

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton, and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

SA Report to accompany the submission version of the Ecchinswell,
Sydmonton, and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

Ecchinswell, Sydmonton, and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering
Group

October 2022

Quality information

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Non-Technical Summary

What is a Sustainability Appraisal?

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to help avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

What is the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan?

The Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the “ESBGNP”) has been prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Purpose of this SA Report

This SA Report, which accompanies the submission version of the ESBGNP, is the latest document to be produced as part of the SA process. The first document was the SA Scoping Report (February 2022), which includes information about the ESBGNP area’s environment and community. The second document was the SA Report which accompanied the draft plan for Regulation 14 consultation in August 2022.

The purpose of this SA Report is to:

- Identify, describe, and evaluate the likely significant effects of the ESBGNP and alternatives.
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SA process which has been carried out to date.

The SA Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the ESBGNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes.
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues for the area.
- The SA Framework of objectives against which the ESBGNP has been assessed.
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the ESBGNP.
- The likely significant effects of the ESBGNP.
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the ESBGNP.
- The next steps for the ESBGNP and accompanying SA process.

Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton, and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

Consideration of site options

With a view to allocating sites within the ESBGNP area to contribute to meeting local housing needs, the ESBGNP Steering Group were keen to consider where development should be delivered within the plan area.

In light of this, the ESBGNP Group has undertaken assessment of the various sites available in the neighbourhood area. A total of 16 sites were considered through an initial site options assessment (SOA) process.

Following the identification of the 16 potential sites, the ESBGNP undertook a preliminary screening. From this initial screening, nine sites were shortlisted – five 'preferred' options, three 'fallback options' and an additional site. These nine sites have been further considered through the SA process. These sites are listed in Table NTS1 below and shown in the figure within Chapter 4 of the SA Report.

Table NTS1: Potential site options considered through the SA process.

SOA Ref.	SA ID and Name	Preferred or Fallback Site?	Size (Ha) ¹	Indicative Capacity ²
BGB (Woodside View)	BGB/EC004: Woodside View	Preferred	1.4	Approximately 15 dwellings
BGI (S of Rooksfield)	BGI: Land South of Rooksfield	Preferred	Approximately 2	Approximately 15 dwellings
BGH (W of Eagle Rd)	BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road	Preferred	0.6	Approximately 15 dwellings
EZ (Ecch Village Hall)	EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall	Preferred	2	Approximately 5 dwellings
EX (Clere Livery Stables)	EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry	Preferred	0.5	Approximately 5 dwellings
BGA (B-G Cottage)	BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage	Fallback	1.5	Approximately 15 dwellings
BGF/EC001	BGF/EC001	Unknown	1	Approximately 15 dwellings
EJ (Malthouse Farm)	EJ: Malthouse Farm	Fallback	4	Approximately 5 dwellings
EI (Land North of Pond)	EI: Land to the North of the Pond	Fallback	2	Approximately 5 dwellings

To support the consideration of the suitability of the shortlisted sites for a potential allocation of a type appropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan, the SA process has appraised the key constraints and opportunities present at each of the relevant sites (see Table 4.2 to Table 4.10 within the main body of the SA Report). A summary of the findings is presented overleaf in Table NTS2.

¹ Represents total site size and not necessarily total developable area.

² According to the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Site Assessment Output, all sites in Bishops Green are identified as having capacity for approximately 15 homes, and all sites in Ecchinswell are identified as having capacity for approximately five homes.

Table NTS2: Summary of SA site assessment findings

Site	Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Climate Change	Landscape	Historic Env.	Land, Soil and Water Resources	Community Wellbeing	Transport
BGB/EC004: Woodside View	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely positive effect
BGI: Land South of Rooksfield	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)
BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect
EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect
EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect
BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely positive effect
BGF/EC001	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)
EJ: Malthouse Farm	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect
EI: Land to the North of the Pond	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)
Key							
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)				Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Likely positive effect		
Neutral/no effect				Uncertain effect	Uncertain effect		

Preferred approach in the ESBGNP in light of the appraisal findings

The ESBGNP seeks to shape development in the neighbourhood area through a combination of allocations, specifically:

- Site BGI: Land South of Rooksfield for up to 15 homes (see policy ESBG3: Housing in Bishops Green).
- Site EX: Clere Livery Stable in old quarry for approximately five dwellings (see policy ESBG4: Housing in Ecchinswell).

The choice of site allocations has been informed by the findings of the site assessment undertaken for the ESBGNP, consultation events, other evidence base studies and the SA findings.

Assessment of the submission version of the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton, and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

The submission version of the ESBGNP presents 17 planning policies for guiding development in the neighbourhood area. These were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering. Earlier draft versions of the policies have been revisited and updated in light of the responses which were received through community consultation, and earlier work undertaken through the SA, including an assessment of the proposed Regulation 14 version of the ESBGNP.

Chapter 5 within the main body of the SA Report presents the findings of the appraisal of the submission version of the ESBGNP. Utilising the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SA, the SA process has assessed the policies put forward through the submission version of the ESBGNP. The SA Report has presented the findings of the assessment under the following SA Themes:

- Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- Climate Change.
- Landscape
- Historic Environment.
- Land, Soil, and Water Resources.
- Community Wellbeing; and
- Transportation.

In the context of the above, the assessment has concluded that the submission version of the ESBGNP is likely to have positive effects in relation to the 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' SA theme by encouraging proposals that support development that is sensitive to the existing habitats, species and ecological networks, in addition to protecting these features and supporting biodiversity net gain. This includes conserving landscape features like hedgerows and trees, protecting habitats, green open spaces and important landscape areas, and maintaining and enhancing the green and blue infrastructure network.

Regarding the 'Climate Change' SA theme, the ESBGNP will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions due to an increase in the built footprint of the neighbourhood area and the rural nature of the neighbourhood area affecting travel patterns. However, the plan has the potential to lead to positive effects through supporting proposals that include low carbon technologies, and proactively responding to the potential impacts of climate change, including an increase in extreme weather events, through the delivery of green infrastructure provision and the implementation of SuDS. Policies promoting active and sustainable transportation within the ESBGNP area also work to make the plan positive in terms of climate change.

The ESBGNP will bring positive effects in relation to the 'Landscape' SA theme. These benefits largely relate to the ESBGNP's emphasis on reinforcing landscape character in association with the distinct character areas present in the neighbourhood area, and the special qualities of the North Wessex Down AONB.

The ESBGNP places the distinct historic environment of the neighbourhood area at the centre of plan policies. Whilst the site allocation under policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) is in proximity to the Ecchinswell Conservation Area, no significant impacts on the historic significance of the conservation area are anticipated as a result of an allocation at this site. In addition, the site allocation policy includes provision for the protection of the historic interest of the conservation area. The wider policies that conserve and enhance the historic environment and natural environment will support the conservation and enhancement of the fabric and setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets in the ESBGNP area. The policies compliment the ESBG Design Guide and Codes, with further benefits for the historic environment in the neighbourhood area.

In terms of the 'Land, Soil and Water Resources' SA theme, the ESBGNP includes a site allocation on greenfield land and a site allocation on a site that has been previously developed. With varied levels of likelihood of BMV land in the neighbourhood area, it is possible development could result in the loss of productive agricultural land. However, the wider policies of the plan protect the area from inappropriate development and outline policies that will help support the capacity of the landscape to regulate soil and water quality. Given both sites overlap with a minerals safeguarding area, it is likely a consultation with Hampshire County Council will be necessary.

The ESBGNP is likely to have positive effects in relation to the 'Community Wellbeing' SA theme, due to the provision of homes suitable for older people and younger people with families, plus the provision for affordable housing. The range of types and tenures of housing facilitated by the neighbourhood plan will help reinforce community vitality and support local services and facilities. Coupled with wider plan policies related to improving community infrastructure, maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure and encouraging active transportation, the ESBGNP will support the quality of life for residents in the plan area.

In relation to the 'Transportation' SA theme, the ESBGNP includes policies that will help to improve access from the sites to the local transport network, outlining measures to keep residents on these sites safe on the road. Additionally, the plan supports the improvement of pedestrian and cycle access in the wider plan area (to the benefit of the residents' health and wellbeing) and encourages the development of sustainable transport provision. This demonstrates the plan has considered the impacts development will have on the local transport network and has engaged in

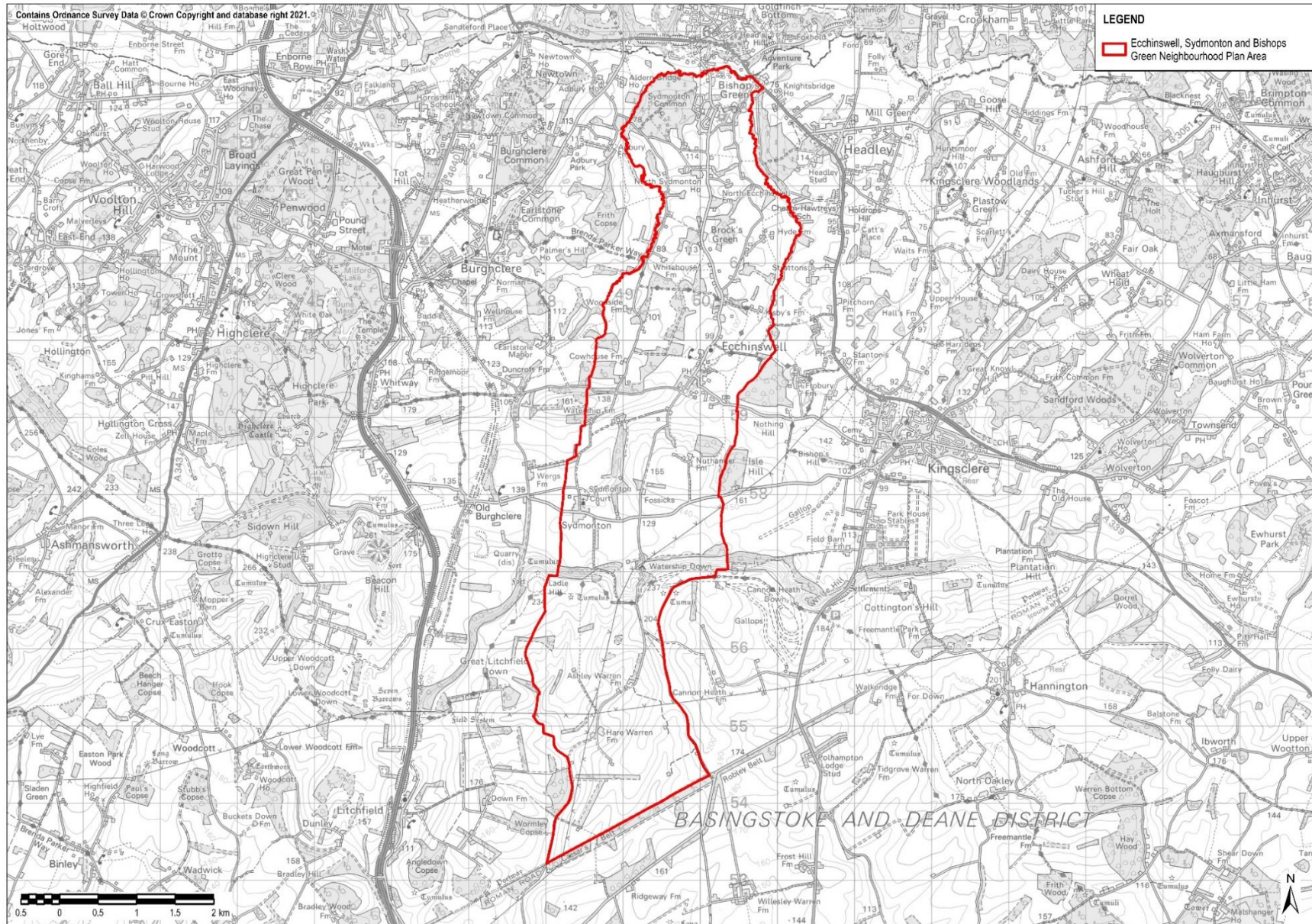
ways to mitigate this impact. However, it is recognised sustainable transport options within the ESBGNP area are relatively limited due to the rural nature of the area, and private vehicle use will continue to allow for access to a greater number of services and amenities.

Next steps

This SA Report accompanies the ESBGNP for submission to the Local Planning Authority, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, for subsequent Independent Examination.

At Independent Examination, the ESBGNP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans and is in general conformity with local planning policy.

If the Independent Examination is favourable, ESBGNP will be subject to a referendum, organised by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the ESBGNP, then it will be 'made'. Once made, ESBGNP will become part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area.



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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of the emerging Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 The Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'ESBGNP') is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011³ and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012⁴. The ESBGNP is being prepared in the context of the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029)⁵. Due regard is also given to the emerging Local Plan Update⁶ which, once adopted, will replace the current Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029) and cover the period up to 2038.
- 1.3 Key information relating to the ESBGNP is presented below in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Key information relating to the ESBGNP.

Name of Responsible Authority	Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Title of Plan	Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan ("the ESBGNP")
Subject	Neighbourhood planning
Purpose	<p>The ESBGNP is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It is being prepared in the context of the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029). Due regard is also given to the emerging Local Plan Update.</p> <p>The ESBGNP will be used to guide and shape development within the neighbourhood area.</p>
Timescale	To 2038
Area covered by the plan	The ESBGNP area covers the civil parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green, in Hampshire (as per the figure above).
Summary of content	The ESBGNP will set out a vision, strategy, and range of policies for the neighbourhood area.
Plan contact point	Marian Dain, Steering Group Coordinator Email address: CllrDain.ESBG@outlook.com

³ UK Government (2011) 'Localism Act 2011' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴ UK Government (2012) 'The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵ Basingstoke and Deane (2016) 'Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011 to 2029)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶ Basingstoke and Deane (no date) 'About the Local Plan Update' can be accessed [here](#).

SA explained

- 1.4 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts.
- 1.5 Through this approach, the SA for the ESBGNP seeks to maximise the developing plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.6 SA is undertaken to address the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). It also widens the scope of the assessment from focussing on environmental issues to further consider social and economic issues. SA is a legal requirement for Local Plans; however, a Neighbourhood Plan is not a Local Plan and SA is not therefore legally required.
- 1.7 The ESBGNP has been screened in by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as requiring a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). To meet this requirement, the ESBGNP is undergoing an SA process which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. This mirrors the approach undertaken for the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan and helps enable the neighbourhood plan development process to consider how it will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.8 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 (or SA 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 ESBGNP) that presents outcomes from the environmental assessment (i.e. discusses 'likely significant effects' that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.
- 1.9 This 'SA Report' is concerned with item 'ii' above.

Structure of this SA Report

- 1.10 This document is the SA Report for the ESBGNP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed below with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations. Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

Table 1.2: Questions that must be answered by the SA Report to meet the regulatory⁷ requirements

SA Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ⁸
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan.
What's the scope of the SA?	<p>Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.</p> <p>The relevant environmental protection objectives established at international or national level.</p> <p>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.</p>
	<p>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan.</p> <p>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.</p> <p>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.</p>
What are the key issues and objectives?	Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment.
What has plan-making/SA involved up to this point?	<p>Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with.</p> <p>The likely significant effects associated with alternatives.</p> <p>Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the current version of the plan.</p>
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<p>The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan.</p> <p>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan.</p>
What happens next?	The next steps for the plan making / SA process.

⁷ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

⁸ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

2. Local Plan context and vision for the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

Local Plan context for the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 Adopted in May 2016, the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan sets out the land use policies to meet the borough's economic, environmental, and social needs and aims for the future (up until 2029) and provides the framework for all subsequent documents which form part of the adopted Local Plan.
- 2.2 In May 2019, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council agreed to launch the preparation of an updated Local Plan in keeping with national guidance promoting an on-going cycle of plan making and review. The Local Development Scheme, which is required to timetable which planning documents will be produced and when, was last updated in June 2021⁹. An issues and options consultation (Regulation 18 consultation) for the emerging Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan Update was undertaken in Autumn 2020.
- 2.3 A recent Settlement Study has been undertaken for the Local Plan Update¹⁰. Stage 1 of the Settlement Study identified that it would be appropriate to stratify the borough's settlements into different categories according to their provision of services and facilities, accessibility, employment and size. Basingstoke was the sole settlement in Category 1, in recognition of the fact that it is significantly more sustainable than any other settlement. At the other end of the scale, small villages that contained limited basic facilities were grouped in Category 4. Bishops Green and Ecchinswell are two of the six settlements included in Category 4, which do not currently have defined Settlement Policy Boundaries. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council would like Settlement Policy Boundaries to be developed for these settlements. In this context, it is the intention for Settlement Policy Boundaries to be developed in the neighbourhood area through the ESBGNP.
- 2.4 Sydmonton is not included in any category (due to its small size, its lack of services and facilities and its position as a hamlet in the open countryside) and is therefore unlikely to be the focus area for any new development that comes forward during the plan period.
- 2.5 With regards to housing numbers, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have not provided a definitive number for delivery in the neighbourhood area. However, they have suggested to the Parish Council that 15 new dwellings in the vicinity of Bishops Green may be appropriate; this though is yet to be confirmed. This indicative housing number has been provided in conjunction with the provisions of paragraph 67 of the NPPF, which seeks to enable neighbourhood groups to proceed with their plan making in advance of a local

⁹ Basingstoke and Deane (no date) 'Local Development Scheme (LDS)' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁰ Basingstoke and Deane (no date) 'Local Plan Update: Developing a Spatial Strategy – Rural Areas' can be accessed [here](#).

plan review and the local planning authority testing their spatial strategy and updated housing requirement.

- 2.6 Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for the area, alongside the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.

Vision, aims, and objectives for the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.7 Developed during the earlier stages of plan making and via community consultation, the vision for the ESBGNP is as follows:



A small rural parish located near prosperous towns that nurtures modest organic growth and continues to evolve towards a more sustainable lower-carbon future.

Peaceful settlements with a rural character where residents prosper and enjoy both their communities and the surrounding countryside as well as having easy access to employment, vital services, and leisure activities. Confidence that the highly valued natural environment, biodiversity and landscape are continuously improving and that important heritage assets and views are maintained for future generations.

Housing development is limited, in keeping with the rural environment, governed by local growth, the need for affordability and with more options for young families, the elderly and less mobile.

Vision Statement for the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan



- 2.8 The vision statement for the ESBGNP is underpinned by nine strategic objectives for development during the plan period, as follows:
- Retain and enhance the rural character of the parish and its settlements.
 - Ensure the inherently limited sustainability of our small village settlements is not damaged by inappropriate development and is nurtured with improvements to community facilities and internet access.
 - Accommodate and encourage organic growth of the parish and the evolving needs of residents by encouraging the development of a modest number of extra homes that are affordable and suited to different stages of individual and family life.
 - Ensure the parish is fit for a low/zero-carbon future via:

- Adopting advanced standards for insulation, renewable power generation/heating and internet access for both new homes and significant alterations and extensions,
- Enabling and encouraging widespread usage of zero emission vehicles by easy access to charging points.
- Enhance the environment, biodiversity, landscape, and access to the countryside and green spaces via clear policies and an alliance between parish residents and landowners. Specifically address shortfall of accessible Green Space in Bishops Green.
- Ensure our heritage assets, key views and the rural character of settlements are retained and enhanced by good stewardship and that design policies ensure new development and refurbishments are in keeping with existing housing character.
- Strengthen the community and reduce the need for travel outside the parish by development of employment opportunities and community facilities suited and scaled not only to our rural environment but also the needs/wishes of residents.
- Reduce concerns over road safety and help community health and well-being by improvements to road layout, parking and traffic management hardware and by actions to encourage more walking and cycling; and
- Underpin delivery of the Vision and Objectives by establishing and progressing community-led programmes in Transport, Socio-Economic Development and Facilities/Services.

3. What is the scope of the SA?

Summary of SA Scoping

- 3.1 The SEA Regulations require that: *“When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”*.
- 3.2 In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Historic England¹¹. These authorities were consulted on the scope of the SA from 21st February 2022 to 28th March 2022.
- 3.3 The purpose of scoping was to outline the ‘scope’ of the SA through setting out the following information:
 - A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional, and local plans and strategies relevant to the ESBGNP.
 - Baseline data against which the ESBGNP can be assessed. This baseline data is presented in Appendix A; the key sustainability issues and the SEA Framework are presented below.
 - The key sustainability issues for the ESBGNP.
 - An ‘SA Framework’ of objectives against which the ESBGNP can be assessed.
- 3.4 Responses received on the Scoping Report, and how they were addressed, have been summarised below. It is noted that no response was received from the Environment Agency.

¹¹ In-line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because *‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme’*.

Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SA Scoping Report

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
Historic England	
<i>Historic England Historic Environment Planning Adviser (email and letter response received 1st March 2022)</i>	
In terms of the historic environment, we consider that the report has identified the plans and programmes which are of most relevance to the development of the plan, that it has established an appropriate baseline against which to assess the plan’s proposals and that it has put forward a suitable set of objectives and indicators. Overall, we believe that it provides an appropriate framework for assessing significant effects which this plan might have upon the historic environment.	Comment noted.
Historic England strongly advises that conservation and archaeological advisers are closely involved throughout the preparation of the SEA of this plan. Historic England has produced guidance for all involved in undertaking SEA/SA exercises which gives advice on issues relating to the historic environment. This can be found here .	Comment noted. The advice within the linked document will be considered during the subsequent site assessments and SEA stages.
Natural England	
<i>Natural England Operations Delivery Consultations Team (email and letter response received 4th March 2022)</i>	
Natural England has no specific comments to make on this neighbourhood plan SA /SEA scoping report.	Comment noted.
However, we refer you to the advice in the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.	Comment noted. The advice within the annex has been a useful reference point during the subsequent stages of the SEA.

Key sustainability issues

Air quality

- Whilst emissions from transport are not a significant issue for the Neighbourhood Plan area, the effects of the ESBGNP in relation to traffic and congestion will be explored under the ‘Transportation’ SA theme.
- The ESBGNP presents opportunities to improve accessibility and support more local and sustainable journeys/connections. These opportunities will be explored under the ‘Community Wellbeing’ and ‘Transportation’ SA themes.
- Traffic and congestion arising from planned new development within and surrounding the ESBGNP area have the potential to increase emissions. However, there is an absence of any specific air quality issues like AQMAs and there are no exceeded or expected exceedances of national air quality

objectives. **In light of this, the Air Quality theme has been scoped out for the purposes of the SA process.**

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- The ESBGNP area is in proximity to several SSSIs and overlaps with SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the type of the development which may be taken forward during the plan period. However, the scale of potential development is perhaps less likely to exceed the SSSI Impact Risk Zone thresholds at most locations.
- Additional designated sites which are within proximity to the ESBGNP area include the Herbert Plantation LNR.
- There are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats located within or in proximity to the Neighbourhood Plan area, primarily areas of deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland, wood pasture and parkland, traditional orchards, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, lowland heathland, and ancient woodland.

Climate Change

- Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have both declared a climate emergency and have resolved to help tackle climate change through plan-making where possible.
- The transport sector continues to be a key challenge in terms of reducing emissions.
- Regarding the fluvial flood risks within the ESBGNP area, Ecchinswell is most at risk due to its proximity to the Ecchinswell Stream and with areas of low, medium, and high flood risk.
- Surface water run-off is an issue for some parts of the parish. In this respect poorly planned development can heighten the risk and impact of flooding through increasing the run-off from land to water courses.
- In terms of wastewater treatment, sewage capacity has been identified as an issue for parts of the parish.

Landscape

- The southern half of the ESBGNP area is within the North Wessex Downs AONB; as such, the relationship between the settlements and the open countryside is an important part of designation.
- There is one key landscape type within the ESBGNP area which has a strong connection to the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- New development has the potential to lead to incremental change in landscape and villagescape character and the visual amenity.

Historic Environment

- The ESBGNP area contains a rich historic environment, including two Grade II* listed buildings, 49 Grade II listed buildings, two scheduled monuments and one conservation 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.
- The conservation area appraisal for Ecchinswell contains an overview of the special qualities and characteristics for the area.
- As well as this, the Hampshire HER highlights numerous non-designated heritage assets which provide local historic significance to the ESBGNP area.

Land, Soil and Water Resources

- The ESBGNP area has the potential to be underlain by best and most versatile (BMV).
- Water resources located in the ESBGNP area include the Ecchinswell Brook, the Earlstone Stream, Burghclere Brook, and some isolated ponds and drainage ditches alongside field margins.
- The section south of Sydmonton in the Neighbourhood Plan area overlaps with two NVZs as well as an SPZ. In addition, the area north of Ecchinswell is designated as Zone 3 Total Catchment, Zone 2 Outer Protection and Zone 1 Inner Protection SPZ.
- Plan making should consider how local decisions will affect water supply and wastewater and ensure appropriate infrastructure is in place to accommodate new development areas.
- There are locations within the ESBGNP area that are within the Mineral and Waste infrastructure, Brick Clay deposit and Sharp Sand and Gravel deposit Mineral Consultation Areas.

Community Wellbeing

- The Neighbourhood Plan area has experienced an increase in population between 2011-2020.
- In common with many areas, the population has seen an ageing trend. This has implications for the suitability of the housing stock and access to services and facilities.
- The services, facilities, and amenities present within the ESBGNP area are central to the community vitality and the quality of life of residents. Access to and availability of these community assets will be essential for the ongoing vitality of the parish.
- As the requirements of the working population continue to change, there is likely to be a greater preference for adaptable dwellings that can accommodate flexible working practices.
- Housing affordability and suitability, houses being built for the future and the impacts development will have on the environment and traffic are key concerns for the residents of the parish.

- Based on the 2019 IMD data, the Basingstoke and Deane 003A LSOA is within the top 10% deprived for the ‘barriers to housing and services’ sub-domain.

Transportation

- There are no railway stations within the ESBGNP area.
- Bus services are limited to Bishops Green.
- The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to change travel patterns in the short, medium, and longer term.
- There is a need to promote an effective pedestrian, cycling and movement strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- The volume and speed of traffic are key local concerns.

SEA Framework

3.5 Drawing on the baseline data and the key issues identified above, the SEA Framework is presented below.

Table 3.2: The SEA Framework for the ESBGNP

SA Objective	Assessment questions to consider for the allocations/proposals within the ESBGNP – will the option / proposal help to:
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	
Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the integrity of the designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity located within proximity to the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats as well as priority habitats and species? • Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?
Climate Change	
Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the ESBGNP area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of journeys made? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources? • Support proposals for EV charging infrastructure?

SA Objective	Assessment questions to consider for the allocations/proposals within the ESBGNP – will the option / proposal help to:
<p>Support the resilience of the ESBGNP area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 ESBGNP area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water runoff and drainage? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the ESBGNP area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
Landscape	
<p>To protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape and villagescape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to protect and enhance the integrity of the North Wessex Downs AONB? • Protect and/or enhance local landscape and villagescape character, key sensitivities, and quality of place? • Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character? • Protect visual amenity and locally important views in the Plan area? • Retain and enhance landscape and villagescape features that contribute to the rural setting of the neighbourhood area?
Historic Environment	
<p>Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the ESBGNP area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance buildings, structures, and areas of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated as well as their settings? • Protect the integrity and the historic setting of key finds of cultural heritage interest as listed in the Hampshire HER? • Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the ESBGNP area?
Land, Soil and Water resources	
<p>Ensure the efficient and effective use of land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the loss of high-quality agricultural land resources? • Promote any opportunities for the use of previously developed land, or vacant/underutilised land? • Protect the integrity of mineral resources?

SA Objective	Assessment questions to consider for the allocations/proposals within the ESBGNP – will the option / proposal help to:
<p>Protect and enhance water quality and use and manage water resources sustainably.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid impacts on water quality? • Support improvements to water quality? • Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside development? • Protect waterbodies from pollution? • Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/ or water recycling?
<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	
<p>Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? • 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?
<p>Transportation</p>	
<p>Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the key objectives within the Hampshire Local Transport Plan and the Basingstoke Transport Strategy to encourage more sustainable transport? • Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel? • Promote improved local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement? • Facilitate working from home and remote working? • Improve road safety? • Reduce the impact on residents and the built environment from the road network?

4. What has plan making/SA involved up to this point?

- 4.1 In accordance with the SEA Regulations the SA Report must include:
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
 - The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives/an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.
- 4.2 The 'narrative' of plan-making/SA up to this point is told within this part of the SA Report. Specifically, the following sections describe how the SA process to date has informed the consideration of different approaches for the key elements of the ESBGNP.
- 4.3 This reflects that the development and appraisal of proposals in neighbourhood plans needs to be an iterative process, with the proposals being revised to take account of the appraisal findings (PPG Paragraph: 038 Reference ID: 11-038-20190722).

Overview of plan making/SA work undertaken since 2021

- 4.4 Significant public consultation has been carried out to date to support the emerging ESBGNP. This has gathered local views and opinions, with a view to engaging local people throughout the neighbourhood plan's development process. This has included (but is not limited to) the following:
- An initial meeting in January 2021 to gather a team and examine the Burghclere Parish neighbourhood plan to examine the output of the SA process. Subsequently there have been regular planning meetings, with agendas and minutes published on the neighbourhood plan website¹².
 - Community consultation events between July-September 2021, the outputs of which are accessible [here](#). Further community consultation occurred in May 2022, the outputs of which are accessible [here](#).
 - Initiating a 'Call for Sites' process to identify suitable locations for housing; possible sites were submitted to AECOM for assessment.

Housing numbers to deliver through the ESBGNP

- 4.5 With regards to housing numbers, the housing requirement figure for Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green as stipulated within the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Local Plan Update is 15 dwellings. This number was derived from a sustainability formula in the spatial review that originally allocated 37 dwellings to the neighbourhood area; a 'low sustainability settlement' cut was applied to reduce this number to 15. It is recognised the ESBGNP will be submitted before the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

¹² Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Parish Council (no date) 'ES&BG Neighbourhood Steering Team Meetings' can be accessed [here](#).

Local Plan Update comes into play, and there is a possibility that the housing number will be revisited due to a potential redistribution of houses from other areas the local plan covers.

Potential site options considered through the SA

Initial shortlisting of sites

4.6 With a view to allocating sites within the ESBGNP area to contribute to meeting local housing, the ESBGNP Steering Group were keen to consider where development should be delivered within the plan area.

4.7 In light of this, the ESBGNP Group has undertaken assessment of the various sites in the neighbourhood area. A total of 16 sites were considered through an initial site options assessment (SOA) process, identified as follows:

- Sites which came forward through a local 'call for sites' process completed in 2022, which invited landowners to submit any parcels of land which they would be happy to release for new housing; and
- Sites within the ESBGNP area which had already been identified by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council through their emerging Local Plan evidence base, including the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)¹³.

Assessment of shortlisted sites through the SA process

4.8 Following the identification of the 16 potential sites, the ESBGNP undertook a preliminary screening of the sites based upon the location of the site in relation to the settlement boundaries, whether there was safe access to the site and whether the site was deliverable for development. From this initial screening, five sites were confirmed to be shortlisted (and became the preferred options), five were unsure (four of which became the fallback options) and the rest were excluded. The fallback option BGC (N of College Copse) was withdrawn before the SA site assessment, and an additional SHELAA site BGF/EC001 was put forward and considered in the assessment. These nine sites have been further considered through the SA process. These sites are listed in Table 4.1 below and shown in the figures that follow.

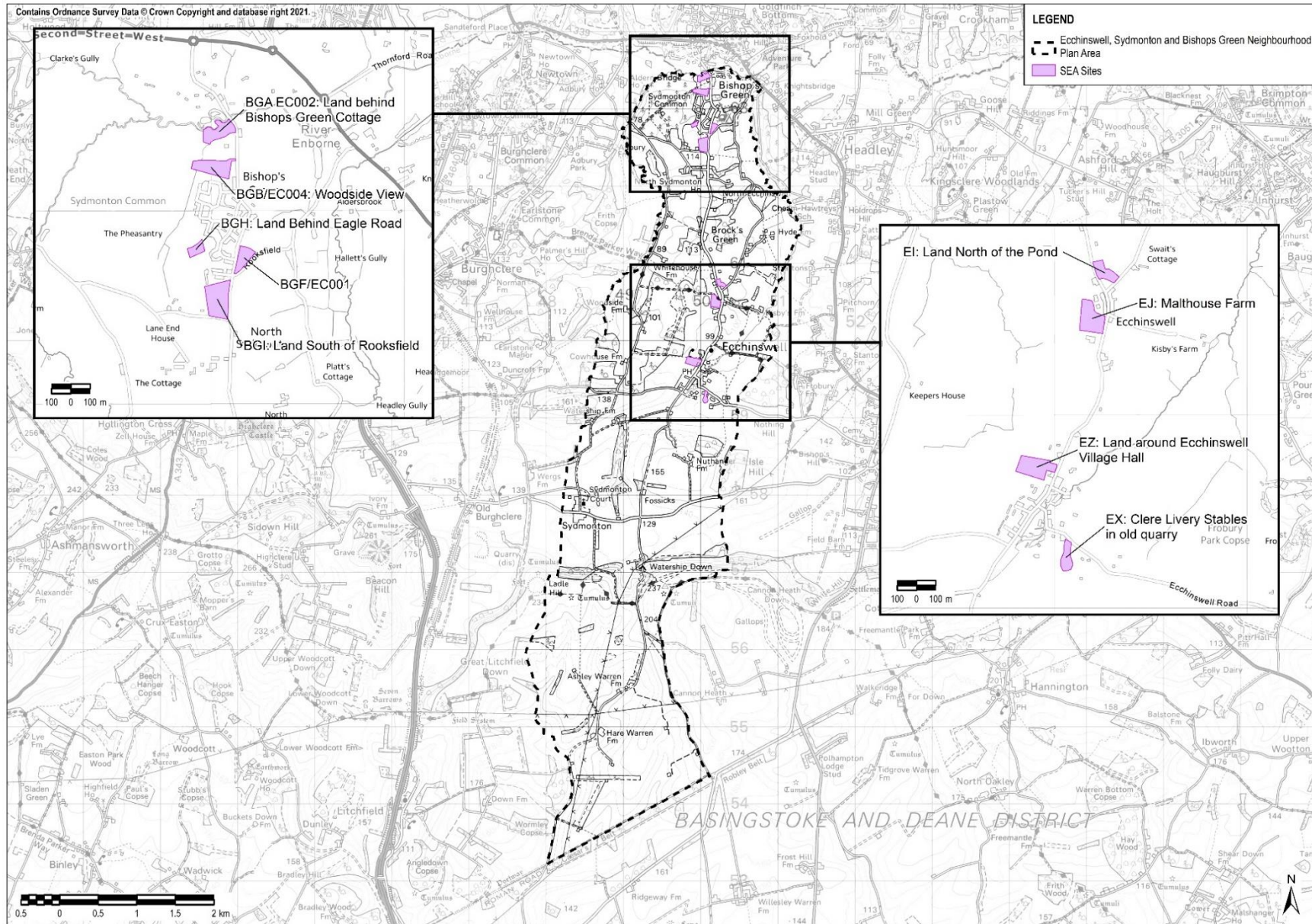
¹³ Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (2021) 'Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)' can be accessed [here](#).

Table 4.1: Potential site options considered through the SA process.

SOA Ref.	SA ID and Name	Preferred or Fallback Site?	Size (Ha) ¹⁴	Indicative Capacity ¹⁵
BGB (Woodside View)	BGB/EC004: Woodside View	Preferred	1.4	Approximately 15 dwellings
BGI (S of Rooksfield)	BGI: Land South of Rooksfield	Preferred	Approximately 2	Approximately 15 dwellings
BGH (W of Eagle Rd)	BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road	Preferred	0.6	Approximately 15 dwellings
EZ (Ecch Village Hall)	EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall	Preferred	2	Approximately 5 dwellings
EX (Clere Livery Stables)	EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry	Preferred	0.5	Approximately 5 dwellings
BGA (B-G Cottage)	BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage	Fallback	1.5	Approximately 15 dwellings
BGF/EC001	BGF/EC001	Unknown	1	Approximately 15 dwellings
EJ (Malthouse Farm)	EJ: Malthouse Farm	Fallback	4	Approximately 5 dwellings
EI (Land North of Pond)	EI: Land to the North of the Pond	Fallback	2	Approximately 5 dwellings

¹⁴ Represents total site size and not necessarily total developable area.

¹⁵ According to the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Site Assessment Output, all sites in Bishops Green are identified as having capacity for approximately 15 homes, and all sites in Ecchinswell are identified as having capacity for approximately five homes.



- 4.9 To support the consideration of the suitability of the shortlisted sites for a potential allocation of a type appropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan, the SA process has appraised the key constraints and opportunities present at each of the relevant sites (see Table 4.2 to Table 4.10 overleaf).
- 4.10 In this context, the sites have been considered in relation to the SA Framework of objectives and decision-making questions developed during SA scoping (see Chapter 3 above) and the baseline information.
- 4.11 Utilising the SA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SA, the appraisal has been presented through the seven SA themes as follows:
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
 - Climate Change.
 - Landscape.
 - Historic Environment.
 - Land, Soil and Water Resources.
 - Community Wellbeing; and
 - Transportation.
- 4.12 The appraisal considers the relative sustainability merits of each of the options. Findings are presented as a commentary on effects. It is anticipated that this will provide the reader with a likely indication of the relative performance of the options in relation to each theme considered.
- 4.13 These assessments undertaken through the SA process have been prepared separately to the initial site assessments completed for the ESBGNP.

SA Site Assessment Findings

Table 4.2: Site Assessment – BGB/EC004: Woodside View

SA Theme BGB/EC004: Woodside View



Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The Greenham and Crookham Commons SSSI is located approximately 350m north of the site. The site does not though overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential). The site is also within proximity to Sydmonton Common and Lower Burnoak Copse SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation) and Gold Copse SINC, which are located c.130m to the west.

There is coastal and floodplain grazing marsh Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat on the west of the site and approximately 30m to the north. There are also areas of deciduous woodland BAP Priority Habitat approximately 40m west of the site, and ancient woodland is present adjacent to the western site boundary. Whilst direct impacts on this habitat from land take and fragmentation are not anticipated, disturbance may take place from noise, light pollution or trampling from enhanced access.

Additionally, there are trees and hedgerows located along the site boundaries. These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

SA Theme **BGB/EC004: Woodside View**

Climate Change	<p>Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Despite being in relatively good proximity to the centre of Bishops Green, there are limited services and facilities in the village. Therefore, there is a need to travel to larger settlements for key services and facilities, including Newbury.</p> <p>With regards to flood risk issues, the whole site is within fluvial Flood Zone 1. The eastern and western site boundaries are at low and medium risk of surface water flooding.</p>	
Landscape	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, AONB or any green belt land. According to the Hampshire County Council website, it is within the Highclere Chase (2a) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area. This site is at a lower elevation than most of Bishops Green.</p> <p>It is important to note that although this site is located within the administrative boundary of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, it is also located adjacent to the administrative boundary of West Berkshire, and would be seen in the context of that part of the administrative area. With regards to the planning application for this site, West Berkshire highlighted in their response to the application that the proposed development has the potential to erode the existing rural character of the area and present a significant urbanising effect. This increase in built development would lead to harm for the existing rural character and appearance of the area, and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The landscape officer for BDBC in their response to the application stated that there could be a harmful and adverse impact on the overall landscape character and development here could harm the fundamental rural character of the landscape in this location.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area. However, it is possible that development at this site will be viewed by ten or eleven properties to the south and there could be an impact on medium distance views to the north-east. There is partial screening in place provided by trees.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations; however, there is a TPO (case number LAWDA0CR0A200) approximately 60m to the north of the site.</p>	
Historic Environment	<p>The site is not within or in proximity to a conservation area and no nationally listed buildings are present on the site or within proximity to it. Additionally, there are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development. No features listed on the Historic Environment Record have been recorded on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.</p>	
Land, Soil and Water Resources	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 4 Poor agricultural land. The land is predicted to have a moderate likelihood (20-60%) of the occurrence of BMV land indicated by Natural England.</p> <p>There are no watercourses within or in proximity to this site, however there is a drain within 15m of the western site boundary that directs water from Featherbed Lane to the River Enborne to the north. In terms of SPZs, the site is wholly within Zone I – Inner Protection Zone. The site does not overlap with a NVZ.</p> <p>This site overlaps with an MSA for Sharp Sand and Gravel.</p>	

SA Theme **BGB/EC004: Woodside View**

Community Wellbeing	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away in the West Berkshire Council administrative area. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.</p> <p>The public footpath 80m north of the site allows for access to Sydmonton Common, a large wooded area that provides open space and recreational areas. A pavement on Ecchinswell Road/Ash Road links the site to the village hall/shop and play area.</p>	
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Transportation	<p>There are no railway stations in proximity to the site, the closest being Newbury railway station, approximately 6.6 km away. The Stagecoach South Link Bus stops at the Bishops Green Turn on the A339, which requires an approximate ten minute walk north. This service provides access to Basingstoke, Rooksdown, Kingsclere, Greenham Common and Newbury Monday-Saturday. Additionally, the Reading Buses 103 service stops at Bishops Green Turn and at Four Oaks bus stop 50m south of the site. This route provides services to Venture West, Heads Hill, Adbury and Newbury Monday-Friday. There is easy access to the adjacent Ecchinswell Road to the east of the site; Newbury is an estimated ten minute drive away and Andover and Basingstoke are an approximate 30 minute drive.</p> <p>A pavement on Ecchinswell Road/Ash Road links the site to the village hall/shop and play area. Regarding the wider PRow network, there is a footpath approximately 60m north of the site and another approximately 140m north.</p>	
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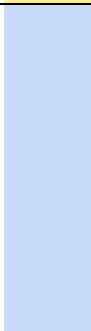
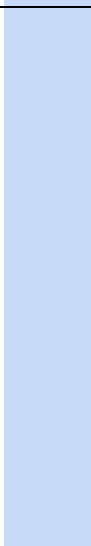
Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 4.3: Site Assessment – BGI: Land South of Rooksfield
SA Theme **BGI: Land South of Rooksfield**



<p>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</p>	<p>An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).</p> <p>There are no Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats on the site or in proximity to it. However, there are trees and hedgerows located along the western site boundary and part of the northern boundary. These connect to the established tree belt which runs south to Featherbed Lane and north into Gold Copse SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation). Additionally, this site forms part of a green corridor. Therefore, these features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.</p>
<p>Climate Change</p>	<p>Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.</p> <p>With regards to fluvial flood risk, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1, and as such is not at risk of flooding. The northern corner is at low risk of surface water flooding. However it is likely SuDS will be required.</p>

SA Theme **BGI: Land South of Rooksfield**

<p>Landscape</p>	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, AONB or any green belt land. According to the Hampshire County Council website, it is within the Highclere Chase (2a) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area. This site is located in proximity to Bishops Green but is higher in elevation. It is a relatively level site, with a slight west to east slope and a high point in the south western corner.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area. However, given the site is higher in topography and is raised from the surrounding area, development would be visible from the east. In this respect the site offers long views across Ecchinswell Road to the east, including to and from Dod's Copse, Little Westland's Copse and Westland's Copse.</p> <p>Development at this site is likely to be visible from existing properties along Ecchinswell Road and Featherbed Lane, with limited screening available. Additionally, development will be kept to the northern end of the site and the southern part will be landscaped to create open space amenity, respond to views and setting, provide net gains and create settlement edge character.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations, nor are there any in proximity.</p>	
<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>The site is not within or in proximity to a conservation area and no nationally listed buildings are present on the site or within proximity to it. Additionally, there are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development. No features listed on the Historic Environment Record have been recorded on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.</p>	
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. However, the land is predicted to have a low likelihood (less than 20%) of the occurrence of BMV land (as indicated by Natural England).</p> <p>There is no waterbody within or in proximity to this site. In terms of SPZs, the site is wholly within Zone II – Outer Protection Zone; it does not overlap with an NVZ.</p> <p>This site overlaps with an MSA for Sharp Sand and Gravel.</p>	
<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.</p> <p>Access to the site is proposed to be through the north-east corner on the intersection of Hyde Lane, Rooksfield and Ecchinswell Road. There is no pedestrian connectivity on this site. Ecchinswell Road is directly east of this site but has no pavement to facilitate safe pedestrian movement to other parts of the Bishops Green, including the village hall, shop and play park.</p>	

SA Theme **BGI: Land South of Rooksfield**

Transportation	<p>There are no railway stations in proximity to the site, the closest being Newbury railway station, which is located 6.7km away. The Stagecoach South Link Bus stops at the Bishops Green Turn on the A339, which requires an approximate 20 minute walk north. Additionally, the Reading Buses 103 service stops at Ash Road bus stop which is an estimated five minute walk from the site. There is easy access to the adjacent Ecchinswell Road to the east of the site; Newbury is an estimated 12 minute drive away and Andover and Basingstoke are an approximate 30 minute drive.</p> <p>There is no pedestrian connectivity on this site, however there is a wide verge on Ecchinswell Road that has potential to provide pedestrian and cycle access to the village centre. Ecchinswell Road is directly east of the site but has no pavement to facilitate safe pedestrian movement to other parts of Bishops Green, including the village hall, shop and play park. Vehicular access to the site could come from Ecchinswell Road.</p> <p>Regarding the wider PRow network, there is a footpath approximately 65m south of the site.</p>	
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Key			
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect	
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect	

Table 4.4: Site Assessment – BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road
SA Theme **BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road**



Biodiversity and Geodiversity An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

There are no Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats directly on the site, however there is ancient woodland adjacent to the northern boundary. Whilst direct impacts on this habitat from land take and fragmentation are not anticipated, disturbance may take place from noise, light pollution or trampling from enhanced access. Additionally, there are trees on the southern site boundary and vegetation on the eastern boundary. These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

Climate Change Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.

With regards to flood risk issues, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1. The southern site boundary is adjacent to two small areas at low risk of surface water flooding.

SA Theme **BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road**

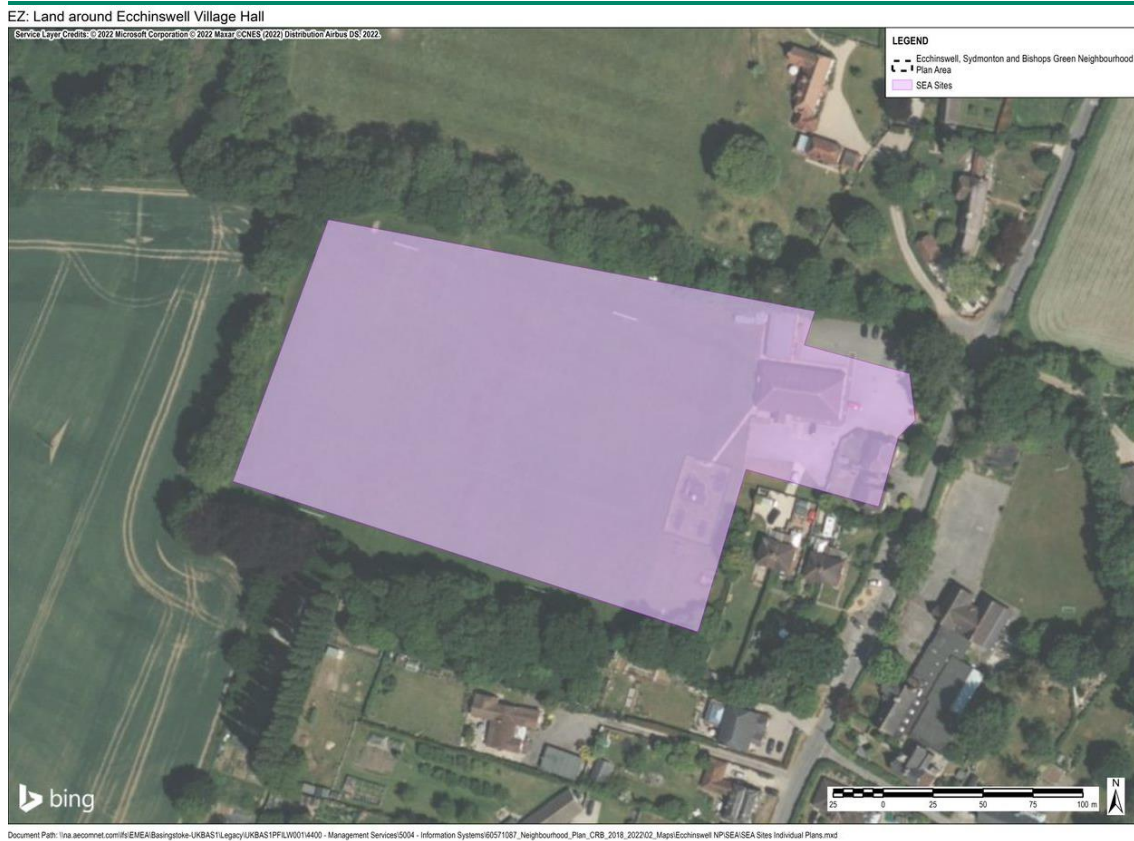
<p>Landscape</p>	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, AONB or any green belt land. According to the Hampshire County Council website, it is within the Highclere Chase (2a) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area. The site is relatively contained in the landscape, although it is slightly higher in elevation than the rest of the settlement.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with tree preservation order (TPO) designations; however, there are several TPOs within 100m of the site, all designated under the case number LAWCLMCR0A200.</p>	
<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>The site is not within or in proximity to a conservation area and no nationally listed buildings are present on the site or within proximity to it. Additionally, there are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development.</p> <p>The site has archaeological potential. According to the Hampshire County Council Historic Environment Record, a Bronze Age urn has been recovered from the quarry adjacent to the southern site boundary, and in the area south of the site Roman pottery has been recovered as well as an additional Late Bronze Age bucket urn. There is also evidence of the existence of a post-Medieval quarry.</p>	
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. The land is however predicted to have a low likelihood (less than 20%) of the occurrence of BMV land (by Natural England).</p> <p>No waterbodies are present within or in proximity to this site. In terms of SPZs, the site is wholly within Zone II – Outer Protection Zone. The site does not overlap with an NVZ.</p> <p>This site overlaps with an MSA for Sharp Sand and Gravel.</p>	
<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.</p> <p>There is no existing pedestrian connectivity on this site and is not directly linked to the limited services and amenities in Bishops Green (including village hall, shop and playpark).</p>	

SA Theme **BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road**

Transportation	<p>The railway station is Newbury railway station, which is located c.7km away. The Stagecoach South Link Bus stops at the Bishops Green Turn on the A339, which requires an approximate 20 minutes walk north. Additionally, the Reading Buses 103 service stops at Ash Road bus stop which is an estimated five minute walk from the site.</p> <p>There is no pedestrian connectivity on this site and is not directly linked to the limited services and amenities in Bishops Green (including village hall, shop and playpark). Also, regarding the PRow network, there are no rights of way crossing this site or in proximity of it.</p> <p>Whilst there is a current lack of direct access to the site, it is likely access could be secured from Eagle Road, which would also provide footpaths to the amenities in Bishops Green.</p>	
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Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 4.5: Site Assessment – EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall
SA Theme **EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall**



Biodiversity and Geodiversity

An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

There are no Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats on the site, however there is deciduous and ancient woodland directly northwest of the site, and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh approximately 70m east of the site. Additionally, there are trees and hedgerows on three of the four site boundaries (north, west and south). Furthermore, this site is part of a green corridor. These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

Climate Change

Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Despite being located in the centre of Ecchinswell, the village has limited services and facilities. Therefore, as for other locations in the village, there would be the need to travel to larger settlements to access key amenities, including Newbury and Basingstoke, which implications for greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

With regards to fluvial flood risk issues, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1. Parts of the northern half of the site are at medium and high risk of surface flooding, and there are sections to the west of the site that are at lower risk.

SA Theme EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall

Landscape	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, or any green belt land. The North Wessex Downs AONB is located approximately 270m south. The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan identifies the potential for development beyond the designated boundary to visually damage or undermines the scale and qualities of the landscape and recognises the intense pressure for development throughout the designated area and its setting. In this respect development at this site would need to conserve and enhance the character, qualities and heritage of the AONB. However, given relatively flat topography of the site, and existing screening and containment within the villagescape, impacts on the setting and special qualities of the AONB would be minimal.</p> <p>According to the Hampshire County Council website, the site is within the North Hampshire Lowland Mosaic (2B) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area. This site is well contained physically within the settlement of Ecchinswell and is level in elevation.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are five viewpoints to important buildings or groups of buildings in proximity to this site, however none of these will be affected as development at this site will be screened from them by the existing built curtilage of the village. Whilst the open perspective provided by the site would be affected, the impacts of smaller scale development could be managed effectively within the villagescape.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations, nor are there any in proximity.</p>
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SA Theme **EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall**

<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>The site is located directly adjacent to the Ecchinswell Conservation Area, which is located to the east of the site. Potential development areas on the eastern part of the site are likely to be visible from the conservation area.</p> <p>The Ecchinswell Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the significance of open spaces for providing view outs of the conservation area and to provide context for the historic significance of local features and areas of interest.</p> <p>In terms of statutory designations, there are no listed buildings present on the site. However there are a number of listed buildings within the historic setting of (and visible from) the site. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade II listed Ecchinswell War Memorial, located to the east of the site across Ecchinswell Road and built in 1922 to commemorate the First World War • Grade II listed Church Villa, located to the north east of the site, comprising a thatched house from the C18th and C19th • Grade II listed Corner Cottage, located to the north of the site and comprising a timber-framed house dating from the C17th with later extensions. <p>Other listed buildings in proximity to the site would be unlikely to be affected by development as it would be screened from view through existing buildings and landscape features.</p> <p>There are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development here. Furthermore, no features recorded on the Hampshire Historic Environment Record have been recorded on the site. However a non-designated pound is recorded in proximity to the Grade II Ecchinswell War Memorial – recorded on the first edition of the 25” OS map.</p> <p>Whilst no features listed on the Historic Environment Record are present on the site, the site has potential archaeological interest. In this respect the eastern half of the site is located within an Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) – where it is likely archaeological remains that evidence the settlement’s origins, development, economy, industry and past inhabitant life may be recovered from. In this context, the Ecchinswell Conservation Area Appraisal, where information about the AHAP is presented, states the following: <i>“Where a development is proposed, the impact that it might have on these remains is a material consideration within the planning process. This may, from time to time, result in the need for archaeological recording in the case of some developments”</i>.</p>
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. However, the land is predicted to have a low likelihood (less than 20%) of the occurrence of BMV land as indicated by Natural England. Development of c.5 homes is also unlikely to impact on productive agricultural land.</p> <p>There is no waterbody within or in proximity to this site. The site does not overlap with an SPZ or an NVZ. The site also does not overlap with an MSA.</p>

SA Theme **EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall**

Community Wellbeing	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>There are relatively limited services in Ecchinswell, including the village hall and recreation ground, the primary school and the Royal Oak pub. A wider range of facilities, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found in Newbury approximately 10.5 kilometres away and Basingstoke 18km away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access some key services and amenities.</p> <p>The site incorporates an important community facility, including the village hall and the recreation ground. Whilst the loss of these amenities would comprise a significant impact, it is anticipated that the loss of community amenity could be readily avoided, given the size and existing layout of the site and the limited land requirement for c.5 dwellings.</p> <p>The site is accessible to the allotments, Digweed’s open space, the village pond and the village park.</p> <p>It is noted that development at this site could help to improve and extend the existing community amenity of the facilities currently present on the site.</p>	
Transportation	<p>The site is accessible to the limited amenities in the village.</p> <p>The site, like all in Ecchinswell, is not readily accessible by public transport, including bus and rail links. The nearest railway station is in Newbury, and the nearest bus service is a 30 minute walk from the village via a footpath with stiles.</p> <p>In terms of access to the wider the PRow network, there is a footpath located on the northern site boundary and another along Mill Lane across the road to the east.</p>	

Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 4.6: Site Assessment – EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry
SA Theme **EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry**



Biodiversity and Geodiversity

An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

There are no BAP Priority Habitats on the site. Whilst there is an area of deciduous woodland approximately 100m to the west of the site, this is not considered as a significant constraint. The site boundary is surrounded by trees which would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

Climate Change

Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Despite being located adjacent to the built up area of Ecchinswell, the village has limited services and facilities. Therefore, as for other locations in the village, there would be the need to travel to larger settlements to access key amenities, including Newbury and Basingstoke, which implications for greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

With regards to flood risk issues, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1. There is a small section of the site to the east that is at low risk of surface water flooding, and the site is adjacent to a small area at low risk to the west.

SA Theme **EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry**

<p>Landscape</p>	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park or any green belt land; it is however completely within the North Wessex Downs AONB. The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan identifies the potential for development within the designated area of the AONB to visually damage or undermine the scale and qualities of the landscape, and recognises the intense pressure for development throughout the designated area and its wider setting. Therefore, development at this site would need to conserve and enhance the character, qualities and heritage of the North Wessex Downs AONB.</p> <p>However, given the relative containment of site within the landscape and the presence of existing structures on the site, high quality development has the potential to conserve (and potentially, augment) villagescape character in the area. Development would also not affect any locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>According to the Hampshire County Council website, the site is within the Clere Scarp and Greensand Terrace (13A) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area. This site is located on the outskirts of Ecchinswell and is higher in elevation than the village centre.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations, nor are there any in proximity.</p>	
<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>The site is located in proximity to the Ecchinswell Conservation Area, which is located approximately 70m to the north-west. Whilst on a slope which faces north, given location, screening and layout, the site has very limited visibility from the conservation area.</p> <p>There are no listed buildings present on the site. Other listed buildings are at least 100m away and it is unlikely that development on the site would affect the historic significance of these features.</p> <p>There are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development, and no features are recorded on the Hampshire Historic Environment Record. The closes feature is an earth bank which is located approximately 30m to the north.</p>	
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, the site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. Natural England also highlights the land is predicted to have a moderate likelihood (20-60%) of the occurrence of BMV land. Given the presence of existing structures of the site, development is unlikely to lead to the significant loss of productive agricultural land however.</p> <p>There is no waterbody within or in proximity to this site. Furthermore, the site does not overlap an SPZ or an NVZ.</p> <p>The site does not overlap with an MSA.</p>	

SA Theme **EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry**

Community Wellbeing	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>There are relatively limited services in Ecchinswell, including the village hall and recreation ground, the primary school and the Royal Oak pub. A wider range of facilities, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found in Newbury approximately 10.5 kilometres away and Basingstoke 18km away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access some key services and amenities.</p> <p>The footpath to the east provides access to Southwood and Frobury Park. The site is accessible to the allotments, Digweed’s open space, the village pond and the village park.</p>	
Transportation	<p>The site, like all in Ecchinswell, is not readily accessible by public transport, including bus and rail links. The nearest railway station is in Newbury, and the nearest bus service is a 30 minute walk from the village via a footpath with stiles.</p> <p>The site is accessible to the village centre and the limited amenities available in the village by foot.</p> <p>In terms of access to the wider PRow network, there is a footpath approximately 100m west of the site and another approximately 70m east.</p>	





Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect 
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect 

Table 4.7: Site Assessment – BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage
SA Theme BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage



Biodiversity and Geodiversity

An allocation at this site could impact on the Greenham and Crookham Commons SSSI, which is located approximately 150m north. This is given the northern half of the site overlaps with Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) associated with the SSSI for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

In terms of sensitive biodiversity habitats, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat on the site is present on the west of the site and also approximately 10m west of the site. There are also areas of deciduous woodland BAP Priority Habitat directly adjacent to the northern site boundary and approximately 55m west, and ancient woodland located approximately 90m south of the site. Whilst direct impacts on these woodland habitats from land take and fragmentation are not anticipated, disturbance may take place from noise, light pollution or trampling from enhanced access. Additionally, there are trees and hedgerows located along the site boundaries. Moreover, this site is part of a green corridor. These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

SA Theme **BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage**

Climate Change	<p>Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Despite being in relatively good proximity to the centre of Bishops Green, there are limited services and facilities in the village. Therefore, there is a need to travel to larger settlements for key services and facilities, including Newbury.</p> <p>With regards to flood risk issues, the majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1, however the northern boundary overlaps with and is adjacent to areas of Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. Similarly, the northern site boundary is at high and medium of surface water flooding; additionally, parts of the eastern and southern boundaries are at lower risk.</p>	
Landscape	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or any green belt land. According to the Hampshire County Council website, it is within the Highclere Chase (2a) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area. However, it is possible that development at this site will be viewed by ten or eleven properties to the south, although there is partial screening in place here provided by trees. More broadly, the site is at a lower elevation than most of Bishops Green.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with tree preservation order (TPO) designations; however, there is a TPO (case number LAWDA0CR0A200) located approximately 70m to the south of the site.</p>	
Historic Environment	<p>The site is not within or in proximity to a conservation area and no nationally listed buildings are present on the site or within proximity to it. Additionally, there are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development. No features listed on the Historic Environment Record have been recorded on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.</p>	
Land, Soil and Water Resources	<p>According to the indicative agricultural land classification (ALC) for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 4 'Poor' agricultural land. The land is predicted to have a moderate likelihood (20-60%) of the occurrence of best and most versatile (BMV) land (according to indicative maps provided by Natural England).</p> <p>The River Enborne flows adjacent to the northern boundary of this site. There is also a drain to channel water to the waterbody from Featherbed Lane to the south. In terms of groundwater source protection zones (SPZ), the site is wholly within Zone I – Inner Protection Zone; it does not overlap with a nitrate vulnerable zone (NVZ).</p> <p>This site overlaps with a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for Sharp Sand and Gravel.</p>	

SA Theme **BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage**

Community Wellbeing	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.</p> <p>The public footpath 60m north of the site allows for access to Sydmonton Common, a large wooded area that provides open space and recreational areas. A pavement on Ecchinswell Road/Ash Road links the site to the village hall/shop and play area.</p>	
Transportation	<p>There are no railway stations in proximity to the site, the closest being Newbury railway station, approximately 6.5 km away. The Stagecoach South Link Bus stops at the Bishops Green Turn on the A339, which requires an approximate ten minute walk north. This service provides access to Basingstoke, Rooksdown, Kingsclere, Greenham Common and Newbury Monday-Saturday. Additionally, the Reading Buses 103 service stops at Bishops Green Turn and at Four Oaks bus stop 50m south of the site. This route provides services to Venture West, Heads Hill, Adbury and Newbury Monday-Friday. There is easy access to the adjacent Ecchinswell Road to the east of the site; Newbury is an estimated ten minute drive away and Andover and Basingstoke are an approximate 30 minute drive.</p> <p>A pavement on Ecchinswell Road/Ash Road links the site to the village hall/shop and play area. Regarding the wider public rights of way (PRoW) network, there is a footpath approximately 60m south of the site and another across the road to the east.</p>	

Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 4.8: Site Assessment – BGF/EC001
SA Theme BGF/EC001



Biodiversity and Geodiversity

An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

An area of deciduous woodland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats is located across the Hyde Lane to the east. There are trees located along the western and northern boundaries, and hedgerows surrounding most of the rest of the site. Additionally, part of this site is within a green corridor. These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

Climate Change

Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.

With regards to fluvial flood risk, the site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 (and as such is not at significant flood risk). The southern boundary of the site along Hyde Lane is at medium and high risk of surface water flooding, and the north-eastern corner of the site is at medium and high risk.

SA Theme **BGF/EC001**

<p>Landscape</p>	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, AONB or any green belt land. According to the Hampshire County Council website, it is within the Highclere Chase (2a) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, this site slopes downwards from Ecchinswell Road. There are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area. Whilst the site is located adjacent to the current built up part of Bishops Green, development of the site would lead to an extension of the settlement to the east of Ecchinswell Road. Given the majority of Bishops Green (excluding the campsite) is located to the west of Ecchinswell Road, development of the site would lead to a significant extension of the village into the landscape to the east.</p> <p>Development at this site is likely to be visible from existing properties along Ecchinswell Road and Rooksfield, with limited screening available. The site also offers long views to the east to Dod’s Copse, Little Westland’s Copse and Westland’s Copse.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations, but there are five in proximity - across Ecchinswell Road to the west.</p>	
<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>The site is not within or in proximity to a conservation area and no nationally listed buildings are present on the site or within proximity to it. Additionally, there are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development. No features listed on the Historic Environment Record have been recorded on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.</p>	
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. However, Natural England suggests the land is predicted to have a low likelihood (less than 20%) of BMV land.</p> <p>There is no waterbody within or in proximity to this site. In terms of SPZs, the site is wholly within Zone II – Outer Protection Zone. It does not overlap with an NVZ.</p> <p>This site overlaps with an MSA for Sharp Sand and Gravel.</p>	
<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>Bishops Green is less well served by services and facilities, with amenities limited to a village hall, convenience store, play area and a number of small businesses. Ecchinswell offers a primary school, but otherwise the closest facilities to the site, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found outside of the neighbourhood area in Newbury approximately six kilometres away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access key services and amenities.</p> <p>There is no pedestrian connectivity on this site. Ecchinswell Road is directly west of this site but has no pavement to facilitate safe pedestrian movement to other parts of the Bishops Green, including the village hall, shop and play park.</p>	

SA Theme **BGF/EC001**

Transportation	<p>There are no railway stations in proximity to the site, the closest being Newbury railway station, which is located 6.7km away. The Stagecoach South Link Bus stops at the Bishops Green Turn on the A339, which requires an approximate 16 minute walk north along a route without footpaths. Additionally, the Reading Buses 103 service stops at Ash Road bus stop which is an estimated five minute walk from the site.</p> <p>There is no pedestrian connectivity on this site. Ecchinswell Road is directly west of the site but has no pavement to facilitate safe pedestrian movement to other parts of Bishops Green, including the village hall, shop and play park.</p> <p>Regarding the PRow network, there is a footpath adjacent to the north of the site and another approximately 290m south.</p>	
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Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 4.9: Site Assessment – EJ: Malthouse Farm

SA Theme EJ: Malthouse Farm



Biodiversity and Geodiversity An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

There are no Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats on the site, however there is deciduous and ancient woodland approximately 70m west of the site. Additionally, there are trees and hedgerows on three of the four site boundaries (west, south and east). These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

Climate Change Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Despite being located close to the centre of Ecchinswell, the village has limited services and facilities. Therefore, as for other locations in the village, there would be the need to travel to larger settlements to access key amenities, including Newbury and Basingstoke, which implications for greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

With regards to flood risk issues, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1. The southern boundary is in proximity to areas of low, medium and high surface water flood risk. Additionally, the northern boundary is at low risk of surface water flooding.

SA Theme EJ: Malthouse Farm

Landscape	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park or any green belt land. Development on the site of the scale proposed for the Neighbourhood Plan (c.5 dwellings) is also unlikely to impact on the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs AONB (which is located c.1km to the south). According to the Hampshire County Council website, the site is within the North Hampshire Lowland Mosaic (2B) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area. This site is located in proximity to the settlement of Ecchinswell and is level in elevation.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are six viewpoints to important buildings or groups of buildings in proximity to this site according to the conservation appraisal. None of these directly point to the site, however two include the site in the framing of the view and have the potential to be affected by development here. Additionally, there are two important open spaces in proximity to this site.</p> <p>With reference to locally important features, the site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations, however there is a TPO approximately 50m north of the site (LAWD8NCR0A200).</p>
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SA Theme **EJ: Malthouse Farm**

<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>The site is located in a part of the village with significant historic environment sensitivities.</p> <p>The site is located within the Ecchinswell Conservation Area. According to the Ecchinswell Conservation Area map, there are two key viewpoints in proximity to the site which will be affected by development, and there are trees of villagscape significance across the road to the east and adjacent to the site to the south-east. The site is also in the setting of key features of historic environment interest in the conservation area, including listed buildings (discussed below).</p> <p>According to the conservation area appraisal, there is an important open space adjacent to this site to the south, with another to the east across the road. The designated important open spaces provide views out of the conservation area and provide context to historic features. Additionally, two key viewpoints in proximity to this site are at risk of negative impacts and/or degradation as a result of inappropriate development.</p> <p>In this context, whilst the site currently comprises of farm buildings of limited historic interest, development of this site has the potential to have significant effects on historic setting of the conservation area.</p> <p>There are no listed buildings present on the site, however there are a number of listed buildings in the historic setting of (and visible from) the site. These include the following listed features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Grade II listed Malthouse Farmhouse, comprising a house dating from the C18th and C19th, located approximately 60m to the south of the site • The Grade II listed Barn 30 Yards North West of Malthouse Farmhouse, comprising an C18th barn located 30m to the south of the site • The Grade II listed Briar Malthouse Cottages, comprising a symmetrical pair of mid C19th cottages located 30m north east of the site across Ecchinswell Road • The Grade II listed Woodpecker Cottage, which is a C17th and C19th timber framed cottage, and located 40m north east of the site. <p>There are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development here. No further features listed on the Hampshire Historic Environment Record are located on or in immediate proximity to the site.</p>	
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. The land though is predicted to have a low likelihood (less than 20%) of the occurrence of BMV land (as indicated by Natural England).</p> <p>Whilst development of a small part of the site would not lead to the significant loss of productive agricultural land, the site comprises a number of farm buildings which are currently vital to the effective workings of the farm.</p> <p>There is no waterbody within or in proximity to this site. In terms of SPZs there is no overlap, however the site is just south of Zone III – Total Catchment. The site does not overlap with an NVZ.</p> <p>This site does not overlap with an MSA.</p>	

SA Theme **EJ: Malthouse Farm**

Community Wellbeing	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>There are relatively limited services in Ecchinswell, including the village hall and recreation ground, the primary school and the Royal Oak pub. A wider range of facilities, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found in Newbury approximately 10.5 kilometres away and Basingstoke 18km away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access some key services and amenities.</p> <p>The site is accessible to the village amenities highlighted above, as well as the allotments, Digweed’s open space, the village pond and the village park.</p> <p>Development of the site would however lead to the loss of farm buildings which are currently vital to the effective working of the farm. Therefore, appropriate replacement provision would need to be provided should development of the site for housing take place.</p>	
Transportation	<p>The site, like all in Ecchinswell, is not readily accessible by public transport, including bus and rail links. The nearest railway station is in Newbury, and the nearest bus service is a 30 minute walk from the village via a footpath with stiles.</p> <p>The site is accessible to the limited amenities available in the village.</p> <p>Regarding the PRoW network, there is a footpath running along the northern site boundary.</p>	

Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 4.10: Site Assessment – EI: Land North of the Pond
SA Theme EI: Land North of the Pond



Biodiversity and Geodiversity An allocation at this site is not likely to impact any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity. The site does not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential).

There are no Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats on the site, however there is deciduous woodland approximately 100m north-east of the site. Additionally, there are trees and hedgerows on three of the four site boundaries (south, east and north). These features would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) within new development areas, alongside the delivery of net gains.

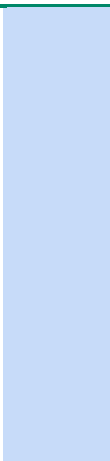

Climate Change Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the settlement and an intensification of uses at this location. Despite being accessible to the centre of Ecchinswell, the village has limited services and facilities. Therefore, as for other locations in the village, there would be the need to travel to larger settlements to access key amenities, including Newbury and Basingstoke, which implications for greenhouse gas emissions from transport.



With regards to flood risk issues, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1. The north-east of the site is at low surface water flood risk.

SA Theme **EI: Land North of the Pond**

<p>Landscape</p>	<p>The site is not within or within proximity to a National Park, AONB or any green belt land. According to the Hampshire County Council website, the site is within the North Hampshire Lowland Mosaic (2B) landscape character area; new development is listed as a force of change in this area.</p> <p>In terms of visual impacts, there are two viewpoints to important buildings or groups of buildings in proximity to this site. Although neither point directly to the site, they are included in the framing of the view – therefore the visual amenity of these may be affected by development at this location. Development of the site would also potentially impact on the open perspective of the location (although the site is relative screened).</p> <p>The site does not contain any significant trees with TPO designations, nor are there any in proximity.</p>	
<p>Historic Environment</p>	<p>This site is located within the northern part of the Ecchinswell Conservation Area.</p> <p>According to the Ecchinswell Conservation Area map, there are two important viewpoints in proximity to the site – one at the western corner and the other to the south. Although the southern and western site boundaries comprise trees which provide a level of screening (and, according to the Conservation Area Appraisal comprise ‘trees of townscape significance’, it is likely development at this site will be visible from areas of the conservation area in proximity to it. Moreover, an important open space for the conservation is located directly to the south of the site.</p> <p>In this respect the loss of an area of open land to development at this location has the potential to have significant impacts on the historic significance of this part of the conservation area.</p> <p>There are no listed buildings present on the site, and the historic setting and significance of other listed buildings (including the Grade II Hillside Cottage, which is located 100m to the north/north west of the site) would unlikely to be affected.</p> <p>There are no scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens on or in proximity to the site that have the potential to be affected by development on the site. No further locally significant features or non-designated features are listed on the Hampshire Historic Environment Record on or the immediate vicinity of the site.</p>	
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for London and the South East region provided by Natural England, this site is wholly within Grade 3 Good to Moderate agricultural land. The land is predicted to have a low likelihood (less than 20%) of BMV land (as indicated by Natural England).</p> <p>There is no waterbody on the site, however there is a pond directly to the south of the site. In terms of SPZs the site is within a Zone III – Total Catchment area. The site does not overlap with an NVZ.</p> <p>This site does not overlap with an MSA.</p>	

SA Theme **EI: Land North of the Pond**

<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>Allocation of the site will contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>There are relatively limited services in Ecchinswell, including the village hall and recreation ground, the primary school and the Royal Oak pub. A wider range of facilities, including shops, secondary education and medical facilities can be found in Newbury approximately 10.5 kilometres away and Basingstoke 18km away. Therefore, an allocation at this site will likely result in an increased need to travel to access some key services and amenities.</p> <p>Whilst there is no pavement connecting the site, which reduces the safety of pedestrians, the road has relatively wide verges that accommodate pedestrian travel. The site is however at some distance (approximately 1-1.2km) from key village services, including the village hall and school.</p>	
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>The site, like all in Ecchinswell, is not readily accessible by public transport, including bus and rail links. The nearest railway station is in Newbury, and the nearest bus service is a 30 minute walk from the village via a footpath with stiles.</p> <p>Whilst there is no pavement connecting the site, which reduces the safety of pedestrians, the road has relatively wide verges that accommodate pedestrian travel. The site is however at some distance (approximately 1-1.2km) from key village services, including the village hall and school.</p> <p>Regarding the PRow network, there is a footpath approximately 190m south of the site, linking the east and west.</p>	

<p>Key</p>		
<p>Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)</p>		<p>Likely positive effect</p>
<p>Neutral/no effect</p>		<p>Uncertain effect</p>

Summary of Site Assessment Findings

Table 4.11: Summary of SA site assessment findings

Site	Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Climate Change	Landscape	Historic Env.	Land, Soil and Water Resources	Community Wellbeing	Transport	
BGB/EC004: Woodside View	Red	Blue	Red	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Green	
BGI: Land South of Rooksfield	Blue	Blue	Red	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Red	
BGH: Land Behind Eagle Road	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	
EZ: Land around Ecchinswell Village Hall	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	Yellow	Blue	Blue	
EX: Clere Livery Stables in old quarry	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Blue	
BGA EC002: Land behind Bishops Green Cottage	Red	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Green	
BGF/EC001	Blue	Blue	Red	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Red	
EJ: Malthouse Farm	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	
EI: Land to the North of the Pond	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	
Key								
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)				Red	Likely positive effect			Green
Neutral/no effect				Yellow	Uncertain effect			Blue

Current approach in the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan and the development of policies

Choice of sites taken forward for the purposes of the Ecchinswell, Sydmonton, and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

4.14 The ESBGNP seeks to shape development in the neighbourhood area through a combination of allocations, specifically:

- Site BGI: Land South of Rooksfield for up to 15 homes.
- Site EX: Clere Livery Stable in old quarry for approximately five dwellings.

Neighbourhood Plan policies

4.15 To support the implementation of the vision statement for the Neighbourhood Plan, the current version of the ESBGNP puts forward 17 policies to guide new development within the ESBGNP area.

4.16 Policies were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering and are listed below in Table 4.12. An earlier version of these policies was assessed in the Regulation 14 version of the SA Report (August 2022).

Table 4.12: ESBGNP policies

Reference	Policy Name
ESBG1	Settlement Boundaries
ESBG2	Housing Supply to Meet Local Demands
ESBG3	Housing in Bishops Green
ESBG4	Housing in Ecchinswell
ESBG5	Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green
ESBG6	Design Quality in the Ecchinswell Conservation Area
ESBG7	Community Engagement in Design
ESBG8	Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace
ESBG9	Support For Home Working
ESBG10	Broadband and Mobile Communications
ESBG11	Community Facilities
ESBG12	Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery
ESBG13	Valued Landscape and Key Views
ESBG14	Local Green Spaces
ESBG15	Dark Skies
ESBG16	Zero Carbon Buildings
ESBG17	Encouraging Active and Sustainable Travel

5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

5.1 The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the submission version of the ESBGNP. This chapter presents:

- An appraisal of the current version (i.e., the submission version) of the ESBGNP under the seven SA theme headings.
- The overall conclusions at this current stage.

Approach to this appraisal

5.2 The appraisal of the submission version of the ESBGNP is presented below and is structured under the seven SA themes.

5.3 For each SA theme, ‘significant effects’ of the ESBGNP on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect ‘characteristics’ are described within the assessment, as appropriate.

5.4 Every effort is made to identify/evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high-level nature of the ESBGNP. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by the understanding of baseline conditions and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects to ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

5.5 There are no internationally designated sites (Ramsar, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)) within or in proximity to the ESBGNP boundary. However, the neighbourhood area is within proximity to several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), which includes Greenham and Crookham Commons, Duncroft Farm Pit, Old Burghclere Lime Quarry and Ladle Hill. The site allocations within policies ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell), as well as the wider ESBGNP area, overlap with SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for the type of development likely to be brought forward; however, for the most part the scale of the likely development will not exceed the thresholds. Only the northern part of the site allocated under policy ESBG3 is limited by these thresholds – residential development of ten houses or more outside of the existing settlement needs to be consulted on. Therefore, development is not likely to have significant impacts on any nationally designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites. The Herbert Plantation local nature reserve (LNR) is also located in proximity to the ESBGNP area.

- 5.6 Whilst the two sites allocated under policies ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) do not have Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats on site or in proximity to them, the wider ESBGNP area has areas of BAP Priority Habitats. This includes deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland, wood pasture and parkland, traditional orchards, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, lowland heathland and ancient woodland. Both site allocations under policies ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) contain trees and hedgerows on the site boundaries that should be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) to aid in ensuring there is no net loss of biodiversity on site, and provide a basis for the delivery of biodiversity net gain.
- 5.7 In light of the sensitivities above, a key part of the vision of the ESBGNP is to have confidence that the highly-valued natural environment, biodiversity and landscape are improving. Therefore, enhancement of the environment, biodiversity and landscape is a key component of plan policies. Site allocation policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) stipulates the site should have accessible green space and infrastructure to support biodiversity net gain. It indicates proposals will be supported where the design and layout retains and reinforces boundary trees and hedgerows. Policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) iterates that residential development proposals will be supported where the developable area is contained as much as possible within the footprints of existing structures to minimise the impacts on the existing boundary trees and hedgerows, and the development provides for a biodiversity net gain. Additionally, the reduction in size of the site allocated under policy ESBG4 will ensure a smaller area of land is used for development, therefore reducing the level of biodiversity disturbance.
- 5.8 Wider ESBGNP policies also work towards enhancing the biodiversity resource of the area. Policy ESBG2 (Housing Supply to Meet Local Needs) sets out the need for residential development proposals concerning first homes to not cause unacceptable harm to protected habitats, and for development in Bishops Green to over-supply accessible green space. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) sets out the need for development proposals to understand and respond to the relevant Local Landscape Character Area in the design of the proposal in line with the ESBG Design Guidance and Code. This supporting document has codes that will help shape development - codes 2 (Green Infrastructure and Open Space) and 7 (Preserving and Enhancing Views, Landmarks and Gateways) will aid in improving biodiversity and geodiversity in the ESBGNP area. Policy ESBG14 (Local Green Spaces) protect features from development, including green spaces like Digweeds, three areas of access land and recreation areas, which are likely to have biodiversity and geodiversity value.
- 5.9 Policy ESBG12 (Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery) demonstrates the value of green and blue infrastructure in the neighbourhood area; development proposals in proximity to or within the network this infrastructure creates must maintain and improve its functionality, including delivering a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, and should work to extend this network. Additionally, on sites greater than 0.1 hectares, a 'Biodiversity Net Gain Plan' must be submitted with all applications, and proposals that lead to a loss of land within the green and blue infrastructure network (or undermine it) will be resisted. Proposals that extend the network will also be supported,

indicating this policy seeks the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity in the plan area. Policy ESG13 (Valued Landscapes and Key Views) indicates development proposals should consider the landscape value of the neighbourhood area, which will contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity in these sections of the plan area.

- 5.10 Paragraph 174 within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹⁶ indicates that planning policies and decisions should work to improve the natural and local environment by *'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks'*. In addition to this, the 25 Year Environment Plan¹⁷ and the Environment Act¹⁸ also focus on the net gain principle and have policies and goals in place to achieve this. In this respect, policy ESG12 (Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery) indicates that development will be supported where it contributes to the net gain in biodiversity. It is anticipated that the provisions of this policy will support the provisions of the Environment Act 2021 relating to biodiversity net gain.
- 5.11 Overall, the ESGNP policies should help ensure that ecological sensitivities are appropriately considered during the planning, construction, and operational phases for new development proposals which come forward during the plan period, whilst also delivering net gains.

Climate Change

- 5.12 Any development in the ESGNP area will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the neighbourhood area. Therefore, the extent to which the ESGNP has the potential to support climate change mitigation efforts relies on creating a growth strategy that promotes development at locations in closer proximity to the existing services and facilities in the area. However, as the ESGNP area has limited services and facilities, residents will be required to travel outside of the neighbourhood area to access a greater variety of amenities, including supermarkets. This will lead to inevitable contributions to greenhouse gas emissions from travel patterns.
- 5.13 To limit greenhouse gas emissions caused by transportation within the ESGNP area, site allocation policy ESG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) outlines support for the 'slow the pace' measures in the neighbourhood area and for the development of a pedestrian path to improve connectivity to the Bishops Green facilities. Site allocation policy ESG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) also outlines support for the 'slow the pace' measures in the neighbourhood area and for the creation of a 'green path' to allow for safe active transportation. Policies ESG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green), ESG8 (Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace) and ESG17 (Encouraging Active and Sustainable Travel) demonstrate ways in which greenhouse gas emissions from transport can be decreased, for example through the encouragement of sustainable and active transportation
- 5.14 In addition to policies seeking to mitigate the effects of transportation emissions, the ESGNP contains further policies related to climate change.

¹⁶ DLUHC (2018): 'Revised National Planning Policy Framework' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁷ DEFRA (2018): 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁸ GOV.UK (2021): 'Environment Act' can be accessed [here](#).

Site allocation policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) demonstrates that housing development proposals will be supported where there is provision to create publicly accessible green space. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) is also key in ensuring development considers climate change - the policy sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESBG Design Guidance and Code document, specifically code 8 (Sustainability) which includes sustainable energy efficient measures and the reuse of materials in construction.

- 5.15 Policy ESBG12 (Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery) ensures features of the green and blue network will be maintained and improved – which will help to mitigate climate change. Policy ESBG15 (Dark Skies) stipulates all development proposals should employ schemes like energy-efficient lighting forms, reducing the amount of power needed to light development. Policy ESBG16 (Zero Carbon Buildings) outlines all development must be ‘zero carbon ready’ by design to minimise the amount of energy within the structures through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping. This includes incorporating a whole life-cycle carbon emission assessment, and submitting an energy and climate statement to demonstrate the work done to make development as low impacting on climate change as possible.
- 5.16 With reference to adapting to the effects of climate change, the site allocation under policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) is within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of fluvial flooding, but the northern corner is at low risk of surface water flooding. The site allocation under policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) is also within fluvial Flood Zone 1 and there is a small section of the site to the east that is at low risk of surface water flooding. The provision of open space, as proposed through the neighbourhood plan policies, will help to manage this risk. In terms of the wider ESBGNP, policy ESBG2 (Housing Supply to Meet Local Needs) indicates housing proposals for first homes will be deemed appropriate where the scheme demonstrates it will avoid areas at risk of flooding. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) is also key in ensuring flood risk is considered in development proposals. The policy sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESBG Design Guidance and Code document, specifically Code 8 (Sustainability) which includes the need to integrate sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) and reduce runoff rates.

Landscape

- 5.17 Landscape and villagescape character play an important part in understanding the relationship between people and place, identifying recognisable and distinct patterns which make one area different from another. Landscape and villagescape character can assist in the assessment of the likely significance of effects of change resulting from new development areas, both in visual and amenity terms. The relationship between the ESBGNP area and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), for example, is a defining feature and contributes strongly to the ESBGNP area’s sense of place and quality of its environment. In this context, proposals within the ESBGNP have a strong focus on protecting the sense of place and special qualities which contribute to its character. For example, policy ESBG13 (Valued

Landscapes and Key Views) seeks to ensure development considers the valued landscapes of the neighbourhood area; this will include the North Wessex Downs AONB landscape, which will work to support the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-2024¹⁹. Policy ESG13 (Valued Landscapes and Key Views) also seeks to ensure the consideration of Local Character Areas, as defined by the Basingstoke and Deane Landscape Character Assessment²⁰.

5.18 The proposed site allocations through policies ESG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) have differing landscape constraints. In this context, an overview of the landscape and villagescape considerations for each of the proposed site allocations (and how these have been addressed through ESGNP policy provisions) is provided below:

- Site BGI under policy ESG3 (Housing in Bishops Green): this site is within the Highclere Chase (2a) landscape character area and new development is listed as a force of change in this landscape type. The northern half of the site is located within the Bishops Green settlement boundary according to ESGNP Policies Map Insert 1 and policy ESG1 (Settlement Boundaries); this is where development would be focused. There are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area but given the site's higher topography, development would be seen from the east and is likely to be seen from existing neighbouring properties due to limited screening. The policy provision includes ensuring the design and layout of development provides an appropriate buffer to neighbouring properties through the retention and reinforcement of existing mature boundary trees and hedgerows and the restoration and replacement of hedgerows where vehicular access has been created. ESG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) also indicates the design of buildings will have full regard to the ESG Design Code to create a positive new settlement edge.
- Site EX under policy ESG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell): this site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB – which has identified development as having the potential to damage or undermine the scale and qualities of the landscape. The site also overlaps with the Clere Scarp and Greensand Terrace (13a) landscape character area, which also identifies development as a force of change in this landscape type. The site is not located within the Ecchinswell settlement boundary according to ESGNP Policies Map Insert 3 and policy ESG1 (Settlement Boundaries). There are no locally identified viewpoints in this part of the neighbourhood area but given the site's higher topography it is possible development would be seen from the main Ecchinswell settlement. The policy provision includes ensuring the design of development sustains the setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB, the Ecchinswell Conservation Area and the ESG Design Code.

5.19 The landscape sensitivities are further reflected by the ESGNP. Policy ESG2 (Housing Supply to Meet Local Needs) stipulates development must not cause unacceptable harm to identified key views. Policy ESG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) is also key in ensuring development considers the landscape - the policy sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESG Design

¹⁹ North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (2019) 'Management Plan 2019-2024' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁰ Hankinson Duckett Associates (2021) 'Basingstoke and Deane Landscape Character Assessment' can be accessed [here](#).

Guidance and Code document, specifically Code 7 (Preserving and Enhancing Views, Landmarks and Gateways) which includes protecting the different landscape types, important landmarks and views. Policies ESG11 (Community Facilities) and ESG14 (Local Green Spaces) seek to protect facilities and amenities, including designated green spaces, important open land and key built structures like the village halls and St Lawrence Church, that form a key part of the landscape by breaking up development and contributing to key views. The same can be said of policy ESG12 (Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery), which seeks to protect the green and blue infrastructure network that contributes to the landscape through the presence of woodland, streams and hedgerows.

- 5.20 The protection and enhancement of these features will improve the landscape quality of the neighbourhood area. Policy ESG15 (Dark Skies) safeguards the night sky, working to protect the night landscape by defending it from development and associated lighting that could adversely affect it. This will support the aims of the North Wessex Downs AONB, where dark skies have been established as an integral part of the designated landscape's character, and ongoing projects are underway to support this quality²¹. Policy ESG16 (Zero Carbon Buildings) indicates development proposals for housing development that is different to existing development in the character area will be supported where it can be demonstrated the proposal will not have a harmful on the character area. This will ensure the landscape integrity is maintained.
- 5.21 With reference to any non-residential development proposals which may come forward during the plan period, policy ESG8 (Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace) stipulates proposals for expanding or diversifying existing businesses in the ESGNP area will be supported where it is of a scale and type suited to the rural location of the neighbourhood area. Additionally, policy ESG10 (Broadband and Mobile Communications) indicates proposals for new or improved mobile phone infrastructure will be supported where it does not affect the surrounding environment, including landscape and key views.

Historic Environment

- 5.22 The ESGNP area has a rich historic environment, including two Grade II* listed buildings, 49 Grade II listed buildings, two scheduled monuments, the Ecchinswell Conservation Area and locally important heritage features, including numerous features listed on the Historic Environment Record (including archaeological features). With regards to the proposed site allocations, the site allocation under ESG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) is not located in proximity to any historic environment assets, nor are there any historic environment assets within the site boundaries. The site allocation under policy ESG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) is located within 100m of the Ecchinswell Conservation Area, though there is limited visibility from the conservation area to the site due to existing screening through boundary vegetation and differences in elevation. There are no designated historic environment assets on site or in proximity to the site allocation, however there is a local HER asset approximately 30m from the site boundary. Given the nature of the allocation on a site with existing development on (the livery

²¹ North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (no date) 'Dark Skies' can be accessed [here](#).

stables), development at this location is not on a site which contributes to the significance of historic assets locally. Policy ESBG4 indicates housing proposals will be supported where the design has full regard to sustaining the setting of the Ecchinswell Conservation Area, which demonstrates the surrounding historic environment has been considered at this site.

5.23 Historic environment sensitivities are further reflected by the draft ESBGNP policies and proposals. Policy ESBG6 (Design Quality in the Ecchinswell Conservation Area) stipulates development proposals within the Ecchinswell Conservation Area must sustain and enhance the significance of the area as defined by the Ecchinswell Conservation Area Appraisal. This will ensure historic assets within the conservation area, and their settings, are conserved and enhanced to better the interpretation and understanding of this special area. Additionally, policy ESBG2 (Housing Supply to Meet Local Needs) details that housing proposals will be deemed appropriate if they will not cause unacceptable harm to any designated heritage assets. This will ensure the protection of heritage assets and their setting. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) is also key in ensuring development considers the historic environment - the policy sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESBG Design Guidance and Code document, specifically Code 7 (Preserving and Enhancing Views, Landmarks and Gateways) which includes protecting landmarks and their setting, which encompasses historic environment assets. Furthermore, policy ESBG10 (Broadband and Mobile Communications) seeks to protect the historic environment through aiming to ensure new or improved mobile phone infrastructure does not adversely affect the built or natural environment, which includes heritage assets. Finally, policy ESBG13 (Value Landscapes and Key Views) protects key views within the neighbourhood area, and proposals for development that has the potential to affect a key view will be permitted where it will not cause harm to the historic landscape features that contribute to the value of the area.

5.24 More broadly, delivering net gains in biodiversity and facilitating green infrastructure enhancements can have beneficial impacts on the historic environment through enhancing the setting of assets, depending on the design and layout of such provision. Key policies include ESBG2 (Housing Supply to Meet Local Needs), ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green), ESBG14 (Local Green Spaces), ESBG12 (Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery) and ESBG13 (Value Landscape and Key Views). These all work to ensure development is sensitive to the surrounding natural environment and local character, taking into consideration ways in which the environment and biodiversity can be enhanced and development can avoid impacts on the landscape. These policies also encourage the conservation of landscape features, which will help enhance the setting of historic environment assets in the ESBGNP area.

Land, Soil and Water Resources

5.25 Although a detailed agricultural land classification assessment has not been undertaken for the ESBGNP area, it is noted in the predictive land quality assessment that the undeveloped sections in the area have a varying likelihood of containing best and most versatile (BMV) land - there are areas of low (<20%), moderate (20-60%) and high (>60%) likelihood across the whole

neighbourhood area. This would indicate that the proposed site allocations within the current version of the ESBGNP have the potential to result in the permanent loss of areas of productive agricultural land. However, the site allocations under ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) are in areas of low and moderate likelihood of BMV respectively. Additionally, the site allocation under ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) has existing structures onsite; given this previous development, it is unlikely that there is productive agricultural land at this site. Although neither site allocation policy makes specific provision for the protection of land, soil and water resources.

- 5.26 Nonetheless, the ESBGNP does include policies that protect the neighbourhood area from inappropriate development. Policy ESBG1 (Settlement Boundaries) stipulates that proposals for development within the settlement boundaries should align with the ESBG Design Guidance and Codes, and development outside of the settlement boundaries should not be permitted unless specific provision has been made or the use is suited to a countryside location. This will indirectly protect areas of high likelihood of BMV land. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESBG Guidance and Code document. Through Code 8 (Sustainability), this documentation will help to improve land, soil and water resources in the ESBGNP area. Policies ESBG11 (Community Facilities), ESBG12 (Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery), ESBG13 (Valued Landscape and Key Views) and ESBG14 (Local Green Spaces) seek to ensure development is considerate of local character, environment and key components of character, like views, vistas, green spaces and built structures. While these policies do not specifically seek to address land, soil and water resources, the policies will indirectly help promote and protect these resources, which will help support the capacity of the landscape and the ESBGNP area to regulate soil and water.
- 5.27 With regards to water quality, neither site allocation has a waterbody on or in proximity to it. Neither site overlaps with a nitrate vulnerability zone (NVZ), but the site allocation under policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) does overlap with a source protection zone (SPZ) – a Zone II Outer Protection Zone. Policy ESBG1 (Settlement Boundaries) indicates development resulting in a net increase in population situated in the part of the parish within the River Test catchment will need to demonstrate nutrient neutrality. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) is also key in ensuring development is considerate of the water environment; as aforementioned, the policy sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESBG Design Guidance and Code document, specifically code 8 (Sustainability).
- 5.28 Regarding mineral resources, the site allocation under policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) overlaps with a mineral safeguarding area for sand and gravel. As such, consultation with Hampshire County Council may be necessary when putting together a development proposal for this site. There are no specific policies in the ESBGNP to safeguard these resources.

Community Wellbeing

- 5.29 With reference to new housing, the ESBGNP supports an approach which seeks to deliver an appropriate level housing development that is in keeping with the rural environment, is considerate of local growth and the need for affordability and provides options for young families, the elderly and those less mobile. The ESBGNP allocates two sites for development under policies ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell). The process of allocating the sites and the site assessments are further discussed in Chapter 4 of this SA Report.
- 5.30 The site allocation under policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) is located to the south of the Bishops Green settlement boundary. Bishops Green has limited services and facilities (including a village shop, the village hall and a play park), so the allocation here will result in more people travelling out of the neighbourhood area to access amenities like supermarkets and secondary schools (Ecchinswell has a primary school). Policy ESBG3 indicates the site allocation is for up to 15 dwellings and accessible green space and green infrastructure; housing should be a mix of smaller one and two bed houses suitable for first homes, two and three bed houses for small families, larger three bed houses for larger families and downsizer homes for the elderly and less mobile.
- 5.31 The site allocation under policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) is located to the south of the Ecchinswell settlement boundary. Ecchinswell has limited services and facilities (it has a village hall, a recreation ground, a primary school and a public house), so the allocation here will result in more people travelling out of the neighbourhood area to access amenities like supermarkets and secondary schools. Policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) states the site allocation is for approximately five dwellings and should include one or two bed homes considering the current and future housing needs of the neighbourhood area.
- 5.32 Additionally, policy ESBG2 (Housing Supply to Meet Local Needs) also stipulates that an additional five dwellings can be delivered through windfall schemes within the settlement boundaries of Bishops Green and Ecchinswell. Policy ESBG1 (Settlement Boundary) indicates infill development within a boundary will need to be in line with the ESBG Design Guide and Codes and development management policies. The ESBGNP also seeks community input into development proposals. Policy ESBG7 (Community Engagement in Design) sets out the need to consult with the residents of the ESBGNP area to demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement and allow for the integration of local knowledge and opinions into the design of development proposals.
- 5.33 The ESBGNP also seeks to support the local economy. This is demonstrated by policies ESBG8 (Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace), ESBG9 (Support for Home Working) and ESBG10 (Broadband and Mobile Communications). These policies work to ensure there are suitable opportunities to create local employment through expansion and diversification of existing businesses and associated structures, allowing for expansions of existing homes to support working from home and providing all new housing and business development with superfast broadband.

5.34 The ESBGNP policies also have a strong emphasis on delivering public realm improvements. Policies ESBG11 (Community Facilities) and ESBG14 (Local Green Spaces) work to protect the existing services and amenities that positively contribute to residents' quality of life. This includes green infrastructure, which provides space for recreation, relaxation and access to nature, and built structures that allow for the community to come together – all of which benefit the health and wellbeing of communities²². The policies also seek to protect the key community infrastructure such as the village halls, the primary school and the public house – all of which act as community hubs and allow for interaction and socialisation between residents. These policies will support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the local community. Additionally, policy ESBG17 (Encouraging Active and Sustainable Travel) works to inspire the residents of the neighbourhood area to increase walking and cycling where it is safe and suitable to do so by providing well defined routes, which will also work to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the residents of the ESBGNP area.

Transportation

5.35 With reference to the local public transport networks, the ESBGNP area is not connected via the rail network. The ESBGNP is serviced by two bus routes, allowing for more sustainable journeys, however these services are limited. In this respect, the residents of the ESBGNP area are more reliant on private vehicles to access a wider variety of services, facilities and amenities outside of the neighbourhood area. The A339 and A34 are accessible from the ESBGNP area and allow for travel to a variety of settlements. The neighbourhood area has numerous public rights of way (PRoW) in addition to a section of the Wayfarer's Long-Distance Walk²³, the Brenda Parker Way²⁴ and two off road cycle paths. Considering this information, the proposed site allocations under policies ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) and ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) have the potential to lead to increased numbers of private vehicles on the road in and around the ESBGNP area. This has the potential to increase concern over traffic on the road network and associated speeding as identified in the September 2021 ESBGNP Community Consultation²⁵. These concerns may be limited though by the number of homes to be delivered through the neighbourhood plan, and the smaller scale of sites to be delivered.

5.36 The site allocation under policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) has easy access to the bus network and Ecchinswell Road, which allows for easy journeys to other settlements. However, the site has no pedestrian connectivity. Policy ESBG3 (Housing in Bishops Green) indicates access to the site will be via Ecchinswell Road and development should make contributions to the 'slow the pace' measures. Additionally, policy ESBG3 indicates development will be supported where a pedestrian path between Rooksfield and Eagle Road is created to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the facilities in Bishops Green. The site allocation under policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) has easy access to the village centre and the limited amenities available, and is located close to two footpaths. Policy ESBG4 indicates

²² Natural England (2021) 'Green Infrastructure Network Framework' can be accessed [here](#).

²³ Visit Hampshire (2022) 'Wayfarer's Walk' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁴ The Brenda Parker Way (no date) 'The Brenda Parker Way' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁵ ES&BG Neighbourhood Plan (2021) 'Overview of Findings from Community Consultation held on 24th and 25th September 2021 at Ecchinswell and Bishops Green Village Halls' can be accessed [here](#).

vehicular access to the site should be via Ecchinswell Road, development proposals will make contributions to the 'slow the pace' measures and create a 'green path' to enhance resident safety, and provide improvements to the pedestrian and cycle access will be supported. In this respect the site allocation policies have a close focus on promoting active travel modes.

- 5.37 In addition to the site specific policies, the ESBGNP includes policies that will encourage improvements to the transportation network in the neighbourhood area. Policy ESBG5 (Design Quality in the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green) sets out the need for developers to understand, respond and adhere to the ESBG Design Guidance and Codes document. Through Codes 6 (Parking and Utilities) and 8 (Sustainability) this documentation will help to improve transportation in the ESBGNP area. Additionally, policy ESBG8 (Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace) indicates proposals for expanding or diversifying existing business infrastructure will be supported where there will be no detrimental impact on the rural highway network and there is no creation of vehicle-intensive development. Policy ESBG17 (Encouraging Active and Sustainable Travel) specifies residential development should seek to provide access to the local road network and mitigate against adverse transport impacts, for example through engagement with the 'slow the pace' projects. Additionally, the policy seeks to encourage active and sustainable transportation by seeking development that financially contributes to the local sustainable transportation network and considers the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Finally, policy ESBG17 (Encouraging Active and Sustainable Travel) supports residential development proposals where there is provision for on and off-road parking and cycle parking facilities.

Conclusions at this current stage

- 5.38 In the context of the above, the assessment has concluded that the submission version of the ESBGNP is likely to have positive effects in relation to the 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' SA theme by encouraging proposals that support development that is sensitive to the existing habitats, species and ecological networks, in addition to protecting these features and supporting biodiversity net gain. This includes conserving landscape features like hedgerows and trees, protecting habitats, green open spaces and important landscape areas, and maintaining and enhancing the green and blue infrastructure network.
- 5.39 Regarding the 'Climate Change' SA theme, the ESBGNP will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions due to an increase in the built footprint of the neighbourhood area and the rural nature of the neighbourhood area affecting travel patterns. However, the plan has the potential to lead to positive effects through supporting proposals that include low carbon technologies, and proactively responding to the potential impacts of climate change, including an increase in extreme weather events, through the delivery of green infrastructure provision and the implementation of SuDS. Policies promoting active and sustainable transportation within the ESBGNP area also work to make the plan positive in terms of climate change.
- 5.40 The ESBGNP will bring positive effects in relation to the 'Landscape' SA theme. These benefits largely relate to the ESBGNP's emphasis on reinforcing landscape character in association with the distinct character areas present in

the neighbourhood area, and the special qualities of the North Wessex Down AONB.

- 5.41 The ESBGNP places the distinct historic environment of the neighbourhood area at the centre of plan policies. Whilst the site allocation under policy ESBG4 (Housing in Ecchinswell) is in proximity to the Ecchinswell Conservation Area, no significant impacts on the historic significance of the conservation area are anticipated as a result of an allocation at this site. In addition, the site allocation policy includes provision for the protection of the historic interest of the conservation area. The wider policies that conserve and enhance the historic environment and natural environment will support the conservation and enhancement of the fabric and setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets in the ESBGNP area. The policies compliment the ESBG Design Guide and Codes, with further benefits for the historic environment in the neighbourhood area.
- 5.42 In terms of the 'Land, Soil and Water Resources' SA theme, the ESBGNP includes a site allocation on greenfield land and a site allocation on a site that has been previously developed. With varied levels of likelihood of BMV land in the neighbourhood area, it is possible development could result in the loss of productive agricultural land. However, the wider policies of the plan protect the area from inappropriate development and outline policies that will help support the capacity of the landscape to regulate soil and water quality. Given both sites overlap with a minerals safeguarding area, it is likely a consultation with Hampshire County Council will be necessary.
- 5.43 The ESBGNP is likely to have positive effects in relation to the 'Community Wellbeing' SA theme, due to the provision of homes suitable for older people and younger people with families, plus the provision for affordable housing. The range of types and tenures of housing facilitated by the neighbourhood plan will help reinforce community vitality and support local services and facilities. Coupled with wider plan policies related to improving community infrastructure, maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure and encouraging active transportation, the ESBGNP will support the quality of life for residents in the plan area.
- 5.44 In relation to the 'Transportation' SA theme, the ESBGNP includes policies that will help to improve access from the sites to the local transport network, outlining measures to keep residents on these sites safe on the road. Additionally, the plan supports the improvement of pedestrian and cycle access in the wider plan area (to the benefit of the residents' health and wellbeing) and encourages the development of sustainable transport provision. This demonstrates the plan has considered the impacts development will have on the local transport network and has engaged in ways to mitigate this impact. However, it is recognised sustainable transport options within the ESBGNP area are relatively limited due to the rural nature of the area, and private vehicle use will continue to allow for access to a greater number of services and amenities.

6. What are the next steps?

- 6.1 This SA Report accompanies the ESBGNP for submission to the Local Planning Authority, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, for subsequent Independent Examination.
- 6.2 At Independent Examination, the ESBGNP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans and is in general conformity with local planning policy.
- 6.3 If the Independent Examination is favourable, ESBGNP will be subject to a referendum, organised by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the ESBGNP, then it will be 'made'. Once made, ESBGNP will become part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area.

Appendix A Context Review and Baseline

A.1 Air Quality

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to the NPPF, which seeks to reduce/mitigate air quality impacts during development and to take advantage of opportunities to improve air quality. Measures include sustainable transport solutions, limiting the need to travel, complying with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants and enhancing green infrastructure in strategic development. Smaller-scale development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality.
- Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) are declared in areas that exceed national objectives for levels of particulates, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, butadiene, carbon monoxide, lead and/or nitrogen oxides.
- In order to improve air quality across the country, the UK government has produced national strategies focused on regulatory frameworks, investment in cleaner processes by industry and a shift towards cleaner forms of energy. Whilst there are dedicated strategies to reducing roadside emissions (as a significant source of nitrogen dioxide emissions), recent objectives found in the 2019 Clean Air Strategy seek to recognise wider sources that contribute to poor air quality, such as diffuse sources and smaller contributors.
- The ESBGNP will also need to be in line with the policies outlined in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan Update.

Current baseline

Local Authorities are obligated to review and assess air quality in their region on a regular basis under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) process, set out in Section 82 of the Environment Act (1995). There are no AQMAs within the neighbourhood area nor in the wider borough council area of Basingstoke and Deane.

The Basingstoke and Deane 2021 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)²⁶ states that the main pollutant of interest within the council area is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), arising primarily due to the use of vehicles. The ASR acknowledges NO₂ levels are below the annual mean objective, however COVID-19 restrictions have likely influenced this reduction. The document recognises there has been an improvement in air quality but states there are some areas where local action is needed to further improve air quality. The Basingstoke and Deane 2021 Air Quality ASR also refers to the 2019 Clean Air Strategy and the Road to Zero Strategy as documents that set out the case for action in the Borough.

²⁶ Basingstoke and Deane 2021 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) can be accessed [here](#).

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have launched several initiatives in pursuit of improving local air quality:

- The launch of an anti-idling campaign to introduce fixed penalty notices to motorists who leave their engines running whilst stationary on a public highway.
- The introduction of two electric vehicles into the Council fleet for use by Civic Enforcement Officers.
- Educational programmes including online events and competitions, the encouragement of car sharing, the encouragement of school and public transport use as well as walking and cycling (dependent on COVID-19 restrictions), Sustainable Travel Accreditation and Recognition for Schools ('STARS') scheme for schools that demonstrate excellence in supporting sustainable travel.
- Basingstoke and Deane Transport Strategy, which provides a framework for more detailed work on specific projects which will progress to deliver transport improvements (and discussed in further detail within the 'Transportation' chapter in this Scoping Report).
- Preparation of a Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy (discussed in further detail within the 'Climate Change' chapter in this Scoping Report) to lead improvements in air quality across the Borough over the next decade as well as support climate change initiatives, focusing on buildings and transport emissions.

Future baseline

The growth associated with future housing and employment provision within the ESBGNP area and the wider setting has the potential for air quality impacts associated with increased levels of traffic and associated pollutants. However, this is unlikely to lead to exceedances of air quality objectives in the neighbourhood area (and within the Borough as a whole) providing that suitable planning and mitigation measures are incorporated in the design of new development areas.

A.2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to the NPPF, which highlights that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils. Plans should also identify, map and safeguard components of wider ecological networks and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species and pursue opportunities to secure net gains in biodiversity. The NPPF states if significant harm to biodiversity due to a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or compensated, then planning permission should be refused.
- The NPPF supports the establishment and enhancement of habitat networks and green infrastructure at the landscape and catchment scale to allow for more resilience to current and future pressures. Trees notably make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan places emphasis on improvements to the natural environment; aiming to achieve clean air and water, a reduced risk from environmental hazards, a thriving plant and wildlife network, the sustainable use of resources and the enhancement of the natural environment. This will be accomplished by sustainably using and managing land, engaging in nature recovery, connecting people to the environment, increasing resource efficiency, and protecting and improving land, sea, and ocean.
- The Environment Act 2021 makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England, in addition to biodiversity gain site registers and biodiversity credits. The Act recognises there is a general duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity using biodiversity reports and local nature recovery strategies. Local nature recovery strategies will identify biodiversity priorities for the strategy area as well as a local habitat map. Furthermore, habitat maps are expected to include recovery and enhancement areas which are or could become of importance for biodiversity.
- The ESBGNP will also need to be in line with the policies outlined in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan Update.

Current baseline

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are protected by law in order to conserve their wildlife or geology. Where an SSSI may be impacted by development proposals, Natural England acts as a statutory consultee.

No Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) have been identified within the ESBGNP area. However, the parish is within 1km of the following SSSIs.

Greenham and Crookham Commons is approximately 130 m north from the northern parish boundary and covers an approximate 279 ha. This site comprises of an

extensive complex of heathland, grassland, gorse scrub, broad leaved woodland and alder-lined gullies and also has a large ancient coppice woodland known as Peckmoor Copse²⁷. This SSSI is rich in biodiversity with a range of flora and fauna species present. Based on the latest condition assessment, 10.64% of the SSSI is in favourable condition, with 72.3% in unfavourable-recovering condition and 17.05% classed as unfavourable-no change²⁸.

Duncroft Farm Pit is approximately 900m west from the western parish boundary and covers an estimated 0.12 ha. This site provides the only known exposure of beds of Upper Chalk, known as the Kingsclere Monocline; thought to have formed due to geological movements during the Tertiary period anywhere between 66-2.6 million years ago²⁹. Based on the latest condition assessment, 100% of the SSSI is in favourable condition³⁰.

Old Burghclere Lime Quarry is approximately 930m west of the western parish boundary and covers an estimated 4.61 ha. This site is a disused limeworks and exhibits various stages of succession from bare chalk through to chalk grassland to scattered and dense scrub. The varied vegetational structure supports a rich ecology of fauna and flora³¹. Based on the latest condition assessment, 100% of the SSSI is in favourable condition³².

Ladle Hill SSSI sits on the western ESBGNP boundary, covering an estimated 10.4 ha. The site occupies north and west facing slopes and the ramparts of a hill fort on the top, supporting some of the floristically richest chalk grassland on the northern escarpment of the Hampshire Chalk Plateau. The earthwork is rich in species and is of exceptional importance for its population of the rare July flowering form of the burnt tip orchis (*Orchis ustulata*)³³. Based on the latest condition assessment, 100% of the site is in favourable condition³⁴.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) are a GIS tool/dataset which maps zones around each SSSI according to the sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location, including residential, rural-residential, and rural non-residential.

Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. In this respect, most of the ESBGNP area overlaps with SSSI IRZs for the types of development which are likely to be brought forward during the plan period.

However, it is important to note that the scale of development likely to be brought forward through the ESBGNP (up to 15 dwellings) is less likely to exceed the SSSI IRZ thresholds at most locations. Nonetheless, this is dependent on the location of new development areas.

²⁷ Greenham and Crookham Commons SSSI 'Reasons for Designation' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁸ The condition of the Greenham and Crookham Commons SSSI can be assessed [here](#).

²⁹ Duncroft Farm Pit SSSI 'Reasons for Designation' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁰ The condition of the Duncroft Farm Pit SSSI can be assessed [here](#).

³¹ Old Burghclere Lime Quarry SSSI 'Reasons for Designation' can be accessed [here](#).

³² The condition of the Old Burghclere Lime Quarry SSSI can be assessed [here](#).

³³ Ladle Hill SSSI 'Reasons for Designation' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁴ The condition of the Ladle Hill SSSI can be assessed [here](#).

Local Nature Reserves

No Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are located within the ESBGNP area. However, the ESBGNP area is within proximity to the Herbert Plantation LNR approximately 1km to the west.

Priority Habitats and Species

There are a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats located within and in proximity to the ESBGNP area, including: deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland, wood pasture and parkland, traditional orchards, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, lowland heathland, and ancient woodland. These BAP habitats within and surrounding the ESBGNP area support a wide variety of species of plants and animals, including populations of protected species. The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) holds biodiversity records detailing which species have been recorded across the county, which can be accessed upon request³⁵.

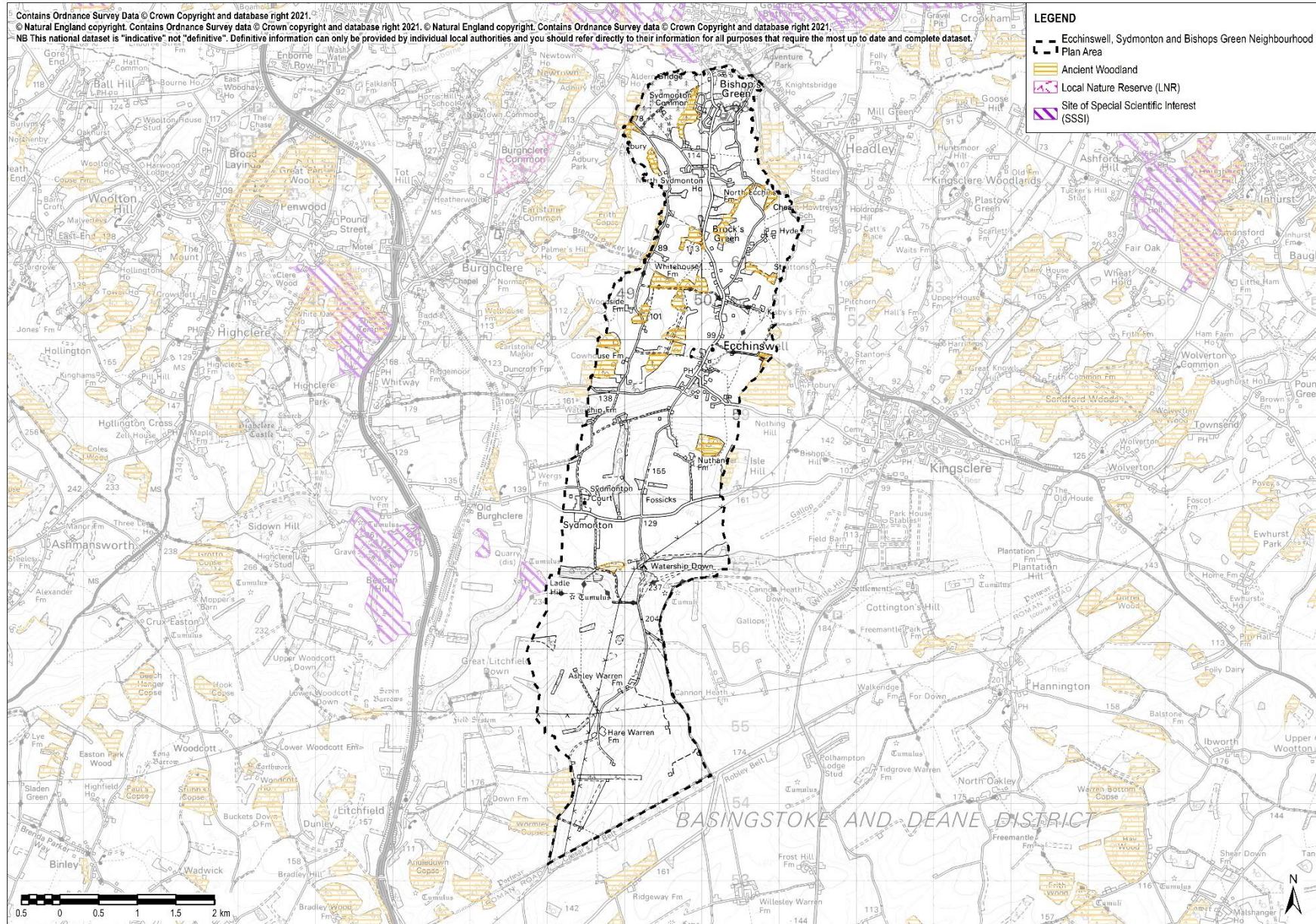
The figures at the end of A.2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity show the location of the designated sites and BAP Priority Habitats within and in proximity to the ESBGNP area.

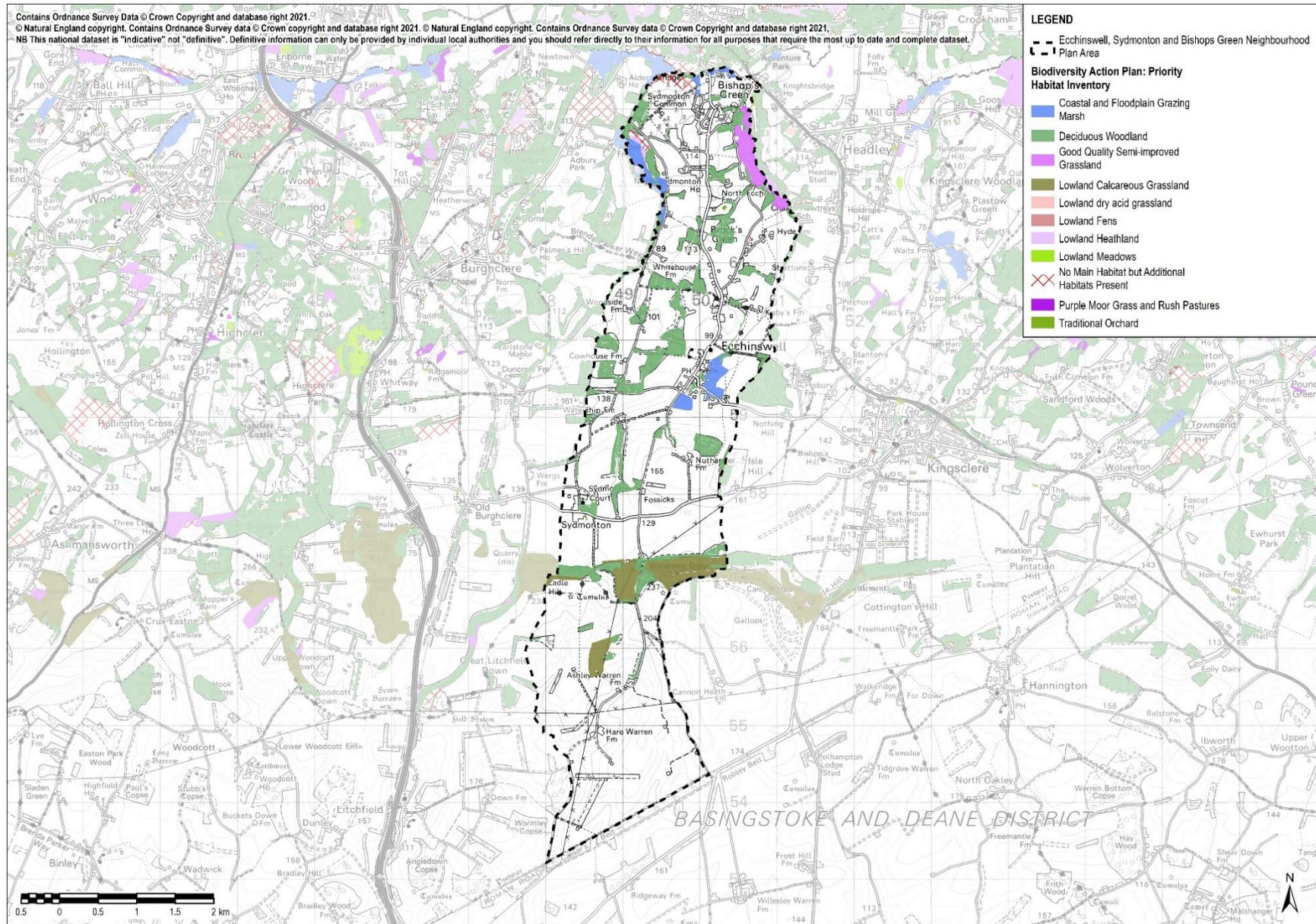
Future baseline

Habitats and species within the ESBGNP area may potentially face increasing pressures from future development, with potential negative impacts on the wider ecological network. This could include through the degradation or loss of habitat/s and impacts on biodiversity networks, which could be intensified 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.

The ESBGNP presents an opportunity to maximise benefits for biodiversity by considering important habitats, species, and designated sites at all stages of planning for future growth. This is particularly relevant for new, smaller scale housing developments. To maintain and improve the condition of the local biodiversity in the future, it is paramount to protect and enhance important habitats and the connections between them. Effective coordination of development delivery will be key in ensuring opportunities to improve green infrastructure and ecological corridors are maximised within the ESBGNP area.

³⁵ Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre websites can be found [here](#).





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A.3 Climate Change

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to 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, including through reuse, regeneration, and conversion.
- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy, the 25 Year Environment Plan, 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. The documents also interlink with the government's commitment to decarbonising transport. The decarbonisation plan recognises the need to undertake action to adapt the transport sector and increase resilience to climate change risks; this challenge is more directly addressed through the UK's National Adaptation Programme.
- The ESBGNP will also need to be in line with the policies outlined in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan Update. These plans contain policies relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including green infrastructure, water quality and flood management, delivering high quality development and pollution prevention measures.

Current baseline

Contribution to climate change

In June 2019, Hampshire County Council declared a climate emergency³⁶, subsequently releasing a climate change strategy and action plan. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council also declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and are committed to becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2030 by committing to their Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy³⁷.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions shown in the following figures are derived from data supplied from the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy³⁸.

Figure A.3.1 indicates that carbon dioxide emissions in the Basingstoke and Deane Borough, in which the ESBGNP is located, are lower in kilotons per km² in comparison to Hampshire, the South East and England. It is likely though that per

³⁶ Hampshire County Council's climate emergency declaration can be accessed [here](#).

³⁷ Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy can be accessed [here](#)

³⁸ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2020) 2005 to 2018 UK local and regional CO₂ emissions – data tables can be downloaded [here](#).

capita emissions are higher in the neighbourhood area given the rural nature of the parish and the high reliance on the private car to access key services and facilities.

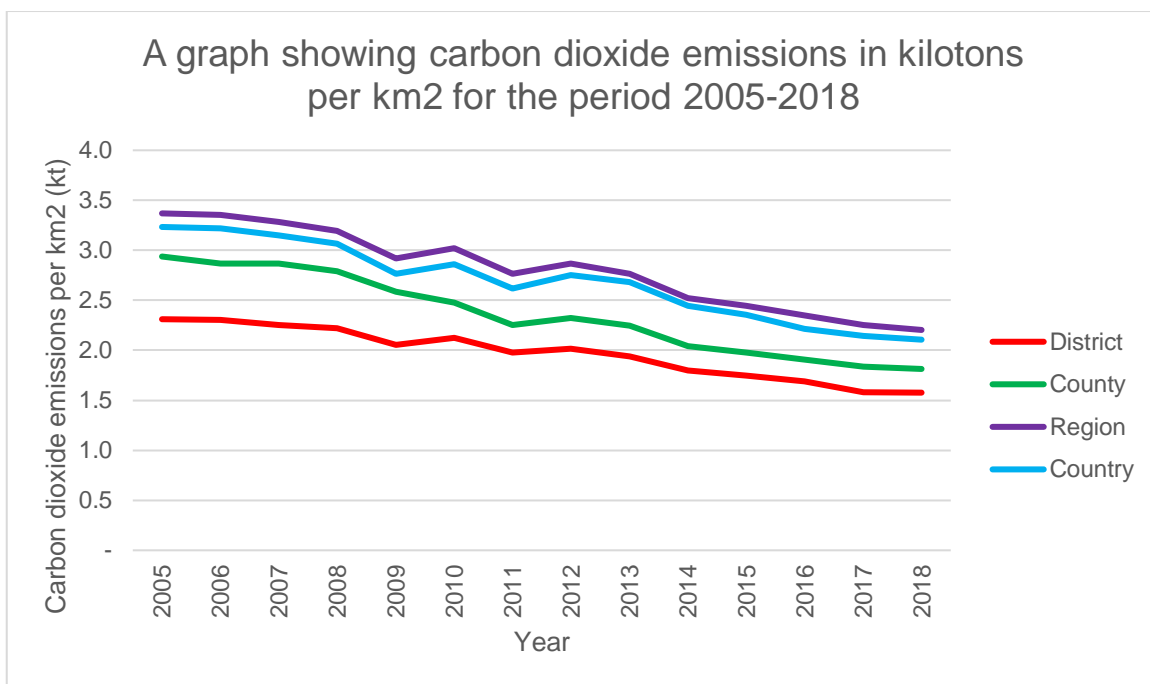


Figure A.3.1 CO₂ emissions in kt per km² across the selected regions (2005-2018)

As shown in **Figure A.3.2**, the largest contributing sector with regards to CO₂ emissions in Hampshire was the domestic sector until 2014, whereupon the transportation sector increased and continues to contribute the highest amount of the three sectors.

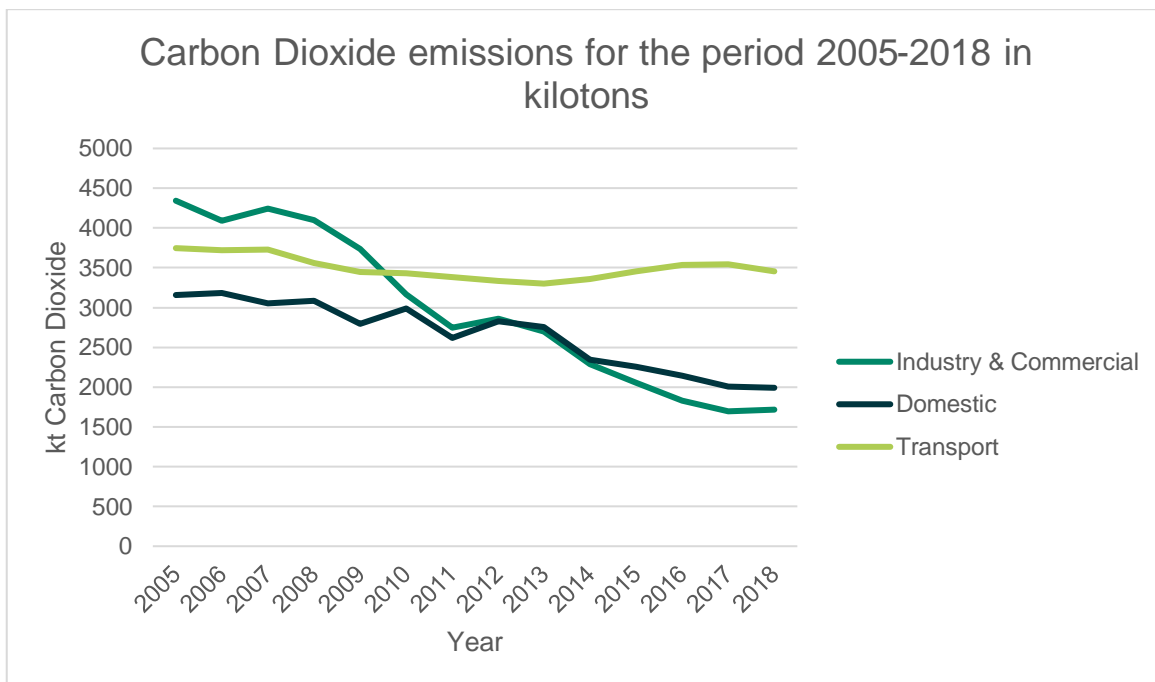


Figure A.3.2 CO₂ emissions in kt per sector in Hampshire (2005-2018)

Researchers from The University of Manchester and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research have developed an online tool which is now being used by local

authorities to understand their role in meeting the climate change objectives set by the UN.³⁹ The tool allows users to calculate a carbon budget for any UK administrative area larger than local authority scale, and set climate change targets which meet the objectives of the United Nations Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The tool suggests that in the Basingstoke and Deane Borough area, the entire carbon budget available under the Paris Agreement will be used up by 2027 without an immediate program of mitigation to deliver cuts in CO₂ of 13.1% per year.⁴⁰

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)⁴¹, 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 carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector have the potential to decrease.

Effects of climate change

The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2018 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) team⁴². UKCP18 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.

As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change (under medium emissions scenarios 50th percentile) for South East England during the period 2040-2059 compared to the period 1981-2000 are likely to be as follows:

- The central estimate of increase in annual mean temperatures of between 2°C and 3°C; and
- The central estimate of change in annual mean precipitation of +20 to +30% in winter and -20% to -30% in summer.

Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the neighbourhood area, including:

- Increased incidence of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer.
- Increased incidence of illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight (e.g. skin cancer, cataracts).
- Increase in health problems related to rise in local ozone levels during summer.
- Increased risk of injuries and deaths due to increased number of storm events.
- Effects on water resources from climate change.
- Reduction in availability of groundwater for abstraction.
- Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain.

³⁹ The Tyndall Carbon Budget tool can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁰ Basingstoke and Deane information can be accessed [here](#).

⁴¹ Department for Transport (2018) The Road to Zero report can be accessed [here](#).

⁴² Information about UKCP18 and key data can be accessed [here](#).

- Increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100-year floods.
- A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers.
- A need to upgrade flood defences.
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding.
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution.
- Spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution.
- Deterioration in working conditions due to increased temperatures.
- Increased demand for air-conditioning.
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence.
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- Flooding of roads.

Flood risks

As shown within **Figure A.3.3**⁴³ overleaf, most of the ESBGNP area is within Flood Zone 1 and thus has a low-very low fluvial flood risk. Areas of concern are found along the Ecchinswell Brook which borders the eastern parish boundary to the east, the Earlstone Stream and Burghclere Brook which border the western parish boundary, and the Enborne Burghclere Brook to Kingsclere Brook on the northern parish boundary. All three of these watercourses are sources to the River Enborne.

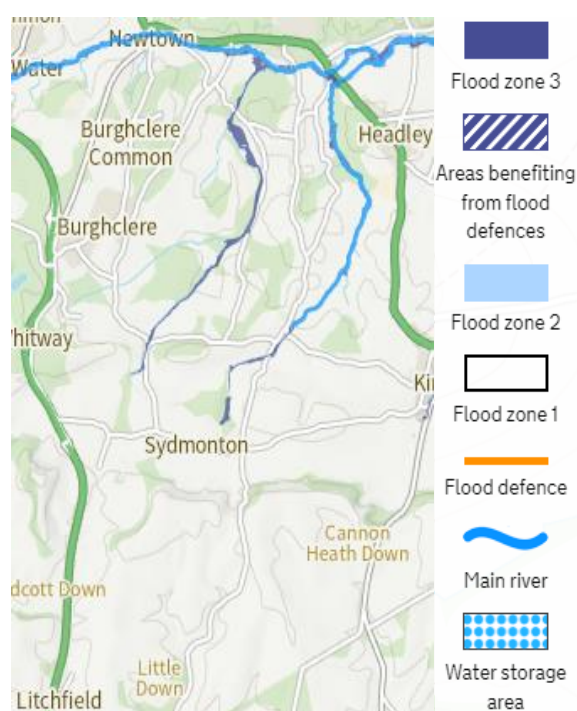


Figure A.3.3 Fluvial flood risk within the ESBGNP area

Part of the southern section of Ecchinswell borders or lies within Flood Zone 3, as demonstrated in **Figure A.3.4**.

⁴³ Flood map for planning can be accessed [here](#).

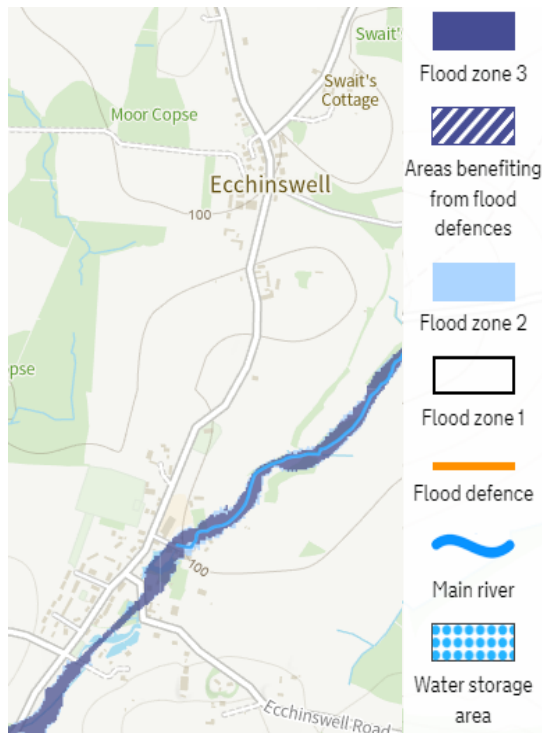


Figure A.3.4 Fluvial flood risk within and surrounding the settlement of Ecchinswell

Sydmonton has no Flood Zones bordering or within the settlement, but it is important to note there is an area of land within Flood Zone 3 to the north east of the settlement, as shown in Figure A.3.5 below.

Bishops Green has no Flood Zones bordering or within the settlement, but it is important to note that there are multiple areas of land within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 surrounding the settlement, as shown in Figure A.3.6 below.

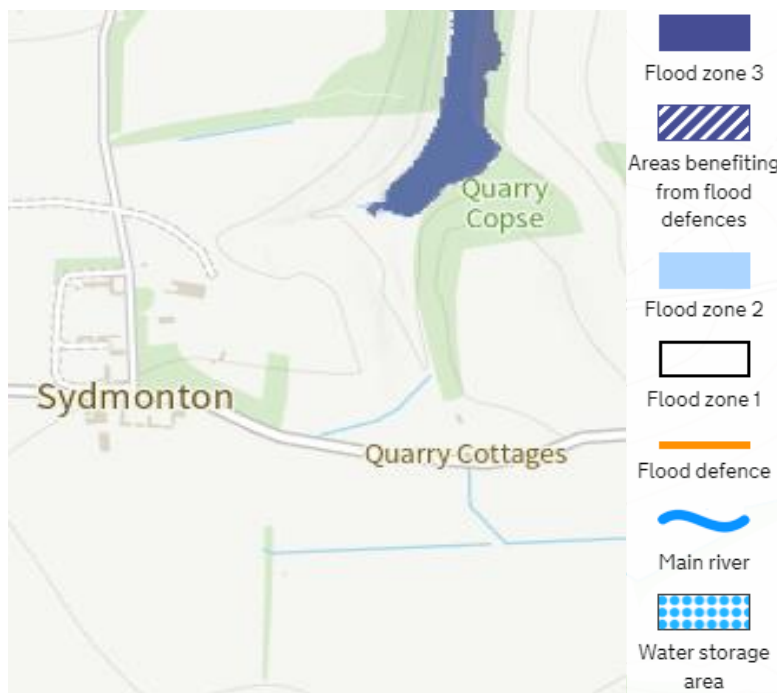


Figure A.3.5 Fluvial flood risk within and surrounding the settlement of Sydmonton

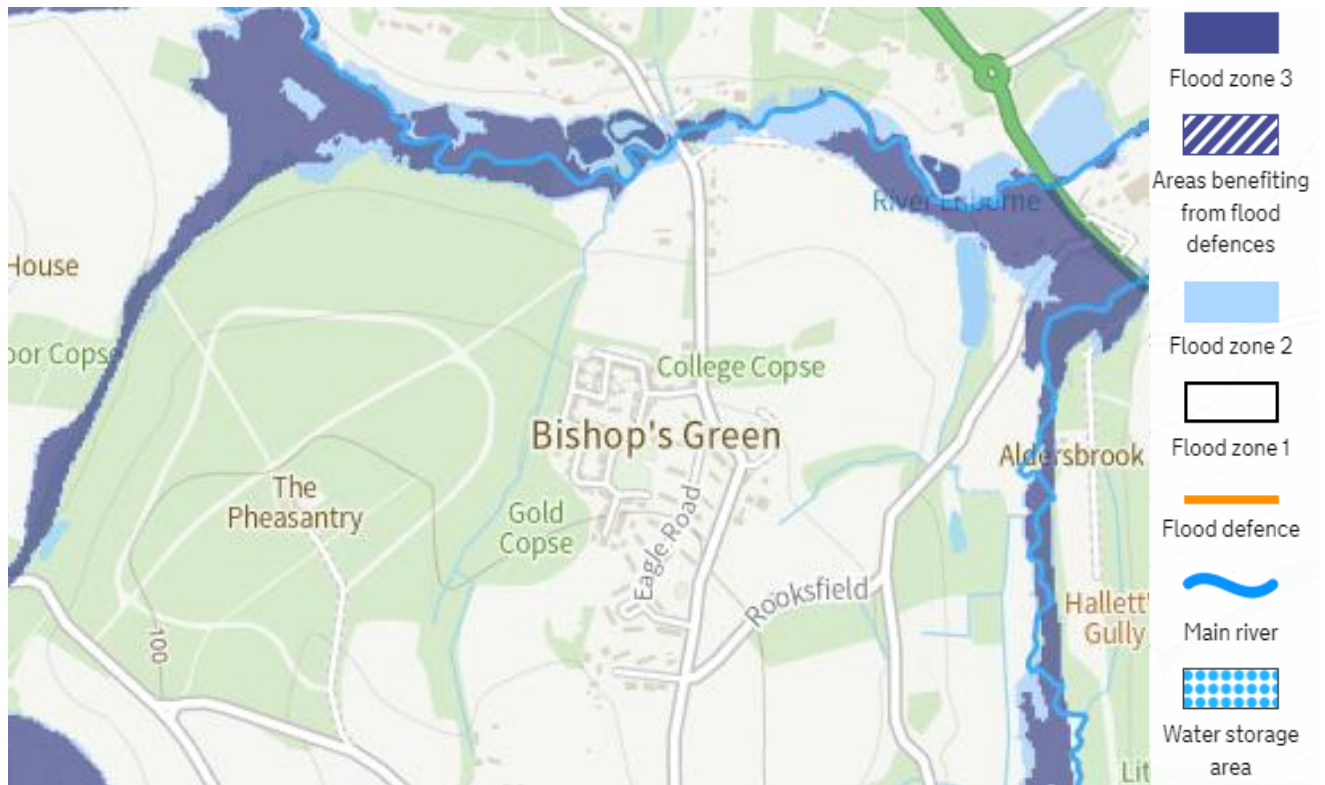
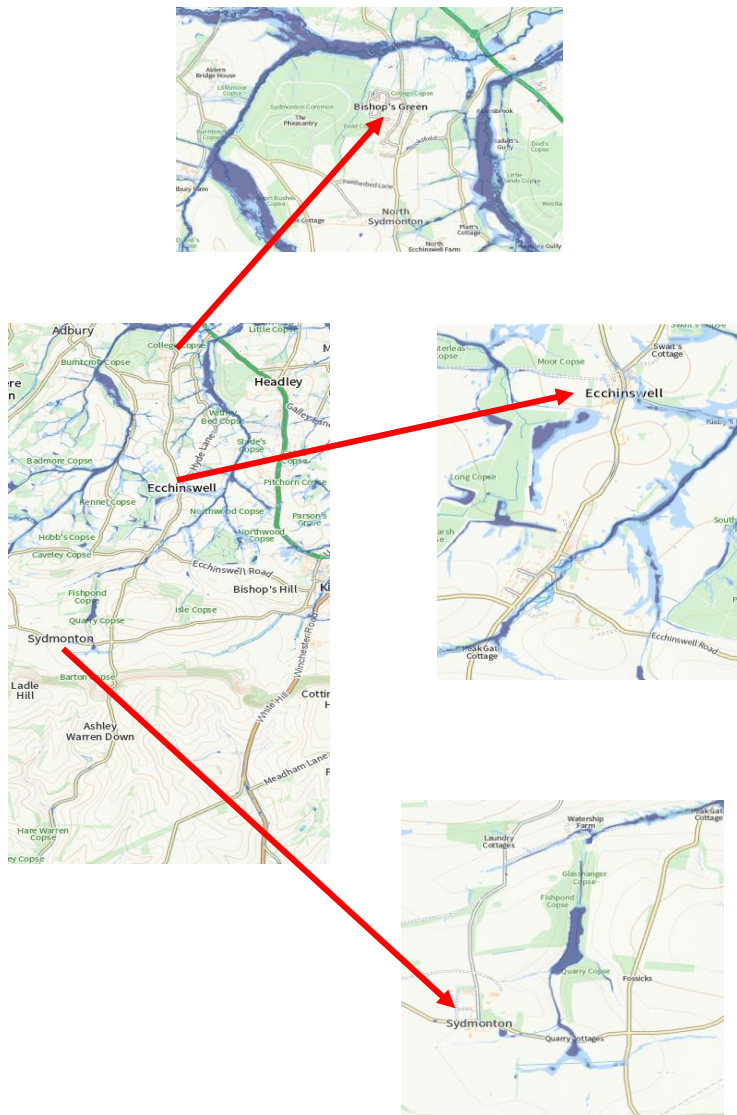


Figure A.3.6 Fluvial flood risk within and surrounding the settlement of Bishops Green

Figure A.3.7 below illustrates the surface water flood risk in the ESBGNP area, and within and surrounding the three main settlements⁴⁴. Ecchinswell is most at risk from surface water flooding, with areas of high, medium, and low risk within the southern part of the settlement.

⁴⁴ Long term flood risk mapping tool can be accessed [here](#).



Extent of flooding from surface water
 ● High ● Medium ● Low ○ Very low

Figure A.3.7 Surface water flood risk within the ESBGNP area and three main settlements

In terms of wastewater treatment, sewage capacity has been identified as an issue for parts of the parish. This is related to two factors. Firstly, there are issues with the capacity/capability of the plant in Bishops Green and of the pumping system/station to the East of St Lawrence Church in Ecchinswell. Secondly, many properties rely on septic tank drainage. This has affected the water quality of the River Enborne/Kennet.

Future baseline

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 amplified level of risk associated with climate change and a subsequent increase in need for resilience and adaptation. New development areas have the potential to increase flood risk through factors like changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks, or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk. Flood risk impacts are likely to be more pronounced in the settlement of

Ecchinswell due to its proximity to a key source of fluvial flood risk concern, the Ecchinswell Brook.

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 contribute to increases in the absolute levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

A.4 Landscape

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will be required to have regard to the principles set out in the NPPF, which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, landscape 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 in addition to designated biodiversity sites, habitats, woodland, historic features, agricultural land, and cultural landscapes. The positive contribution that land remediation can have on despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land is also recognised.
- The 25-year Environment Plan and National Design Guide outline the same aims as each other, focusing on helping to create a cleaner, greener country that puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats. Design is focused on beautiful, enduring, and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality green open spaces.
- The National Model Design Code states all design codes should include a landscape and open space strategy that takes into account the existing natural features and new structural elements. It recognises that landscapes can be major drivers in the design process.
- The neighbourhood area falls within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and as such the key aims and objectives within the most recently prepared management plan for this nationally protected landscape should be a key source of reference during plan making.

Current baseline

Nationally protected landscapes

The southern half of the ESBGNP area is within the boundaries of the North Wessex Downs AONB.

The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 discusses the area's special qualities, split into the following themes: landscape, rural land management, biodiversity, natural resources, historic environment, development, communities and tourism, leisure and access.

The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 also lists key issues that have the potential to influence AONB's landscape. These include:

- Development outside the AONB boundary that could visually damage or undermine the landscape character areas and qualities.
- The impact of traffic noise, external lighting, road signs, insensitive materials, and clutter on the landscape as people travel through it.

- The need to maintain the current pattern of discrete villages set within a quiet rural landscape to ensure views of the surrounding scarps are undamaged.
- The need to maintain, conserve and enhance a variety of habitats; and
- Intense pressure for development throughout the AONB and its setting that threatens the character and quality of its landscape and risks the merging of small settlements, encroachment by larger settlements and changes to the scale and nature of development boundaries.

Local landscape and villagescape character

Landscape and villagescape character are important when evaluating the relationship between people and place; allowing for the identification of recognisable and distinct patterns in the landscape which make areas unique. Character can assist in assessing the significance of change resulting from development and the value of landscape in both visual and amenity terms. Assessments can provide indications of landscape sensitivity and capacity.

As discussed, approximately half of the ESBGNP area overlaps with the boundaries of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 classes this area as 'Section 2D: Walbury Hill – Watership Down Scarp', which falls under the 'Downland with Woodland' landscape character type. It has areas of Upper, Middle and Lower chalk as well as London Clay. This landscape is of lower elevation, has a covering of clay over the chalk, and has contours with greater woodland cover. It also has field patterns comprised of small irregular medieval enclosures and larger regular Parliamentary enclosures.⁴⁵

The Basingstoke and Deane Landscape Character Assessment, which was initially undertaken in 2001, has recently been updated.⁴⁶ This sets out the key landscape characteristics across the borough, based on 20 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).

The neighbourhood area is covered by three LCAs. The majority of the parish is within the Ecchinswell LCA (02). The southern parts of the parish are within The Clere Scarp LCA (07) and the Great Litchfield Down and Willesley Warren LCA (08). The key characteristics of these LCAs, as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment, are as follows:

Ecchinswell (02): Overall Landscape Character

This area is characterised by a medium-scale mosaic of mixed farmland and relatively small, but numerous, copses and areas of woodland. These small, irregular-shaped woodlands are predominantly broadleaved, although larger, less-frequent areas of mixed conifer and broadleaf are evident to the west of Headley. Fields are under a mix of pasture and arable, and bounded by a strong structure of hedgerows and trees. Added diversity is created by areas of more open farmland on higher ground and smaller, more enclosed fields, under pasture, within the minor stream valleys. As in the Highclere and Burghclere Character Area, the landform is gently undulating and the landscape has an intimate, relatively secluded character. Numerous small villages, hamlets and individual farmsteads and properties are scattered throughout the area accessed through a fairly dense network of narrow lanes, often enclosed within high hedgerows. Some parts in the west and south-west

⁴⁵ The Watership Down area was also the inspiration for the book of the same name by Richard Adams.

⁴⁶ Hankinson Duckett Associates (May 2021) 'Basingstoke and Deane Landscape Character Assessment' can be accessed [here](#).

have a feeling of remoteness and, overall, the Character Area has retained a rural character away from the A339 and fringes of Kingsclere and Headley.

The Clere Scarp (07) Overall Landscape Character

This is an area dominated by the dramatic escarpment, an example of a distinctive and scarce chalk landscape type. Its strongly linear form brings a unifying and cohesive character to the scarp footslopes and offers long views from points such as Beacon Hill. Both the scarp and its footslopes display localised variations in landcover and use. The escarpment is characterised by calcareous grassland with small areas of encroaching scrub and blocks of infrequent woodland. A slightly higher proportion of woodland exists on the scarp and footslopes to the west of the area, creating a rather more enclosed landscape than that in the east. Oak woodland is dominant within the western part of the area, giving way to predominantly beech woodlands within the coombes. Racehorse gallops and stud farms characterise the bottom of the scarp, south of Kingsclere, whilst at Sydmonton, parkland provides a more ornamental and managed element. Settlement density within this area is limited with only a small scattering of farm buildings. As a result, a sense of remoteness and tranquillity pervades the landscape, except in the vicinity of the A34 and A343. Roads are relatively straight and direct.

Great Litchfield Down and Willesley Warren (08): Overall Landscape Character

Landscape character within this area is comparatively uniform, with coherence and unity provided by the area's scale and openness. Large, open arable fields, with a weak hedgerow and woodland structure, separate it from the surrounding, more enclosed, chalkland landscapes. Occasional small areas of pasture are distributed throughout the area. A regular, formal, wooded element within the open landscape is formed by Robley Belt, part of a series of linear plantations marking the route of the straight

Roman road that traverses the area. The north of the landscape is notable for the 'gallops' for racehorse training, which take advantage of well-drained springy turf. The landscape is sparsely populated, with infrequent farmsteads dispersed across the area. Due to the low density of settlement, roads are also few and, where they are present, generally follow a straight and direct route. The area is remote from major urban influences, ensuring that the landscape has retained a quiet, rural character, apart from around the A34 in the west, and the detracting feature of a major pylon line across the north.

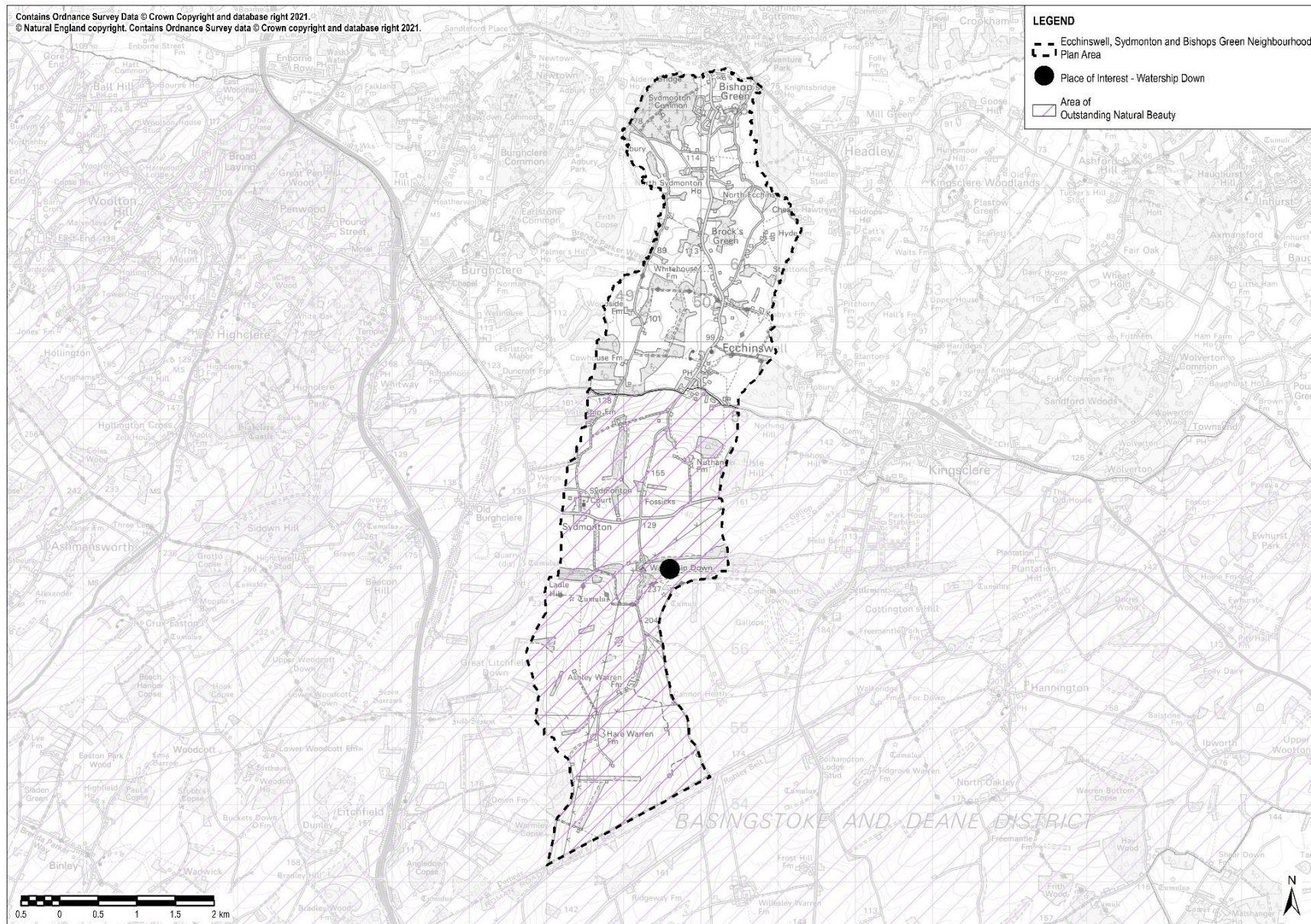
Visual amenity

It is important to note that views across the ESBGNP, especially associated with the historic character of the Ecchinswell Conservation Area (see Historic Environment SA Theme), should be fully considered in the planning process, as new development has the potential to impact upon important views and locations.

Future baseline

New development has the potential to cause changes in landscape quality in and around the neighbourhood area. Without a Neighbourhood Plan in place, development proposals may come forward without an in-depth consideration of the surrounding environment, affecting the landscape and villagescape features that contribute to the distinctive character of the ESBGNP area; particularly the unique qualities of the AONB.

However, locally distinctive landscape and villagescape features, characteristics and special qualities can be protected, managed, and enhanced through the Neighbourhood Plan. New development that is appropriately designed and landscape led could support the area's intrinsic landscape character and quality. This could include development that improves the village setting, delivering green infrastructure improvements and/or new recreational opportunities and enhanced framing of key views.



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A.5 Historic Environment

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The key high-level 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.
 - Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.
 - Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent, and consistent; and
 - Documenting and learning from decisions is essential⁴⁷.
- 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 significant.
- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to the NPPF, which seeks 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 are able to 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 Environmental 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.
- Historic England's Advice Notes provide further guidance on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of relevance for the ESBGNP 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;

⁴⁷ Historic England: Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance can be accessed [here](#).

- Recognising the value of implementing controls through neighbourhood 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 ESBGNP will also need to be in line with the policies outlined in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan Update.
 - In addition to conserving the historic environment, the ESBGNP should also look to identify opportunities to enhance the setting of the historic environment in combination with the rejuvenation of features and areas that are at risk of neglect and decay.

Current baseline

Listed buildings

Listed buildings are nationally designated buildings that are protected through the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990⁴⁸. According to the National Heritage List for England, the ESBGNP area contains a total of 51 listed buildings, including: two Grade II* and 49 Grade II listed buildings. The listed buildings are provided below along with their Historic England List Entry Number (HE), grouped by Listing Grade:

Grade II*:

- Church of St Mary, HE: [1092523](#)
- Sydmonton Court, HE: [1301426](#)

Grade II:

- Stable/Workshop 10 yards west of the Old Tannery, HE: [1092512](#)
- Clere House Farm, Granary 30 yards east of the Old Tannery, HE: [1092513](#)
- Woodpecker Cottage, HE: [1092514](#)
- Malthouse Farmhouse, HE: [1092515](#)
- Barn 30 yards north west of Malthouse Farmhouse, HE: [1092516](#)
- Ecchinswell House, HE: [1092517](#)
- Corner Cottage, HE: [1092518](#)
- Church Villa, HE: [1092519](#)
- Woodleys Cottage, HE: [1092520](#)
- Barn 20 yards south east of Burnside, HE: [1092521](#)
- Mill, HE: [1092522](#)
- Stable block approximately 50 metres west of Sydmonton Court, HE: [1092524](#)

⁴⁸ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can be accessed [here](#).

- Dovecot 30 yards west of Sydmonton Court, HE: [1092525](#)
- Nuthanger Farmhouse, HE: [1092526](#)
- Barn 20 yards south east of Nuthanger Farmhouse, HE: [1092527](#)
- Dores Hill, HE: [1092552](#)
- Granary, 20 yards east of Whitehouse Farmhouse, HE: [1092553](#)
- Barn 30 yards west of Woodside Farmhouse, HE: [1092554](#)
- Granary 30 yards west of Woodside Farmhouse, HE: [1092555](#)
- Barn 10 yards north of Whitehouse Farmhouse, HE: [1157695](#)
- Woodside Farmhouse, HE: [1157707](#)
- Church of St Lawrence, Lych-Gate, HE: [1157747](#)
- School, HE: [1157756](#)
- Bramley Cottage, HE: [1157766](#)
- Riverside Cottages, HE: [1157780](#)
- Mill House, HE: [1157788](#)
- Sydmonton Farmhouse, HE: [1157791](#)
- Quarry Cottages, HE: [1157832](#)
- South barn in a range of 2 on north-south axis at Nuthanger Farm, HE: [1166392](#)
- Clere House Farm Barns and Cattle Shed, HE: [1251013](#)
- Granary 15 yards south of Nuthanger Farmhouse, HE: [1301398](#)
- Granary 60 yards north-west of Sydmonton Farmhouse, HE: [1301424](#)
- Church of St Lawrence, HE: [1301432](#)
- Chapel Farm Cottages, HE: [1301459](#)
- Primrose Cottages, HE: [1301482](#)
- Whitehouse Farmhouse, HE: [1301484](#)
- Farm stable at Sydmonton Farm, HE: [1326291](#)
- Stable block next to the barn 10 yards north of Whitehouse Farmhouse, HE: [1339709](#)
- The Old Tannery, HE: [1339710](#)
- Barn/Hide store 10 yards north east of the Old Tannery, HE: [1339729](#)
- Hillside Cottage, HE: [1339730](#)
- Briar Malthouse Cottages, HE: [1339731](#)

- Kisbys' Cottage, HE: [1339732](#)
- Oak Cottage, HE: [1339733](#)
- Schoolhouse, HE: [1339734](#)
- Burnside, HE: [1339735](#)
- Cartshed 20 yards south west of Sydmonton Farmhouse, HE: [1339736](#)
- Pentico, HE: [1339748](#)
- Ecchinswell War Memorial, HE: [1464845](#)

Sydmonton Court (Grade II* listed) was originally owned by the Kingsmill family⁴⁹, including Admiral Sir Robert Kingsmill. The estate itself now forms part of the Watership Down Stud Farm. It is also the location of Sydmonton Festival, which introduces new works to a private audience connected to theatre, television, and film to determine their future potential and viable commercialism⁵⁰. In addition to the festival and stud farm, Sydmonton Court is also the headquarters of the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, which aims to advance the arts, culture, and heritage for the benefit of the public⁵¹.

Nuthanger House (Grade II listed) is referenced in the Watership Down novel by Richard Adams.

Scheduled Monuments

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) 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 Act. There are two Scheduled Monuments within the ESBGNP area, as listed below along with their Historic England List Entry Number:

- A bell barrow and a saucer barrow 315m ESE of the unfinished hillfort on Ladle Hill, HE: [1012035](#).
- An unfinished hillfort, a saucer barrow, a disc barrow and sections of two linear earthworks on Ladle Hill, HE: [1012035](#).

Conservation areas

Conservation areas are protected due to their special architectural and historic interest. A conservation area appraisal is a tool used to demonstrate the area's special interest, allowing for the explanation of the designation, and providing a greater understanding and articulation of its character.

There is one conservation area within the ESBGNP area, located in Ecchinswell. An assessment of the special interest, condition, issues, proposed actions, and management proposals of the conservation area can be found within the Ecchinswell

⁴⁹ Information on Sydmonton Court can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁰ Information on Sydmonton Festival can be accessed [here](#).

⁵¹ Information on the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation can be accessed [here](#).

Conservation Area Appraisal⁵², which will be an essential source of reference during the next stages of the SA process.

Ecchinswell Conservation Area was designated in 1990 in recognition of the special historic and architectural interest in the village. Qualities include:

- Higher ground providing extensive views across the valley and surrounding area.
- The combination of small, informally grouped pockets of settlement with open areas, which afford long range views of the surrounding countryside.
- Well established hedgerows and mature trees that help create a cohesive streetscene.
- Twenty-six buildings included on the Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, all of which are Grade II listed. They represent a variety of building types and are dispersed throughout the village, often located at key visual points in the streetscene.
- Several unlisted buildings that contribute to the special character.
- Walls constructed from brick and other materials that contribute to the texture and grain of the area.
- Bridges crossing the watercourses that are intrinsic to the conservation area.
- Two distinctive building traditions – timber-frame and thatch buildings in addition to high quality, decorative brickwork.
- The limited use of flint, stone, and slate in building construction.
- Streams, ponds, and associated vegetation that create a picturesque setting.
- A variety of habitats, including wetland, fields, pastureland, and woodland.
- Individual and groups of mature trees that represent a diverse collection of species.
- Chalkland landscapes on the southern boundary that are included within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Heathland habitats on the northern and western boundaries.
- The remains of two historic deer parks.
- An Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) to the west of the village where the original church was located, stretching out of the conservation area to the south, east and north; and
- An Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP) on the west side of the main road, suggesting there may have been occupation in this section.

Local important heritage features

It is recognised that not all historic environment features in an area are subject to statutory designations, and non-designated features comprise a large part of what people have contact with as part of daily life. Although they may not be designated, many buildings and areas are of historic interest and are important by local communities, like open spaces and distinctive buildings.

⁵² It is important to note that given the length of time which has passed since the completion of the conservation area appraisal document, it is possible that some of the detriments, issues or priority actions for each area may have since been completed or appropriately addressed.

In recognition of these features of local importance, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council hold a Local List of Architectural or Historic Interest.⁵³ The local list which last updated in 2008.

The Hampshire Historic Environmental Record (HER)⁵⁴ identifies the important distinctive structures and/or features that contribute positively to the local distinctiveness and sense of place in Hampshire. A search of the HER (accessed through the Hampshire County Council website)⁵⁵ shows the following features within and in proximity to the three main settlements in the ESBGNP area:



Figure A.5.1 Features listed on the HER in and in proximity to Bishops Green

⁵³ Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (2008) 'Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest Ecchinswell, Sydmonton & Bishops Green' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁴ Hampshire HER can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁵ The search involved inputting Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green into the search bar in turn, running the page then zooming in on the map until green triangles appeared on the map, indicating the locally important heritage features.

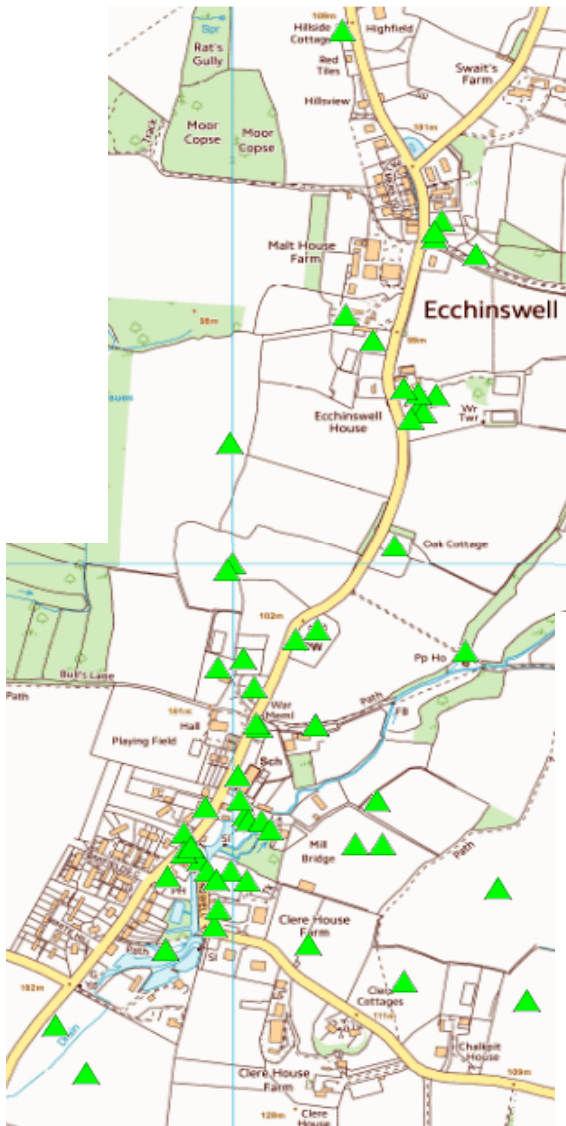


Figure A.5.2 Features listed on the HER in and in proximity to Ecchinswell



Figure A.5.3 Features listed on the HER in and in proximity to Sydmonton

During the subsequent stages of the SA process, the Hampshire HER online database will be reviewed in further detail to determine whether the policies and

proposals in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan have the potential to impact these features.

Heritage at risk

Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights the Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings, scheduled monuments, historic parks and gardens, registered battlefields, wreck sites and conservation areas deemed to be 'at risk'. According to the 2021 Heritage at Risk Register for South East England⁵⁶, there are no heritage assets at risk within the neighbourhood area.

It is important to recognise that the 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 ESBGNP area are at risk.

Encouraging and facilitating improvements to the condition of heritage assets within the Plan area (wherever practicable) is recognised as an opportunity for the ESBGNP.

Future baseline

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 layout and/or increasing the impacts of traffic within conservation areas. However, it should be noted that existing historic environment designations offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings.

New development proposals may not be harmful to the significance of a heritage asset. In the context of the neighbourhood area there may be the opportunity for new development to enhance the historic setting of the three key settlements within the area, support historic landscape character and better reveal assets' heritage significance.

⁵⁶ Historic England (2021) 'Heritage at Risk Register for South East England' can be accessed [here](#).

A.6 Land, Soil and Water Resources

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to the NPPF which pursues 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. This correlates to the Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England policy paper, which 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 plan 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.
- The Climate Change Committee's Sector Summary for Agriculture and land use, land use change and forestry assumes that land needed for food production, housing and other activity is met before climate mitigation objectives.
- The Southern Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) states that the South East of England is in a state of serious water stress and intends to implement 32 catchment schemes, two desalinisation schemes and three water recycling projects over the plan period of 2020-2070. This WRMP states that securing new water supplies for Hampshire in the next ten years is going to be a challenge due to the need to protect the unique chalk regions in the region; the River Test and the River Itchen. The document outlines a plan to secure alternative water resources, including reducing leaks and installing water meters to improve water efficiency, importing water from other water authorities such as South West Water and investing in environmental improvement projects to enhance water quality and river flow.
- The ESBGNP should 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.

Current baseline

Soil resources

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 of poorer quality. In this context, there is a need to avoid loss of higher quality BMV agricultural land.

As shown in **Figure A.6.1** below, the undeveloped areas surrounding the three key settlements in the ESBGNP area are predominantly underlain by Grade 3 (Good to Moderate) agricultural land, with small sections of Grade 4 (Poor) land⁵⁷. In the absence of a detailed assessment at these locations, it is currently not possible to determine whether these areas are Grade 3a (i.e. best and most versatile land) or Grade 3b quality (not best and most versatile).

The results of the ‘Predictive Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land Assessment’ for London and South East England provided by Natural England⁵⁸ indicates that the ESBGNP has areas of high, moderate, and low likelihood of BMV land. This is also shown in **Figure A.6.1**. Moderate and low likelihood areas are mostly concentrated in the northern half of the neighbourhood area.

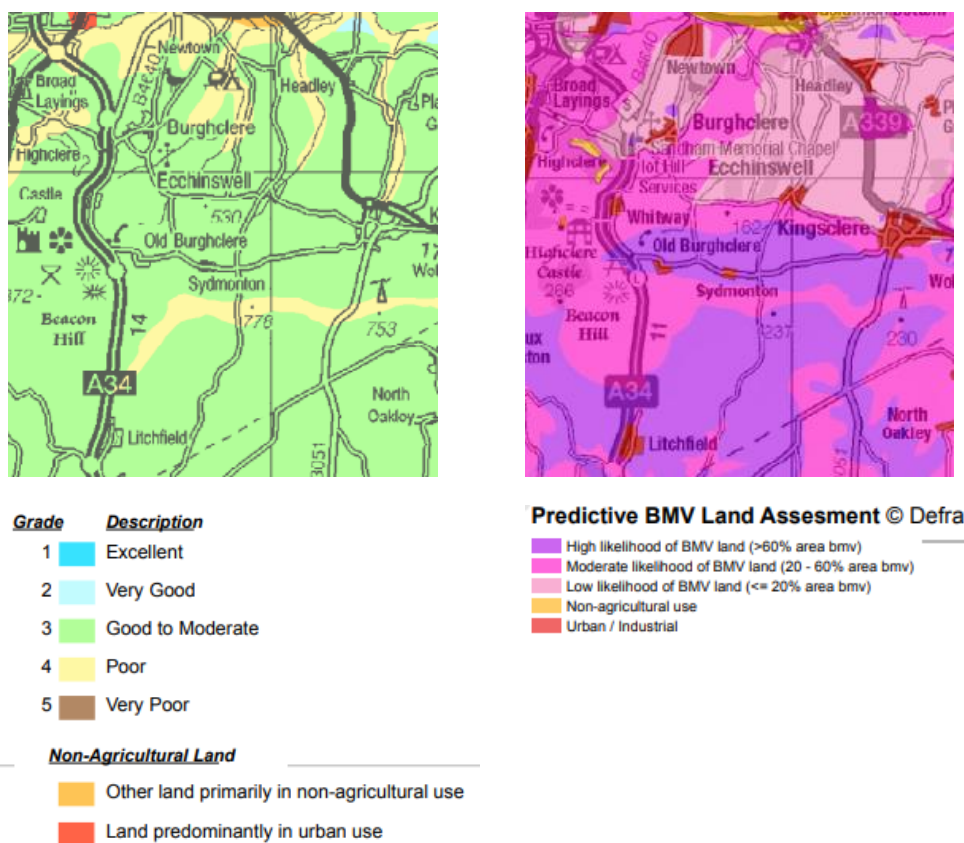


Figure A.6.1: Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) and Likelihood of BMV

⁵⁷ Natural England ALC map of London and the South East can be downloaded [here](#).

⁵⁸ Natural England Likelihood of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land - Strategic scale map London and the South East can be downloaded [here](#).

Water resources and quality

The neighbourhood area is located within the Thames River Basin District⁵⁹ and the Kennet Operational Catchment⁶⁰. The Enborne is the nearest main watercourse to the ESBGNP area, located north of Bishops Green – distinct from the rest of the catchment due to its fast flow.

As shown on the Environment Agency's Catchment Data Explorer, the Enborne is split into three sections. Section 1⁶¹ is awarded good ecological status but failed the chemical status due to the presence of Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE). Section 2⁶² was awarded moderate ecological status but also failed the chemical status due to PBDE traces. The same can be said of Section 3⁶³.

PBDEs are man-made compounds that are persistent in the environment, with a degradation half-life estimated between months to years. They also have the potential for long-range transport⁶⁴. It is estimated that 2.69kg of PBDEs enter the river districts in the South East of England every year.

Additional water resources located in the ESBGNP area include a network of small streams and inlets which connect to the Enborne, including the Ecchinswell Brook, the Earlstone Stream, Burghclere Brook, and some isolated ponds and drainage ditches alongside field margins.

Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) protect groundwater sources that are used for human consumption. The area north of Ecchinswell is designated as Zone 3 Total Catchment, Zone 2 Outer Protection and Zone 1 Inner Protection, with a section south of Sydmonton being classified as Zone 3 Total Catchment.

Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs)⁶⁵ represent areas at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. The area south of Sydmonton is within the Hampshire Chalk NVZ and the Hamble Estuary NVZ. NVZs identify rules in relation to the use of fertilisers and manures as well as a requirement to prevent water pollution from farm areas.

Mineral resources

With regards to minerals resources, the ESBGNP is not within or in proximity to a Mineral Safeguarding Area; however, it is within and in proximity to several Mineral Consultation Areas, as follows⁶⁶:

- 'Mineral and Waste infrastructure' located west of Sydmonton and west of Bishops Green.
- 'Brick Clay deposits' running between Ecchinswell and Sydmonton; and
- 'Sharp Sand and Gravel deposit' located mostly in the north of the parish with some deposits south of Sydmonton.

In this respect, consultation with Hampshire Council will be required to determine whether there are likely to be any significant impacts to mineral resources within the ESBGNP for new development proposals in these areas.

⁵⁹ Map of River Basin Districts can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁰ Map of the Kennet Operational Catchment can be accessed [here](#).

⁶¹ Enborne (Source to downstream A34) Water Body information can be accessed [here](#).

⁶² Enborne (downstream A34 to Burghclere Brook) Water Body information can be accessed [here](#).

⁶³ Enborne (Burghclere Brook to Kingsclere Brook) Water Body information can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁴ Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs): sources, pathways and environmental data can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁵ Information on NVZs can be found [here](#).

⁶⁶ Minerals Consultation Area map can be accessed [here](#).

Future baseline

Future development has the potential to affect water quality and availability through increased consumption and pollution, waste water discharges, water runoff and modification. It is likely that Southern Water will address any water supply and wastewater management issues in line with their WRMP. However, it will be important for new development to avoid impacts on water quality and to contribute to reducing consumption and improving efficiency.

Given the potential for BMV land within the neighbourhood area, new development areas may result in the permanent loss of productive agricultural land.

In addition to food production, the use (and potential use) of land for other purposes such as flood risk alleviation, biodiversity enhancements, carbon sequestration and other uses is an important consideration.

It is unlikely that small-scale development implemented by the Neighbourhood Plan will have a significant impact on the wider area's NVZ designation given the strategic scale of the overall NVZs. Additionally, a large source of detriment to NVZ comes from agricultural use, which is not anticipated to be brought forward through the ESBGNP.

A.7 Community Wellbeing

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to the principles set out in the NPPF, which seek to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities such as educational facilities and open spaces. 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. This contributes to ensuring settlement and community identities are protected.
- 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.
- The 2020 Health Equity in England Report identifies a health gap 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 declined, 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.
- Basingstoke and Deane Housing and Homelessness Strategy sets out the main priorities and actions for the Borough to meet affordable housing needs, prevent homelessness and offer more choice in housing. The priorities are:
 - preventing homelessness
 - eradicating rough sleeping by 2024
 - housing choice and quality
 - tackling climate change
 - place shaping.

The document states that the Borough wants to have a balanced approach to the homes it delivers and wants to maximise the available opportunities for all residents seeking housing.

- The Basingstoke and Deane Health and Wellbeing Partnership (HWP) comprises of representatives from various local health agencies with the aim to improve health outcomes for the residents. Although the shared plan covered the period 2016-2020, it highlighted the link between physical and mental wellbeing. The priorities of the plan were to increase physical activity, mental wellbeing, positive healthy behaviours, and social connections, with a focus on those that are inactive, mentally vulnerable, at risk of harm and/or socially isolated.

- The ESBGNP will also need to be in line with the policies outlined in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan Update.

Current baseline

Population and age structure

There are two villages in the ESBGNP area: Bishops Green and Ecchinswell. Sydmonton has not been categorised as a small village in the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan Update work given its population is below 50 the settlement has no facilities or services.

The neighbourhood area is included in the Evingar ward⁶⁷. According to the City Population website⁶⁸, which uses the 2011 Census data, there were 1,048 residents in the parish. This is expected to have increased to 1,179 by 2020.

As established through the work being undertaken for the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan Update, Bishops Green's population was 690 in 2019, with approximately 227 dwellings, and Ecchinswell's population was 210, with approximately 94 dwellings.

Within 2020, it was estimated that approximately 23.8% of the population of the neighbourhood area was between the ages of 0-17, with 59.4% between the working ages of 18-64 and 16.8% within the over 65 age band

Index of Multiple Deprivation

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

- 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.
 - 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: this 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 the physical proximity and 'wider barriers' linked to access to housing.

⁶⁷ The map of the wards within the Basingstoke and Deane district can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁸ UK Census data via the City Population website can be accessed [here](#).

- 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.

Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)⁶⁹ are designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardized 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.

In this respect, the ESBNP area is within the Basingstoke and Deane 003A LSOA and, in 2019, with key trends summarised as follows:

- 15,143 out of 32,844 LSOAs within England for overall deprivation (within the top 50%).
- 246 out of 317 local authority district LSOAs within England for overall deprivation (Basingstoke and Deane Borough in its entirety).
- Within the top 10% most deprived neighbourhoods for ‘barriers to housing and services’ in England.
- Amongst the 50% least deprived neighbourhoods for ‘living environment’ in the country.

Whilst levels of deprivation vary across the parish, Bishops Green has been identified as having higher deprivation on a number of measures.

Community consultation results

The following information has been taken from the ES&BG Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation⁷⁰:

- There is a high value on the rural environment of the parish and the perceived safe and friendly environment.
- There is concern over the current level of traffic and associated speeding. There is also serious concern over the impact of housing development on the existing infrastructure and services, which are already pressured.
- Some housing development would be welcome but no more than 30 homes. There should be a focus on affordable housing and homes suitable for downsizers and older people, and all development should be in accordance with the rural environment. Furthermore, development should be built with the future in mind; and
- There is a universal rejection of large-scale development due to its negative impact on the setting of the parish, its impact on traffic and the increase pressure it would bring on local services. Large development is also seen to be detrimental to the local environment.

⁶⁹ The Indices of Deprivation Explorer is available [here](#).

⁷⁰ A copy of the consultation can be accessed [here](#).

Community assets and infrastructure

The availability of services, facilities, and amenities within the ESBGNP area varies dependent on location. An overview of the services, facilities and amenities within each settlement is provided below⁷¹:

- Bishops Green: Darling Dogs of May (dog park), The Darling Buds of May (garden centre), Barn Café, Willowfield Cattery, Bishops Green Village Hall, Barkshire Dog Walking, The Salvation Army Homelessness Service, Fairbrass F J (gardener), Bishops Green Farm Campsite and N H Smith (campsite).
- Ecchinswell: G&T Executive LTD (airport shuffle service), Brittany Butterfly (shop), Ecchinswell (St Lawrence) Church, Ecchinswell Village Hall, Ecchinswell and Sydmonton C of E Primary School and the Royal Oak (pub).
- Sydmonton: Watership Down Stud and the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation.

A wider range of services, facilities and amenities is available within the neighbouring towns of Newbury, Andover, and Basingstoke, which are all within a 30-minute car drive from the ESBGNP area.

Green infrastructure networks

Access to gardens, parks, woodlands, and rivers have played a part in helping people through the 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 England⁷².

Green spaces and areas of value in the neighbourhood area include (but is not limited to): Allotments; Bishops Green Play Area; Digweed's Open Space; Ecchinswell Village Hall Play Area; Ecchinswell Village Pond; The River Enborne; Watership Down; Old Original Churchyard; Old United Reformed Churchyard; the play area off Eagle Road (south end) in Bishops Green; the play area off Oakfields in Ecchinswell; Ecchinswell War Memorial Grounds; and St Lawrence's Church.

Future baseline

As the population of the neighbourhood area continues to age, there could be a negative impact upon the future vitality of the local community in parts of the neighbourhood area, whilst also placing additional pressures on existing services and facilities.

The suitability and affordability of housing for local requirements will depend on the implementation of appropriate housing policies. Unplanned development may have wider implications in terms of transport and access to infrastructure and/or the natural environment.

The importance of local services and facilities, and access to open green spaces and recreational areas has been further highlighted through the ongoing pandemic. These factors are more likely to be appropriately considered and addressed through planned development rather than unplanned development.

⁷¹ The examination of the services, facilities and amenities within each settlement was conducted via a high-level Google maps search – focusing on each area in turn and making a note of the different features.

⁷² Natural England's survey can be accessed [here](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also changed the way people work and shop. For many people, working from home is likely to continue to form part of a more flexible approach.

A.8 Transportation

Policy Context

The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The ESBGNP will need to have regard to 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.
- 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 a 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.
- The Basingstoke Transport Strategy works to establish the vision, objectives, challenges, and policy interventions to deliver transport in the Basingstoke and Deane borough. Transport is viewed in relation to how it affects the residents' lives and must: support housing and employment growth and vibrancy, support a high quality of life and support inclusive and accessible communities. Therefore, the ESBGNP will need to work with these priorities and ensure development aligns with the Basingstoke Transport Strategy.
- The ESBGNP will also need to be in line with the policies outlined in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan Update.

Current baseline

Rail network

There are no railway stations within the ESBGNP area. The closest stations are in the neighbouring settlements of Basingstoke, Newbury, Overton, Whitchurch, and Andover, which are all within a 15km radius of the ESBGNP area.

There are hourly services to London Waterloo from Andover⁷³ and Overton⁷⁴ stations as well as hourly services to Salisbury from these stations. There are also services to Somerset and Exeter. Newbury station has hourly trains to London Paddington and twice hourly to Reading station⁷⁵. Basingstoke station⁷⁶ has regular trains to London Waterloo and offers services to a range of destinations including Oxford, the

⁷³ Live train times for Andover railway station can be viewed [here](#)

⁷⁴ Live train times for Whitchurch railway station can be viewed [here](#).

⁷⁵ Live train times for Newbury railway station can be viewed [here](#).

⁷⁶ Live train times for Basingstoke railway station can be viewed [here](#).

Midlands and the North, Reading, Portsmouth, Southampton, Salisbury and Bournemouth.

Bus network

There are two bus services serving the neighbourhood area, as follows:

- A service runs along the A339 and stopping via Knightsbridge Farm stop. This is via the Link bus service that runs between Newbury and Basingstoke, operated by Stagecoach^{77,78}. Access to the service requires an approximately 1km journey from the centre of Bishops Green, via a steep hill. The service is hourly during weekdays but does not run in the evenings.
- A service runs from Bishops Green to Newbury (service 103). This runs hourly between 0800 and 1800 on weekdays only and is only very lightly used. It is of limited value for social/leisure uses given there are no evening/weekend services.

Road network and congestion

Two main roads are accessible from the neighbourhood area. The A339 is located east of the parish, linking the neighbourhood area with Newbury, Kingsclere and Basingstoke. The A34, which links the M4, Oxford and the Midlands to the north, and the A303, Winchester and the south coast to the south, passes to the west of the parish. The southbound carriageway of the A34 can be accessed west of Old Burghclere and the northbound and southbound carriageway can be accessed at Tot Hill services.

Ecchinswell Road is a key link within the parish, and links with the A339 in the north.

According to the ESBGNP Community Consultation results, there is concern over the current level of traffic on the parish's road network and associated speeding⁴⁹.

Public rights of way network (PRoW)

As highlighted by the Hampshire County Council Public Rights of Way map⁷⁹, there are numerous footpaths, bridleways and byways accessible to the public the ESBGNP area.

Bishops Green has three footpaths, all connecting to Ecchinswell Road which runs through the settlement.

Ecchinswell has several footpaths, again connecting to Ecchinswell Road. There is also a bridleway that leads out of the parish and into the neighbouring Kingsclere Parish.

Sydmonton has two footpaths in proximity to it. In addition to this there is a bridleway passing through the area to the south of the settlement. This overlaps with a section of the Wayfarer's Long-Distance Walk; an approximate 113km route that starts on the chalk downs at Inkpen and finishes at Emsworth Harbour⁸⁰.

Additionally, there are two off road cycle paths to the south of Sydmonton - the Watership Down and the Whitchurch.

Given a lack of pavements in many parts of the parish and a lack of safe cycling routes, there are significant safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists.

⁷⁷ Link bus service timetable can be accessed [here](#).

⁷⁸ Link bus map can be accessed [here](#).

⁷⁹ Hampshire County Council Public Rights of Way map can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁰ Wayfarer's Walk information can be found [here](#).

Future baseline

Given the rural nature of the ESBGNP area and the relative lack of sustainable transport options, in the absence of strategic transport interventions growth in the parish will likely increase the reliance on private vehicles for travel. Therefore, new development has the potential to increase traffic flows in the neighbourhood area. This is likely to be more pronounced during busier times of the day (i.e. rush hours and school times).

An increased trend of working from home may help limit traffic flows during some times of the day.