

June 2018



Eastleigh Borough Local Plan

2016-2036



Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036



include encouragement of proposals that enhance the woodlands in the Forest of Bere²⁰ area and recreational links to and within this area.

4.49 The Borough's countryside performs an important role in separating and providing a setting for the Borough's settlements. Maintaining the individual identities of the Borough's communities is an important priority for the Borough Council. The most obvious way of achieving this is keeping them physically separate from each other and from Southampton. Development over recent years has tended to cause some merging of settlements – for example West End has now merged with Southampton. The Council considers that designating areas between settlements as countryside gaps to be kept free of urbanising development is the best way of preventing further loss of local identity, and has defined a number of such gaps, see figure 5, having regard to the criteria set out in the PUSH Framework for Gaps.

4.50 Parts of the countryside are underlain with mineral deposits. As the minerals planning authority for this Borough Hampshire County Council seeks to avoid the sterilisation of such resources by permanent non minerals development. Areas safeguarded because they contain important minerals are identified by the County Council in the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013), and they are also shown on the Local Plan policies map. The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan identifies the former Hamble Airfield as an area for the extraction of sand and gravel.

4.51 The countryside within Eastleigh Borough is not regarded as being a rural area for the purposes of applying the provisions

of the NPPF in relation to supporting a prosperous rural economy. Much of it has the characteristics of urban-fringe where careful management is required to avoid urbanisation and the coalescence of settlements, and the Local Plan's policies are framed accordingly.

Strategic policy S7, New development in the countryside

There is a presumption against new development in the countryside, subject to other policies of this Local Plan. Countryside is defined as all the areas outside the urban edge as defined on the policies map, including river valleys, ancient woodland and the undeveloped coast.

Planning permission will be granted for new development in the countryside provided it is related to:

- i. **the provision of employment through agricultural development (policy DM17), the extension and replacement of existing employment uses (policy DM18) and the re-use of existing buildings (policy DM19);**
- ii. **residential extensions and replacement buildings (policies DM18 and 27), limited residential conversions (policy DM19), rural workers' dwellings (policy DM29) and accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople (policy DM33);**
- iii. **community, tourist, or visitor uses through the re-use of buildings including facilities for the**

20 The Forest of Bere is an area of approximately 26,000 hectares which stretches across south-east Hampshire from the Itchen Valley in Eastleigh to the border with West Sussex. It covers the northern part of the Borough mainly north of the M27. See Hampshire County Council's Countryside Access Plan for the Forest of Bere 2008-2013: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/rh/countryside/access/forestofbere.pdf>

Figure 5: Countryside gaps



interpretation of heritage assets (policies DM12);

- iv. outdoor recreation and open space (policies DM34 and DM35);
- v. allotments and community farms (policy DM34);
- vi. cemeteries (policy DM39); and
- vii. essential public utilities (policy DM9).

In permitting new development in the countryside the Borough Council will seek to:

- a. avoid adverse impacts on the rural, woodland, riparian or coastal character, the intrinsic character of the landscape including the avoidance of adverse landscape impacts on areas adjoining national parks and their settings, and on the biodiversity of the area;
- b. secure long-term beneficial management practices that will enhance the landscape and biodiversity of the countryside and coast; and
- c. avoid sterilisation of mineral resources, in accordance with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan.

[Note: DM (development management) policies are in Chapter 5.]

Strategic policy S8, Protection of countryside gaps

In order to maintain the separate identity of settlements and separation from Southampton, countryside gaps are defined between:

- Eastleigh and Southampton;

- Eastleigh and Bishopstoke;
- the two new communities at the Strategic Growth Option*;
- the Strategic Growth Option and Colden Common*;
- the Strategic Growth Option and Lower Upham/Upham*;
- Fair Oak (including the Strategic Growth Option) and Horton Heath*;
- Botley and Boorley Green;
- Hedge End and Botley;
- Hedge End and Southampton;
- Hedge End and Horton Heath;
- Hedge End and Bursledon;
- Bursledon/Netley and Southampton;
- Bursledon and Hamble/Netley;
- Boyatt Wood and Otterbourne Hill;
- Boyatt Wood and Allbrook;

as set out in the key diagram and on the policies maps. *The precise boundaries of countryside gaps connected to the Strategic Growth Option will be determined following masterplanning.

In countryside gaps, development which physically or visually diminishes the gap, or has an urbanising effect detrimental to the openness of the gap, the character of the countryside or the separate identity of the adjoining settlements will not be permitted. Proposals for development within gaps will also be assessed against other relevant policies but will be resisted where this approach is not met.