council's social media channels, by targeted Facebook advertising, through information on the Council's Real Time Bus Information signs in the area, and via flyers that were posted to circa 8,200 residential and business addresses across the Hamble, Hound and Bursledon parishes.
- 4.5 The response form sought comments on and included questions about the specific elements of the preferred Scheme in turn, starting with: the on-line widening (including changes to the junctions at Tesco, Jurd Way and Portsmouth Road); measures to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities; the environmental impact and proposed mitigation; and the draft Travel Plan Framework and the measures proposed. Consultees were also asked to prioritise the different elements. There were several free text questions for respondents to record comments on each of the different elements of the Scheme, and to explain what impact it would have on them. There were also questions about respondents' use of Hamble Lane and demographic classification questions.

- 4.6 In total, the second consultation received 354 responses, of which 342 were to the questionnaire and 12 were unstructured emails/letters. Of those responding to the questionnaire, 331 responses were from individuals and 11 were from organisations or groups. The vast majority of respondents lived locally in the parishes of Bursledon, Hound or Hamble and normally travelled along Hamble Lane in a car or on foot. The majority of respondents used Hamble Lane five or more days a week and travelled during both on and off-peak times at weekends and on weekdays.
- 4.7 A full report of the findings of the public consultation can be seen here: "[consultation findings report](#)". This includes a copy of the original survey questionnaire. The following section focuses on providing a summary of the main findings of the consultation, in terms of residents' views on the different elements of the preferred improvement Scheme; the main comments and issues; and prioritisation of different elements of the proposals.

## **5. Second Public Consultation – Summary of Findings**

- 5.1 Overall, the consultation revealed strong support for the proposed improvements and provided a clear public mandate to proceed with the preferred improvement Scheme for Hamble Lane.

### **Scheme Elements**

- 5.2 The Scheme was sub-divided into 12 key elements for potential infrastructure works along with additional travel planning measures. The majority of respondents agreed with 11 out of 12 elements within the scheme. Full details are provided in the table on the next page.
- 5.3 Five elements – widening of the northern part of Hamble Lane; introducing a footway /cycleway between Lowford Hill and Windhover roundabout; changes to the Portsmouth Road junction; changes to the Tesco access; and improvements to pedestrian and cycle provision – received significant backing and very little opposition.
- 5.4 Six elements – junction changes at Jurd Way and Lowford Hill; improvements to Pound Road; junction changes involving traffic signals at A27/Portsmouth Road and Hamble Lane/Satchell Lane; and introducing traffic signals at junctions along the northern section of Hamble Lane to help manage traffic flow – achieved a majority of support. However, there was also some notable opposition and over one third of all respondents would like to modify the proposed improvements to Jurd Way junction, and the new traffic signals proposed for the wider network. This tended to derive from the view that more traffic lights would reduce traffic flow and thereby increase journey times and air pollution.
- 5.5 The proposal to introduce traffic signals at the Hamble Lane/Hound Road junction was the only measure that received more disagreement than support. The respondents who did not support it often believed that the

existing roundabout worked well, and that traffic only needed to be controlled during peak times.

<b>Scheme Element</b>	<b>Agreement</b>	<b>Disagreement</b>
Northern part: Road widening	82	13
Northern part: Footway/cycleway	73	12
Portsmouth Road junction changes	73	17
Tesco access changes	72	16
Pedestrian and cycle provision	64	9
Jurd Way junction changes	59	25
A27/ Portsmouth Road change	58	24
Pound Road improvements	56	14
Northern part: Traffic signals	54	36
Hamble Lane/ Satchell Lane changes	53	33
Lowford Hill junction changes	52	30
Signals: Hamble Lane/ Hound Road	37	46

- 5.6 Overall, the vast majority of respondents believe that the improvement Scheme for the northern part of Hamble Lane will have a positive effect. One third of respondents believed it would fully meet the project objectives, and half thought objectives would be met to some extent.
- 5.7 Almost everyone who responded identified impacts on both themselves and on the local area if the preferred improvement Scheme for Hamble Lane went ahead. Around three quarters of respondents recognised the positive impacts of the Scheme, such as reduced journey times, improvements in air quality and improved personal wellbeing.
- 5.8 Just over half of the respondents highlighted potential negative impacts. Many respondents, even those in favour of the Scheme, recognised that the roadworks required could cause significant disruption. Most negative impacts came from an assumption that a (perceived) excess of traffic lights would cause increased traffic congestion, increased air pollution, and cutting through using residential roads. The majority of respondents were willing to accept the resulting loss of vegetation, on the understanding that an equivalent amount would be planted elsewhere to offset the impact.



## **Priorities**

- 5.9 When asked to rank the proposed improvements to Hamble Lane the top three priorities for respondents were (note that on-line widening was not offered as an option, as it is an intrinsic part of any improvements and without it the Scheme would not proceed):
1. Improvement to the Hamble Lane/Portsmouth Road Junction.
  2. Revised access for Tesco.
  3. Improvement to the Hamble Lane/Jurd Way junction.
- 5.10 Two thirds believed that the Portsmouth Road junction should be the main priority, whilst 88% ranked it either first or second. Improvements to the Tesco access and the Jurd Way junction were each selected as a first or second priority by almost 70% of respondents, with the Tesco access receiving 8% more votes as a first priority than the Jurd Way junction.
- 5.11 The number of respondents were significantly higher for 'Improvement to Hamble Lane/Portsmouth Road', 'Improvement to Hamble Lane/Jurd Way' and 'Revised access for Tesco'. This suggests that these are the areas that respondents may be most impacted by at present and feel most strongly about.

## **Environment**

- 5.12 Over three quarters of respondents believed that the loss of vegetation as part of the proposed Scheme would be acceptable, at least to some extent. Less than one in five opposed this entirely. Most respondents turned down the alternative option of having a smaller improvement scheme for Hamble Lane that would protect more trees, suggesting that they believe that the benefits of the improvement Scheme would outweigh the environmental costs. Work is ongoing to establish whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in order to assess the full environmental impact of the preferred Scheme. More details are provided in Section 12 of the report.

## **Sustainable Modes**

- 5.13 Over nine out of ten respondents saw some value in introducing a Travel Plan Framework for the Hamble Peninsula – with six out of ten being fully supportive of this plan. Improved provision for cyclists and pedestrians, and shuttle buses/Park and Ride/Park and Rail initiatives that encourage people to leave their cars outside the peninsula were all well supported.
- 5.14 The consultation responses provide a clear mandate for changes to improve the pedestrian and cycling provision to the south of Hamble Station. Almost two thirds of respondents believed that there was a need for improvements, whilst less than one in ten believed that no improvements were needed.

- 5.15 A key proposal to reduce private car use within the Hamble Peninsula is to provide a new car park, bus stop and pick-up/drop off facility at Hamble Rail Station. Just under half of the respondents said that they would make use of these improved facilities, with one in three in favour of the additional car parking facility. A similar number would use the pick-up/drop-off facility, if available. Just under two in ten would make use of the bus stop.
- 5.16 In order to increase use of sustainable modes of transport, 60% of respondents believed that the Travel Plan Framework should focus on improvements to pedestrian and cycle provision, suggesting that if pathways were modified, they and others would be more likely to walk or cycle instead of using a vehicle. Over half of respondents believe that a shuttle bus that operates in and out of Hamble village would encourage them to travel more sustainably. Finally, if bus stops were increased or improved, over 40% of respondents would be more inclined to use public transport, reducing their carbon footprint.

## 6. Second Public Consultation – Other Comments

- 6.1 Given the way the consultation question was structured, the comments that were received were in response to each specific element of the Scheme and as such a response is provided to some of the main comments received on each Scheme element, in the table below.

Issue / Comment / Suggestion	County Council Response
<b>Northern section: On-line widening and junction improvements generally</b>	
Modifications to, or removal of proposed traffic lights / create roundabouts instead.	<p>Creating traffic lights at all three junctions provides the best means to co-ordinate the flow of traffic along Hamble Lane and help to manage vehicles more effectively than using roundabouts, which are un-controlled.</p> <p>The type of modern ‘smart’ lights that would be installed are demand-responsive in real time to the prevailing traffic conditions and do not operate on fixed timing plans. This means that at busy times green time can be split proportionately between traffic on each approach to the junction, limiting the potential for excessive traffic queues on one approach. At off-peak times this means that traffic will not be held on a red light if there is no traffic on other approaches, significantly limiting off peak delays.</p> <p>Several different options have been assessed for the junctions including revised roundabout layouts, but co-ordinated traffic signals provide for the best overall traffic flow along the corridor. Whilst there will still be some traffic queues, these should clear within each cycle of the</p>

<b>Issue / Comment / Suggestion</b>	<b>County Council Response</b>
	signals and overall there will be significantly less queueing traffic than would be experienced if the current road layout was retained.
Create additional lanes and/or create a tidal flow middle lane.	<p>There is simply not enough land available to create an additional lane northbound and thereby provide two lanes in each direction between Tesco and Jurd Way and/or Portsmouth Road.</p> <p>The creation of a tidal flow middle lane would require the installation of overhead gantries, which would be both visually intrusive and would require land on both sides of the road to install. On the eastern side this would require an additional strip of land so as not to obstruct the proposed shared use path, but there is not sufficient land available. Furthermore, the additional southbound lane is required to solve traffic congestion at the Portsmouth Road junction which is an issue in both the AM and PM peaks, therefore a tidal flow lane on the northern section of Hamble Lane would not benefit the network overall.</p>
<b>Tesco Access Junctions</b>	
Alternative arrangements, e.g. just new access onto A27 / no u-turn north of access / keep as it is.	<p>The proposed arrangements provide the most efficient means of accessing Tesco, in terms of the overall operation of the local highway network. Retaining a right-turn into Tesco from Hamble Lane at the existing access point would add a third stage to the proposed traffic signals and significantly increase delay to southbound traffic on Hamble Lane. Likewise retaining a right-turn out of Tesco would add another stage to the proposed signals and would increase delay to both northbound and southbound traffic on Hamble Lane.</p> <p>Keeping the roundabout layout as it is and providing only a new car park exit onto the A27 would offer some benefits over the existing layout, as traffic turning right from Tesco onto Hamble Lane would potentially be reduced. However some vehicles would still choose to make this manoeuvre, delaying traffic on Hamble Lane.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, agreement from Tesco is still needed to the revisions to the internal layout of the Tesco car park, which would be required to facilitate the proposed new arrangements. This is in terms of getting traffic to/from the new egress and permanent access on the A27 and also accommodating delivery vehicles that could no longer u-turn at the roundabout on Hamble Lane to get back to Windhover roundabout. Discussions</p>

<b>Issue / Comment / Suggestion</b>	<b>County Council Response</b>
	with Tesco and their representatives are ongoing at present.
Will cause increased queuing at Windhover roundabout and on A27.	The proposed improvements would only be delivered in the context of the HE scheme for an improved Windhover roundabout, which will provide significant additional capacity through the provision of traffic signals and additional lanes on the approaches and circulatory carriageway. This will ensure that traffic approaching Windhover from the A27 Providence Hill will have dedicated green time and an additional approach lane to enter the roundabout and generally the road should operate with a lot less delay than it does currently.
Safety at the proposed u-turn north of Tesco access.	To make it as safe as possible the proposed u-turn facility would be controlled by traffic lights, which will also include a stage for the proposed pedestrian crossings over Hamble Lane at this location. The third lane proposed on Hamble Lane southbound on approach to the crossing will help to reduce delay caused by the signals and the design has now been modified to include a third lane on Hamble Lane northbound, dedicated to u-turning traffic which will mean that traffic continuing north to Windhover is not impeded. The traffic lights will be 'smart' and will monitor traffic approaching from Windhover to ensure that traffic on Hamble Lane southbound is stopped at the optimum time, to minimise delay.
<b>Jurd Way Junction</b>	
Do not install traffic lights / modify existing roundabout	Both roundabout and signal-controlled options have been assessed for this junction and the proposed layout was found to have the best operation for the overall network. As noted above traffic signals provide the best means to control and balance delay across approaches and co-ordinate flow with adjacent junctions. Their 'smart' nature means that off-peak delays will be minimised and peak-hour flow will be optimised. Traffic signals will also allow signal-controlled crossings to be installed to provide a safe new means to cross both Hamble Lane and Jurd Way and ensure the continuity of the proposed new shared use footway/cycleway on the eastern side of Jurd Way.
<b>Portsmouth Road Junction</b>	
Banning right turns will cause problems	Traffic data that has been collected shows that very few vehicles currently turn right from Portsmouth Road onto Hamble Lane, likely due to the difficulty in making this

<b>Issue / Comment / Suggestion</b>	<b>County Council Response</b>
elsewhere, e.g. Pound Road	manoeuvre in the context of the high traffic flows on Hamble Lane. It is also easier to route down Pound Road and turn right onto Hamble Lane from there, as the opposing traffic flow on Hamble Lane is lower at this point. This means that the additional traffic that would be likely to use Pound Road is very low, as most traffic from Portsmouth Road looking to route south towards Hamble is already using Pound Road.
Do not install traffic lights / extend right-turn lane instead / install roundabout	<p>As for other junctions, both roundabout and signal-controlled options have been assessed and the proposed layout was found to have the best operation for both this junction and the overall network. It allows flow to be managed, to balance delays between the different approaches to the junction at peak times and off-peak delays will be minimised due to the 'smart' signals.</p> <p>Installing a roundabout would cause severe queues on Hamble Lane northbound due to the high volume of traffic turning right into Portsmouth Road from Hamble Lane southbound, which would have priority over northbound traffic. This flow would not be broken up because it would have very little opposing traffic, due to the very low number of vehicles that turn right out of Portsmouth Road.</p> <p>Leaving the junction as it is and just providing a longer right-turn lane would offer some benefits, but signalling the junction offers more benefits as it allows traffic to turn right into Portsmouth Road at the same time as traffic turns left out of Portsmouth Road, providing for very efficient operation of the signals.</p>
<b>Lowford Hill Junction</b>	
Keep as it is now, i.e. no through road	<p>Of the one-third of respondents who were unsure of or disagreed with the proposal to re-open Lowford Hill, three-quarters believed that it should be kept as it is now.</p> <p>The proposed re-opening of Lowford Hill for eastbound traffic would simply redistribute existing traffic that currently travels from the south on Hamble Lane and turns right at the Jurd Way junction, it should not in itself encourage more traffic to take this route. It involves relatively low numbers of vehicles (150-200 in the peak hours) but does provide enough of a benefit to the operation of the Jurd Way junction to warrant its inclusion. This is because the removal of right turning</p>

Issue / Comment / Suggestion	County Council Response
	<p>traffic from signal-controlled (and roundabout) junctions offers significant benefits to overall junction operation, as right-turning traffic directly opposes other traffic. In this instance the volume of traffic opposing vehicles on Hamble Lane southbound would be significantly reduced, by up to around 50%.</p>
<p><b>A27 / Portsmouth Road &amp; Hamble Lane / Hound Road / Satchell Lane</b></p>	
<p>Don't install traffic lights here / make the lights smart to reduce off-peak delays / use a roundabout instead</p>	<p>As for other junctions, both roundabout and signal-controlled layouts have been assessed and overall the traffic signals were found to offer the most capacity and lowest delays. The lights that would be installed would be 'smart' meaning that during peak times delay would be balanced across the approaches according to the prevailing traffic conditions and at off-peak times delays would be minimised.</p> <p>A roundabout at Satchell Lane would not offer as many benefits to traffic on Satchell Lane due to the high flow on Hamble Lane southbound which would still oppose traffic looking to exit Satchell Lane and would not be broken up enough due to the relatively low volume of traffic turning right into Satchell Lane. Creating a large elongated roundabout incorporating the two junctions would also not work, as this would increase the volume of traffic opposing vehicles on all approaches.</p>
<p>Hound Road roundabout doesn't need changing</p>	<p>As per the consultation responses, the majority of people did not support the proposed changes to the Hamble Lane / Hound Road roundabout, although the majority did support changes at the Satchell Lane junction. It is acknowledged that the Satchell Lane junction is more of an issue than the Hound Road junction and that the Hound roundabout generally works quite well.</p> <p>However, option testing revealed that to make the Satchell Lane junction work better traffic signals would be required and due to the proximity of the Hound road junction circa 60m to the north, signalisation of Hound Road would also be required to manage the flow on Hamble Lane southbound and minimise queuing between the two junctions, which would otherwise potentially block back to Hound Road junction and interfere with its operation.</p>
<p><b>Improvements to Pedestrian and Cycling Provision, south of Hamble Station</b></p>	

<b>Issue / Comment / Suggestion</b>	<b>County Council Response</b>
Cyclists and pedestrians should be separated, for safety etc, or paths widened	It is acknowledged that ideally pedestrian and cycle provision would be separated, but due to the significant physical and environmental constraints along Hamble Lane, it is not considered feasible to provide a wider and/or segregated path at this time.
Additional crossing points are required	<p>It is acknowledged that there are currently no formal or controlled crossing points on Hamble Lane in the vicinity of Hamble Rail Station. The nearest controlled crossing points are located 750m to the south (adjacent to Hamble Primary School), or 350m to the north (adjacent to the Hamble School). There is an uncontrolled crossing with a central refuge island located 300m to the south of the station, adjacent to the police training centre access and further south into Hamble village there are several more crossings of this type.</p> <p>The provision of an additional crossing in the vicinity of the rail station will be considered further as part of ongoing work to try and provide a car park and drop-off facility at the station. This would be expected to increase use of the station and thereby increase potential demand for a crossing. It should be noted that providing a crossing in the immediate vicinity of the station would not be possible due to the presence of the 'humped' bridge over the railway line, which limits the forward visibility sightlines to a crossing.</p>
Cyclists should be made to use the cycle paths, where they exist	<p>There is no existing mechanism by which cyclists could be made to use cycle paths and even if there was, it is not something that the County Council would wish to pursue. Cyclists have as much right to be on the road as vehicles.</p> <p>Encouraging more people to cycle is a key part of the County Council's strategy to reduce the number of vehicles on our roads and help people to lead healthier lifestyles.</p>
Better connectivity of cycle paths	<p>It is acknowledged that it could be considered that there is a 'missing link' in provision, as there is no path on the western side of Hamble Lane from the bus stop layby south of the Police Training Centre access for a distance of circa 250m, up to where the Hamble Rail Trail crosses Hamble Lane, north of Hamble Primary School.</p> <p>However, there is a shared use path on the eastern side of Hamble Lane at this location and the Hamble Rail Trail does provide an alternative route on the western side of</p>

<b>Issue / Comment / Suggestion</b>	<b>County Council Response</b>
	<p>Hamble Lane for this section and one that is not adjacent to the carriageway.</p> <p>Providing a continuous shared use path along Hamble Lane on the western side would be very challenging due to the high number of trees adjacent to the highway and the allotments that are located directly behind these trees.</p> <p>There is also no cycle path on either side of Hamble Lane over the railway bridge adjacent to the station, with only a footpath on the eastern side of the road. This is because of the narrow width of the road on the approach to and over the bridge, which limits the space available for a footway/cycleway. To widen the road would require a new bridge to be constructed, or an additional structure to carry pedestrians/cyclists to be 'bolted-on' alongside the bridge, both of which would involve significant cost.</p>
<p>Re-surfacing is required, to encourage use</p>	<p>The surfacing of the existing shared use path will be reviewed and where appropriate this will be flagged for improvement via the County Council's highway maintenance programme.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Mitigation Measures</b></p>	
<p>Replacement vegetation should be provided, including in the wider area if not enough space adjacent to the road</p>	<p>As outlined during the consultation, the proposed Scheme does include a plan to plant new vegetation to replace that which would be lost. For the northern section of Hamble Lane, the indicative proposals involve the replacement planting of circa 48 new trees and 350m of new hedgerow and shrubs, to replace the circa 40 existing trees that would be lost. As the scheme develops further, consideration will be given to providing additional new planting in the wider area.</p>
<p><b>Perceived Negative Impacts on the Local Area and on Respondents</b></p>	
<p>Disruption during construction stage</p>	<p>Whilst detailed plans for the construction phase of the Scheme have yet to be developed, it's clear that on a road as busy as Hamble Lane there would be disruption and delay over and above that currently experienced, whilst an on-line widening scheme such as this is constructed. As part of the traffic management plan for the Scheme every effort will be made to minimise disruption as far as possible, particularly during the morning and evening peak periods and at weekends.</p>



<b>Issue / Comment / Suggestion</b>	<b>County Council Response</b>
	<p>Consultation will be undertaken with all affected parties to ensure that access to adjacent properties and businesses is maintained for the duration of the works.</p> <p>Whilst there will be short-term disruption while the Scheme is implemented, in the longer term the benefits to traffic flow along Hamble Lane should be significant.</p>
<p>Increased queues due to traffic lights and more rat-running</p>	<p>Whilst the general perception is that traffic lights lead to more delays as vehicles are held at red lights, on a road that is already very congested such as Hamble Lane this tends not to be the case. Traffic lights provide an opportunity to manage traffic flows in way that cannot be achieved with roundabouts, by apportioning green time (and capacity) more evenly across the different junction approaches, based on the prevailing traffic conditions. This is especially true of modern 'smart' traffic signals which can respond in real-time to traffic conditions and adjust the signal timings accordingly.</p> <p>The transport modelling results that were presented at the consultation show that the proposed Scheme involving linked traffic signals would dramatically reduce the overall levels of congestion and delay on the north section of Hamble Lane, compared to a situation where the existing layout with roundabouts and priority junctions is maintained.</p> <p>It should also be noted that this view was supported by respondents to the consultation, where circa three times as many people cited positive impacts on traffic congestion and journey times as people citing negative impacts, as outlined in the full consultation report.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that more rat-running would occur as a result of the proposed Scheme and indeed if Hamble Lane, Windhover roundabout and M27 Junction 8 are all working better, this should help to keep traffic on the more strategic routes and therefore reduce the propensity for rat-running to occur.</p>
<p>Increased pollution due to queues at traffic lights</p>	<p>As a result of the forecast reduction in delays and queuing vehicles and increase in vehicle speeds due to the proposed scheme it is expected that pollution levels will overall be significantly reduced. This is because stationary and slow-moving traffic causes more air pollution than traffic that is moving along at a steady speed. Whilst the traffic lights will result in short-term queues the modelling indicates that these queues should clear each cycle and there will be significantly less</p>

Issue / Comment / Suggestion	County Council Response
	<p>queueing vehicles than if the current junction layouts are retained.</p> <p>It should again be noted that this view was supported by respondents to the consultation, where approximately twice as many people cited a positive impact on air pollution as people citing a negative impact, as outlined in the full consultation report.</p>

6.2 The County Council received 12 responses through channels other than, or in addition to the consultation questionnaire. Of these seven were from residents, three were from local Parish Councils and two from organisations. These responses raised similar views to those highlighted via the consultation questionnaire. The most frequent themes raised (those with three or more comments) in these responses are outlined below and the remainder can be seen in the full consultation report:

- Comments regarding past/ potential future housing developments in the area (6 comments).
- Concerns about the consultation process, Information Pack or Response Form (4 comments).
- Concerns that proposals may encourage 'rat running' and increase traffic through other areas (4 comments).
- Comments about the proposal to impose a U-Turn to access Tesco (4 comments).
- Concerns that traffic lights proposed would increase congestion (4 comments).
- Suggestions that traffic lights should be synchronised/smart lights (4 comments).
- Concerns about the impacts of the proposal to open the road/turning to Lowford from Hamble Lane (3 comments).
- Concerns that traffic delays forecast are still high after implementation (3 comments).
- Comments regarding improvement of cycle lanes (3 comments).
- General support shown to the proposals to improve Hamble Lane in the consultation (3 comments).
- Suggestions to improve congestion by reducing car usage/ encouraging use of public transport (3 comments).

- 6.3 The majority of the comments noted above have either been addressed within the table above or addressed within the previous EMET report of July 2018, which outlined the results of the first public consultation.
- 6.4 Of the outstanding items, full details of the consultation process are provided at Section 4 of this report. In relation to the concern that the delays are still forecast to be high following Scheme implementation, this is due to the very high levels of forecast traffic growth that were used in the assessment, to ensure a robust scheme was developed. Effectively the modelling for the forecast year scenario is undertaken using traffic flows that are produced by taking the surveyed and modelled base year traffic data and applying local background growth factors in accordance with Government technical guidance, to account for known local planned and committed development sites, and growth in traffic and car ownership more generally. Both the existing layout and the preferred Scheme have been modelled using the same flows and as shown by the modelling results the preferred Scheme is forecast to result in a very significant reduction in overall delay and journey times compared to the existing layout, which is the key point.

## **7. Modifications to the Preferred Scheme**

7.1 Following the second public consultation and consultation with key stakeholders, some relatively minor revisions have been made to the preferred Scheme design at different locations, in order to optimise the design and take account of comments received. These can be summarised as follows and are shown on the revised drawings for the preferred Scheme, which are attached as Appendices to this report:

- The proposed u-turn adjacent to Tesco has been modified to include a third lane on Hamble Lane northbound approaching the u-turn, which is dedicated to u-turning traffic and will mean that traffic continuing north to Windhover roundabout is not impeded by traffic waiting at the signals to make the u-turn.
- The position of the traffic signal stop-line on the left-turn onto Hamble Lane from the Tesco car park has been amended, so that traffic is able to exit from the Lowford Clinic/Ruma Salons car park prior to the stop line.
- The layout in the vicinity of Manor Crescent has been revised (subject to further discussions with the residents of Manor Crescent) to show a central point of access, with the two existing access points at the northern and southern ends of the crescent closed off. This provides a safer and simpler layout, makes the junction more conspicuous to vehicles on Hamble Lane, and moves the accesses further away from the proposed signals at the Portsmouth Road and Jurd Way junctions. Precisely how Manor Crescent is accessed and where replacement parking provision is made will be subject to discussions with the affected residents on Manor Crescent and therefore could potentially be subject to modifications as the design progresses. But as the only directly affected

parties are the residents of Manor Crescent, this matter is one which does not need to be the subject of further wider public consultation.

- The internal layout within the Tesco car park is not shown on the scheme drawings as it is still subject to further review and discussions with Tesco and their representatives, in terms of servicing and access to/from the proposed new car park exit onto the A27.

## **8. Prioritisation of the Preferred Scheme for Highway Works**

8.1 A review of which elements of the Scheme deliver the widest benefit to all and a review of the consultation responses has been undertaken. Consideration has also been given to which parts of the preferred Scheme could be delivered in isolation and which parts would be dependent on others. The following order of priority for different elements has been identified, which broadly accords with the public consultation responses, which prioritised highway works over improvements to pedestrian/cycle facilities south of Hamble Rail Station. Note again also that the on-line widening is an intrinsic part of any scheme and is therefore the top priority:

1. On-line widening of the northern section of Hamble Lane to provide a second lane southbound between the Tesco access and Portsmouth Road and a new shared use footway/cycleway on the eastern side of the road.
2. Signalisation of the Portsmouth Road Junction, including the partial re-opening of Lowford Hill.
3. Signalisation and widening of the Jurd Way junction.
- 4a. Revised access arrangements for the Tesco Store – new/improved existing car park egress and access, via the A27.
- 4b. Revised access arrangements for the Tesco Store – new signal-controlled left-in/left-out junction on Hamble Lane, with new u-turn slip from Hamble Lane northbound north of the Tesco access.
5. Signalisation of the A27/Portsmouth Road Junction.
6. Signalisation of the Satchell Lane and Hound Road junctions with Hamble Lane.

## **9. Sustainable Transport Measures**

- 9.1 Development of the Travel Plan Framework (TPF) for the Hamble Peninsula will continue, including liaison with Hamble Parish Council, although at present there is no County Council funding to put towards roll-out of the TPF.
- 9.2 Work will continue to seek to progress the delivery of a new car park and drop-off facility at Hamble Rail Station on land owned by the County Council, working with key stakeholders including the Hampshire Police Training Centre and Eastleigh Borough Council. At present the primary means of

access to the new car park would need to be from the existing Police training centre access road and there are several issues that need to be overcome before this can be agreed.

- 9.3 Respondents to the public consultation prioritised junction improvement and widening works over pedestrian/cycle improvements to Hamble Lane (between the rail station and Ensign Way). Notwithstanding this, a feasibility study will be undertaken over the coming months to develop minor works schemes for improvements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Hamble Lane (to the south of the rail station), in order to improve access to the station, with the possibility of funding these improvements via the Transforming Cities fund.

## **10. Finance**

- 10.1 Approximately £3million in funding is available to be put towards the on-line widening and junction improvements for the northern section of Hamble Lane, from Section 106 contributions that are both held and to be forthcoming from local development sites.

- 10.2 Additional funding for the Scheme continues to be sought and the County Council has identified two potential opportunities to bid for funding towards the Scheme as follows:

- Highways England funding; and
- Transforming Cities Fund.

- 10.3 The latest cost estimate for the on-line widening and junction improvements for the northern part of Hamble Lane (Windhover to Lowford Hill, including the new Tesco A27 access) is circa £12million (excluding land costs). The estimate for improving the Portsmouth Road/A27 junction is a further circa £1.5million, while the initial estimate for improving the junctions with Hound Road and Satchell Lane is a further circa £2million.

- 10.4 Following the prioritisation exercise that has been undertaken, the intention is to deliver different elements of the preferred Scheme ideally in terms of the identified priority, but adjustments may need to be made to reflect the availability of sufficient funding. Approval is therefore sought as part of this report to proceed with the progression of the Scheme towards delivery in a prioritised and logical, but where appropriate flexible, manner.

## **11. Equalities**

- 11.1 The Scheme will offer positive benefits to pedestrians and cyclists through the introduction of the new shared use path on the eastern side of Hamble Lane and also through the new signal-controlled crossing points of Hamble Lane and Jurd Way. Mobility impaired users will also significantly benefit from these new controlled crossing points, which are a safer form of crossing

than the existing uncontrolled crossing points. These crossings will assist users when crossing the widened highway along Hamble Lane.

11.2 Further details are provided in Integral Appendix B.

## **12. Future Direction**

- 12.1 It is important to progress the overall design for the Scheme to a state of readiness whereby when sufficient funding becomes available, that prioritised elements can be quickly progressed to delivery (subject to the submission and approval of a Project Appraisal for the Scheme).
- 12.2 In order to progress the Scheme towards delivery additional funding will be required and as such there is a need to progress appropriate bidding opportunities for funding as and when they arise and to prepare business cases to support any funding bids, including potential bids to Highways England and the Transforming Cities Fund later this year.
- 12.3 As the improvement Scheme is limited to improvements to existing junctions and on-line widening adjacent to existing highway, it can be delivered as Permitted Development (PD), as authorised under Part 9 Section A(b) of the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO) 2015. However, it will still be necessary to prepare and progress the necessary orders, notices, consents, permissions, rights and easements as and when funding is secured for the different elements of the Scheme and to commence initial negotiations to acquire land.
- 12.4 In regard to third party land, it is possible that a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) will be required in due course for certain elements of the Scheme, but this will only be pursued once funding has been secured for the corresponding elements and would be run in parallel with negotiations to acquire the land by agreement. A recommendation will be made to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources that formal negotiations commence at the appropriate time and once funding is secured, to acquire all third party interests in any land and any necessary rights required to facilitate delivery of the Scheme elements, including the making of a CPO to run in parallel with negotiations to acquire all third party land interests by agreement.
- 12.5 Work is ongoing to establish whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in order to assess the full environmental impact of the preferred Scheme. The environmental impact of the Scheme is expected to be relatively localised and in some cases (such as for air quality) beneficial, but should the LPA decide that an EIA is required, PD rights would be removed and planning permission would be required.
- 12.6 In order to secure the opportunity to deliver the Hamble Lane Improvement scheme in full, it is also considered opportune to review the existing

Eastleigh Borough Transport Statement 2012, and to consider whether it needs to be updated in respect of the policy stance on development off Hamble Lane in conjunction with the emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2036. It is therefore proposed that a review be carried out, and a further report be brought to a future decision day on this matter.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	n/a
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	n/a

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Hamble Lane Improvements	17/07/2018
A3025 Hamble Lane Improvements	14/11/2017
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	



## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

The improvements referred to in this decision seek to improve traffic flow on Hamble Lane as well as improving the facilities for non-motorised users. The Scheme also includes improvements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure in the vicinity of Hamble village and the development of a travel plan for the Hamble Peninsula, to try to reduce reliance on the private car.

This decision to approve the preferred scheme will have a neutral impact on residents with protected characteristics, and as the scheme progresses to the detailed design stage, a project appraisal will be brought forward which will include an equalities impact assessment of the implementation of the Scheme.

The Scheme as currently designed will offer positive benefits to all highway users due to the reduction in vehicular journey times, and improvements in highway safety.

**2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

- 2.1. The decision is not considered to have any direct impact upon crime and disorder.

**3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The proposed Scheme aims to reduce congestion and delay and therefore help to improve air quality, through a reduction in the volume of queuing vehicles. The northern section of Hamble Lane (from Windhover roundabout to Portsmouth Road) is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) designated by Eastleigh Borough Council, therefore the preferred scheme will directly help to improve air quality within a designated AQMA.

Elements of the preferred scheme for the wider network, such as the Hamble Travel Plan and the pedestrian and cycle improvements along Hamble Lane, aim help to reduce the number of vehicular trips along Hamble Lane. If successful they will therefore help to directly improve air quality and reduce emissions caused by vehicular traffic, providing positive climate change impacts and reducing our carbon footprint.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

As the scheme progresses to the detailed design stage, a project appraisal will be developed with details of the design and layout which could address resilience to climate change. For example, improved highway drainage can minimise the potential increase of flooding incidents due to climate change and limit the damaging effects water has on the condition of the carriageway, other highway assets, and private property.

**APPENDIX 3: PLAN-LEVEL HRA OF SITE PROMOTER'S PROPOSALS FOR HA2 MERCURY MARINA -  
UEEC**

# Technical Note

<b>Project</b>	Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Eastleigh Local Plan	<b>Date</b>	September 2020
<b>Note</b>	Plan-level HRA of site promoter's proposals for HA2 Mercury Marina	<b>Ref</b>	UE0247
<b>Author</b>	Giulia Civello PIEMA Nick Pincombe CEnv MIEMA MCIEEM	<b>Page</b>	1 of 16
<b>Status</b>	Final		

## 1. Introduction

Eastleigh Borough Council's submitted Local Plan (October 2018) includes a policy for the Mercury Marina site (Policy HA2). Policy HA2 as submitted supports a marina, hotel, other holiday accommodation, and retention of the boatyard. It also requires that 'The Mound' Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and the northern shores of the site be enhanced or restored.

The landowner, Marina Developments Limited (MDL), made a Regulation 19 representation<sup>1</sup> on the submitted Local Plan and proposed a revised policy which includes residential development (approximately 75 units) as opposed to the hotel. MDL consider that the hotel is not viable and cannot fund the ecological enhancement works. MDL's proposed revisions to the policy also extend the submitted Plan's policy boundary into Chamberlayne's Field as illustrated in *Figure 1.1*.

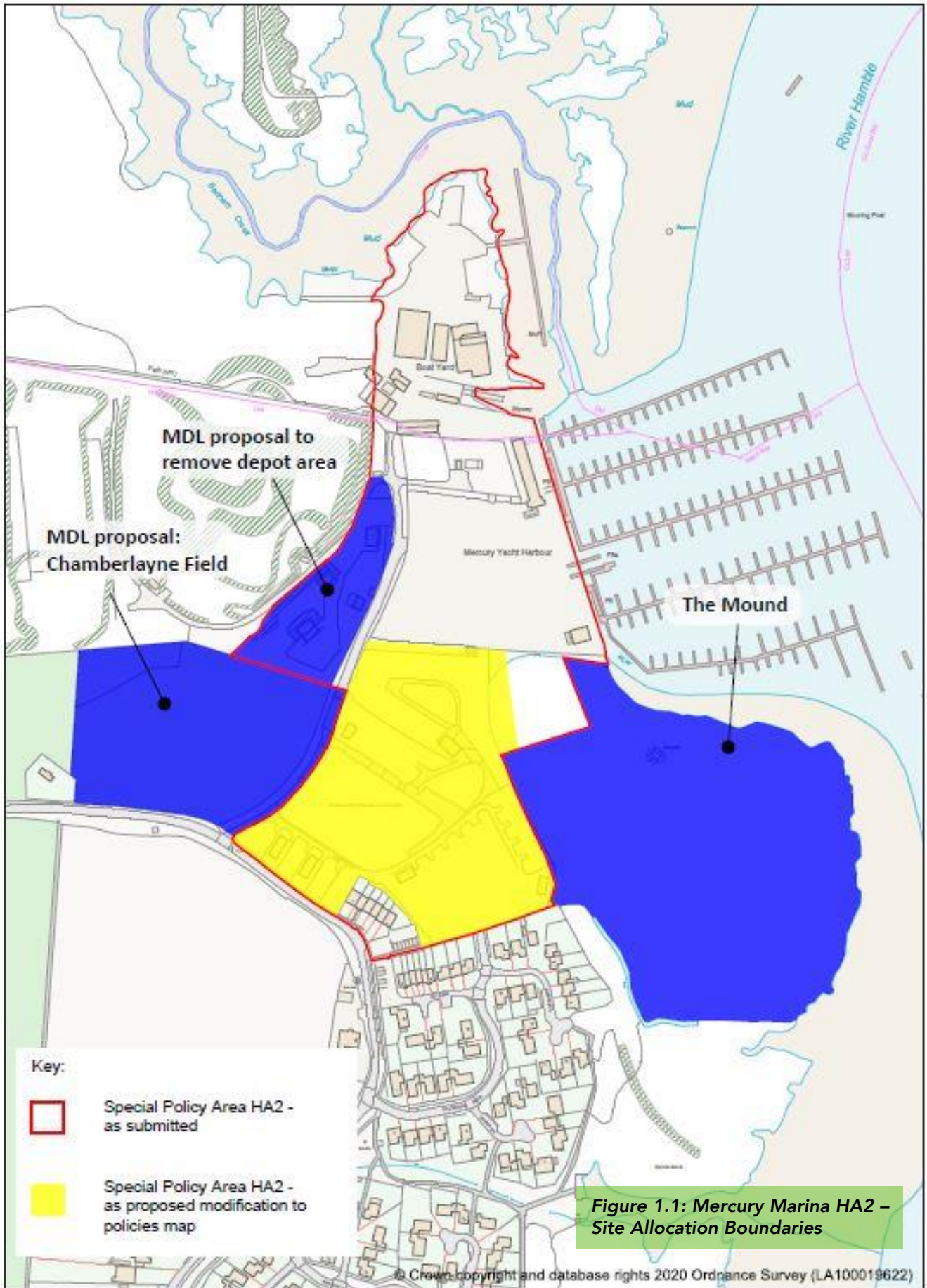
The Council proposed modifications to the Plan in July 2019 (ED32 and ED33) including a reduction of the site area to focus on the hotel uses as shown in *Figure 1.1*. This involved the removal of the northern section from the allocation boundary, including the northern shores where enhancement and restoration works had been proposed.

The submitted Plan's Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) undertaken by Urban Edge Environmental Consulting<sup>2</sup> concluded that Policy HA2 would have no adverse effect on internationally designated sites taking account of mitigation incorporated into the Local Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Available online at: <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/6608/mdl.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> UEEC (2019): *Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 – HRA Report for the Submission Plan, June 2019*. Available online at: <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/5477/ed12a-41-hra-main-report.pdf>



Mercury Marina - HA2



Department:	Department
Date: 08/06/2020	Scale: NTS

This Technical Note provides an assessment of MDL's proposed policy revisions to determine whether these would alter the conclusions of the HRA with respect to Policy HA2. It should be read alongside a separate Technical Note<sup>3</sup> which provides an assessment of the overall net effect on biodiversity objectives from the change to the site from its current condition to that proposed by MDL.

## 2. Site Context

The Mercury Marina site, which is currently owned by MDL, is located in the south-east of Eastleigh Borough where Badnam Creek joins the River Hamble. It was subject to a walkover survey by an experienced ecologist on 13 July 2020 to inform this note. The centre of the site consists of a large hard surface car park, including some boat storage and a large building incorporating the marina office, ancillary marina retail units, changing facilities and a restaurant. At the northern end of the site the boatyard consists of a number of large units, prefabricated buildings, yachtsman storage sheds, boat storage areas, a large gravel surface car park, a public slip-way and a Sea Scout compound. Areas of saltmarsh are present around the edges of the hardstanding. On the eastern side a jetty provides mooring for a number of house boats within Badnam Creek. The southern section of the site includes a caravan park, comprising well managed grassland and separate areas for touring and static caravans and three ancillary buildings. The existing access road running along the south western boundary of the site is bordered by mature trees, including native and non-native species.

Immediately southwest of the site boundary is a SINC known as 'The Mound' or 'The Bund'. The area is dominated by mostly young, developing secondary woodland including oak and birch trees and a species-poor field layer. There are a number of well-formed informal recreational routes through the area linking the marina car park to the residential estate and existing footpath network to the south.

Immediately west of the site boundary is an area known as 'Chamberlayne's Field' bounded by Satchell Lane and the site access road. The field contains species poor grassland with mature trees and scrub along the boundaries.

## 3. International Designations

Running around the northern boundary of the site and around the eastern edge of the marina and 'The Mound' are the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Solent & Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar and the Solent & Dorset Coast SPA (as shown in *Figure 3.1* below). The HA2 policy boundary directly abuts the Solent & Dorset Coast SPA boundary. The River Itchen SAC is located in the north west of the Borough, just east of Eastleigh town. Site descriptions and details of the qualifying features for each of these internationally designated sites are provided in the submitted Plan HRA<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> UEEC (2020): *Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Eastleigh Local Plan: Ecological assessment of site promoter's proposals for HA2 Mercury Marina.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

# Eastleigh Local Plan HRA

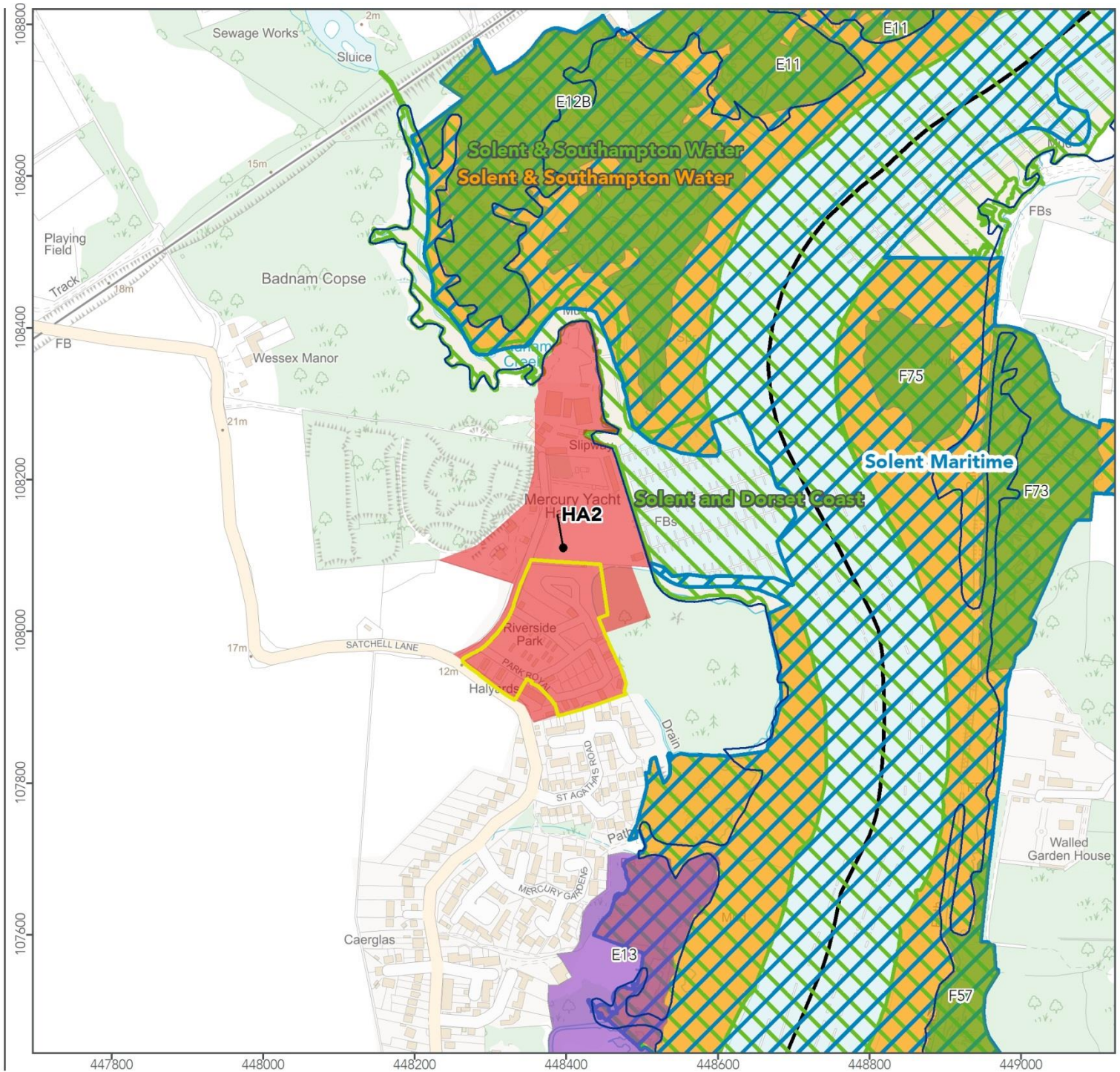
- Proposed Submission Allocation
  - Revised HA2 Allocation, June 2019
  - Special Areas of Conservation
  - Special Protection Areas
  - Ramsar Sites
- Solent Waders and Brent Goose Sites Classification
- SPA site
  - Core Area
  - Borough

**Figure 3.1: Internationally designated sites and Brent Goose and wader sites**



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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Scale: 1:7,400      Created by: NP  
 Date: Sep 2020      Reviewed by: NP  
 Drawing number:  
 UE0247HRA-AllocationHA2\_200907



#### 4. HRA Impact Pathways

Those impact pathways which were screened into the HRA on the basis that they could result in likely significant effects and which are relevant to policy HA2 are described in turn below, together with a description of whether MDL's proposed revisions to HA2 could alter the predicted impacts, taking account of mitigation measures incorporated within the submitted Local Plan and any additional relevant mitigation measures proposed by MDL.

##### ***Recreational disturbance***

Population growth associated with residential development brings with it the prospect of additional visitor pressure on internationally designated sites. Impacts associated with disturbance from recreation differ between seasons, species, and individuals. Birds' responses to disturbance can be observed as behavioural or physiological, with possible effects on feeding, breeding and taking flight. Disturbance can be caused by a wide variety of activities and, generally, both distance from the source of disturbance and the scale of the event will influence the nature of the response.

The Solent Disturbance and Mitigation project (SDMP) was initiated in response to concerns over the impact of disturbance on coastal designated sites and their overwintering bird assemblage. Beginning in 2008 the project has consisted of literature reviews, interviews, on-site visitor surveys, bird disturbance fieldwork, household surveys and future visitor modelling and disturbance impact modelling<sup>5</sup>. The project identified a 5.6km impact zone around the Solent's internationally designated sites, residential development within which could result in adverse effects through recreational disturbance. Policy HA2 as presented in the submitted Plan and as proposed by MDL, falls within the 5.6km impact zone. As presented in the submitted Plan with hotel uses the policy was considered likely to contribute to significant effects to the Solent's internationally designated sites as a result of increased numbers of overnight visitors to the area. MDL's proposed revision to policy HA2 to provide for approximately 75 residential dwellings will increase the number of residents within the impact zone all year round and hence is still considered likely to contribute to significant effects to the Solent's internationally designated sites.

##### *Mitigation incorporated within the Local Plan*

Phase 3 of the SDMP outlined an avoidance and mitigation strategy to prevent adverse effects on overwintering bird populations around the Solent<sup>6</sup>. It included mitigation measures such as coastal rangers, communications and education initiatives, measures to encourage responsible dog walking, a code of conduct for coastal activities, site specific projects to better manage visitors and provision of new/enhanced greenspaces as an alternative to visiting the coast. These measures are funded through developer

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<sup>5</sup> Available online at: <https://solent.birdaware.org/strategy>

<sup>6</sup> Liley, D. & Tyldesley, D. (2013): *Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project: Phase III. Towards an Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy*. Unpublished report. Footprint Ecology/David Tyldesley & Associates. Available online at: [http://www.solentems.org.uk/natural\\_environment\\_group/SRMP/SDMP/Phase3\\_Avoidance\\_and\\_Mitigation\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.solentems.org.uk/natural_environment_group/SRMP/SDMP/Phase3_Avoidance_and_Mitigation_Strategy.pdf)



contributions for development which creates net additional dwellings within the 5.6km impact zone. Policy DM11 of the submitted Plan requires such contributions.

#### Conclusions on adverse effects on integrity

The HRA concluded that recreational disturbance associated with development in the submitted Plan, including HA2, has the potential to alter the structure and function of the habitats of the Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar overwintering bird populations, and to reduce these populations via increased energetic expenditure and starvation risk, leading to a fall in winter survival rates, and altering the birds' distribution within the sites. However, counteracting measures in Policy DM11 were considered sufficient to effectively avoid and mitigate the impact ensuring no adverse effects on the integrity of the Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar. If the revisions to policy HA2 proposed by MDL were adopted, any proposed development coming forward at the site would still need to contribute towards the mitigation strategy as required by Policy DM11. MDL's proposed revisions to policy HA2 would not therefore alter the existing conclusions of the HRA.

#### **Land outside of EU site**

The Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy<sup>7</sup> aims to avoid impacts to qualifying species using land outside of the Solent's designated sites which have a functional role in supporting waders and Dark-bellied Brent Goose at high-water. The Strategy promotes the protection of areas regularly used by these species, or which may become regularly used in the future, from development and increased recreational use through the planning system.

In the absence of mitigation, the submitted Plan could have a negative effect on Brent Geese and waders overwintering in the Solent due to development in the coastal zone resulting in losses of areas of functionally connected land used by the species for feeding or roosting at high tide. Loss of functionally connected land to development of any kind could, unless mitigated, reduce the overall extent of habitats which support the Brent Goose and wader populations within the SPA/Ramsar. Residential development may be of greater concern where it is of a scale or location which could increase disturbance to adjacent areas of supporting habitat, thereby reducing the suitability of land left undeveloped as well.

The Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy<sup>8</sup> aims to protect the network of non-designated terrestrial wader and Brent Goose sites that support the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar. It classifies sites as Core Areas, Primary Support Areas, Secondary Support Areas, Low Use sites and Candidate sites. A framework for guidance on mitigation and off-setting requirements for each classification is proposed to achieve the long-term protection of the wider Brent Goose and wader network of sites.

The HRA for the submitted Plan identified that the Mercury Marina site partially overlaps with the northern extremity of Brent Goose / wader site E13 (**Figure 3.1**), a Low Use site with a maximum count of 26 birds over 19 recorded sightings of species including curlew, grey plover, lapwing, oystercatcher, redshank and dark-bellied Brent Goose. The overlap extends to c.0.083ha but E13 extends another c.670m south and has a total

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<sup>7</sup> <https://solentwbgs.wordpress.com/>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

area of c.12ha. Aerial photography shows the northern third of E13, broadly coinciding with Mercury Marina Saltmarsh SINC (The Mound), to be dominated by deciduous woodland which is unsuitable for feeding Brent Goose or roosting waders. The HRA therefore concluded that HA2 was unlikely to result in significant effects on the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar.

MDL's proposed revisions to the HA2 boundary are associated with the western boundary of the site (*Figure 1.1*) and therefore they do not alter HA2's encroachment into Brent Goose / wader site E13. 2019 updates to the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy have also reduced the extent of site E13 to remove the SINC (*Figure 3.1*). Therefore, it can be concluded that MDL's proposed revisions to HA2 will not result in significant effects to the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar.

### **Atmospheric pollution**

Atmospheric pollution is a widespread issue. Local pollutant sources can affect designated sites, particularly in relation to protected habitats within SACs, and especially from road traffic emissions. The main pollutants of interest are nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>). These gases can result in direct toxifying effects to vegetation and indirect effects through wet and dry deposition.

Critical loads and levels are a tool for assessing the risk of air pollution impacts to ecosystems. Critical loads concern the quantity of pollutants deposited from the air to the ground (for example nitrogen deposition and acid deposition), whilst critical levels concern the gaseous concentration of a pollutant in the air (for example nitrogen oxides). Critical loads are assigned to habitat classes on the European Nature Information System (EUNIS) to enable consistency of habitat terminology and understanding across Europe. Critical levels are not habitat specific but have been set to cover broad vegetation types (e.g. forest, arable, semi-natural), often with critical values set for sensitive lichens and bryophytes<sup>9</sup>.

Guidance from Natural England<sup>10</sup> provides a method for assessing impacts of air pollution on European sites. It is based on a staged process by which sites and locations are initially screened into the assessment if predicted pollution concentrations exceed 1% of the critical load or critical level. This can be considered the screening stage of the HRA and concludes that in those places where the 1% threshold is breached there is likely to be a significant effect on sensitive European sites within the impact contour.

A 2015 HRA screening report<sup>11</sup> identified the potential for impacts from air pollution associated with all residential development in the Local Plan (including HA2) in combination to adversely affect the saltmarsh habitats that are features of the Solent Maritime SAC and Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar sites. Air quality modelling undertaken to support the submitted Plan HRA predicted nitrogen deposition rates above the 1% screening thresholds in some area of the Borough. However, when overlain with the SAC/SPA/Ramsar boundaries and habitat data, the modelling results demonstrate that no saltmarsh habitat within the SAC or SPA/Ramsar site will experience exceedances of the threshold and therefore there will be no likely significant effect from nitrogen deposition.

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<sup>9</sup> Available online at: <http://www.apis.ac.uk/>

<sup>10</sup> Pers. comm. (2018a): Email correspondence with Becky Aziz, Sustainable Development Lead Advisor, Area 13 – Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Natural England.

<sup>11</sup> AECOM (2015): Issues and Options Eastleigh Borough Local Plan – Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report.

The 2015 HRA screening report also identified the potential for air pollution impacts to southern damselfly (a feature of the River Itchen SAC) due to potential effects of nutrient nitrogen deposition on terrestrial habitats used by the species. The air quality modelling identified that deposition rates in proximity to areas of Southern damselfly habitat could increase above the 1% screening threshold and therefore there was potential for likely significant effects to southern damselfly in the River Itchen SAC.

#### Conclusions on adverse effects on integrity

Potential impacts to southern damselfly were taken forward for Appropriate Assessment. However, following site visits to three locations where the 1% screening threshold was exceeded, it was concluded that the marginal swamp vegetation associated with southern damselfly habitat is unlikely to be significantly affected by nitrogen deposition and therefore no adverse effects on the integrity of the River Itchen SAC were identified.

Revisions to policy HA2 proposed by MDL, namely the inclusion of 75 residential dwellings as opposed to a hotel, may alter the traffic generation associated with the development, which in turn could influence NOx levels and nitrogen deposition rates. A trip generation assessment commissioned on behalf of MDL and supporting their representation to the Local Plan, predicted an increase of 137 daily vehicle trips when compared to the proposals identified in Policy HA2. No air quality modelling of these traffic impacts has been undertaken, but it is considered that this scale of change should not result in adverse effects to the integrity of the River Itchen SAC, particularly given HA2's distance from the SAC.

#### **Noise and vibration**

Development whose construction processes emit a level of noise which could change the distribution of qualifying species within an internationally designated site or important supporting area, displacing the species from otherwise suitable habitats, could thereby reduce individual survival rates and risk a population reduction. This could be due to the proximity of the development site to the internationally designated site / supporting area, or the absence of existing topographic features, structures or vegetation which may serve to sufficiently attenuate the noise, or a combination of both.

Very loud (defined as greater than 70dB) and percussive noises have the potential to disturb birds within the Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar, increasing time spent alert and in flight, and reducing the time available to feed. Peak levels of sound are most likely to occur from the impact of pneumatic drilling and concrete breaking during site preparation and piling during construction. These activities can have an impact on bird species at a distance of up to 300m.

The River Itchen is designated for several species of fish and the European otter, all of which will be more or less sensitive to noise and vibration through the water column, and in the case of the otter in close proximity to holts and other terrestrial habitat. Activities close to either the River Itchen SAC itself or to one of the many tributaries of the Itchen that may be used by otters as corridors or links to the neighbouring catchments used by otters could constrain their distribution and dispersal. The zone of influence of construction noise on potential otter disturbance could extend to 100m from individual construction tasks if these are of a highly percussive nature (e.g. driven/impact piling).

The HRA identified that site HA2 falls within a screening distance of 300m of the Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar with potential for likely significant effects to qualifying wader / wildfowl species. HA2 was also identified as being within 100m of the River Hamble, and it is thought that otters for which the River Itchen SAC has been designated may pass through or along the Hamble catchment when dispersing through their wider range.

#### Mitigation incorporated within the Local Plan

Policy DM8 (Pollution) of the Submitted Plan with Proposed Modifications requires that *"construction noise should be kept below 69dBA max (measured at the sensitive receptor which is the nearest point of the SPA/Ramsar or supporting habitat) during the bird overwintering period, or works timed so that they do not coincide with the wintering bird season"*.

Additional mitigation proposed through the HRA which is being incorporated via modifications to the policy DM11 seek to prevent impacts to otter when moving between catchments by measures such as low impact construction methods and noise attenuation measures.

#### Conclusions on adverse effects on integrity

The HRA concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, noise/vibration emanating from Policy HA2 as presented in the submitted Plan could render otherwise suitable habitats unusable by breeding gulls and terns and overwintering waders and wildfowl. Very loud construction processes associated with HA2 proposals could also displace these bird species, and create a risk of reduced breeding success or overwintering survival rates. Whilst it was concluded that HA2 would be unlikely to result in a population scale effect, however, in combination the impact could still be adverse. Any displacement of breeding gulls and terns and overwintering waders and wildfowl would change the distribution of qualifying features within the site, although the impact was concluded likely to be short term and reversible as it would occur during site preparation and construction phases only. However counteracting measures in Policy DM8 adequately deal with the potential for adverse effects on integrity associated with HA2 proposals.

In the absence of mitigation, for qualifying species including European otter noise/vibration impacts could result in avoidance of the affected areas and potentially lead to range contractions. For Policy HA2 this effect is likely to be relatively short term and reversible as it would occur during site preparation and construction phases only.

There is potential for increased levels and duration of noise and vibration emanating from construction of 75 residential dwellings and relocation of the caravan park, as proposed in MDL's proposed revised policy HA2. However, the measures in Policy DM8 and additional measures implemented through changes to DM11 will ensure that there are still no adverse effects to the integrity of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar or River Itchen SAC.

## ***Invasive non-native species and site-specific hydrological impacts***

### *Non-native species*

A frequent concern in habitat management is the control of unwanted plant species, such as non-native species that out-compete native vegetation. This is primarily an issue relating to protected habitats due to the ability of non-native species to alter habitat composition, leading to impaired species diversity. Examples of these non-native species include Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, floating pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* and creeping water primrose *Ludwigia peploides*.

Non-native species can be introduced via naturally dispersed seeds and spores; via the aquatic environment, as escapees from domestic and ornamental gardens, ponds and aquaria; and by direct introduction via transportation networks, poor biosecurity measures, and through the dumping of garden waste. Residential developments in close proximity to river and stream corridors can significantly increase the risk of non-native species being introduced, particularly non-native plant species resulting from garden waste, soil/rhizomes and seed dispersal.

### *Site-specific hydrological impacts*

Construction activities can lead to the mobilisation of contaminants during remediation, demolition or construction, resulting in pollution of a qualifying habitat or habitat of a qualifying species, thereby limiting the function of the habitat or altering the supporting processes on which it relies. This could occur by introducing pollutants to an aquatic environment that is hydrologically connected with the designated habitat. Impacts could also occur as a result of a pollution incident during construction on a site which is hydrologically connected with a qualifying habitat or habitat of a qualifying species, regardless of whether the allocation site is thought to be contaminated.

During the operational phase, the increase in developed areas can result in an increase in suspended solids within surface water and impact upon water quality in receiving waters. Depending on their composition, suspended solids can lead to changes in nutrient, organic or chemical loading. In addition, increased suspended solids can alter the flow path for the runoff, as sediment becomes deposited and alters natural flow paths. Where additional sediment is deposited within the river system, this can impact upon migratory and spawning fish and feeding patterns.

Natural England's supplementary advice for Solent Maritime SAC<sup>12</sup> makes specific mention of invasive species and water pollution in relation to a number of the site's features and attributes. Desmoulin's whorl snails are potentially or actually at risk from non-native invasive plants which may directly alter the composition of Desmoulin's whorl snail habitat by replacing preferred species and increasing shading.

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<sup>12</sup> Natural England: Designated Sites View: Solent Maritime SAC supplementary advice Available online at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/Marine/SupAdvice.aspx?SiteCode=UK0030059&SiteName=solent&SiteNameDisplay=Solent+Maritime+SAC&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAAarea=>

Although several of the invasive non-native species affecting Solent Maritime SAC are marine invertebrates, and therefore unlikely to be attributable to the types of development proposed by the Local Plan, the HRA identified that botanical invasives could potentially impact upon Desmoulin's whorl snail. Mobilised contaminants and increased turbidity in run-off from construction sites could also contribute to existing negative effects within the Solent Maritime SAC.

HA2 is within 100m of the Solent Maritime SAC and therefore the HRA concluded that likely significant effects as a result of non-invasive species and site-specific hydrological impact could not be ruled out.

#### Mitigation incorporated within the Local Plan

Modifications to policy DM11 of the submitted Plan require planning applications for sites within 100m of Solent Maritime SAC which could result in adverse effects via non-native species and hydrological impacts to adopt a series of mitigation measures including:

- Prepare and implement Construction Environmental Management Plans to prevent water quality impacts, coupled with utilisation of standard pollution control measures (e.g. storage of chemicals and fuel away from the watercourse);
- Provide a separate construction-phase surface water drainage system which adopts forms of naturalised filtration to attenuate water flows (volume/velocity) and ensure water discharge quality (turbidity, chemical loading, pH, nutrient content, dissolved oxygen content);
- Provide an operational-phase surface water drainage system which adopts forms of naturalised filtration to attenuate water flows (volume/velocity) and ensure water discharge quality (turbidity, chemical loading, pH, nutrient content, dissolved oxygen content); and
- Undertake project-level HRA to show that the above or other devised measures are capable of preventing adverse effects on integrity.

#### Conclusions on adverse effects on integrity

The HRA concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, a major pollution incident during construction of HA2 could adversely affect: the extent and distribution of qualifying habitats and habitats of qualifying species; the structure and function of qualifying habitats; and the supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely. However, the counteracting measures in Policy DM11 were considered sufficient to effectively avoid and mitigate these impacts ensuring no adverse effects on the integrity of the Solent Maritime SAC.

The exact nature and extent of both the proposals included in the submitted HA2 policy and MDL's proposed revisions to HA2 are unknown at this stage. However, it is not expected that MDL's proposed revisions would result in an increased level of construction activity such that the risk of pollution incidents is significantly increased. In any event, the measures in policy DM11 would continue to minimise the risk of such an incident. The increase in residential population, compared to the hotel use, may slightly increase the risk of non-native species introduction resulting from garden waste, but this is not considered significant, and similarly measures in DM11 will continue to minimise this risk. Therefore, it is not anticipated that MDL's proposed revisions to HA2 would result in any adverse effects to the integrity of the Solent Maritime SAC.

### **Water abstraction**

New homes require the development of new infrastructure, including the provision of fresh water supply. Eastleigh Borough lies within the Southampton East Water Resource Zone (WRZ), part of the wider Western Area. Water in Southampton East WRZ is sourced from 48% groundwater sources, which abstract from the Chalk aquifer, and 52% from river sources. Surface water is drawn from abstractions at Testwood on the River Test, and Otterbourne on the Itchen. Groundwater is drawn from the Chalk aquifer.

Since publishing the submitted Plan HRA, Southern Water has released The Southern Water 2019 Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), which covers the period 2020 to 2070<sup>13</sup>. There have been concerns about the quantity of water flow in the River Itchen and resulting impacts to the SAC, which supports an abundant and exceptionally species rich aquatic flora. Additional pressure for water abstraction could result in adverse effects on the ecological integrity of the River Itchen SAC both via direct abstractions from the river and indirectly through groundwater abstractions. The 2019 WRMP reflects the commitments of an agreement with the Environment Agency under Section 20 of the Water Resources Act 1991 made in 2018, including reduced abstraction licences from the River Itchen.

Southern Water has forecast 'baseline' demand and supply across their supply network for the periods 2020 to 2070. This baseline demand includes 'Household demand' incorporating population growth for Eastleigh Borough. In the Western Area, despite an expected reduction in the demand for water, there will be a significant supply demand deficit throughout the planning period. Southern Water has considered options to address this deficit and maintain resilient supplies for their customers, incorporating an HRA of the alternatives considered which identified no adverse effects to the integrity of an internationally designated site.

### Mitigation incorporated within the Local Plan

Policy DM2 of the submitted Plan seeks high sustainability standards from residential developments proposed in the Local Plan, including a minimum standard for "predicted mains water consumption of no more than 110 litres/person/day", which is more stringent than the building regulations minimum requirement of 125 litres/person/day. This measure will help to avoid the need for drought orders affecting the River Itchen SAC by contributing to an overall reduction in water demand per dwelling.

### Conclusions on adverse effects on integrity

The submitted Plan HRA concluded no adverse effects to the integrity of the River Itchen SAC on account of the amendments to the abstraction licences on the lower Itchen and related water sources agreed between the Environment Agency and Southern Water. As part of the agreement the water company is still able to obtain authorisation from the Agency for abstractions over and above the revised licence under certain conditions, but a series of ecological monitoring and mitigation measures have been detailed to ensure there will be no adverse effects on integrity, together with compensation measures (if necessary) designed to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network is protected. Measures set out within Policy DM2 further seek to reduce water consumption in the Borough.

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<sup>13</sup> Available online at: <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-story/water-resources-planning/water-resources-management-plan-2020-70>

Policy HA2 as presented in the submitted Plan did not include any residential development and therefore was not considered to contribute to likely significant effects to the Itchen as a result of water abstraction. The replacement of the hotel with approximately 75 dwellings will increase the site's water abstraction; however, this is not considered to be sufficiently significant to result in adverse effects to the integrity of the River Itchen SAC.

### **Water pollution**

The two nutrients of interest with respect to water pollution are:

- Phosphate – Phosphates can be organic and inorganic. Phosphate contributes to the eutrophication of receiving waters, and it is acknowledged that phosphate is more generally the problem nutrient for freshwaters. Hence, additional inputs of phosphate are a principal concern in relation to the River Itchen SAC where excess phosphate may result in overgrowth by epiphytic filamentous algae that compete directly with vascular plants for light and nutrients, possibly leading to loss of nutrient-sensitive species, and reduced species composition, extent and condition of riverine plant communities.
- Nitrates – Ammonia is a form of nitrogen which aquatic plants can absorb into proteins, amino acids, and other molecules. Nitrate is the stable end product of complete nitrification (which involves the conversion of ammonia into nitrite and ultimately nitrate). In saline coastal waters it is acknowledged that nitrate is more generally the problem nutrient. Nitrogen enrichment arising from wastewater discharges has been implicated in the development of dense macroalgal mats occurring in the intertidal zone, which increases biological oxygen demand (BOD) and reduces dissolved oxygen content. This in turn reduces the diversity and abundance of intertidal invertebrates (wader prey) and the productivity of sea-grass beds (Brent Goose forage).

The Solent and Southampton Water were both assessed as of Moderate WFD ecological status. Natural England's supplementary advice for Solent Maritime SAC<sup>14</sup> makes specific mention of water quality in relation to a number of the site's features and attributes, which could have knock-on effects for wintering bird assemblages within the SPA/Ramsar.

Eastleigh borough is served by Southern Water's Chickenhall, Portswood and Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) catchments. All WWTW are permitted to discharge a set volume of treated effluent based on the population size they serve. The Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS) identified that, of the three facilities serving Eastleigh, Peel Common had less than 10% spare capacity. The water quality assessments indicated that there are no significant constraints to prevent future housing growth related to Chickenhall Eastleigh or Portswood, although they will require upgrades to their sewer networks. However, phosphate concentrations are problematic within the River Itchen SAC to which Chickenhall Eastleigh WWTW is a major contributor.

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<sup>14</sup> Natural England: Designated Sites View: Solent Maritime SAC supplementary advice Available online at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/Marine/SupAdvice.aspx?SiteCode=UK0030059&SiteName=solent&SiteNameDisplay=Solent+Maritime+SAC&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAAArea=>



Although, overall, no significant impact or deterioration is predicted due to future housing growth, the Peel Common WWTW may require capacity improvements by 2025, which will be subject to review in 2022. The possible need for an improved N discharge limit will also be reviewed in 2022. Sewer capacity upgrades are also likely to be required. The catchment is affected by nitrate pollution and catchment level nitrate measures are required now.

### Nutrient neutrality

In light of the baseline environmental position in the PFSH region, to accommodate future housing growth without having a detrimental effect upon the water environment, Natural England's current advice is that all new development resulting in any net increase in dwellings or overnight accommodation uses should achieve nutrient neutrality. By ensuring that new development does not add to existing nutrient burdens, this provides certainty that the project / plan is deliverable in line with the Habitats Regulations.

A nitrogen budget was calculated as part of the HRA for the submitted Plan which identified a likely surplus of nitrogen over the plan period equivalent to 15,434.74 kg/TN/year. A positive figure indicates a surplus of nitrogen resulting from development proposed in the Local Plan and therefore mitigation will be required to achieve nutrient neutrality and avoid any impact to internationally designated sites in the Solent.

The nitrogen budget for the various iterations of Policy HA2 (Appendix I) is as follows<sup>15</sup>:

- HA2 as presented in submitted Plan 19.40 kg/TN/yr;
- HA2 as presented in Proposed Modifications (July 2019) (reduced northern extent) 19.40 kg/TN/yr; and
- HA2 as per revisions proposed by MDL 80.55 kg/TN/yr.

The higher N load associated with MDL's revisions is associated with increased waste water from the additional population associated with the 75 dwellings, as well as the change in land use associated with Chamberlayne's Field from a non-agricultural green space with a nitrogen loading of 5 kg/ha to a caravan park with a higher nitrogen loading of 14.3 kg/ha.

### Mitigation incorporated within the Local Plan

Policies DM2, DM10 and DM11 of the Plan require water efficient development (maximum of 110 litres per person per day), the phasing of development with the upgrades / mitigation required, and the implementation of the necessary mitigation at the right time.

### Conclusions on adverse effects on integrity

The HRA concluded no adverse effects to the integrity of the Solent Maritime SAC and the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar in the short term; however, Peel Common is predicted to reach capacity by

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<sup>15</sup> These figures take account of Natural England's June 2020 Guidance on achieving nutrient neutrality. Available online at: <https://www.push.gov.uk/2020/06/11/natural-england-published-nutrient-calculator-and-updated-guidance-on-achieving-nutrient-neutral-housing-development/>

2025, at which point a review of its N permit will be required; therefore this means that (in the absence of mitigation) it is not possible to rule out the potential for adverse effects later in the plan period. The nitrogen budget for the Plan suggests that developments allocated will lead to a surplus of 15,434.74 kg/TN/yr over the plan period; this scale of excess nitrogen entering the marine environment will require mitigation to prevent adverse effects on site integrity. The counteracting measures set out in Policy DM10 and Policy DM11 and their supporting text ensure any adverse effects are avoided.

Revisions proposed to HA2 by MDL will increase the amount of waste water entering the Peel Common facility and will also increase the nitrogen surplus for the HA2 allocation; however those measures set out in Policy DM10 and DM11 will ensure these revisions do not result in adverse effects to the integrity of the Solent's internationally designated sites.

## **5. Summary and Conclusions**

In its representation to the submitted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan, MDL proposes revisions to Policy HA2 Mercury Marina which include the replacement of the hotel use with approximately 75 residential dwellings and an extension of the policy boundary to the west into Chamberlayne's Field.

A number of the impact pathways within the submitted Plan's HRA were taken forward for Appropriate Assessment on account of the possibility of likely significant effects associated with Policy HA2 alone and in combination with other allocations of the Plan. This document has drawn out those pathways relevant to HA2 and concluded that the revisions proposed by MDL would not alter the conclusions of the HRA and would not result in any adverse effects to the integrity of internationally designated sites taking account of the incorporated mitigation within the Plan.

## **Appendix I – HA2 Nitrogen Budget**

Site description							Stage 1 calculation: Total N Load from Development Wastewater						Stage 2 calculation: Total N Load from Current Land Use						Stage 3 calculation: Total N load from future land use (not received by WWTW)				Stage 4: Total Net Change in N Load from the development							
Policy / Site Ref	Parish	Site Address	Existing use	Source of info re: existing land use	Site area (ha)	Greenfield / brownfield	Development proposal (No. residential dwellings)	Equivalent population (Dwellings*2.3) (No. persons)	Wastewater volume generated by development (No. persons * 110litres) (litres/day)	Receiving WWTW	Receiving WWTW environmental permit limit or proxy for TN (mg/litre)	TN discharged after WWTW treatment ((90% of permit limit (where there is a permit otherwise 100%)-2 (acceptable TN loading)* WW volume generated by development)/1,000,000) (kg/TN/day)	Annual WWTN load (kg/TN/yr)	Total area of existing agricultural land (ha)	Farm type / nitrate loss (kg/ha/yr)	N load - current agricultural land use (Area * nitrate loss) (kg/ha/yr)	Total area of existing urban development (gardens, caravan park, brownfield and non-residential urban) (ha)	N load - existing urban development (kg/ha/yr)	Total area of existing SANG / open space (ha)	N load - existing SANG / open space (kg/ha/yr)	Total N load from current land uses (kg/ha/yr)	New urban land (ha)	Total N load from future urban land (kg/TN/yr)	New SANG / open space (ha)	Total N load from SANG / open space (kg/TN/yr)	Combine Total N load from future land uses (kg/TN/yr)	Stage 1: Total N Load from WW (kg/TN/yr)	Total N Load from land use (stage 2 current - stage 3 future) (kg/TN/yr)	N budget (Total N load from land use) (kg/TN/yr)	20% precautionary buffer applied where TN is positive
HA2 as per submission Plan	Hamble-le-Rice	Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park	Part of site already in use as caravan park and marina parking. Yachting school also on site. Northern end of site in use as boat yard with associated structures and hardstanding.	Aerial photography	6.95	Brownfield	60 bed hotel	120.00	13200.00	Peel Common	9.00	0.08	16.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.95	99.39	0.00	0.00	99.39	6.95	99.39	0.00	0.00	99.39	16.16	0.00	16.16	19.40
HA2 reduced extent as per July 2019 proposed modifications	Hamble-le-Rice	Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park	Includes just southern portion of site, existing caravan park	Aerial photography	2.64	Brownfield	60 bed hotel	120.00	13200.00	Peel Common	9.00	0.08	16.16	0.00	1.00	0.00	2.64	37.75	0.00	0.00	37.75	2.64	37.75	0.00	0.00	37.75	16.16	0.00	16.16	19.40
HA2 as proposed to be revised by MDL	Hamble-le-Rice	Mercury Marina and Riverside Camping and Caravan Park	Includes chamberlayne's field but excludes depot area	Aerial photography	8.1	Brownfield	25 static caravan plots and 30 tents, & 75 dwellings	392.50	43175.00	Peel Common	9.00	0.26	52.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.35	90.81	1.75	8.75	99.56	7.88	112.72	0.22	1.09	113.81	52.87	-14.25	67.12	80.55

**APPENDIX 4: ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF SITE PROMOTER'S PROPOSALS FOR HA2 MERCURY  
MARINA - UEEC**

# Technical Note

<b>Project</b>	Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Eastleigh Local Plan	<b>Date</b>	September 2020
<b>Note</b>	Ecological assessment of site promoter's proposals for HA2 Mercury Marina	<b>Ref</b>	UE0247
<b>Author</b>	Giulia Civello PIEMA / Dr Richard Bickers MCIEEM / Nick Pincombe CEnv MIEMA MCIEEM	<b>Page</b>	1 of 18
<b>Status</b>	Final		

## 1. Introduction

Eastleigh Borough Council's submitted Local Plan (October 2018) includes a policy for the Mercury Marina site (Policy HA2). Policy HA2 as submitted supports a marina, hotel, other holiday accommodation, and retention of the boatyard. It also requires that 'The Mound' Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and the northern shores of the site be enhanced or restored.

The landowner, Marina Developments Limited (MDL), made a Regulation 19 representation<sup>1</sup> on the submitted Local Plan and proposed a revised policy which includes residential development (approximately 75 units) as opposed to the hotel. MDL consider that the hotel is not viable and cannot fund the ecological enhancement works. MDL's proposed revisions to the policy also extend the submitted Plan's policy boundary into Chamberlayne's Field as illustrated in *Figure 1.1*.

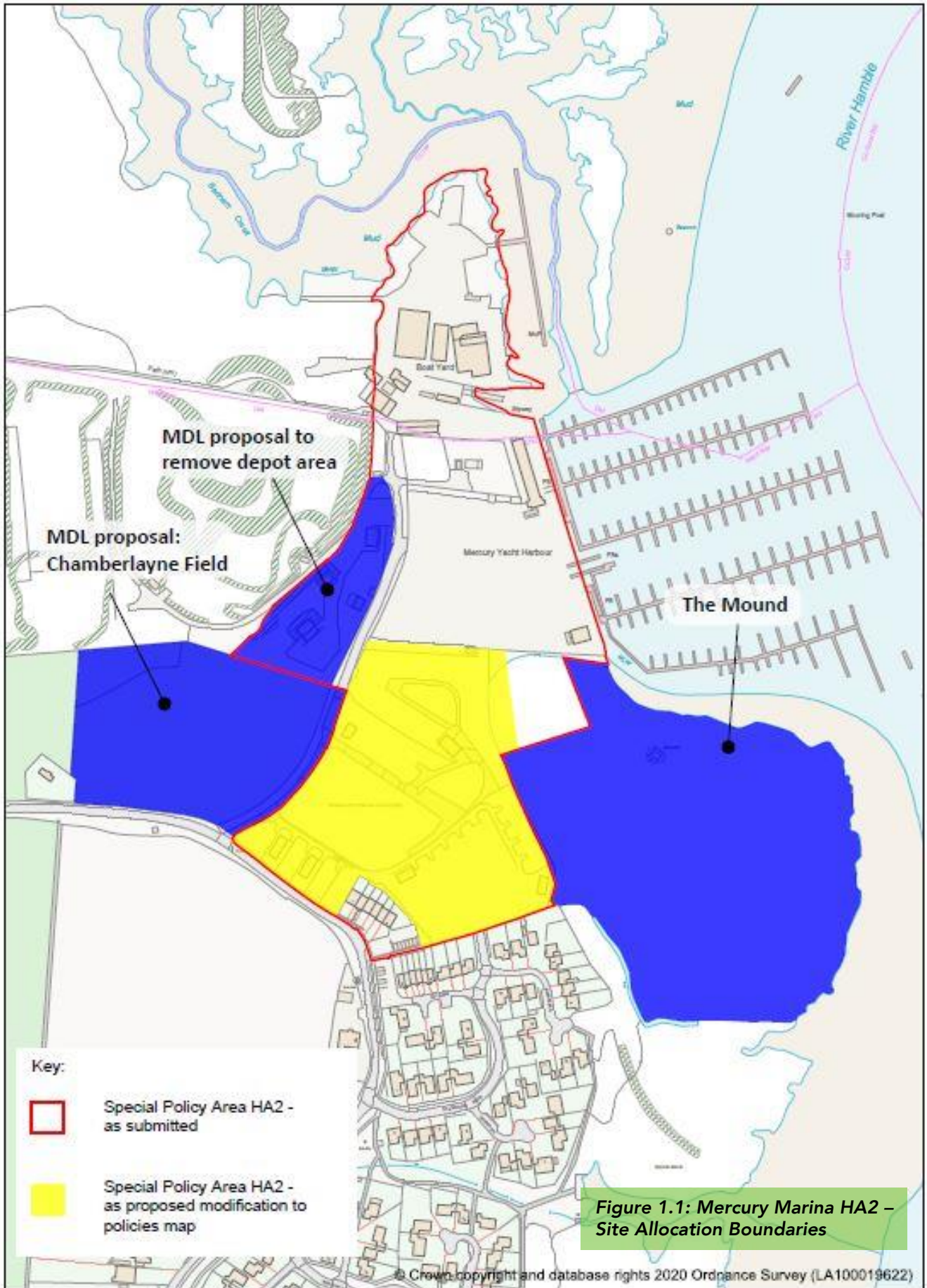
The Council proposed modifications to the Plan in July 2019 (ED32 and ED33) including a reduction of the site area to focus on the hotel uses as shown in *Figure 1.1*. This involved the removal of the northern section from the allocation boundary, including the northern shores where enhancement and restoration works had been proposed.

This Technical Note provides an assessment of the overall net effect on biodiversity objectives from the change in site use from its current condition to that proposed by MDL. It should be read alongside a separate Technical Note<sup>2</sup> which provides an assessment of the proposals in terms of the potential effects on internationally designated sites and whether they would alter the conclusions of the Habitats Regulations Assessment accompanying the submitted Local Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Available online at: <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/6608/mdl.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> UEEC (2020): *Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Eastleigh Local Plan: Plan-level HRA of site promoter's proposals for HA2 Mercury Marina*.



Mercury Marina - HA2



Department:	Department
Date: 08/06/2020	Scale: NTS

## 2. Site Context

The Mercury Marina site, which is currently owned by MDL, is located in the south-east of Eastleigh Borough where Badnam Creek joins the River Hamble. It was subject to a walkover survey by an experienced ecologist on 13 July 2020 to inform this note. The centre of the site consists of a large hard surface car park, including some boat storage and a large building incorporating the marina office, ancillary marina retail units, changing facilities and a restaurant. At the northern end of the site the boatyard consists of a number of large units, prefabricated buildings, yachtsman storage sheds, boat storage areas, a large gravel surface car park, a public slip-way and a Sea Scout compound. Areas of saltmarsh are present around the edges of the hardstanding. On the eastern side a jetty provides mooring for a number of house boats within Badnam Creek. The southern section of the site includes a caravan park, comprising well managed grassland and separate areas for touring and static caravans and three ancillary buildings. The existing access road running along the south western boundary of the site is bordered by mature trees, including native and non-native species.

Immediately southwest of the site boundary is a SINC known as 'The Mound' or 'The Bund'. The area is dominated by mostly young, developing secondary woodland including oak and birch trees and a species-poor field layer. There are a number of well-formed informal recreational routes through the area linking the marina car park to the residential estate and existing footpath network to the south.

Immediately west of the site boundary is an area known as 'Chamberlayne's Field' bounded by Satchell Lane and the site access road. The field contains species poor grassland with mature trees and scrub along the boundaries.

## 3. Ecological Designations

In addition to the internationally designated Solent sites in proximity to HA2, and discussed in UEEC (2020)<sup>3</sup>, there are a number of national and local ecological designations close to HA2 (see Figure 3.1 below). These are discussed in turn below, with an explanation of the reasons for which each site is designated. The descriptions are supplemented with observations made during the site walkover in July 2020 (see Figure 3.2 below and photographs in Appendix I).

### **National designations**

#### Lincegrove and Hackett's Marshes SSSI

The Lincegrove and Hackett's Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located just to the north of the Mercury Marina boatyard, immediately beyond Badnam Creek. The site is notified for its nature saltmarsh habitat on the west bank of the River Hamble estuary. The marshes are elevated to about High Water Mark Spring Tide and dissected by complex patterns of drainage creeks, their outer (river) margin terminating in 1–1.5 metre cliffs which are now eroding. The saltmarsh vegetation is dominated by sea purslane *Halimione portulacoides* and common cord-grass *Spartina anglica*, the latter species having

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



invaded the marsh during the present century. Saltmarsh grass *Puccinellia maritima*, sea lavender *Limonium vulgare*, thrift *Armeria maritima*, sea aster *Aster tripolium* and sea club-rush *Scirpus maritimus* form a mixed community on the higher marsh levels and at the landward margin, the marshes grade either to a sea couch *Elymus pycnanthus* or reed *Phragmites australis* zone. Reed invasion is thought to have followed cessation of grazing on the marshes earlier this century. Structurally, the marshes are one of the best examples of mature saltmarsh on the south coast. They are one of only eight extensive saltmarshes on the central south coast between Poole in Dorset and Pagham in West Sussex<sup>4</sup>. All three units of the SSSI are in 'Unfavourable – No change' condition.

#### Lee-on-the-Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI

This SSSI extends along the eastern shore of Southampton Water from Lee-on-the-Solent to the mid-Itchen estuary and includes the lower estuary of the River Hamble. A single SSSI unit, Mercury & Satchell Marshes, can also be found to the south of the HA2 allocation boundary beyond the Mercury Marina Saltmarsh SINC. The site comprises extensive intertidal muds with a littoral fringe of vegetated shingle, saltmarsh, reedbed, marshy grasslands and deciduous woodland on alluvium, valley gravels (Hamble Common), and Bracklesham Beds (Hook Links). The site is an integral part of Southampton Water which is of international importance for over-wintering dark-bellied geese, and of national importance for three species of wildfowl (great-crested grebe, teal and wigeon) and five species of wader (black-tailed godwit, dunlin, grey plover, ringed plover, redshank). The SSSI supports an outstanding assemblage of nationally scarce coastal plants. The intertidal flats support high densities of benthic invertebrates (molluscs, crustacea, marine worms, etc.). Those units of the SSSI closest to the HA2 allocation boundary, Mercury & Satchell Marshes to the south and Crableck Marshes on the east bank, are in 'Unfavourable – No change' condition.

#### **Local designations**

##### Marshes Mercury Marina Saltmarsh SINC

This SINC, also known as 'The Mound' or 'The Bund' is located immediately south east of the HA2 allocation boundary. The HA2 allocation boundary encroaches into the SINC in its northwest corner. The area was formed by the disposal of dredging material some time ago but has since been colonised by woodland. The SINC is predominantly comprised of youngish developing secondary woodland dominated by oak and birch species and a species poor field layer. An area of mature trees is present around 'The Mound', itself an area of lower lying land in the centre of the SINC. There is a narrow strip of saltmarsh along the immediate east boundary of the SINC corresponding to the start of the Lee-on-the-Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI designation. The site contains a number of Priority Habitats including large areas of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland.

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<sup>4</sup> Available online at:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1001217&SiteName=lincegrove&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAAarea=>

# Eastleigh Local Plan

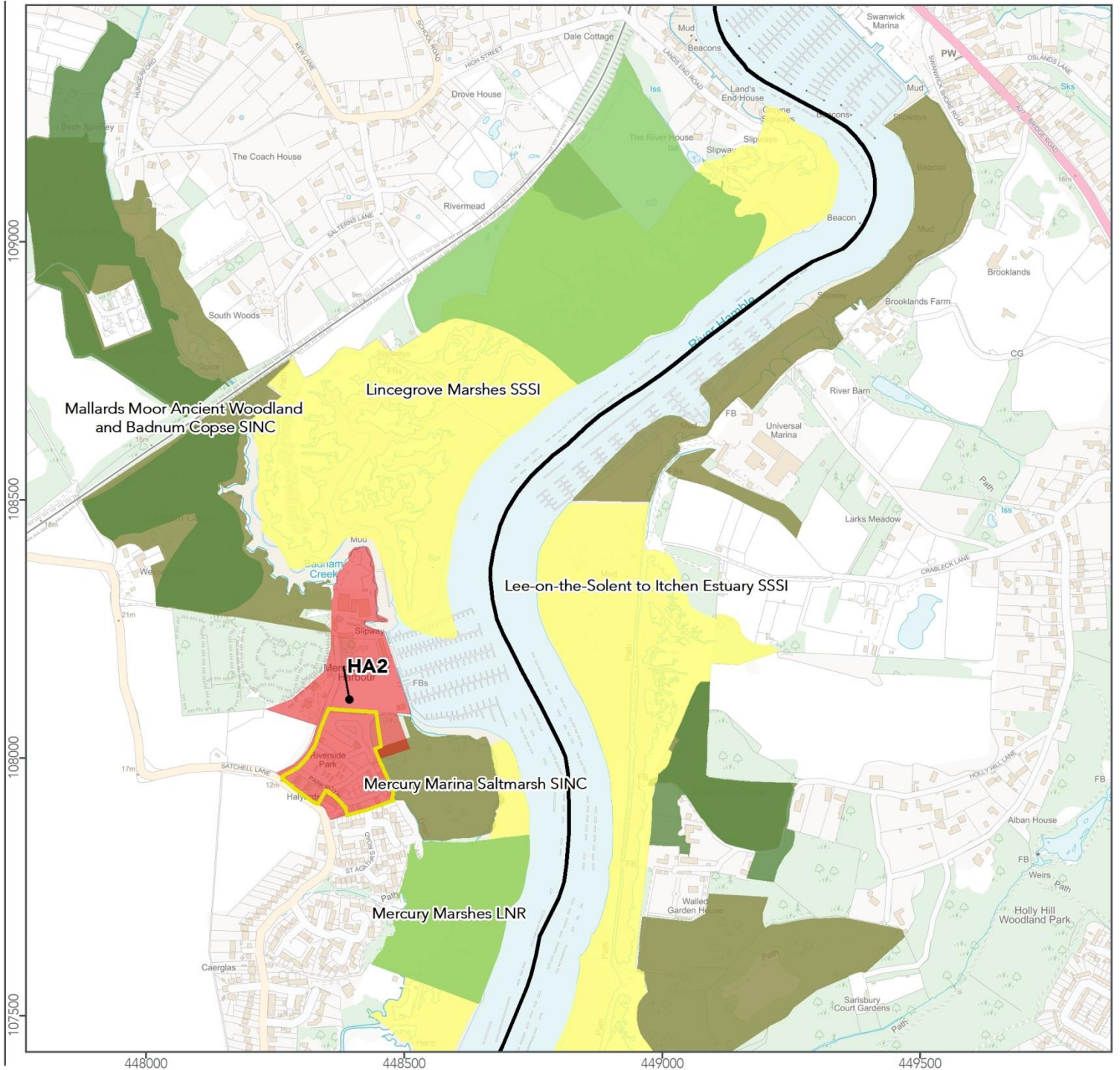
- Proposed Submission Allocation
- Revised HA2 Allocation, June 2019
- Local Nature Reserves
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Ancient Woodland
- Sites of Importance for Nature Cons
- Borough

**Figure 3.1: National and local designations in proximity to HA2**



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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Scale: 1:10,900      Created by: GC  
Date: Sep 2020      Reviewed by: NP  
Drawing number:  
UE0247HRA-HA2\_National\_Local\_Designations\_200907



# Mercury Marina Walk Over Survey

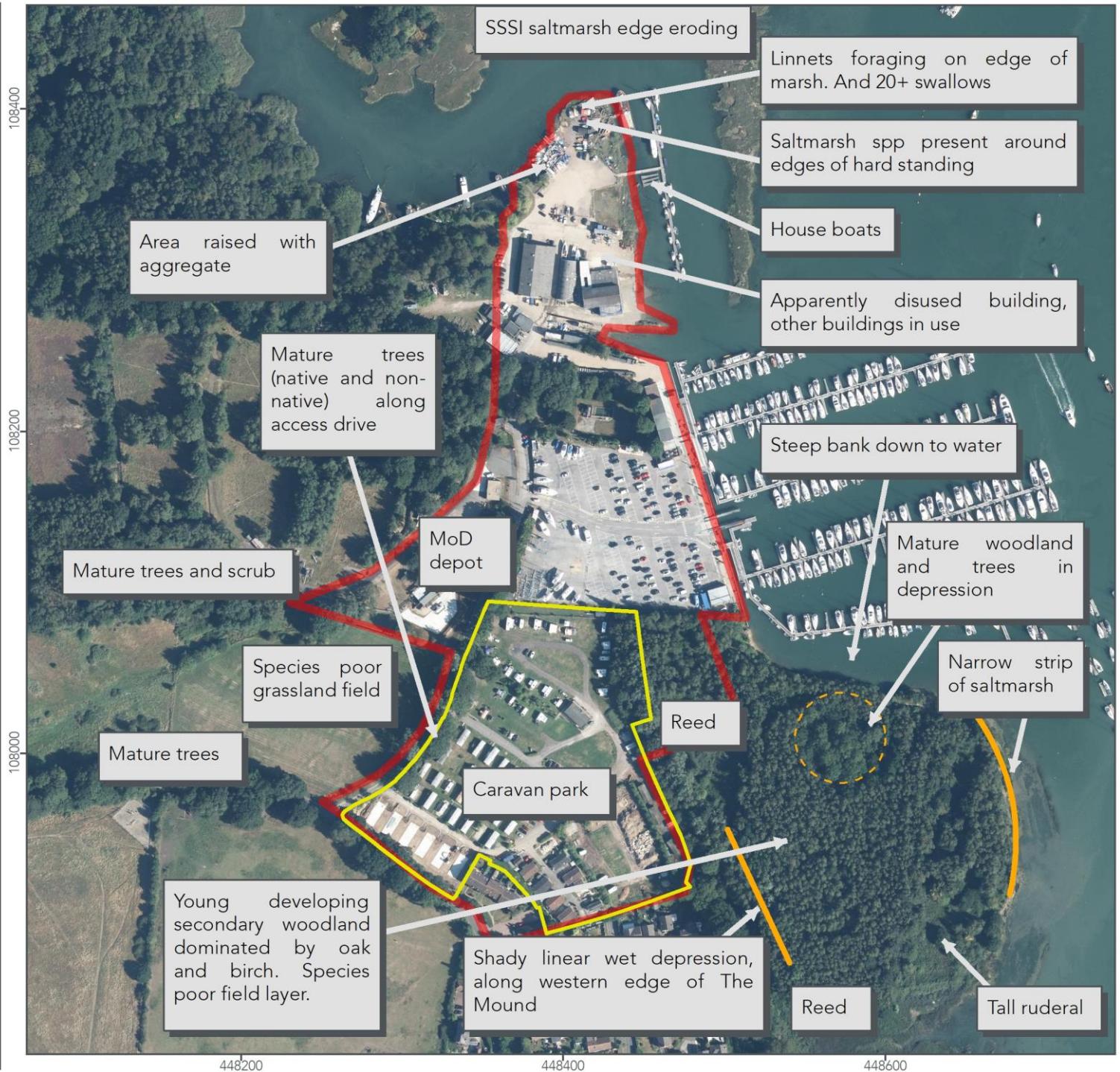
- Proposed Submission Allocation
- Revised HA2 Allocation, June 2019

**Figure 3.2: July 2020 site walkover observations**



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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Scale: 1:3,500      Created by: AD  
Date: Sep 2020      Reviewed by: NP  
Drawing number:  
UE0247HRA-HA2WalkOver200910



### Mercury Marshes LNR

Immediately south of the SINC is the Mercury Marshes Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which overlaps with some sections of the Mercury & Satchell Marshes unit of the Lee-on-the-Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI. The site is dominated by three Priority Habitat types including Intertidal Mudflats, Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh and Reedbeds.

### Badnum Copse SINC and Mallards Moor Ancient Woodland

To the north-west of the submitted HA2 allocation boundary is an area predominantly of woodland designated as Badnum Copse SINC. The SINC includes areas of ancient woodland known as Mallards Moor. The site contains large areas of Priority Habitat, including Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland and Wet Woodland.

### **Ecological features within the allocation boundary**

Within the submitted HA2 allocation boundary itself there are large areas of hardstanding associated with the boatyard and the Marina car park. During the site walkover the erosion of saltmarsh habitats around the northern edges of the boatyard was noted. Linnets were observed foraging in this area as well as 20+ swallows; additional sightings of 20+ redshank, 5+ oystercatcher, 1 greenshank, 3 lapwing, 1 little egret and some blackheaded gulls were also made.

In the southern sections of the site, mature trees, including native and non-native species, were observed along the access drive. Chamberlayne's Field was observed to be species poor grassland with mature trees and scrub along the field boundaries.

## **4. MDL Proposals**

MDL's proposals for the site are shown on the Illustrative Masterplan in Figure 4.1. This section describes those proposals in four key areas of the site where there is the greatest potential for ecological benefits and impact. The letters referred to in the following paragraphs correspond to those letters demarcating different areas on the Masterplan.

### **Northern zone**

MDL's proposals for Area A on the Masterplan area described as "*Ecological restoration and enhancement zone, including removal of existing houseboats and ancillary activity*". Whilst the house boats will be removed, the pontoon at point B is proposed to be retained for public use. Area C is described as an "*Additional area of ecological enhancement used as a managed recreational area*". The exact nature of the ecological restoration and enhancement works proposed in Areas A and C are unclear from MDL's proposals. The existing slipway is proposed for restoration for public use including boats, canoes and dinghies (Point E on the Masterplan).

Page 30 of the MDL vision document describes the following for the Badnum Creek Leisure Hub which covers this northern section of the site as follows:



**Figure 4.1: MDL Illustrative Masterplan**

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>A.</b> Ecological restoration and enhancement zone, including removal of existing houseboats and ancillary activity</p> <p><b>B.</b> Retained pontoon for public use</p> <p><b>C.</b> Additional area of ecological enhancement used as a managed recreational area</p> <p><b>D.</b> Northern parking zone</p> <p><b>E.</b> Restored slipway for public use including boats, canoes and dinghies</p> <p><b>F.</b> Replacement Commercial units (950m<sup>2</sup>) and sea scout / watersports building (950m<sup>2</sup>) to the south of the restored slipway</p> <p><b>G.</b> Replacement Marina building to include restaurant, retail and office space and changing rooms</p> <p><b>H.</b> Marina parking area</p> <p><b>I.</b> Berth holder access / drop-off and trolley point</p> | <p><b>J.</b> New riverside walkway along the waterfront</p> <p><b>K.</b> Waterside park including LEAP</p> <p><b>L.</b> Access to residential area providing circa 74 new homes including a mixture of types and tenures from 1 bedroom apartments to 5 bedroom detached homes</p> <p><b>M.</b> Apartments and higher density development on lower lying and least sensitive part of the site</p> <p><b>N.</b> Lower density detached and semi-detached homes located on higher slopes</p> <p><b>O.</b> New linking pathways to the waterfront</p> <p><b>P.</b> New public viewing area and open space overlooking Badnum Creek and Riverside with interpretation boards highlighting the ecological importance and ongoing management</p> <p><b>Q.</b> New managed public access routes through the Bund area which formalise current access and walking</p> | <p>routes to the surrounding area whilst avoiding the ecologically sensitive foreshore</p> <p><b>R.</b> Existing "pond" reformed as a usable drainage facility and ecological asset</p> <p><b>S.</b> A new landscape buffer along the highest part of the site to provide additional screening to proposed residential developments from Satchell Road and soften the views of new development from existing properties.</p> <p><b>T.</b> Static Lodge zone with notional plot areas located on the northern lower lying part of the field</p> <p><b>U.</b> Camping zone with green corridor to the south retaining and enhancing the existing landscape edge to Satchell Lane</p> <p><b>V.</b> Footpath connecting to the existing public right of way network</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*"Our proposal for the outdoor events space is to create a "Leisure Hub" venue for water sports enthusiasts. The centre would be carefully managed, would allow access to a public slipway and include facilities for boat rental, paddle board rental, dinghies, RIBs, and general water sports clubs. We envisage the usage to be largely seasonal, and aesthetically would tie into the adjoining campground and holiday lodge park.*

*"The existing buildings and houseboats will be removed as part of the redevelopment and this area will be kept free from buildings to reflect its designation as part of the Old Bursledon Conservation Area."*

The images accompanying this section of the vision document together with the green areas shown on the Masterplan in Areas A and C suggest that this area would be reinstated with grass landscaping.

Paragraph 5.12 of MDL's representation<sup>5</sup> describes the proposals for this northern zone as follows:

*"The Masterplan identifies the removal of the existing houseboats, and the provision of an enhanced public slipway ... and more restricted and managed access to the northern shoreline. The refurbished slipway can be used as the primary access for the existing water-sports uses, enabling the more sensitive northern shoreline/tidal area to be reinstated with suitable landscaping".*

Items 1a and 1b of the MDL Cost Estimate included in the representation specify 'Scalping' works to the water's edge and the creation of *"Grassed area on areas of previously removed hardstanding; including importing topsoil, spreading, turfing, sundry edges and grading"*.

### **Northern parking zone**

Area D on the Masterplan is allocated as a parking zone. Items 1 d and 1e of the MDL cost estimate suggest this parking zone will be comprised of grass crete or similar.

### **Holiday Lodges and Campground**

The Masterplan includes the re-provision of camping/lodge area within Chamberlayne's Field. Area T on the Masterplan is proposed for 24 relocated and re-built Static Holiday Lodges. To the south of this, in Area U, a camping zone is proposed for mobile caravans and tents *"with green corridor to the south retaining and enhancing the existing landscape edge to Satchell Lane"*.

Page 36 of the MDL vision document describes the following for the Holiday Lodges and Campground:

*"This area will be carefully designed to work with the site's natural topography with the holiday lodges positioned on lower ground to the northern side of the field. This would reduce their visual prominence and allow for the more open camping field to be located adjacent Satchell Lane. There is an opportunity to strengthen the vegetation to the northern boundary of this area to provide screening to the intrusive fencing and structures within the Oil & Pipeline Agency Depot that have an intrusive influence on views across the landscape.*

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<sup>5</sup> Available online at: <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/6608/mdl.pdf>

*"An enhanced green corridor incorporating a new footpath connecting to Footpath No.1 to the south of Satchell Lane will be provided to enhance the permeability of the area and facilitate enhanced opportunities for access to the River Hamble."*

### **The Mound / The Bund**

The Mound is proposed to be retained and managed. Point Q on the Masterplan provides for *"New managed public access routes through the Bund area which formalise current access and walking routes to the surrounding area whilst avoiding the ecologically sensitive foreshore."* Point P provides for *"New public viewing area and open space overlooking Badnum Creek and Riverside with interpretation boards highlighting the ecological importance and ongoing management."* Point R provides for the *"Existing 'pond' [to be] reformed as a usable drainage facility and ecological asset."*

Paragraph 5.13 of MDL's representation notes that dedicated informal routes through the Mound will be provided but that these would not extend down to the more sensitive shoreline.

## **5. Ecological Effects on Biodiversity Objectives**

The following sections describe the ecological effects of MDL's proposals on the biodiversity objectives of Policy HA2, namely that:

- The northernmost shores of the site are restored for nature conservation purposes, commensurate with the proximity of national and international nature conservation designations; and
- The Mound (the Mercury Marina Saltmarsh Site of Importance for Nature Conservation) adjoining the site is retained and managed to maintain and enhance its nature conservation interest, including the provision if possible of public access subject to there being no adverse impact on nature conservation interests.

### **Northern zone**

The key existing impact in the northern zone is the erosion of the saltmarsh habitat on the northern foreshore associated with areas of hardstanding which are preventing landward migration or expansion of this habitat. MDL's proposals suggest that these areas of hardstanding will be removed and landscaped. Whilst the removal of hardstanding will be beneficial, the landscaping of the northern zone *"including importing topsoil, spreading, turfing, sundry edges and grading"* will inhibit the extent to which the saltmarsh habitat can develop and expand naturally. This description implies that the area will be converted to a landscaped amenity grassland type habitat which will deliver limited ecological benefit. The proposal could be further enhanced by providing for dune grassland seeding over an appropriate substrate, but this is likely to be difficult to achieve and allowing the reversion of natural processes is more likely to be successful.

The removal of house boats will alleviate some disturbance to birds feeding in the mudflats along the River Hamble. However the pontoon at point B itself is to be retained for public use. The proposal could be further enhanced by removing the houseboats and retaining the pontoon but closing it to public access to encourage its use by roosting waders.

### **Northern parking zone**

The northern parking zone as currently proposed in the MDL masterplan could result in direct habitat loss within Badnam Copse SINC and indirect disturbance impacts associated with light and noise. This should be discouraged and it would be advisable for the site promoters to provide alternative parking arrangements or delete this part of the proposal; area H as proposed by MDL would already provide parking for the marina.

### **Holiday Lodges and Campground**

The re-provision of camping/lodge area within Chamberlayne's Field is expected to be relatively neutral in terms of ecological impact. The field does not include any designated areas or Priority Habitats. The vegetated boundaries appear to be retained on the MDL masterplan with further proposals to strengthen the vegetation along the northern boundary and for an enhanced green corridor along the southern edge of the field.

### **The Mound / The Bund**

MDL's proposals to formalise access routes through the SINC and restrict access to the foreshore will have beneficial impacts by directing visitors away from the most sensitive areas. The provision of a pond / drainage feature at point R would constitute an ecological enhancement if designed sensitively and appropriately managed and maintained.

### **Overall effect**

The overall effects of MDL's proposals are likely to deliver a net benefit for the site's ecological features, particularly in relation to The Mound / The Bund and areas immediately adjacent to the foreshore. However, there is a risk that this benefit is weakened by direct and indirect negative impacts on Badnam Copse SINC as a result of the proposed northern parking area. Furthermore, it seems likely that there would be missed opportunities for maximising the ecological benefits which are potentially available in areas A, B and C, such that the proposals may fail to deliver restoration "*commensurate with the proximity of national and international nature conservation designations*" as required by the policy.

## **6. Recommendations for Further Enhancements**

This sections sets out further enhancements, additional to those proposed by MDL, which would maximise the ecological benefits potentially available at the site.

### **Northern Shore**

- Remove house boats and other buildings at points A, B and C (as already proposed by MDL) but reduce other boating activity and consequent disturbance by closing the pontoon (point B) to public access to encourage its use by roosting waders.
- Screen retained/new buildings and yard areas to reduce disturbance associated with light and noise.
- Remove hardstanding at points A and C (as already proposed by MDL) but enable saltmarsh habitat to develop under natural processes instead of landscaping the area with amenity grassland. If



grassland is preferred, the proposal could be further enhanced by providing for dune grassland seeding over an appropriate substrate, but this is likely to be difficult to achieve and allowing the reversion of natural processes is more likely to be successful.

- Control public access to views over Lincegrove Marshes – for example by providing a screened access track and hide.
- Within Badnam Copse SINC, avoid direct habitat loss and indirect disturbance from light and noise by relocating (or removing altogether) the parking provision proposed at point D.

### **The Mound**

- Open up and enhance the linear wetland feature on western boundary and link to the reedbed to northeast.
- Excavate the existing pond at point R (as already proposed by MDL), but further enhance this feature by linking it to the existing reedbed area with appropriate planting.
- Thin the secondary woodland (excluding more mature areas) through selective felling of 30-40% of lower value trees, to increase light penetration to the field layer and provide space for retained trees to mature.
- Remove non-native species such as cherry laurel and holm oak.
- Install measures to expand the narrow strip of saltmarsh along the eastern shore, for example by protecting and stabilising the existing sediment to facilitate accretion.
- Formalise public access along route Q (as already proposed by MDL) but further enhance this by providing a bridge over the wet depression and boardwalks to discourage free roaming access.
- Provide a bird hide along the public access route Q to further manage disturbance.

## **7. Summary and Conclusions**

In its representation to the submitted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan, MDL proposes revisions to Policy HA2 Mercury Marina which include the replacement of the hotel use with approximately 75 residential dwellings and an extension of the policy boundary to the west into Chamberlayne's Field.

The proposals presented by MDL recognise the policy objectives to restore the northernmost shores of the site, and to maintain and enhance the nature conservation of The Mound. They include measures which are likely to achieve modest improvements immediately adjacent to the foreshore and through improved access management in The Mound. However, these may come at the cost of direct and/or indirect impacts to Badnam Copse SINC, and it appears likely that there would be missed opportunities for maximising the ecological benefits which are potentially available.

## Appendix I – Site Walkover Photos



Car Park, Mercury Marina looking east towards River Hamble



Looking north from south of slipway over end of Badnam Creek and towards SSSI marshes



Looking south along river frontage, Mercury Marina, with piers/jetties



Looking west over Badnam Creek, with SSSI marshes to right, from northern end of peninsula



Looking north along eastern edge of northern part of peninsula. Saltmarsh spp/communities in foreground



Looking east over end of Badnam Creek to River Hamble from slipway



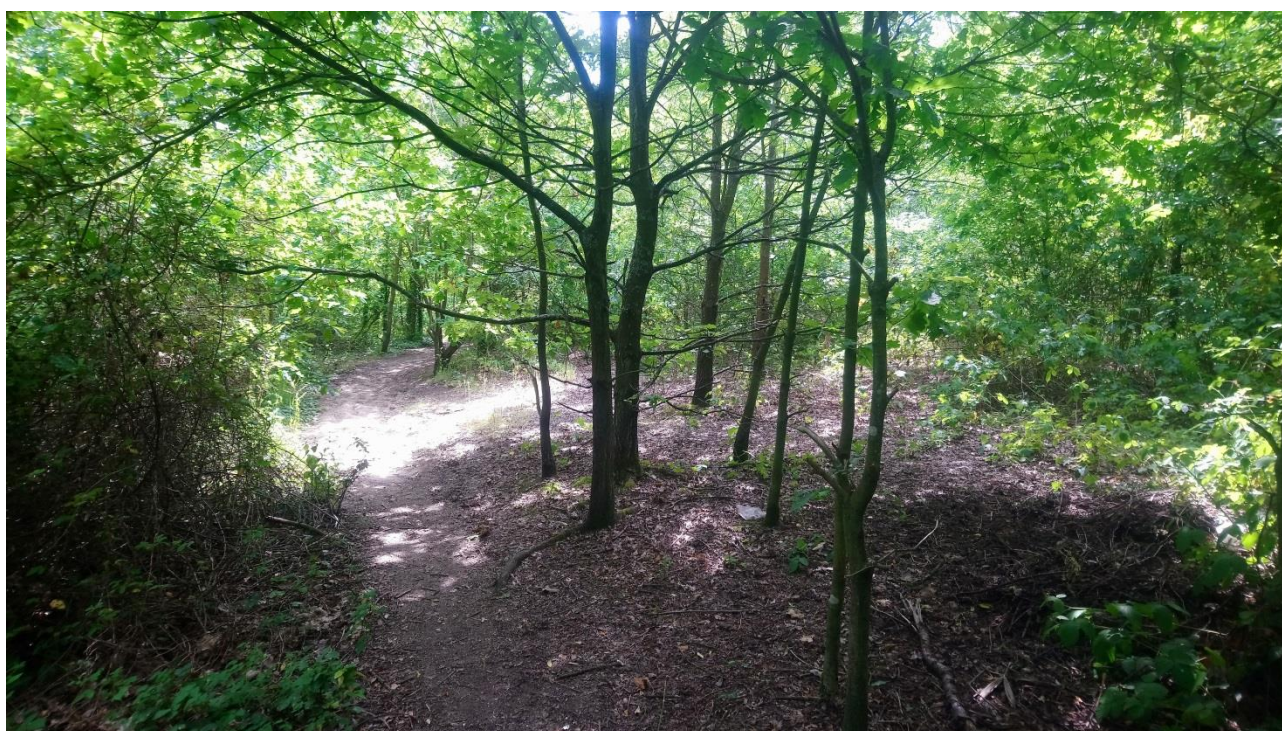
Species poor grassland field in south west of site with mature trees and scrub on boundaries



Entrance to caravan/camping park from entrance drive to Marina



Information sign on gate at entrance to the Mound from Mercury Marina car park



Woodland, northern side of the Mound



River frontage northern side of the Mound, showing relatively steep drop in levels



Northern edge of narrow saltmarsh strip on the eastern edge of the Mound