

# Denmead Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031

## Strategic Environmental Assessment



***DNF***

Denmead Neighbourhood Forum

*A Frontrunner community group, operating as a Working Party of the Parish Council, producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Denmead*

Published by Denmead Parish Council under and EU Directive 2001/42 on Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004.

July 2014

## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of any significant environmental effects resulting from the policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Denmead Parish ("the Neighbourhood Plan") in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42 on strategic environmental assessment ("the SEA") and the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2010 ("the EA Regulations").
2. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Denmead Parish Council ("the Parish Council") as the Qualifying Body under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations. It covers the majority of the parish area (i.e. that part of the parish outside the administrative area of the South Downs National Park Authority and the 'West of Waterlooville' strategic housing site) and was designated as a Neighbourhood Area by Winchester City Council ("the City Council") on 17 September 2012.
3. The Neighbourhood Plan contains a number of policies for the use and development of land in the Parish of Denmead in the plan period from 2011 to 2031. Together with the policies of the Winchester City development plan - that is the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1- Joint Core Strategy ("LPP1"), the 'saved' policies of the 2006 Winchester District Local Plan Review ("the WDLPR") and the replacement of those saved policies by the Winchester Development Management & Site Allocations Plan ("LPP2"), and of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be used by the City Council in determining planning applications once the Plan is approved in due course.
4. Within the Neighbourhood Plan area there are some environmental designations. The South Downs National Park lies to the north of the parish and to the south is the rural hinterland from the remnants of the ancient Bere Forest at Creech Wood. Surrounding the village are Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) and have high numbers of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).
5. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the immediate vicinity of Denmead but there are 4 grade II listed buildings within the settlement boundary and a further 15 buildings elsewhere in the parish. Anthill Common has great archaeological potential as there are extant earthworks of two mediaeval fishponds on the site.
6. Denmead lies along the upper reaches of the Wallington River which flows into Portsmouth Harbour via Fareham Creek; a substantial area of housing is covered by Flood Zone 3 that cuts through the settlement along Harvest Road and across Hambledon Road and in the area northwest of Creech View across Forest Mead to the field drains to the southeast of the settlement.
7. The landscape in the south-east of the plan area is categorised as 'most sensitive'. This area lies within the local gap and development here could have landscape and visual impacts on the effectiveness of the gap, biodiversity, visual amenity and water quality. The southern area of Inhams lane and Anthill Common are 'highly sensitive' in terms of their biodiversity and existing landscape character.
8. The main environmental issue the parish faces, along with many of its neighbours, is that of managing flood risk. The Winchester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of 2007 identifies a significant part of the village lying within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (being part of the River Wallington

system). In addition, the chalk downlands that form the edge of the South Downs National Park to the north of the village create significant risk of ground water flooding in parts of the village. Very recent exceptional and prolonged rainfall events have clearly demonstrated these risks and it will therefore be important that the DNP does not seek to allocate land subject to flood risk.

9. The SEA objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are set out in Table A below. They are derived from the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment of the LPP1. They comprise those environmental objectives of greatest relevance to the Neighbourhood Plan and that have measures that are meaningful to assess at this small scale.

DNP SEA Objective	DNP SEA Measures
1: Water Resources - to protect, enhance and manage water resources in a sustainable way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1A - will the policy require development in either Flood Zone 2 or 3 or on land where there are known problems with flooding?</li> <li>• 1B – will the policy require development within 200m of streams, rivers, lakes or other watercourses/ aquatic habitat?</li> </ul>
2: Biodiversity - to conserve and enhance biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2A - could the policy have any adverse impact on any designated sites or protected species (International, European, National or Local) and/ or on any locally valued habitats and species (non-recorded biodiversity interests)?</li> <li>• 2B - could the policy have the potential to enhance designated and locally valued habitats and species and/or provide opportunities for provision and enhancement of a network of greenspaces using an ecosystems approach?</li> <li>• 2C - will the policy require development that may affect any structure or features that could be habitats for protected species or that are locally valued habitats and or species (non-recorded biodiversity interests)?</li> </ul>
3: Landscape - to protect and enhance the character and quality of the local landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3A - will the policy require development that could adversely impact on the landscape setting of the village?</li> <li>• 3B – does the policy encourage the use of previously developed land that is not of high environmental value?</li> <li>• 3C - could the policy contribute towards conserving and enhancing local distinctiveness, especially in terms of characteristic materials, trees, built form and layout, tranquillity, sense of place and setting?</li> <li>• 3D - will the policy require development of land that would result in the loss of high grade (1 – 3a) agricultural land or that lies within the designated Denmead-Waterlooville Strategic Gap?</li> </ul>

10. The policy options chosen in the Neighbourhood Plan have been assessed as those, where genuine, plausible options were available, that achieved an appropriate balance between avoiding any significant environmental impact and meeting the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

11. All the policies have sought to protect and enhance the surrounding natural assets of the village and to avoid areas of flood risk. The locational decisions have been driven by achieving specific housing and business outcomes. Where necessary, the policies have ensured that key development principles are secured at the outset, leaving the saved policies of the development plan to ensure subsequent planning applications will provide the detail to assess impact at a finer grain than possible in this assessment

12. In which case, the assessment indicates there are no significant environmental effects of the Plan. Those minor environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be addressed as identified above. WCC and Denmead Parish Council will jointly monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan using the available data. The WCC Monitoring Report will provide some data at this level.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of any significant environmental effects resulting from the policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Denmead Parish ("the Neighbourhood Plan") in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42 on strategic environmental assessment ("the SEA") and the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2010 ("the EA Regulations").

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Denmead Parish Council ("the Parish Council") as the Qualifying Body under the NP Regulations. It covers the majority of the parish area (i.e. that part of the parish outside the administrative area of the South Downs National Park Authority and of the 'West of Waterlooville' strategic housing site – see Figure A) and was designated as a Neighbourhood Area by Winchester City Council ("the City Council") on 17 September 2012.

1.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has been completed for submission to the City Council by the Parish Council under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ("the NP Regulations"). The City Council, as the local planning authority, issued its formal screening opinion requiring an SEA in January 2014. A scoping letter was consulted on with the statutory authorities for a five week period (under Regulation 12 of the EA Regulations).

1.4 The responses received on the scope were taken into account in the preparation of a draft SEA report, which was consulted on alongside the Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan for the statutory period during April – June 2014. A number of comments were received on the Neighbourhood Plan and on the Draft SEA during that period and these have resulted in minor modifications being made to the Neighbourhood Plan, which are reflected in this final SEA report.

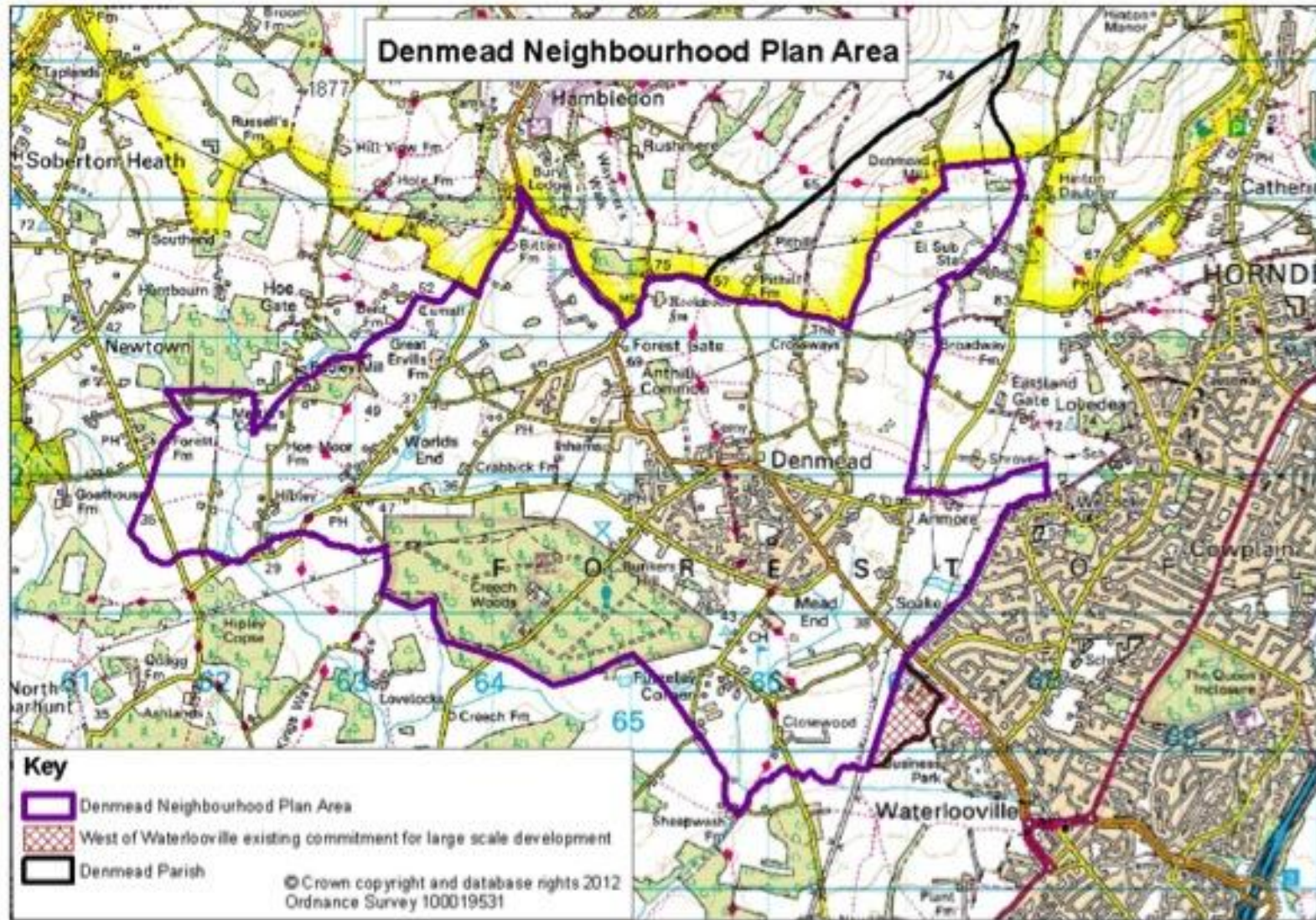


Figure A: The Designated Denmead Neighbourhood Area

## 2. Background to Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) involves the evaluation of the environmental impacts of a plan. The requirement for an SEA is set out in the European Directive 2001/42/EC adopted into UK law as the “Environmental Assessment of Plans or Programmes Regulations 2004” as follows:

- An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan, and relationship with other relevant plans or programmes
- The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan
- The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected
- Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC
- The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation
- The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of competency encountered in compiling the required information
- A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10

2.2 The methodology for the assessment is intended to be proportionate to the task of assessing the modest development proposals of a Neighbourhood Plan in a relatively small parish area. It focuses only on the requirements of SEA and does not extend to cover the wider sustainability attributes of a Sustainability Appraisal. These are addressed in the Basic Conditions Statement that is also part of the submission documentation, in respect of demonstrating that the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

2.3 The report responds to each of the SEA requirements in turn, beginning with a short description of the Neighbourhood Plan,

identifying the key environmental features of the parish and then assessing the impact of the strategic objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan on those features, using a number of SEA objectives and measures.

### **3. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and relationship with other relevant plans or programmes**

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan contains a number of policies for the use and development of land in the Parish of Denmead in the plan period from 2011 to 2031. Together with the policies of the Winchester City development plan - that is the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1- Joint Core Strategy ("LPP1"), the 'saved' policies of the 2006 Winchester District Local Plan Review ("the WDLPR") and the replacement of those saved policies by the Winchester Development Management & Site Allocations Plan ("LPP2"), and of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be used by the City Council in determining planning applications once the Plan is approved in due course.

3.2 The LPP1 vision is:

*"Winchester District is a special place characterised by a rich historical and cultural heritage and attractive countryside and is home to a diverse population and a variety of business sectors. The District should retain the distinctive characteristics of the three key areas so as to maximise opportunities to address change in a positive way that ensures it remains an attractive place to live, visit, work and do business:-*

- *areas at Waterlooville and Whiteley on the southern fringes of the District need to provide homes, jobs, physical and social infrastructure whilst creating a strong sense of community identity and protecting nearby environmentally sensitive sites, to create extended communities in this part of South Hampshire;*
- *the market towns and many villages that fall within the rural area are to remain viable settlements offering where possible a range of local services and facilities, and be allowed to grow to respond to local needs, whilst retaining their individual identity and rural character. Development in those settlements that lie in the South Downs National Park should respect its purposes".*

3.3 The Plan contains a range of strategic policies that will guide the nature and quality of development in the District (see the Key Diagram in Figure B below). These cover issues that apply to the whole District, or have implications beyond individual Village boundaries. However, some policies are especially important in setting the context for the Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant extracts are set out below:



## Policy DS1 - Development Strategy and Principles

*"The Local Planning Authority will support the delivery of new housing, economic growth and diversification through the following development strategy ... the Market Towns and Rural Area will make provision for about 2,500 new homes, and support economic and community development that serves local needs in the most accessible and sustainable locations, promotes the vitality and viability of communities, and maintains their rural character and individual settlement identity."*

*"Development proposals will be expected to make efficient use of land within existing settlements, and prioritise the use of previously developed land in accessible locations ..."*

*"In delivering the District's housing, employment and community requirements development proposals will be expected to demonstrate conformity with the following principles:*

- maintaining and enhancing the importance of environmental, heritage and landscape assets and making efficient use of scarce natural resources;*
- making the use of public transport, walking and cycling easy, to reduce non-essential car use;*
- integrating development of homes, jobs, services and facilities;*
- applying a town centres first approach to retail, leisure or other development proposals that are high attracters of people, in accordance with the following hierarchy of centres ... Local Centres – Denmead ...;*
- achieving high standards of design and sensitivity to character, setting and cultural heritage;*
- contributing to individual and community wellbeing, health and safety and social inclusivity;*
- testing existing infrastructure and service capacity to serve new development and making arrangements in a timely manner for appropriate increases in capacity or measures to mitigate impact;*
- addressing the impact on climate change, renewable energy, air quality, green infrastructure, recycling/waste, flooding issues and the water environment."*

3.4 This policy establishes the key development principles to which the Neighbourhood Plan must conform. It specifically defines Denmead as a 'Local Centre'.

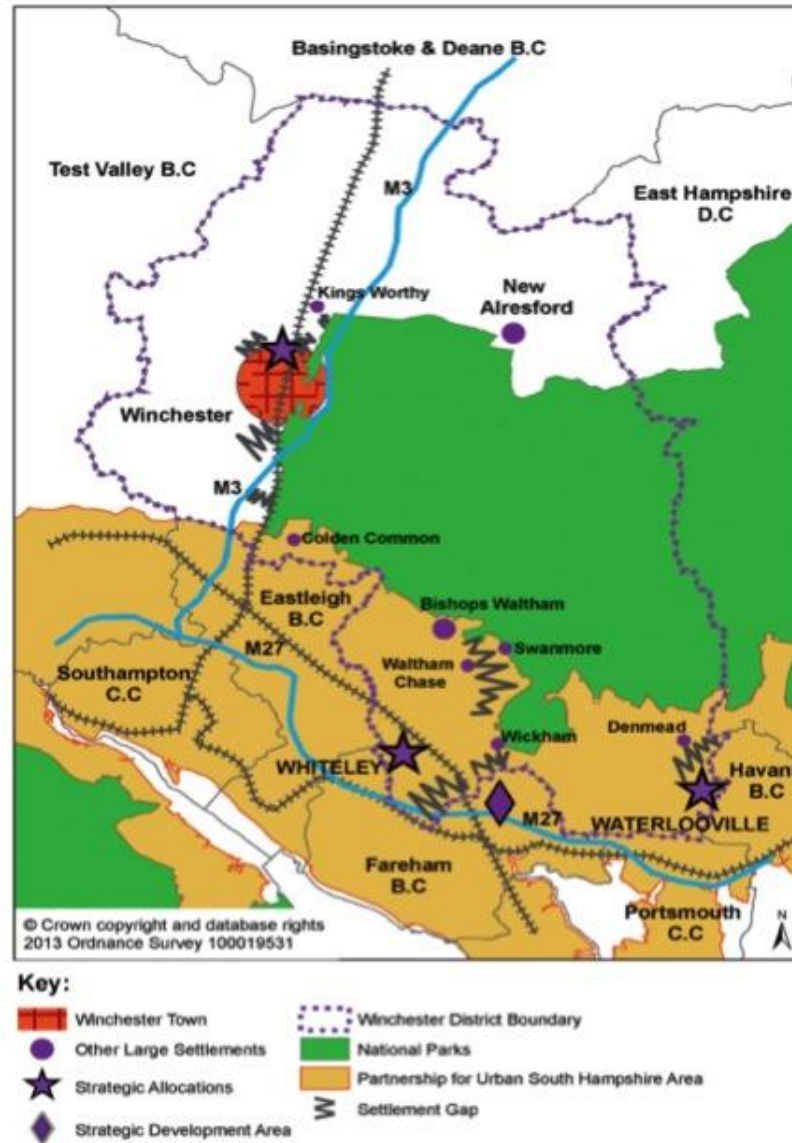


Figure B: WDLPP1 - Joint Core Strategy Plan – Key Diagram

## Policy MTRA1 - Development Strategy Market Towns and Rural Area

*"The spatial planning vision for the Market Towns and Rural Area will be achieved through:*

- identifying and providing for the needs of each settlement, to fulfil its needs relative to its role and function;*
- the provision of new homes to meet the local housing needs of the settlements in this spatial area. A range of housing types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, should be provided to meet a range of requirements, including those of older persons and people with disabilities and support needs to ensure social inclusion;*
- retention or redevelopment of existing employment land and premises, and development of new sites or buildings, to provide and improve local employment opportunities for both existing and new businesses and to support entrepreneurship;*
- the retention and improvement of rural shops and community facilities, including expansion at an appropriate scale in keeping with the location and the community they serve and their role in the hierarchy of retail centres;*
- development proposals which maintain and enhance important local character and built or natural features and retain settlement identity.*
- development should be of an appropriate scale so as not to exceed the capacity of existing services and infrastructure or should be accompanied by any required improvements to physical and community infrastructure provision, including rural transport initiatives and communications technology."*

3.5 This policy translates the overall spatial vision for the District for application in the market towns and rural areas, like Denmead.

## Policy MTRA 2 - Market Towns and Larger Villages

*"The Local Planning Authority supports the evolution of the larger settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area to maintain and improve their role and function and to meet a range of local development needs through ... provision for about 250 new homes in ... Denmead ..."*

*Economic and commercial growth will be supported to maintain and improve the shopping, service, tourism and employment roles of these settlements where consistent with their role in the hierarchy of retail centres. Proposals for new floorspace of 500 sq. m. or more outside defined centres will need to demonstrate that it would not have a harmful impact on the centre. There should be improvements to public transport provision, where possible, and development should be appropriate in scale and result in a more sustainable community by improving the balance between housing, employment and services. Existing facilities, services and employment provision should be retained or improved to serve the settlements and their catchment areas.*

*Housing, employment, retail and services should be accommodated through development and redevelopment opportunities within existing settlement boundaries in the first instance. Sites outside settlement boundaries will only be permitted where, following an assessment of capacity within the built-up area, they are shown to be needed, or to meet a community need or realise local community aspirations identified through a Neighbourhood Plan or other process which demonstrates clear community support. Uses which are essential to the role and function of the settlement, or to maintaining the balance between housing, employment and services, may be relocated if they can be re-provided in a*

*location which is as at least as suitable and accessible and if proposals for the re-use of vacated land and premises are also acceptable.*

*All new development should be appropriate in scale and design and conserve each settlement's identity, countryside setting, key historic characteristics and local features, particularly as identified in Village Design Statements, the District Landscape Assessment or other guidance. Development should protect areas designated for their local, national, or international importance, such as Gaps and the South Downs National Park."*

3.6 This policy establishes the housing supply requirement for Denmead over the plan period (250 no.) and the role for LPP2 and the Neighbourhood Plan in shaping local policy requirements.

3.7 In addition, LPP1 contains many other relevant policies to which the Neighbourhood Plan should adhere in respect of its development allocation and other policies:

- MTRA4 – Development in the Countryside
- CP2 - Housing Provision & Mix
- CP3 – Affordable Housing
- CP6 – Local Services & Facilities
- CP7 – Open Space, Sport & Recreation
- CP8 – Economic growth & Diversification
- CP9 – Retention of Employment Land & Premises
- CP10 – Transport
- CP14 – Effective Use of Land
- CP15 – Green Infrastructure
- CP17 – Flooding, Flood Risk and the Water Environment
- CP18 – Settlement Gaps
- CP20 – Heritage & Landscape Gaps
- CP21 – Infrastructure & Community Benefit

3.8 The 2006 WDLPR contains a number of 'saved' policies that will not be replaced by the two parts of the new Local Plan and will therefore remain a relevant part of the development plan until such a time as they are replaced either by other development plan documents or Neighbourhood Plans.

3.9 Those that have a specific relevance to the DNP are listed below, though many others may have some generic relevance:

- DP3 General Design Criteria
- DP4 Landscape and the Built Environment
- DP5 Design and Amenity Open Space
- CE2 Local Gaps
- H3 Settlement Policy Boundaries
- SF1, 2, 3 Town Centre Development
- SF5 Primary Shopping Area
- RT1 Important Amenity Areas
- RT2 important Recreational Space
- RT5 Site Allocations for Recreation
- T2 Development Access
- T3 Development Layout

3.10 The LPP2 will set out the more detailed policies for development management and allocated sites. The policies will cover detailed development management considerations in relation to retail, housing, employment, community uses, transport and the environment across the District, including the designated Denmead Neighbourhood Area. In most if not all cases, they will replace the saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan once adopted. LPP2 is based on the objectively assessed development needs in the LPP1 Core Strategy. The evidence base has also been used for the parish of Denmead in informing the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.11 There is, therefore, an up-to-date and comprehensive local planning policy framework in place that provides a sound basis for the policies of the DNP. On the one hand, the DNP will serve the same purpose as the LPP2 in allocating sites for development to meet the requirements of Policy MTRA2 in LPP1. On the other, it sets out a series of policy constraints on where and how this development should be delivered. It also allows the DNP to review policy designations such as the respective settlement policy, shopping area and local gap boundaries in the process of its preparation.

3.12 The Vision of the Neighbourhood Plan for Denmead in 2031 is:

*“Denmead's housing and business development schemes of the last few years have been compatible with the village's existing principal buildings, its general character and personality in terms of building density. The established settlement gaps and open spaces have not been eroded by coalescent development. The right development sites have been built that have served and addressed our local needs.*”

*We have ensured that new buildings and infrastructure changes in Denmead have been of the highest design quality, which has continued to make Denmead a desirable and attractive place in which to live.*

*Our investment in the Village Centre and other community assets has enabled us to maintain and enhance our strong sense of community by supporting its clubs, societies, religious organisations, community groups and associations."*

3.13 In pursuit of this Vision, the Neighbourhood Plan contains six strategic objectives, each with specific indicators against which the successful implementation of the Plan will be measured:

*1. To meet the future housing need for the parish by enabling our senior citizens to continue to live in the village if they so wish but to ensure that development works for everyone and adds to the village character and balance by reflecting the overall mix of housing types and distinctive design aesthetic*

- No. of open market homes*
- No. of affordable homes*
- No. of homes suited to occupation by older people*

*2. To support existing businesses including retail activity and to encourage new businesses*

- No. of jobs retained*
- No. of new jobs created*
- No. of A1 shops*

*3. To maintain and visually enhance the physical separation of the village from the nearby Waterlooville urban area, and any other future local major developments*

- No. and nature of planning permissions in the Denmead Local Gap*

*4. To improve the breadth and quality of community and sports facilities in the parish and to ensure recreational and visual amenity for all generations*

- Net additional floorspace in active community use*
- Net additional land in active sports use*

*5. To create an integrated safe and convenient road, footpath and cycleway layout that embraces the 'Walkable Neighbourhood' concept and encourages the use and provision of public and community based transport to serve the village.*

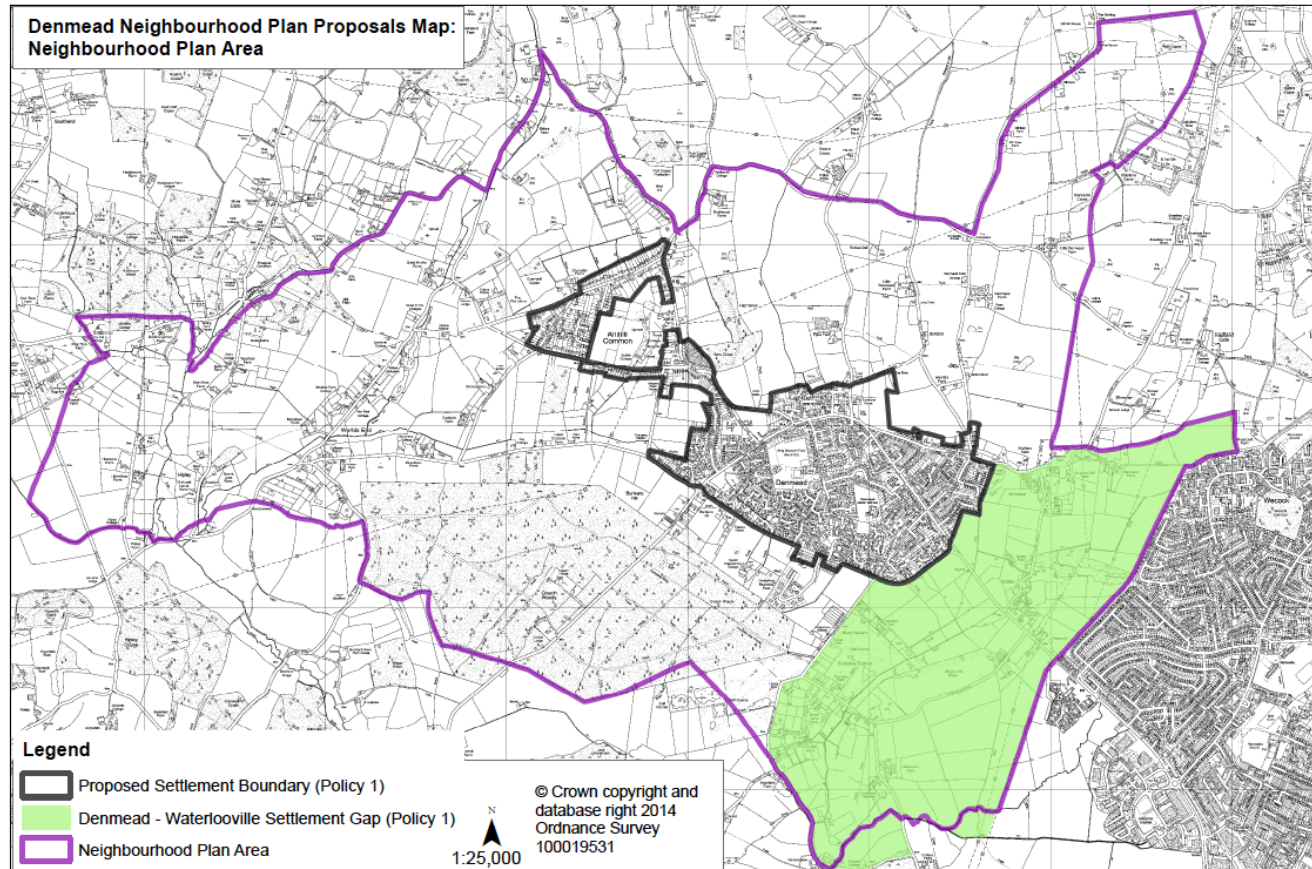
- No. of new bus services serving the village*
- Km of new cycle route in the parish*

*6. To sustain a thriving village that respects its cultural, historical and archaeological heritage and the landscape character and biodiversity*

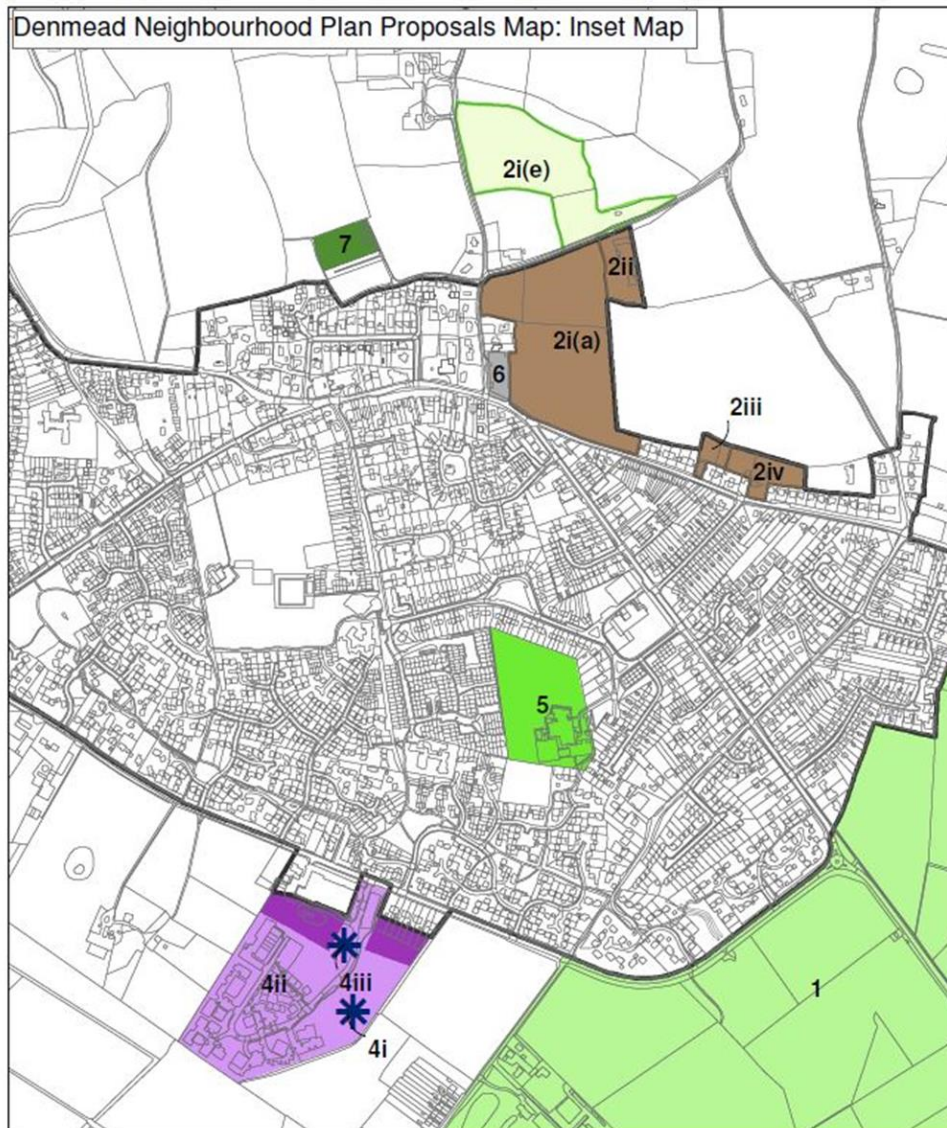
value of its surroundings.

- No. of planning permissions affecting designated heritage assets
- No. of planning permissions affecting designated environmental assets










3.14 The Neighbourhood Plan proposes a small number of policies on housing, economic development and community facilities. These policies are each assessed in section 8 of the SEA below. The Proposals Map and Inset show the area-specific policies.



Denmead Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map: Inset Map



**Legend**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Proposed Settlement Boundary (Policy 1)             |  Amenity Open Space (Policy 4)            |
|  Denmead - Waterlooville Settlement Gap - (Policy 1) |  Sports and Leisure Facilities (Policy 5) |
|  Housing Allocations (Policy 2)                      |  Public Car Park (Policy 6)               |
|  Open Space North of the Village Centre (Policy 2)   |  Burial Ground (Policy 7)                 |
|  Land at Parklands Business Park (Policy 4)          |  |



1:7,500



3.15 The Neighbourhood Plan is obliged to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It must also reflect national planning guidance (of the NPPF). More locally, there are no other significant plans or programmes, of which the Neighbourhood Plan has had to take account, given the scale and location of its proposals.

#### **4. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment**

4.1 Within the Neighbourhood Plan area there are some environmental designations. The South Downs National Park lies to the north of the parish and to the south is the rural hinterland from the remnants of the ancient Bere Forest. Creech Wood and Anmore Dell Meadow surrounding the village are Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) and have high numbers of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

4.2 The international (Ramsar) and European (Special Protection Areas [SPA] and Special Areas of Conservation [SAC]) sites are over 4.5km from the neighbourhood plan area. A Habitat Regulations Assessment has been undertaken on LPP1 and will also be undertaken for LPP2. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the neighbourhood plan area. The nearest are at Lye Heath Marsh and Catherington, both over 1km away.

4.3 The area around the settlement of Denmead is predominantly agricultural with some grade 3a, but mainly grades 3 and 4 quality. There are likely to be areas of mature hedgerows and possibly some standard trees.

4.4 There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the immediate vicinity of Denmead but there are 4 grade II listed buildings within the settlement boundary and a further 15 buildings elsewhere in the parish.

4.5 Anthill Common has great archaeological potential as there are extant earthworks of two mediaeval fishponds on the site. Other features associated with this water management system may survive across the area. The area around Inhams Lane and west of Bunkers Hill also has high archaeological potential. Remains of Late Bronze and Iron Age activity have been recorded here. Late Bronze, Iron Age and Roman settlement and industrial remains have also been found west of Inhams Lane. Other areas of high archaeological potential include the area within the settlement boundary at Green Lane, which is the last surviving building of an historic farm complex. The area south of Forest Road may also be of interest, where Roman remains have been found as may the area to the west where remains associated with a possible Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British industrial centre have been found immediately north of site 2425.

4.6 Denmead lies along the upper reaches of the Wallington River which flows into Portsmouth Harbour via Fareham Creek; a substantial area of housing is covered by Flood Zone 3 that cuts through the settlement along Harvest Road and across Hambledon Road and in the area northwest of Creech View across Forest Mead to the field drains to the southeast of the settlement.

4.7 The quality and status of the local natural and built environment is therefore of importance to future planning decisions in the parish and these environmental designations form the baseline data for the assessment.

4.8 Should the Neighbourhood Plan not be adopted then decisions on future planning applications will be made using the policy provisions of the Winchester development plan and the NPPF. Given the limitation on the Neighbourhood Plan to make only local and not strategic planning policy for the parish, the current state of these environmental features will not be affected by a failure to adopt or to implement the Neighbourhood Plan.

## **5. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected**

5.1 The WCC Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal 2013 sets out the relevant landscape character, townscape and features for the neighbourhood plan area.

5.2 The landscape in the south-east of the plan area is categorised as 'most sensitive'. This area lies within the local gap and development here could have landscape and visual impacts on the effectiveness of the gap, biodiversity, visual amenity and water quality.

5.3 The southern area of Inhams lane and Anthill Common are 'highly sensitive' in terms of their biodiversity and existing landscape character. The Landscape Appraisal identifies that some undesignated areas within the Forest of Bere Lowlands Character Area could contribute significantly towards the setting of Denmead. There are also numerous Tree Preservation Orders in the neighbourhood plan area.

## **6. Any existing environmental problems that are relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan**

6.1 The main environmental issue the parish faces, along with many of its neighbours, is that of managing flood risk. The Winchester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of 2007 identifies a significant part of the village lying within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (being part of the River Wallington system). In addition, the chalk downlands that form the edge of the South Downs National Park to the north of the

village create significant risk of ground water flooding in parts of the village. Very recent exceptional and prolonged rainfall events have clearly demonstrated these risks and it will therefore be important that the Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate land subject to flood risk.

6.2 There are no pressing environmental problems to which the Neighbourhood Plan needs to respond. Like other rural parishes, Denmead faces challenges in respect of addressing broader social and economic issues, notably in relation to meeting the housing and job needs of the local community.

## **7. The environmental protection objectives that are relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation**

7.1 The SEA objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are set out in Table A below. They are derived from the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment of the LPP1. They comprise those environmental objectives of greatest relevance to the Neighbourhood Plan and that have measures that are meaningful to assess at this small scale.

<b>Plan SEA Objective</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Plan SEA Measures</b>
1: Water Resources - to protect, enhance and manage water resources in a sustainable way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1A - will the policy require development in either Flood Zone 2 or 3 or on land where there are known problems with flooding?</li> <li>• 1B - will the policy require development within 200m of streams, rivers, lakes or other watercourses/ aquatic habitat?</li> </ul>
2: Biodiversity - to conserve and enhance biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2A - could the policy have any adverse impact on any designated sites or protected species (International, European, National or Local) and/ or on any locally valued habitats and species (non-recorded biodiversity interests)?</li> <li>• 2B - could the policy have the potential to enhance designated and locally valued habitats and species and/or provide opportunities for provision and enhancement of a network of greenspaces using an ecosystems approach?</li> <li>• 2C - will the policy require development that may affect any structure or features that could be habitats for protected species or that are locally valued habitats and or species (non-recorded biodiversity interests)?</li> </ul>

<p>3: Landscape - to protect and enhance the character and quality of the local landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3A - will the policy requirement development that could adversely impact on the landscape setting of the village?</li> <li>• 3B – does the policy encourage the use of previously developed land that is not of high environmental value?</li> <li>• 3C - could the policy contribute towards conserving and enhancing local distinctiveness, especially in terms of characteristic materials, trees, built form and layout, tranquillity, sense of place and setting?</li> <li>• 3D - will the policy require development of land that would result in the loss of high grade (1 – 3a) agricultural land or that lies within the designated Denmead-Waterlooville Strategic Gap?</li> </ul>
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*Table A: Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objectives & Measures*

7.2 During the scoping of this SEA, the Parish Council agreed with the City Council that although the parish contains some designated heritage assets their number, location and significance in and around the village was not sufficient to warrant inclusion. In response, English Heritage has requested that the SEA does assess the likely significant environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan policies on heritage assets.

7.3 Further analysis has therefore been undertaken of the Denmead Historic Environment Assessment prepared by the City Council in 2013 as part of its evidence gathering across the District to inform the LPP2 and the Neighbourhood Plan. That assessment notes that the only likely effects of development on heritage assets are in relation to a small number of sites, none of which have not been selected for allocation in Policy 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan. As shown in section 8 below, the criteria selected in Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan have proved an effective filter in identifying those sites with the least environmental effects and result in no impact on designated heritage assets.

## **8. The likely significant effects on the environment**

8.1 The likely significant effects of the strategic objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan on the environment are assessed in turn below. In each case, the assessment uses the following notation: + positive; 0 neutral; and – negative. Where the assessment is qualified on the basis that a mitigation measure is deployed then this is indicated by a ‘?’ . In general, this final assessment has taken a more cautious approach to determining positive benefits than in the Draft SEA. In a number of cases, therefore, the assessments have now concluded there is a neutral effect rather than a positive effect if the policy will not have a direct impact nor will exacerbate an existing problem. This is seen as a more measured approach to the assessment and does not indicate that the attributes of the policies have changed to result in a poorer performance.

8.2 In most cases, it is acknowledged the data is not collected or reported at a Neighbourhood Plan scale to enable an accurate assessment. In addition, the scale of development proposed in the Plan is too small in comparison with the scale of existing development in the parish, making the identification of cause-and-effect relationships between inputs and outputs very uncertain.

8.3 However, the assessment does seek to identify the relative attributes of the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan to inform the reader.

**Assessing the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Objectives**

8.4 In Table B below the six strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are assessed against the three Neighbourhood Plan SEA objectives.

Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objectives	Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Objectives					
	1 Housing	2 Jobs	3 Coalescence	4 Community	5 Transport	6 Heritage
Water Resources	?	?	0	0	0	0
Biodiversity	?	?	+	?	0	0
Landscape	?	?	+	?	0	+

Table B: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Objectives

8.5 This analysis suggests that there is an overall positive relationship between the two sets of objectives. It acknowledges that the housing and economic development objectives may have an environmental impact, although this impact can be avoided and mitigated through the location and design of development proposals. This is not a surprising outcome given the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to plan for the growth of the village beyond its current boundaries.

8.6 In some cases there is a strong correlation between the two sets of objectives, notably in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan objective of protecting the Denmead – Waterlooville Settlement Gap from inappropriate development and the SEA objectives are protecting and improving biodiversity and landscape character.

8.7 Given the English Heritage response to the scoping of the SEA (in para 7.3 above), it is noted that there is also a positive correlation between the Neighbourhood Plan objective of respecting the heritage of the village and the SEA objectives.

**Assessing the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan policies**

8.8 The assessment considers each policy in turn, combining an overview and comparison of the impact of the policy and of having no policy with a short commentary. The assessment should therefore be read in conjunction with the Submission Neighbourhood Plan document and the Proposals Map.

***Policy 1 – Spatial Strategy***

<b>Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective</b>	<b>DNP Policy</b>	<b>Alternative Policy A</b>	<b>Alternative Policy B</b>
Water Resources	+	?	?
Biodiversity	+	?	?
Landscape	+	+	-

8.9 This policy directs future development in the parish to the settlement of Denmead. In doing so, the policy proposes amendments to the Denmead Settlement Policy Boundary (DSPB) as defined on the Proposals Map of the 2006 Winchester District Local Plan Review (WDLPR) to accommodate new development on the edge of the settlement. It also seeks to protect the essential countryside character of the defined settlement gap between Denmead and Waterlooville to the east of the village (in

Policy CP18 of the 2013 Winchester District Local Plan Part 1).

8.10 The policy selects three criteria to justify those locations of the defined settlement policy boundary of Denmead (DSPB) where an amendment will have the least environmental effect. The three criteria relate to flood risk, landscape character and accessibility and all three are derived from a combination of key LPP1 and NPPF policies. Their effect is to enable the DSPB to be extended on to land immediately east of the village centre to allow for a number of sites to be allocated in Policy 2 in that area.

8.11 This approach was taken in the knowledge that to justify development in this location would not result in other effects on other environmental assets, notably heritage assets. The Denmead Historic Environment Assessment of 2013 shows that there are no assets in this vicinity and therefore there was no need to apply another filter criterion in this respect, nor to add a heritage-related SEA objective.

8.12 In addition, the approach was compared to two alternative spatial options to assess their relative environmental performance (and these are shown in the table above). Alternative Policy A retained the flooding and landscape filter criteria of the policy but did not apply an accessibility criterion. This resulted in one and possibly two other sites being suitable for allocation off Inhams Lane, with a potential dwelling capacity of over 50 homes. However, in addition to the sites being some distance from local services in the village, both sites are in close proximity to land with biodiversity value and land that is subject to flood risk. Although both matters may be mitigated, this alternative does not compare favourably with the chosen approach.

8.13 The Alternative Policy B retained the flooding criterion but relaxed the landscape sensitivity criterion to allow for sites assessed as 'moderately' as well as 'least' sensitive to development (as per the Denmead Site Sensitivity Assessment of 2013). This alternative ensured the Neighbourhood Plan would continue to apply the sequential test of the NPPF and to respect the special character of the Denmead – Waterlooville Settlement Gap. The consequence was that many more available sites on the southern and western edges of the village would have been candidates for allocation, with a potential total capacity well in excess of 500 homes. In almost all cases, the impact on the more sensitive landscapes will be significant as the sites display similar attributes. In some cases, notably those sites that qualify in Alternative Policy A, these impacts would be greater given their closer proximity to areas of biodiversity value and subject to flood risk. In addition, although not an SEA objective, this major scale of development will not be in conformity with the development plan and would not be accommodated without very significant infrastructure investment.

## Policy 2 - Housing Site Allocations

Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective	DNP Policy	Alternative Policy
Water Resources	0	n/a
Biodiversity	0	n/a
Landscape	0	n/a

8.14 This policy allocates land for housing development over the plan period and sets out the key principles of each scheme.

8.15 The proposed sites all fall within the revised Denmead SPB of Policy 1. A summary of how each assessed site relates to the Policy 1 criteria is included in the 'Denmead Neighbourhood Plan: Site Assessments' report published in the evidence base. It is noted that one site ('Land Adjoining the Memorial Hall') has been deleted from the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan, which now allocates land for 130 new homes to meet the demand and need for housing in the parish and wider District. Each allocation in the policy sets out a maximum number of dwellings, the desired mix of dwelling types, the phasing of delivery and the key design and/or delivery principles. In doing so, the policy allocations balance the need to deliver new homes with the need to mitigate any potentially harmful environmental and social impacts.

8.16 The largest proposed allocation at Land East of Village Centre includes a number of key principles to ensure a satisfactory scheme. These principles will ensure the scheme delivers a biodiversity gain through green infrastructure investment in and around the edges of the site. This same investment will screen development from the open countryside to the north to minimise the impact on the surrounding countryside and will result in the transfer of woodland to the Parish Council to manage for public benefit. In which case, the overall effect of the allocation will be net neutral. Similarly, the other proposed site allocations in this location all require the provision of landscape buffers for the same purposes.

8.17 The proposed allocations are the only sites that are available for development in the plan period where there is a justification to amend the DSPB. The only alternative option was to either not make specific allocations (and rely on a criteria-based policy) or to not include any key principles. Neither option was considered a reasonable possibility so neither has been assessed.



### **Policy 3 - Housing Design**

<b>Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective</b>	<b>DNP Policy</b>	<b>Alternative Policy</b>
Water Resources	0	0
Biodiversity	0	0
Landscape	+	0

8.18 This policy requires the design of all housing schemes to reflect the local character of different parts of the parish by responding positively to the relevant guidance in the adopted Denmead Village Design Statement.

8.19 The policy effects are generally neutral but the requirement for development to suit the existing character of the village will avoid schemes that by way of their mass or height may have an effect on surrounding landscape character.

### **Policy 4 – Land at Parkland Business Park, Forest Road**

<b>Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective</b>	<b>DNP Policy</b>	<b>Alternative Policy</b>
Water Resources	0	0
Biodiversity	0	0
Landscape	0	0

8.20 This policy encourages new employment-related development at the Parklands Business Park on Forest Road.

8.21 The policy does not seek to amend the DSPB in this location so the majority of the business park remains in the countryside. The key principles included in the policy therefore seek to mitigate any potential effects by showing an appropriate location for the care home on the Proposals Map that is suited to this purpose and will not undermine the character of the surrounding countryside in this location. They also limit the scale of economic development and confine it to the reuse of existing buildings rather than promote new development. In overall terms, therefore, the policy mitigates any environmental effects to deliver a neutral outcome.

8.22 An alternative was not to have this policy and rely upon the criteria-based policies of the development plan to determine the merits of future planning applications. Although this too should have enabled the effects of development to be avoided, the application of such policies in the past have resulted in a refusal of schemes that may have been acceptable in principle, thereby constraining economic development.

**Policy 5 – Sports & Leisure Facilities**

Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective	DNP Policy	Alternative Policy
Water Resources	0	?
Biodiversity	0	?
Landscape	0	?

8.23 This policy supports in principle proposals for new sports and leisure facilities to serve Denmead within the grounds of the Denmead Junior School.

8.24 The school grounds are within the DSPB and are not subject to flood risk or have any biodiversity value. There are therefore no environmental effects of the policy.

8.25 The only alternative sites for such uses are beyond the DSPB and could not be provided for in any of the proposed housing site allocations. Given the policy makes provision for indoor as well as outdoor facilities, there would likely be an effect on landscape character on sites that have been assessed as at least 'moderately' sensitive to development. Other potential sites are in proximity

to areas of biodiversity value and that are subject to flood risk. In addition, the school site is highly accessible within the village; the alternatives would all result in more trips by car. In overall terms, therefore, the policy proposes the most suitable location in environmental terms.

**Policy 6 – Public Car Park at Hambledon Road/Kidmore Lane**

Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective	DNP Policy	Alternative Policy
Water Resources	0	0
Biodiversity	0	0
Landscape	0	0

8.27 This policy establishes the importance of the public car park at Hambledon Road/Kidmore Lane for the benefit of customers of the Village Centre and of visitors to the village more generally.

8.28 As such, the policy has no environmental effects that can be assessed. The alternative of allocating the site for some form of development for another purpose has no environmental effects that can be assessed either but will have detrimental economic and social impacts.

**Policy 7 – Burial Ground**

Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective	DNP Policy	Alternative Policy
Water Resources	0	0
Biodiversity	0	0
Landscape	0	0

8.29 This policy allocates land for an extension to the existing burial ground on Cemetery Lane north of the village.

8.30 The policy provides for the only sensible means of extending the burial ground to provide for the long term needs of the local community. The site is not subject to flood risk and, as the proposal provides space for new burial plots, there will be no effect of new buildings on the open countryside to the north. There is no known biodiversity interest on the site that cannot be mitigated in the detailed design of a future scheme. An alternative 'no policy' option may have a social impact in the longer term but will also be neutral in environmental terms.

**Policy 8 – Travellers Accommodation**

Neighbourhood Plan SEA Objective	DNP Policy	Alternative Policy
Water Resources	0	0
Biodiversity	0	0
Landscape	0	0

8.31 This policy supports the provision of additional traveller accommodation pitches in suitable locations that are in close proximity to the existing settled traveller community in the parish.

8.32 In doing so, the policy requires that the location and nature of any future proposals must accord with the relevant provisions of the development plan. This will ensure that the proposals do not have any significant effect on water resources, biodiversity assets or sensitive landscapes that cannot be effectively avoided or mitigated. The policy is therefore neutral in its impact. An alternative 'no policy' option may have a social impact but will also be neutral in environmental terms.

**9. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with**

9.1 The policy options chosen in the Neighbourhood Plan have been assessed as those, where genuine, plausible options were available, that achieved an appropriate balance between avoiding any significant environmental impact and meeting the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

9.2 All the policies have sought to protect and enhance the surrounding natural assets of the village and to avoid areas of flood risk. The locational decisions have been driven by achieving specific housing and business outcomes. Where necessary, the policies have ensured that key development principles are secured at the outset, leaving the saved policies of the development plan to ensure subsequent planning applications will provide the detail to assess impact at a finer grain than possible in this assessment.

9.3 In more general terms, the Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for 130 new homes over the plan period, in addition to windfall schemes, in line with the requirements of LPP1, which itself has been subject to a satisfactory Sustainability Appraisal. This number of homes represents a very small addition to the existing housing stock to the extent that no material impacts on transport, air quality or water quality for example can be measured or compared. In which case, the assessment indicates there are no significant environmental effects of the Plan. Those minor environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be addressed as identified above.

## **10. A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring**

10.1 WCC and Denmead Parish Council will jointly monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan using the available data. The WCC Monitoring Report will provide some data at this level.

## Annex A – Evidence Base

The list below contains all those documents collected and reviewed in the process of preparing this report. All are available to view via the Denmead Parish Council website's neighbourhood plan pages.

- Denmead Profile Data (2013)
- Denmead Open Space Assessment (2013)
- Denmead Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal (2014)
- Denmead Transport Accessibility Study (2014)
- Denmead Windfall Trends & Potential (2013)
- Denmead Historic Environment Assessment (2013)
- Denmead Neighbourhood Plan Employment Paper (2013)
- Denmead Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessments Report (2014)
- Winchester District Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007)
- Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006)
- Denmead – All Assessed Sites (Winchester SHLAA extracts)(2013)
- Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy (2013)
- Winchester Infrastructure Study & Delivery Plan (2012)
- Market Towns and Rural Area Development Strategy Background Paper (2011)
- Winchester Green Infrastructure Study (2010)
- Winchester Habitat Regulations Assessment (2009)
- Winchester Car Parking Strategy (2014)
- Winchester Review of Employment Prospects, Employment Land and Demographic (2011)
- Hampshire Traveller Assessment (2013)