

Eastleigh Borough

Local Plan Review

Interim Sustainability Appraisal

Non-technical summary

December 2024



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future together



This is a non-technical summary of the interim Sustainability Appraisal. This supports the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review. It summarises the initial assessment of the plan's draft objectives and options relating to the overall need / scale of development, site options and non-spatial policy themes.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Eastleigh Borough Council has started the Local Plan Review (LPR), replacing the adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2022). It will form part of the Council's development plan alongside the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan and any neighbourhood plans in the Borough that may be 'made' in the future. It is subject to a partial review and is expected to be adopted by Summer 2025.

Background to the Plan

1.2 The Planning Inspectorate recommended that the adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) undergo an early review to address a housing shortfall during the latter period of the plan, amongst other reasons. An early LPR allows the Council to review the local housing needs, other key policies, evidence, and potential for policy change.

1.3 If adopted, the LPR covers the period up to 2044 as the key Development Plan Document for the Borough. The timescales for the LPR up to adoption are set out in the Council's [Local Development Scheme](#).

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Overview

1.4 A sustainability appraisal (SA) aims to inform and influence the plan-making process, reduce negative and maximise positive effects, and maximise the LPR's contribution to sustainable development. This is done by evaluating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan and the reasonable alternatives considered during the plan-making process.

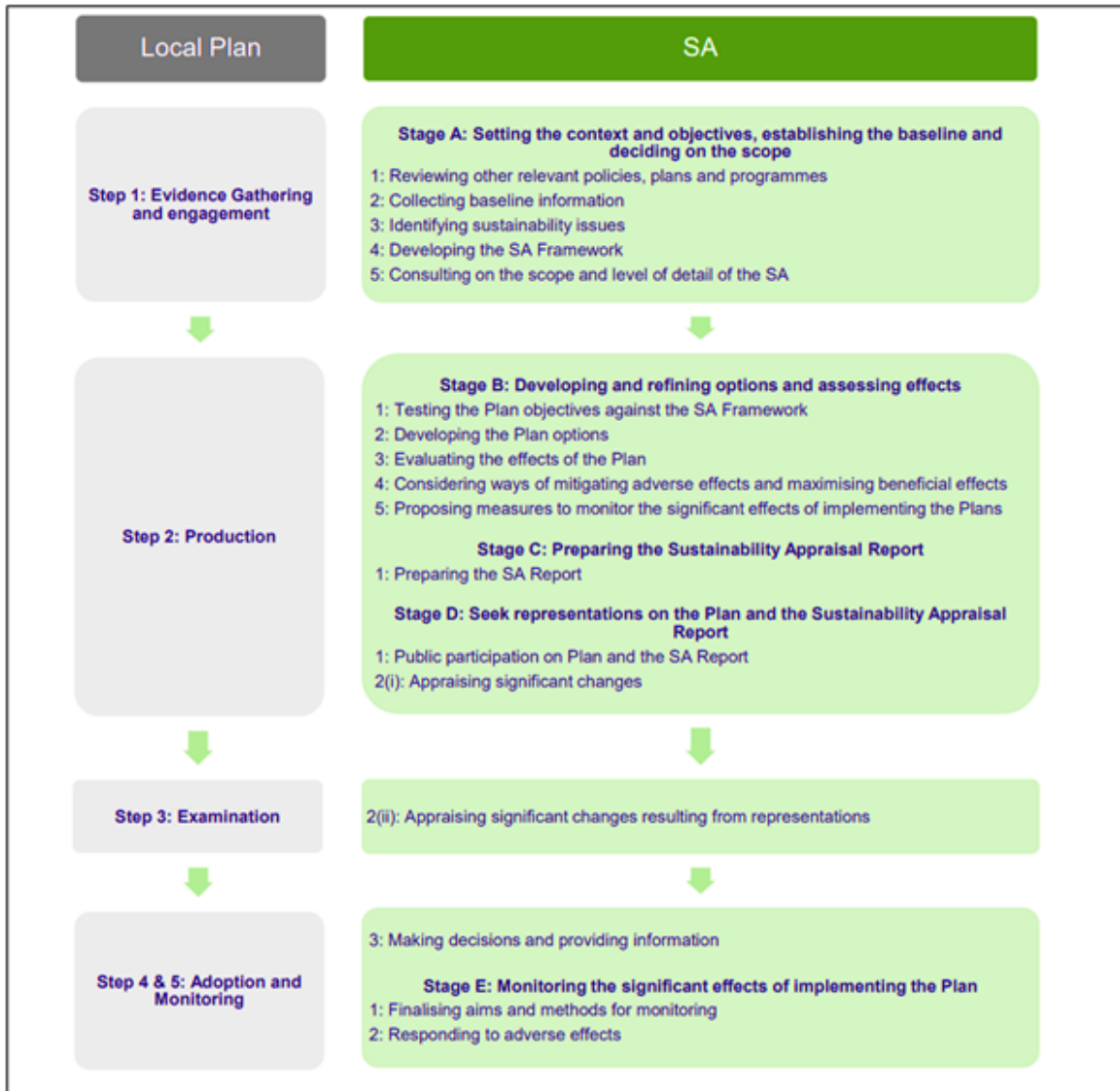
Stages of the SA Process

1.5 Sustainability Appraisal has five stages:

- A. Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope ('Scoping Report')
- B. Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects
- C. Sustainability Appraisal report preparation
- D. Seek representations on the SA Report from consultation bodies (see Table 1), the public and other key stakeholders
- E. Post-Plan adoption reporting and monitoring

1.6 The figure below captures how sustainability appraisal and the Local Plan interrelate during the plan-making process:

Figure 1: Relationship between Sustainability Appraisal and Local Plan preparation



Regulatory Compliance

1.7 An SA is completed per the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) Whilst focusing generally on environmental issues, including social and economic issues. The SEA regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'.

Consultation on the SA Scoping Report

1.8 The SA Scoping report, undertaken as part of Stage A, undertook valuable consultation in line with regulations and best practices. The statutory consultees' feedback, as appropriate, has been incorporated into the environmental and scoping reports. The feedback provided has helped to strengthen the content of this SA. The feedback concluded that the report has an appropriate methodology and framework for the SA of the Local Plan. Other comments focused on adjusting the wording of the SA objectives to make them more consistent with other plans and strategies. Appendix A provides a summary of the consultation responses.

Introduction to the Interim Report

1.9 The Interim SA report (IR) and this Non-Technical Summary (NTS) have been published as part of the evidence base of the LPR Regulation 18, Issues and Options Stage, part of Stage B of the SA Appraisal. The IR works to inform the preferred development strategy, which is expected to be published in 2026. The 'interim' stage reflects the need for further evidence to help inform the process whilst focusing on crucial emerging options, planning future development, and obtaining the views of key stakeholders and the broader public. The report is structured into the following chapters and sub-sections:

1. Introduction

An introduction to Eastleigh Borough, previous work on the LPR, the SA process and the Interim Report.

2. Assessment of the Local Plan Objectives against the SA Objectives

Outlining the initial assessment of both LP and SA Objectives.

3. Determining the Approach Towards Development

A summary of the development needs of the Borough, key principles and related options assessed against the SA objectives. This informs what impacts different decisions will have on the Borough.

4. Identification of Reasonable Sites

Proposed sites assessed against the SA objectives. This informs which sites are best matched to the Local Plan's objectives.

5. LPR Next Steps

This summarises what happens next in the Local Plan Review process.

6. Appendices

Table 1: Interim Report at a Glance.

Stage	Purpose	Where covered
Overall aim	Document the appraisal of options and alternatives against a sustainability framework consisting of 14 objectives, which has helped to determine our preferred options. Identify where there are significant effects of a preferred option and, where these are negative effects, identify how these could be addressed	Interim Report
'B1': Testing the Local Plan against the SA framework	It helps to ensure that the sustainability benefits are maximised and that the wording of the Local Plan objectives is tightened up to maximise opportunities for sustainable development.	Interim Report
'B2': Develop the Local Plan options, including reasonable alternatives	Allows sites in the Borough to be earmarked for development, and then be assessed for their suitability.	Interim Report
'B3': Evaluate the likely effects of the Local Plan and alternatives	Helps to determine the most suitable, sustainable and realistic Local Plan Options as well as alternatives than can guide future development in the borough.	Interim Report
'B4': Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects	To be undertaken for the preferred options.	To be undertaken
'B5': Propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan	To be undertaken for the preferred options.	To be undertaken

2. Appraisal of Local Plan Objectives against the SA Objectives

2.1 The higher-level assessment of the Local Plan objectives against the SA objectives helps to ensure that the sustainability benefits are maximised and that the wording of the Local Plan objectives is tightened up to maximise opportunities for sustainable development.

2.2 The NPPF's approach to sustainable development and the Council's Corporate Plan influences the draft strategic objectives. They have been further informed by the plan's emerging SA objectives and decision-aiding criteria. Conversely, the draft strategic objectives have also helped to inform the emerging SA objectives and decision-aiding criteria.

Local Plan Draft Objectives

2.3 The local plan objectives set out the overarching themes to achieve as the Borough evolves as a place. They relate to the needs of:

- I. people who live, work in or visit the Borough (people of all ages, genders, levels of mobility, ethnicity, etc);
- II. the overall communities of the Borough;
- III. businesses (across all sectors and sizes);
- IV. biodiversity (wildlife and plants).

2.4 The objectives inform the preparation of the Local Plan. Draft objectives topics are presented below, and sub-topics can be found in full in Appendix B:

1. Climate Change and Environmental Resources
2. Urban Areas / Town Centres
3. Transport
4. Countryside
5. Biodiversity
6. Quality Places
7. Homes
8. Jobs / Skills
9. Delivery

2.5 The ideal will be to meet all the objectives; in some cases, the objectives might support one another; in others, the objectives might point to adopting different policy approaches or selecting different sites. In such cases, the Council's decision will be informed by national and corporate policy, as well as the evidence and the results of consultation with key stakeholders.

SA Objectives

2.6 The SA objectives are set out in Table 2 for ease of reference. The detailed matrices for the SA framework, which are based on the SA objectives and used to appraise proposed sites, are shown in Appendix 4 of the SA Scoping Report.

Table 2: SA Objectives

Sustainability Theme	SA Objective
Social	
1. Housing	Provide sufficient quantity and mix of housing to meet identified needs, including affordable and specialist needs
2. Health and Well-Being	Safeguard and improve community health, safety and wellbeing
Economic	
3. Economy	Develop a dynamic and diverse economy
4. Transport Accessibility and Connectivity	Reduce road traffic/congestion/emissions by reducing the dependency to travel by car / lorry and providing a range of high quality sustainable travel choices
Environmental	
5. Natural Resources	Protect and conserve natural resources
6. Pollution	Reduce air, soil, water, light and noise pollution
7. Climate Change Adaptation	Plan for/adapt to the anticipated levels of climate change including flood risk and climate change
8. Climate Change Mitigation	Minimise Eastleigh Borough's contribution to climate change by reducing its carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions
9. Waste Management	Manage waste in the following order: prevent; re-use; recycle; other recovery; (disposal)
10. Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, mitigating adverse effects; and protect geodiversity
11. Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Leisure	Protect and enhance the Borough's multifunctional green and blue infrastructure networks
12. Landscape and Townscape	Protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening distinctiveness and its special qualities
13. Heritage and Culture	Conserve, enhance and manage the significance of heritage assets, protect the historic environment and support its effective management
14. Delivery	Delivery of strategic proposals

2.7 The SA needs to assess critical themes and the reasonable alternatives (or options) associated with these themes against the SA objectives. The non-spatial themes and options have been identified by reviewing the following:

- The adopted Local Plan’s:
 - Strategic policies: to ensure all themes are covered.
 - Development management policies: to ensure all additional key themes are covered.
- The assessment of non-spatial themes and options which was undertaken for the adopted plan’s issues and options SA report.
- The emerging SA draft assessment criteria for the Local Plan Review.

2.8 All key themes are assessed, the themes which do not have reasonable alternatives are generally those already established by national policy. The non-site themes are divided into three categories: Development Quanta (scales of growth), Spatial Themes and Policy Themes. The themes and their reasonable alternatives (options) are assessed against the SA objectives, as explained below.

Scoring the Objectives

2.9 A simple methodology has been used based on a series of “significance” criteria, ranging from ‘significant positive effect’ to ‘significant negative effect’. Options for each policy have been scored against the sustainability objectives and sub-objectives using the significance criteria as a guide. The scoring system is set out in Table 3 below.

2.10 Table 1A, Appendix C in the Interim Report shows the results of the high-level assessment of the Local Plan objectives against the SA objectives.

Table 3: Sustainability Appraisal Scoring System

Effect Symbol	Description of Effect
++	The objective/option/policy is likely to have a significant positive effect on the SA objective(s)
+	The objective/option/policy is likely to have a positive effect on the SA objective(s)
o	The objective/option/policy is likely to have a negligible or no effect on the SA objective(s)
-	The objective/option/policy is likely to have a negative effect on the SA objective(s)
--	The objective/option/policy is likely to have a significant negative effect on the SA objective(s)
?	It is uncertain what effect the objective/option/policy will have on the SA objective(s), either due to a lack of information or because it is not possible to reach a definite judgement
+/-	The option/policy is likely to have a mixture of positive and negative effects on the SA objective(s)
n/a	This option/policy is not applicable for the SA assessment

Summary Appraisal of Local Plan Objectives

2.11 Most of the Local Plan objectives are compatible with the SA objectives. Some of these have very positive effects, although most have been assessed to be positive overall.

2.12 Some uncertain and negative effects have also been identified, including a handful of very negative effects. These relate to those objectives that are mutually incompatible. For example, it is impossible to build large numbers of new homes and continue protecting all the Borough's countryside.

2.13 Very negative effects have also been identified regarding meeting the needs for new and high-quality homes through a mix of different types and meeting the needs for a range of business/commercial/education space to support a thriving economy across the range of sectors about reducing the use of resources. Whilst it is very possible that these effects could be mitigated, it will be impossible to reduce the resources consumed due to the development required to meet identified needs.

3. Determining the Approach Towards Development

3.1 This section lays out the approach taken towards the needs of the borough and options that can be taken based on local and national policy.

Need for Development

3.2 There is a significant need for new homes, business space and supporting facilities in the Borough. The Government's standard method for assessing housing need identifies a need for Eastleigh Borough to provide 902 dwellings annually.

3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that plans should provide for assessed need and unmet need from surrounding areas unless there are strong reasons not to. Strategic policies should make sufficient provision for all types of development for a minimum of 15 years from adoption. Eastleigh's Local Plan is scheduled to be adopted in 2029, meaning the plan should meet needs until 2044.

3.4 Based on the overall housing needs for the Borough, we need to consider potentially meeting between 12,900 and 18,040 new homes (2024-2044), of which 6,308 are likely to be in urban and existing sites. There is a need to locate the other new homes on greenfield sites and potentially contribute to the wider area's unmet needs. The Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH) identifies an unmet need from the New Forest, and over the longer term, there are also likely to be unmet needs arising from Southampton. Government policy explains that we need to meet these needs unless there are strong reasons not to. These reasons could include protecting areas of (inter)national recognition or if meeting it would significantly affect other aspects of national policy. These factors impact the scale of new developments, how they are designed and where they are located.

Table 4: Options for residential development need assessed against SA objectives.

Meeting Standard Need	Scores well for objectives SA1 (Housing), SA2 (Health and Wellbeing), and SA3 (Economy.) Can put pressure on objectives SA6 (Biodiversity), SA10 (Pollution), and SA12 (Landscape / Townscape.)
Accommodating 20% more than standard need	Supports objectives SA1 (Housing), and SA3 (Economy) Potential issues around insufficient infrastructure SA2 (Health and Wellbeing) and strain or uncertainty on environmental SA5 (Natural Resources), and SA10 (Biodiversity).
Accommodating 20% less than standard need	Worsen housing affordability SA1 (Housing) Less impactful on sensitive habitats which support SA10 (Biodiversity) and maintain settlement gaps.

3.5 The Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Spatial Position Statement (2023) sets out the need for office and industrial space in South Hampshire until 2040. This indicates that sufficient land is already allocated to meet needs, although some sites require strategic infrastructure development. It recommends that Councils consider the need for up to 5 additional sites for larger warehouses across South Hampshire, each of 8 – 10 hectares in size. Therefore, the assessed figure has been increased by 10ha to reflect the provision of one such site in the Borough.

3.6 The Statement also recognises the designation of the Solent Freeport part of a network of national economic importance. The Solent Freeport is estimated to generate 50,000 new jobs across the sub-region and includes the North-East of Southampton Airport site in Eastleigh.

3.7 The Council intends to update its assessment of employment needs for the ‘pre-submission plan’ The Plan will need to consider employment needs until 2044. Currently, the figures are between 77,805–95,805 sqm of office need and between 9.9 – 19.9ha of industrial need.

Table 5: Options for industrial / office development need assessed against SA objectives.

Office Floorspace	Most positive effects for objective SA3 (Economy) Potential negative impacts of further travel from outside the borough on the sustainability of objective SA4 (Transport, Accessibility and Connectivity), the lower proposed figure would perform better for this and for environmental objectives like SA10 (Biodiversity).
Industrial Land	Most positive effects for objective SA3 (Economy) Negatively effects relating to objectives SA5 (Natural Resources), SA6 (Pollution), SA10 (Biodiversity), and SA12 (Landscapes / Townscapes). The higher proposed figure would have both more positive and negative impacts.

3.8 We must plan for significantly more homes and business space to meet everyone's need for a home and a job. It also means putting these homes in places where vital countryside and green spaces for people and wildlife can be protected and created, communities can be created (with local jobs and facilities), people can travel around easily when they need to, and air quality is enhanced, and climate change emissions reduced.

Spatial Factors

3.9 The SA assessment identifies that the Local Plan's approach should focus growth in town centres and urban areas where possible and protect the most important characteristics of the countryside. This approach puts more people within reach of jobs, facilities, services and public transport. The SA uses key spatial principles to inform the decisions about where to put development.

- *Urban Areas*

By focusing development on previously developed land, more people are in reach of existing services, facilities and jobs, and more countryside can be protected.

- *Transport and Accessibility*

Creating an efficient and safe transport system and reducing congestion, local pollution, and emissions. Locate new development where it reduces the need to travel, therefore encouraging walking, cycling, and using public transport.

- *Countryside and Green Spaces*

Recognising that the countryside and green spaces meet a wide range of needs, therefore ensuring that the most important areas of countryside, important green spaces, and areas of high biodiversity are protected and enhanced and guiding development to areas of least environmental and amenity value.

- *Wider Heritage and Environment Issues*

Conserve and enhance heritage assets in accordance with national policy. Manage flood risk, minimise pollution, and ensure development does not occur in areas of poor ground conditions, land stability or contamination, as well as ensuring development does not sterilise mineral resources.

- *Delivery*

Ensuring developments are successful by ensuring sites are available, viable and served by adequate infrastructure.

3.10 At this stage, the focus is on the initial assessment of individual sites and areas. Currently, the spatial options and concepts that can be usefully assessed include the approach to urban development and greenfield development; what sort of sites should be developed and the scale and density of that development.

Table 6: Key spatial themes and impacts of potential options, assessed against the SA objectives

Key Themes	Options	Assessment against SA objectives
<i>Approach to Urban Development</i>		
In and around Eastleigh town centre	1 - Specify minimum densities higher than 40 dwellings per hectare and continue increasing density at the same scale and level as what has already been done.	Supports SA3, SA4 and reduces greenfield land take supporting SA10. Potential negative impacts on SA2 and SA6.
	2 - Increase the density uplift achieved.	Supports SA3, SA4. Potential negative impacts on SA2 and SA6.
	3 - Alongside either option 1 or 2, support the redevelopment/ reuse of industrial and office areas in or near the town centre for residential led high density development.	Higher uncertainty, but supports SA3, SA4. Potential negative impacts on SA2, SA3, and SA6.
Other Urban Areas	1 - Continue with the current level of density uplift.	
	2 - Increase the density uplift achieved.	Supports SA4 and SA10. Could negatively impact SA2 and SA6.
	3 - Increase the density uplift achieved in or close to district centres.	Supports SA4 and SA10. Could negatively impact SA2 and SA6.
<i>Approach to Greenfield Development</i>		
Site Size Balance	1 - Smaller number of larger sites.	Supports SA2, SA4, and SA10.
	2 - Larger number of smaller sites.	Supports SA14. Less supportive for SA4 and SA10.
	3 - A mixture of larger and smaller sites.	Result sits between options 1 and 2 and is more uncertain.
Densities	1 - Continue with the level of density currently achieved.	More supportive of SA12.
	2 - Achieve a modest increase in the level of density currently used.	More supportive of SA12.

	3 - Achieve option 2, but also achieve a higher uplift on sites/ areas within sites that are close to facilities and public transport.	Supports SA4, SA5, and potentially SA3. May have negative impacts on SA2, SA6, SA11.
	4 - Achieve higher densities across all greenfield sites.	Supports SA4, and SA5. May have negative impacts on SA2, SA6, SA11.
<i>Approach to Employment and Town Centre</i>		
Location of Industry and Storage	1 - Continue to safeguard all areas in the adopted local plan policy map.	Supports SA3.
	2 - Continue to safeguard areas unless they perform worse, or there are strong planning reasons to redevelop.	Supports SA3, and potentially SA1, depending on projects proposed on each site.
New Industrial / Storage Allocations.	1 - Allocate more sites than needed.	Supports SA3. Negatively impacts SA5, SA10, and SA12.
	2 - Allocate sufficient sites for identified needs.	Supports SA3.
	3 - Allocate fewer sites than needed.	Likely to have a positive impact on sustainability objectives, like SA5, SA10, and SA12.
	4 - Set criteria to consider employment proposals to cover longer term needs.	Supports SA3.
Location of Main Town Centre Uses.	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	Supports SA3, and SA4.

Non-Spatial Factors

3.11 The non-spatial themes and options have been identified through:

- The adopted Local Plan's:
 - o strategic policies - to ensure all themes are covered.
 - o development management policies - to ensure all additional key themes are covered.
- The assessment of non-spatial themes and options which was undertaken for the adopted plan's issues and options SA report.

- The emerging SA draft assessment criteria for the Local Plan Review (2023).

3.12 Where only one option has been listed there is no other reasonable alternative under national policy.

Table 7: Key non-spatial themes and impacts of potential options, assessed against the SA objectives

Key Themes	Options	Appraisal against SA objectives
<i>Housing Mix</i>		
<i>Affordable Housing</i>		
Size Threshold	1 - To seek affordable housing on sites of 10 or more homes or 0.5 ha or more.	Supports SA1 and SA2.
Proportion	1 - Following the local plan 35% of all homes are affordable.	
	2 - Increase the proportion of affordable homes.	Supports SA1 and SA2 but may negatively impact viability.
	3 - Decrease the proportion of affordable homes.	Negatively impacts SA2.
	4 - Vary the proportion of affordable homes.	Result is more uncertain.
Elderly/ Specialist/ Self and Custom Build	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Follow adopted local plan but add reference to homes for families and tenure.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	3 - Allocate specific sites for specific types of homes.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Gypsies and Travellers	1 - Allocate sites with extant planning permission, or suitable unauthorised sites.	Supports SA1 and SA2.
	2 - Extend existing sites.	Supports SA1 and SA2.
	3 - New 'stand alone' sites.	Supports SA1 and SA2.
	4 - New sites as part of wider development sites.	Supports SA1 and SA2.
<i>Internal Space/ Mobility Standards</i>		
Internal Space Standards	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Disapply the space standards.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Access Standards	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Increase the proportion of homes required to meet access standards.	<i>To be appraised</i>

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	3 - Decrease the proportion of homes required to meet access standards.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Achieving Quality Places	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	Supports SA2, SA11, SA12.
Heritage	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	Supports SA2, SA3, SA13.
<i>Countryside and Green Infrastructure</i>		
Countryside	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Follow adopted local plan but add more flexibility.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	3 - Follow adopted local plan but reduce flexibility.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Settlement Gaps	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	
	2 - Follow adopted local plan but add more flexibility, more supportive of development.	Supports SA1.
	3 - Follow adopted local plan but reduce flexibility, less supportive of development.	Supports SA2, SA10 and SA12.
Coast	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Green Infrastructure / Open Spaces	1 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan.	Supports SA8, SA10, SA11, and SA12.
	2 - Increase open space requirements for new development.	Supports SA2, SA8, SA10, SA11, and SA12.
	3 - Identify a Borough wide strategic greenspace network.	Supports SA2, SA8, SA10, SA11, and SA12. Particularly benefits SA10, SA12.
	4 - Decrease or adapt open space requirements for new development	Negatively impacts SA2 and SA4.
Biodiversity	1 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan.	Supports SA2, SA6 and SA10.
	2 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan, but include policy aim of higher than 10% biodiversity net gain.	Supports SA2, SA6 and SA10. Performs better than option 1, but potentially less feasible.
<i>Sustainable development, Climate Change and Flood Risk.</i>		
Sustainable Drainage	1 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Require more naturalised filtration on smaller sites.	<i>To be appraised</i>

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	3 - Require less naturalised filtration on larger sites.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Energy Performance	1 - Maintain national standards. (residential)	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Maintain higher standards. (residential)	<i>To be appraised</i>
	3 - Keep Government policy under review and aim where possible for a higher standard. (residential)	<i>To be appraised</i>
	4 - Follow the adopted local plan. (non-residential)	<i>To be appraised</i>
	5 - Higher standard than the adopted local plan. (non-residential)	<i>To be appraised</i>
Water Efficiency	1 - Follow the adopted local plan and Government's higher water efficiency standard (110 litres).	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Reduce to the Government's lower water efficiency standard (125 litres).	<i>To be appraised</i>
Water/ Wastewater/ Telecommunications/ Other Utilities	1 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Pollution	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	Supports SA2, SA5, SA6, and SA10.
<i>Transport and Other Infrastructure</i>		
Transport	1 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan.	Supports SA2, SA4, and SA8. Will have some negative outcomes on SA6.
Parking	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	2 - Set standards, not minimum or maximum.	<i>To be appraised</i>
	3 - Set maximum standards where justified.	<i>To be appraised</i>
Community Facilities	1 - Follow the adopted 2036 plan.	Supports SA2, and potentially SA3.
Funding	1 - Follow the adopted local plan.	Supports SA2 and SA3.

4. Identification of Reasonable Alternative Sites

4.1 This section summarises the ‘reasonable alternative’ greenfield site options that have been identified and how these site options have been combined to create:

- Strategic Development Options (SDOs), each divided into sub-areas;
- Small and Medium Site Options (SMSOs).

4.2 To summarise, this process can effectively be divided into three stages:

- Stage 1 – Identification of ‘reasonable alternative’ site options
 - 88 sites were proposed by developers or landowners through the ‘call for sites.’ A further 3 sites were identified by the Council’s planning policy team for consideration. The Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) assesses all these sites.
- Stage 2 – Organising neighbouring sites into SDOs and SMSOs
 - From the identified ‘reasonable alternative’ sites, 4 Strategic Development Options (SDOs) have been Identified. These SDOs represent larger, coherent new communities.
 - SDO A – north-east of Fair Oak;
 - SDO B – south of Bishopstoke;
 - SDO C – north of West End;
 - SDO D – north of Hedge End.
- Stage 3 – Initial sustainability appraisal (SA) of 4 SDOs and 52 SMSOs
 - All sites have been assessed and evaluated for their sustainability; here are the summary findings:

Table 8: Summary of SDOs and SMSOs assessed against SA objectives

SA Objective	Summary of SDOs	Summary of SMSOs
SA1: Housing	All of the SDOs are large enough to provide a mix of homes, including affordable and specialist homes.	The majority of SMSOs are large enough to provide a mix of homes, including affordable and specialist homes.
SA2: Community Health	All of the SDOs are large enough to potentially provide primary healthcare facilities (this will need to be discussed further with the Integrated Care Board).	A handful of sites are large enough potentially to provide a new primary healthcare facility (pending discussions with the Integrated Care Board); almost half of the SMSOs however are neither large enough to provide a primary healthcare facility or lie over 1,600m away from an existing such provision.
SA3: Economy	All of the SDOs are large enough and located to be able to provide local job opportunities.	Over half of the SMSOs are large enough and located to be able to provide local job opportunities.
SA4: Transport and Connectivity	Bus Services: SDO A, B1a and D score as ‘very good’ or ‘good’; SDO C scores as ‘poor or very poor’ (scores based on proximity to and frequency of bus services).	Bus Services: Over half of sites lie close to existing bus services, but around a quarter remain fairly distant from provision (scores based on proximity to and frequency of bus services).

SA Objective	Summary of SDOs	Summary of SMSOs
	<p>Rail Station: Most SDOs are a considerable distance from the nearest rail station, but SDO D is relatively close to a station.</p> <p>Centres / Shops: None of the SDOs are close to a town centre, a district centre or a major supermarket (SDO B may be closest to a town centre, although still over 3.2 kilometres away and subject to further assessment regarding the ability to achieve direct access in the light of biodiversity designations). SDO A1 is close to a village centre.</p> <p>Schools: The potential for SDOs to provide new schools will be discussed further with Hampshire County Council (the education authority). At this initial stage, the proximity to existing schools is assessed. Recognising that secondary school pupils are able to travel further, SDO A1 is relatively close to a secondary school, whereas SDOs B and D are relatively distant and SDO C particularly distant from a secondary school. Most of the SDOs are relatively distant from a primary school, although SDO C1 is not too far away.</p>	<p>Rail Station: Almost three-quarters of SMSOs are a considerable distance from a railway station.</p> <p>Centres / Shops: None of the SMSOs are close to a town or district centre or major supermarket, although a small number of sites are close to such facilities.</p> <p>Schools: Recognising that secondary school pupils are able to travel further, around a fifth of sites are fairly close to existing provision. Almost half of the SMSOs are, however, relatively distant from an existing secondary provision.</p>
SA6: Pollution	Without additional transport measures, all of the SDOs have the potential to increase traffic in congested areas, and in air quality management areas or other areas at risk of exceeding air quality standards.	Without additional transport measures, all of the SMSOs have the potential to increase traffic in congested areas, and in air quality management areas or other areas at risk of exceeding air quality standards.
SA7: Climate change adaptation	All the SDOs score as "neutral" because for each SDO, most or all of the site will be outside areas with the potential for groundwater, fluvial and tidal flooding to occur.	Nearly all the sites score as "neutral" because most or all of each site will be in future no or low tidal hazard zones. Only a limited number of sites score as "negative" and even fewer as "significant negative" for the potential for groundwater, fluvial and tidal flooding to occur.
SA8: Climate change mitigation	This SA objective applies to non-spatial themes and policies only.	This SA objective applies to non-spatial themes and policies only.
SA9: Waste	This SA objective applies to non-spatial themes and policies only.	This SA objective applies to non-spatial themes and policies only.
SA10: Biodiversity	See associated background paper.	See associated background paper.

SA Objective	Summary of SDOs	Summary of SMSOs
SA12: Landscape and Townscape	<p>Settlement Gaps: Nearly all of the SDOs would have a significant impact on the ability to maintain strong settlement gaps. However, SDO A1/A2 would have no impact on gaps, and SDO A3 would only have some impact.</p> <p>The South Downs National Park: The national park lies just outside the Borough. All SDOs might have traffic effects on the national park, although this is probably more likely for SDO A. SDO A3/A4 may have a landscape effect on the national park.</p> <p>Landscape Sensitivity: Whilst none of the SDOs include designated landscapes, all of the SDOs include landscapes identified with high or medium sensitivity to change. However, SDO A1 and A2 and SDO C3 contain the largest proportion of high sensitivity landscape areas. Although both SDO C and SDO D contain a large proportion of areas identified with a moderate sensitivity to change, SDO D is a much smaller area and therefore the amount of land involved is significantly less. The landscape of SDO B is the last sensitive to change.</p>	<p>Settlement Gaps: Around two-fifths of the SMSOs would have a significant impact on the ability to maintain strong settlement gaps. However, a further two-fifths of sites would have no impact on gaps.</p> <p>The South Downs National Park: TO BE ASSESSED</p> <p>Landscape Sensitivity: TO BE ASSESSED</p>
SA13: Heritage	<p>All the SDOs have the potential to impact the significance of a heritage asset, although, in the case of just SDO C1, this asset is more distant.</p>	<p>Whilst a majority of the SMSOs have no potential for effects on the significance of a heritage asset, around a fifth have the potential for major effects upon heritage significance.</p>
SA14: Deliverability	<p>Most SDOs have been proposed by developers/landowners, so they are available during the plan period. However, only about half of SDO B has been proposed by a developer/landowner for development.</p>	<p>A vast majority of the SMSOs have been proposed by developers/landowners and are therefore available during the plan period. A handful of sites are subject to various issues, e.g. submitted without landowner knowledge or already allocated for minerals extraction.</p>

4.3 It is important to reiterate that most of these issues need to be assessed in more detail, and some potential benefits and issues have not yet been assessed. However, from the initial assessment, several interesting conclusions can be drawn:

- The SDO and SMO sites were almost all compliant with the housing and deliverability objectives, with the latter being the case as most of the sites have been proposed by developers/landowners. Therefore, they are available during the plan period.

- All the SDOs can provide local job opportunities, but only half of the SMOs can meet this level of provision. This is the same split between sites for the ability to provide healthcare facilities / the community health objective.
- Regarding connectivity and traffic congestion, Most SDOs and SMOs are close to running bus service; however, most sites are far from a railway station, a town centre, a district centre, a major supermarket and even a secondary school. Without additional measures, all SDOs and SMOs can potentially increase traffic in congested areas, while also putting air quality standards at risk.
- Finally, nearly all sites are "neutral" regarding climate change adaptation, Whilst Most sites would significantly impact the ability to maintain strong settlement haps. All SDOs have the potential to significantly affect the significance of a heritage assessment, whilst almost all SMOs have no potential impact.

5. SA of the Eastleigh Local Plan Review: Next Steps

5.1 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process has, at this stage, progressed to the 'Issues and Options' stage of the Eastleigh Local Plan Review. SA is an ongoing process to refine the Local Plan, and to make it more sustainable. Any part of SA can be updated as the Local Plan continues to be prepared.

5.2 Next, public consultation will be undertaken, allowing key bodies, the public, and all interested parties to comment on the SA and help refine it. Public and stakeholder input, especially at this early stage, is essential in the sustainability appraisal process, enhancing outcomes' quality, legitimacy, and effectiveness. Involvement ensures that the process is inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the needs and concerns of all affected parties.

5.3 Following consultation, the Eastleigh Local Plan Review will continue to be assessed against the SA objectives using the SA Framework. A further Sustainability Appraisal Report will be published at the 'Pre-submission' plan stage. This will provide a comprehensive evaluation of the 'reasonable alternative' proposed development sites and localities, explain why certain sites and localities have been excluded from the preferred development strategy, and make recommendations to guide the ongoing development of the Local Plan.

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of Scoping Consultation

What follows is a summary of consultation on the SA Scoping Report for the Eastleigh LPR, which took place with the main four statutory stakeholders during spring 2024. Recommendations, where appropriate, have been incorporated into either the SA Framework or the wider SA process.

Natural England

The following types of plans relating to the natural environment should be considered where applicable:

- Green infrastructure strategies
- Biodiversity plans
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Shoreline management plans
- Coastal access plans
- River basin management plans
- AONB and National Park (National Landscape) management plans
- Relevant landscape plans and strategies.
- Air quality can have impacts upon the natural environment, and designated sites – consider including in the key issues.
- Best and Most Versatile agricultural land is covered in SA Objective 5 but not in the key issues and should be added.
- Improving people’s access particularly to nature could also be incorporated into the key issues.
- The Climate change adaptation and mitigation SA objectives (SA7 and SA8) should also consider impacts upon the natural environment, and use of nature-based solutions to the issues. This objective (SA7) should include enabling biodiversity to adapt to and be resilient to climate change. This should consider the restoration of natural processes and the avoidance of action that further degrades or constrains the natural environment’s ability to respond to the effects of climate change.
- Support the inclusion of achieving local nature recovery.
- SA Objective 10 could be stronger in reference to the restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, with the current focus appearing to be on avoiding damage and achieving Biodiversity Net Gain (an existing requirement). The site framework could also be clearer in ensuring that true biodiversity benefits are reflected that go beyond mitigation requirements.
- SA Objective 11 could also include the protection/enhancement, or at least avoiding impacts to, existing GI alongside trees and public rights of way. There is a risk that in some situations, development on land of limited biodiversity value can *per se* lead to the creation of islands of biodiversity, permanently severed from other areas. Wording is suggested to ensure current ecological networks are not compromised, and future improvements in habitat connectivity are not prejudiced. SA Objective 11: ‘Protect’ re the Borough’s multifunctional green infrastructure networks was added.
- Bespoke indicators should be chosen relating to the outcomes of development management decisions; the following indicators may be appropriate:

Biodiversity

- Number of planning approvals that generated any adverse impacts on sites of acknowledged biodiversity importance.
- Number of planning approvals granted against Natural England advice on adverse biodiversity impacts.
- Percentage of major developments generating overall biodiversity enhancement.
- Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations.

Landscape

- Amount of new development in AONB / National Park / Heritage Coast with commentary on likely impact.

Green infrastructure

- Percentage of the population having access to a natural greenspace within 400 metres of their home.
- Length of greenways constructed.
- Hectares of accessible open space per 1000 population.

Environment Agency

- The SA Objectives do not have any specific reference to flood risk or flood resistance and resilience and recommend this is reviewed. 'Including flood risk and coastal change' was added to SA objective 7.
- SA Objective 11 (Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Leisure) – to include a reference to green *and blue* infrastructure (including in any emerging Local Plan policies).
- Appendix 1 – Recommend referencing the Selsey Bill to Hurst Spit SMP13 Shoreline Management Plan.
- Appendix 2 – There can be multiple sources of flood risk (rivers, sea, surface water, reservoirs, sewers and groundwater) which need to be considered cumulatively in accordance with paragraph 166 of the NPPF. This section has been modified to show the multiple sources of flood risk in the Borough.
- There should be some scoring relating to the cumulative impacts of flood risk from all sources.

Historic England

- Most plans, policies and programmes identified in relation to the historic environment
- An appropriate baseline has been established against which to assess the plan's proposals – although recommended that more detail is added to the baseline information on heritage at risk, the Borough's archaeological assets and coastal erosion
- In terms of key heritage issues, heritage should be viewed as an opportunity and not simply a constraint – more detail could be added on the role of heritage in climate change mitigation and adaptation, which connects also with the plan's approach to heritage at risk (including risks from coastal erosion).
- SA objectives are fine although minor changes are suggested to the wording to SA13 and with the proposed decision-making criteria, such that the approach includes the setting of all heritage assets.

National Highways

- The key objective in Table 2 of the main report is to reduce road traffic and congestion through reducing the need to travel by private car and improving sustainable travel choices aligns well with circular 01/22 which encourages planning authorities to focus on developing active travel and sustainable public transport as a means of reducing road traffic and thereby alleviating pressure on the SRN.
- The scoping report complies with circular 01/22 because, whilst the M27 and M3 are mentioned as key parts of the area's transport network, there is a large emphasis on promoting other means of transport and improving sustainable transport, rather than relying on the SRN.
- Appendix 2, baseline information, sets out some known congestion hotspots in the Borough, none of which, however, on the SRN.
- SA objective 4 in the draft SA Framework aligns well with the policies set out in circular 01/22 which encourages development to be well-located, within easy reach of facilities which will help to encourage a modal shift away from single occupancy vehicle use. National Highways therefore supports the criteria as they are set out.

Appendix B: Local Plan Draft Objectives

Climate Change and Environmental Resources

- a. Reducing climate change emissions, to contribute to meeting 'net zero' and adapting to the effects of climate change.
- b. Minimising the use of different resources (e.g. by supporting energy and water efficiency in our buildings, reducing / recycling our waste, re-using vacant buildings), and supporting renewable or low carbon energy.
- c. Optimising the use of land, including through higher density development (see Quality Places).
- d. Minimising pollution and the effects of pollution on people and biodiversity (in terms of air, water, soil and noise conditions), and where possible enhance these environmental conditions.
- e. Avoiding or else reducing the risks from flooding or coastal change, ensuring developments are safe for people.
- f. Avoiding the sterilisation of mineral resources.

Urban Areas / Town Centres

- g. Focussing development in urban areas wherever possible.
- h. Supporting a network of vibrant town, district and local centres / parades, to provide the services people need locally.

Transport

- i. Promoting safe, efficient and sustainable transport for people and businesses (which reduces climate change emissions and pollution on people and biodiversity) by encouraging:
 - An increase in:
 - walking and cycling (e.g. by locating more development close to facilities [both existing and new]);
 - public transport use (e.g. by locating more development close to existing services or where it can more easily be served by new services);
 - car sharing;
 - A switch to electric vehicles, and by providing attractive routes and facilities for people to these facilities and services.
 - A reduction in vehicle use and traffic congestion (through the above measures and by measures to improve traffic management and ease remaining congestion).

Countryside

- j. Conserving and enhancing the countryside in general where possible, recognising its intrinsic character and beauty.
- k. Conserving and enhancing in particular areas of countryside with higher value, for example:
 - settlement gaps in-order to protect the individual identity of towns and villages;
 - the undeveloped coast / rivers, trees / woodland and higher value agricultural land;
 - more sensitive landscapes;
 - the neighbouring South Downs National Park;

- biodiversity (see below for more detail);
- a linked network of strategic green & blue infrastructure which meets these multiple aims.

Biodiversity

- l. Conserving and enhancing biodiversity, by protecting designations, habitats and species in accordance with their importance, enhancing habitats and ecology networks across the landscape, and recovering species.

Quality Places

- m. Conserving, enhancing and creating well designed quality places which are healthy, safe, accessible, distinctive, vibrant and attractive places for all communities and people, which protect and enhance their amenity and provides for the appropriate range of community facilities.
- n. Optimising the use of land by making effective use of:
 - development land (creating higher densities consistent with achieving quality places to support vibrant communities, more services and facilities, and which minimise land take)
 - green spaces (for multiple purposes, e.g. biodiversity, landscape, play / recreation / sport / health, climate change mitigation / adaption, food production, etc).
- o. Supporting the provision of or access to the education, health, cultural and other services and facilities needed to create and support communities.
- p. Conserving, enhancing and adding to the network of amenity spaces, play areas, parks, sports pitches, country parks, allotments, green spaces, and green links / features;
- q. Conserving and enhancing heritage assets in accordance with their importance, supporting their appropriate re-use;
- r. Integrating new development, services and facilities and open spaces to create communities, and integrating with existing communities and with the surrounding countryside (e.g. through clear / permeable / accessible routes for people and careful design / landscaping).

Homes

- s. Meeting people's needs for new and high quality homes through a mix of different types and sizes of homes to meet needs, including a mix of affordable homes.

Jobs / Skills

- t. Meeting the needs for a range of business / commercial / education space to support a thriving economy across the range of sectors and ensure all communities and people can access economic opportunities.

Delivery

- u. Support the delivery of the development, infrastructure, enhancements, facilities, services and measures needed to achieve all of the above objectives.



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eastleigh.gov.uk/localplanreview

