

March 2018

Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood  
Development Plan

# Interim Report







This report contains independent advice and recommendations on the continuing development and preparation of the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood plan. This is based on the outcomes of a series of consultation and engagement events held during 2017.



Feria Urbanism is a planning and design studio that specialises in urban design, urban planning, neighbourhood strategies, public participation and community engagement. Established in 2007, we have been involved in a diverse range of planning and design projects across the UK.

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## The consultation & engagement work so far



A successful community visioning event was held in June 2017 and a three day design forum was held in November 2017. Both these events were key parts of the process to date.

## About this report

As part of the process of developing the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan, a successful community visioning event was held in June 2017 and a three day design forum was held in November 2017. While the visioning event had a community focus as it sought to uncover the main issues of concern to local interest groups and residents, the design forum provided a platform for more detailed development and land allocation issues as it addressed subject of housing growth and different development scenarios.

The results of the visioning event can be found in a separate report and the various individual outcomes of the design forum have been captured in both slide shows and videos. All public materials are available on the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan website<sup>1</sup>.

This report seeks to draw interim conclusions from this consultation and engagement process so far. These conclusions focus on two areas:

The first focus of the report is setting out the range of draft planning policies that have emerged from the engagement work during 2017 (pages 18 — 45). These draft heading are supported by recommendations to develop these into more fully-formed planning policies.

The second is the issue of housing land allocations and how these can be addressed by the next stages of the neighbourhood plan process (pages 48 — 54).



The visioning event helped uncover some key issues that were taken forward into the design forum for further testing.



The design forum was collaborative and interactive, testing ideas and options.



There was engagement with a wide variety of views and opinions during the three days of the design forum.

<sup>1</sup> <https://bramshottandliphookndp.uk/>

## A summary of all position statement received

As context to the emerging planning policies, it is important to first consider the range of position statements received by the design form. The design forum event received 30 position statements from various clubs, societies and amenity groups. A wide range of opinions were expressed through this process of gathering statements although greater representation from Passfield, Conford and outlying areas would have been welcome. Much of the focus within the received statements was on Liphook and land uses and activities around the main settlement. Short summaries of all statements received follows:

### *01 / Bohunt School Students*

Students love the countryside setting of the parish, excellent school, facilities for the elderly, outdoor sports, supermarket, and easy access to London via train. Many students travel to school via bus or train, and the recent change in train times will have an impact on their routine. The students would like the pavements to be widened and have more places to cross the road safely, with cycling trails to Bordon, reduced traffic congestion and more parking provision.

The students would also like more social and sports facilities, a greater variety of shops, more places to eat, longer library opening hours, green open spaces for dog walking, more trees and flowers to improve the appearance of the park, and cleaner streets. They foresee the future of the parish as thriving yet calm place that is easily accessible and offers a range of healthy activities.

### *02 / Liphook Infant & Junior Students*

Students like the school, church, countryside setting, Radford Park, the pet shop, fish and chip shop, and skate park. Students dislike the central roundabout and noisy traffic along the A3. For the parish to improve, students would like to see a swimming pool, soft play area, electric cars to reduce pollution, a toy factory, more flowers, fewer houses, a museum and a trampoline park.

The students agreed that what they would like most is a public swimming pool, for both school swimming lessons and leisure time with their families. Being part of the South Downs National Park was also important to them. Students were concerned that trees in Radford Park have been cut down and want to plant more native trees, encourage more wildlife and for the bridge to be rebuilt. They would like more places to play, a safer walking environment, and refurbish historic buildings for use as shops and restaurants. Students wish to maintain the community feel and continue the events like the carnival.

### *03 / East Hampshire District Council*

East Hampshire District Council is currently developing part 3 of the Local Plan: "Other Allocations and Development Management Policies". However, the impact of recent Government consultations may mean that this needs to be reviewed. EHDC have a duty to support the neighbourhood planning process.



The presentation listed aspects for the steering group to be aware of, such as certain policy aspirations not being able to be delivered through a neighbourhood plan, a time frame of 18 months to two years, the need for the plan to be in general conformity with the Local Plans (both EHDC and SDNPA), and the “moving goal posts” of the NPPF and housing need consultation.

#### *04 / Savills on behalf of Countryside Properties*

A presentation on a proposal for land at Old Shepherds Farm, Highfield Lane. They state that the land is included SHLAA, with EHDC scoring it highly and suggesting a yield of 200 dwellings. The developers wish to deliver “... much needed housing that is in keeping with the nearby Burgh Estate” stating that there is an opportunity to create a landscape-led scheme, including new planting, habitat enhancements and a soft edge to the settlement.

The wish to provide up to approx. 130 new homes, both market and affordable, in a wide range of types, sizes and tenures. They envisage a suburban village extension, designed to reflect the local vernacular, in a sensitive, landscaped setting, including public open space and children’s play space. The developers have considered additional transport infrastructure, such as a new bus stop, footpath links and access point. They propose enhanced public access and a new woodland walk, long-term maintenance for its upkeep, and a potential natural playspace.

#### *05 / Graduate Landscapes*

Tony Richards set out his vision for his land at the south east of the parish. He included improvement to the roads as a benefit of the proposal and cites local success stories of cycleways, green spaces and safe roads. Tony wishes to improve the lives of local residents and strengthen the community and sense of place, while addressing the housing shortage.

#### *06 / Reside Developments*

Reside presented a proposal for land to the west of Headley Road, adjacent to the A3. The site is enclosed by mature oaks and other highquality trees, some of which have TPOs. The site is not visible from the A3 and is screened by tree belts. Reside suggest adding acoustic fencing within the woodland for greater protection against traffic noise. The suggested open space on Headley Road provides a new entrance across a small common, characteristic of the area. Reside proposes a mixed development of 36 houses and apartments at 23 dwellings per hectare, in keeping with the surrounding densities; a financial contribution towards improvement of the SANG; substantial public open space and access; landscape and biodiversity enhancement; 40% affordable housing; on-site water storage; and a layout which incorporates existing trees.

## 07 / *Vocalism*

Vocalism began by showing the historic growth pattern of the parish from 1810 onwards, which alludes to a natural next step of development to the west of Liphook. The proposal includes a western relief road to relieve increasing traffic congestion in Liphook centre, with improved links to the A3 and railway station.

The scheme includes new land for public access and gateways to the South Downs National Park, a new football pitch and facilities, new sewage treatment plant to alleviate current and future loading, improved recreational facilities for Bohunt School and locals, outdoor classroom for local schools, improved Bohunt School access and parking, shopping facilities with local small supermarket, new farm shop, community hub, affordable housing, new medical centre, GP surgery, and small commercial units for business start-ups as incubator space.

## 08 / *Adam Architecture*

Adam Architecture is working with Vocalism to develop land to the west of Liphook and presented the detail of the scheme. They propose the football pitch is relocated to the RN Trust land to the north, then affordable housing and 18 self-build plots for eco houses to include work studio or offices and allotments and a community orchard, to be available exclusively to EHDC and SDNPA residents. The layout shows the land reserved for the relief road and its proposed route.

East of this is mixed housing including affordable homes, a new community hub with farm shop and space for a library if needed, and a new surgery. The scheme includes a gateway to the SDNP and a village green. To the south, they propose a new public car park for SDNP visitors and community allotments, outdoor classroom for local schools, woodland and picnic area, public nature reserve, public open space, 3-acre community allotments and orchards. There is also employment space for small businesses and start-up companies, and a footpath connection to the Links Pub and the wider footpath network.

## 09 / *South Downs National Park Authority*

The aims of the SDNPA are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public; and to seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities within the National Park, but only in pursuit of the previous two purposes.

The South Downs Local Plan promotes tranquillity, dark night skies, and conserving views. There are very tough tests to allocate land within the national park where a parish is split by the National Park boundary, and the SDNPA does not support the allocation of sites within SDNP. The SDNPA encourage the neighbourhood planning group to consider factors other than development, such as local green spaces, cultural heritage, wildlife, natural beauty, and access. SDNPA officers recommend reading other neighbourhood plans for their detailed design policies for development.

*10 / Deer's Hut & General Wine, Print IT*

Representatives from the businesses spoke of their involvement within the local communities and raising money for local charities. Their beneficiaries include Liphook Scouts and Guides, the Peak Centre, Heritage Centre, Canine Partners Midhurst, Macmillan Cancer Support, Poppy Appeal, Liphook Carnival, Liphook Football Club, and Liphook Fire Service.

The businesses employ local people and are part of a wider network of employers and suppliers. Their vision for the future of Liphook is how improved infrastructure, planned development, whole town linked development, retain and build on the community spirit, grasp the opportunities, public support services.

*11 / Liphook United Football Club*

The club is currently located on Liphook Recreation Ground. The clubhouse has 2x changing rooms, 2x toilets, 2x shower rooms, 1x referee changing room and a bar.

Due to planning restrictions and lack of finances, LUFC has not been able to update and upgrade the clubhouse, therefore limiting their options. The recreation ground is approximately 8 acres, the perfect size for the club's requirements. Games are played dependent on the weather and cancellations are a common occurrence.

Winter training requires floodlit pitches but the only available location is Bohunt School which has an all-weather surface, yet this costs LUFC over £1,000 per month. LUFC is unable to accommodate any more teams due to limited facilities and funds, when they would like to expand to fit in with development and the increased local population. They require a minimum 6-acre site, a floodlit all-weather pitch, and clubhouse large enough to host events.

*12 / Liphook Golf Club*

Liphook Golf Club sees important concerns for the future as the local economy, health and well-being, and the environment. They wish to be part of the community.

*13 / Liphook & Liss Surgery*

Four surgery premises serve the local population of Liphook and Liss. Liphook and Liss Surgery is considered too small for its patient population, leading to questions of its suitability for the future. Planning permission was granted for a new medical centre in 2011, at the Bohunt site.

This land is to be given free of charge within the SNDP, however, the current lack of funding means it's unlikely this development will take place. There is no investment being made based on local need and prioritisation, yet the population of Liphook continues to grow.

The big issues for the NHS are mirrored in the local health economy. The new NHS model means care will become centralised and hubs will be formed where patients will be dealt with by nurses, paramedics, and pharmacists. Patients may have to travel further and there will be greater emphasis on self-care and electronic consultation methods.

#### *14 / Tri-High Multi-Sports Club*

Many local sports clubs use the facilities at Bohunt School. However, the community lacks adequate leisure facilities and many would like a public swimming pool. Tri-high members love playing three sports but would like their own place to go which does not require booking.

Liphook Infant and Junior School and Highfield School allow the club use of their facilities, and without this there would be no Tri-High. However, the club is still very limited with what they can offer due to available facility slots and the ever-increasing membership. Like many other clubs, schools and individuals, it would make a huge difference if they all had a public leisure centre to use with a swimming pool.

#### *15 / Lowsley Farm Residents*

The HCC Liphook Transport Project aims to ease traffic congestion at the centre of Liphook. In January 2016, EHDC deferred the Lowsley Farm Phase 2 application due to the impact of traffic and the Atkins Liphook Transport Feasibility Study was initiated. Since then, different options have been presented for alternative road access.

Local residents often highlight traffic and congestion as an issue, yet have learned that a solution of through traffic is difficult and that better roads mean more houses. The Western bypass, preferred by some, is not within the SDNPA Local Plan. The group would like to know where the Neighbourhood Plan stands with improvements to the road network.

#### *16 / Mayflower Care Communities*

Mayflower's vision for the Bramshott Grange Care Home is to employ local people; integrate into the community; provide high quality, flexible care services; engage with local providers such as the GP, community teams, pharmacy, florist, disability services, schools and food services; and support local charities and events. Mayflower will provide a bus service to the village for residents and team members of both the care home and the village, to enable villagers to access the local facilities, and a community dial a ride service with wheelchair access.

Mayflower will give incentives for team members who travel to work other than in a car or team members car share. The care home supports the conservation of woodlands and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and aims to transform the land in front of the home into a wild flower field.



*17 / Preservation Society & the River Wey Trust*

The Preservation Society's principal concerns are built heritage, the countryside and landscape setting, and their value to the community and local sense of place. They believe new developments should not adversely impact the local listings and conservation areas; should retain tree-belts and woodland as natural boundaries; and for key frontages to be well designed. The Society would like developments to avoid visual intrusion into open countryside; exploit the characteristics of the site; be limited in size; be positioned to cater for future expansion; and be creative with open space and SANGs allocations.

The River Wey Trust formed as a spin-off to the Preservation Society. The River Wey, its valley and tributaries are close to all settlements within the parish and provide natural landscape corridors which should be preserved. The Trust would like an access strategy for the valley and believe that environmental improvements could come with (limited) further development (e.g. Passfield Mill), yet more consideration of the effects of runoff is needed, including improvements to historic storm water systems.

*18 / Chiltley Farm Action Group (CFAG)*

CFAG has a strong desire for the best strategic outcomes and future for the village of Liphook. The group is aware of the need for more housing, but would like it to be designed in a way that benefits the community as a whole. They would like improvements to infrastructure; good schools; preserved open spaces; new sports facilities; retail development; and for traffic concerns to be addressed, especially across the square and railway bridge.

There is a unique challenge and opportunity to open up views and access to the SDNP, with Liphook acting as an educational and recreational gateway. The SDNP boundary divides the village into two and skews development towards the south east, as it covers a third of the parish yet takes no housing allocation. Residents expressed desire for development in SDNP, especially at Bohunt Park, due to its location close to the centre. CFAG propose moving the SDNP boundary.

*19 / SOS Bohunt Manor Community Action Group*

The group aims to protect Liphook's gateway to the SDNP and uphold the principles of the Park, ensuring the cultural heritage, landscape, beauty and wildlife are preserved for future generations. Their main aims are to protect the tranquil and scenic character of the Bohunt Manor estate for public benefit; to champion the intentions of the benefactors who gave the property to the World Wildlife Fund to continue their conservation and birdlife management; and to see greater public access to and enjoyment of the estate through sports and youth-based facilities.

The group wholly supports the SDNPA Local Plan. In the future, the group like to see all residents continuing to benefit from a safe community with beautiful scenic countryside and good schools; the integrity, character and quality of the Bohunt Manor estate maintained and contributing to biodiversity; and the estate making a greater contribution to the objectives of the SDNPA in terms of public enjoyment and educational value.

#### *20 / St. Mary's Church*

Church members like the sense of community and neighbourliness within Liphook; its good accessibility by car and train; good social mix of people; and proximity to accessible countryside. The PCC like that the church is integrated into the community; the support given to maintaining the Grade II\* listed building and grounds; and that the church is seen as the village church even though it is geographically remote.

Members would like the village to see the church centre as a place of worship as well as a community hall and help maintain the building, and consider supporting the setting up of a food bank. The church feel that the dispersed nature of retail and service outlets does little for the sense of community and there is an “empty village” feel outside of rush hour. There is a need to integrate people from new developments to provide a sense of community as well as church information. The church would like to meet social needs, e.g. drop-ins, parenting and marriage courses with a Christian ethos and values.

#### *21 / Old Thorns Hotel*

The hotel currently benefits from a good road network; good rail links; three major airports; a major sea port; the supply of a regular workforce; and a pleasant location within the South Downs National Park. They have found that people visit Liphook for the local attractions, historical interest, events, spa, golf, and restaurants.

The hotel would like to see continued support in terms of utilizing the facilities, bringing people to events, potentially even working for them; published walks; cycle paths; more facilities for kids; and family activities. As the hotel moves into the family market there will be a need to provide more for families to do. The Old Thorns Hotel would like to know what it can do to sbetter upport the village.

#### *22 / Age Concern*

The objective of Age Concern is to promote the relief of the elderly by assisting them where possible. The charity has purchased a minibus and had it especially adapted for disabled passengers, and dedicated volunteer drivers transport people from their homes to various activities. This has helped reverse the declining group numbers which were due to transport difficulties. The group provides help and financial support to a number of groups covering outings, Christmas parties, etc.

They have produced a Directory of Services and Activities to provide the community with useful information for all age groups, with an issue delivered to every address in the parish. Age Concern would like to see the needs of the elderly being met within any proposal for the future of the parish.

23 / *Diabetes UK*

Liphook Diabetes UK Community Group holds regular monthly meetings in The Royal Anchor. The group offers help, support and an opportunity to others who are living with diabetes. It is estimated that in the south and south east alone, over 584,000 people are living with diabetes.

With the ever-increasing population, it is important that all volunteer-led community groups are considered when future housing developments take place. Diabetes UK is here to help new people with diabetes feel confident that they can have the right support to enable them to settle happily in the community.

24 / *Liphook Crankers*

The Liphook Crankers are a group of keen amateur cyclists who live in Liphook and have been together for over 15 years. They cycle several times each week around the local roads or mountain bike routes and spend a week training in Mallorca each Spring. The group runs the annual Liphook Bike Ride, which receives support from EHDC who have provided grants for equipment, while local businesses and Bohunt School provide sponsorship and support.

The Liphook Guides run refreshment stops around the route while most Liphook charities have stalls at Bohunt and enter riders and car parking is run by Petersfield Air Cadets. Crankers enjoy cycling round the beautiful countryside which surrounds Liphook. The only issue they would like to see resolved is pot holes which are a constant threat to road users.

25 / *Mad Hatter's Nursery School*

The nursery school has been oversubscribed for the last six years and has unfortunately had to turn away children. Their view is that the need for more nursery places must be a paramount consideration in the planning for the future, otherwise families with children from the local area will have to travel outside the village to find nursery places.

Liphook Infant and Junior schools both have outstanding reputations and parents strive to live in the catchment area for these schools, but they also look for good local nurseries and child-minding services. It is important that children have stability in their lives and the transition between schools is crucial to their education and settling in process.

If children must attend a nursery several miles away, they may not make the friendships that help this transition process, and these nurseries will not have a relationship with local schools. Educating children from Liphook in Liphook is essential for the well-being of the children.

Local resident Natasha Thomas expressed that her children would like Radford Park to have an eco-friendly wooden adventure playground. The family feel that this would encourage more people to use the park and appreciate it. The children have no interest in the skate park and would much rather there was a BMX / bike track created in one of the local areas that they could use.

Another request was for safer crossing at the triple roundabouts. A lot of local mums with younger kids are crying out for an open all day soft play centre, perhaps with a cafe. There are enough unused industrial units around Liphook that surely could be utilised, should an interested party come forward to open one.

Visitors to the Peak Centre described their problems with healthcare. This included the doctors not doing house visits; difficulty booking an appointment; traffic congestion preventing ambulance access; and an unreliable prescription service.

Visitors to the Peak Centre really appreciate the facility, describing it as a lifeline. However, there is a long waiting list, and other facilities and leisure activities are inaccessible for those who do not have people to transport them.

Overall, the visitors reflected that Liphook is a friendly and attractive place, yet worry about it becoming too big and losing the local character. Some say it has already expanded too much and cannot be called a village anymore.

Regarding the future of the parish, the South Downs Society would like for Flora Thompson, were she to return, to still recognise Liphook in the way she described it in her diary, as "...a perfect panorama of beauty". They state that there is no better tribute to and description of their countryside and scenic views, nor a better qualified person to say so.

This quote is also part of the evidence base of the SDNP Local Plan. The Society would like to see the policies and management objectives of the South Downs National Park Authority followed through to grass-roots level, and for the aims of the Parish Plan to be achieved. The Society would like the parish to be clean and un-polluted, including the headwaters of the River Wey.



29 / *The Parish Plan Group*

The Parish Plan sets out a vision for the next 10 to 15 years. It involved an extensive, 5 year public consultation process with the help of local, enthusiastic volunteers. The Plan includes a study of which issues arise when large housing developments arrive in a rural community.

A wide variety of topics are covered, from infrastructure to healthy living, followed by a list of objectives to achieve ‘a vibrant and sustainable community’. The information sources used include local government planning documents (EHDC & SDNPA); census records; and questionnaires and surveys for different groups of local people, e.g. youth, elderly, businesses, property market.

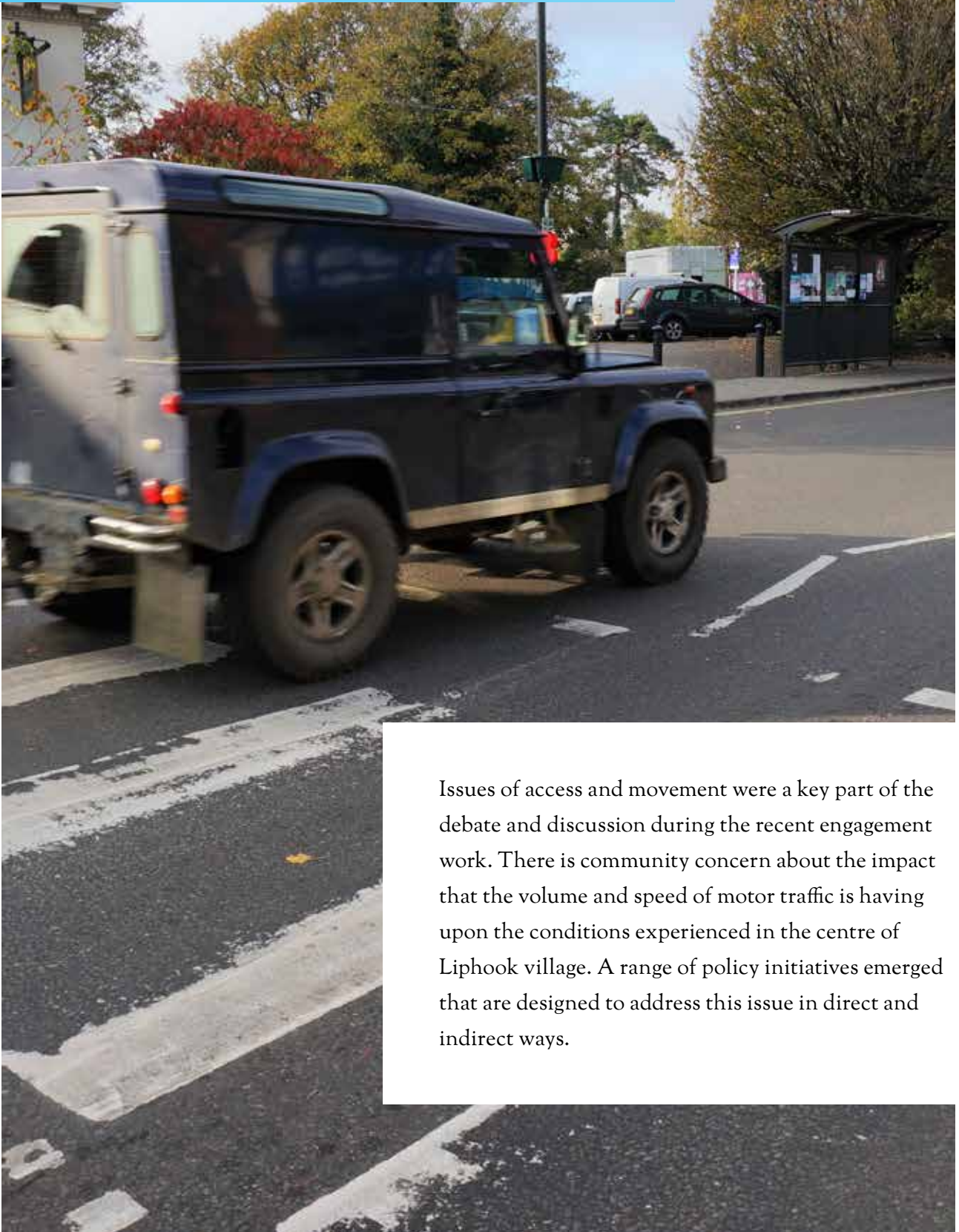
The Parish Plan objectives are to improve infrastructure; develop businesses; resolve transport issues; support young people; and promote healthy living. The outcomes of the Parish Plan were a detailed Action Plan; living document to be updated; and a solid foundation for a Neighbourhood Plan.

30 / *Passfield Mill Redevelopment*

AMK occupies a unit on the Passfield Mill Industrial Estate and owns most of the land in the immediate area. They currently run AMK Chauffeur Drive, a successful and major business from the unit. They are currently looking at an expansion programme and the viability of operating an increased fleet which would also mean increasing the number of staff employed from this site at Passfield. To achieve this, the site needs additional vehicle maintenance facilities and increased parking to accommodate the vehicles.

They have looked at other available set ups in the Farnham area but would like, with the help of the East Hampshire District Council and the Parish Council, to future-proof the current site to allow the continued growth of the business at Passfield. They would like to provide the additional parking they require as part of a comprehensive extension to the industrial estate on their land identified. Their proposals would include a new access road and car parking and could also provide new start-up business units along with elderly/care home development and some self-build plots. The site lies outside of a settlement boundary but is not covered by any other major designations. There is a conservation area to the north and a SSSI to the south, but the site lies outside both.

# Access & Movement



Issues of access and movement were a key part of the debate and discussion during the recent engagement work. There is community concern about the impact that the volume and speed of motor traffic is having upon the conditions experienced in the centre of Liphook village. A range of policy initiatives emerged that are designed to address this issue in direct and indirect ways.



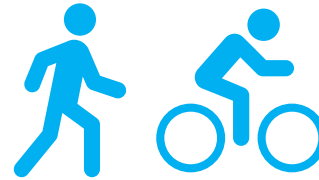
## AM1 Successfully accommodate traffic in a rural environment

POLICY AIM — To ensure continued access but with a reduction in the negative impacts associated with high traffic volumes and speeds.

- Amend signage to divert traffic away from Liphook
- Implement traffic-calming measures e.g. pedestrianisation and speed restrictions
- Use design guidance and sites specific design/development briefs to potentially create informal “relief roads” via interconnected street networks through new or existing development
- Better road surfaces; fill potholes

### Suggested Action Points

1. Await the results of the Hampshire County Council (HCC) traffic monitoring survey to better inform decisions about future traffic redirection strategies.
2. Consider a design-led village renewal project that will rebalance road space in the village centre towards a more pedestrian-focussed environment. See Policy HD1.



## AM2 Promote active travel modes (i.e. walking & cycling) across the parish

POLICY AIM — To increase the proportion of journeys being made by active travel modes.

- Implement connected foot and cycle path network throughout parish and out to surrounding areas
- Increase frequency of pedestrian crossings over main roads
- Widen pavements at key pinch-points
- Ensure easy access by foot and bicycle to key locations e.g. shops, schools, station
- Ensure key pedestrian and cycle routes are well-lit and secure cycle parking installed in main areas of use
- Improve overall access to SDNP land

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to better understand the barriers to walking and cycling across the parish and develop a project list and action list to address this.
2. Engagement with HCC and EHDC active travel projects teams essential.



## AM3 Improved access to Bohunt School

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POLICY AIM — To reduce traffic impacts of the school-run by offering better non-car alternatives.

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- Introduce a lollipop person to help children cross
  - New pedestrian crossings at key points in village centre
  - More school buses with designated drop-off and pick-up areas
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to engage with the school management team and the active travel group (see Policy AM2) to establish projects that will encourage modal shift for travel to school patterns.
2. Mapping of origin and destination routes for students will help to create bespoke travel plans.



## AM4 Support for bus services across the parish

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POLICY AIM — To deliver a more frequent and more reliable bus service.

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- Improve frequency and reliability of bus service to surrounding towns
  - Local shuttle bus, invest in the No. 250 service
  - Utilise school bus park
  - Provide more transport for elderly
  - Consider “Park & Ride” options
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Early engagement between the neighbourhood plan team and HCC public transport teams required.
2. Key early requirement in this engagement is to assess/agree the scope of influence a neighbourhood plan can have with regard to bus services, which is likely to be quite limited.





## AM5 Support for rail services into and out of the parish

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POLICY AIM — To deliver a more frequent and more reliable rail service

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- Increase frequency of rail service to surrounding towns
  - Increase frequency and reliability of service to London
  - Install lift at station and lower trains/raised platforms for improved disabled access
  - Improve facilities at Liphook station e.g. café, toilets, information etc.
  - Improvements to railway bridge to allow bicycles to swap platforms more easily
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Early engagement between the neighbourhood plan team and HCC public transport teams required.
2. Key early task in this engagement is to assess/agree the scope of influence a neighbourhood plan can have with regard to rail services, which is likely to be quite limited.



## AM6 Successfully accommodate the car in Liphook village centre

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POLICY AIM — To ensure continued access but without the negative impacts of high traffic volumes and speeds

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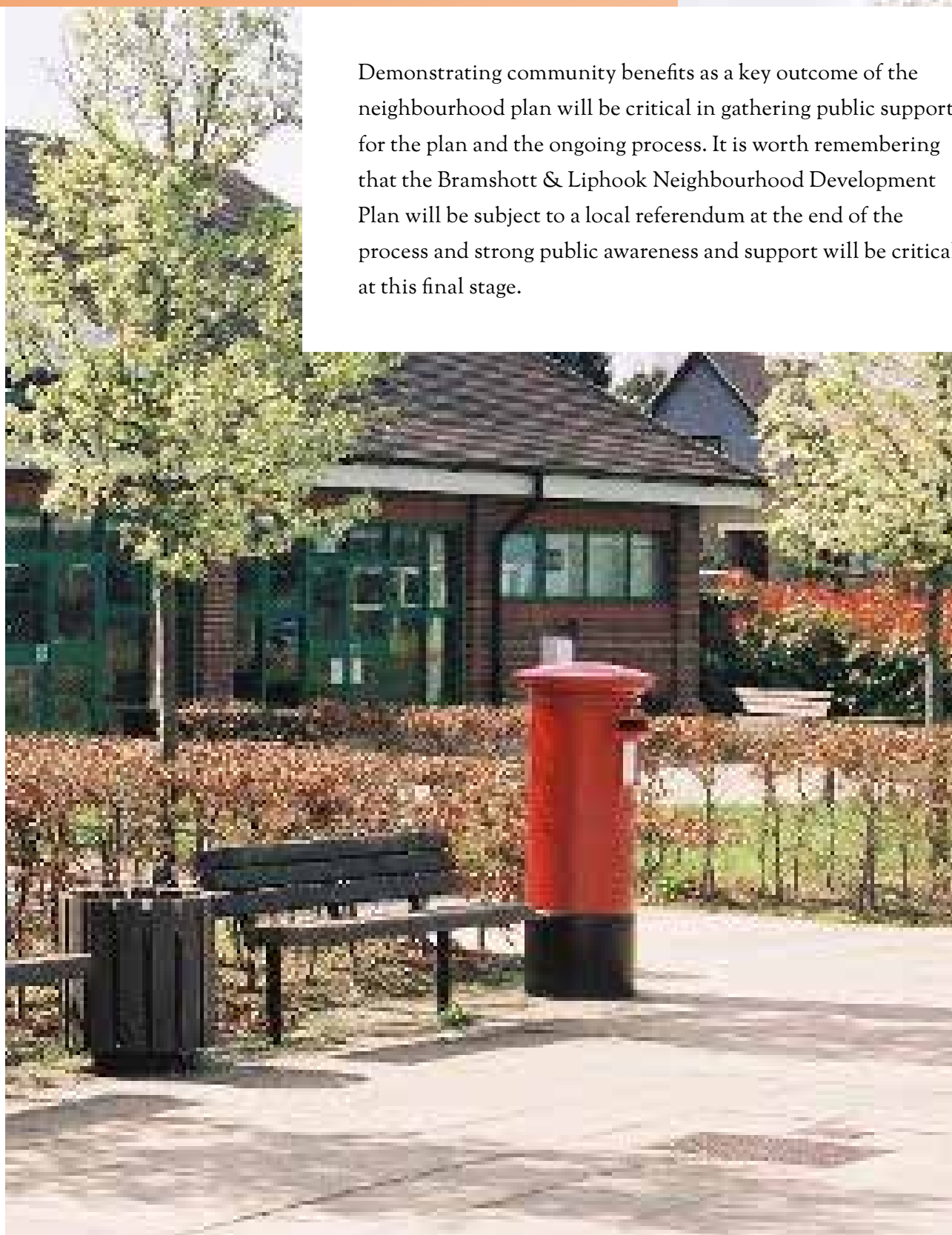
- Balance the need for on-street parking so cars do not dominate yet traffic speed is restricted
  - Introduce new measures e.g. residents-only parking and sensible time restrictions
  - Improve car parking access at key locations e.g. schools and station
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### Suggested Action Points

1. Await the results of the Hampshire County Council (HCC) traffic monitoring survey to better inform decisions about future traffic redirection strategies.
2. Awareness required within the neighbourhood plan group that increasing car park access (e.g. making more car parking spaces available, introducing more relaxed parking restrictions, reduced charges/fees etc) can undermine efforts to increase walking and cycling levels.

# Community

Demonstrating community benefits as a key outcome of the neighbourhood plan will be critical in gathering public support for the plan and the ongoing process. It is worth remembering that the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan will be subject to a local referendum at the end of the process and strong public awareness and support will be critical at this final stage.





## C1 Provide a diverse mix of shops in the retail core

POLICY AIM — Support an economically vibrant, mixed-use centre to Liphook

- Ensure a variety of shops through land use and use class policies
- Encourage sale of fresh, local produce
- Ensure short walking distances between shops through land use policies
- More cafes and fewer takeaways, to be controlled through use class order and policy
- Revitalise historic shops – identify specific shop units

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake a land use audit to identify strengths and weaknesses etc.
2. Engagement with HCC and EHDC heritage officers regarding historic shops.
3. Policy development to apply Use Class Order restrictions to ensure preferred mix of shops and non-retail uses.
4. Seek to support the current commercial and economic success found in and around the station. Link to Policy AM<sub>4</sub>.



## CF2 Introduce a covered market hall

POLICY AIM – To provide social space in form of covered market

- Focus for point of sale for fresh, local produce
- Flexible event space when not is use on market day
- Large span, simple structure, unheated space — is there a site identified for this?

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to identify a range of site options for such a building, informed by building scale and preferred access arrangements.
2. Use local architecture practices or university students to develop concept designs, including floor space requirements, height, bulk, massing and materials.
3. Task group required to explore funding opportunities — either direct grant funding or linked to developer contributions. Also, understand ongoing management needs and maintenance costs.



## CF3 Facilities for all generations

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POLICY AIM — To cater for the needs of all generations living and working in the parish.

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- Increase library opening hours, possibly in combination with larger facility – new location?
  - Increase funding for “Peak Centre” to help combat isolation
  - Invest in facilities for 0 – 4 year olds – which exactly?
  - Invest in facilities for senior/retired people – which exactly?
  - Improve play parks; improve skate park – new location?
  - Renew investment in the allotments
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake an audit of existing and required community facilities. Refer back to the existing Parish Plan for baseline information on this topic.
2. Explore innovative management options (e.g. Community Interest Companies, Community Land Trusts etc).



## CF4 Support for local and community events

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POLICY AIM — To ensure continued support for community events across the parish.

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- Require successful businesses to “give back” to community
  - Make certain properties Assets of Community Value – is there a list in place?
  - Protect and fund “Liphook in Bloom” and “Liphook Carnival”
  - Encourage more events
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Liaison between the neighbourhood plan group and the organising committees of the key parish events to better understand how the neighbourhood plan can accommodate their needs. The role of the neighbourhood plan is likely to be quite limited here.





Liphook Library is well-regarded by the local community and there is a desire to expand its services and widen its appeal through longer opening hours. An exploration of innovative new management models, such as Community Interest Companies, Community Land Trusts, may be needed to achieve this.



Liphook Carnival is a highlight of the year and links between the organisers and the neighbourhood plan group should be established to better understand how the plan can support the successful continuation of the event.



# Sports & Recreation



Sports and recreational needs have been identified as a distinct aspect of the neighbourhood plan, outside of the wider community policy section. This is primarily because of its links with landscape and the outdoors meaning its land take is likely to be larger and locational decisions will be more peripheral than central.





## SR1 Developing a sports strategy with Bohunt School

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POLICY AIM — To open up wider community access to sports facilities.

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- Engage with Bohunt School to provide community sports and recreation within their facilities e.g. existing dance studio, gym, sports hall, squash court, outdoor pitches etc.
  - Support Liphook Youth Club
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to engage with the school management team to explore how new sports projects can be supported by the plan. For example, safeguarding land in the plan for expansion of sports provision.
2. Task group to explore how school sports facilities can be accessed by a wider population.
3. Link to Policies CF3, E1 and E3.



## SR2 Enhancing and expanding the sports and recreation offer

---

POLICY AIM — To provide a wider range of sports and recreational facilities for different age groups.

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- Liphook Football Club pitches & new club house
  - Soft play area
  - Trampolining
  - Bowling
  - BMX track
  - Swimming pool
  - Eco-friendly wooden adventure playground
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to identify a range of site options for facilities, informed by scale, land take and preferred access arrangements.
2. Task group required to explore funding opportunities — either direct grant funding or linked to developer contributions. Also, understand ongoing management needs and maintenance costs.



## SR3 Design and implement a series of outdoor trails

---

POLICY AIM – To provide a wider range of sports and recreational facilities for different age groups.

---

- Promote outdoor access and provide information
  - Better physical links to open green spaces
  - Include walking, jogging, cycling, horse riding, nature trails and educational information
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to audit and assess the current PRoW arrangements in and around the parish and identify new preferred access arrangements.
2. Establish links with sports governing bodies and other supportive organisations for advice on funding opportunities.
3. Engagement with SDNPA, HCC and EHDC access officers regarding public rights of way.
4. Links to Policy SR<sub>1</sub>, SR<sub>2</sub>, SR<sub>4</sub> and CF<sub>3</sub>.



## SR4 The South Downs National Park

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POLICY AIM – To capitalise on the opportunity to become a gateway to SDNP

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- Establish an outdoor activity hub for DofE and/or school residents, both within and outside the parish
  - Education centre
  - Enable circular cycle route around village, including across SDNP land
  - Cricket pitch, football, allotments and camping/glamping.
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Continued engagement with SDNPA over land allocations in the South Downs National Park. Key discussion is extent to which sports and recreation development of the kind anticipated by this policy will be considered compliant with national planning policy.
2. Engagement with SDNPA access officers and landowners regarding public rights of way into and across the South Downs National Park.
3. Links to Policy SR<sub>1</sub>, SR<sub>2</sub>, SR<sub>3</sub> and CF<sub>3</sub>.





The Shipwrights Way long distance footpath has proved popular yet there is a feeling more could be done to exploit its appeal at a parish level. For example, stronger links to tourism strategies or heritage interpretation works.



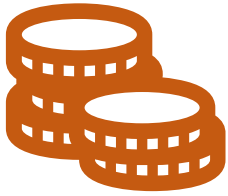
Green spaces and recreational opportunities that exist in the parish require protection through the neighbourhood plan while new ones can be introduced.



# Housing



The mix of housing and its affordability was a main concern of those that took part on the engagement process. To develop planning policies that address this, further technical survey work is needed to better understand these issue. Alongside this, concern were expressed about the location of new homes and design quality. Policies for both these aspects can be formulated and included in the neighbourhood plan.



## H1 Providing affordable housing

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POLICY AIM – To meet local housing needs to allow future generations to remain in parish.

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- Undertake a local housing needs survey
  - Provide a range of new homes that respond to average local income levels – what proportions are required?
  - Offer more social housing, help to buy and shared ownership
  - General conformity with SDNPA and EHDC policies required
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake a local housing needs survey. This can be done by either working with the emerging EHDC data as it prepares its new Local Plan or a parish-level survey can be undertaken directly. Direct surveys are offered free of charge to neighbourhood plan groups by Locality, the body that administers neighbourhood planning grants.



## H2 Ensuring a mixture of property sizes

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POLICY AIM – To meet local housing needs to allow future generations to remain in parish.

---

- Provide small homes for first time buyers and down-sizing, as well as family homes
  - Local housing needs survey – this is offered by Locality free of charge
  - Provide a range of new homes that respond to needs local income levels – what proportions are required?
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Same task group to use local housing needs results to better formulate policy on preferred housing mix.



### H3 Designing well-located developments

---

POLICY AIM — To meet local housing needs to allow future generations to remain in parish.

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- Ensure new development sites are closely related to the existing patterns of development – this will require site specific allocations that are not met with objection from SDNPA or EHDC
  - Effectively integrate retirement living into the community
  - Establish strong walking and cycling links to village centre
  - Connect existing and new neighbourhoods together more effectively
- 

#### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group will need to await outcome of SDNPA and EHDC work on housing allocations and understand the implications of SA/SEA process (see page 9) before policy can be formulated on housing locations.
2. Links to Policies AM1, AM2, SR3 and SR4.



### H4 Delivering high design standards for all development

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POLICY AIM – To ensure all new developments, residential, commercial and community, achieve high design standards

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- Integrate appropriate community facilities within development e.g. playgrounds
  - Deliver acoustic protection, where needed
  - Provide beautiful and functional green spaces
  - Environmentally-friendly design
  - Aspirational architecture
  - Deliver fibre optic broadband
- 

#### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake an architectural audit of the existing housing and built environment stock across the parish, including a green space audit.
2. Use the results of the audit to develop design guidance policies that will shape and influence the layout, look and use materials in new developments across the neighbourhood plan area.



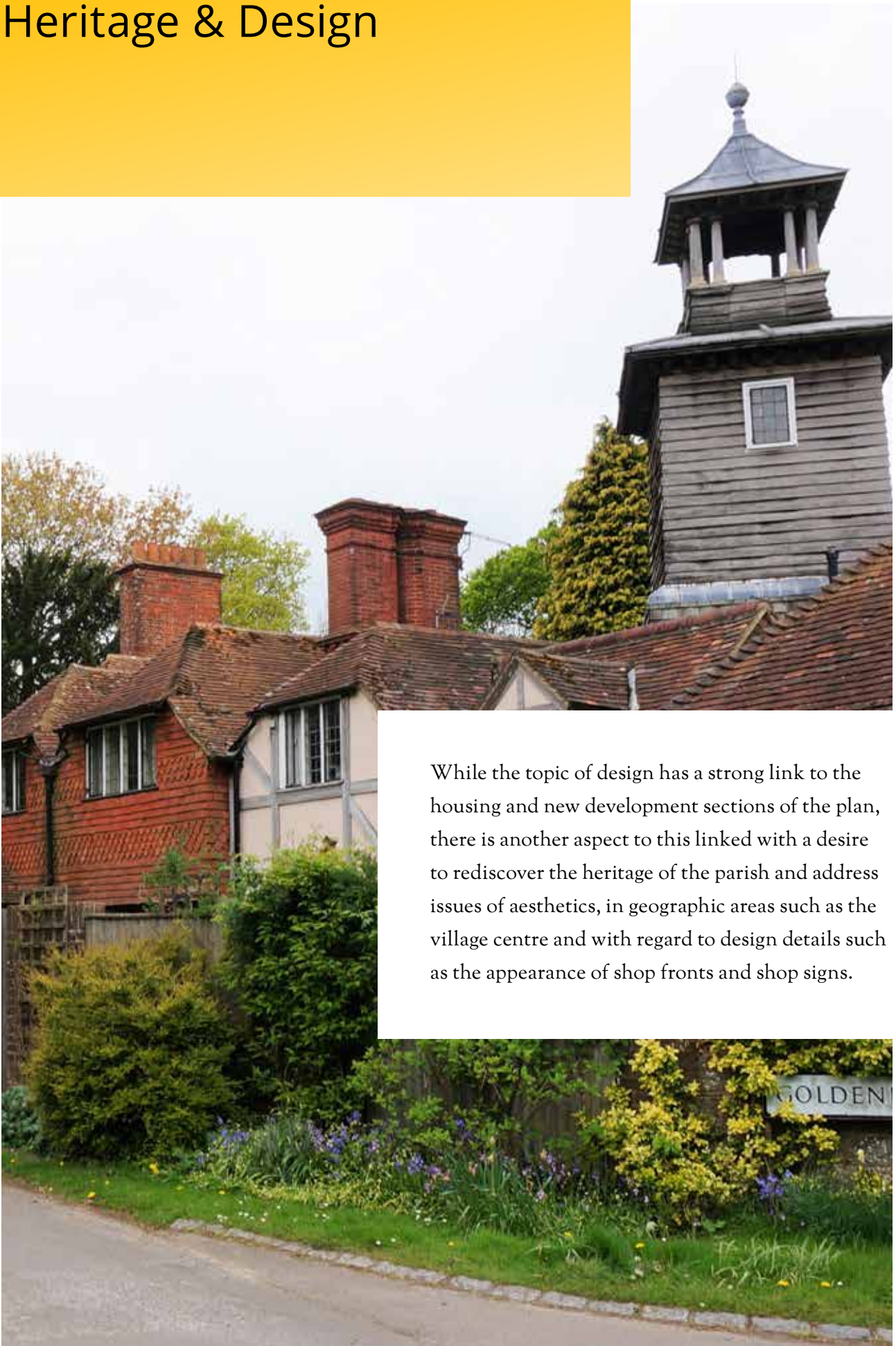


While historic areas are typically most favoured by the community in a village environment, some recent developments in Liphook, such as Longbourne Row, above, are considered to be good examples of high quality design.



Bungalows and the strict application of lifetime home standards will be required to meet the needs of an aging population in Bramshott & Liphook.

# Heritage & Design



While the topic of design has a strong link to the housing and new development sections of the plan, there is another aspect to this linked with a desire to rediscover the heritage of the parish and address issues of aesthetics, in geographic areas such as the village centre and with regard to design details such as the appearance of shop fronts and shop signs.





## HD1 Rediscovery of Liphook Square

POLICY AIM – To rediscover the historic centre of Liphook village.

- Investigate feasibility for a “shared space” scheme to better prioritise space between cars and people
- Use the redistribution of space to boost local economy through a greater emphasis on “dwell time” in the centre
- Investigate use of new surface materials
- Reduce negative effects of car movements in the centre

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to investigate pedestrian-priority schemes that have been successfully implemented elsewhere in the UK (e.g. Poynton, Cheshire).
2. Establish a design performance criteria for any intervention. For example, improve economic vitality of the centre, reduce noise and air pollution, increase opportunity for people-centred events.
3. Links to Policies AM1, AM2, AM6 and CF4 and to the HCC transport study.



## HD2 Enhancing Liphook shop frontages and designs

POLICY AIM – To enhance the aesthetic appeal of Liphook centre.

- Ensure consistency in design
- Respect established frontages
- Sensitive to Conservation Area status
- Allied to possible “shared space” project?

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake a shop front design audit in the centre of the village.
2. Use the results of the audit to develop a design policy, perhaps supported by an external design guide, that will shape and influence new shop signage as and when existing signs are replaced or updated.
3. Engagement with landowners and land agents needed to ensure private sector support.
4. Engagement with HCC and EHDC heritage officers.



## HD3 Rationalise and review all street furniture

---

POLICY AIM – To improve the pedestrian experience by reducing street clutter.

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- Enhance the aesthetic appeal of Liphook centre
  - Consistency in design – seats, benches, bins, bollards etc
  - More frequent and better quality outdoor seating
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake a street furniture audit across the centre of the village, identifying unnecessary clutter and extraneous objects that could be removed. Engage with HCC highways team.
2. Use the results of the audit to develop a design policy, perhaps supported by an external design guide, that will shape and influence the introduction of limited amounts of new street furniture, as and when existing features are replaced or updated.
3. Involve a local artist to add layers of local history interpretation to new items of street furniture, where possible.



## HD4 Rediscover the heritage of the parish

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POLICY AIM – To rediscover the heritage of the parish and use this to support local economic, environmental and cultural initiatives.

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- Protect and celebrate heritage assets e.g. Flora Thompson's home
  - Positively exploit local character features in new development e.g. use existing quality designs as an inspiration for new architecture
  - Linkages between the local landscape, sports and recreational opportunities in the South Downs National Park
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to work with local historians, artists, artisans, makers and other creative types to better explore and exploit the history and heritage of the area.
2. Seek to add layers of local history interpretation and celebration to various policy themes, as appropriate.



A positive relationship between the built elements of a village environment and soft landscape features can be vital to the overall visual experience. Understanding this and codifying it into design policy can become a key ingredient of the neighbourhood plan.



Existing heritage features in the Conservation Area can be protected and enhanced through planning policy, and given a better setting should Policy HD1 be implemented.

# Public Services

As with the section on Community (page 20 — 24), demonstrating public service benefits as a key outcome of the neighbourhood plan will be critical in gathering public support for the plan and the ongoing process. That said, locational and investment decisions over healthcare and education provision are often made at a regional or sub-regional level. This may mean there is limited scope for the neighbourhood plan to influence these two topics.







## PS1 Designing for healthcare

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POLICY AIM — To provide better access to community healthcare and that demand is met by supply.

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- Support new medical centre through a land allocation
  - Investment in NHS dental services
  - Increase opportunity to access GP services
  - Ensure accessibility to health services through central locations and better pedestrian links
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to engage with healthcare providers and the neighbourhood plan team to establish how new healthcare buildings or services can be supported by the plan. For example, safeguarding land in the plan for expansion of existing healthcare provision or securing new for new provision of services.
2. Assess/agree the scope of influence a neighbourhood plan can have with regard to healthcare provision, which is likely to be quite limited.



## PS2 Designing for education

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POLICY AIM — To provide better access to education for all age groups and that demand is met by supply

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- Ensure school provision rises with population
  - Possibility of new primary school and satellite campuses – is there support for this?
  - Promote sustainable school transport
  - Integrate train timetable with school hours
  - Improve the appearance of Bohunt grounds
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to engage with education services and the neighbourhood plan team to establish how new education buildings or services can be supported by the plan. For example, safeguarding land in the plan for expansion of existing education provision or securing new for new provision of services.
2. Assess/agree the scope of influence a neighbourhood plan can have with regard to education provision, which is likely to be quite limited.





## PS3 Investment in water infrastructure

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POLICY AIM – To ensure sufficient investment in flood protection and associated infrastructure.

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- Ensure there is sufficient sewage system and treatment capacity by linking investment in this to development sites
  - Likewise, improve storm-water systems
  - Flood mitigation for all identified development sites
  - Widespread application of SuDS technologies and approaches
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Early engagement between the neighbourhood plan team, the HCC infrastructure team and with statutory water service providers.
2. Assess/agree the scope of influence a neighbourhood plan can have with regard to water and flood issues, which given the wider geographical context (e.g. flood basins, river catchments etc) is likely to be quite limited.
3. Links with Policies H3, H4 and PS4.



## PS4 Planning & design to achieve clean energy and air

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POLICY AIM – To use the planning system to ensure high standards of environmental sustainability

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- New developments should aspire to be “off-grid” and generate own energy
  - Widespread use of PV systems, ground source heat pumps and combined heat and power, where appropriate
  - Provide electric car charging points
  - Restrict HGV movement – create local clean air zones
  - Increase tree planting along streets, requires wider pavements
  - Replace trees +1 that are lost to new development
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Develop planning policies that prioritise clean air and reduce the use of energy.
2. Consider the use of the ecosystem and natural capital assessments within the neighbourhood plan, conforming with the SDNPA policies on the same topics.
2. Links with Policies H3, H4 and PS3.



Bramshott & Liphook parish currently has good education provision for children from aged 4 to 16. The neighbourhood plan can be used to support continued investment in these services, such as safeguarding land for future expansion.



# Employment



As well as addressing where people in the parish will live, shop, play sport and access the countryside in the future, the neighbourhood plan can also make clear statements on the type of work that the parish will support and where these economic activities will take place. Safeguarding existing employment land and identifying new employment opportunities should become a high priority for the next stage of the plan preparation process. Indeed, support for sustainable economic activity in rural areas is a requirement of neighbourhood plans as set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, para. 28).





## E1 Provide local employment space

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POLICY AIM – To use the planning system to ensure supply of employment land meets demand.

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- Provide affordable rental space for start-ups and entrepreneurs – is there a specific site identified?
  - Encourage small businesses to locate in parish
  - Encourage local workforce employment and retention
  - Allow change of use away from employment uses only in specific circumstances
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake an audit of existing employment spaces.
2. Use the results of the audit to establish a working group between local employers and the neighbourhood plan team to establish how new employment space can be supported by the plan. For example, safeguarding land for expansion of existing employment uses or securing new land for new employment buildings.



## E2 Combining living and working

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POLICY AIM – To use the planning system to encourage home-working and small business creation

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- Provide work space within residential development
  - Use design briefs and development controls to ensure new developments include such spaces
  - Reduce commuting time
  - Improve mental health and ease traffic congestion
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to undertake a parish-wide survey to establish the demand for home-working spaces as described by the draft policy.
2. Based on the results of the survey, task group to develop design guidance policies and development briefs that will encourage innovative and flexible new homes that can accommodate successful home-working. Policy to be applicable across the whole neighbourhood plan area.
3. Links with Policy H4 and E1.



## E3 Cultivating stronger links between work and education

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POLICY AIM – Stronger education/  
workplace links

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- Use local employers as mentors
  - Implement placement schemes with schools
  - Match students with entrepreneurs
- 

### Suggested Action Points

1. Task group to engage with the school management team to explore how links between employers and the school can be supported by the plan.
3. Possible link to Policy SR1 and E1.





To further develop Policy E1, it is recommended that task group to undertake an audit of existing employment spaces across the parish. This will include the shops and services found in the village centre.

There are clear links here between this work and the work required to further develop Policies C1, HD2 and HD3 so careful planning by the neighbourhood plan team is needed to avoid any duplication of effort.

# The benefits of the design forum process



The design forum was a collaborative and consultative process that brought together many of the main agencies and actors involved in the process. Alongside its focus on developing an effective spatial plan for the future of the parish, there was debate and discussion on the limiting effects that the current planning policy context has upon the neighbourhood plan process. It was useful to have this debate in an open forum.





The first two days of the design forum involved a series of presentations from a variety of interest groups and stakeholders. It also involved work to develop a future growth scenario drawing (left) that was then tested by participants.



The third day of the design forum included a lengthy debate about how the neighbourhood plan should address land allocations. This aspect of the process was helpfully supported by officers from both the SDNPA and EHDC.



As well as work undertaken in smaller groups, the design forum also sought a broad consensus on the housing allocations issue through facilitated discussions amongst all participants.

## Allocation of land for development in the South Downs National Park

This section of the report provides a detailed focus on the issues associated with development of land in the national park, and the alternatives. This focus is necessary due to the historic debate on this, and to allow further options to be researched within the planning policy context, as set out here.

The process of community engagement revealed a keen debate over the future growth scenarios for the parish. While some in the community are clear in their preference for land immediately to the west of Liphook village centre to be allocated for housing, others are of the view that this should not be developed. Setting aside for a moment the intrinsic qualities of the land itself, the advice that follows relates to the planning policy context in that applies in this instance.

The neighbourhood plan project steering group needs to be advised that, following the extensive engagement process in 2017, there remains significant obstacles to the allocation of land that lies immediately to the west of Liphook village centre for development in the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is because the land lies within the South Downs National Park. The local planning authority responsible for this specific area of land within the parish is the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and has made it known, through the design forum process, that it has an objection in principle to development in this location.

In response to a direct invitation from the neighbourhood plan project steering group,

the SDNPA provided a written statement<sup>2</sup> to the November 2017 design forum that explained it will object to any future Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan that includes a land allocation for development in the South Downs National Park. This objection will be made at both the pre-submission and submission stages of the neighbourhood plan preparation.

If a neighbourhood plan finds itself subject to an objection from the relevant local planning authority, then the neighbourhood plan is at considerable risk of:

- being failed by an examiner
- not making it to referendum stage

In the case of failure by an examiner, the plan will automatically be unable to move to referendum. Even if the plan does pass examination, there is a mechanism within the neighbourhood planning regulations (Regulation 18<sup>3</sup>) that allows the local planning authority to decline or refuse a proposed plan. While the lead authority that will be considering the examiner's report will be East Hampshire District Council<sup>4</sup>, it will need to have fair consideration to the objections made by the SDNPA.

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<sup>2</sup> Email from Lucy Howard, Planning Policy Manager, South Downs National Park Authority, 27 November 2017

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/regulation/18/made>

<sup>4</sup> It has been agreed that EHDC is the lead authority for neighbourhood planning purposes as it represents the larger geographic part of the parish compared to the SDNPA.



An objection made by a national park is unlikely to be easily dismissed. It is noted that land in the South Downs National Park has been the subject of a refused planning application<sup>5</sup> in the recent past.

The applicants and landowners involved in promoting this application have made it known through the design forum process that the proposed design and layout of the development was well-received by a design review panel and the landscape and ecological mitigation proposed with the application was considered acceptable. The applicants made it known that the proposal had more letters of support from the community than letters of objection. The application was refused by the SDNPA on grounds of the principle of development.

While all this is noted, if an allocation in a neighbourhood plan is not in conformity with the relevant local plan, then an examiner is likely to find against the neighbourhood plan. In such circumstances, it does not matter how well-received the proposal is by a design review panel, how effectively landscape impacts can be minimised or how well-supported it is by the public. The examiner's role is to assess conformity between the neighbourhood plan and the relevant local plan, not to assess the suitability or otherwise of land allocations and their associated design codes and layouts.

Essential here is the "objection in principle" point made by the SDNPA in refusing the recent planning application. This is not something that can easily be overcome through good urban design, the delivery of community or public benefits and so on.

Therefore, including a land allocation in the South Downs National Park in the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan, while the circumstances remain for an objection in principle by the SDNPA, cannot be recommended.

## Sustainability Assessments

It is expected that the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) likely to be in the form of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

In order to determine if as SEA is required, a screening exercise in consultation with relevant statutory bodies needs to be undertaken and the results confirmed in writing. This will reveal if the neighbourhood plan requires a SEA under European Directive 2001/42/EC. A similar process is required for a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) under European Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC whereby a screening exercise will confirm if a full appropriate assessment for the plan is required or not.

The SA/SEA process is a technical undertaking that assesses alternative development and growth scenarios and will advise on the most sustainable patterns of growth. Those promoting land allocations within the South Downs National Park have argued that an SA/SEA process is likely to support an expansion of Liphook westwards into the South Downs National Park on sustainability grounds, when compared to other development and growth scenarios.

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5 Application Ref: SDNP/14/06426/OUT

This is because of the intrinsic qualities of the land itself i.e. it is close to existing services and facilities, has few technical constraints to development etc.

However, experience of such processes indicates that only sites that are in conformity with planning policy are likely to be subject to an SA/SEA process. This is because that the SA/SEA process applies a series of filters to a range of site options. These filters start to discount some sites while favouring others. Towards the end of this process, most sustainable sites are identified as the less sustainable sites have been discounted.

One of the early filters applied in the SA/SEA process is conformity with planning policy. If so, this is likely to mean that land in the South Downs National Park is unlikely to make it through to the later rounds of the assessment process and therefore is unlikely to be revealed as a sustainable option by the SA/SEA process.

However, even if land in the South Downs National Park is the subject to the later rounds of the SEA/SA assessment, and this concludes that development here represents the most sustainable outcome, this still will not overcome adopted planning policy that designates this land with the highest level of national landscape protection.

As described earlier, the landowners and developers promoting development in the South Downs National Park have been refused planning permission by the SDNPA in recent years. The same area of land is now being promoted through the neighbourhood plan process. However, while a neighbourhood development plan can take its own decisions independent of the relevant local planning authority — and develop its own planning

policies — on some matters, conformity with the higher level planning authority is essential to a neighbourhood plan's success. An example of a topic where conformity is essential is housing allocations.

## Allocation of land in a protected landscape and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant to the process of considering the allocation of land in the South Downs National Park is paragraphs 115 and 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These are as follows:

*115. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.*

*116. Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

- the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
- the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*

— *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.*

The importance of this section of the NPPF for the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan is found within the paragraph 116 and its three qualifying points. This main policy message of paragraph 116 is that development within a national park can only happen in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated it is in the public interest. Neither of these two circumstances are defined as such in the text but both are required.

The three qualifiers that follow the main paragraph address the issues that must be considered:

— The need for the development. As the following sections of this report set out, the need for new housing has yet to be formally established even if there is obvious developer pressure to build in the parish.

— The cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way. Should the case for need be made, there are other parcels of land in the neighbourhood area that are not designated with the same high level of landscape protection afforded to the South Downs National Park. It must be demonstrated that it is technically impossible to develop this alternative land or that it is economically unviable to do so.

— Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated. Advocates for development in the South Downs National Park made a compelling

case through the design forum, that landscape, environment and recreational impacts can not only be mitigated, but could even be enhanced through development. Much of the land under consideration at the present time is in private control and is inaccessible to the wider public. Through new development, public rights of way could be introduced and sports and recreational opportunities greatly increased. However, this third test on its own does not amount to meeting the requirements set out in the NPPF. The other two tests of (i.e. the need for the development and the lack of alternative sites) remain a barrier to an allocation, as does the objection in principle to any allocation that will be raised by the SDNPA.

## Interim conclusions on land in the South Downs National Park

Based on all the above, the advice presented here is that the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan should not allocate land in the South Downs National Park area unless or until there is support for such an allocation from the SDNPA. Given the planning policy context at this time, there is no support for an allocation forthcoming from the SDNPA and nor is there likely to be any support in the foreseeable future.

The same conclusion, expressed in a different way is as follows: If the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan does decide to allocate land in the SDNP then it will be at considerable risk of failure at examination and/or will fail to reach referendum if the current planning policy circumstances are still applicable at the time of the examination.

## Allocation of land for development elsewhere in the parish

Land elsewhere in the parish that is not in the South Downs National Park does not have the planning policy issues associated with land with the highest status of landscape and scenic beauty protection that affects land to the west. Nevertheless, the factors that will inform a decision to allocate other sites in the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan are closely related to the issues affecting the land in the South Downs National Park. The principle factors here are the issues of need for development and of the cost of developing outside the designated area.

At this time, there is no requirement for the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan to secure land to meet future housing numbers. This is because the requirement for housing in the parish under the current East Hampshire Local Plan has already been fulfilled.

That is not to say this situation will remain the same. Indeed, it is understood that EHDC are about to start work on the development of a new single Local Plan to replace all current documents, including:

- Joint Core Strategy (Part 1)
- The Housing & Employment Allocations (Part 2)
- The new Housing Allocations, currently being developed (Part 3)

This new, single Local Plan will be for the new plan period 2017 — 2036. This is eight years longer than the present JCS and responds to a recent Government requirement to plan for 15 years. If it is to meet its aim of having the new draft local plan ready for consultation for the end of 2018, EHDC need to start producing its new local plan now to. This timetable will ensure there is no gap in planning regulations in the district.

## The case for housing need

As part of the process of creating the new, single Local Plan, new housing figures will be required. It is anticipated that once these new numbers are agreed with central government, EHDC will then start to allocate these numbers to each parish across the district. If this is the case, then it will make the next stages in the neighbourhood plan process more straightforward as the neighbourhood plan team will have a “number to work towards” when it comes to allocating sites.

The Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan process requires this input from EHDC on the future housing needs of the parish before any further any exploratory work is undertaken on land to the south of the railway. Critical here is the number of new housing units it needs to find land for. Without this housing numbers information, the Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan could begin to allocate land unnecessarily. The scale of development needs to be understood as this will influence the land take that needs to be considered.



## Land south of the railway

During the November 2017 design forum, the land outside the South Downs National Park that was the focus of most of the debate was land south of the railway. While other potential sites exist, few are being actively promoted at this time by landowners and developers in the same way as land south of the railway.

While land south of the railway is perhaps a candidate for allocation, given the policy barriers to land in the South Downs National Park, it has technical issues relating to accessibility and its relationship to the village centre. The land has limited access points as it is bounded to the north by the railway line. Creating an effective network of connections to tie this land into the existing urban fabric will not be straightforward. Due to these technical issues, the merits of developing land south of the railway line have not been successfully demonstrated at this stage. There was unease amongst members of the design forum during the third day that access issues have still to be properly addressed.

This point relates to “... the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way” as set out in paragraph 116 of the NPPF. If the development of land south of the railway proves to be too costly as the technical issues of effective connectivity over the railway line prove impossible to deliver, then it may bring land in the South Downs National Park back into consideration, notwithstanding the policy barriers already described.

## Interim conclusions on land elsewhere in the parish

The work on the new, single EHDC Local Plan will be a critical input to the next stages of the neighbourhood plan process. The results of the housing needs work, when translated to a parish level, will be a key determinant of the land allocations process. Knowing the number of homes to include in the neighbourhood plan will help inform how much land needs to be included in the neighbourhood plan.

Due to the policy barriers already described, land that lies outside the South Downs National Park will need to be considered first. However, should the cost of development on these areas prove too much, then in accordance with the NPPF, consideration may then turn to land with the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

However, by this stage, the scale of the required incursion into such land will be better understood as the housing need, and therefore housing numbers, will be established. During the design forum, diagrams were presented that showed development of a significant scope and scale, involving hundreds of new homes and extensive new infrastructure, including new roads and sports facilities. The appropriateness of such proposals will need to be matched against the emerging housing need assessments being undertaken by EHDC in support of its new local plan. This will ensure that the neighbourhood plan does not over provide but can still be future-proofed against and unexpected rise in required housing numbers.

## Summary

Taken together, the visioning event (June 2017) and the design forum (November 2017) successfully explored the challenges and opportunities that the neighbourhood plan will need to address. The process also tested different future spatial scenarios in a very open and transparent way.

Bringing together into the same room a diverse range of voices — including landowners, developers, architects, technical officers, community groups, local amenity groups, sports clubs and schools — created a unique opportunity for the sharing of ideas and brought a sense of energy to the process.

The design forum also drew out definitive statements of intent from the main agencies and actors involved in the process, notably the SDNPA. These statements helped to clarify a number of key positions. As a result, there is now a stronger and clearer platform for future decision-making with regard to land allocations. There is now a greater understanding about the consequences (both intended and unintended) of different choices moving forwards.







