

Strategic Environmental Assessment for the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan

Scoping Report

New Alresford Town Council

April 2023

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
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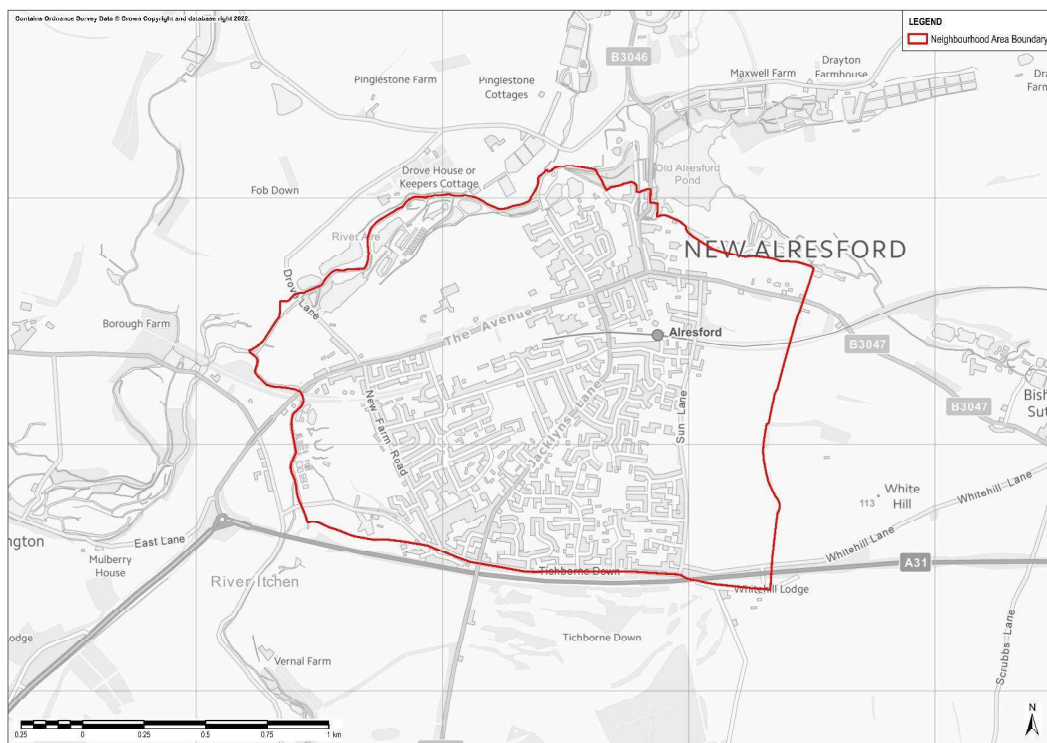


Figure 1.1: The New Alresford neighbourhood area

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan (NANP).
- 1.2 The NANP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011¹ and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012², and in the context of the Winchester Local Plan 2010-2030³. Due regard is also given to the emerging Winchester Local Plan⁴. The key information relating to the NANP is presented in **Table 1.1** below and the neighbourhood area is depicted in the figure above.

Table 1.1: Key information relating to the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan

Name of Responsible Authority	Winchester City Council
Title of Plan	New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan
Subject	Neighbourhood planning
Purpose	<p>The New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a neighbourhood plan under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the adopted Winchester District Local Plan, which covers the period up to 2031.</p> <p>The New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan will be used to guide and shape development within the neighbourhood area.</p>
Timescale	To 2039.
Area covered by the plan	The neighbourhood area covers the civil parish of New Alresford, as shown in the figure above.
Summary of content	The New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy, and range of policies for the neighbourhood area.
Plan contact point	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px;"></div>

Planning policy context

- 1.3 The Winchester District Local Plan (2010-2030) was adopted in March 2013, and sets out the main planning approach and policies for the district to meet the identified economic, environmental, and social needs within the plan period; and work towards its aims for the future.

¹ UK Government (2011) 'Localism Act 2011' can be accessed [here](#).

² UK Government (2012) 'The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012' can be accessed [here](#).

³ Winchester City Council (2013) 'Existing Development Plan' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴ Winchester City Council (2023) 'Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 (Emerging)' can be accessed [here](#).

- 1.4 New Alresford is identified within the Local Plan as a district centre under Policy MTRA2: Market Towns and Larger Villages, and an additional 500 homes over the plan period to 2031 are required. The adopted Winchester District Local Plan allocates two strategic sites within the neighbourhood area – these are Sun Lane and The Dean. Following these allocations, there is a residual target of 100 homes to be found through the NANP.
- 1.5 It is noted there is an emerging Winchester District Local Plan. This plan will shape development across the district in areas outside of the South Downs National Park up to 2039, setting out the development strategy and policy framework for the area and allocate / designate land accordingly. Regulation 18 consultation on the emerging plan ended on December 14th 2022⁵.
- 1.6 Following two strategic site allocations at Sun Lane and The Dean, there is a residual target of 100 homes to be found through the NANP. Additionally, Winchester City Council have forecast a figure of 90 homes that will be delivered through windfall permissions within New Alresford.
- 1.7 Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for Winchester City Council, alongside, but not as a replacement for, the Winchester District Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the Winchester District Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Winchester District Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Winchester District, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.

SEA for the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan

SEA screening for the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.8 A Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA where it is likely to have significant environmental effects. In this respect, Neighbourhood Plans are more likely to be screened in as requiring an SEA if both the following apply:
 - 1) the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared within a neighbourhood area with significant environmental constraints, such as, for example, Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, or large concentrations of heritage assets; and
 - 2) the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to allocate sites for development⁶.
- 1.9 As the NANP is allocating sites for development in an environmentally constrained part of Winchester (including, but not limited to, an SAC designation, SSSIs and associated Impact Risk Zones, listed buildings and a registered park and garden), it is considered that there is potential for development to result in significant environmental effects.
- 1.10 In light of this outcome, an SEA process is being undertaken to meet the specific requirements prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations)⁷.

⁵ Winchester District Local Plan (2023) 'Your Place Your Plan. Winchester District Local Plan' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶ DLUHC (February 2022): Chief Planner's Newsletter, February 2022 "Strategic Environmental Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans: Timely and effective screening" accessible [here](#)

⁷ UK Government (2004) 'The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004' can be accessed [here](#).

SEA explained

- 1.11 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues.
- 1.12 The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the NANP seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.13 Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:
- i. When deciding on 'the scope and level of detail of the information' which must be included in the Environmental Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues; and
 - ii. A report (the 'Environmental Report') is published for consultation alongside the draft plan (i.e., the draft NANP) that presents outcomes from the environmental assessment (i.e., discusses 'likely significant effects' that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.

SEA scoping explained

- 1.14 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:
- Exploring the policy context for the NANP and SEA to summarise the key messages arising.
 - Establishing the baseline for the SEA (i.e., the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the NANP) to help identify the plan's likely significant effects.
 - Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a particular focus of the SEA; and
 - Considering this information to develop an SEA Framework comprising SEA objectives and assessment questions, which can then be used as a guiding framework for the subsequent assessment.
- 1.15 The scope is explored and presented under a series of key environmental themes as follows:
- Air quality
 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
 - Climate change (including flood risk)
 - Community wellbeing
 - Historic environment
 - Land, soil, and water resources
 - Landscape and townscape
 - Transportation

1.16 The selected environmental themes incorporate the ‘SEA topics’ suggested by Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive.⁸ These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects. The discussion of the scoping information for each theme is presented in **Chapters 2 to 9**, along with a summary of the key issues and the proposed SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions. Each proposal within the emerging NANP will be assessed consistently using this Framework.

⁸ The SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) is 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on 'the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'

2. Air quality

Focus of theme

2.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the air quality SEA theme. The theme focuses on air pollution sources, air quality hotspots, and air quality management within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

2.2 **Table 2.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the air quality SEA theme.

Document title	Year of publication
Environment Act	2021
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
The Clean Air Strategy	2019
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations	2017
Environment Act	1995
Winchester City Council 2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)	2022
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	

2.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The New Alresford Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to consider the principles outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which seek to reduce or mitigate air quality impacts during development whilst simultaneously taking advantage of opportunities to improve air quality. Measures include, but are not limited to; sustainable transport solutions, limiting the need to travel, compliance with pollutant limits or objectives, and the enhancement of green infrastructure. Smaller-scale development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality. The NPPF also states that planning policies should contribute towards compliance with pollutant limit levels or national objectives; acknowledging air quality management areas, clean air zones and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Moreover, the NPPF indicates that new and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution.

- The Clean Air Strategy outlines how the government will tackle all sources of air pollution. The strategy proposes goals to cut public exposure to particulate matter pollution and outlines required action to meet these goals. Furthermore, it seeks to recognise wider sources that cause poor air quality, such as diffuse sources and smaller contributors. The proposed measures include new legislation and local powers to act in areas with air pollution issues.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan establishes how the government will expand net gain approaches to include air quality improvements, such as planting more trees in urban areas and changing fuel supplies. In particular, 'Goal 1 Clean air' and the policies contained within 'Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste' directly relate to the air quality SEA theme.
- The UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide is focused on lowering nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) emissions to statutory limits as quickly as possible. The plan acknowledges that an improvement in air quality and a reduction in emissions is important and aims to position the UK at the forefront of vehicle innovation by making motoring cleaner.
- Local authorities are required to monitor air quality across the district, report regularly to Defra and act where nationally set levels and limits of pollutants are likely to be exceeded under Section 82 of the Environment Act (1995). Monitoring is undertaken to assess levels of nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene, and particulates. Where exceedances exist, areas are declared as air quality management areas (AQMAs) and local authorities are required to produce an air quality action plan (AQAP) to improve air quality in the area. Under Schedule 11 in the Environment Act (2021), a local authority must identify any parts of its area in which it appears air quality standards or objectives are not likely to be achieved within the relevant period. Additionally, local authorities must also identify relevant sources of emissions that are considered partly or wholly responsible for failing to achieve air quality standards or objectives in the area. As such, the Winchester City Council 2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) is the last available report covering the neighbourhood area; fulfilling the requirements of the local air quality management (LAQM) as set out in Section 82 of the Environment Act (1995).
- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

2.4 According to the Winchester City Council 2022 ASR and the DEFRA UK Air AQMAs interactive map⁹, there are no AQMAs within the New Alresford

⁹ DEFRA (2020) 'UK AIR Air Information Resource – AQMAs – AQMAs interactive map' can be accessed [here](#).

neighbourhood area. The nearest AQMA is 'Winchester City' located approximately 15km south-west.

- 2.5 Air quality monitoring in the district is undertaken for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂); the main source for this is local traffic emissions, which has an annual national objective of not exceeding 40 ug/m³. 'Winchester City' AQMA did not exceed this threshold in 2022. NO₂ pollution is monitored in New Alresford, with a diffusion tube located on the roadside on the junction between West Street and Broad Street. This monitoring site has reported reducing levels of NO₂ since 2017, with a large drop in 2020 – this could be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Future baseline

- 2.6 Future development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to increase traffic and associated emissions. In the absence of suitable planning and mitigation, this could lead to a deterioration in air quality. Therefore, mitigation measures should be incorporated into the design of new development areas to maintain (and where possible, improve) air quality. However, in light of the baseline presented above, exceedances in annual pollutant thresholds (particularly within any designated areas of air quality concern (i.e., AQMAs)) is unlikely through the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.7 It is considered that the present shift towards the use of sustainable transportation, including active travel modes and electric vehicle use, has the potential to support longer term air quality improvements. Furthermore, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a shift towards home working, which also contributes to emissions reduction. Providing the infrastructure to support these trends as part of new development in the neighbourhood area will have a positive impact on air quality.

Key issues

- 2.8 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to air quality:
- According to data from 2022, there are no AQMAs in the neighbourhood area – the nearest is 'Winchester City' AQMA, approx. 15km south-west.
 - Designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area are potentially sensitive to air pollution issues. The effects of the NANP in relation to these concerns will be explored in the 'Biodiversity and geodiversity' SEA theme in Chapter 3.
 - The NANP could present opportunities to improve accessibility and support more local and sustainable journeys / connections. These opportunities will be explored in the 'Community wellbeing' and 'Transportation' SEA themes in Chapter 5 and Chapter 9 respectively.
 - The effects of traffic and congestion will be explored in the 'Climate change and flood risk' SEA theme in Chapter 4 and the 'Transportation' SEA theme in Chapter 9.
- 2.9 Due to the absence of any significant air quality issues raised in relation to the NANP, **the air quality theme has been scoped out for the purposes of the SEA process.**

3. Biodiversity and geodiversity

Focus of theme

- 3.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the biodiversity and geodiversity SEA theme. The theme focuses on nature conservation designations, geological sites, and habitats and species in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

- 3.2 **Table 3.1** below present the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 3.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the biodiversity and geodiversity SEA theme.

Document title	Year of publication
Environment Act 2021	2021
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework	2012
The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper)	2011
Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services	2011
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act	2006
UK Biodiversity Action Plan	1994
Winchester City Council Biodiversity Action Plan	2021
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
The Green Infrastructure Study	2010
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	

- 3.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:
- The Environment Act makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England, in addition to creating biodiversity gain site registers and biodiversity credits. It recognises there is a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and encourages the identification of suitable areas through biodiversity reports and local nature recovery strategies. Furthermore, habitat maps are expected to include recovery and enhancement areas which are currently, or could become, important for biodiversity.
 - The NANP will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, which indicate that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance soils and sites of biodiversity and / or geological value. Plans should also

identify, map, and safeguard components of wider ecological networks, promote positive action for priority habitats and species, and pursue opportunities to secure biodiversity net gains. The NPPF also states that if development causes substantial harm and cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or compensated, then planning permission should be refused.

- The NPPF also supports the establishment and enhancement of habitat networks and green infrastructure to allow for more resilience to current and future pressures for biodiversity.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan places importance on improvements to the natural environment, such as achieving clean air and water, reducing environmental hazard risk, and encouraging sustainable resource use. This will be accomplished through a variety of actions including implementing sustainable land management, engaging in nature recovery, and connecting people to the environment.
- The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a response to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which calls for the development and enforcement of national strategies and associated action plans to identify, conserve and protect existing biological diversity, and to enhance it wherever possible. In particular, the BAP identifies priority species and habitats that are most threatened and require conservation action. The UK BAP is succeeded by the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework, which aims to ensure that biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored, and wisely used, and ecosystem services are maintained. This helps to sustain a healthy planet that delivers essential benefits for everyone.
- The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) sets out the importance of a healthy, functioning natural environment to sustaining economic growth, prospering communities, and personal wellbeing. It adopts a landscape approach to protect and enhance biodiversity and aims to create a green economy, whereby the economic growth and the health of natural resources sustain each other.
- Reflecting the commitments within the NEWP, Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services aims to stop overall biodiversity loss, support healthy and well-functioning ecosystems, and establish coherent ecological networks.
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act details nature protection in the UK, which includes wildlife, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and National Parks. It extends the UK Government's duty to biodiversity and establishes the role of Natural England, which is responsible for safeguarding England's natural environment, making sure it is protected and improved whilst ensuring people enjoy, understand, and access it.
- The Winchester City Council Biodiversity Action Plan sets the strategic direction for how Winchester City Council will respond to the need to protect, enhance and restore key biodiversity across the district. It focuses mainly on the Council's own operations and actions that can be delivered within its work programmes, as there is a clear need for immediate action. Some of the aims of the Biodiversity Action Plan include monitoring biodiversity decline and the effectiveness of work undertaken to combat

this, identify opportunities to work in a partnership to achieve maximum benefits, and provide clear evidence, support and input for key policy documents.

- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy CP13: High Quality Design;
 - Policy CP15: Green Infrastructure; and
 - Policy CP16: Biodiversity.
- The Green Infrastructure Study identifies and analyses key green infrastructure features in order to create a clear and deliverable strategy for retaining, enhancing and enlarging green infrastructure assets in the district up to 2026. This green infrastructure can support and enhance natural biodiversity in the district, and Winchester City Council includes landscape and water, designated sites (on international, national and local level), formal greenspace, specific features, destinations and the public rights of way (PRoW) network as infrastructure examples.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Internationally designated sites

3.4 The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (known as the Ramsar Convention) is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and appropriate use of wetlands and their resources¹⁰. In the UK, many Ramsar sites were also designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)¹¹. To ensure European Directives were operable in the UK after the EU transition period, changes were made through the implementation of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019¹². In doing so, SPAs and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) form a national site network within the UK¹³, comprising of sites already designated under the Nature Directives (i.e., 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC) and any additional sites designated under the 2019 Regulations.

3.5 Within the neighbourhood area to the north and west, and within proximity to it, is the River Itchen SAC – **Figure 3.1** at the end of this chapter details its precise location. The River Itchen SAC designated spans 303.98ha, and is characterised by¹⁴:

- Inland water bodies, including standing and running water.

¹⁰ Ramsar Convention (2014) 'Introducing the Convention on Wetlands' can be accessed [here](#).

¹¹ EU (1979) 'The European Birds Directive (79/209/EEC)' can be accessed [here](#).

¹² UK Government (2019) 'The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019' can be accessed [here](#).

¹³ Defra (2021) 'Policy Paper: Changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁴ JNCC (no date) 'River Itchen' can be accessed [here](#).

- Bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation and fens.
 - Humid grassland and mesophile grassland.
 - Improved grassland.
 - Broad-leaved deciduous woodland.
 - Mixed woodland; and
 - Non-forest area cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards and dehesas).
- 3.6 According to the Natura 2000 Standard Form for this site¹⁵, threats to the designation include grazing, pollution to groundwater and human induced changes in hydraulic conditions; but positive impacts include grazing, modification of cultivation practices and forest and plantation management and use.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 3.7 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are protected to conserve their wildlife and / or geological value. Within the neighbourhood area there is one SSSI, and within 1 km of the parish boundary there is a further SSSI. The location of these designations is shown in **Figure 3.1** at the end of this chapter. Further information on each is provided below:
- The River Itchen SSSI is located within the neighbourhood area to the west and on the northern neighbourhood boundary. It is designated for its chalk stream and river and a variety of habitats that support rare plant and animal species¹⁶. According to the latest condition survey¹⁷, 5.51% of the designation is in 'unfavourable – declining' condition, 27.99% is in 'unfavourable – no change' condition, 55.42% is in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition and the remaining 10.69% is within 'favourable' condition.
 - The Alresford Pond SSSI is on the northern neighbourhood boundary. It is designated for its form – a large, shallow calcareous lake, that is bordered by extensive fen vegetation and supports a rich aquatic plant community¹⁸. According to the latest condition survey¹⁹, 100% of the designation is in 'unfavourable – declining' condition.
- 3.8 SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.
- 3.9 Local authorities have a duty to consult Natural England before granting planning permission on any development that is in or likely to affect a SSSI. In this respect IRZs can be used to consider whether a proposed development is likely to affect a SSSI and determine whether they will need to consult Natural

¹⁵ JNCC (2015) 'Natura 2000 – Standard Data Form: River Itchen' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁶ Natural England (2001) 'River Itchen – 2000227 SSSI Citation' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁷ Natural England (2023) 'Site: River Itchen – 2000227 SSSI Condition Summary' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁸ Natural England (no date) 'Alresford Pond SSSI Citation' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁹ Natural England (2023) 'Site: Alresford Pond SSSI Condition Summary' can be accessed [here](#).

England to seek advice on the nature of any potential SSSI impacts and how they might be avoided or mitigated.

- 3.10 In this respect, the neighbourhood area overlaps with IRZs for the types of development likely to come forward, especially for residential development (“residential development of 50 units or more”) and potentially rural non-residential (“large non-residential developments outside existing settlements/urban areas where net additional gross internal floorspace is >1,000m² or footprint exceeds 0.2ha). Consultation with Natural England is therefore likely to be required for any application within these thresholds.

Priority habitats and species

- 3.11 There are a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority habitats within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area. This includes coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland calcareous grassland, purple moor grass and rush pasture, lowland fens, deciduous woodland, traditional orchards and woodpasture and parkland. The location of the habitats is shown in **Figure 3.2** at the end of this chapter.
- 3.12 In terms of the national habitat network, much of the neighbourhood area is covered by Network Enhancement Zone 2²⁰, which is considered to be most suitable zone type for new habitats and green infrastructure creation. The area to the east of Sun Lane is considered to be a Network Expansion Zone²¹; as such it is identified as a suitable location for connecting and linking up habitats across a landscape with new habitat creation.
- 3.13 The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC)²² contains archives of protected and notable species within the neighbourhood area, including those species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981²³ and under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. The BAP Priority Habitats and ecological designations within and surrounding the neighbourhood area are likely to support populations of protected species.

Future baseline

- 3.14 Habitats and species will potentially face increasing pressures from future development within the neighbourhood area, with the potential for negative impacts on the wider ecological network. This may include a loss of habitats and impacts on biodiversity networks, which may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change. This has the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition of habitats.
- 3.15 Future development has the potential to impact upon internationally and nationally designated sites within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. The NANP presents the opportunity to encourage initiatives to improve the condition of ecological assets and enhance ecological corridors / green infrastructure to the benefit of the wider biodiversity network.
- 3.16 The NANP presents an opportunity to maximise benefits for biodiversity by including consideration of important habitats, species, and designated sites at

²⁰ Natural England (2020) ‘National Habitat Network Maps’ can be accessed [here](#).

²¹ Ibid.

²² Hampshire County Council (no date) ‘HBIC – Information we hold’ can be accessed [here](#).

²³ UK Government (1981) ‘The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981’ can be accessed [here](#).

an early stage of planning for future growth. To maintain and improve the condition of biodiversity in the future, it will be important to not only protect and enhance important habitats, but also the connections between them. It will be crucial to effectively coordinate the delivery of new development to ensure that opportunities to improve green infrastructure and ecological corridors are maximised within the neighbourhood area.

- 3.17 In January 2022 a consultation on biodiversity net gain regulations and implementation was launched. As a result, mandatory biodiversity net gain is being made a development requirement as of November 2023 – and the UK Government is providing funds for local planning authorities so they can prepare for this shift²⁴. This will further ensure biodiversity and geodiversity are considered through the neighbourhood plan, and enhancements are incorporated into development proposals through sensitive design.

Key issues

- 3.18 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity:

- The River Itchen SAC falls partially within the neighbourhood area.
- Nationally designated sites within and within proximity to the neighbourhood area include the River Itchen SSSI and the Alresford Pond SSSI. The neighbourhood area is subject to SSSI IRZs for the types of development likely to be brought forward through the NANP.
- There are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats within the neighbourhood area, as well as areas of Network Enhancement Zone 2 and Network Expansion Zone. These areas would be suitable for the introduction of green space and habitat linkages to maximise benefits for local biodiversity.

Proposed SEA objective

- 3.19 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

- 3.20 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Avoid or, if not possible, minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, including internationally and nationally designated sites, following the mitigation hierarchy?
- Achieve biodiversity net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure services?
- Support the integrity of the designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity located within proximity to the neighbourhood area?

²⁴ GOV.UK (2023) 'Consultation on Biodiversity Net Gain regulations and implementation' can be accessed [here](#).

- Protect and enhance priority habitats, semi-natural habitats, species, and the ecological network connecting them?
- Support the national habitat network, particularly Network Enhancement Zone 2, Network Expansion Zone, and identified restorable habitat?
- Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
- Support and promote access to and interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?

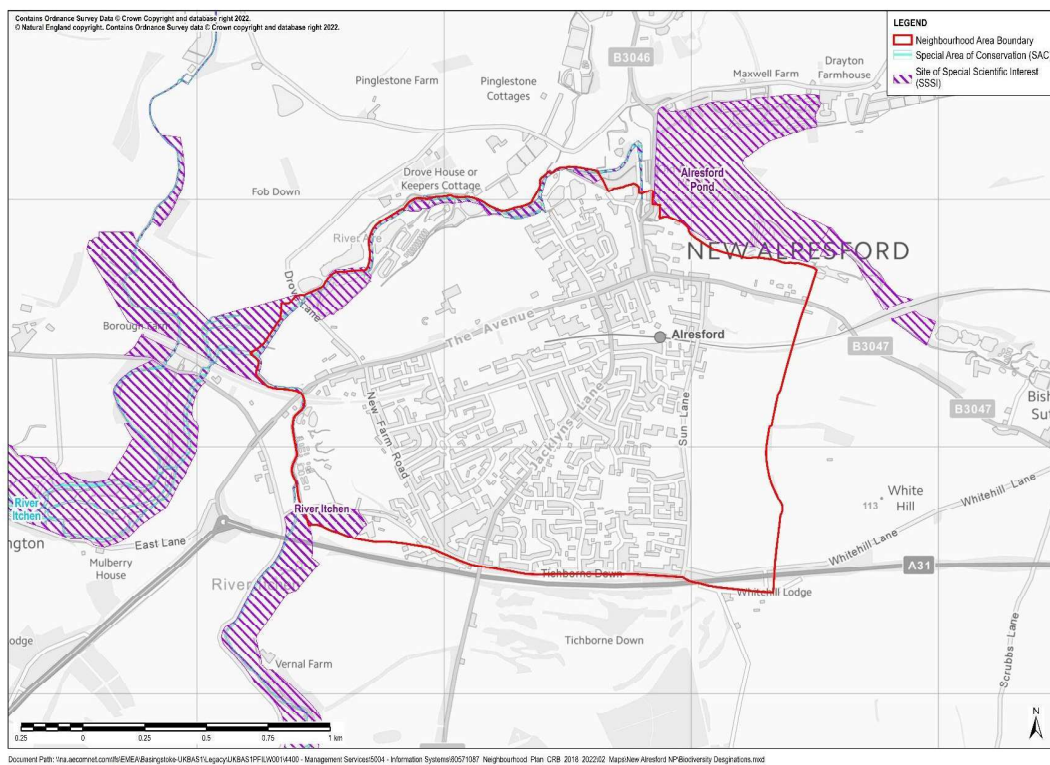


Figure 3.1: Biodiversity and geodiversity designations in the New Alresford neighbourhood area

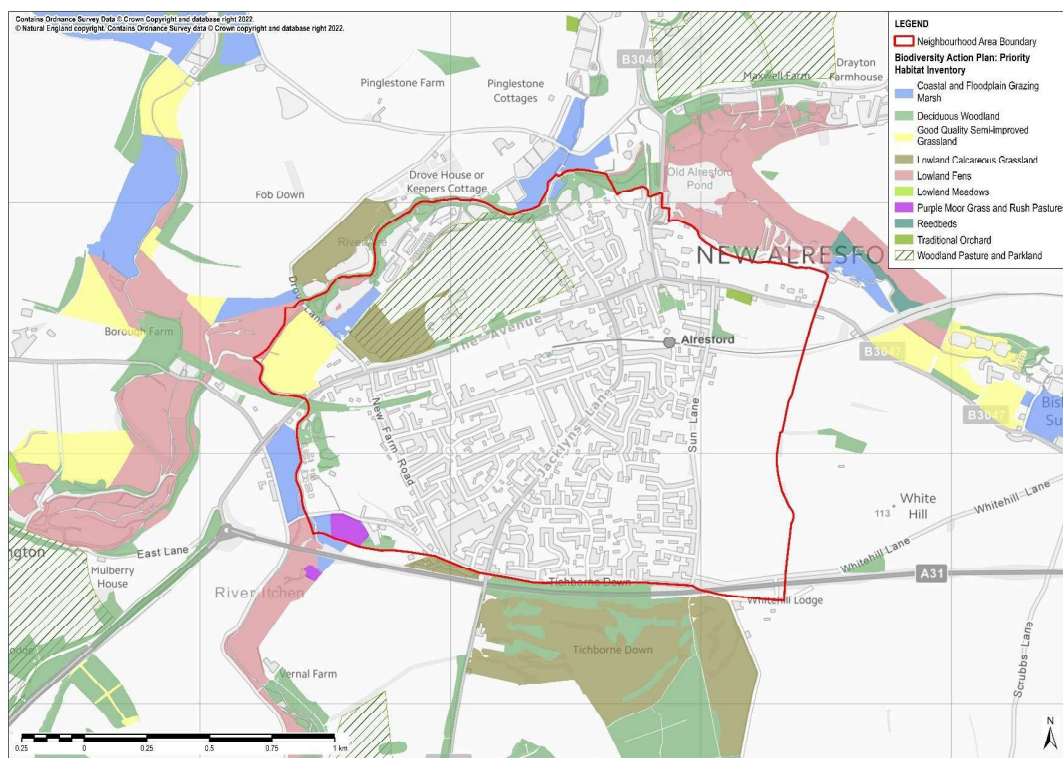


Figure 3.2: BAP Priority Habitats within in the New Alresford neighbourhood area

4. Climate change and flood risk

Focus of theme

- 4.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the climate change SEA theme. The theme focuses on contributions to climate change, the effects of climate change, climate change adaptation, and flood risk in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

- 4.2 **Table 4.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 4.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the climate change SEA theme

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener	2021
National Infrastructure Assessment	2021
The UK Sixth Carbon Budget	2020
The Clean Air Strategy 2019	2019
The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting	2018
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
The Clean Growth Strategy	2017
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017	2017
Flood and Water Management Act 2010	2010
Climate Change Act 2008	2008
Winchester City Council - Carbon Neutrality Action Plan	2019
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	

- 4.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:
- The NANP will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, including adopting a proactive planning approach to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies are expected to improve the resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, avoid inappropriate development in the flood plain zone, and support the move to a low carbon economy. The NPPF recognises the potential for planning to shape places to better contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and deliver long-term resilience.

- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy and the Net Zero Strategy are a collection of documents seeking to progress the government's commitment to becoming net zero by 2050 under the UK Climate Change Act 2008. The documents outline how the government will tackle air pollution sources whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25 Year Environment Plan, which seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment. Of note in the 25 Year Environment Plan are the following: 'Chapter 1: Using and managing land sustainably', 'Chapter 6: Protecting and improving the global environment', 'Goal 4: A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought' and 'Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change'.
- The National Infrastructure Assessment is published every five years and analyses the UK's long-term economic infrastructure needs to create a strategic vision and recommendations. The baseline report states that climate change will increase pressures on all sectors, including economic infrastructure.
- The National Adaptation Programme outlines the government's response to the second Climate Change Risk Assessment, demonstrating the actions the government is currently taking and actions it will be taking in the future. It outlines risks that fit within the priority areas identified by the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017:
 - Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses, and infrastructure.
 - Risks to health, well-being, and productivity from high temperatures.
 - Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation, and industry.
 - Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils, and biodiversity.
 - Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
 - New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants, and animals.
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 provides for better and more comprehensive management of flood risk for people, homes, and businesses, in addition to aiding in safeguarding community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges and protecting consumer water supplies. It also highlights alternatives to traditional engineering to flood risk management.
- The UK Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a framework to develop an economically viable emissions reduction path. The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order of 2019 put in place the legally binding target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Act includes the following:
 - The UK Government must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum of 100% of 1990 levels by 2050.

- The document requires the government to produce legally binding carbon budgets – a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period.
- The Act requires the government to assess and prepare for the risks and opportunities linked to climate change for the UK.
- The Sixth Carbon Budget is the legal limit of UK net greenhouse gas emissions and requires the country to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 relative to 1990 levels. This puts the country on track to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest.
- The Winchester City Council Carbon Neutrality Action Plan outlines a strategy to achieve carbon reduction targets. This includes interventions like electric vehicle charging provision, adoption of renewable energy schemes and improving energy efficiency.
- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles;
 - Policy CP13: High Quality Design;
 - Policy CP15: Green Infrastructure;
 - Policy CP16: Biodiversity; and
 - Policy CP17: Flooding, Flood Risk and the Water Environment.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Contribution to climate change

- 4.4 Winchester City Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019²⁵, committing to publishing a carbon reduction strategy. This strategy²⁶ sets the council the target of reducing carbon emissions from its own activities in order to reach carbon neutrality by 2030.
- 4.5 The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order of 2019 requires carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from the built environment to be monitored and recorded at the local authority level. The CO₂ emissions shown in **Figures 4.1** and **Figure 4.2** overleaf are derived from data supplied by the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy²⁷.
- 4.6 As demonstrated in **Figure 4.1**, the largest contributing sector with regards to CO₂ emissions in Hampshire was the industry and commercial sector until 2010 – when transport became the largest contributor. The transport sector

²⁵ Winchester City Council (2023) 'Carbon Neutrality Action Plan' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2020) 'UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2008' can be accessed [here](#). The data tables used to generate Figures 4.1 and 4.2 can be downloaded from this page.

continues to contribute the highest levels of CO₂ across the three sectors in the region, though it has been decreasing since 2017.

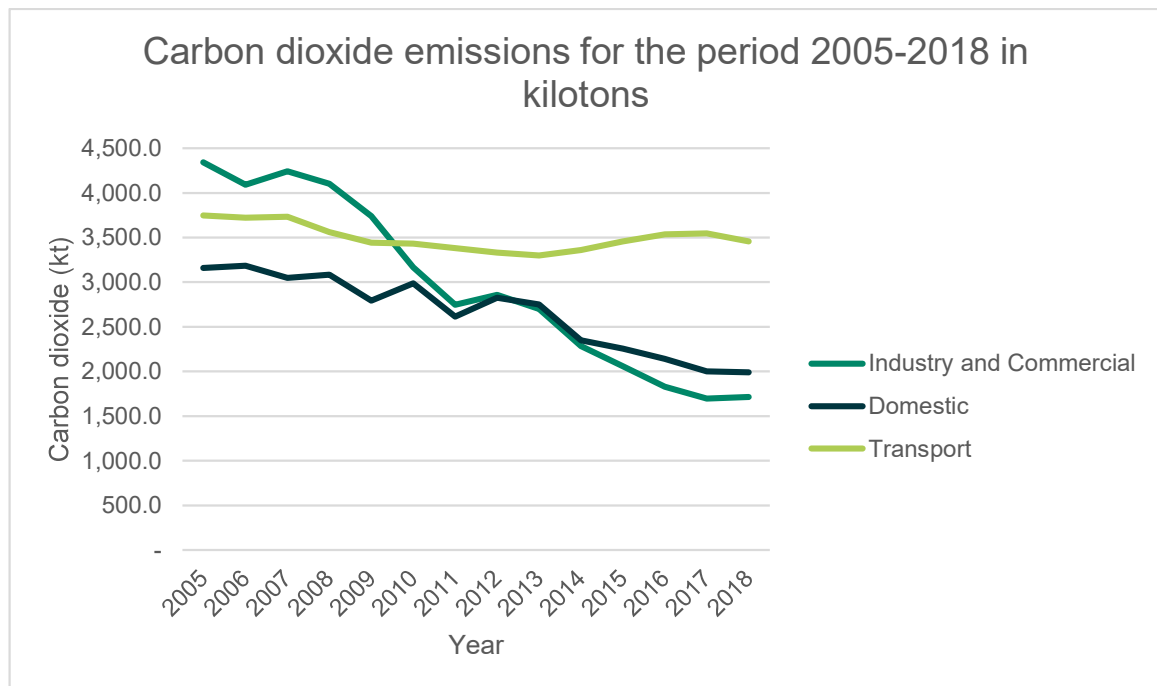


Figure 4.1: CO₂ emissions in kilotons per year for each sector in Hampshire (2005-2018)

- 4.7 The introduction and uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) will contribute positively towards the reduction of road transport related emissions. In line with assumptions made by the Department for Transport’s ‘Road to Zero’ report (2018)²⁸, it is assumed that ULEV uptake will increase rapidly in the coming decade. Therefore, all vehicles could be ultra-low emission (powered either by hydrogen or electricity) by 2030, thus the CO₂ emissions from the transport sector have the potential to decrease.
- 4.8 **Figure 4.2** overleaf indicates CO₂ emissions per capita have been generally higher than the average for England during 2005-2018, and have been higher than the average for the whole of Hampshire and the South East region. The Winchester area has experienced a decrease in emissions over the examined period of 3.9 tons per capita. This is the largest decrease – the average for the whole of Hampshire has decreased by 3.8 tons per capita, the South East region by 3.3 tons per capita and England by 3.5 tons per capita.

²⁸ Department for Transport (2018) ‘The Road to Zero’ can be accessed [here](#).

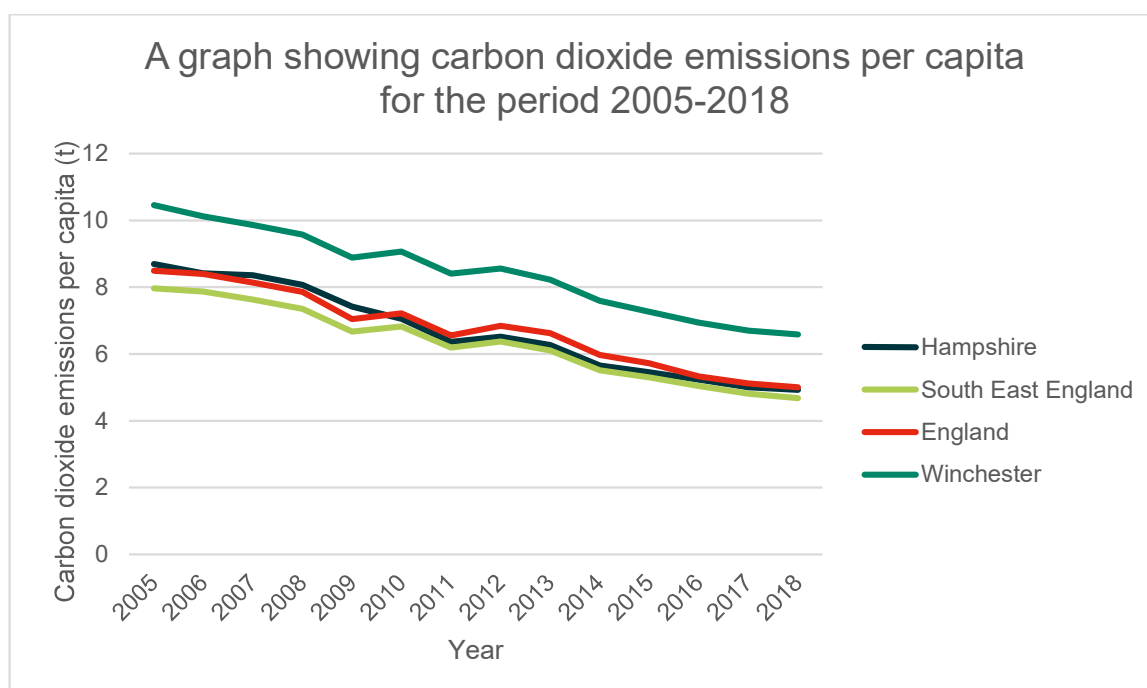


Figure 4.2: CO₂ emissions per capita (in tons) for Winchester, Hampshire, the South East region and England (2005-2018)

Potential effects of climate change

4.9 The UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) programme is a climate analysis tool that provides the most up-to-date assessment on potential future climatic changes in the UK based on climate model simulations²⁹. Projections can be downscaled to a regional level across the UK, allowing for specific evaluations of a selected area. The UKCP18 projections conclude the effects of climate change under a high emissions ‘worst case’ scenario known as the ‘business as usual’ scenario RCP8.5³⁰. The UKCP18 projection conclusions for the South East are shown in the figures overleaf.

²⁹ Met Office (no date) ‘UK Climate Projections (UKCP)’ can be accessed [here](#).

³⁰ The RCP8.5 emissions scenario assumes there is fast population growth, low technical development rate, slow GDP growth, a massive increase in world poverty and high energy use and emissions. It also assumes no climate change mitigation or adaptation techniques are engaged with.

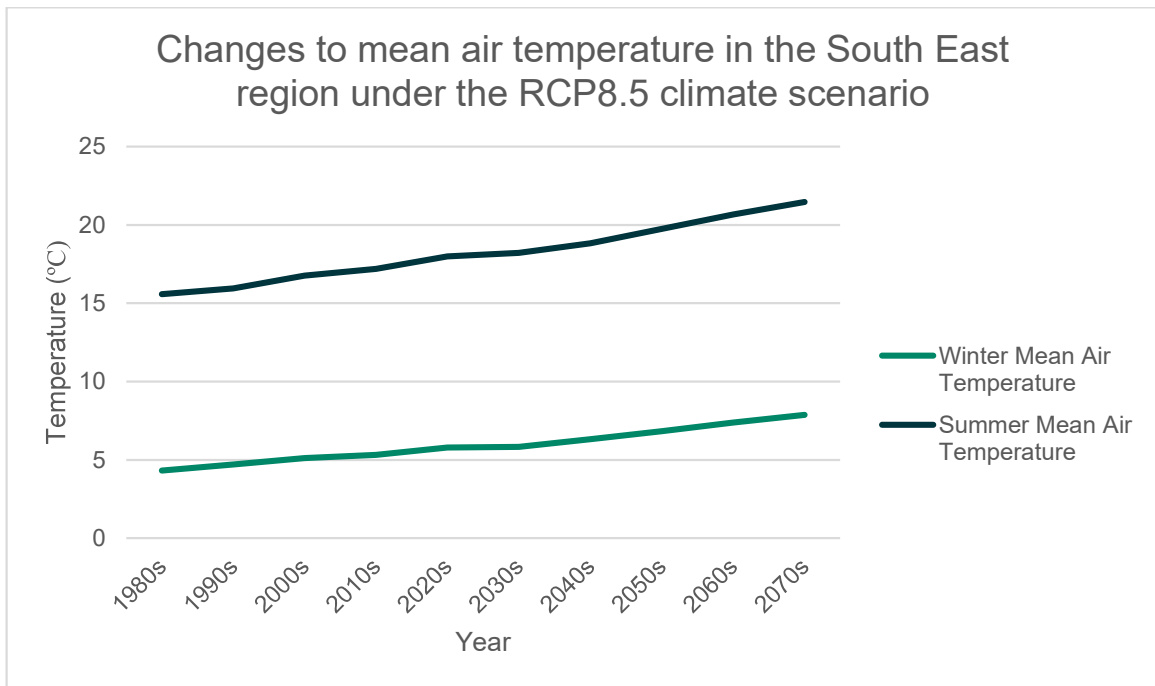


Figure 4.3: UKCP18 projections for mean air temperature in the South East region

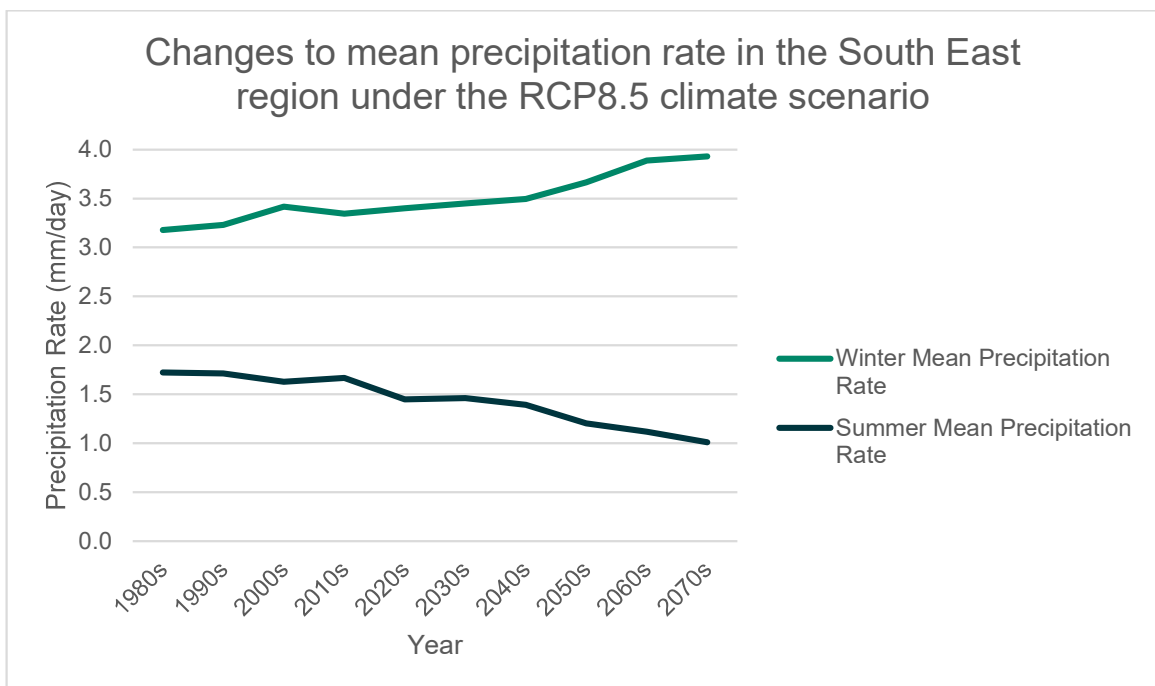


Figure 4.4: UKCP18 projections for mean precipitation rate in the South East region

4.10 The UKCP18 projections indicate there will be an approximate 3.12°C increase in mean winter air temperature between 1981-2080 and a 5.34°C in mean summer air temperature for the same period. It also predicts a 0.72mm / day increase in mean winter precipitation rate and a 0.66 mm / day decrease in mean summer precipitation rate. If these changes occur, the neighbourhood area may face a range of risks, including:

- Increases in cases of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer period as well as illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight.

- An increase in the risk of injuries and deaths caused by storm events, due to both the increase in quantity and magnitude.
- Changes to water resources, in terms of quality and quantity.
- An increased risk of flooding, including changes in vulnerability to 1 in 100-year floods, and a need to upgrade flood defences.
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding.
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their distribution, particularly their southern edge, and a spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution.
- Increased drought events, both in quantity and magnitude; and
- Heat related impacts to local infrastructure, e.g., road surfaces melting.

Flood risk

4.11 **Figure 4.5**³¹ below indicates the areas within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 within the neighbourhood area, with Flood Zone 1 being at low risk of fluvial flooding and Flood Zone 3 being at high risk of fluvial flooding. According to this figure, most of the New Alresford settlement is within Flood Zone 1 and removed from areas at risk of flooding – except for the northernmost extent. Flood Zones 2 and 3 follow the course of the waterbody to the north and west of the neighbourhood area.



Figure 4.5: Fluvial flood risks within the neighbourhood area

4.12 **Figure 4.6**³² overleaf demonstrates which areas are at risk of surface water flooding. It shows that the majority of the neighbourhood area is at very low risk of surface water flooding, with areas at higher risk following the water course in the north and west. Additionally, the A31, sections of the B3047, and the B3046 are also at risk or surface water flooding, as well as the centre of

³¹ GOV.UK (2021) 'Get flood risk information for planning in England' can be accessed [here](#).

³² GOV.UK (2019) 'Learn more about flood risk' can be accessed [here](#).

New Alresford by the train station, The Dean Road, New Farm Road and residential streets to the south of the town.

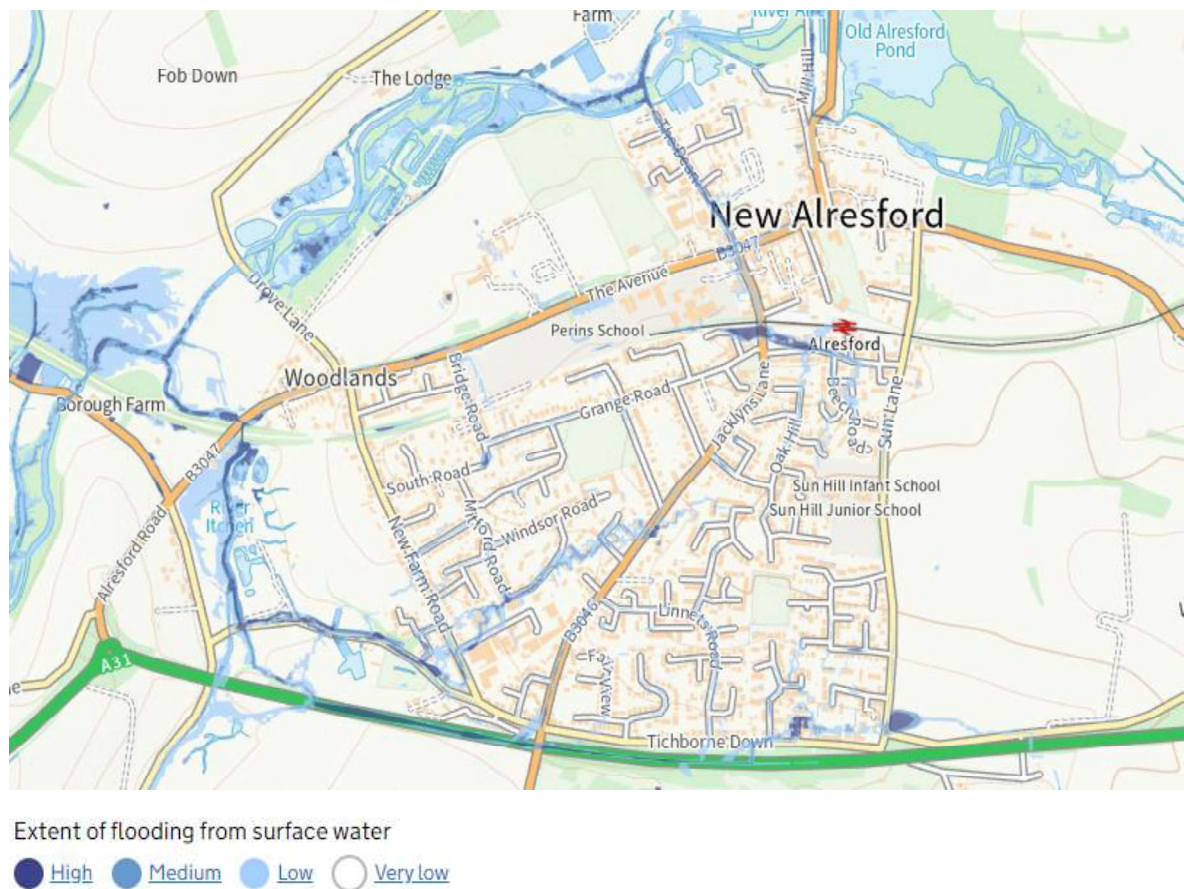


Figure 4.6: Surface water flood risk within the neighbourhood area

Future baseline

- 4.13 Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the neighbourhood area. In turn it is likely the neighbourhood area will experience an increased level of risk associated with climate change and a subsequent increase in need for resilience and adaptation measures.
- 4.14 New development has the potential to increase flood risk through changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks, and / or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk. This could lead to more of the neighbourhood area becoming at risk of surface water flooding.
- 4.15 In terms of climate change contribution, greenhouse gas emissions generated in the neighbourhood area may continue to decrease with the wider adoption of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production, and new technologies. However, increases in the built footprint of the neighbourhood area would likely contribute to increases in the absolute levels of greenhouse gas emissions, and these increases are considered likely with or without the NANP.

Key issues

4.16 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to climate change and flood risk:

- Winchester City Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019.
- The transport sector is the highest contributor to carbon dioxide emissions in the district. The NANP could guide development towards the most accessible locations in the neighbourhood area, and support local infrastructure improvements (including walking and cycling infrastructure) where appropriate to encourage active and sustainable travel.
- Opportunities to influence per capita emissions could be sought through the NANP process, particularly by planning for integrated and connected development, which reduces the need to travel and supports opportunities to travel by more sustainable modes.
- Whilst the majority of the neighbourhood area is within Flood Zone 1 and at a low risk of fluvial flooding, the land to the north and west within the neighbourhood area is within Flood Zone 2 and 3 due to the presence of a river. As such, this area is at greater risk of fluvial flooding. Additionally, parts of the neighbourhood area are at varying risk of surface level flooding – these areas are located in proximity to the river, on the road network and within the southern part of New Alresford. It is possible that surface water run-off from development could exacerbate the risk of flooding by increasing the run-off from land to these drains and watercourses.
- Opportunities to enhance the resilience of the both the neighbourhood area and its residents, to the effects of climate change, should be sought. This can include adaptation strategies, green infrastructure enhancement, flood betterment measures, infrastructure development, and increased renewable energy sources.

Proposed SEA objective

4.17 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Climate change	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.

4.18 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Reduce the number of journeys made by private vehicle and reduce the need to travel?
- Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and EV infrastructure?
- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?

- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
- Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change?
- Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area?
- Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing run-off where possible?
- Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?

5. Community wellbeing

Focus of theme

- 5.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the community wellbeing SEA theme. The theme focuses on population and age structure, deprivation levels, housing mix and affordability, community assets and infrastructure, and influences on health and wellbeing for residents in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

- 5.2 **Table 5.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 5.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the community wellbeing SEA theme

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On	2020
Healthy and Safe Communities Planning practice guidance	2019
Planning for Sport Guidance	2019
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
Winchester City Council - Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024	2020
Winchester City Council - Playing Pitch Strategy	2018
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	
Winchester City Council - Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study	2008

- 5.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:
- The NANP will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which seek to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities. The NPPF recognises the benefits of having a range of local provision to support community needs. In addition, the NPPF recognises the benefits of creating cohesive communities in safe environments where the fear of crime (and crime itself) does not undermine resident quality of life.
 - The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, therefore contributing to the health and wellbeing of communities. The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure are further reiterated in the 25 Year Environment Plan. Additional guidance is available through the Healthy and Safe Communities Planning practice guidance.

- The 2020 Health Equity in England Report identifies a health gap between less and more deprived areas, which has grown in the last decade. This means an increased amount of people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health with a stalled, or even declining, life expectancy.
- The Planning for Sport Guidance seeks to help the planning system provide formal and informal opportunities for everyone to take part in sport and be physically active, setting out twelve principles.
- The Winchester City Council Homelessness Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy and Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study set out how the council will support communities, through outlining current priorities, implementing best practise and developing an evidence base that can be taken forward to help shape the future.
- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles;
 - Policy CP1: Housing Provision;
 - Policy CP2: Housing Provision and Mix;
 - Policy CP3: Affordable Housing Provision on Market Led Housing Sites;
 - Policy CP4: Affordable Housing on Exception Sites to Meet Local Needs;
 - Policy CP5: Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
 - Policy CP6: Local Services and Facilities;
 - Policy CP7: Open Space, Sport and Recreation; and
 - Policy CP21: Infrastructure and Community Benefit.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Population and age structure

5.4 According to census data³³, the neighbourhood area had a total of 5,339 residents in 2021. This is a 1.7% decrease from 2011, where the area had 5,431 residents. A declining population has the potential to impact upon the vitality of the local community, though it is noted the decline experienced is very small.

Index of Multiple Deprivation

5.5 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation and is the combination of seven different domains as described overleaf:

³³ City Population (2022) 'New Alresford' can be accessed [here](#).

- **Income:** the proportion of the population experiencing a deprivation relating to low income. There are a further two subsets of this measure:
 - **Income deprivation affecting children:** the proportion of children aged 0-15 living in income deprived families; and
 - **Income deprivation affecting older people:** the proportion of all adults aged 60 and above that experience income deprivation.
 - **Employment:** the proportion of the working-age population involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those who want to work but cannot.
 - **Education, skills, and training:** the lack of attainment and skills in the population.
 - **Health deprivation and disability:** the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health.
 - **Crime:** the risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
 - **Barriers to housing and services:** the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, split into 'geographical barriers' linked to physical proximity and 'wider barriers' linked to access to housing.
 - **Living environment:** the quality of the local environment, categorised into 'indoors living environment' to measure the quality of housing and 'outdoors living environment' to measure indicators like air quality and road traffic accidents.
- 5.6 Lower super output areas (LSOAs)³⁴ are designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardised geographies intended to be as consistent as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. In relation to the IMD 2019, LSOAs are ranked out of the 32,844 in England and Wales, with 1 being the most deprived.
- 5.7 In this respect the neighbourhood area overlaps with five LSOAs. **Table 5.2** overleaf indicates the overall level of deprivation for each LSOA, plus the worst three domains for each LSOA. It shows that the neighbourhood area experiences a varying level of overall deprivation. Generally speaking, the southern and western parts of the neighbourhood area are more deprived in terms of barriers to housing and services – especially around New Farm Road, Spring gardens, Jacklyns Lane and Tichborne Down. This area also extends northwards along Drove Lane. The area around New Farm Road, Spring Gardens and Drove Lane is also more deprived in terms of the living environment.

³⁴ The Indices of Deprivation Explorer can be accessed [here](#).

Table 5.2: IMD rankings for the LSOAs overlapping with the New Alresford neighbourhood area

LSOA	IMD	Worst deprivation domain	Second worst deprivation domain	Third worst deprivation domain
Winchester 004A	19,734 (amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Barriers to Housing and Services (1,173 – amongst 10% most deprived neighbourhoods)	Living Environment (2,192 – amongst 10% most deprived neighbourhoods)	Crime (21,179 – amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Winchester 004B	30,703 (amongst 10% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Income Deprivation Affecting Children (23,752 – amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Employment (24,222 – amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Barriers to Housing and Services (24,299 – amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Winchester 004C	32,092 (amongst 10% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Barriers to Housing and Services (11,889 – amongst 40% most deprived neighbourhood areas)	Income Deprivation Affecting Children (26,204 – amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Income (30,692 – amongst 10% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Winchester 004D	24,586 (amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Barriers to Housing and Services (4,427 – amongst 20% most deprived neighbourhoods)	Living Environment (12,984 – amongst 40% most deprived neighbourhoods)	Education, Skills and Training (24,186 – amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Winchester 004E	27,452 (amongst 20% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Education, Skills and Training (19,936 – amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Income Deprivation Affecting Older People (20,121 – amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)	Income (20,539 – amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)

Housing tenure

5.8 As reported by Zoopla³⁵, the average house price in Hampshire is £412,954 – with flats selling for an average of £199,459, terraced houses selling for an average of £315,598, semi-detached houses selling for an average of £402,467 and detached houses selling for an average of £683,691. According to another source³⁶, the average house price in New Alresford is £595,308. This suggests

³⁵ Zoopla (2023) 'House prices in Hampshire' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁶ Home.co.uk (2023) 'Current House Prices in New Alresford' can be accessed [here](#).

the neighbourhood area has higher than average house prices in comparison to the regional trends.

- 5.9 The Housing Needs Assessment for New Alresford indicates a full range of housing types and sizes are needed in New Alresford over the plan period, and that the provision of smaller properties may help to achieve affordability improvements alongside the provision of affordable housing. It also highlights a potential need for larger, family sized housing accommodation to be brought forward as affordable housing.

Community assets and infrastructure

5.10 An overview of the services and facilities within the neighbourhood area is provided below³⁷:

- Four recreation grounds (Arlebury Park, Stratton Bates Recreation Ground, Sunhill Recreation Ground and Memorial Gardens) with a variety of features including playgrounds, playing pitches, cafes / bars and a pavilion;
- A number of cafes / restaurants, including Pulpo Negro and The Globe;
- Sun Hill Infant School and Sun Hill Junior School;
- A caravan park;
- A doctors surgery and a dental surgery;
- A number of small businesses, like Roxtons, Moda Rose and the Alresford Gift Shop;
- The Co-operative store;
- Watercress Meadows nature reserve;
- Churches, including Alresford Methodist Church and St Gregory the Great Roman Catholic Church; and
- A number of hotels and B & Bs.

Green infrastructure networks

5.11 Access to gardens, parks, woodlands, and rivers have played a huge part in helping people through the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost nine in ten adults surveyed by Natural England reported that being in nature makes them feel happy, and nearly three quarters of adults were concerned about biodiversity loss in England³⁸.

5.12 Within the neighbourhood area, green spaces include (but are not limited to):

- Arlebury Park, including Alresford Playpark;
- New Alresford Memorial Park;
- Stratton Bates Recreation Ground;
- Sunhill Recreation Ground;
- Alresford Bowling Club; and

³⁷ The review of the services, facilities and amenities was conducted via a high-level Google maps search and making a note of the different features.

³⁸ Natural England (2020) People and Nature survey can be accessed [here](#).

- Ashburton Close Playground.

Future baseline

- 5.13 As the population of the neighbourhood area increases, it is likely there will be an increase in pressure on existing services within the neighbourhood area and outside of it. This highlights the need to support the retention of existing facilities in the area, including open green space, which has been increasingly used and valued through the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors are more likely to be appropriately considered and addressed through planned development rather than unplanned development.
- 5.14 The suitability and affordability of housing for local requirements depends on the implementation of appropriate housing policies throughout the neighbourhood area. Unplanned development may have wider implications in terms of transport and access to infrastructure, or the natural environment.
- 5.15 The COVID-19 pandemic has also changed the way people work and shop. For many people, working from home and 'flexible' working has become the norm. The potential impacts associated with increased levels of home working is also considered within the 'Transportation' SEA theme in **Chapter 9** of this SEA Scoping Report.

Key issues

- 5.16 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to community wellbeing:
- Census data shows there has been a slight decrease in population between 2011 and 2021s. This has the potential to impact upon the vitality of the local community, particularly if the decline were to continue. However, it is recognised that the population decline over the 10-year period was only very small.
 - Based on the 2019 IMD data, the New Alresford neighbourhood area overlaps with five LSOAs. The data indicates that the neighbourhood area experiences varying levels of deprivation, but deprivation linked to barriers to housing and services is generally experienced more in the southern part and western part of the neighbourhood area. The western part of the neighbourhood area is also more deprived in terms of living environment.
 - The existing services, facilities, and amenities within the neighbourhood area support community vitality and the quality of life of residents. Development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to increase the population, which has the potential to impact the capacity of the existing community infrastructure of the neighbourhood area.
 - As the requirements of the working population continue to change, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is likely to be a requirement for adaptable dwellings which can accommodate more flexible working practices.

Proposed SEA objective

5.17 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, reducing deprivation, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.

5.18 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing?
- Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?
- Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?
- Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?
- Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people?
- Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities?
- Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements?
- Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction?
- Minimise fuel poverty?
- Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?

6. Historic environment

Focus of theme

- 6.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the historic environment SEA theme. The theme focuses on designated and non-designated assets, the setting, special qualities, and significance of heritage assets, locally important heritage features, and the historic character of the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

- 6.2 **Table 6.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 6.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the historic environment SEA theme

Document title	Year of publication
Historic England: Heritage and Climate Change	2022
Historic England Advice Note 11 (Second Edition): Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment	2022
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
National Model Design Code	2021
The National Design Guide	2019
Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal Designation and Management	2019
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: The Setting of Heritage Assets	2017
Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	2016
Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans	2015
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	

- 6.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:
- The key principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:
 - The historic environment is a shared resource;
 - Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment;
 - Understanding the significance of places is vital;

- Important places should be managed to sustain their values;
- Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent, and consistent; and
- Documenting and learning from decisions is essential³⁹.
- The significance of a place is the crucial element that supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is the collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, no matter what form the place takes. This means a singular building, an archaeological site, or a larger historic area, such as a whole village or landscape, can be important.
- The NANP will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, which seek to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a way that compliments and works with their significance. The NPPF pursues planning policies and decisions that are understanding to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation and change. The NPPF supports the use of area-based character assessments, design guides and codes, and masterplans to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places.
- The NPPF indicates proposed plans should ensure the design of streets, parking areas and other transport elements reflect current national guidance including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. Design codes can set out a necessary level of detail in sensitive locations. In the case of the historic environment, they can indicate specific ways to maintain local character.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan and the National Design Guide recognise and reiterate the role of the historic environment in supporting healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes, and cultural values. Of note in the 25 Year Environment Plan is ‘Goal 6: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment’.
- Historic England’s Heritage and Climate Change strategy document details the impacts climate change could have on heritage in the future, and highlights the role of heritage in climate action. The vision of the document is to ensure the role of heritage in the global fight to limit climate change and its impact on people and places by 2040 – working to mitigate, manage risk and adapt.
- Historic England’s Advice Notes provide further guidance on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of relevance for the NANP is the emphasis on the importance of:
 - Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest that underpin designations and the consideration of how settings and / or views contribute to the significance of heritage assets.

³⁹ Historic England (2008) ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ can be accessed [here](#).

- Recognising the value of implementing controls through neighbourhood development plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans; and
- Appropriate evidence gathering, including the clear identification of any issues that threaten an area, asset character, or appearance that merit the introduction of management measures.
- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles;
 - Policy CP12: Renewable and Decentralised Energy; and
 - Policy CP20: Heritage and Landscape Character.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

6.4 The location of designated historic environment assets within the neighbourhood area are shown in **Figure 6.1** at the end of this chapter.

Listed buildings

6.5 Listed buildings are nationally designated heritage assets that are protected through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990⁴⁰. According to the National Heritage List for England provided by Historic England⁴¹, there are 130 listed buildings in the New Alresford neighbourhood area: four Grade II* listed buildings and 126 Grade II listed buildings.

Scheduled monuments

6.6 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)⁴² allows for the investigation, presentation, and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest, making provision for the regulation of operations or activities that could affect ancient monuments and archaeological areas. Scheduled monuments are nationally designated sites which are protected under this legislation. According to the National Heritage List for England, there is one scheduled monument in the neighbourhood area – Alresford Bridge (Historic England List Entry Number: [1021111](#)).

Conservation areas

6.7 Conservation areas are designated because of their special architectural and historic interest. Conservation area appraisals are a tool to demonstrate the area's special interest, explaining the reasons for designation and providing a greater understanding and articulation of its character - mentioned within the

⁴⁰ UK Government (1990) 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴¹ Historic England (no date) 'National Heritage List for England – Search the List – Advanced Search' can be accessed [here](#). Select which heritage categories you'd like to view and enter 'New Alresford' into the 'Parish (Civil / Non-civil)' box and press the search button at the bottom of the page.

⁴² UK Government (1979) 'Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act' can be accessed [here](#).

‘Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’ advice note by Historic England.

6.8 The New Alresford Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 and was extended in 1998, and incorporates the three medieval streets and features including Pound Hill to the West, the Great Weir to the north and land to the south of West and East Streets. It is estimated there are around 250 buildings within the conservation area, of which over half are listed as being of historic or architectural interest⁴³. The NANP should seek to understand the special character and significance of this section of the conservation area when considering development proposals.

Registered parks and gardens

6.9 Historic England’s ‘Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England’, established in 1983, currently identifies over 1,600 sites assessed to be of significance.

6.10 Within 500m north of the New Alresford neighbourhood area there is the Grade II listed Old Alresford House registered park and garden. Designated as a landscape park design in 1764 as the setting for a country house, the park has a variety of features including (but not limited to)⁴⁴:

- Tree belts and fen woodland;
- Brick walls, ironwork screens and wrought-iron entrance gates;
- The historic Old Alresford House (Grade II* listed);
- A rose garden;
- Plantations; and
- The kitchen garden.

Locally important heritage features

6.11 It is noted that not all of the neighbourhood area’s historic environment features are subject to statutory designations and non-designated features contribute a large part of what people interact with on a day-to-day basis. Although not designated, many buildings and areas are of historic interest and are important to local communities.

6.12 The Winchester Historic Environment Record (HER) and Winchester Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) identifies important and distinctive structures or features that positively contribute to the local sense of place and distinctiveness. Following a high-level review of the HER via the Heritage Gateway⁴⁵, there are 183 documented local records within the neighbourhood area, including (but not limited to) finds from Tichborne Down House, named buildings like Winchester House and The Hurdle House, a quaker burial ground and a war memorial. During the subsequent stages of the SEA process, the Winchester HER and UAD will be explored in further detail to consider the potential impacts associated with the plan proposals on these assets.

⁴³ Winchester City Council (2001) ‘New Alresford Conservation Area: A Technical Assessment’ can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁴ Historic England (2023) ‘Old Alresford House’ can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁵ Heritage Gateway (2021) ‘More Detailed Search’ can be accessed [here](#). Open the link, change the tab from ‘map’ to ‘admin location’, type ‘New Alresford’ into the administrative location search bar and press the search button at the bottom of the page.

6.13 It is noted that there is a heritage rail line within the neighbourhood area. The Watercress Line runs along ten miles of rail track and allows passengers to stop at four heritage stations and explore historic towns like Alton and Alresford⁴⁶.

Heritage at risk

6.14 Since 2008, Historic England has produced an annual Heritage at Risk Register, which highlights historic environment assets that are seen to be 'at risk'. According to the 2022 Heritage at Risk Register for London and the South East⁴⁷, there is one historic environment feature within the neighbourhood area that is considered to be at risk – the New Alresford conservation area.

6.15 However, it is important to recognise that Heritage at Risk registers for areas outside of London do not contain information about the status of Grade II listed buildings. As such, it is currently not possible to determine whether any of the Grade II listed buildings within the neighbourhood area are at risk.

6.16 Encouraging and facilitating improvements to the condition of heritage assets within the neighbourhood area is recognised as an opportunity for the NANP.

Future baseline

6.17 New development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets, for example, through inappropriate design and / or layout. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations offer a level of protection to heritage assets and their settings. Additionally, the planning system has in place tools to offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings, reducing the potential impacts of development to some degree.

6.18 It is recognised that planning for development could provide opportunities for positive effects for the historic environment. This may include management measures for the New Alresford conservation area (which is on the 2022 Heritage at Risk register), an updated evidence base to compliment information and data associated with the historic environment, public realm and access improvements, or opportunities to better reveal the significance of an asset or increase enjoyment of the historic environment.

Key issues

6.19 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to historic environment:

- There is a variety of designated heritage assets within and surrounding the neighbourhood area, including New Arlesford conservation area, Alresford Bridge scheduled monument, and a significant number of listed buildings.
- The New Alresford conservation area is viewed as an historic feature 'at risk' under the London and South East England Heritage at Risk register. Any opportunity to restore or support appropriate management for the conservation area in line with its technical assessment should be explored.

⁴⁶ Watercress Line (2023) 'Enjoy a trip at the Watercress Line' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁷ Historic England (2022) 'Heritage at Risk Register 2022 – London & South East' can be accessed [here](#).

- The NANP provides an opportunity to develop the existing evidence base in relation to the historic environment. It also poses an opportunity to further heritage understanding in the neighbourhood area through improving knowledge, interpretation and access to heritage assets in the area.
- It will be important to ensure that future development avoids / minimises impacts upon the historic environment and maximises opportunities to improve the public realm and green infrastructure, to the indirect benefit of heritage settings. This can be achieved through considerate and appropriate design.

Proposed SEA objective

6.20 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

6.21 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Conserve and enhance buildings, structures, and areas of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?
- Support access to and the interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?
- Support the undertaking of archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?
- Protect the integrity and the historic setting of key finds of cultural heritage interest as listed in the Winchester HER and UAD?

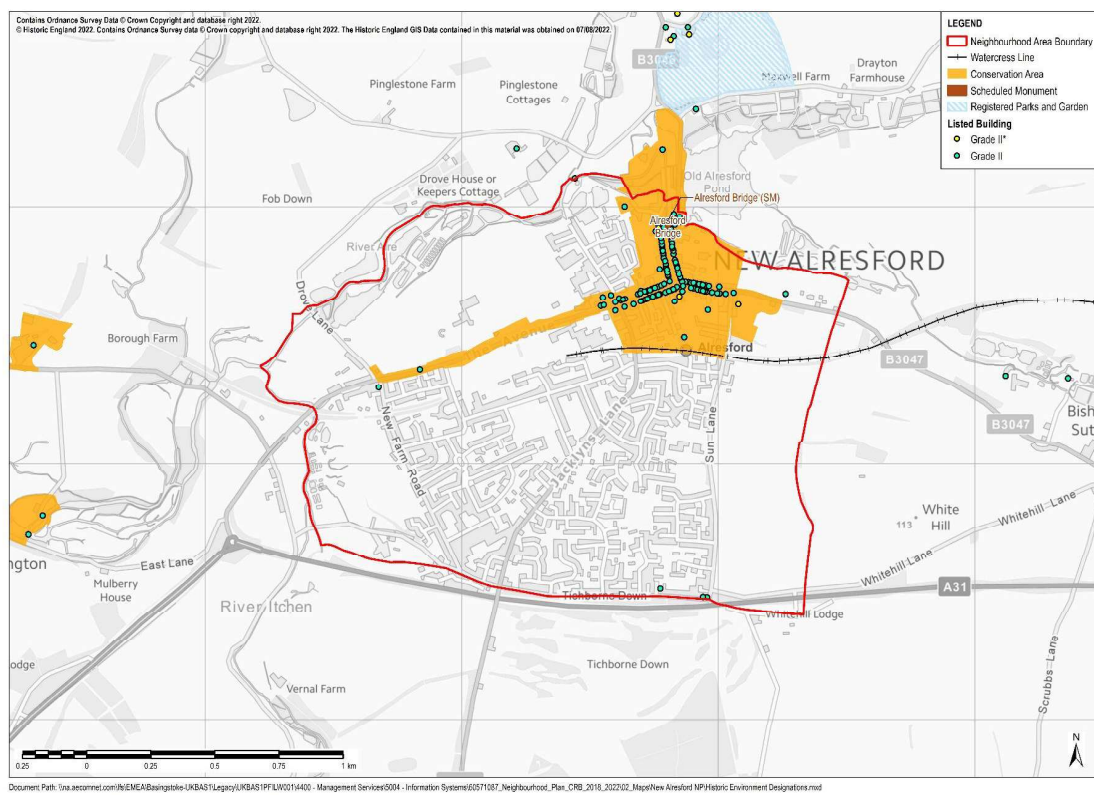


Figure 6.1: Historic environment designations within the New Alresford neighbourhood area

7. Land, soil, and water resources

Focus of theme

7.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the land, soil, and water resources SEA theme. The theme focuses on quality of agricultural land, extent of mineral resources, and water resources and water quality. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

7.2 **Table 7.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 7.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the land, soil, and water resources SEA theme

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
Waste Management Plan for England	2013
Future Water: The Government's water strategy for England	2011
Water for Life	2011
Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England	2009
Southern Water Resources Management Plan	2019
Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	

7.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The NANP will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF which pursue the protection of high-quality soil resources and the improvement of the water environment. It recognises the wider benefits of natural capital and the need to consider the long-term implications of climate change and ways in which to build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan discusses measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, use water more sustainably, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. Of note is 'Chapter 1: Using and managing land sustainably', 'Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste', 'Goal 2: Clean and plentiful water', 'Goal 5: Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently' and 'Goal 8: Minimising waste'.

- **Future Water:** The Government's water strategy for England sets out how the water sector will look by 2030 for both people and wildlife. The vision also includes valuing and protecting water resources and delivering water to customers in a fair, affordable, and cost-reflective manner. Water for Life highlights the Government's vision for a more resilient water sector. It details the measures that will be deployed to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.
- The Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England policy paper seeks to ensure that all soils in England will be managed sustainably, and degradation threats minimised successfully by 2030. This policy paper also seeks to secure sustainable and resilient water resources in addition to the improvement in waterbody quality. The Waste Management Plan for England identifies measures being taken to move towards a zero-waste economy, which includes national waste plans which seeks to identify measures being taken to move towards a circular economy in which resources are kept in use for longer. To do this, there needs to be a maximisation in the value of resources used and a minimisation in the waste created.
- Southern Water's WRMP outlines the priority of the water provider to ensure a resilient and high-quality water supply system and details how mitigation of impacts on water, like population growth and climate change, will be carried out over the plan period.
- The NANP will be required to align with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan, which identifies and safeguards sites and resources that are important to the continuation of sustainable mineral and waste management.
- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles;
 - Policy CP5: Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
 - Policy CP11: Sustainable Low and Zero Carbon Built Development; and
 - Policy CP17: Flooding, Flood Risk and the Water Environment.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Soil resources

7.4 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural land' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. In this context, there is a need to avoid loss of higher quality BMV agricultural land.

7.5 As shown in the left hand image of **Figure 7.1**⁴⁸ below, the built-up area of the New Alresford neighbourhood area is considered to be underlain with Grade 4 'Poor' quality agricultural land. However, the majority of the neighbourhood area is underlain with Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' quality agricultural land. In the absence of a detailed assessment, it is currently not possible to determine whether these areas are Grade 3a or Grade 3b quality.

7.6 **Figure 7.1** also shows the results of Natural England's 'Predictive Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land Assessment' for the London and South East England region in the right hand image⁴⁹. It indicates the majority of the land not in urban / industrial use has a moderate likelihood of being BMV land, with areas that have a high likelihood located by Sun Lane and The Avenue.

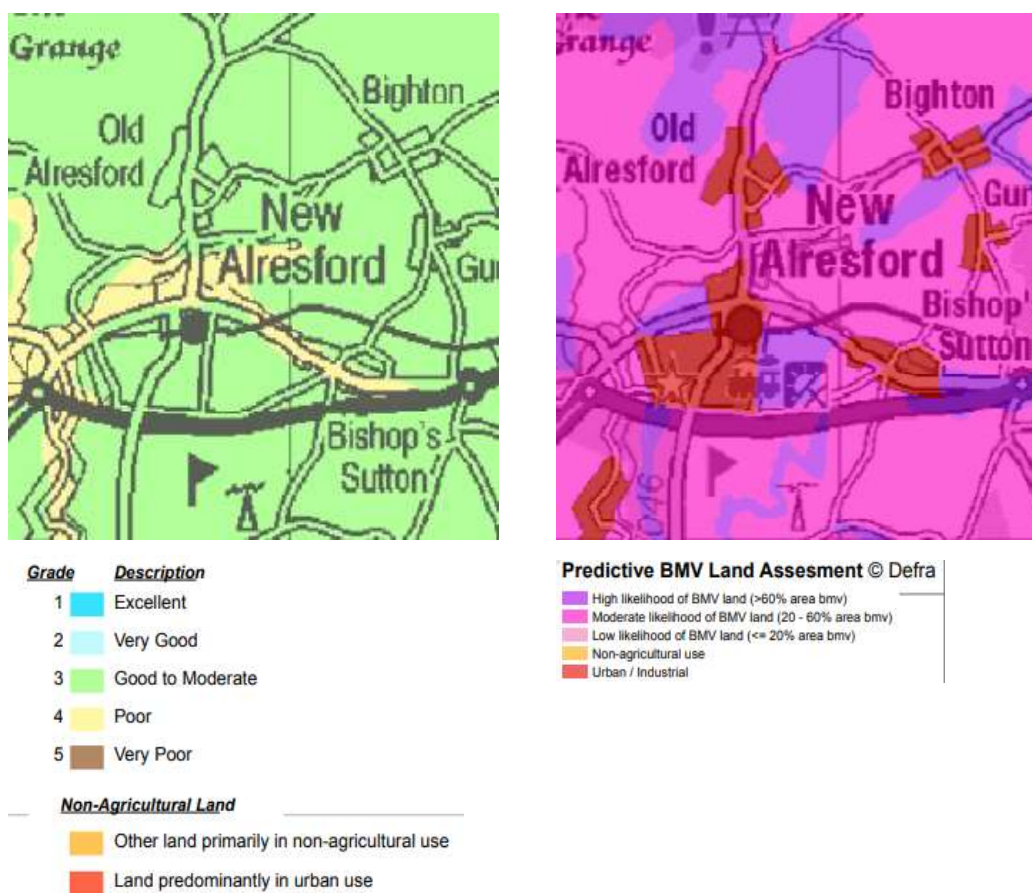


Figure 7.1: ALC and the likelihood of BMV land within the New Alresford neighbourhood area

Mineral resources

7.7 Mineral resources are defined as natural concentrations of minerals or bodies of rock that have the potential to be of economic interest in the present or the future due to their inherent properties. As minerals are a non-renewable resource, minerals safeguarding is deployed as the process through which it is ensured that non-minerals development does not needlessly prevent the future extraction of mineral resources⁵⁰. According to the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan, the neighbourhood area does not overlap with a mineral

⁴⁸ Natural England (2010) 'Agricultural Land Classification Map London and the South East Region' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁹ Natural England (2017) 'Likelihood of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land – Strategic scale map London and the South East Region' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁰ UK Government (2014) 'Guidance: Minerals' can be accessed [here](#).

safeguarding area, nor are there any mineral works within the neighbourhood area.

Water quality

- 7.8 The neighbourhood area is located within the South East River Basin District, specifically within the Test and Itchen management catchment, and within the Itchen operational catchment⁵¹. There are two waterbodies within the neighbourhood area; the Arle in the north, and the Itchen (Cheriton Stream) in the south. The Arle waterbody⁵² was awarded a 'moderate' ecological status in 2019, and the Itchen (Cheriton Stream) waterbody⁵³ was awarded a 'good' ecological status in 2019.
- 7.9 In March 2022, Winchester City Council received guidance from Natural England regarding nutrient pollution in the Solent area. The River Itchen, and by association the River Arle, is a significant part of the Winchester District, and the guidance provided advises that phosphorus and nitrogen are causing environmental effects and need mitigation measures. Winchester City Council requires development proposals to demonstrate how they will avoid or mitigate any adverse effects on nationally protected sites, else permission will not be granted⁵⁴.
- 7.10 Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) represent areas at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution, identifying rules in relation to the use of fertilisers and manures as well as a requirement to prevent water pollution from farming areas⁵⁵. According to the interactive map⁵⁶, the New Alresford neighbourhood area overlaps with two NVZs: the Groundwater G143 – Hampshire Chalk NVZ and the Eutrophic Water ET3 – Hamble Estuary Eutrophic Water NVZ.
- 7.11 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been defined by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes, and springs that are used for public drinking water supply⁵⁷. There are three areas within the SPZ Zone 1 – Inner Protection Zone in the New Alresford neighbourhood area; to the north by the memorial garden, to the north-west, and to the south.

Future baseline

- 7.12 New development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to lead to the loss of areas of BMV agricultural land. In this context there could potentially be opportunity to avoid developing higher quality land, by directing development toward lower quality land and urban areas. Additionally, the regeneration of brownfield sites is encouraged wherever possible.
- 7.13 Future development has the potential to affect water quality and availability through increased consumption and pollution, wastewater discharges, water runoff and modification. As the water company covering the area, it is considered that Southern Water are likely to maintain adequate water services over the plan period. It will be important for new development to avoid negative

⁵¹ Environment Agency (2022) 'Itchen Operational Catchment' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵² Environment Agency (2022) 'Arle Water Body' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵³ Environment Agency (2022) 'Itchen (Cheriton Stream) Water Body' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁴ Winchester City Council (2023) 'WCC position statement on nitrate neutral development' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁵ UK Government (2018) Nitrate vulnerable zones can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁶ UK Government (2021) Nitrate vulnerable zone designations and appeals 2021 to 2024 can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁷ UK Government (2017) 'Groundwater Protection' can be accessed [here](#).

impacts on water quality, and instead contribute to reducing consumption and improving efficiency.

Key issues

7.14 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to land, soil, and water resources:

- The provisional ALC data indicates the majority of the built up part of New Alresford is underlain with Grade 4 'Poor' quality agricultural land, and the remaining land within the neighbourhood area outside of the main settlement is underlain with Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' quality agricultural land. Much of the neighbourhood area has a moderate likelihood of being BMV land (Grade 3a), with areas of high likelihood around Sun Lane and The Avenue. As such, where possible, future development should be focused on land in use already to avoid impacts on these finite resources.
- The New Alresford neighbourhood area overlaps with two water bodies – the Arle and the Itchen (Cheriton Stream). The neighbourhood area also overlaps with two NVZs and water safeguarding zones. As such, development could bring forward changes to these water designations and adverse impacts should be avoided through development proposals.
- Plan making should consider how local decisions affect water supply, such as water accessibility issues, and ensure that appropriate drainage infrastructure is in place to accommodate new development areas.

Proposed SEA objective

7.15 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Land, soil, and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.

7.16 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible, including the regeneration of underutilised brownfield land?
- Identify and avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land?
- Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste?
- Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality?
- Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development?
- Protect waterbodies from pollution?
- Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/or water recycling?

8. Landscape and townscape

Focus of theme

8.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the landscape and townscape SEA theme. The theme focuses on nationally protected landscapes, landscape and townscape character and quality, and visual amenity in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

8.2 **Table 8.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 8.1: Plans, policies, and strategies reviewed in relation to the landscape and townscape SEA theme

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
National Model Design Code	2021
The National Design Guide	2019
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	
The Green Infrastructure Study	2010

8.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The NANP should consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, landscape and townscape character, and scenic beauty. The scale and extent of development within these areas should be limited and development within their setting should be mindfully located and designed to avoid / minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.
- The NPPF also recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the positive contribution that land remediation can have on despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated, and unstable land.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide outline the same aims as one another, focusing on creating a cleaner, greener country that puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats present in the UK. Design is focused on creating beautiful, enduring, and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality and green open spaces. Of note is 'Chapter 2: Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes' and 'Goal 6: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment'.

- The National Model Design Code states that all design codes should include a landscape and open space strategy that incorporates the existing natural features and new structural elements. It recognises that landscapes can be major drivers in the design process.
- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles.
 - Policy MTRA2: Market Towns and Larger Villages.
 - Policy CP5: Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
 - Policy CP12: Renewable and Decentralised Energy.
 - Policy CP13: High Quality Design.
 - Policy CP19: South Downs National Park; and
 - Policy CP20: Heritage and Landscape Character.
- The Green Infrastructure Study identifies and analyses key green infrastructure features in order to create a clear and deliverable strategy for retaining, enhancing and enlarging green infrastructure assets in the district up to 2026. This green infrastructure can support and enhance landscape character and features in the district, and Winchester City Council includes landscape and water, designated sites (on international, national and local level), formal greenspace, specific features, destinations and the public rights of way (PRoW) network as infrastructure examples.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Nationally designated landscapes

- 8.4 Whilst not within the New Alresford neighbourhood area, the South Downs National Park is on the western neighbourhood boundary. As such, it is likely the New Alresford neighbourhood area provides an element of landscape setting for this designation.
- 8.5 The South Downs National Park was designated in 2010 and is the newest of the UK's national parks, but the idea of it being designated as such can be traced to 1929⁵⁸. The designation has a variety of special qualities, including (but not limited to): breath-taking views, diverse and inspirational landscapes, rare and important species, unspoilt places, farming and new enterprise, opportunities to engage with recreational activities and distinct settlements⁵⁹. Threats to the landscape include the climate emergency, wellbeing of residents, the economy of the area, new infrastructure and a decline in nature and its struggle to recover⁶⁰. Though outside of the designation, the NANP could

⁵⁸ South Downs National Park Authority (2023) 'Key Facts' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁹ South Downs National Park Authority (2015) 'Special Qualities' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁰ South Downs National Park Authority (2019) 'South Downs National Park: Partnership Management Plan 2020-2025' can be accessed [here](#).

incorporate details from the South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan⁶¹ to maintain and enhance its setting.

National character areas

8.6 National Character Areas (NCAs) are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. This makes them valuable in creating decision-making frameworks for the natural environment.

8.7 The neighbourhood area overlaps with one NCA – 130: Hampshire Downs. This NCA⁶² forms part of the central southern England belt of chalk; a steep scarp face delineates the Downs to the north (overlooking the Thames Basin) and east (overlooking the Weald). Key features include rivers and streams, settlement pattern, prehistoric landscape, unique and traditional buildings, sheltered valleys and a network of ancient roads. The statements of opportunity for this landscape type are as follows:

- In the catchments of the rivers Test and Itchen, work with partners, landowners, land and river managers, user groups, businesses and local communities to implement sustainable management regimes that conserve, enhance and restore the priority habitats and species of the watercourses and associated wetlands.
- Ensure that the remnant areas of biodiversity-rich chalk grassland are retained and managed to ensure good condition, and seek opportunities to restore areas in poor condition and extend the area of this habitat. Protect and manage the associated historic features of these sites.
- Work with landowners and the farming community to encourage sustainable food and fodder production that also retains or enhances landscape character, provides habitats for wildlife, and minimises its impacts on ecosystems such as water and soil and on the historic features in the landscape.
- Encourage woodland management regimes that: ensure good condition of priority habitats and species; maximise the potential ecosystem benefits of woodland such as carbon sequestration, water quality and regulation, timber provision, recreation and biomass potential; and enhance the landscape visually.

Local landscape character

8.8 Landscape and townscape character play an important role in understanding the relationship between people and place and identifying recognisable and distinct patterns in the landscape which make one area different from another. Landscape and townscape character assessments can both help identify the value of landscapes and townscapes, in terms of visual and amenity value.

8.9 The Winchester Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was published in April 2022⁶³, and places the New Alresford neighbourhood area within local landscape character type 9 – Upper Itchen Valley, and landscape character type 11 – Bramdean Woodlands.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Natural England (2014) 'NCA Profile: 130 Hampshire Downs (NE549)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶³ Winchester City Council (2022) 'Landscape Character Assessment SPD' can be accessed [here](#).

8.10 The Upper Itchen Valley landscape character type includes features like:

- Distinctive river valley topography;
- Valley floor that consists of small pasture fields with historic water meadows;
- Historic buildings;
- Areas of high biodiversity value;
- Long views across the river valley;
- Long distance footpaths;
- Traditional building features; and
- The A31, which causes noise affecting tranquillity.

8.11 The Bramdean Woodland landscape character type includes features like:

- Well drained geology;
- Varying field sizes and shapes;
- Long views often enclosed by woodland and undulating topography;
- Numerous footpaths;
- A long history of occupation, but with no settlements at the present; and
- A relatively high proportion of ancient woodland.

Tree Preservation Orders

8.12 A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is an order that is made by a local council to protect trees that make a significant contribution to their surroundings that may be under threat. A TPO ensures the tree remains in the local landscape and continues to contribute to the character of an area.

8.13 Within the New Alresford neighbourhood area there are numerous TPOs, especially along The Avenue (B3047), along Sun Lane, in the south-eastern corner and the north-eastern corner⁶⁴.

Visual amenity

8.14 Visual amenity is an important factor to consider in the planning process, as the scale, height, and mass of development can ultimately impact on important local views. New development and landscape and townscape change can see these important views and vistas degraded overtime if not appropriately considered through design and masterplanning.

8.15 In collaboration with the community, New Alresford Town Council have prepared a local list of important viewpoints within the neighbourhood area.

Future baseline

8.16 New development has the potential to lead to small, incremental, but cumulative changes in the character and quality of the landscape within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area. This includes changes to the setting of nationally protected landscapes (the South Downs National Park), the loss or

⁶⁴ Winchester City Council (2023) 'Winchester City Council Online Interactive Map' can be accessed [here](#).

damage of landscape and townscape features, character areas, and areas with important visual amenity value.

8.17 It should be noted that the planning system has tools in place to offer a degree of protection to the landscape and townscape. Therefore, new development will not necessarily result in harm. Furthermore, locally distinctive landscape and townscape features, characteristics and special qualities can be protected, managed, and enhanced through appropriate planning policies. It is further recognised that new development that is appropriately designed and landscape led could support the area’s intrinsic landscape and townscape character and quality. This could include regeneration that improves the setting of the town, delivering green infrastructure improvements and / or new recreational opportunities and the identification and / or enhanced framing of key views.

Key issues

8.18 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to landscape and townscape:

- There are a range of landscape features present within the neighbourhood area which contribute to the character and quality of the landscape and townscape. These features should be protected and enhanced where possible.
- The New Alresford neighbourhood area is within proximity to the South Downs National Park. The National Park Management Plan (2020-2025) should be reviewed to ensure the NANP aligns with management outcomes and guidance.
- New development has the potential to lead to incremental changes in landscape and townscape character, and visual amenity. However, new development also has the opportunity to enhance parts of the local area that are important contributors to landscape and townscape interpretation and experience through considerate development proposals.

Proposed SEA objective

8.19 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Landscape and townscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape and townscape, including the South Downs National Park.

8.20 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Protect and enhance the setting and integrity of nationally protected landscapes?
- Protect and enhance the local landscape and townscape character, key sensitivities and features, and quality of place?
- Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character?
- Protect and support trees with an associated Tree Preservation Order?

- Protect visual amenity and locally important views in the neighbourhood area?
- Support the integrity of the landscape in the neighbourhood area in accordance with the Winchester City Council Landscape Character Assessment SPD?

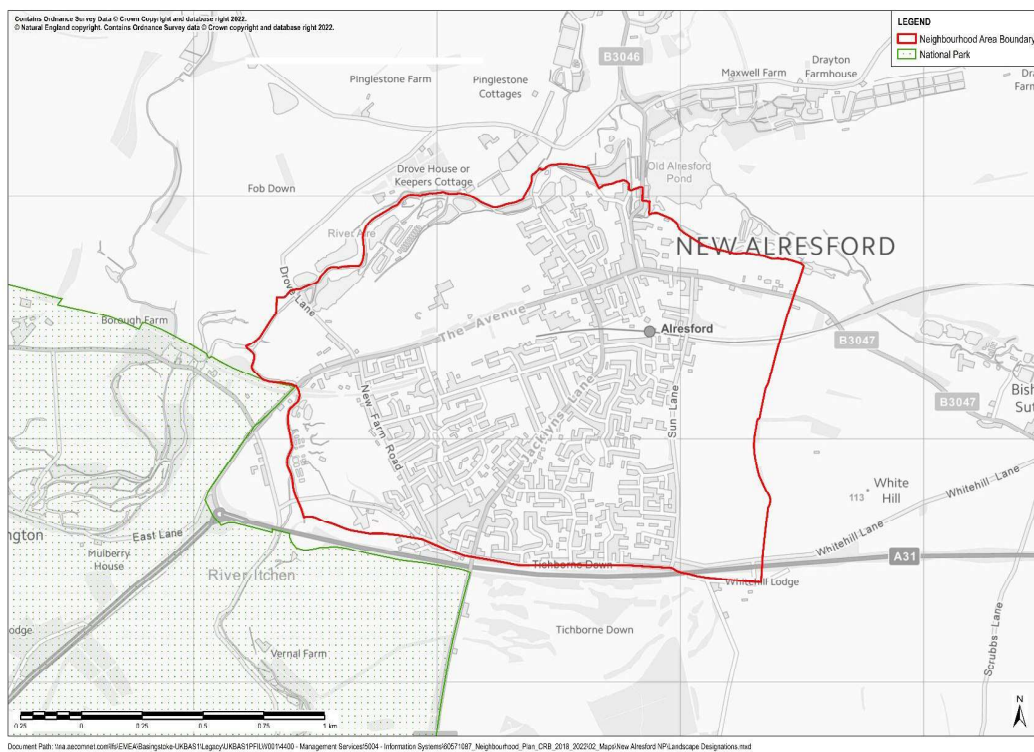


Figure 8.1: Landscape designations in proximity to the New Alresford neighbourhood area

9. Transportation

Focus of theme

9.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the transportation SEA theme. The theme focuses on transport infrastructure, transport use, traffic flows and congestion, accessibility, and active travel opportunities within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

9.2 **Table 9.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 9.1: Plans, policies, and strategies reviewed in relation to the transportation SEA theme

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain	2021
Transport Investment Strategy	2017
Hampshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2031	2013
Winchester District Local Plan	2013
Winchester District Local Plan 2018 - 2039 (Emerging)	

9.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The NANP will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which influence plans and development proposals to ensure they consider transport issues from the earliest stages, address any known issues, and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility to sustainable transport. Larger developments are expected to limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. However, it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments.
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain sets out how the UK Government will deliver emission reductions and associated benefits in the country; presenting the path to net-zero transport in the UK and the commitments and actions necessary to make progress on this path.
- The Transport Investment Strategy sets out investment priorities to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport network whilst simultaneously reducing impacts on the natural environment. Furthermore, the document places great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys.
- The Hampshire Local Transport Plan seeks to make progress in developing and supporting stronger and safer communities, maximising wellbeing and enhancing quality of place. It states there are five key themes to consider

when assessing transport: resilient highways, traffic management, public transport, quality of life and place and transport and growth areas. It is noted a new Hampshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) is emerging that will be more relevant to the current transport challenges and opportunities⁶⁵.

- The NANP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. This includes:
 - Policy DS1: Development Strategy and Principles;
 - Policy CP9: Retention of Employment Land and Premises;
 - Policy CP10: Transport;
 - Policy CP12: Renewable and Decentralised Energy; and
 - Policy CP14: The Effective Use of Land.
- The emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2018-2039 and its associated policies will also need to be taken into consideration.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Rail network

9.4 The Alresford train station is located in the town centre of New Alresford; however this is a recreational heritage line that connects to limited stations including Ropley, Medsted and Four Marks and Alton.

9.5 To access key centres for commuting / shopping, the nearest train station is Winchester station, located within 10km west of the neighbourhood area. Operated by South Western Railway, this station offers regular services to a number of locations, including Portsmouth Harbour, Bournemouth, Weymouth, London Waterloo and Southampton Central⁶⁶.

Bus network

9.6 The following three bus routes serve the neighbourhood area:

- The 240 service is operated by Cresta Coaches and runs on a Monday and a Thursday, and stops four times a day at a number of stops. It connects the neighbourhood area with Ropley, Bishop's Sutton, Gundleton, Bighton, Old Alresford and New Alresford⁶⁷.
- The 67 service is operated by Stagecoach South and runs Monday through to Saturday, with a number of stops only occurring on specific days. It connects the neighbourhood area with Petersfield, Stroud, East Meon, West Meon, Bramdean, Cheriton, Alresford, Itchen Stoke, Itchen Abbas, Kings Worthy and Winchester⁶⁸.

⁶⁵ Hampshire County Council (2023) 'A New Local Transport Plan for Hampshire' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁶ South Western Railway (2023) 'Winchester station live train stations' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁷ National Journey Planner (2022) '240 Alresford Local Service' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁸ Stagecoach South (2022) '67 Petersfield – West Meon – Alresford – Winchester' can be accessed [here](#).

- The 64 service is also operated by Stagecoach South. It runs throughout the week connects the neighbourhood area with Winchester, Morn Hill, Alresford, Old Alresford, Ropley, Four Marks, Alton and Holybourne⁶⁹.

Road network and congestion

- 9.7 The two main roads within the neighbourhood area are the B3047 and the B3046. The B3047 connects to the A31 outside of the neighbourhood area to the east and Winchester to the west, extending through a number of settlements including Abbots Worthy, Itchen Abbas and Bishops Sutton. The B3047 also intersects with the B3046, which provides access to New Cheriton and the A272 to the south of the neighbourhood area, and to Broadmere to the north. The B3046 provides access to locations like Nutley, Totford and Old Alresford.
- 9.8 The A31 intersects with the south east of the neighbourhood area, then extends south outside of the neighbourhood area. The A31 provides access to Winchester, the M3 and the A272 to the south west, and to Guildford to the north east— via Alton and Farnham.
- 9.9 The community view parking as an issue within the town.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 9.10 The neighbourhood area has an extensive PRoW network, including footpaths, the Winchester off road cycle route and the Wayfarers Walk and St Swithuns Way long distance routes⁷⁰. Notably the Wayfarer's Walk is a 70 mile route that starts on the chalk downs at Inkpen and finishes at Emsworth Harbour⁷¹. The St Swithuns Way is a 34 mile route from Winchester to Farnham, passing through the Itchen Valley⁷².

⁶⁹ Stagecoach South (2022) '64 Bus Route and Timetable: Alton – Winchester' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷⁰ Hampshire County Council (2022) 'Map of Public Rights of Way' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷¹ Visit Hampshire (2023) 'Wayfarer's Walk' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷² Visit Hampshire (2023) 'St Swithuns Way' can be accessed [here](#).

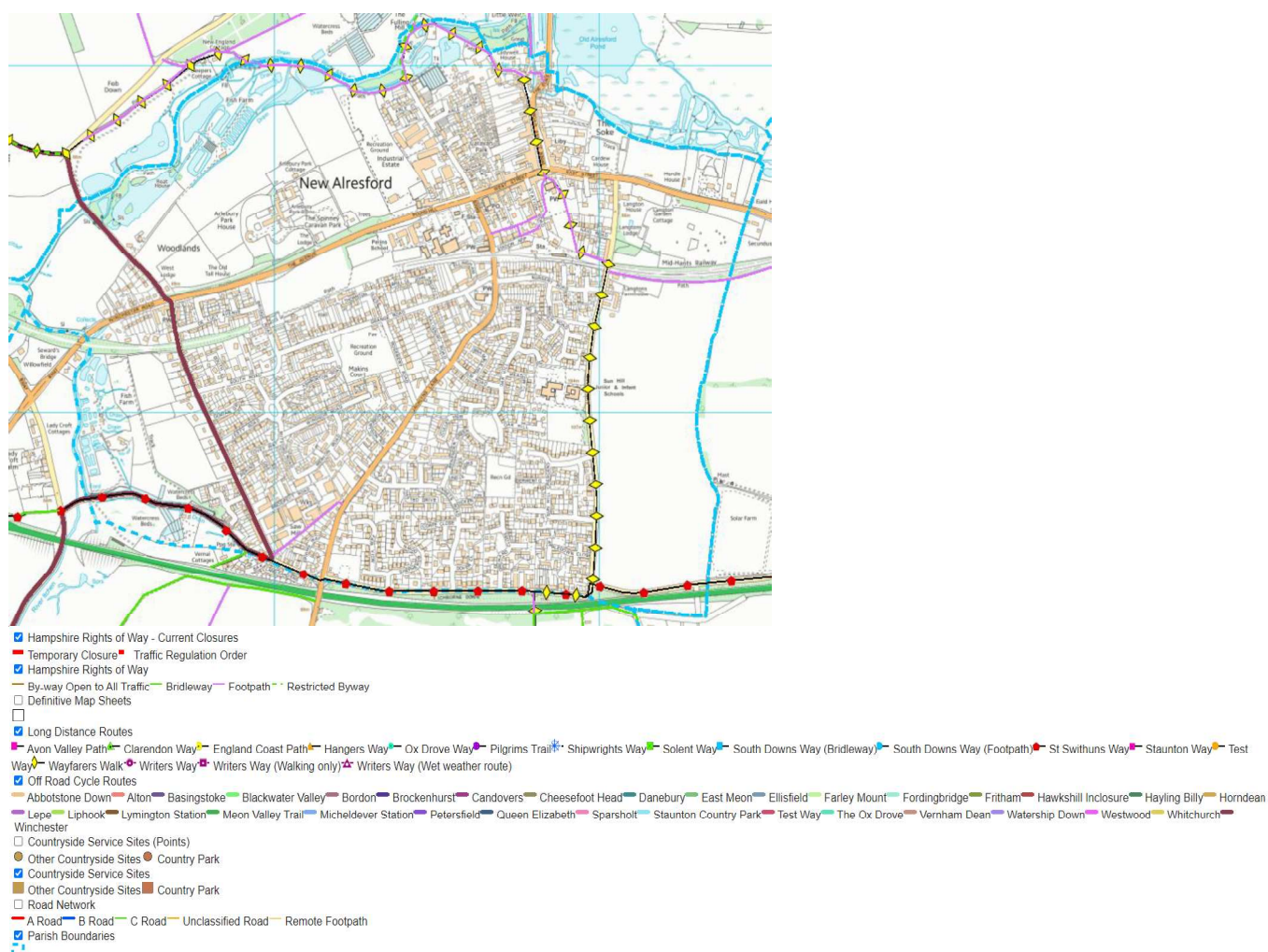


Figure 9.1: PRoW within the New Alresford neighbourhood area

Future baseline

9.11 While bus services are relatively accessible within the neighbourhood area, it is likely new development will bring forward a continued reliance on the private vehicle. Increased road users could have a negative impact on the local road network, including through increased congestion and reduced road safety, particularly at peak times.

9.12 As discussed in previous chapters, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and changing working habits, the provision of infrastructure to facilitate home working is likely to positively impact transport management through reduced road users. Additionally, there will be a continuing need for development to be situated in accessible locations, to support active travel and modal shift.

Key issues

9.13 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to transportation:

- The rail station in the neighbourhood area is linked to a heritage railway line that is in recreational use. To access key centres for work and leisure, the nearest station is in Winchester, approximately 10km away – offering

- access to a number of locations including Portsmouth Harbour, Bournemouth, Weymouth, London Waterloo and Southampton Central.
- There are three bus services in operation in New Alresford that connect residents with surrounding locations, allowing for safe and sustainable transportation.
 - The PRoW network in the New Alresford neighbourhood area is extensive and is focused predominantly in the northern half. The network is formed of multiple footpaths that create safe active travel opportunities and should be retained and enhanced alongside development; supporting modal shift.
 - Facilitating home working could support reduced road usage and congestion, particularly at peak times.

Proposed SEA objective

9.14 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Transportation	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.

9.15 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Support the objectives within the Hampshire Local Transport Plan to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes?
- Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?
- Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?
- Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area?
- Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?
- Improve road safety?
- Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?

10. Proposed SEA Framework and Methodology

10.1 The proposed SEA objectives, established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise, are brought together to create one framework, the SEA Framework, and are presented in **Table 10.1** below.

Table 10.1: Proposed SEA Framework

SEA theme	SEA objective
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.
Climate change	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, reducing deprivation, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.
Land, soil, and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.
Landscape and townscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape and townscape, including the South Downs National Park.
Transportation	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.

10.2 The SEA Framework provides a methodology and consistent approach for the NANP. The proposed SEA Framework will be used to appraise the options and proposals emerging for the draft plan, and findings will be fed back to the neighbourhood group to inform plan development.

11. Next steps

Subsequent stages for the SEA process

11.1 The next stage will involve exploring reasonable alternatives for the NANP. The findings of this work will be fed back to the neighbourhood group so that they might be taken into consideration when finalising the NANP. The draft version of the NANP will then be subject to appraisal, and the SEA Environmental Report will be prepared for consultation alongside it.

Consultation on the Scoping Report

11.2 Public involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies but not full consultation with the public.

11.3 The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. This scoping report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

11.4 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this scoping report, particularly the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues, and the proposed SEA Framework.

11.5 The consultation period runs from 4th April 2023 to 16th May 2023. This incorporates the statutory five-week period for SEA scoping consultations, including an additional week to take into consideration the Easter break and May bank holidays. Comments on the scoping report should be sent to:

████████████████████

██

11.6 All comments received on the scoping report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.