

## FAREHAM LOCAL PLAN 2037 REPRESENTATIONS

### LAND AT NEWGATE LANE (NORTH AND SOUTH), FAREHAM

ON BEHALF OF BARGATE HOMES LTD AND SUSTAINABLE LAND

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)  
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

Prepared by: Matthew Good



## Pegasus Group

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## APPENDICES:

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## 1.0 Introduction / Details

- 1.1 The following representations are made by Pegasus Group on behalf of our clients Bargate Homes Ltd and Sustainable Land. Our clients have interests in an area of land between Newgate Lane and Newgate Lane East (the new relief road) in Peel Common. Applications for outline planning permission (refs. P/18/1118/OA and P/19/0460/OA) **have been made at 'Land at Newgate Lane'** which together will provide for the development of up to 190 homes. Both applications are currently the subject of undetermined appeals.
- 1.2 Representations have been made in respect of the sites in response to the Regulation 18 consultation on the original version of the draft Local Plan in December 2017, and again in July 2019 and in February 2020 on subsequent consultations for the new Local Plan. The site continues to be promoted through the Local Plan process as it represents a sustainable and deliverable option to deliver much needed housing in this authority.
- 1.3 Our clients are important stakeholders within Fareham and are keen to work with the Council to produce a plan which is legally compliant and meets the tests of soundness set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.4 **The following representations utilise the same format as the Council's response** form. Each area of the Publication Local Plan (PLP) which is deemed to be either not legally compliant or unsound is clearly outlined below. The exceptions are questions A (1,2 & 3) and B5 (parts a & b) where a single response at the beginning and end of the representations is provided, respectively. This is because these responses are common to all questions and our representations.



FIGURE 1 – NEWGATE LANE NORTH



FIGURE 2 – NEWGATE LANE SOUTH



Questions A1, A2, A3 Agent / Client details

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## 2.0 Plan Overall

B1 Which part of the Local Plan is this representation about?

2.1 The following comments relate to the overall Local Plan.

B2 Do you think the Publication Local Plan is:

Legally compliant - No

Sound - No

Complies with the duty to co-operate - No

2.2 The Fareham Local Plan is not legally compliant and is unsound as it is not consistent with national policy, effective or justified.

B3 Please provide details you have to support your answers above.

2.3 The NPPF (paragraph 33) states that plans should be reviewed every 5 years and updated as necessary. Previously the local planning authority indicated that this local plan review would amalgamate the adopted Local Plan Parts 1, 2 and 3 into a single new plan. Part 3 is the Welborne Plan which was adopted in 2015. The total quantum of housing to be delivered at Welborne has reduced over the years, and the date for its commencement has repeatedly slipped back. Recently, serious doubts have been expressed over whether it is deliverable at all given the funding gap of tens of millions of pounds that exists in relation to the required upgrade of M27 junction 10. Certainly, the development is not currently "deliverable" in NPPF terms.

Taking all of this into account, the Welborne Plan should be reviewed, which it has not (PLP paragraph 4.9). It is also clear that at this stage the Council suggests that it is not intending to review the Welbourne Plan (Local Development Scheme (LDS), paragraph 1.5). Given the importance of the Welborne Plan to housing delivery this is considered an issue of both soundness and legal non-compliance.

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B4a What modification(s) is necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

2.4 Include a review of the Welborne Plan in this Local Plan review.

B4b How would the modification(s) you propose make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

2.5 Compliance with the NPPF requirement to review plans and provide an up to date framework to ensure housing delivery.

B4c Your suggested revised wording of any policy or text

2.6 Not applicable.

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### 3.0 Strategic Policy DS2: Development in Strategic Gaps

B1 Which part of the Local Plan is this representation about?

3.1 The following comments relate to the Policy DS2, the supporting text and the inclusion of our clients' land between Newgate Lane and Newgate Lane East (the new relief road) in Peel Common within this designation.

B2 Do you think the Publication Local Plan is:

Legally compliant – N/A

Sound - No

Complies with the duty to co-operate – N/A

3.2 The Fareham Local Plan is unsound as it is not consistent with national policy, effective or justified.

B3 Please provide details you have to support your answers above.

3.3 The PLP, paragraph 3.43, identifies that the:

*"...primary purpose of identifying Strategic Gaps is to prevent the coalescence of separate settlements and help maintain distinct community identities. Strategic Gaps do not necessarily have intrinsic landscape value but are important in maintaining the settlement pattern, defining settlement character and providing green infrastructure opportunities."*

3.4 The proposed policy seeks to strengthen the current Core Strategy policy position, contained within Policy CS22 with regards to preventing settlement coalescence. It is stated in the PLP this has been undertaken in response to **the NPPF and recent planning decisions (paragraph 3.44)**. The Council's evidence in relation to this policy is contained within the September 2020 'Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps' document. Chapter 2, section 4.2, seeks to apply the NPPF to this policy.

3.5 The interpretation of the NPPF in this section is selective and as such misleading. For example in referencing paragraph 20 of the NPPF it states:

*"Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for... conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes."*

3.6 This fails to recognise that strategic policies should also set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development. **The Council's evidence also refers** to paragraph 170 of the NPPF noting:

*"planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... protecting and enhancing valued landscapes... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)".*

3.7 It must, however, be recognised that the strategic gaps do not have any **statutory status therefore shouldn't be unduly restrictive. A tightening of** restrictions would be contrary to the NPPF. The policy does identify that development can be accommodated within the Strategic Gap. Indeed, the previous iteration of the plan identified site HA2 and Strategic Growth Areas within the Fareham – Stubbington Strategic Gap. Thus, suggesting that development in the gap is not prohibitive per se.

3.8 Within our representations on the draft Local Plan Supplement we argued the evidence base lacks robustness and has been applied without justification. The updated evidence does not overcome these concerns. Our clients site is situated within parcel 8c of the updated evidence. The study suggests that despite the proximity of Fareham and Gosport in the north part, the gap is **currently still effective in providing a 'sense of separation', but it is at risk. It** is further noted at point 15 that;

*"Whilst the recently completed Newgate Lane South road development does not alter the experience of entering the urban area of Gosport beyond the Peel Common Roundabout, it does reduce tranquillity and bring more built features*

*(such as noise attenuation barriers) into this part of the gap.”*

- 3.9 Despite this significant development, **the** 'Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps' **simply re-**iterates previous conclusions from earlier analysis undertaken by LDA and described in the Fareham Borough Landscape Character Assessment, 2017. There is no consideration as to how the development of Newgate Lane South has altered the area. Clearly, the new highway has added a substantial urbanising influence upon the gap, this should be assessed. The blanket approach taken within the policy does not recognise these substantial changes.
- 3.10 **Within our client's appeal evidence in relation to applications** P/18/1118/OA and P/19/0460/OA we provide evidence in relation to landscape and visual matters. This evidence takes full consideration of the strategic gap and identifies that Peel Common is not well defined as a coherent area of settlement character due to the fact the settlement appears to be based on the progression of wayside and ribbon development since the early twentieth century. It also notes that the amenity value of the area has altered since the completion of Newgate Lane East. It was concluded that this parcel makes a limited contribution to the wider context of the strategic gap.
- 3.11 The protection of the Strategic Gap is currently governed by policy CS22 of the Core Strategy, which does not permit development where it significantly affects the integrity of the gap. The policy provides a useful starting point for considering the purpose of strategic gaps. It states:
- 3.12 **"Their boundaries will be reviewed in accordance with the following criteria:**
- a) *The open nature/sense of separation between settlements cannot be retained by other policy designations;*
  - b) *The land to be included within the gap performs an important role in defining the settlement character of the area and separating settlements at risk of coalescence;*
  - c) *In defining the extent of a gap, no more land than is necessary to prevent the coalescence of settlements should be included having regard to maintaining their physical and visual **separation.**"*

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3.13 Taking each of these key criteria in turn:

Openness and sense separation

3.14 Although the proposed development site is a greenfield site within the countryside, it would not represent isolated development. The site is located to the west of the settlement of Bridgemarky. The development will become a cohesive part of the Bridgemarky neighbourhood through the provision of key **pedestrian links and local facilities (open space and children's play areas)** for the benefit of the wider community.

3.15 The site is bounded by Newgate Lane East to the east. To the west it is bounded by Newgate Lane, which is the focus of ribbon development, and beyond this the Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works and solar farm. If the site is not developed, then it will be an open pocket of land between the two roads within an otherwise urbanized landscape, which in our view is of inherently less value in terms of its contribution to the strategic gap.

3.16 **It is notable that the Council's evidence** 'Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps' identifies the Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works to provide a strong physical and visual gap between Gosport and Stubbington (Area 8b), and to a lesser extent so does the Solar Farm. This physical and visual gap would not be affected by development on our clients' sites.

3.17 **The Council's evidence** also identifies that a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy or Framework would be beneficial to enhance the GI value of the current gap and potentially help determine an appropriate GI framework for moderately scaled development. Our clients' proposals would enhance the provision of GI through the provision of on-site open space and pedestrian linkages. It should be noted that due to the site being within private ownership there is currently no public right of way connectivity, such that it has no real functional value as GI other than its contribution to a wider landscape setting.

3.18 As such, although the development of the site would necessarily have an urbanizing effect on the existing open land, good growth could be achieved without compromising the gap between the existing urban edge of Fareham/Bridgemarky and Stubbington.

### Defining the Settlement Character and Preventing Coalescence

- 3.19 The character of the site and surrounding area is defined by both the natural and built environment, having regard to the landscape setting in which it sits.
- 3.20 The development of the site, by extending the boundary of the Fareham/Gosport built-up area would not have the effect of coalescence with Stubbington. The settlement character of Bridgemary is distinct from that of Stubbington. Whilst both are characterized by large areas of low-rise, medium-density development from the late-20th century (and in the case of Bridgemary also from the pre-war era), the development of Bridgemary as a suburban extension of Fareham/Gosport lends it a different character compared with **Stubbington's growth as a distinct** village with a more extensive local centre.
- 3.21 **The remaining Strategic Gap will still achieve a 'green' gap between the two** settlements such that the distinct identities of the two settlements are reinforced by their physical and visual separation.

### Extent of Gap Required

- 3.22 Most obviously, the development of the Land at Newgate Lane would retain a **'green' gap between the two** settlements. The extent of this gap remaining is sufficient to prevent coalescence in line with the policy consideration in Core Strategy Policy 22.
- 3.23 This green gap will also help to retain the physical and visual separation of the settlements, an effect which will be further enhanced by the introduction of the Stubbington By-Pass which will serve to sever them further. The location of **Land at Newgate Lane is not within the 'pinch point' between** Fareham and Stubbington. Further north, the Strategic Gap between the two settlements narrows, and an extension to Fareham in this location would reduce the gap to a much greater degree or eliminate it. This makes Land at Newgate Lane a preferable development location than sites north of Peel Common/West of Fareham in terms of impact on coalescence.



B4a What modification(s) is necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

- 3.24 **The policy and proposals map should be amended to either exclude our client's site from the strategic gap or it should be identified as a location which could accommodate sensitive development.**

B4b How would the modification(s) you propose make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

- 3.25 It would be justified by the evidence and would assist the Council in achieving an appropriate housing requirement.

B4c Your suggested revised wording of any policy or text

- 3.26 See response to B4a above.

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4.0 Policy H1: Housing Provision (including supporting text)

B1 Which part of the Local Plan is this representation about?

4.1 Policy H1: Housing Provision and all supporting text.

B2 Do you think the Publication Local Plan is:

Legally compliant - No

Sound - No

Complies with the duty to co-operate - No

4.2 The Fareham Local Plan is not legally compliant and is unsound as it is not consistent with national policy, effective, positively prepared or justified.

B3 Please provide details you have to support your answers above.

4.3 The PLP has based its housing proposals on the annual housing target derived from the Government's draft Revised Standard Methodology published in August 2020 in its consultation "Planning for the Future". The **Government's** response to this consultation was published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The Government does not propose to proceed with the changes to assessing local housing need consulted on earlier this year in the **"Changes to the Current Planning System"**; but instead has published a revised approach to the standard method, which retains the method in its current form except for London and 19 of the most populated cities and urban centres.

4.4 The key change is to apply a 35% uplift to the standard method for Greater London and the 19 most populated cities and urban areas in England – Birmingham, Liverpool, Bristol, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Leicester, Coventry, Bradford, Nottingham, Kingston upon Hull, Newcastle upon Tyne, Stoke on Trent, Southampton, Plymouth, Derby, Reading, Wolverhampton and Brighton and Hove. The minimum housing requirement for Fareham calculated using the amended standard method therefore remains 514hpa.

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- 4.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states (paragraph 16 a) that Plans should "be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development". Footnote 10 confirms that this is a legal requirement of local planning authorities in exercising their plan-making functions. Meeting the objectives of sustainable development includes **"...meeting the needs of the present..."**. By preparing a Plan based on a consultation draft Standard Methodology target of 403 dwellings per annum, the local planning authority is failing to meet its local objectively assessed need for housing, thereby failing to plan to deliver sustainable development.
- 4.6 The lower housing requirement has also not been the subject of sustainability appraisal (SA). Whilst the SA re-assesses sites based upon a lower housing requirement it fails to consider the implications of a lower housing requirement, compared to the current standard method, upon the delivery of the SA objectives.
- 4.7 The Plan does not seek to, as a minimum, meet the area's objectively assessed need. Given that the Core Strategy was adopted on 4th August, 2011, it is significantly out of date such that (as advised by paragraph 73 and footnote 32 of the NPPF) local housing need should be calculated using the current Standard Methodology. On this basis the extant local housing need target is 514 homes per annum (hpa). Instead, the PLP plans for 403hpa, thereby failing to plan for the area's objectively assessed need and failing to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.8 The PPG (ID 2a-003-20190220) is clear that the current standard method should be used and any other method should only be used in exceptional circumstances. It further explains that:
- "...Where an alternative approach results in a lower housing need figure than that identified using the standard method, the strategic policy-making authority will need to demonstrate, using robust evidence, that the figure is based on realistic assumptions of demographic growth and that there are exceptional local circumstances that justify deviating from the standard method. This will be tested at examination."* (PPG ID 2a-015-20190220).

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- 4.9 As discussed above the extant standard method identifies a requirement of 514hpa. The NPPF (paragraph 60) identifies that the current standard method provides a minimum requirement. To depart and provide a figure lower than the current standard method must be justified by clear and robust evidence. **This is absent from the Council's** evidence base and as such is an unsound approach.
- 4.10 The Government's guidance is that transitional arrangements require Regulation 19 plans to be based on the current Standard Methodology figure. However, given that there is no change for Fareham this is irrelevant.. As such, Fareham's decision to progress to Regulation 19 stage with a strategy based on a figure of 403hpa is procedurally flawed, lacking in evidential basis, premature and potentially misleading.
- 4.11 It is also unclear whether the PLP has planned to adequately accommodate unmet need from other authorities. The PPG (ID 2a-010-20190220) identifies that meeting unmet needs from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground, is one reason why local housing need calculated using the current standard should be exceeded.
- 4.12 Paragraph 4.4 of the PLP states that unmet need in the sub-region over the plan period could be "circa 10,750 dwellings". At paragraph 4.5, Fareham's "immediate neighbours" are considered, and it is confirmed that Portsmouth City Council has requested that Fareham contributes 1,000 dwellings towards its unmet need, and that Gosport is "likely to have an unmet need issue, currently estimated to be in the region of 2,500 dwellings...". **However, in response, the PLP (Table 4.1) proposes a contribution of 847 dwellings to wider unmet need. This produces an overall plan requirement of 7,295 dwellings, equivalent to 456hpa. The Council's 'Duty to Co-operate Statement of Compliance' identifies at paragraph 4.6 that instead of responding to the request from Portsmouth the Council is proposing to: "...take the approach that the issue of unmet need is not dealt with as specific to any authority, but as a general contribution."** It is not clear how this "general contribution" has been calculated but it appears inadequate.

4.13 Contrary to the advice within the PPG (ID 2a-010-20190220) there are currently no statements of common ground identifying if the figure of 847 dwellings is adequate or accepted by other authorities. Rather, the Council **speculates that this contribution would be "ratified" by a subsequent** Partnership for South Hampshire Statement of Common Ground (Duty to Co-operate Statement of Compliance, paragraph 4.5). There is, however, no evidence to support this speculation. Indeed, the only evidence presented suggests a higher requirement of 1,000 dwellings from a single authority.

4.14 Fareham has decided to deliberately plan to not meet its local objectively assessed housing need, which fundamentally means that the plan will not be effective. This, coupled with its apparent failure to plan to contribute appropriately to the unmet housing need of the sub-region, indicates a failure to work effectively with its neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary strategic planning for housing delivery and a failure "to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes" (NPPF, paragraph 59). Rather, the PLP proposes to restrict the supply of homes in the plan period in a way which will exacerbate the local housing crisis.

4.15 The PLP is not consistent with the NPPF because:

- It will not contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by not, as a minimum, planning to meet its local objectively assessed housing need;
- It is not planning to adequately meet the unmet housing needs of neighbouring authorities in the sub-region;
- It has not based its housing proposals on the current Standard Methodology;
- Its strategy lacks a robust evidential justification.

#### Phased Provision

4.16 In addition to the issues with the overall requirement, Policy H1 also seeks to **identify a 'phased' requirement**. The overall supply is at least 8,389 dwellings this is just 165 dwellings greater than the requirement when the correct local housing need standard method is applied. Given the need to provide for unmet needs from neighbouring authorities this is clearly insufficient and as such further allocations are required. Policy H1 seeks to **'phase' this supply** identifying the following:

- Approximately 2,250 dwellings (averaging 450 dwellings per annum) between 2021/22 and 2025/2613,
- Approximately 2,400 dwellings (averaging 480 dwellings per annum) between 2026/27 and 2030/31,
- Approximately 3,750 dwellings (averaging 625 dwellings per annum) between 2031/32 and 2036/2037.

4.17 This phasing clearly will not meet the overall plan requirement. The rationale for this phasing is due to an anticipation that many of the housing allocations will begin to deliver later in the plan period. This is simply a factor of the sites chosen rather than an evidence-based approach to need. The net effect is that in the early part of the plan period the full need will not be met. This will mean households will either be unable to form or will be forced to move elsewhere to find appropriate accommodation. This not only has an impact upon affordability through increased demand but also has implications for social mobility and health for young and old alike.

4.18 The lack of housing to meet needs in the short-term is exacerbated by recent under-delivery of both market and affordable housing. The Council recognises it has under-delivered in recent years due to the reference to the need for a 20% buffer in accordance with NPPF, paragraph 73 (paragraph 4.16, PLP).

4.19 The housing requirement in the PLP should not be phased to manufacture a five-year housing land supply in the short-term. The plan should seek to address housing need now and to do otherwise is not justified or effective.

#### Housing Supply

4.20 The second part of Policy H1 identifies the sources of supply. Whilst our clients do not wish to comment upon individual sites, we do have significant concerns that the sources of supply will not deliver the plan period housing requirement in full. The PLP, paragraph 4.16, acknowledges that many of the chosen sites will not deliver until later in the plan period therefore any slippage in timescale could well push delivery beyond the plan period. Furthermore, the Council is heavily reliant upon delivery at Welborne. Within our comments upon the Plan overall we identify the need for delivery from this site to be reviewed and indeed question whether it is deliverable at all given the funding gap of tens of millions of pounds that exists in relation to the required upgrade of M27

junction 10.

4.21 Furthermore, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing **land supply**. **The Council's most recent assessment of its five-year** housing land supply suggests a 4.03-year supply. This assessment appears optimistic given recent appeal decisions which identify it is closer 2.4-years<sup>1</sup>. Given these shortcomings it is essential that the PLP seeks to address this under-supply in the short-term.

4.22 **Our client's sites, SHLAA references 3129 and 3161, should be considered for** allocation. Both sites are sustainable being well located in terms of accessibility to services, facilities and employment. They also have good access to public transport opportunities. Furthermore, whilst the sites are located within the Fareham – Stubbington Gap, there are no unsurmountable specific statutory or non-statutory landscape related planning designations.

4.23 The SHLAA identifies that both sites are discounted because:

*"Development in this location would not be in keeping with the settlement pattern and would change the settlement character of Peel Common. The site is therefore considered unsuitable for residential development."*

4.24 Our clients fundamentally disagree with these points. This is discussed in greater detail within our response to Policy DS2 above. However, in summary the sites are well located in relation to the settlement of Bridgemary and our evidence identifies that development in this location would have a limited impact due to the recent completion of the Newgate Lane East site. The proposals could also enhance the strategic gap through the provision of appropriate Green Infrastructure.

B4a What modification(s) is necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

4.25 The following amendments are necessary to ensure that the plan is legally compliant and sound.

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<sup>1</sup> APP/A1720/W/19/3230015

1. Plan to meet, as a minimum, the area's objectively assessed housing need. The current Standard Methodology annual housing need figure is currently 514hpa.
2. Provide Statements of Common Ground in relation to unmet need from neighbouring and PfSH authorities. Any agreements will need to be included as additional housing to the minimum 514hpa.
3. In any event, plan for a level of housing which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
4. Undertake SA of all reasonable alternative housing requirements.
5. Provide a housing requirement which is not phased and meets needs now.
6. Provide additional allocations, including our clients, which can deliver in the short-term.

B4b How would the modification(s) you propose make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

- 4.26 Compliance with the NPPF requirement for the housing requirement to be based upon current local housing need standard method as a minimum. To comply with relevant legal and procedural requirements.

B4c Your suggested revised wording of any policy or text

- 4.27 Not applicable, as this will be dependent upon the outcome of the work identified in response to question B3.



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5.0 Policy HP4: Five-Year Housing Land Supply

B1 Which part of the Local Plan is this representation about?

5.1 The following comments relate to Policy HP4 and all supporting text.

B2 Do you think the Publication Local Plan is:

Legally compliant – N/A

Sound - No

Complies with the duty to co-operate – N/A

5.2 The Fareham Local Plan is unsound as it is not effective or justified.

B3 Please provide details you have to support your answers above.

5.3 Whilst the principle of the policy is supported the current wording is considered contrary to its stated purpose. The supporting text identifies that this policy is required to provide flexibility if a five-year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated. However, in accordance with the NPPF, paragraph 11d, in such cases the most relevant policies in the plan would be out of date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply.

5.4 It is therefore not justified to seek to apply additional requirements upon developments should a five-year supply not be demonstrable. For example, the requirement for the scale of the site to be relative to the shortfall is not only unclear but could be prohibitive of sustainable sites being brought forward. Furthermore, many of the criteria are replicated from other policies and as such are superfluous.

B4a What modification(s) is necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

5.5 A more positive policy is justified. Parts a, c, d and e should be deleted to avoid repetition and conflict with the NPPF.

B4b How would the modification(s) you propose make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound?

5.6 See above.

B4c Your suggested revised wording of any policy or text

5.7 See above.

## 6.0 Participation at the examination hearing sessions

B5a If your representation is seeking a modification to the plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in the examination hearing session(s)?

6.1 Yes, I want to take part in the hearing sessions.

B5b Please outline why you consider it necessary to take part in the hearing session(s):

6.2 There are several detailed and complex points made within our representations which would benefit from further debate and consideration. It is also important that our clients can respond orally to hearing statements made by the Council and other participants to ensure that the Inspector has a full understanding of our case.

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APPENDIX 1

LANDSCAPE EVIDENCE

FL&BH 1.1

APPEAL BY FAREHAM LAND LP AND BARGATE HOMES LTD

LAND AT NEWGATE LANE (NORTH) AND LAND AT  
NEWGATE LANE (SOUTH), FAREHAM, HAMPSHIRE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS:  
PROOF OF EVIDENCE

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## APPENDICES:

(REFER TO SEPARATE DOCUMENT REF. FL&BH 1.2)

APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.1	Extract from the Fareham Landscape Assessment
APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.2	Composite Landscape Strategy
APPENDIX FL&HB 1.2.3	Extract from the 'Technical Review of AoSLO and Strategic Gaps'
APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.4	Landscape Analysis of the Strategic Gap

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Qualifications and Experience

- 1.1. My name is James Atkin. I hold the position of Director (Landscape) in the Birmingham Office of the Pegasus Group. The Company undertakes all aspects of planning, urban and landscape design and environmental planning. I have a Bachelor of Science Degree in Landscape Design and Plant Science and a Diploma in Landscape Management, both from the University of Sheffield. I am also a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (2005).
- 1.2. I have over 19 years professional experience specialising in the application of landscape and visual assessment and the use of best practice guidance. I have authored landscape and visual impact appraisals, assessments and evidence, both in the UK and in the international context.
- 1.3. Prior to joining the Pegasus Group I have worked in multidisciplinary consultancies, including Wardell Armstrong LLP and Atkins, advising on landscape and visual matters across a range of sectors including power, highways, rail, housing, waste, land reclamation and restoration, mineral extraction, commercial developments and renewable energy.
- 1.4. Since joining the Pegasus Group I have completed a number of detailed LVIA's for sites across the UK, including residential development and mixed use development schemes, care home developments, solar installations and commercial development. As an inherent part of this work I apply an iterative process of landscape and visual appraisal and assessment to inform masterplanning principles which avoid or respond to landscape and visual constraints and opportunities.
- 1.5. In this context I have produced technical documents on landscape and visual matters for use in the emerging design process, for planning applications and at appeal. I am currently involved in a variety of projects for mixed use and residential masterplans, of varying scales between 10 and 1000 units, in both urban and urban fringe environments, where matters of sensitive and designated landscapes are key considerations. The diversity of these different project types has enabled me to develop a strong understanding as to how different landscapes can respond to different types of development.

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## Terms of Reference

- 1.6. This evidence is written on behalf of Fareham Land LP and Bargate Homes Ltd (the appellants) and relates to an appeal for non-determination by Fareham Borough Council in respect of two outline applications for residential development, both on land to the east of Newgate Lane. This evidence sets out an overview of relevant landscape and visual matters.
- 1.7. The outline application for 'Land at Newgate Lane (North) (Fareham Land LP; LPA ref. P/18/1118/OA) sought permission for:
- The demolition of existing buildings and development of up to 75 dwellings, open space, vehicular access point from Newgate Lane and associated and ancillary infrastructure, with all matters except access to be reserved.
- 1.8. The outline application for 'Land at Newgate Lane (South) (Bargate Homes Limited; LPA ref. P/19/0460/OA) sought permission for:
- The demolition of existing buildings and development of up to 115 dwellings, open space, vehicular access point from Newgate Lane and associated and ancillary infrastructure, with all matters except access to be reserved.
- 1.9. These are referred to as the 'northern' site and the 'southern' site respectively.
- 1.10. Whilst the two sites are subject of separate applications, it is important to note that the proposals have always been conceived as a cohesive development, together addressing the constraints and opportunities in respect of the local landscape context and providing a cohesive and complementary strategy for development and mitigation.
- 1.11. The evidence presented herein applies to both appeals, unless specifically stated otherwise.
- 1.12. Each application was supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of the appellants. Reference is made to the content and findings of these where relevant, supplemented by additional professional judgement as necessary.



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## Evidence Structure

- 1.13. The evidence is structured as follows, including this introduction (section 1):
- At section 2, I give a brief description of the appeal sites in their context, and the appeal scheme, including an analysis of constraints and opportunities and development potential (based on my own observations and judgement);
  - At section 3, I present a brief background to the appeal, including a summary of the Council's reasons for refusal where these are relevant to landscape and visual matters;
  - At section 4, I address the key issues in the reason for refusal in respect of landscape and visual matters, and present additional analysis of these;
  - At section 5, I address policies relevant to landscape and visual matters; and
  - At section 6, I provide a summary and conclusions.
- 1.14. Principles and good practice for undertaking landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) and/or applying the principles of LVIA are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013)<sup>1</sup> (GLVIA3). The concepts and procedures set out in this guidance have been adopted where appropriate.
- 1.15. The professional judgements which are presented in this evidence for this appeal (reference LPA reference P/18/1118/OA and P/19/0460/OA) have been prepared in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution. I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

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<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (April, 2013)

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## 2. THE APPEAL SITES

2.1. This section sets out an overview of the appeal sites and their context.

### Overview

- 2.2. Together, the appeal sites extend to ca. 10 hectares (ha) of agricultural land, situated close to the urban edge of Fareham and Gosport and within a discreet parcel of land that is bounded by Newgate Lane to the west, Woodcote Lane to the south and Newgate Lane East to the east (with Newgate Lane and Newgate Lane East framing the northern edge of the sites also).
- 2.3. Hambrook Lodge (accessed from the west, off Newgate Lane) Lodge and its curtilage is located between the two sites, but the property (and the access to the property) is not included in the red line boundary for the sites.
- 2.4. The appeal sites are located outside the defined settlement boundary identified in the Local Plan policies map, in a 'Strategic Gap' known as the Fareham/Gosport to Stubbington/Lee on Solent Gap (or simply the Fareham - Stubbington Gap).
- 2.5. They are not subject to specific statutory or non-statutory landscape related planning designations.

### Description and Context

- 2.6. The sites are located between Fareham and Gosport, adjacent to the suburbs of Woodcot and Bridgemary which are located to the east and adjacent to Peel Common which is located to the west.
- 2.7. The northern site comprises three enclosures, the largest of which is currently in arable production, the smaller two are in pastoral use. These cover an area that surrounds the northern extent of Hambrook Lodge which itself includes a number of related buildings (some dilapidated) and is generally enclosed by mature vegetation.
- 2.8. The southern site comprises four mixed use agricultural enclosures, the fields to the east are currently in arable production, whilst the field to the west, adjacent to Peel Common and Newgate Lane are in use as pastoral and equestrian paddocks. A small watercourse and drainage ditch bisects the southern site and reinforces the differentiation between the land uses of the eastern and western areas.

- 2.9. Newgate Lane is located immediately to the west of the sites and forms a connection with the southern edge of Fareham and, further south Gosport Road (noting that this is closed to traffic but retains a link for pedestrians and cyclists). Immediately to the east is the route of the new relief road, Newgate Lane East. Newgate Lane East is accessed from Newgate Lane by a T-junction, situated just north of the northern parcel.
- 2.10. The wider landscape context is set within the low-lying ground of the coastal plain landscapes and characterised by abrupt transitions between the open landscapes of the coastal plain and the urban environments which abut these. These urban areas include Fareham, Gosport and Woodcot and Bridgemary to the north and east. The settlement area of Stubbington, a medium scale, predominantly residential area is located to the west. The settlement edge of Stubbington forms the western extent of the Fareham to Stubbington strategic gap. In this context the strategic gap comprises an area of open landscape that extends across the coastal plain between the local settlement areas. Separation is most pronounced across the arable areas between Fareham/Peel Common and Stubbington.

#### Recent Landscape Change

- 2.11. The LVIA reports submitted in support of the planning applications were prepared and finalised in late 2018. These included reference to the published landscape character study for the Borough (The Fareham Landscape Assessment, 2017) which was prepared by LUC on behalf of Fareham Borough Council (FBC) and forms part of the evidence base to the current Local Plan.
- 2.12. The appeal sites are located in an area defined by the LUC study as 'LCA 8, Woodcot-Alver Valley' (including sub areas 08.1a and 08.2b). In relation to 'LCA 8, Woodcot-Alver Valley', the LUC study acknowledges the emerging proposals of the Fareham bypass (Newgate Lane East) and potential strategic housing development on the edge of Woodcot/Bridgemary (parcel HA2) and the landscape change that these may bring.
- 2.13. Since the publication of the LUC study (and submission of the Pegasus Group LVIA work) the proposals for Newgate Lane East have been constructed and the route has been open to traffic since April 2018; the majority of landscape works were completed in the 2018/19 season.
- 2.14. Although both the LUC study and the assessment of impacts undertaken in the submitted Pegasus Group LVIA make reference to the potential bypass and how it will

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influence the local landscape, there is now scope to consider the actual and current baseline situation.

### 3. BACKGROUND TO THE APPEAL

3.1. The background to the proposal is set out in full, in the main Statement of Case, prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of the appellant. This section provides a brief overview of the background relevant to landscape and visual matters.

#### Application

3.2. The applications were submitted in September 2018 (north) and April 2019 (south), with each supported by a separate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by Pegasus Group (CDA.48 and CDA.106).

3.3. In respect of both appeal sites, landscape and visual matters formed part of an iterative design process that guided the evolution of the masterplans and integration of mitigation measures into the schemes.

3.4. For both sites, the submitted LVIA work demonstrated a limited effect on landscape character, whereby impacts are restricted to a local level.

3.5. The work also demonstrated that the proposed developments would not detract from the function of the wider strategic gap, both due to the inherent character of the landscape itself, and also due to the physical and visual separation that is present between the sites and the more obvious and open part of the strategic gap between Peel Common and the eastern edge of Stubbington.

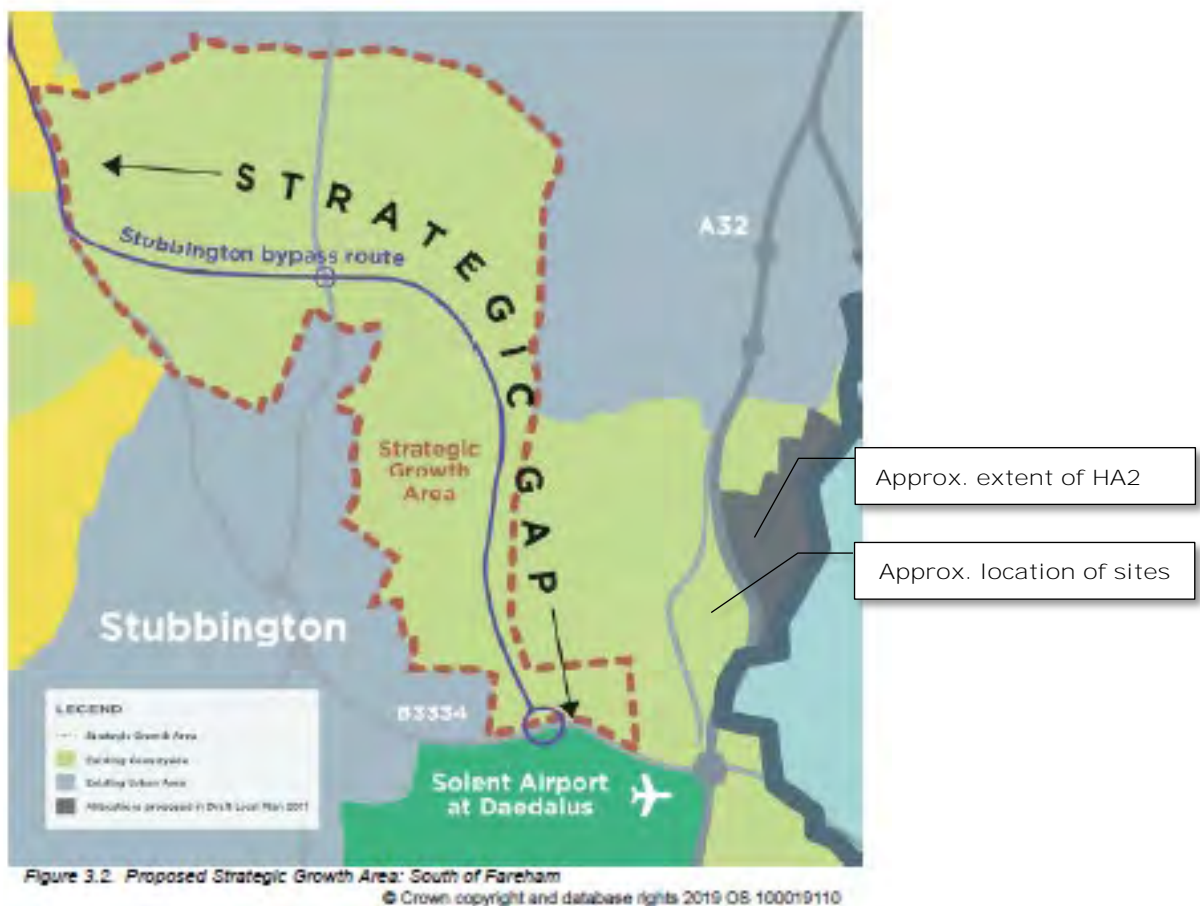
3.6. For views and visual amenity, the submitted LVIA work also demonstrated that the sites (and proposed developments) would be generally screened by existing development and existing mature vegetation, the influence of both being augmented by the low lying and relatively flat nature of the landform. Prominent views of the sites would only be available from its immediate context along Newgate Lane and Woodcote Lane with the greatest degree of visual effect from locations immediately adjacent to the sites, and from a small number of existing individual residential properties, again, located close to (or adjacent to) the site. Together, and in the balance of landscaped and visual matters overall, these impacts and effects are were not considered significant in landscape and visual terms.

3.7. During the process of the application, further design changes have occurred; these either maintain or improve the proposed mitigation which forms an inherent part of the schemes.

### Further Landscape and Visual Studies

- 3.8. Since the submission of the planning applications, the LPA has continued with the development and review of the Local Plan.
- 3.9. In previous iterations, notwithstanding the continued adoption of 'Strategic Gap' policies in this part of the Borough, the emerging local plan proposals had identified a 'Strategic Growth Area' situated across the landscape between Stubbington and Fareham, overlapping with a large part of the retained Strategic Gap. This had also indicated the inclusion of a housing allocation (HA2) on the southern edge of Fareham.

Plate 1: Extract from Fareham Draft Local Plan 2036 Supplement



- 3.10. In that previous iteration, the boundary of the Strategic Gap had been drawn to extend up to the settlement edge of Bridgemary (whilst incorporating the proposed housing allocation of HA2 and the recently constructed New Newgate Lane). In contrast, the Strategic Growth Area had been drawn to an eastern limit up to the existing waste water treatment works and the solar farm that are present to the south-west of the edge of

Fareham, noting that the extent of that boundary would exclude both appeal sites and exclude the emerging HA2 allocation.

- 3.11. Notwithstanding that the Fareham Landscape Assessment (LUC, 2017) forms part of the evidence base for the policy proposals, it was necessary to address the purpose and function of the gap and the proposed area of strategic growth.
- 3.12. In order to address this issue, Pegasus Group undertook a strategic level study of the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap, including the area up to the Gosport boundary (CDA.54).
- 3.13. The aim of that study was to identify the core areas of Strategic Gap which were considered more fundamental to the function of the Strategic Gap in terms of preventing coalescence between settlements and maintaining of settlement identities. The study identified 'Priority Areas' that should be maintained as Strategic Gap, with areas outside of these considered further for growth.
- 3.14. The study concluded that areas on the northern and western edges of Stubbington and at Fareham (along Longfield Avenue and between Peel Common and Woodcot/Bridgemary) can accommodate growth and that development in these areas would not fundamentally undermine the physical separation, nor the sense of separation between Stubbington and Fareham.
- 3.15. During the course of the appeal FBC continued to progress their Local Plan. The evidence base to the latest draft Local Plan 2036 included a 'Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps' (2020) undertaken by Hampshire County Council on behalf of FBC (CDG.7). The content and findings of this study are considered later in my evidence.

#### Consultation Responses

- 3.16. A summary of the main relevant consultation responses to the application are set out in the following section.

#### ***Urban Design, Fareham Borough Council***

- 3.17. The response from FBC on landscape and visual matters was prepared by the Urban Design officer (4th February 2019) (CDB.5a). These comments were limited to the northern site and broadly suggested that the proposed development would have an

'unacceptable negative impact upon the integrity of the existing open, predominantly rural agricultural character', of the landscape'.

- 3.18. However, it was felt that the conclusions of the consultation response did not sufficiently consider the (then) emerging baseline of Newgate Lane East and potential strategic development site (HA2), consequently the response overemphasised the degree of impact arising from the scheme.
- 3.19. In this context Pegasus Group prepared a comprehensive response to address the points raised (refer to CDA.41).
- 3.20. In a separate, later, response, the Urban Design officer requested that the layout be reworked to make a 'less formal block structure' (CDB.5b). These comments were addressed in revisions to the LVIA and ILMP, which were resubmitted as LVIA Rev D (CDA.48).

***Principal Tree Officer, Fareham Borough Council***

- 3.21. No objection is raised in response to trees, with the tree officer noting that 'the illustrative masterplan shows the developable area with the majority of the existing field boundary trees and hedges retained and incorporated into public green space' and concluding that 'the principle of development within the area shown is broadly acceptable in arboricultural terms'.

***Gosport Borough Council***

- 3.22. Gosport Borough Council (GBC) have objected to the applications, noting issues of the strategic gap and green infrastructure.
- 3.23. In relation to the first point, GBC suggest that the 'scale and location will undoubtedly harm the integrity of the gap and will diminish the physical and visual separation of the settlements.
- 3.24. GBC go on to suggest that the sites would diminish the opportunities to make the 'optimum use' of green infrastructure, and particularly in providing green linkages from Fareham to the coast via the Alver Valley Country Park.



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### ***Natural England***

- 3.25. The response from Natural England refers to green infrastructure provision, noting that the development is within in area that could benefit from enhanced green infrastructure provision.
- 3.26. In relation to landscape, the Natural England response notes that the proposal does not appear to be within, or within the setting of, any nationally designated landscape but also notes that proposals should complement, and where possible enhance, local distinctiveness, as guided by relevant landscape character assessment for the Borough.

### ***Environment Agency***

- 3.27. Further design changes to the masterplan were implemented in response to consultation comments from the Environment Agency and their provision of up to date flood map data.
- 3.28. This resulted in amendments to the southern appeal site and removal of a parcel of proposed development from an area to the west of the watercourse.
- 3.29. An LVIA addendum (CDA.119) was prepared that addressed the minor design change, along with the iteration of the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan.

### **Officers Reports to Committee**

- 3.30. Appeals against the non-determination of the applications were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, and the Council were notified in June 2020 as to the validity of these.
- 3.31. A report was prepared for Members which confirmed the position of the Council in respect of the case that would be presented at a forthcoming appeal, and inviting Members to confirm the decision that they would have made, had they been able to determine the planning application.
- 3.32. In both instances (north and south sites) the reports confirm that they would have refused the application.
- 3.33. The reports to committee set out a brief summary of the consultation responses received under several sub-headings (CDC.1 and CDC.2). Those relevant to landscape and visual matters are summarised as follows:

### *Principle/location/policy issues*

- Located in strategic gap;
- Loss of countryside;
- Impact on character of the 'new' Newgate Lane and the 'old' Newgate Lane;
- Impact on "green belt" (notwithstanding that the site is not in fact in an area defined as green belt);
- The site is not 'well integrated' contrary to policy DSP40;
- Loss of green land and linkages; and
- Impact on landscape.

### *Strategic Gap*

- Impact on the strategic gap;
- Coalescence of Fareham and Gosport;
- The proposed development will not strengthen the strategic gap; and
- Development in the strategic gap will set a precedent for further development.

### *Environment*

- Loss of green/open space and loss of agricultural land; and
- Impact on ability to make optimum use of green infrastructure, including providing green linkages from Fareham to the coast.

3.34. The report includes reference to a petition entitled 'Stop building in the Fareham/Gosport Strategic Gap' that was published in August 2020 and refers to several points in respect of landscape and visual matters and the strategic gap.

3.35. The main issues raised in respect of landscape and visual matters are set in the context of Local Plan Policy DSP 40 (paragraphs 8.32 to 8.61 of the North committee report and 8.31 to 8.6 of the South committee report).

3.36. The applications were subsequently refused (24th June 2020) (CDC.4) with the reasons for refusal as listed in the reports to committee. The overarching reason for refusal state that:

3.37. *"The development is contrary to Policies CS2, CS4, CS5, CS6, CS14, CS15, CS16, CS17 and CS22 of the Adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy 2011 and Policies DSP6, DSP13 & DSP40 of the Adopted Local Plan Part 2: Development Site and Policies Plan, paragraphs 103, 109 and 110 of the NPPF and is unacceptable in that:*

- 3.38. For the southern site this is identical, save for the omission of reference to Policy CS16.
- 3.39. *"The development is contrary to Policies CS2, CS4, CS5, CS6, CS14, CS15, CS17 and CS22 of the Adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy 2011 and Policies DSP6, DSP13 & DSP40 of the Adopted Local Plan Part 2: Development Site and Policies Plan, paragraphs 103, 109 and 110 of the NPPF and is unacceptable..."*
- 3.40. More specific reference to landscape and visual matters is made in the following reasons for refusal (noting that these are repeated for both the north and south sites):

- b) The proposed development fails to respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics of the area and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside;*
- c) The provision of development in this location would significantly affect the integrity of the strategic gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements;*
- d) The application site is not sustainably located adjacent to, well related to or well-integrated with the existing urban settlement boundaries;*

- 3.41. On review of the consultation responses, reports to committee and relevant reasons for refusal, several common themes are apparent in respect of landscape and visual matters. These are summarised as follows:
- Issue 1A: What are the key characteristics of the site and its immediate context and how have the schemes responded to these in terms of mitigation?
  - Issue 1B: The degree of impact on the key characteristics of the site and its immediate context and the extent to which these can be considered as harmful.
- 3.42. These matters are effectively addressed in the submitted landscape and visual impact assessments which set out a comprehensive baseline for the site and the local landscape context, including an assessment of the impact and approach to mitigation. I will return to these documents in later sections of my evidence.
- Issue 2: The purpose and function of the strategic gap in terms of providing physical and visual separation between settlements and how the site functions in relation to the wider gap.

3.43. During the course of the application a 'strategic landscape and visual appraisal' of the strategic gap was prepared to identify the role and function of the strategic gap, variations therein, the core areas and also how the strategic gap could be maintained whilst accommodating the strategic growth in the area. I will return to the gap study in later sections of my evidence.

- Issue 3: The context of the application sites in relation to the existing urban settlement edges/boundaries.

3.44. This issue is also touched upon in the submitted landscape and visual impact assessments in terms of the local landscape context to the appeal sites. I will return to the relevant findings of the LVIA reports in later sections of my evidence.

3.45. I consider these issues in the following sections, along with the different parts of the reason for refusal, thereafter drawing my conclusions.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS

4.1. In this section I set out an analysis of landscape and visual matters. I have presented the analysis under the broad topics raised in the reason for refusal, with reference to the key issues identified in the previous section of my evidence.

Reason for refusal b) The proposed development fails to respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics of the area and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside.

##### *Landscape character and key characteristics*

4.2. The reasons for refusal suggest that the proposed development fails to respond positively to, and be respectful of, the key characteristics of the area. In this section I set out the key characteristics relevant to the local landscape character, including reference to published guidance, but also with reference to recent landscape change that has resulted from the relatively recent completion of the new bypass, Newgate Lane East.

4.3. Landscape character for the area is defined by the 'Fareham Landscape Assessment', with the sites being located in the 'Woodcot/Alver Valley landscape character area, sub areas 08.1a for the northern site, and 08.1 and a small part of 08.1b for the southern site (relevant extracts are included in Appendix FL&BH 1.2.1). Peel Common, along with adjacent residential areas and remnant parts of the landscape up to the edge of Gosport, are also included in the same LCA; by contrast, the landscape between Fareham and Stubbington (including the wastewater treatment plant and solar farms) are located within the adjacent area of LCA 7, the Fareham/Stubbington Gap. There is a clear difference in the character between these areas that is based on the scale and pattern of the landscape, land use, enclosure landscape, and the degree of influence of the settlement edge along with urbanising influences.

4.4. The key characteristics of the relevant LCAs are considered in the baseline of the submitted LVIA (para 4.34, CDA.48 and CDA.106) and consequently informed the analysis, constraints and opportunities, and ultimately the landscape strategy for the mitigation that is included as an integrated part of the two masterplans for northern and southern schemes.

4.5. Greenfield development retains an inherent impact on the physical landscape, but it is possible to bring development forward in a positive manner that addresses landscape and visual constraints. The appeal schemes do so. Where this positive approach is

adopted, the perception of those physical impacts in terms of landscape character are also minimised, also something that the schemes achieve.

- 4.6. In respect of the key characteristics the Fareham Landscape Assessment (FLA) notes that 'key characteristics aim to improve understanding of the how places are distinctive and different from one another, rather than being an appraisal for areas that are 'better or worse'. It is the second and third sections of the FLA that address Landscape Sensitivity and the designations review that address matters of value, sensitivity and designations.
- 4.7. Key characteristics are defined in the 'Landscape Character Assessment' section of the FLA. For the Woodcot/Alver Valley (LCA8) the FLA notes that (FLA, page 62):
- 4.8. *"The Alver Valley also forms part of the strategic gap separating Fareham and Gosport but it is very different in character and scale from the open farmed landscape to the west. It comprises a mixed pattern of wooded common, small-scale pasture and ribbon development along the corridors of the River Alver and Newgate Lane and is bounded to the east by the urban edge of Gosport and to the north by the outskirts of Fareham."*
- 4.9. This sets out a clear distinction between the landscape context of the site, and the wider strategic gap area to the west and north-west, between Fareham and Stubbington. The description of the LCA also establishes the influence of the urban fringe; from the edge of Gosport, edge of Fareham, but also from ribbon development in the LCA (as reflected by the character of Peel Common). These influences should be considered in the appraisal of the appeal sites in the context of the local landscape.
- 4.10. The LCA defines several 'essential characteristics'. These are set out in the following table, set against a brief description as to how the appeal schemes would influence these or has responded to these.

Table 1: Summary of essential characteristics of the Woodcot/Alver Valley and anticipated change

Essential characteristics of the Woodcot/Alver Valley	Influence on landscape and design response
A mosaic of small and medium scale fields at Woodcot, forming a mixture of small horse-grazed pasture and larger arable fields divided by fences, ditches and gappy hedgerows;	<p>The scale and pattern of fields contribute to a more enclosed landscape.</p> <p>Grazed pasture, equestrian uses are not always positive aspects of the landscape and can be seen as detracting components of a landscape, driving needs for enhancement.</p> <p>Development and landscape strategy generally works within the scale of the existing field pattern aiming to</p>

	<p>limit overall 'massing' by working within the existing enclosures.</p> <p>This has an added benefit that vegetation is retained and subsequently enhanced through programmes of supplementary planting and longer term management.</p> <p>As part of the overall green infrastructure strategy for the appeal schemes, the sites can provide additional and reinforcement planting to hedgerows with additional tree planting also.</p>
<p>Although this area forms the upper part of the Alver Valley it lacks a distinct valley character;</p>	<p>A 'valley' landform is not pronounced here, reinforcing that this part of the landscape is a transition between the more distinct valley to the south-east and the flatter, slightly undulating plain to the west.</p> <p>This reinforces the nature of boundaries between character areas that they are rarely fixed along a defined alignment and instead tend to form a 'merging' or transition.</p>
<p>The hedgerow pattern is gradually replaced by scrubby woodland to the south, enclosing Chark Common and the golf course;</p>	<p>The hedgerow network is a stronger characteristic of the appeal sites and their context, with this network forming much of the green infrastructure framework.</p> <p>Newgate Lane East has impacted on the network to a degree, severing the hedgerows and field patterns in some parts of the landscape, particularly in proximity to the eastern edge of the appeal sites.</p> <p>The appeal schemes incorporate the hedgerow network as part of the overall masterplan, using this landscape component to guide the scale and form of the development envelope. There are likely to be some limited losses in parts of the appeal sites but retention, management and additional planting can mitigate these losses.</p>
<p>The character is influenced by the busy road corridor and the urban characteristics of Peel Common and Solent Enterprise Zone at HMS Daedalus on one side and the urban edge of Bridgemary on the other.</p>	<p>In the local landscape context of the appeal sites, urban influences and the settlement fringes are generally a prominent feature and, given the appeal sites and the surrounding undeveloped landscape areas do not existing in isolation, these urban edges do have an influence on the local landscape character.</p> <p>Newgate Lane East and its associated infrastructure (including prominent acoustic fencing, road junctions and crossings) have further influenced local landscape character, drawing the urban influence into the landscape between Peel Common and Gosport (at Bridgemary).</p> <p>The acknowledge landscape impact largely relates to the introduction of residential development into the appeal sites. However this will be congruent with the settlement pattern of Peel Common due to the placement and relationship between the appeal sites to Peel Common (along Newgate Lane) and the contained to the east and north by the alignment of Newgate Lane East.</p> <p>There also remains the existing connection between Peel Common and the edge of Gosport at Bridgemary, whereby the settlement pattern is connected by</p>

	existing properties along Woodcote Lane and the amenity land use of Brookers Field Recreation Ground (which is suburban in its character and contrasts to the agricultural land uses).
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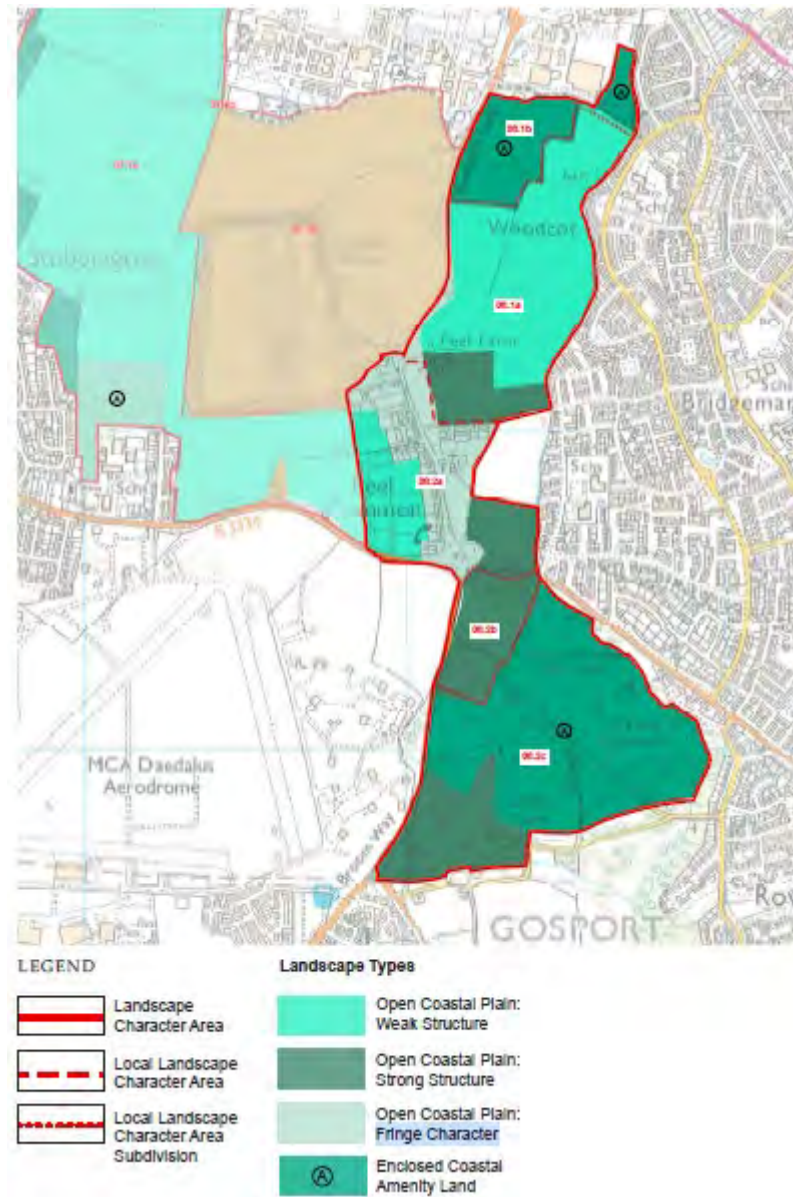
- 4.11. Overall, I consider the approach taken to the design of the respective masterplans to have adopted a positive approach in landscape and visual terms. The loss of the agricultural enclosures and replacement of these areas with residential development is largely the main cause of impact, however this is balanced by the response to the grain and pattern of the landscape and its scale, as well as the response to the characteristics of the landscape, several of which are defined as 'essential' by the published guidance. Where these are referenced, mitigation adopts an approach of retention and/or enhancement. Further details are described in the following sections.
- 4.12. In relation to the scale of the field patterns (and scale of the landscape), this has been used to guide the scale and pattern of the development areas on site. Field boundaries and parcels of development have been formed within the field patterns and their boundaries consequently breaking down the massing of proposed development. Notwithstanding the change in land use from agricultural fields to residential development, this approach to mitigation does draw on and reflect the key characteristics. Furthermore, the scale of development is consistent with the types of existing residential area that are present in the surrounding context, the appeal sites being subservient to the stronger and larger scale residential edges of Fareham and Gosport and also being compatible with the adjacent settlement area of Peel Common.
- 4.13. In respect of the landform, the proposed development will not unduly influence this characteristic; a characteristic which is not necessarily distinctive in any respect. The landform of the site in its context is not reflective of the broader Alver Valley and, I consider, shows part of a transitional area of topography that emerges from the valley and up toward the undulating plain to the north-west. Man made features such as the earth banks around the waste water treatment works are also a feature in the local landscape, maintaining a distinction between the landscape to the west and east of Peel Common.
- 4.14. As with the scale of the landscape, the proposed development has intentionally incorporated the field boundary hedgerows into the layout as far as possible, retaining the existing framework of vegetation. Notwithstanding that this will be set in the framework of a residential development and its open spaces, the hedgerow field pattern is retained, whereas elsewhere in the LCA (such as the golf courses) it would appear to have been eroded). Disruption to the hedgerow network is also apparent as a



consequence of the new bypass, Newgate Lane East, which has severed several of the local field patterns and hedgerows; the replacement of these with highways green infrastructure is acknowledged, but this does not respond to the pattern of the landscape in this locality. Vegetation and hedgerows retained within the layout are proposed to be augmented with new additional planting, supplemented by added diversity and landscape management, and where lost the additional planning will replace these.

- 4.15. In relation to urban influences, the landscape impact of introducing residential development into the site is acknowledged, and the impacts are clearly set out in the submitted LVIA. However in response to landscape character, and the existing influences of the urban edge that are noted in the FLA, the site has responded by avoiding and minimising this influence. This includes the provision of 'buffers' to form an offset to the edge of the proposed development and the adjacent landscape context. This will also help to create a partial screen, presenting a scheme that is not entirely defensive in terms of how it integrates with the adjacent landscape, but instead adopts a more positive approach of presenting a 'fair face' and more attractive, softer settlement edge.
- 4.16. More detail on landscape character is set out in section 2 of the FLA, relating to local landscape character areas and the sensitivity assessment. This divides LCA8 into five sub-areas, with areas 08.1a, 08.1b and 08.2a most relevant to the sites given they sit adjacent to each other and include the site. 08.2b and 08.2c provide some context to the local landscape but sit further afield and are slightly separate from the site context.

Plate 2: FLA extract (page 151) showing landscape types for LCA8



4.17. The structure of the landscape of 08.1a and 08.2a is defined predominantly as 'weak structure' or 'fringe character' with just a small part of 08.1a that is defined as 'strong structure' which is concurrent with parts of the southern site (refer to Plate 2).

4.18. In relation to the appeal sites, I agree with the definition of the structure as broadly 'weak' or 'fringe' character. This is because it is reflective of the various suburban influences that are prominent in this part of the landscape and contribute to the suburban continuity in the landscape that draws Peel Common, Bridgemarky, Woodcot and the edge of Fareham together. Physical influences include the prominent residential edges of Gosport and Fareham, cycleway connections and the alignment of Newgate

Lane East (and substantial pieces of highways infrastructure that accompany this), but also the pocket of amenity land use situated to the north and south of these areas.

4.19. The more detailed sections of the LCA do not set out 'key characteristics' (over and above the 'essential characteristics' defined for the wider LCA) but instead include a more detailed descriptions (refer to Appendix FL&BH 1.2.1). These are presented for each sub-area in relation to:

- the landscape resource (landscape character and quality);
- the visual environment (views, visual features and viewers);
- setting of the urban area (contribution to setting and settlement character); and
- green infrastructure (contribution to green infrastructure).

4.20. Each also includes descriptions of sensitivity and development potential.

4.21. The descriptions are extensive, but a summary is presented in the format of addressing 'development criteria and enhancement opportunities'. This section states that the area is of 'high sensitivity' and refers to matters of coalescence and it's 'generally unspoilt rural character'.

4.22. In itself this is a characteristic, but this part of the landscape does not exist in isolation, nor is it experienced in isolation and the sense of the rural character is equally influenced by the settlement fringe and amenity land uses that are presented by the residential areas and nearby sports and playing fields.

4.23. Furthermore, the FLA goes on to state that:

4.24. *"The situation is further complicated by the proposed new road which will have some effect on the integrity and character of the landscape resource and undeveloped gap."*

4.25. Newgate Lane East is now constructed and in use. The route includes additional road junctions as well as some prominent fencing along the route, visible from the road but also from the local rights of way and settlement fringes. I consider the road has effectively severed this part of the landscape, and provided a very urbanised corridor that connects previously suburban fringes, linking as it does such features as the urban edge of Fareham (with the solar installation and sports facilities also on this edge), the waste water treatment works, Peel Common itself and the amenity landscapes of Brookers Field recreation ground.

- 4.26. Consequently, this part of the landscape is no longer representative of the 'unspoilt' landscape described in the 2017 LA, nor does it fulfil its role of preventing coalescence between these edges of the settlement.
- 4.27. The FLA does acknowledge that, in relation to sub-area 8.2 there is some potential for development, stating that (page 167):
- 4.28. *"The only opportunities may lie within areas that are closely associated with existing development (e.g. at Peel Common or in the SW corner of area 8.2c) and can be integrated within the landscape without any physical or perceived encroachment within the gap."*
- 4.29. This part of the landscape does (and will), however, remain distinct from the wider strategic gap between Fareham and Stubbington which, in landscape character terms, is a clearly distinct part of the landscape from the suburban fringes of Fareham and Peel Common.
- 4.30. Turning back to the reason for refusal in respect of the key characteristics of the landscape, there are several development criteria and enhancement opportunities defined by the FLA which the proposed developments positively respond to. The relevant issues are set out in the following table, accompanied by a brief response as to how/why the proposed development responds positively. Although the two appeal schemes are separate applications, I include a plan of a composite landscape strategy that illustrates how the landscape strategy forms a comprehensive and connected mitigation strategy (refer to Appendix FL&BH 1.2.2).

Table 2: Summary of LCA8 sub-area development criteria/enhancement opportunity and design response of the appeal schemes

Relevant FLA development criteria and enhancement opportunity	Proposed development design response
Sub area 8.1 Woodcot	
Maintain and strengthen the existing structure of trees, hedgerows and other mature vegetation, to maximise its landscape and wildlife value and to minimise impacts on the rural character of the landscape	<p>The appeal schemes reference the scale and pattern of the landscape by placing a limit on the development envelope for built form and retaining hedgerow (and other) vegetation as far as possible. Losses will be mitigated by additional planting.</p> <p>The landscape strategy includes for a diverse range of tree, hedgerow and grassland areas, contributing to biodiversity potential.</p> <p>Being contained between Peel Common and Newgate Lane East, other than the 'on site' impact, impacts on the 'rural character' will be contained and limited.</p>

<p>Maintain the essentially open, undeveloped character of the public open space, playing fields and sports facilities within area 8.1b, and be designed to relate closely to the existing structure of trees hedgerows and existing characteristic built features within the area</p>	<p>Brookers Field Recreation ground is located immediately to the south-east of the appeal sites with additional playing fields and formal play areas located on the edge of Fareham to the north of the appeal sites. Notwithstanding the connections to these areas by the settlement pattern and roads/footpaths, the appeal schemes are physically contained and will not influence the openness of these areas.</p>
<p>Avoid any major incursion of the urban area into the countryside beyond existing well defined boundaries, or create significant new pockets of urban or urbanising development within open farmland</p>	<p>The presence of the solar farm, waste water treatment works and Peel Common itself all form a physical and perceptual barrier to the west; these are further reinforced for much of the western edge by various tree and woodland cover. To the east, Newgate Lane East has severed the agricultural landscape and now broadly forms an eastern limit to the appeal schemes, however there remains a perception and some physical connection to Bridgemary. Overall this does not represent a 'major incursion; into the countryside as in either respect, the appeal schemes will form an appropriate fit with the existing settlement patterns.</p>
<p>Protect the area's role in maintaining the separation of settlements and a clear distinction between urban and rural areas. In particular, avoid ribbon development strung out along road corridors (e.g. along the existing and proposed new alignment of Newgate Lane) and any development beyond the existing urban edge that cannot be successfully integrated within the existing landscape structure and which could affect the visual, physical or perceived integrity of the strategic gap</p>	<p>As noted, Peel Common and its immediate environs form a distinct edge to the settlement pattern associated with the edge of Fareham and Gosport. The appeal schemes will not breach this and will not have an impact on the overall strategic gap to the edge of Stubbington.</p> <p>In terms of ribbon development, together the appeal schemes will present an area of development that dovetails with the existing settlement pattern of Peel Common which in itself is partly comprised of ribbon development along Newgate Lane. The appeal schemes will alter this and consolidate the settlement pattern of Peel Common as a small core settlement area within the broader strategic gap (much in the way that Titchfield, to the north, exists between Titchfield Common and Fareham).</p>
<p>Maintain significant distance and separation from the corridor of the new road to minimise its urbanising effects upon the rural character of the area</p>	<p>The appeal schemes include a landscape buffer along their eastern edge which will integrate with the linear landscape proposals that have been implemented to mitigate the urbanising influence of the new road.</p>
<p>Avoid the introduction of tall buildings or structures that would be particularly visually prominent within the open, flat landscape</p>	<p>The appeal sites are physically well contained by the combination of existing built form and green infrastructure and consequently it is not considered that residential development on the appeal sites will be particularly visible or prominent.</p>
<p>Protect and enhance enjoyment of the landscape by maintaining and enhancing the existing areas of public open space and access network, and by making further provision for accessible greenspace and access links within and across the area</p>	<p>The appeal schemes will not unduly affect any of the open spaces in the area, not are they prominent or visible from the open spaces or prominent from the local PROW network.</p> <p>Furthermore, green infrastructure and open space is included on the western edges of the appeal sites which makes further provision for accessible green space and green links.</p>

<p>Provide substantial new investment in the landscape through extensive tree, hedgerow and woodland planting using native broadleaved species appropriate to the locality and soil conditions and habitat creation to diversify the intensively farmed landscape</p>	<p>The appeal schemes include for a range of landscape and habitat types as part of the landscape strategy. Use of native and locally prevalent species would be an inherent part of the proposals and this element of detailed design can be controlled by condition.</p>
<p>Demonstrate design that has minimal impact on the surrounding landscape and is in keeping with the character of the local landscape context</p>	<p>The detailed LVIA, along with additional analysis in this evidence, illustrates that mitigation measures will be successful in minimising impacts in respect of both landscape and visual matters.</p>
<p>Sub-area 8.2 – Peel Common and Alver Valley</p>	
<p>Safeguard the area’s vital role in maintaining the separation of settlements and a clear distinction between urban and rural areas. In particular, avoid ribbon development along road corridors (e.g. Broom Way, Shoot Lane and Gosport Road) and any development beyond the existing urban edge that cannot be successfully integrated within the existing landscape structure and which could affect the visual, physical or perceived integrity of the strategic gap;</p>	<p>The appeal schemes will consolidate the settlement pattern of Peel Common and can be integrated into the landscape with very limited influence on the adjacent landscape areas, particularly due to the considerable degree of enclosure from existing green infrastructure.</p> <p>The integrity of the overall strategic gap will be retained; where this is narrowed between</p>
<p>Maintain the distinctly ‘isolated’ nature of settlement at Peel Common and ensure that any potential small-scale infill development within this area effectively ‘rounds off’ rather than extends the settlement boundary, to avoid the risk of physical or perceived coalescence with other built areas;</p>	<p>The appeal schemes will consolidate the settlement of Peel Common being limited as they are by the alignment of Newgate Lane East. The appeal sites represent an opportunity to round off this edge of the settlement, up to the existing junction, without overly diminishing the remaining countryside to the east of Newgate Lane East. Further south, the perception of separation between the existing edges of Peel Common and Bridgemary is already limited due to the presence of residential development along Woodcote Lane and also the amenity character of Brookers Field Recreation Ground which influences character at a local level.</p>
<p>Protect the semi-rural, undeveloped character of areas 8.2b and c;</p>	<p>The appeal sites are separated and distinct from these areas due to distance and the alignment of the Gosport Road.</p>
<p>Maintain and strengthen the existing structure of woodland, trees, hedgerows and other mature vegetation in all parts of the area, to maximise its landscape and wildlife value;</p>	<p>As previously noted, the comprehensive landscape strategy would deliver this.</p>
<p>In particular, maintain and enhance the mosaic of woodland, heathland, grassland and wetland habitats of value within the Lee-on-the-Solent golf course at Chark Common and</p>	<p>As previously noted, the comprehensive landscape strategy would deliver this – the strategy includes for diversity of habitats and landscape components.</p>



encourage further habitat creation and diversification within intensively managed areas to maximise wildlife and landscape value;	
Avoid the introduction of tall buildings or structures that would be particularly visually prominent within the landscape;	As noted, the appeal schemes will not be unduly prominent in the landscape and are both physically and visually well contained.
Protect and enhance enjoyment of the landscape by maintaining and enhancing the existing areas of public open space and access network, and by making further provision for accessible greenspace and access links within and across the area, particularly along the River Alver corridor and with the Country Park to the south;	The appeal schemes include areas of green infrastructure and open space which will make a positive contribution to the network of green infrastructure in the area. Connections to the River Alver corridor and Country Park will not be impacted.
Demonstrate design that has minimal impact on the surrounding landscape and is in keeping with the character of the local landscape context.	As noted, the detailed LVIA, along with additional analysis in this evidence, illustrates that mitigation measures will be successful in minimising impacts in respect of both landscape and visual matters.
Use native broadleaved species appropriate to the locality and soil conditions in new tree and hedgerow planting.	Also as noted, the use of native and locally prevalent species would be an inherent part of the proposals and this element of detailed design can be controlled by condition.

*Interim summary on landscape character*

4.31. In this section so far, I have considered the first part of the reason for refusal (b), namely that the proposed development fails to respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics. This includes:

- A description of the characteristics with reference to the published guidance, reiterating that this baseline position was fully considered and acknowledged in the submitted LVIA;
- That there is a distinction in landscape character between this area (the site and its context) and the wider part of the strategic gap between Fareham and Stubbington;
- That the published baseline makes clear reference to the suburban nature and influences in this part of the landscape and that it gives give some context to the scope for potential development in this area;
- That this baseline is slightly out of date by virtue of Newgate Lane East, which is now constructed and in operation;
- Having set out this baseline position on the key characteristics, I have also described clearly, again reiterating that this was addressed in the submitted LVIA,

how the proposed development responds to these characteristics through the landscape strategy that forms the basis for the proposed development.

- 4.32. The mitigation strategy is largely integrated into the proposed development as a whole, with landscape and visual matters addressed in the layout, extent of developable area, green infrastructure strategy and areas of open space.
- 4.33. In summary, the appeal schemes can clearly demonstrate how they have responded positively to the local landscape character and is respectful of this through the restrictions placed on built form and provision of green infrastructure and open space (with associated landscape proposals) as an integral and positive component of the masterplan for the two appeal sites.
- 4.34. Not only is the landscape strategy consistent with the local landscape character, it also plays an important role in terms of lessening the predicted impacts of the 'built' component of the developments (as does the baseline context of the suburban edges of the settlement).
- 4.35. This leads me to the second part of the reason for refusal (b) where it suggests that the proposed development would be 'harmful' to the character and appearance of the countryside.

*Impacts on the character and appearance on the countryside*

- 4.36. In respect of landscape and visual matters, it is typical for landscape character to be discussed first, with views/visual receptors and appearance following. However, I will address the visibility and perception of the site (and proposed development) up front as it sets a very useful context in respect of landscape character.
- 4.37. It is important to note that a comprehensive landscape and visual impact assessment was prepared in support of the applications. These present a technical assessment of the baseline scenario, judgements on landscape value, susceptibility and overall landscape sensitivity as well as consideration of visual impacts from a range of visual receptors in the local area.
- 4.38. The technical assessment and professional judgements therein are based on a transparent approach and can be referred to for specific points. Overall, notwithstanding that there is an inevitable landscape impact on the appeal sites and that for locations directly adjacent to or close to the appeal sites might be of a higher significance of



effect, the overall balance of judgments found that, this degree of impact was acceptable and that mitigation had been successful in avoiding or minimising the impact and effect.

4.39. The overall visibility of the appeal sites is defined as follows:

- To the north, the visibility of the appeal sites is restricted to a short section of Newgate Lane and the junction/short section of Newgate Lane East. Views from the more northern section of Newgate Lane, and also the route of the public footpath between Newgate Lane and Woodcot, are generally screened by intervening vegetation and the route of Newgate Lane East;
- To the east, the visibility of the appeal sites is restricted to locations on the very edge of Woodcot and Bridgemary. This is generally restricted to the upper storeys of residential properties situated on the very edge of the settlement, views from ground floor levels and the street scene being generally screened by intervening vegetation. Newgate Lane East is highly visible from the east, large sections of the route being defined by tall acoustic fencing panels. In the future, views from the east of the appeal schemes is likely to be further screened and contained by the highways mitigation planting along Newgate Lane East, which will form a linear belt of green infrastructure in views from this direction;
- To the south, the visibility of the site is limited to a small number of properties located off Woodcote Lane, with filtered views from the road itself. Some views from Newgate Lane East and Newgate Lane will also be available, albeit limited in duration. In the longer term, highways mitigation planting will screen such views; and
- To the west, the visibility of the site is limited to the route of Newgate Lane with views from locations further west (including public footpaths) being screened by various sections of green infrastructure.

4.40. On balance, the potential visibility of the appeal schemes is very restricted and highly localised. Higher sensitivity receptors such as PROW have very few views. Views from receptors across the strategic gap between Stubbington and Peel Common (including PROW) will have no views.

4.41. Views from Bridgemary, although partially available now, are influenced by highways infrastructure of Newgate Lane East and in the longer term will potentially be fully screened by the mitigation planting along that route.

4.42. What remains is a small number of private dwellings in relatively close proximity to the appeal sites and some public vantage points from the local road network that have views

of the proposed developments. Such locations include a short section of Newgate Lane, the passing traffic (and receptors) along Newgate Lane East, and a short section of Woodcote Lane.

- 4.43. I raise the matter of views/visibility in the first instance, not just to demonstrate how limited the potential views and visual impacts are in their extent, but also to demonstrate that any perception of the change to landscape character is equally limited. In turn, this influences the extent to which any impact could be judged as 'harmful' to the character and appearance of the landscape.
- 4.44. In respect of character and appearance of the landscape, the limited 'scale of change' is just one consideration in the balance of judgement, other matters that are accounted for in the LVIA process include the nature of change. In this case, the appeal sites are not located in a landscape context where residential development, or other urbanising influences, are absent.
- 4.45. The settlement edges at Bridgemary and Fareham are prominent and influential on the local character; the appeal sites sit adjacent to Peel Common and the appeal schemes will complement this settlement pattern, particularly given its containment by the route of Newgate Lane East. Amenity landscapes are present in the form of Brookers Field Recreation Ground and the open spaces and sports fields to the north of the appeal sites.
- 4.46. The agricultural components of the landscape are noted and included in the consideration of landscape impacts, however the peri-urban influences described above are also a relevant part of the baseline consideration against which impacts are judged.
- 4.47. Impacts are also judged on the basis of avoiding or minimising the type and extent of any impact and the positive design approach, reflective of the local landscape context, is successful in avoiding and reducing such impacts. Previous sections of my evidence have clearly demonstrated the positive approach to mitigation.
- 4.48. Overall, an inevitable impact on the landscape will be generated, largely due to the loss of agricultural land to built development. This is addressed by the LVIA which, in reference to the relevant character area of the 'Woodcot/Alver Valley LLCA - Sub area 08.1a' concluded that the magnitude of impact within the study area will be medium which, assessed alongside the low to medium sensitivity, would result in a minor to moderate adverse effect.

4.49. In terms of landscape and visual impact assessment, this is at the lower end of the scale for the assessment of significance (which general range across a scale of negligible, minor, moderate and major). At this level of significance, at the lower end of the threshold, these impacts are considered to be acceptable in landscape terms and do not constitute an overall 'harm' to the landscape.

c) The provision of development in this location would significantly affect the integrity of the strategic gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements;

4.50. In this section I consider the purpose and function of the strategic gap in terms of providing physical and visual separation between settlements and how the site functions in relation to the wider gap.

4.51. During the course of the application a 'strategic landscape and visual appraisal' of the gap was prepared and submitted and this addresses issues in respect of function of the gap, core areas and how the strategic gap can be maintained whilst accommodating the strategic growth in the area.

4.52. The overarching aim was to establish which areas of the gap were a priority to maintain its function and separation between settlements, and which parts of the gap could, subject to further detailed assessment, accommodate some form of built development that would be integrated, not highly visible and ensuring that it would not erode the physical, visual and perceived gap.

4.53. Albeit undertaken at a high level, the study found that the appeal sites (and landscape generally between Peel Common and Fareham/Gosport) were not a priority area required to maintain the integrity and function of the wider Fareham to Stubbington Strategic Gap.

4.54. In September 2020, in support of the emerging Local Plan, the evidence base was updated to include a recent study of strategic gaps across the Borough.

4.55. This document, a 'Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps' was undertaken by Hampshire County Council on behalf of FBC and published in September 2020 (CDG.7). The study undertook a technical review of the six proposed 'Areas of Special Landscape Quality' and two proposed strategic countryside gaps (including the Meon Gap and the Fareham and Stubbington Gap).

4.56. The study reiterates the Fareham Draft Local Plan 2036, stating that (page 5, CDG.7):

- 4.57. *"...Strategic Gaps do not necessarily have intrinsic landscape value but are important in maintaining the settlement pattern, protecting settlement identity and providing green infrastructure opportunities (page 27, Fareham Draft Local Plan 2036)"*
- 4.58. Study states that the approach and methodology established a set of criteria for determining strategic gap characteristics and boundaries
- 4.59. The executive summary makes two observations in respect of the Fareham to Stubbington Strategic Gap, stating that (following extracts from pages 6 and 7 of the study, CDG.7):

*"The Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap is proposed for continued designation, also having strong sub-regional agreement for its designation, and a clear role in preventing settlement coalescence through continued and heavy pressure for Southern expansion of Fareham and Northern and Eastern expansion of Stubbington, but it is considered that there are some opportunities for development to be accommodated within the landscape, without compromising the Strategic Gaps function..."*

*Possible adjustments to the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap could be considered in the following locations:*

- An area to the South of Fareham, and west of HMS Collingwood, as some development in this area could be visually absorbed into the Gap without compromising the Gap function...*

*It is also noted that the Newgate Lane Area (Newgate Lane West and East from Fareham to Peel Common Roundabout) has undergone a significant amount of change in the recent past."*

- 4.60. The study goes on to 'test' a series of areas against defined criteria, including primary and secondary measures (described on page 19 of the study, CDG.7). These are summarised in the following table.

Table 3: Summary of primary and secondary measures for strategic gap criteria

Principles of primary measures	Principles of secondary measures
<i>Physical and visual separation:</i> - absence of urban land uses	<i>Green infrastructure provision:</i> - role and purpose of green infrastructure

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- primarily an absence of residential development</li> <li>- feeling relatively tranquil</li> <li>- have dark night skies</li> <li>- retain a sense of leaving a settlement, passing through a distinct tract of countryside before entering another</li> <li>- maximum and minimum distances are a 'rule of thumb'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- influence appropriate gap distances</li> </ul>
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4.61. Further detail of these measures is set out in the detailed methodology to the study. Also in relation to the approach and methodology of the study, it notes that (page 20, para 45, CDG.7):

4.62. *"Whilst it has been stated earlier that Strategic Gaps, do not necessarily have an intrinsic landscape value, landscape character and it's quality does have a role to play in helping to understand and determine the extent of a gap and it's sensitivity to development..."*

4.63. Chapter 4 of the study sets out an overview of the Strategic Gaps, it states that (page 84, para 8, CDG.7):

4.64. *"The aim of the Fareham-Stubbington Gap is to avoid coalescence between the settlements of: Fareham and Bridgemary, with Stubbington and Lee-on-the-Solent."*

4.65. The study goes on to define a series of 'key features' within the Fareham to Stubbington Gap (page 96, CDG.7). I summarise these in the following table, along with a brief analysis as to whether these key features are reflected by the appeal sites and their immediate context.

Table 4: Summary of the defined 'Fareham-Stubbington Gap' key characteristics

Key feature as defined by the study	Relevance to the appeal sites and context
Open, predominantly arable farmland and horticulture with some glasshouses, a weak hedgerow structure and few trees	This is reflective of the core part of the gap, whereas the appeal sites are contained within a smaller scale arable landscape contained by a strong framework of hedgerows and hedgerow tree. This distinction is acknowledged by the defined landscape character guidance.  Consequently, given the fundamental difference in landscape character here, the appeal schemes will not unduly influence this particular key feature.
The settlement edges are for the most part well screened by mature tree canopy, but there is some	The landscape context to the appeal sites also include the settlement edge of Gosport at Bridgemary, which is also visually apparent from the local landscape. Closer

<p>minor visual intrusion from Fareham, Stubbington and HMS Collingwood</p>	<p>to the appeal sites, Peel Common forms an incidental 'satellite' of the settlement pattern which has grown out of ribbon development along Newgate Lane and this is more prominent in the local landscape context.</p> <p>Given the existing context of the residential edges, particularly Peel Common, the appeal schemes are not considered to unduly influence this key feature of the Strategic Gap, particularly given the urbanising influence (and associated infrastructure of Newgate Lane East) along with mitigation in the appeal schemes which includes landscape buffers and additional landscape planting.</p>
<p>A few scattered farmsteads/horticultural holdings and a mosaic of small fragments of open farmland and horse grazed pastures sandwiched between.</p>	<p>This is more reflective of the appeal site and their local context, however it is useful to contrast this with similar farmsteads and horticultural buildings set within the more open arable landscape to the west. Fragmentation of the arable landscape in this area has also occurred through the implementation of Newgate Lane East which has severed several field parcels and hedgerows through the area.</p> <p>The appeal schemes have taken an approach of minimising impacts through reference to the scale and field pattern within the landscape which has defined the development envelopes for built form. Notwithstanding this positive approach, there is an acknowledged loss of agricultural land.</p>
<p>Large scale non-agricultural uses of business and airfield development at Solent Airport in Daedalus to the south.</p>	<p>There is limited physical and visual connections between the appeal sites and these features.</p> <p>The appeal schemes will not increase the prominence or extent of these uses in the landscape.</p>
<p>Utilities of:                  Peel Common Water Treatment Works enclosed from views by an earth bund and mature tree belt                  Peel Common Solar Farm</p>	<p>Both utilities are in close proximity to the appeal sites, the former acting as one of the main features that enclosure the appeal site physical and visually and restrict the potential visibility of the appeal schemes in terms of visual effects.</p> <p>These features effectively contain the appeal scheme and prevent any perception (physically or visually) of them from the west, and in particular from the context of the arable landscape across to Stubbington.</p>
<p>Construction site of Stubbington Bypass, which will provide an east-west route through the gap that has not previously existed.</p>	<p>This feature is physically and visually separate from the appeal schemes, but will likely introduce a detracting feature into the landscape, much in the same way Newgate Lane East has in the locality of the appeal sites.</p>
<p>Urban fringe character of Peel Common residential area</p>	<p>The appeal sites are located adjacent to the 'satellite' residential area of Peel Common and will consolidate this area of the settlement.</p> <p>In terms of the gap, notwithstanding the extension of the settlement (albeit limited by the alignment of Newgate Lane East, the gap will continue to function much in the same way that the strategic gap in the north continues to function, with the consolidated</p>

	settlement area of Titchfield situated between the two more pronounced settlement edges.
Recently completed highway works to Newgate Lane and Peel Common Roundabout, with associated noise attenuation fencing and bus and cycle infrastructure.	Overall these key features reflect the independent judgements in the LVIA and earlier in this evidence as to the impact of Newgate Lane East on the landscape.  In term of the gap, these features conflict with some of the primary measures in relation to tranquillity and drawing a distinction between settlements along major routes.

4.66. In respect of the Fareham-Stubbington Gap, the study draws together key conclusions in respect of the primary and secondary measures. Several key conclusions are summarised as follows (I include the full extract of the conclusions at Appendix FL&BH 1.2.3 of my evidence):

- Minimum and maximum distances of ca. 300m to 1.8m [sic] (assumed km);
- That Peel Common represents a 'false' settlement edge;
- Two areas of the gap have distances of 350m and 300m but that these distances are still perceived as a sense of separation between neighbouring settlements, partly due to presence of mature vegetation;
- These represent 'minimum' gaps (within the 'rule of thumb') but are not appropriate to become a standard dimension as they would be weak and at risk of being lost (i.e. they are acceptable, but not ideal) – furthermore they function due to the context of linking to wider sections of the gap either side;
- Moderate to large gap distances of ca. 600m to 1.8km are 'good' distances;
- Presence of urban land uses can correspond to loss of tranquillity and dark night skies as urban fringe characteristics 'creep into the gap';
- In terms of land uses, sports fields and recreation grounds on the fringes of urban settlements have the potential to bring urbanising influence;
- In comparison to the Meon Gap there is not the same level of GI resource, however measures could be taken to increase these through positive environmental management; and
- Mitigation will be required where there is considered to be capacity to absorb development.

4.67. These conclusions are illustrated in the study by analysis diagrams of legibility/visibility and key distances (refer to extracts at Plates 3 and 4).



Plate 3: Extract illustrating the analysis of legibility/visibility

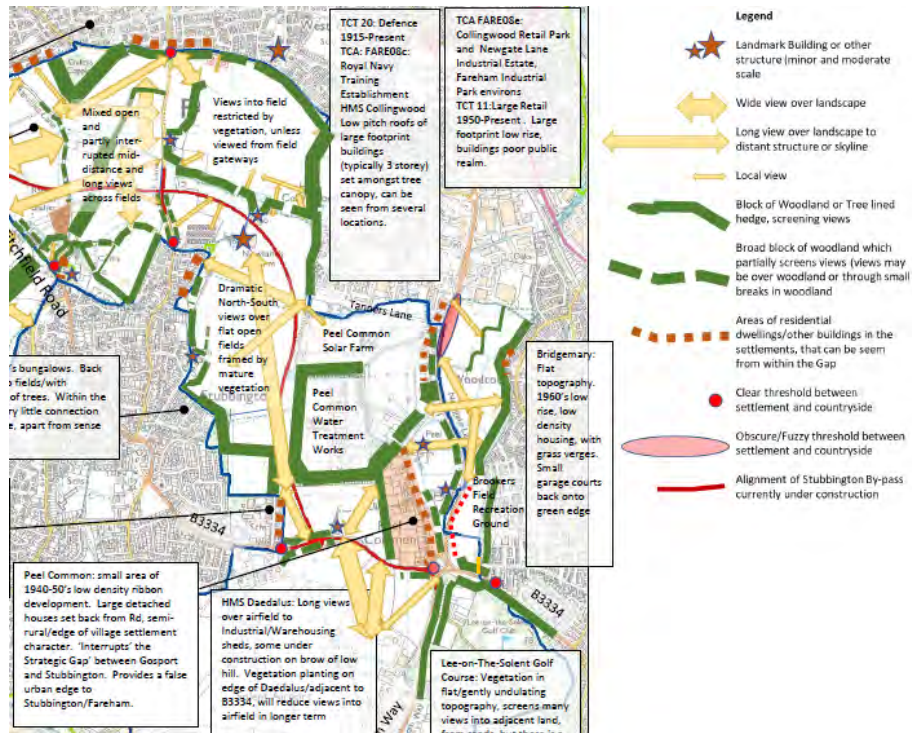
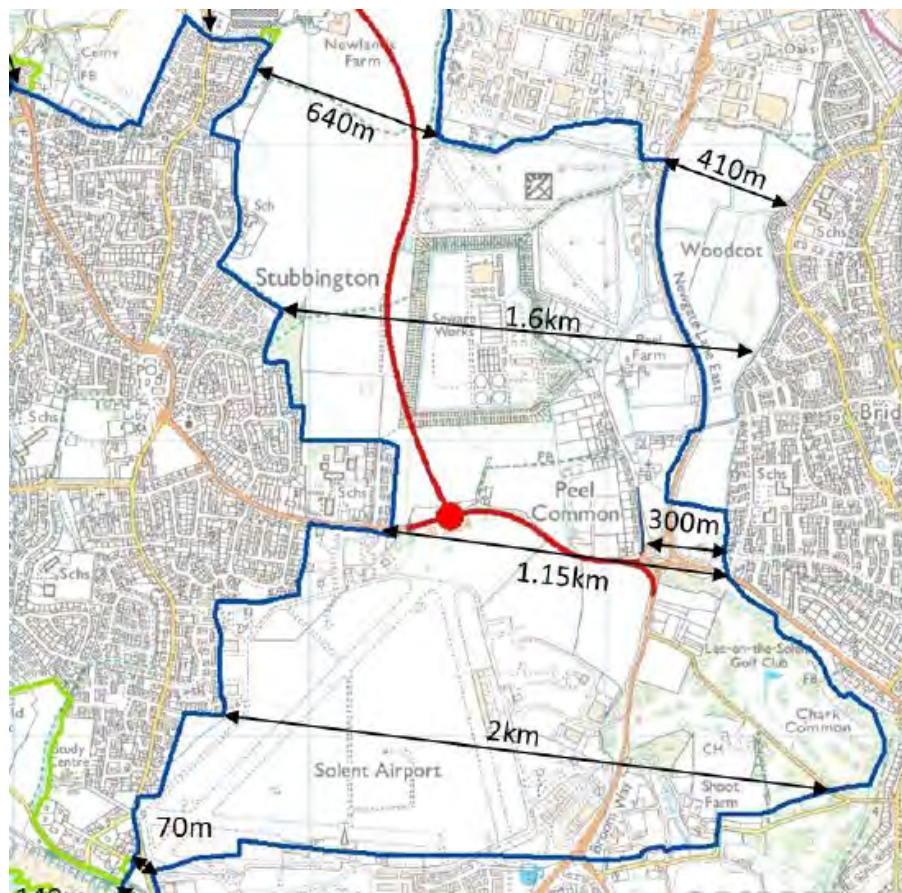


Plate 4: Extract illustrating key distances across the strategic gap





- 4.68. Having considered the analysis of the gap study, I refer back to the executive summary of the gap study where it notes that there exists some opportunities for development to be absorbed within the strategic gap without compromising its function. Further to illustrative extracts (Plates 3 and 4) I include some additional analysis of the gap in the context of the appeal sites (refer to Appendix 1.2.4, Landscape Analysis of the Strategic Gap).
- 4.69. The study suggest that an area south of Fareham and west of HMS Collingwood be considered, however this would place development in a more open and exposed part of the landscape, at a point where the existing gap (between HMS Collingwood and Newlands Farm/Stubbington) is only between ca. 325m and 550m. This would seem to contradict some of the principles set out in the analysis and conclusions.
- 4.70. I don't intend to critique the approach of the strategic gap study or its analysis, however I do think it is necessary to interrogate the robustness of the overall conclusions. The aims of the study include a review of the function of the strategic gaps in the Borough, but also to consider their boundaries. The study includes the necessary analysis to present a clear evidence base for amending boundaries in parts of the strategic gap. In relation to the edges of Fareham and Gosport, there is no recommendation to adjust the boundaries in this area, despite the findings of the study that:
- Some physical coalescence has already occurred;
  - These are some of the narrowest parts of the gap, resulting in a 'minimum functioning gap, that is weak';
  - Suburban edges and influences are often prominent, which reduces the effectiveness of the gap, including loss of tranquillity and presence of lighting;
  - Recreational land uses are present in the form of several sports and recreation grounds and these are noted as an issue in terms of their 'visual appropriateness'; and
  - The road network is such that there is no genuinely clear experience of a break between the settlement areas, particularly between Peel Common, Bridgemary and the southern edge of Fareham.
- 4.71. In relation to the landscape around the appeal sites, and particularly between Peel Common and Bridgemary, I cannot see how these trends would be reversed nor how the strategic gap could be strengthened, particularly with Newgate Lane East now forming such a strong urbanising feature in the local landscape context. The result is now the continued inclusion of a part of the gap that is weak and under pressure in the long term.

- 4.72. In that context I would think a logical and appropriate conclusion for the study would be to amend the boundary to omit this part of the landscape from the strategic gap, creating capacity for appropriate forms of development that could come forward with a strong framework of green infrastructure and mitigation. This would place an emphasis on the importance of the core, priority areas of the gap, between Fareham and Stubbington where the gap clearly delivers its role and function in full. However, I do appreciate that this is not the conclusion of the published study.
- 4.73. Returning to the conclusions of the study, it notes that development coincidental with LCA8 (Woodcot-Alver Valley) would be inappropriate. However, it goes on to state that Gosport and Fareham have already partly coalesced (along the A32) and that urban characteristics are present throughout the study area 8C (which is coincidental with the appeal sites).
- 4.74. Given the urbanising influences, along with the considerable green infrastructure which provide appropriate visual qualities and separation thresholds, I consider that development in this area would not be inappropriate, particularly given that the inherent mitigation would also contribute substantially to the green infrastructure network (as illustrated on the Composite Landscape Strategy (refer to Appendix FL&BH 1.2.2))
- 4.75. Having considered the analysis within the study analysis of the Fareham to Stubbington gap, I consider the appeal sites are well placed to accommodate development without undue consequences or impacts on the role and function of the strategic gap. This is on the basis that (refer also to Appendix FL&BH 1.2.4):
- In relation to distances, the appeal schemes will reduce the gap between Bridgemary and Stubbington physically from ca. 1.6km to ca. 1.1km which remains a considerable distance and well within the thresholds of the 'rule of thumb' appropriate distances;
  - In terms of visibility, the appeal schemes will be physically and visually well contained – they site within the strong green infrastructure framework that is evident by blocks of woodland and tree lined hedges which screen or partially screen views – furthermore they will not be visible across the strategic gap from Stubbington;
  - Existing screening is present immediately adjacent to the appeal sites in terms of the woodland around the waste water treatment works, also along Newgate Lane and within the merging framework of vegetation along Newgate Lane East that will continue to establish and increasingly provide a robust visual screen from the east;

- The surrounding context and urbanising influences, including the settlement area of Peel Common which reduce the degree of change;
- The opportunity to contribute to, and maintain, a strong green infrastructure network that complements both the strategic gap and the areas of settlement, in the form of the landscape d areas and landscape buffers along the eastern and western edges of the appeal sites which will reinforce and connect the linear routes which cross broadly north to south through this area;
- In connection with the green infrastructure provision, the ability to incorporate substantial mitigation that will successfully avoid or minimise landscape and visual effects.

4.76. I also note that, notwithstanding differences in the technical approaches, the Pegasus group and Hampshire County strategic gap studies both independently acknowledge that the strategic gap can accommodate some form of growth and development within it. Both also recognise the need for additional, more detailed assessment on a site /project basis.

4.77. For the appeal schemes, this more detailed site analysis has been completed in the form of the submitted landscape and visual impact assessments. This iterative approach to design, based on the impact assessment, has informed the inherent mitigation to the masterplan and concludes that the proposed developments would be acceptable.

4.78. On this basis, I consider that the appeal schemes can come forward without a significant effect on the integrity and function of the strategic gap and without conflict to the aim of the Fareham to Stubbington Gap which is to avoid coalescence between Fareham and Bridgemarky with Stubbington and Lee-on-the-Solent.

d) The application site is not sustainably located adjacent to, well related to or well-integrated with the existing urban settlement boundaries.

4.79. The final issue raised buy the reason for refusal in respect of landscape and visual matters related to the settlement boundaries and relationship between the sites and the urban edge.

4.80. Notwithstanding that this is more generally a planning matter related to the definition of settlement boundaries, I consider it useful to briefly consider the existing urban and suburban areas from a landscape and visual perspective; including how these relate to the site. This includes reference to Newgate Lane East and the potential 'future baseline' that could include emerging development of the former HA2 allocation.

- 4.81. In the context of the appeal sites, the current settlement pattern is defined by the edges of Fareham and Bridgemary which are generally defined by residential development, including some green infrastructure. Other settlement areas are that of Peel Common, which would appear to be a small 'satellite' of predominantly residential development, historically small scale ribbon development along Woodcote Lane and Newgate Lane. There is a mix of dwellings in terms of age, appearance and scale, and no one aspects really binds the settlement character together or delivers a unique sense of place.
- 4.82. The strategic gap study describes Peel Common as a 'false urban edge' and this is likely due to the visibility of dwellings on the approach from Stubbington, which briefly gives way to the open space of Brookers Field Recreation Ground before entering Gosport.
- 4.83. The surrounding landscape context to Peel Common is influenced equally by the agricultural landscape along with several areas of recreational open space and sports pitches. Newgate Lane East, Peel Common Roundabout and the utilities of Peel Common solar farm and the waste-water treatment works are all notable features that influence the character and pattern of the satellite settlement.
- 4.84. In terms of the more extensive urban areas that are located nearby, there is some connectivity close to Gosport Road a partial connection between Peel Common to Gosport in the form of Woodcote Lane (and its associated residential dwellings) and the amenity open space of Brookers Field Recreation Ground.
- 4.85. The reason for refusal suggests that the appeal schemes will not relate to, or integrate with, the existing urban settlement boundaries.
- 4.86. However, the appeal sites are located immediate to the east of Newgate Lane, and are physical contained by the alignment of Newgate Lane East; they sit immediately adjacent to the existing residential dwellings off Woodcote Lane and directly opposite the mix of dwellings and urban influences along the northern section of Newgate Lane. Together the appeal schemes will consolidate the pattern of Peel Common within a clearly prescribed and defined limit.
- 4.87. Furthermore, the proposals for green infrastructure and open space that form an integral part of the masterplans will set the proposed developments in a landscape framework that reflects some of the characteristics of Peel Common where tree belts and hedgerows are present to a greater or lesser degree across parts of the satellite. This includes proposals for an area of green space directly adjacent to Newgate Lane

that will form a green corridor that runs broadly through the centre of the emerging pattern.

- 4.88. Green infrastructure and open space on the eastern edge will integrate with the highways landscape planting along Newgate Lane East and together this will add to the containment of this pocket of settlement.
- 4.89. As such I consider that the appeal schemes will integrate well, and in a positive way, with the settlement area at Peel Common.
- 4.90. As previously noted, there exists some physical connections between Peel Common and Bridgemary. With the appeal schemes in place, the consolidated pattern of Peel Common would continue to blend with the urban edge of Gosport and Bridgemary, focused along the green route into Bridgemary (along Woodcote Lane) and focussed on the large amenity open space of Brookers Field Recreation Ground.
- 4.91. Whilst forming a consistent part of the overall settlement edge, these would be characterised by a softer transition than the current settlement edge, incorporating a strong network of green infrastructure which links the wider countryside to the west of HMS Collingwood, through the green infrastructure of the solar and waste water facilities, along the open spaces of the appeal schemes and Newgate Lane East, connection to the recreation ground and the wider extent of the Alver Valley further south.
- 4.92. At the time of writing the direction of the Local Plan had altered slightly and the former emerging allocation of HA2 had been removed. However, were HA2 to come forward this broader allocation would form a logical connection between Peel Common (including the appeal sites) and the edge of Fareham. This would represent a clear connection to the settlement edge of Fareham and a logical pattern of the settlement in this area. Furthermore, given the opportunities for including and extending the green infrastructure network, that larger extent of the settlement can come forward with a suitable mitigation strategy.
- 4.93. In each eventuality, I consider there to be a good connection between the appeal schemes and the existing areas of the settlement.

## 5. RESPONSE TO POLICY

5.1. In the context of the analysis of effects identified in the previous section, I now go on to address the policy context, addressing these in respect of landscape and visual matters.

5.2. There are also several other saved and emerging policies relevant to landscape and visual matters which are not referenced in the reason for refusal but against which the appeal scheme will potentially make a positive contribution.

### National Planning Policy Framework

5.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Reference to the NPPF in the reason for refusal generally relate to sustainability and transport (noting paras 103, 109 and 110). Notwithstanding that landscape is not addressed at this level, there are other parts of the NPPF that are relevant.

5.4. NPPF paragraph 8 defines three overarching objectives to sustainable development, economic, social and environmental. The environmental objective (c) is explained in the following terms:

5.5. *"To contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

5.6. Section 15 of the NPPF is concerned specifically with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 170 notes that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (a) protecting and enhancing 'Valued Landscapes' in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the Development Plan.

5.7. It is common ground that The site is not a 'valued landscape' for the purposes of Paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

5.8. The NPPF paragraph 170 also notes in sub section (b) that (my own emphasis):

5.9. *"Recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and eco system services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland."*

- 5.10. To satisfactorily address policy at a national level it is necessary to undertake an appraisal of landscape character making reference to published guidance, but also looking more specifically at the local landscape character. This establishes a detailed baseline position for the landscape character of a site or area in question and presents and understanding of its sensitivity.
- 5.11. The submitted landscape and visual assessments that were prepared in support of the applications were undertaken using a methodology which accords with current best practice guidance for landscape and visual impact assessment (i.e. GLVIA3).
- 5.12. The submitted LVIAs make reference to published landscape character assessment prepared at a national, regional and district level and also addresses local character by reference to the description of the appeal site and its immediate context. The subsequent design of the proposed development reflects the relevant aspects of the local landscape character to ensure that impacts are minimised, that the proposals can be assimilated into the landscape and that mitigation forms an inherent part of the proposed development. Consequently, the LVIA responds fully to the requirement of the NPPF.

Adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy 2011

- 5.13. The following section responds to policies included in the reason for refusal that are relevant to landscape and visual matters.

***Policy CS4: Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Geological Conservation***

- 5.14. This policy relates habitats and biodiversity and also ecologically focussed designations, however it also refers to the protection of trees and woodland. There is some relevance to landscape and visual matters by virtue of the parts of the policy that refer to green infrastructure. The policy refers to networks of accessible multi-functional green infrastructure to be planned around existing green spaces in urban, urban fringe and rural areas.
- 5.15. The appeal schemes incorporate a landscape strategy that forms an integrated part of the development proposals and sets a green framework for the masterplan. Notwithstanding the two applications are administratively separate, the landscape and green infrastructure strategies work together to provide a comprehensive framework of retained vegetation, proposed open space and augmentation of these through additional landscape works (refer to Appendix FL&BH 1.2.2).

- 5.16. Furthermore the green infrastructure network across the appeal sites dovetails with the wider green infrastructure network as it extends from the landscape to the west of Fareham, through the network of vegetation and open spaces to the north of Peel Common and along New Newgate Lane, and down toward the Alver Valley in the south.
- 5.17. Overall, the appeal schemes are considered to be consistent with and positively contribute to the policy in landscape and visual terms.

*Policy CS14: Development Outside Settlements*

- 5.18. This policy states that, for land outside the defined settlements, development will be strictly controlled to protect the countryside and coastline from development which would adversely affect its landscape character, appearance and function.
- 5.19. Both applications have been supported by comprehensive LVIAs which have found the proposals to be acceptable in landscape and visual terms. These documents also demonstrate the physical and visual containment of the appeal sites in relation to both the local landscape character and visual receptors.
- 5.20. In my evidence I have presented additional analysis that demonstrates the appeal schemes respond positively to the local landscape character and that this approach integrates mitigation that aims to avoid or minimise potential impacts. Some degree of residual impact is acknowledged at a site level, however in the context of the urban fringe context in this part of the landscape, the degree of impact is not considered to be at a level that would adversely affect the overall character of this part of the landscape.

*Policy CS17: High Quality Design*

- 5.21. This policy requires that proposed developments be of a high quality of design. This includes the need to, amongst other criteria:
- respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics of the area, including landscape
  - provide continuity of built form
  - provide green infrastructure, including landscaping, open spaces, greenways and trees



*Policy CS22: Development in Strategic Gaps*

- 5.22. This policy relates to land within a Strategic Gap and states that development proposals will not be permitted where it 'significantly' affects the integrity of the gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements.
- 5.23. The submitted LVIAs demonstrate that the appeal sites are physically and visually well contained. Landscape and visual impacts are limited to a highly localised area and the appeal sites together are contained in a strong framework of the existing settlement area of Peel Common, infrastructure (with associated vegetation) and the alignment of Newgate Lane East. This containment will be strengthened over time as mitigation within the schemes – and along Newgate Lane East – becomes established.
- 5.24. Additional analysis presented in my evidence also demonstrates several points in relation to the Strategic Gap, including that the key area for separation is between Stubbington and Fareham (including up to the western extent of Peel Common) and that the strategic gap in the area around Peel Common has been undermined to the point where it is no longer fulfils its role effectively.
- 5.25. Together, the containment of the site along with the strength of the gap between Stubbington and Fareham (at Peel Common) means that there will not be a significant effect on the integrity of the gap and consequently I do not see any conflict with this policy.

***Adopted Fareham Borough Local Plan Part 2: Development Site and Policies Plan (June 2015)***

*Policy DSP40: Housing Allocations*

- 5.26. This policy notes that, in the scenario where the Council does not have a five year supply of land for housing, additional housing sites, outside the urban area boundary, may be permitted. The policy sets out several criteria of which the following is relevant to landscape and visual matters:
- ii. The proposal is sustainably located adjacent to, and well related to, the existing urban settlement boundaries, and can be well integrated with the neighbouring settlement;
- Response: My evidence demonstrates the relationship between the appeal schemes and Peel Common and how this area, already partly connected to the

edge of Gosport, would be consolidated as an area of settlement and present a well defined edge to the eastern edge of the Strategic Gap.

- iii. The proposal is sensitively designed to reflect the character of the neighbouring settlement and to minimise any adverse impact on the Countryside and, if relevant, the Strategic Gaps;

Response: My evidence has also demonstrated, in addition to the submitted LVIA, how the appeal schemes reflect local landscape character and a limit landscape and visual effects overall. My evidence also demonstrates that there will be no significant effect on the integrity of the strategic gap between Stubbington and Fareham.

- 5.27. Overall, in respect of landscape and visual matters, I do not consider there to be a conflict with this policy.

#### Other Matters

- 5.28. Matters raised in objection to the proposed scheme were summarised in the report to committee, including comments from the statutory consultees and several public comments. These include reference to matters of the countryside, strategic gap landscape and landscape character impacts and
- 5.29. I have dealt with these issues throughout my evidence in respect of several of the related points, including with reference to the submitted LVIAs, additional landscape and visual analysis in this evidence and the subsequent response to policy.

## 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1. This evidence is written on behalf of Fareham Land LP and Bargate Homes Ltd (the appellants) and relates to an appeal for non-determination by Fareham Borough Council in respect of two outline applications for residential development, both on land to the east of Newgate Lane. This evidence sets out an overview of relevant landscape and visual matters.
- 6.2. Together, the appeal sites extend to ca. 10 hectares (ha) of agricultural land, situated close to the urban edge of Fareham and Gosport, that is bounded by Newgate Lane to the west, Woodcote Lane to the south and Newgate Lane East to the east (with Newgate Lane and Newgate Lane East framing the northern edge of the sites also).
- 6.3. The wider landscape context of the appeal sites includes the low-lying ground of the coastal plain, characterised by abrupt the transition between the open landscapes and the adjacent urban environments of Fareham, Gosport (with Woodcot and Bridgemary). The settlement area of Stubbington forms the western extent of the Strategic Gap, extends across the coastal plain between the local settlement areas. Separation is most pronounced across the arable areas between Fareham/Peel Common and Stubbington.
- 6.4. Both applications were submitted with a detailed LVIA. These not only set out a comprehensive baseline and robust assessment of predicted impacts, but include details as to how landscape and visual matters have influenced the design of the masterplan, with mitigation measures consequently forming an inherent part of the proposals, both independently but also in respect of the complementary approach of the two schemes.
- 6.5. The reasons for refusal raises three main issues in respect of landscape and visual matters, stating that:
- b) The proposed development fails to respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics of the area and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside;
  - c) The provision of development in this location would significantly affect the integrity of the strategic gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements;
  - d) The application site is not sustainably located adjacent to, well related to or well-integrated with the existing urban settlement boundaries;
- 6.6. This evidence considers the reasons for refusal against various information, including the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, various consultation

responses, report to committee and other relevant baseline and evidence base material related to landscape and visual matters.

- 6.7. The submitted LVIAs address the key characteristics of the appeal sites and their immediate context. The submitted LVIAs also set out an assessment of the impact and approach to mitigation. This comprehensive process also enables judgements to be drawn in respect of the context of the appeal sites in relation to the existing urban settlement edges/boundaries.
- 6.8. The purpose and function of the strategic gap in terms of providing physical and visual separation between settlements and how the site functions in relation to the wider gap has been addressed the a 'strategic landscape and visual appraisal' (prepared by Pegasus Group) and also by reference to the updated Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps, prepared by Hampshire County Council on behalf of FBC.
- 6.9. With reference to this material, and supported by my own additional analysis where necessary, I conclude that the appeal schemes will not be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside, will not significantly affect the integrity of the Strategic Gap and will relate well to the existing patterns of settlement.
- 6.10. This is on the basis the relevant key landscape characteristics of the area have been considered through the process of LVIA, consequently informing the analysis of constraints and opportunities, and ultimately the landscape strategy for the mitigation. This forms an integrated part of the two masterplans for northern and southern schemes.
- 6.11. Consequently, I consider the approach taken to the design of the respective masterplans to have adopted a positive approach in landscape and visual terms.
- 6.12. The loss of the agricultural enclosures and replacement of these areas with residential development is largely the main cause of impact, however this is balanced by the response to the grain and pattern of the landscape and its scale, as well as the response to the characteristics of the landscape, several of which are defined as 'essential' by the published guidance. Where these are referenced, mitigation adopts an approach of retention and/or enhancement.
- 6.13. I consider that the subsequent residual impacts of the appeal schemes will be acceptable in landscape and visual terms.

6.14. In terms of the Fareham to Stubbington gap, I consider the appeal sites are well placed to accommodate development without undue consequences or impacts on the role and function of the Strategic Gap. This is on the basis that:

- In relation to distances, the appeal schemes will reduce the gap between Bridgemary and Stubbington physically from ca. 1.6km to ca. 1.1km which remains a considerable distance and well within the thresholds of the 'rule of thumb' appropriate distances set out in the FBC study;
- In terms of visibility, the appeal schemes will be physically and visually well contained – they sit within the strong green infrastructure framework that is evident in the form of blocks of woodland and tree lined hedges which screen or partially screen views – furthermore they will not be visible across the Strategic Gap from Stubbington;
- Existing screening is present immediately adjacent to the appeal sites in terms of the woodland around the waste water treatment works, along Newgate Lane and within the emerging framework of vegetation along Newgate Lane East that will continue to establish and increasingly provide a robust visual screen from the east;
- The surrounding context and urbanising influences, including the settlement area of Peel Common which reduce the degree of change;
- The opportunity to contribute to, and maintain, a strong green infrastructure network that complements both the strategic gap and the areas of settlement, in the form of the landscape d areas and landscape buffers along the eastern and western edges of the appeal sites which will reinforce and connect the linear routes which cross broadly north to south through this area; and
- In connection with the green infrastructure provision, the ability to incorporate substantial mitigation that will successfully avoid or minimise landscape and visual effects.

6.15. I also note that, notwithstanding differences in the technical approaches, the Pegasus Group and FBC Strategic Gap studies both independently acknowledge that the Strategic Gap can accommodate some form of growth and development within it. Both also recognise the need for additional, more detailed assessment on a site/project basis.

6.16. In respect of the conclusions of the FBC Strategic Gap study (where these note the relatively poor state of the gap at this point), I would think a logical and appropriate conclusion would be to amend the boundary to omit this part of the landscape from the Strategic Gap, creating capacity for development to come forward with a strong framework of green infrastructure and mitigation. This would place an emphasis on the

importance of the core areas that are located further west, between Fareham and Stubbington where the Strategic Gap clearly delivers its role and function in full.

- 6.17. Finally, the reason for refusal suggests that the appeal schemes will not relate to, or integrate with, the existing urban settlement boundaries. However, my evidence demonstrates that the appeal sites are well related to Peel Common, being located to the east of Newgate Lane, physical contained by the alignment of Newgate Lane East and situated immediately adjacent to the existing residential dwellings off Woodcote Lane and directly opposite the mix of dwellings and urban influences along the northern section of Newgate Lane.
- 6.18. With existing and proposed green infrastructure in place, the appeal schemes will consolidate the pattern of Peel Common within a clearly defined limit. As such I consider that the appeal schemes will integrate well, and in a positive way, with the settlement area at Peel Common.
- 6.19. Furthermore, there are some existing physical connections between Peel Common and Bridgemarky. With the appeal schemes in place, the consolidated pattern of Peel Common would continue to blend with the urban edge of Gosport and Bridgemarky, focused along the green route into Bridgemarky (along Woodcote Lane) and focussed on the large amenity open space of Brookers Field Recreation Ground.
- 6.20. If the previous emerging allocation of HA2 were to come forward, this broader area of development would reinforce the connection between Peel Common (including the appeal sites) and the edge of Fareham. In each eventuality, I consider there to be a good connection between the appeal schemes and the existing areas of the settlement.
- 6.21. In all respects, considering Peel Common in itself, connections to Gosport, and with the potential for HA2 to come forward, development in this area will maintain a robust gap between Fareham (aligned with the western edge of Peel Common) and Stubbington.
- 6.22. Overall, in the context of these limited issues, and with the appeal schemes in place, landscape and visual issues are not sufficient to support a prospective reason for refusal.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

[insert as necessary]



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FIGURES

APPEAL BY FAREHAM LAND LP AND BARGATE HOMES LTD

LAND AT NEWGATE LANE (NORTH) AND LAND AT  
NEWGATE LANE (SOUTH), FAREHAM, HAMPSHIRE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS:  
APPENDICES

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.1	Extract from the Fareham Landscape Assessment
APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.2	Composite Landscape Strategy
APPENDIX FL&HB 1.2.3	Extract from the 'Technical Review of AoSLO and Strategic Gaps'
APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.4	Landscape Analysis of the Strategic Gap

APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.1  
EXTRACT FROM THE FAREHAM LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

2017

# FAREHAM LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

LDÄ DESIGN



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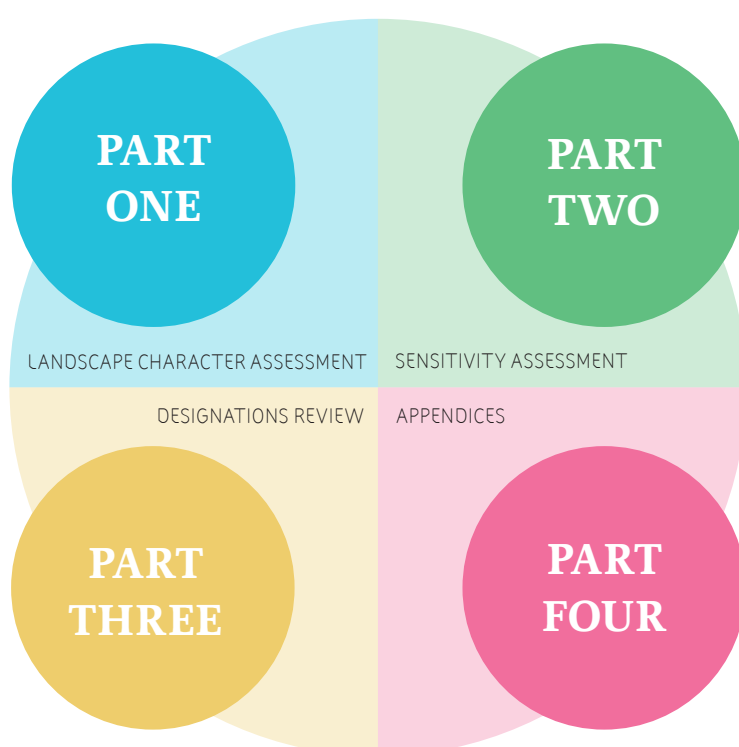
# PREFACE

The National Planning Policy Framework makes a clear commitment to conserving the natural environment in the planning system and recognises that it has a key role to play in the achievement of sustainable development. The Framework principles and policies make clear that planning should take account of the different roles and character of different areas, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and promoting local distinctiveness. Planning policies and decisions should be based upon up-to-date and relevant evidence about the landscape characteristics of the area and the primary tools for achieving this are landscape character assessments and, where appropriate, assessments of landscape sensitivity.

Fareham Borough Council is currently undertaking a review of its adopted Local Plan and commissioned *LDA Design* to up-date and expand upon the previous Fareham Landscape Assessment, undertaken in 1996, to provide robust evidence to inform Local Plan policy and planning decisions. The study brief included three main components:

- Landscape character assessment - a review of the baseline 'audit' of the character of the Borough landscape provided by the 1996 Landscape Character assessment, updated as necessary. The aim is to improve understanding of the key characteristics of the landscape that make places distinctive and different from one another, rather than better or worse;
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment - detailed analysis and judgements regarding the value of the landscape and its sensitivity to change. The aim is to assist the Council in the evaluation of possible development options/alternatives to meet housing needs in the Local Plan Review and to inform the assessment of potential impacts on the landscape when determining planning applications;
- Designations Review - a review of landscape designations within the Borough, with specific reference to 'Strategic Gaps' and 'Areas of Special Landscape Character', but also 'other areas of protected or valued landscape designations'. The aim is to assist the Council in framing policy related to landscape protection, strategic gaps and settlement boundaries within the review of the Local Plan.

These components are presented in three separate 'parts', supported by appendices, and together form the 2017 Fareham Landscape Assessment. It should be emphasised that the assessment findings are based upon the professional judgement of the qualified landscape architects/planners within the consultant team and have not been influenced by, nor tested against, the opinions of the Council or the public.








# 2.8

# LCA 8: WOODCOT-ALVER VALLEY

## LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



### LEGEND

-  Landscape Character Area
-  Local Landscape Character Area
-  Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision

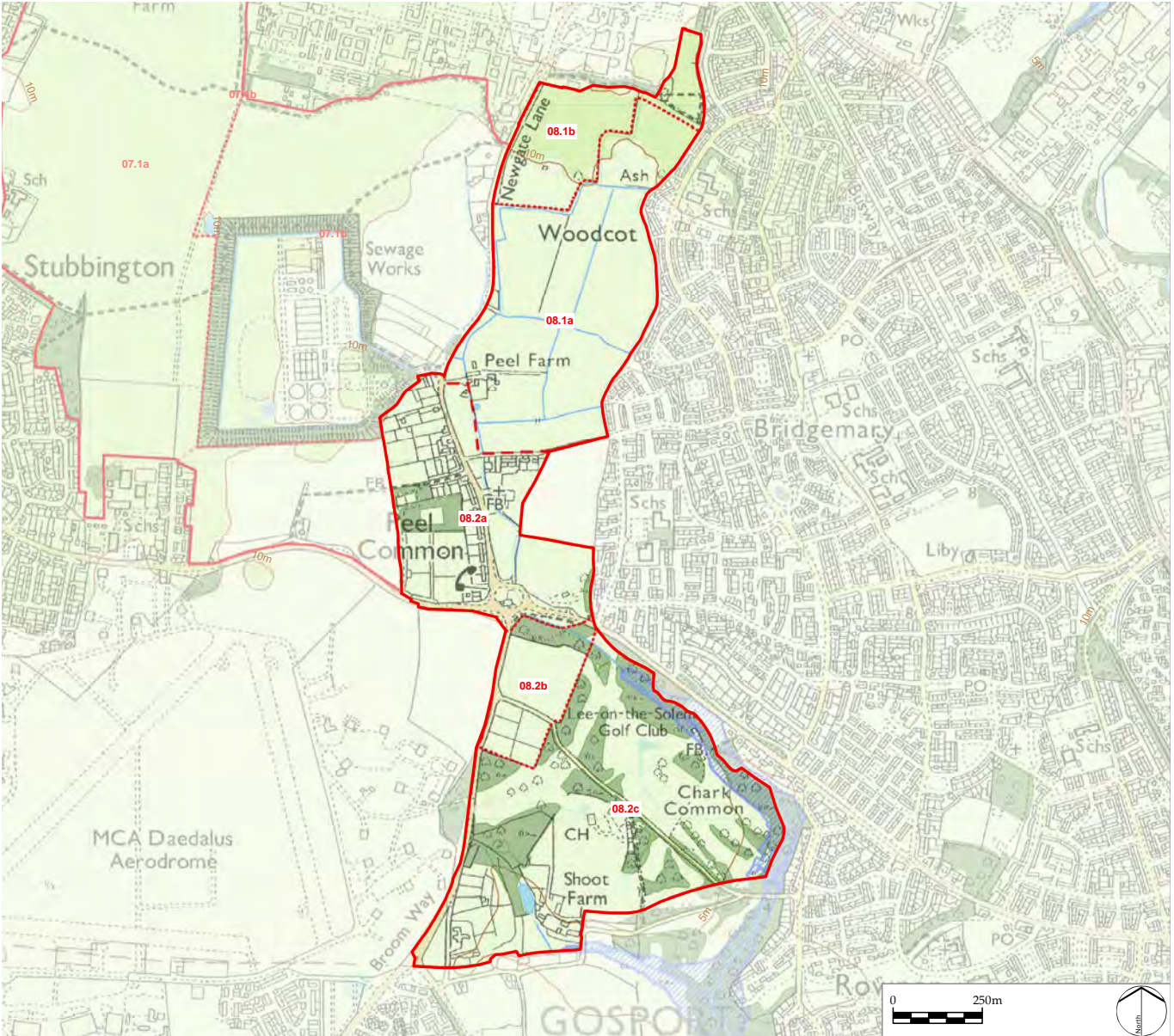


Location Diagram

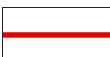

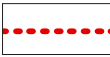




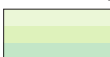
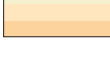


LCA 8 - WOODCOT-ALVER VALLEY

PHYSICAL AND VISUAL CHARACTERISTICS



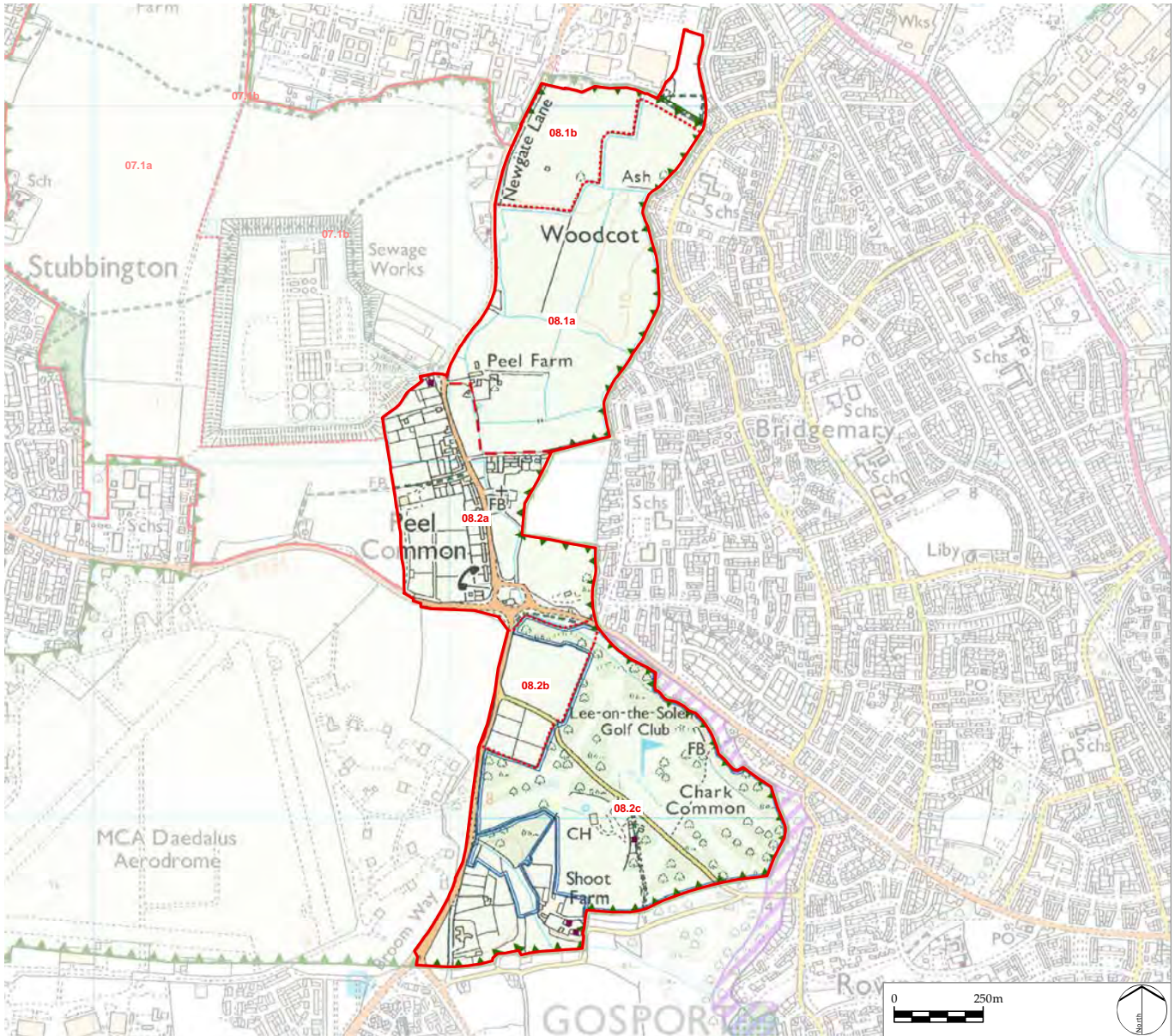
LEGEND

-  Landscape Character Area
-  Local Landscape Character Area
-  Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision
-  Water
-  Flood Alert Areas
-  Woodland
-  5m Contours
- Elevation (m AOD)**
-  0m
-  60m



LCA 8 - WOODCOT-ALVER VALLEY

PLANNING CONTEXT



LEGEND

- Landscape Character Area
- Local Landscape Character Area
- Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision
- The Meon Gap
- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Designations

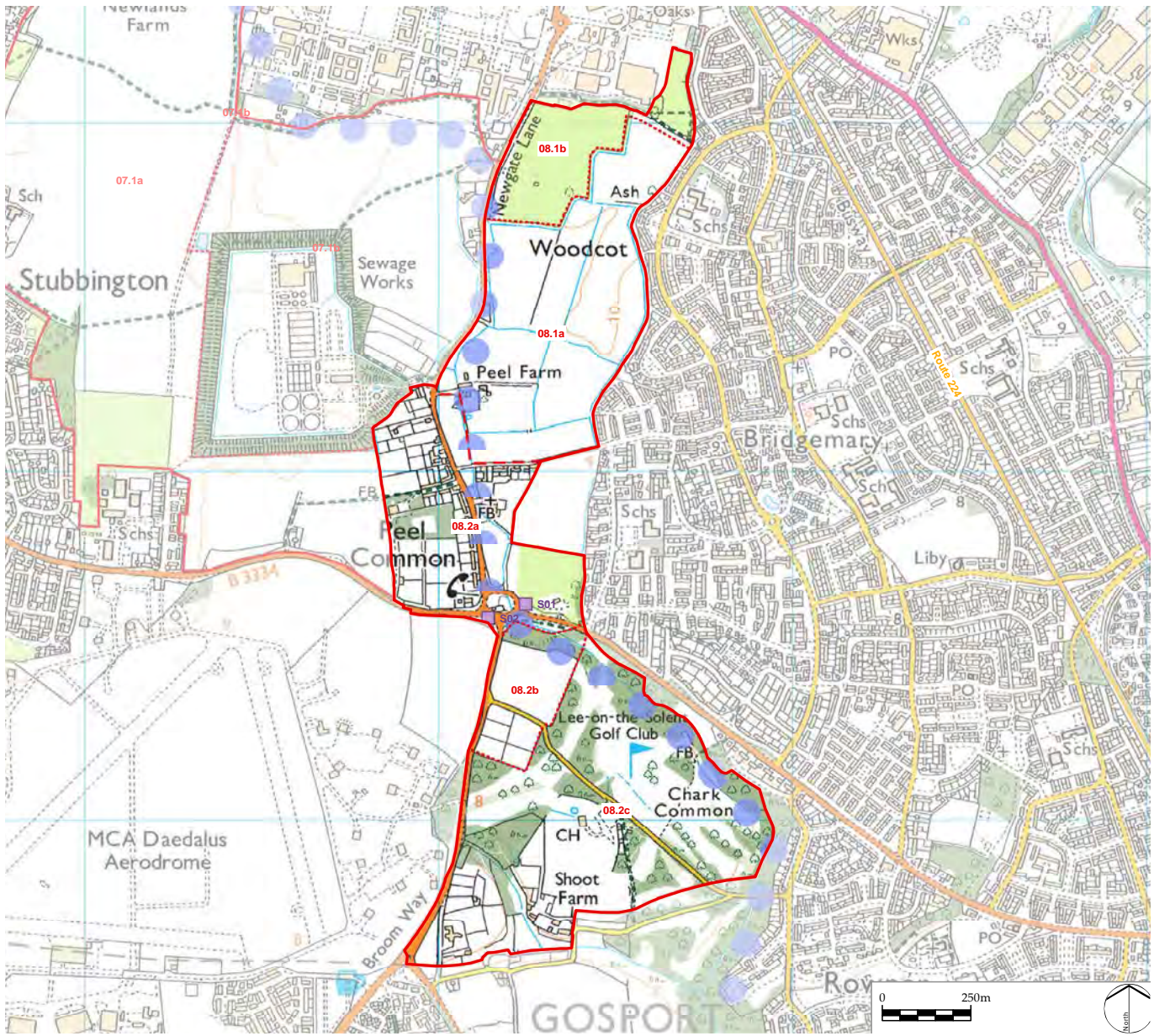
Listed Building Grade

- I
- II
- II\*










LCA 8 - WOODCOT-ALVER VALLEY

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



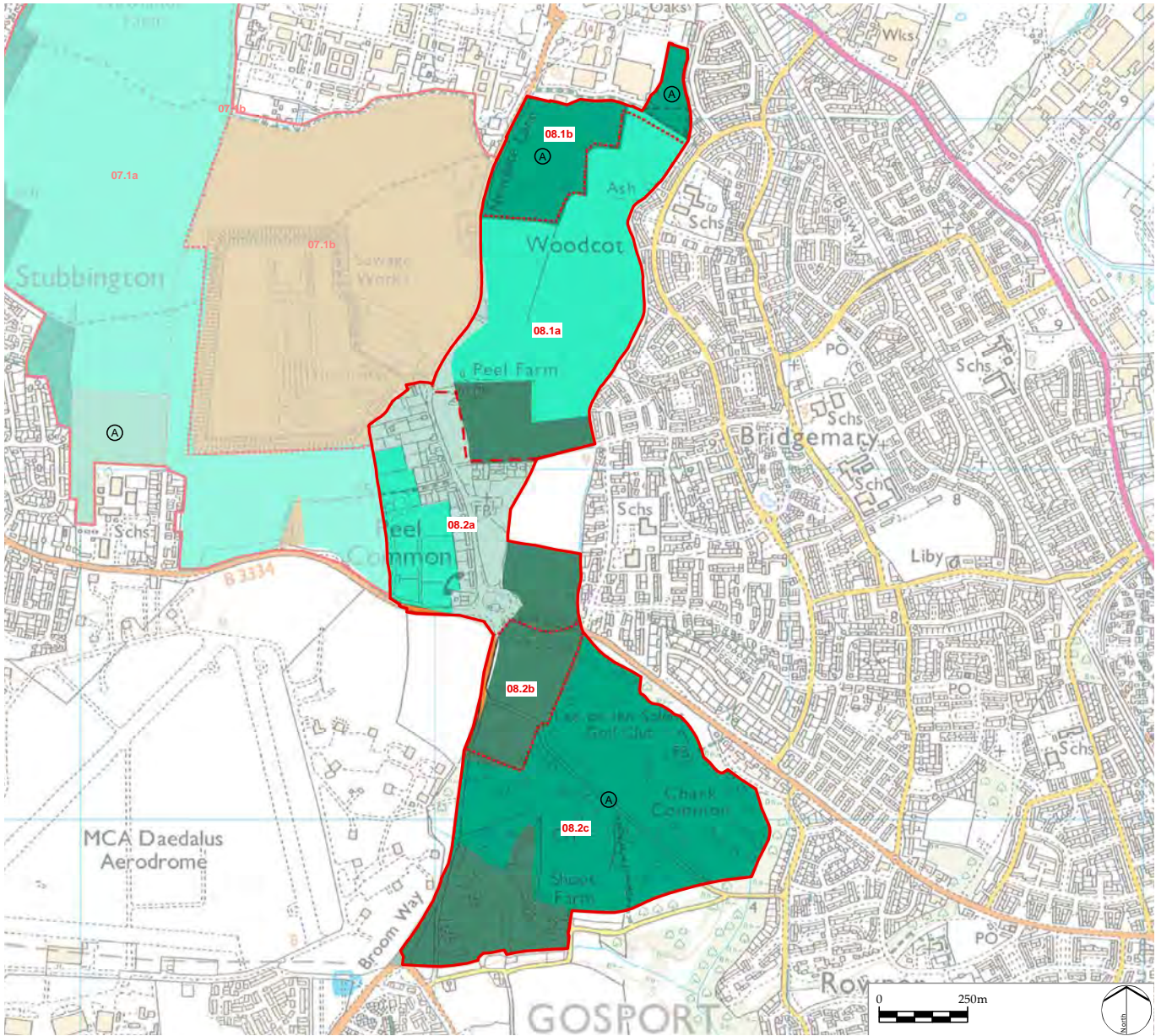
LEGEND

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
|  | Landscape Character Area                   |  | Woodland  |
|  | Local Landscape Character Area             |  | Existing Open Space                             |
|  | Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision |  | Green Infrastructure Sub-Regional Blue Corridor |
|  | Green Infrastructure Projects              |   |   |



LCA 8 - WOODCOT-ALVER VALLEY

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES



LEGEND

- Landscape Character Area
- Local Landscape Character Area
- Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision

Landscape Types

- Open Coastal Plain: Weak Structure
- Open Coastal Plain: Strong Structure
- Open Coastal Plain: Fringe Character
- Enclosed Coastal Amenity Land

## LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

## LANDSCAPE RESOURCE - SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, QUALITY AND VALUE

This area forms part of the easternmost extent of the Stubbington–Fareham Strategic Gap. It is bounded by Newgate Lane to the west, beyond which lie the Newlands Solar Farm and Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works. Out-of-town retail uses border the area to the north, while the eastern boundary is shared with the western edge of the Bridgemary area of neighbouring Gosport district. The southern boundary is formed by Woodcote Lane.

The LLCA is divided into two sub-areas, reflecting different land uses and their effects on intrinsic landscape character and quality. **Area 8.1a** comprises the land between Woodcote Lane in the south and Speedfield Park Playing Fields in the north. This area shares the typically flat, low-lying character of the coastal plain landscape that extends south and westwards to the Solent, but lacks the very expansive and denuded character of these areas. It is characterised by medium-scale, regular shaped fields, mostly under arable cultivation, bounded by a network of drainage ditches and a relatively intact structure of hedgerows, albeit heavily trimmed with some gappy sections and few mature hedgerow trees. Internally, the area has an open character but tree belts form taller, denser boundaries around the periphery of the area, especially to the north, east and south, which give the area a sense of enclosure from surrounding urban areas. The western boundary along Newgate Lane is more open and allows some intrusion from passing traffic but the area is devoid of built development (apart from farm buildings at Peel Farm) and retains a predominantly unspoilt, rural, agricultural character with limited intrusion from surrounding urban influences.



**Area 8.1b** is comparatively small and comprises two separate areas of recreation land and playing fields collectively referred to as Speedfields Park, connected by a surfaced pedestrian and cycle route. Both areas comprise amenity grassland and are enclosed by well-treed boundaries. The larger field adjacent to Newgate Lane contains a pavilion building and small car park along its northern boundary, with a variety of rugby posts, football goalposts and tall flood lights located in the centre of the field. The smaller field to the north east contains a single sports pitch and a children's play area in the south west corner. Despite retaining some of the characteristics of the adjacent landscape type (e.g. flat landform, well-defined hedgerow and tree boundaries and a regular field pattern) the introduction of built elements, car parking and management for sports use give the area a suburban, rather than rural agricultural, character.

The landscape of area 8.1 is not covered by any current national or local landscape designation. Scenic quality is not exceptional and is affected by some localised intrusion of urban features around its periphery and within area 8.1b. It does not contain any features of recognised conservation interest and it lacks the sense of remoteness and natural qualities that are found in other parts of the coastal plain. It has the sense of a 'landlocked' piece of countryside and the area's urban context is perceptible even if not dominating. However, area 8.1a does retain a predominantly rural, agricultural character and has a reasonably intact structure of hedgerows and significant tree cover around its periphery that contributes to its aesthetic appeal. The landscape is generally well-managed as agricultural land and in good condition, with limited evidence of 'fringe' uses or influences (e.g. horse paddocks, vacant land, unkempt fencing, fly tipping etc.). Overall, landscape value in area 8.1a is judged as moderate to high while in area 8.1b it is moderate, although the well-treed boundaries are valuable landscape features.



## SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The area lacks the very open, expansive character of other parts of the coastal plain (including adjacent land within the strategic gap to the west) but it nevertheless has a relatively open and large-scale character which makes it susceptible to change.

The distinctive character of **area 8.1a** relies on this openness, its rural agricultural character and the absence of prominent urban features, and it would be difficult to accommodate significant new development without affecting these characteristics or altering the balance between a predominantly rural or predominantly urban landscape. So, overall, the sensitivity of the landscape resource within area 8.1a is judged to be high (moderate to high value and high susceptibility to change), with very limited capacity to accommodate development without a significant impact on the integrity of the area's rural, agricultural character.

The existing balance will be affected, however, with the approved construction of the new southern section of Newgate Lane, which will provide a new connection from Newgate Lane to Peel Common Roundabout and a junction and link road to access the existing route of Newgate Lane. The road alignment just clips the extreme south-western corner of area 8.1b but cuts right through the middle of the southern half of area 8.1a and will inevitably introduce further activity, noise and urbanising features into the agricultural landscape, as well as resulting in physical disturbance to land and tree/vegetation cover.

However, the road corridor is relatively narrow and unaffected land within the rest of the area should be of a sufficient scale to remain viable as farmland and to maintain its essentially rural character. Mitigation proposals include new hedgerow and tree planting along the route to reduce its visibility and impact on the landscape and, if this is effective, the road itself may not have an overwhelming urbanising effect across the area as a whole in the longer term. However, significant further development in addition to the road scheme would almost certainly have this effect, potentially tipping the balance towards a predominantly urban character.

The sensitivity of the landscape resource within **area 8.1b** is slightly lower, as its rural character is already influenced by the proximity to built up areas/roads and the development of sports facilities and amenity uses within the area. Despite its more urbanised character, the area nevertheless has some value as part of the Borough's amenity landscape resource (as well as a role in the strategic gap and local GI network, see below) and its essentially open, undeveloped character would be significantly altered by further encroachment of built development. However, strong boundary vegetation would help to limit the influence of development within this area on the more rural landscape of area 8.1a to the south, particularly if located within the smaller northern field which is contained within very strong, well-treed boundaries.



## LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

## VISUAL ENVIRONMENT – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

## VIEWS, VISUAL FEATURES AND VIEWERS

Long distance visibility towards the area is low due to the typically low-lying and flat topography of the Borough (including the area itself), and the screening effects of boundary vegetation and surrounding built form. The area may be visible from some local elevated viewpoints (e.g. tall buildings in Fareham) and from higher ground at Portsdown, but from this distant location it forms an insignificant part of a wide panorama of the urban and coastal plain landscape.



Shorter-distance views into the area from built up areas to the north and east are largely filtered through established trees and boundary vegetation or interrupted by built form. Short distance visibility from the east is limited to private views from the rear of properties that back onto the area within the residential suburb of Bridgemary (e.g. Tuke's Avenue, Pettycot Crescent and around Heron Way). Short-distance visibility from the north is also significantly restricted by planting along the southern edge of the retail park, but there are open views through fencing into area 8.1b from the footpath that runs along the northern edge of the sports ground from Newgate Lane. Views of area 8.1a are largely screened from this direction by intervening vegetation.

Views from roads and public places to the south of the area are also very limited but there are some occasional views into the southern end of area 8.1a over or through the hedgerow that runs along Woodcote Lane/Brookers Lane at the far south of the area. Private properties along Woodcote Lane will experience similar views from upstairs windows.

The most significant views are from Newgate Lane which runs along the western side of the area, and from a number of properties along the roadside. Open views across large parts of areas 8.1a and b are possible from much of this length of road, where the roadside hedgerow is absent, gappy or trimmed to a low level. Land further to the east is less visible because of some intervening hedgerows or tree cover within the area.

Most of the available views are across open, undeveloped and relatively attractive countryside, with a strong backdrop of mature trees and limited evidence of built development or other urbanising features. The exceptions to this are views from the southern section of Newgate Lane between Peel Farm and Woodcote Lane, where a foreground of small-scale horse-grazed paddocks with wire fencing, shelters etc lends a fringe character to the view, and views into the sports fields in area 8.1b which have a more suburban character.

Currently, the main viewers are local residents within properties around the immediate periphery of the area, motorists and pedestrians on Newgate Lane and users of the sports facilities, public open space and footpath within area 8.1b. In future, the new alignment of Newgate Lane will increase the extent of the views available to road users, opening up most of area 8.1a to potential views from the road. Roadside planting will mitigate some of these effects but will take time to become effective.





## SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Overall, visual sensitivity in this area is moderate to high. Although it is screened from longer-distance views, a large proportion of **area 8.1a** is highly visible from short distance views from Newgate Lane to the west, and it is overlooked by a number of properties around its periphery through or over boundary vegetation. The high intervisibility within the area means that these views are quite extensive across the area and they generally have an attractive, unspoilt rural character.

The extent of visibility will be exacerbated, at least over the short term, by the introduction of the new alignment proposed for Newgate Lane. This will open up additional views across the area from the new road and will affect the character of rural views across the area for a period of time. Roadside planting will mitigate some of these effects but will take time to become effective and visual sensitivity of the remaining undeveloped area will remain high.

While road users are only moderately susceptible to change, because of their focus on the road and fleeting nature of views, local residents are likely to be more focussed on the landscape and their surroundings and will be highly susceptible to change. The introduction of further development into the agricultural landscape is likely to have a significant impact on the character and quality of existing predominantly rural views, unless it can be successfully integrated within a substantial framework of new vegetation.

**Area 8.1b** is slightly less visually sensitive, partly because it benefits from more extensive tree cover around its boundaries, and also because the existing character of the views is already affected by some urbanising influences. Nevertheless, local residents and recreational users of the public open space and PRow network are highly susceptible to change and will value the existing open, essentially undeveloped character of this recreational landscape. Their visual amenity would be significantly affected by the introduction of built development within this area.





## LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

## SETTING OF URBAN AREA – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

CONTRIBUTION TO  
SETTING AND SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

The area lies within the lower-lying parts of the Borough, forming part of the coastal plain that slopes gently up to the foot of Portsdown Hill in the far north. While the area does not play a significant role in the topographic setting of the urban area, together with LCA7 to the west it forms part of a swathe of largely undeveloped agricultural landscape that lies between the urban areas of Fareham in the north, Stubbington in the west and Gosport in the east, providing clear visual and physical separation of these settlements. The significant role of the area in separating and preventing coalescence of these settlements is enshrined in policy, with the area designated a Strategic Gap in the Fareham Borough Local Plan.

The visual separation between settlements is apparent in all short distance views into the area from the edge of Fareham to the north, Newgate Lane to the west, Woodcote Lane to the south and in private views from Bridgemary (residential suburb of Gosport) in the east. The substantial vegetation along the northern and eastern boundaries provides strong definition of the edges of the urban areas of Fareham and Bridgemary and marks a clear distinction between town and country (albeit slightly blurred by the amenity uses in the north). This helps to reinforce the separate identity of each settlement and also provides the urban areas with an attractive, essentially rural setting.



The alignment of the approved Newgate Lane South encroaches within the Gap but, in itself, should not fundamentally alter the sense of separation, indeed it may in some ways strengthen it. The lack of roadside development along the new route will reinforce the experience of moving out of Fareham, passing through an area of undeveloped countryside and entering the urban area of Gosport beyond the Peel Common roundabout. Similarly the physical and visual gap across the area between the edge of Bridgemary and Peel Common may be more readily appreciated in views from the road as it passes through the middle of the gap between these two settlements.

The role of the area in separating Stubbington and Gosport is less easily perceived because of intervening development and other features that interrupt views, and occupy land, between the two areas. These include the Newlands Solar Farm, the waste water treatment plant and housing development along the western side of the Newgate Lane corridor at Peel Common. Nonetheless, the area does have a critical role in preventing the coalescence of these areas and this is likely to become more significant with the future redevelopment of land at MCA Daedalus and construction of the Stubbington Bypass to the west, within the existing gap between built areas.

The area does not play a significant gateway role for the Borough as a whole, being some way to south of the M27 and main railway line and therefore not visible from the main approach routes. However, it does provide a strong rural backdrop along Newgate Lane which forms part of a key approach into the Borough from Gosport District to the south via the B3334. This reinforces the sense of moving between settlements and districts.

Overall, **area 8.1** plays an important role in defining the edges, separate identity and settings of Fareham and Gosport and a critical role in preventing their coalescence. It also makes an important contribution to the swathe of landscape that currently separates Stubbington from Gosport, a role that may become more critical to maintain with the redevelopment of the MCA Daedalus site in future years.

## LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

## SETTING OF URBAN AREA – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

## SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Given the area's designation as part of the Strategic Gap and the role it plays in preventing coalescence between the settlements of Fareham, Stubbington and Gosport, the area is highly sensitive to change. The landscape lacks any strong landform feature (e.g. ridges or valleys) or a mature framework of woodland that could potentially contain and provide a strong landscape edge to any major extension of built form into this area. Intrusive development within the area would inevitably erode the visual and physical separation that currently exists and potentially alter the character of the landscape settings of the two settlements from predominantly agricultural to predominantly urban. Ultimately, the function and integrity of the area as farmland could be significantly eroded to the point where the gap becomes a corridor of greenspace between urban areas, or an 'urban park', rather than a functioning area of agricultural landscape with a distinct character and identity.

The proposed new bypass could potentially erode the integrity of the existing gap if it is regarded as forming a potential new edge for development. If the rural, undeveloped and open character of this area is to be maintained, it will be crucial to keep the urban boundaries as tightly drawn as possible and avoid infilling the land between the existing urban edges and the new road. Overall, therefore, there is very limited scope to accommodate development without a significant impact on the integrity of the area's rural, agricultural character and the role it performs in maintaining the separate identity and character of the settlements and their landscape settings.



## LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### CONTRIBUTION TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

This area does not support a wide range of GI assets in terms of biodiversity or landscape features (there are no designated features) but the area as a whole does make a contribution to the local GI network as an extensive area of undeveloped greenspace between the urban areas of Fareham and Gosport, albeit with limited public access. The tree lined boundaries and reasonably intact structure of hedgerows provide a valuable framework of vegetation within this large-scale, intensively managed landscape and the playing fields, public open space and footpath within area 8.1b are valuable recreational assets for local people. The footpath along the northern edge of the area and Woodcote Lane/Brookers Lane in the south provide east-west access links between the residential suburbs of Gosport across the strategic gap to Stubbington and beyond to the Meon Valley. There are no other PRoW or access routes across or within area 8.1a.

The PUSH GI strategy identifies a sub-regional scale blue corridor following the drainage network that runs through the western side of the area southwards to join the River Alver (within Gosport District). The strategy includes a project (C7) to strengthen wildlife corridors connected to the River Alver but this is focused on the Alver Valley outside of the Borough. The Fareham GI strategy does not identify any specific projects within the boundary of this area.





## LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The area's GI value lies in its largely open, undeveloped nature, the public open space at Speedfields Park and the functional connections between Newgate Lane and Bridgemary provided by the public footpath to the north and Woodcote Lane to the south. The area is moderately sensitive to change. Any development that compromised the PRoW network or the sense of openness and being 'in the countryside' would have an adverse effect on the GI network.

This area would benefit from improvements and extension of the local GI network, through major investment in the reinstatement or creation of hedgerows, woodlands and other habitats that have been lost or damaged by agricultural intensification, and through the extension of public open space or access connections through the area.

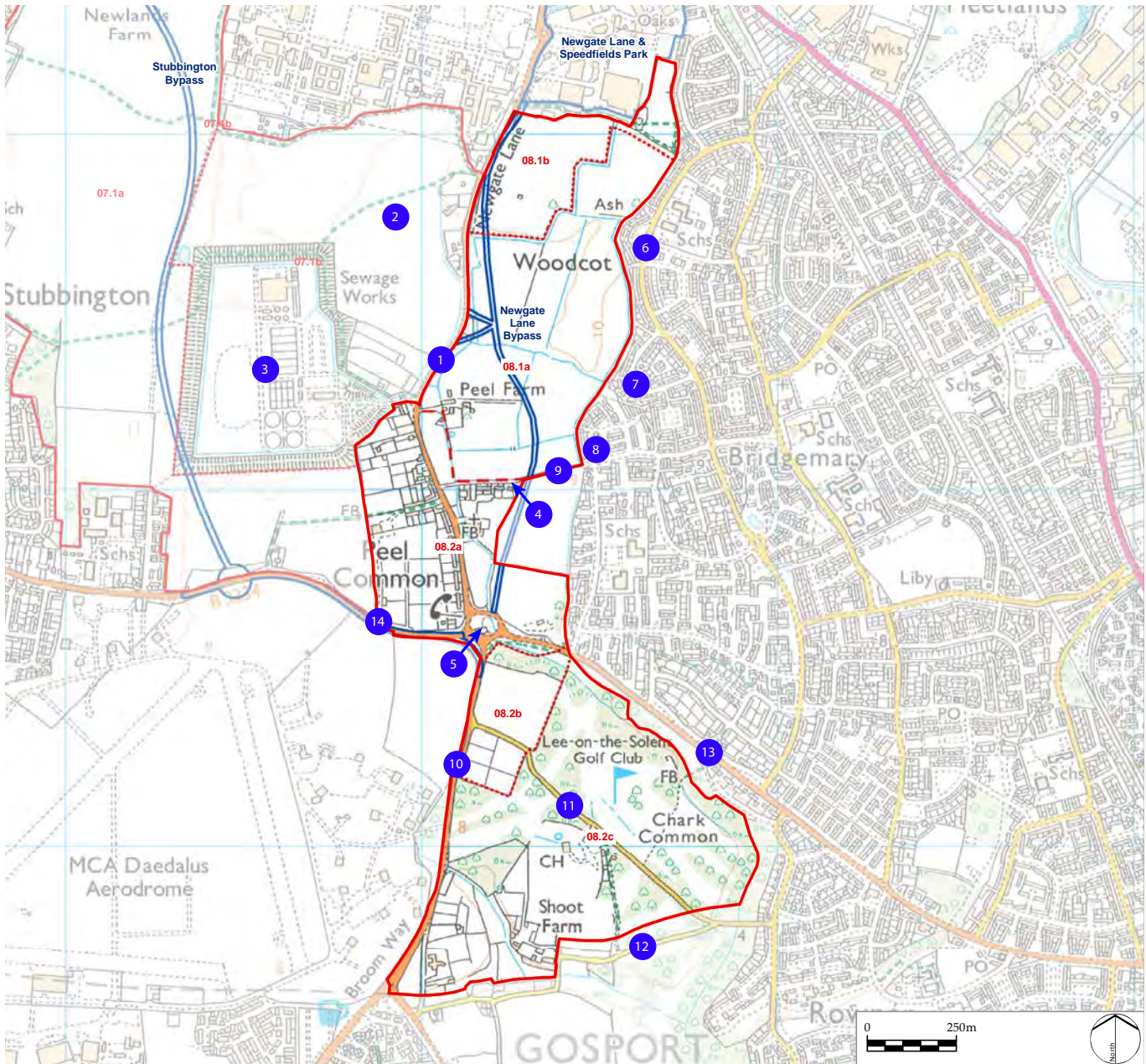
The main impacts of new road on GI resources are its potential interference with the east-west footpath link between Bridgemary and Peel Common that crosses the area along Woodcote/Brookers Lane, the loss of small areas of amenity space within the Speedfields Park and Brookers Field Recreation Grounds and the loss of some trees and hedgerow vegetation along the road alignment. Mitigation proposals will offset much of this impact.





LLCA 8.1 - WOODCOT

LOCATION PLAN FOR ROADS AND OTHER FEATURES



LEGEND

- |  |  |   |   |   |                      |
|--|--|---|---|---|----------------------|
|  | Landscape Character Area                   |  | Newgate Lane (B3385)                    |  | Heron Way            |
|  | Local Landscape Character Area             |  | Newlands Solar Farm                     |  | Brookers Lane        |
|  | Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision |  | Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works |  | Broom Way (B3385)    |
|  |  |  | Woodcote Lane                           |  | Brune Lane           |
|  |  |  | Peel Common roundabout                  |  | Shoot Lane           |
|  |  |  | Tuke's Avenue                           |  | Rowner Road          |
|  |  |  | Pettycoat Crescent                      |  | Gosport Road (B3334) |

## DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As a whole, this area is of high sensitivity primarily on account of its critical role in preventing the coalescence of the urban areas of Fareham, Bridgemary and, to a lesser extent, Stubbington, and in defining the edges, setting and separate identity of these settlements. The relatively small size of the area, the high degree of intervisibility and its generally unspoilt, rural character make it particularly vulnerable to change. The generally open nature of the landscape means that it is difficult to integrate development without it being highly visible and potentially affecting the rural undeveloped character across a wide area, as well as eroding the physical, visual and perceived gap between settlements. The situation is further complicated by the proposed new road which will have some effect on the integrity and character of the landscape resource and undeveloped gap. Even a small amount of encroachment of further built development within the area could exacerbate these effects to the point at which the character of the whole area may be fundamentally altered.

There may be potential for some modest, small scale development associated with existing recreational land uses and built form within area 8.1b, as long as it is closely related to existing features and can be successfully integrated within the existing structure of hedgerows and trees without altering the essentially 'undeveloped' character of the amenity landscape or the wider agricultural landscape of area 8.1a.

In order to protect and enhance the character and quality of landscape resources, views and visual amenity, urban setting and green infrastructure, development proposals will need to:

- Protect the open, predominantly agricultural and undeveloped, rural character of area 8.1a;
- Maintain and strengthen the existing structure of trees, hedgerows and other mature vegetation, to maximise its landscape and wildlife value and to minimise impacts on the rural character of the landscape;
- Maintain the essentially open, undeveloped character of the public open space, playing fields and sports facilities within area 8.1b, and be designed to relate closely to the existing structure of trees hedgerows and existing characteristic built features within the area;
- Avoid any major incursion of the urban area into the countryside beyond existing well-defined boundaries, or create significant new pockets of urban or urbanising development within open farmland;
- Protect the area's role in maintaining the separation of settlements and a clear distinction between urban and rural areas. In particular, avoid ribbon development strung out along road corridors (e.g. along the existing and proposed new alignment of Newgate Lane) and any development beyond the existing urban edge that cannot be successfully integrated within the existing landscape structure and which could affect the visual, physical or perceived integrity of the strategic gap;
- Maintain significant distance and separation from the corridor of the new road to minimise its urbanising effects upon the rural character of the area;
- Avoid the introduction of tall buildings or structures that would be particularly visually prominent within the open, flat landscape;
- Protect and enhance enjoyment of the landscape by maintaining and enhancing the existing areas of public open space and access network, and by making further provision for accessible greenspace and access links within and across the area;
- Provide substantial new investment in the landscape through extensive tree, hedgerow and woodland planting using native broadleaved species appropriate to the locality and soil conditions and habitat creation to diversify the intensively farmed landscape;
- Demonstrate design that has minimal impact on the surrounding landscape and is in keeping with the character of the local landscape context.



## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

## LANDSCAPE RESOURCE - SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, QUALITY AND VALUE

## Landscape character, quality and value

This area forms the southern part of the Woodcot-Alver Valley LCA and the south-eastern part of the wider Stubbington–Fareham Strategic Gap. The area forms part of the flat, low-lying coastal plain but is very different in character and scale from the open agricultural landscape to the north and west. It is characterised by a mixed pattern of wooded common, small-scale pasture and ribbon development along the corridors of the River Alver and Newgate Lane and is bounded to the east by the urban edge of Gosport, to the west by the Daedalus airbase, to the north by the Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works and arable farmland, and to the south by the open amenity land of the Alver Valley.

**Area 8.2a** comprises a strip of land on either side of Newgate Lane, extending from Peel Farm in the north to the Peel Common roundabout in the south. To the west of the road, the area is occupied by residential ribbon development backed by gardens and a small-scale pattern of fields, paddocks and other plots of land, contained by strong boundary vegetation to the rear. The eastern side of the road is characterised by a similar patchwork of small-scale, horse grazed pastures, built development south of Woodcote Lane (including housing, church and care home), gardens and small parcels of land enclosed by woodland, trees and hedgerows. In the far south-east corner is an area of public open space, including sports pitches and associated buildings. The character of this corridor is significantly affected by the influence of busy roads, street lighting, built development and other urban land uses, while the management of the small-scale pastures and plots of land - with their associated rather ramshackle fencing and structures - lends a distinct fringe character to the remaining unbuilt landscape. This situation will be exacerbated by the construction of the proposed new Newgate Lane-Peel Common bypass which will further fragment and intrude upon areas of undeveloped landscape. Overall landscape quality is therefore substantially degraded although the strong structure of vegetation that encloses this area is of some landscape value.

On the southern side of the Peel Common Roundabout lies Chark Common, which marks a distinct change in character from the open arable landscape of the northern part of the Woodcot-Alver Valley LCA, to a landscape which is strongly enclosed by extensive cover of woodland and trees, within which small-scale fields or open spaces are seemingly ‘carved out’ from the woodland cover. Within the overall area, **area 8.2b** is distinctive in that it forms a relatively large, regularly shaped parcel of open land, divided into smaller horse-grazed paddocks by fencing. This area shares some of the fringe characteristics of the roadside paddocks further north (e.g. fencing, land management, structures etc) but has a less urbanised context and is framed by a strong, attractive backdrop of woodland, mature trees and hedgerows. Its quality is less degraded and it retains a semi-rural character.

The remainder of the Chark Common area (**area 8.2c**) is dominated by the Lee-on-Solent Golf Course, which extends across the majority of the area, excluding the far south-west corner (comprising fields in use for horse-grazing along with former farm buildings converted for residential use). The landscape is characterised by open areas of grassland, heathland and wetland habitats (associated with the River Alver) contained within a strong structure of woodland belts, copses, mature trees and scrub. Parts of the land are intensively managed as part of the golf course (e.g. greens, fairways, bunkers etc.) and there are associated buildings and structures, which have an amenity character that somewhat detracts from the rural character of the landscape. However, most of the area is designated as a SINC (for its woodland, heathland and wetland habitats) and retains an attractive, enclosed and well-treed character with some ‘semi-natural’ qualities. The strong tree cover also provides an effective buffer to the influence of surrounding roads and neighbouring development within Gosport. The area is generally unspoilt and of relatively high landscape quality although it is not covered by any current national or local landscape designation.

## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

## LANDSCAPE RESOURCE - SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

## SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The sensitivity of the landscape resource varies within this overall area. **Area 8.2a** is already substantially degraded by urban influences and has a predominantly 'fringe' character which reduces its sensitivity to change. This will be exacerbated by the construction of the proposed bypass. Further development within this area would further erode the extent of surviving 'undeveloped' land but would not have a significant effect upon the overall character and quality of the landscape resource. Notwithstanding its value as part of the strategic gap or other roles, in landscape resource terms alone this area has relatively low sensitivity and high development potential.



**Area 8.2b** also has fringe qualities but has not been degraded in the same way. It retains an essentially rural, pastoral character that is susceptible to change and would be significantly affected by the introduction of permanent built development. The area is physically and visually detached from other built form by the strong surrounding woodland framework and significant development would appear as an isolated area of built land within open countryside. A section of the western boundary along Broom Way is open and there is a visual relationship between the area and currently undeveloped land within the Daedalus site to the west which would also be affected by development within this area. Redevelopment proposals for the Daedalus site may change the situation but current indications suggest that the undeveloped 'green' character of this corner of the site is to be maintained. Overall, therefore, landscape sensitivity is judged as moderate to high and the potential for development is low.

**Area 8.2c** is highly sensitive to change. Although its use as a golf course has altered the underlying character of the landscape it nevertheless has an attractive wooded and enclosed character and supports a mosaic of other habitats and features of landscape and ecological value. Built development would undoubtedly intrude upon its quiet, semi-rural and secluded character. There may be some modest potential for accommodating small-scale development (i.e. individual buildings) within the south west corner of the area, where it is associated with existing built form and can be more successfully integrated within the existing vegetation structure, but otherwise there is very limited potential for development within the area.



## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

### VISUAL ENVIRONMENT – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### IEWS, VISUAL FEATURES AND VIEWERS

The area's low lying position within the coastal plain means that there are few long distance views. The area may be perceived as one part of a much wider panorama taking in the urban and coastal landscapes in views from higher ground to the north of the Borough. However, its small size and lack of landmark features means the area is generally indistinguishable from the wider landscape within long-distance views.

More locally, large parts of **area 8.2a** are visible from roads, adjacent dwellings, lanes, public rights of way and open spaces within the area itself, although there are some small pockets of land enclosed behind built form and strong boundary vegetation that are less visible from public areas. The character and quality of the available views is already heavily influenced by urban characteristics and would not be fundamentally altered by additional built development.

**Area 8.2b** is largely enclosed within a strong wooded framework which restricts its visibility from surrounding areas but it is open along parts of its western boundary, allowing some direct views from adjacent Broom Way. There are also occasional filtered glimpses through the roadside trees along Brune Lane, which cuts through the middle of this area. Given that the main viewers will be road users, the visual sensitivity of this area is moderate and could be reduced further by mitigation planting to close the gap along the western boundary, although this will take time to become effective.

**Area 8.2c** is generally of low visual sensitivity. The extensive cover of trees and woodland around and within the area prevent all but glimpsed views from surrounding roads, through trees and gaps in the boundary vegetation. There are no views from neighbouring urban areas to the east. There is a public footpath that cuts through the golf course, linking Shoot Lane with Brune Lane, and another sort section of footpath into the area off Rowner Lane on the northern side of the area, otherwise there are no other publicly accessible viewpoints in this area.

The main viewers of this area are therefore local residents within Peel Common (area 8.2a), users of the main road network (Newgate Lane, Broom Way) and minor local lanes (Brune Lane, Shoot Lane), users of the limited network of PRow and open spaces, and golf course members. Apart from some attractive views within area 8.2c, the value of the landscape as a visual resource for these receptors lies primarily in its character as undeveloped land rather than its intrinsic scenic quality.



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## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

### VISUAL ENVIRONMENT – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Visual sensitivity is relatively low within this area. Area 8.2a is highly visible but the character of the views is such that further development is unlikely to have a major impact on visual amenity. Area 8.2b is visually well-contained apart from a section of its western boundary, but this visual exposure could be mitigated by additional planting to close the gap. Likewise, area 8.2c is also highly visually contained by the extensive cover of trees and woodland within and around the area, with very limited publicly accessible views. However, balanced against this is the relatively unspoilt character of the views in the Chark Common area which are highly susceptible to change, and the high level of sensitivity of people using the PRoW network (albeit very restricted) and otherwise accessing the area for recreational purposes, who appreciate their surroundings and will be very aware of changes.

Across much of the area, therefore, there are limited opportunities to integrate development into the visual environment without unacceptable adverse effects on the character and quality of existing views and on the visual amenity of sensitive viewers. However, there may be some modest scope for accommodating small-scale development (i.e. individual buildings) within less visible, well-contained pockets of land within areas 8.2a and in the south-western corner of area 8.2c, where the existing vegetation structure has the potential to limit effects on high quality views and visual amenity.



## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

### SETTING OF URBAN AREA – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### CONTRIBUTION TO SETTING AND SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

The area lies within the lower-lying parts of the Borough, forming part of the coastal plain that slopes gently up to the foot of Portsdown Hill in the far north. While the area does not play a significant role in the topographic setting of the urban area, together with LCA7 to the west (and area 8.1 to the north) it forms part of a swathe of largely undeveloped landscape that lies between the urban areas of Fareham in the north, Stubbington in the west and Gosport in the east, providing clear visual and physical separation of these settlements. The significant role of the area in separating and preventing coalescence of these settlements is enshrined in policy, with the area designated a Strategic Gap in the Fareham Borough Local Plan.

The role of **area 8.2a** as part of the gap is evident to the east of Newgate Lane, where the strip of roadside paddocks forms part of a wider corridor of undeveloped landscape between the road and the western edge of Bridgemary. However, the role of this area in maintaining the gap westwards towards Stubbington is less easy to perceive from the Newgate Lane corridor as views in this direction are blocked by built development along the roadside at Peel Common. Nevertheless, when viewed from the west (from the Gosport Road) it becomes apparent that Peel Common is an isolated small settlement that lies within the wider gap, rather than defining its western boundary or connecting to a larger urban area. It will be vital to maintain this ‘isolation’ of development at Peel Common if the physical and visual integrity of the wider gap is to be maintained.

The Peel Common Roundabout is a critical ‘pinch point’ within the gap between Peel Common and the edge of Bridgemary where there is a real risk of the two areas coalescing. This will be further exacerbated by the new bypass which eats into the remaining undeveloped land to the north of the roundabout and also, potentially, by redevelopment of the Daedalus site to the south. It will be vital to protect the undeveloped landscape within the public open space to the east of the roundabout in order to maintain a physical, visual and perceptual gap between the built areas.

**Areas 8.2b and c** also play a pivotal role in maintaining separation of urban areas and as a link between the upper and lower parts of the Alver Valley corridor. This triangle of semi-rural, heavily wooded landscape is important not only in physically and visually separating built areas at Peel Common and Bridgemary but also in separating Bridgemary from the northern edge of Lee-on-the-Solent. The redevelopment of MCA Daedalus may potentially exacerbate the perceived closing of the gap between Lee-on-the-Solent and Peel Common. It will be essential, therefore, to maintain the undeveloped character of all sides of this triangle, avoiding encroachment of development along Broom Way, Shoot Lane and Gosport Road.

This southern area also forms a vital link in the wider Alver Valley landscape corridor which extends southwards into Gosport District to the coast, providing a distinct edge and landscape setting to the urban areas to the south. It will be very important to maintain the integrity of this continuous corridor of undeveloped landscape and avoid the encroachment of development within and across it.



## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

## SETTING OF URBAN AREA – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

## SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Given the area's designation as part of the Strategic Gap and the role it plays in preventing coalescence between the settlements of Fareham, Stubbington, Bridgemarky and Lee-on-the-Solent, the area is highly sensitive to change. The area also contributes to the perceived sense of separation between Gosport District and Fareham Borough. Any development that reduced the physical or visual separation between these settlements would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the gap and on the area's contribution to the distinct identity and settings of the surrounding urban areas. Consequently, the area offers very limited development potential in respect of its role in maintaining the separation and setting of settlements. The only opportunities may lie within areas that are closely associated with existing development (e.g. at Peel Common or in the SW corner of area 8.2c) and can be integrated within the landscape without any physical or perceived encroachment within the gap.



## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### CONTRIBUTION TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

The area's main contribution to the GI network is through its role as an extensive area of undeveloped land between the urban areas of Fareham and Gosport and, in particular, as part of the wider corridor of greenspace and habitats that follow the course of the River Alver, identified within the PUSH GI strategy as a 'sub-regional scale blue corridor'. The strategy includes a project (C7) to strengthen wildlife corridors connected to the River Alver but this is focused on the Alver Valley outside of the Borough.

The northern part of the area (8.2a) does not support a wide range of designated GI assets but the framework of mature hedgerows and trees and the playing fields to the east of the Peel Common Roundabout are all valuable GI resources in this urbanised area. Woodcote Lane and the footpath linking Newgate Lane with Gosport Road also provide a valuable access link connecting Bridgemary with Stubbington across the middle of this area.

The southern part of the area (**areas 8.2b and c**) contains significant biodiversity assets in the extensive woodland, grassland, heathland and wetland habitats (designated as a SINC) within the golf course and surrounding area but is relatively inaccessible to the public, with only three short lengths of public footpath and no public open space. An extension of public access in this area, particularly along the river corridor to link with the Alver Valley Country Park to the south (in Gosport District) would be desirable. The Fareham GI strategy identifies project BW14 which aims to create 'cross boundary links from South Fareham Gap and Daedalus to the Alver valley Country Park' and 'to provide a linear corridor between Stubbington, Lee-on-the-Solent and Gosport'.





## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### SENSITIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The area's primary GI value lies in its largely undeveloped nature and the extensive network of woodland, grassland, heathland and wetland habitats within the corridor of the River Alver and within Chark Common in the south of the area. These assets are particularly scarce and valuable within the heavily urbanised and pressured context of this part of the Borough and are therefore very sensitive to change.

The existing network of public access and open space is fairly sparse within the area and existing features need to be protected and their function and quality enhanced. The area would benefit from improvements to the local access network to provide improved east-west links between urban areas and the wider access network of the coastal plain, and north-south links to connect the northern part of the river corridor with the Alver Valley Country Park and the coast.

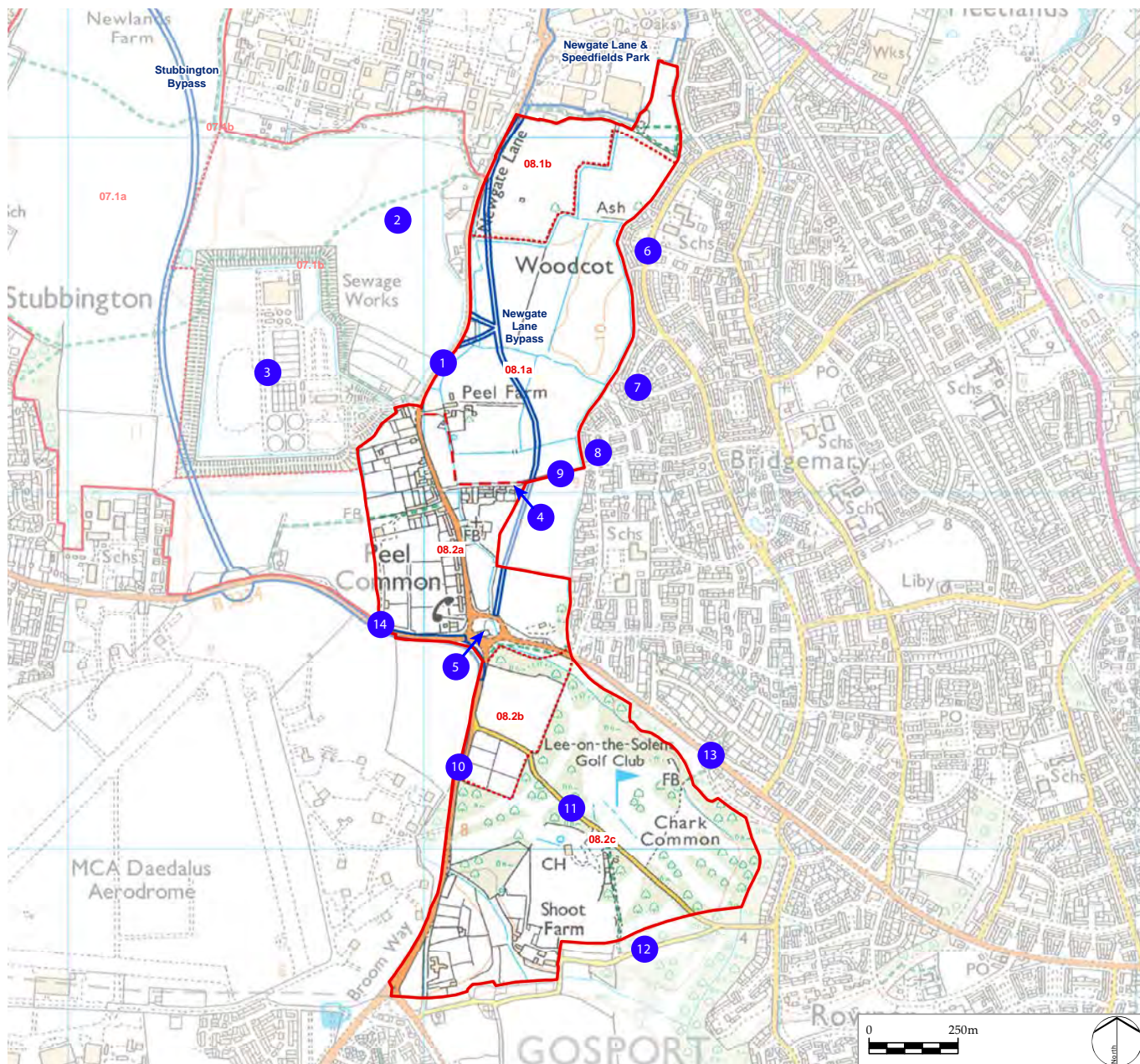
Any new development would need to maintain the largely 'undeveloped' character of the area, ensure the protection of features of landscape or biodiversity value, and maintain and extend the provision of access and public open space opportunities. There is very limited scope for this to be achieved in this highly constrained area.





LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

LOCATION PLAN FOR ROADS AND OTHER FEATURES



LEGEND

- |  |  |   |   |   |                         |
|--|--|---|---|---|-------------------------|
|  | Landscape Character Area                   |  | 1 Newgate Lane (B3385)                    |  | 8 Heron Way             |
|  | Local Landscape Character Area             |  | 2 Newlands Solar Farm                     |  | 9 Brookers Lane         |
|  | Local Landscape Character Area Subdivision |  | 3 Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works |  | 10 Broom Way (B3385)    |
|  |  |  | 4 Woodcote Lane                           |  | 11 Brune Lane           |
|  |  |  | 5 Peel Common roundabout                  |  | 12 Shoot Lane           |
|  |  |  | 6 Tuke's Avenue                           |  | 13 Rowner Road          |
|  |  |  | 7 Pettycoat Crescent                      |  | 14 Gosport Road (B3334) |

## LLCA 8.2 - PEEL COMMON AND ALVER VALLEY

## DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As a whole, this area is of high sensitivity primarily on account of its critical role in preventing the coalescence of the urban areas of Fareham, Bridgemary, Lee-on-the-Solent and, to a lesser extent, Stubbington, and in defining the edges, setting and separate identity of these settlements. The narrowness of the gap between development at Peel Common and the edge of Bridgemary means that this area has a particularly vital role in maintaining physical, visual and perceived separation and even a limited amount of development in the ‘wrong’ place, particularly along the main roads that enclose the southern part of the area, could threaten the integrity of the gap. The situation is further complicated by the proposed new bypass which will inevitably have some effect on the integrity and character of the landscape resource and undeveloped gap and further ‘squeeze’ the gap at its narrowest point.

Other key sensitivities include the important range of habitats within the Chark Common area and the area’s contribution to the corridor of undeveloped greenspace (albeit largely inaccessible) along the course of the River Alver, from Fareham to the Alver Valley Country Park and beyond to the coast.

There may be potential for some modest, small scale development associated with existing built form at Peel Common or in the far south-west of the area, as long as it is closely related to existing features and can be successfully integrated within the existing structure of hedgerows and trees without altering the essentially ‘undeveloped’ character of the landscape or threatening the integrity of the gap.

In order to protect and enhance the character and quality of landscape resources, views and visual amenity, urban setting and green infrastructure, development proposals will need to:

- Safeguard the area’s vital role in maintaining the separation of settlements and a clear distinction between urban and rural areas. In particular, avoid ribbon development along road corridors (e.g. Broom Way, Shoot Lane and Gosport Road) and any development beyond the existing urban edge that cannot be successfully integrated within the existing landscape structure and which could affect the visual, physical or perceived integrity of the strategic gap;
- In particular, protect and strengthen the undeveloped character of the public open space to the east of the Peel Common roundabout;
- Maintain the distinctly ‘isolated’ nature of settlement at Peel Common and ensure that any potential small-scale infill development within this area effectively ‘rounds off’ rather than extends the settlement boundary, to avoid the risk of physical or perceived coalescence with other built areas;
- Protect the semi-rural, undeveloped character of areas 8.2b and c;
- Maintain and strengthen the existing structure of woodland, trees, hedgerows and other mature vegetation in all parts of the area, to maximise its landscape and wildlife value;
- In particular, maintain and enhance the mosaic of woodland, heathland, grassland and wetland habitats of value within the Lee-on-the-Solent golf course at Chark Common and encourage further habitat creation and diversification within intensively managed areas to maximise wildlife and landscape value;
- Avoid the introduction of tall buildings or structures that would be particularly visually prominent within the landscape;
- Protect and enhance enjoyment of the landscape by maintaining and enhancing the existing areas of public open space and access network, and by making further provision for accessible greenspace and access links within and across the area, particularly along the River Alver corridor and with the Country Park to the south;
- Demonstrate design that has minimal impact on the surrounding landscape and is in keeping with the character of the local landscape context.
- Use native broadleaved species appropriate to the locality and soil conditions in new tree and hedgerow planting.





APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.2  
COMPOSITE LANDSCAPE STRATEGY





- KEY**
-  Site boundary
  -  Existing trees/vegetation to be retained
  -  Existing drainage
  -  Existing public rights of way
  -  Newgate Lane relief road Southern Section (Currently under construction)
  -  Proposed development cells and units
  -  Proposed key frontages
  -  Proposed secondary frontages
  -  Proposed buffer planting to eastern and southern boundaries
  -  Proposed tree planting
  -  Proposed feature tree planting
  -  Proposed hedgerows
  -  Proposed footpaths
  -  Proposed attenuation area
  -  Proposed play areas
  -  Continuity of green infrastructure connections to the Alker Valley
  -  Direct connection to existing settlement pattern



APPENDIX FL&HB 1.2.3  
EXTRACT FROM THE  
'TECHNICAL REVIEW OF AOSLQ AND STRATEGIC GAPS'

# Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps

supporting document for Fareham Local Plan  
Development



Client: Fareham Borough Council  
Consultant: Hampshire County Council  
22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

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Rev	Date	Revisions
-	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	First Draft issued for comment.
A	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft Issued for comment. Revisions to ASLQ. Addition of SG and Info. to Appendix on Refs and Maps. Responses to Clients comments
B	2 <sup>nd</sup> Aug 2020	3 <sup>rd</sup> Draft. Additional Photos and References added. Additional text on SCG.
C	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020	Text edits.
D	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020	Text edits.
E	17 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2020	Text and Map edits.
F	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sept 2020	Minor text errors and map adjustments

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ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

Cover Photograph: Meon Shore, at edge of Chilling-Brownwich Coastal Plain, Photo: Charlotte Webb, June 2020.

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## Executive Summary

Fareham Borough Council is in the process of producing a new Local Plan to address housing, employment and retail development requirements across the Borough up to 2037. Once adopted, the new Local Plan will replace the adopted Local Plan Part 1 (Core Strategy) and Local Plan Part 2 (Development Sites & Policies).

To support Local Plan development, Fareham Borough Council commissioned the Landscape Team, in Hampshire County Council, to undertake a technical review of:

- six proposed Areas of Special Landscape Quality (ASLQ).
- two proposed Strategic Countryside Gaps: Meon Gap and between Fareham and Stubbington.

Fareham Borough Council's recent past experience in the determining of two planning applications, identified the need to address the 'valued landscapes' of Fareham.

*"Two recent planning appeal decisions demonstrated how the argument of valued landscapes could help to determine planning decisions. Both decisions were on sites located in the Lower Meon Valley (Land west of Old Street, Stubbington and Land east of Posbrook Lane, Titchfield) and the Inspectors recognised the high-quality landscape concluding that the Lower Meon is a valued landscape.*

*...with this in mind, the Council proposed the designation of valued landscapes as part of the Draft Local Plan Update consultation in the summer of 2019."(page 27, Fareham Draft Local Plan 2036)*

There was also the need to clarify the role that Strategic Gap designation plays within planning policies in the Countryside, and establish the clear difference between a policy that addresses landscape quality and a policy that addresses the prevention of coalescence of settlements with separate identities, as:

*"...Strategic Gaps do not necessarily have intrinsic landscape value but are important in maintaining the settlement pattern, protecting settlement identity and providing green infrastructure opportunities." (page 27, Fareham Draft Local Plan 2036)*

This technical review is published at the Regulation 19 stage to support the proposed designations.

The technical review undertaken during March to July 2020, reviewed recent relevant documents and developed an appropriate and concise methodology for determining Areas of Special Landscape Quality (or ASLQ), based primarily on criteria from the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLIVIA) 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Box. 5.1, supported by other examples of good practice and case law.

As there is no standard national guidance on Strategic Gap determination, a methodology and set of criteria were established for determining Strategic Gap characteristics and boundaries through review and analysis of pertinent recent Strategic Gap proposals developed for other Local Plans and through Fareham Borough Council's own Strategic Gap history.



## Executive Summary

The resultant analysis and site surveys of all Fareham Borough's Landscape Character Areas concludes that:

- The six proposed ASLQ put forward for designation in the Fareham Local Plan Supplement (Reg 18 consultation document, Jan-March 2020), can be considered as 'valued landscapes' as they scored highly against the assessment criteria and therefore should be identified for ASLQ designation in the Fareham Local Plan 2037, with some modifications made to boundaries, to bring them into line with the current Fareham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017, but also;
- Through this process, two further landscape character areas in Fareham Borough were identified as having equivalently 'valued landscape' characteristics and so it is recommended that Chilling-Brownwich Coastal Plain and parts of the Cams to Portchester Coast should also be designated.
- Conservation Areas where they sit in or adjacent to a proposed ASLQ should be included as part of the ASLQ because of their mutually supportive relationship.

The resultant analysis and site surveys of the two Strategic Gaps, conclude that:

- The Meon Strategic Gap is proposed for continued designation, having both strong sub-regional agreement for its designation, and a clear role in preventing settlement coalescence, that could result from continued pressure for expansion of the Western Parishes; North and West Fareham, and from pressure for the expansion of Stubbington.
- One moderate amendment is proposed to the North Eastern corner of the Meon Gap; that is an extension to the Gap around Funtley to prevent Funtley from coalescing with North and West Fareham.
- The Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap is proposed for continued designation, also having strong sub-regional agreement for its designation, and a clear role in preventing settlement coalescence through continued and heavy pressure for Southern expansion of Fareham and Northern and Eastern expansion of Stubbington, but it is considered that there are some opportunities for development to be accommodated within the landscape, without compromising the Strategic Gaps function.

# Executive Summary

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Possible adjustments to the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap could be considered in the following locations:

- An area to the South of Fareham, and west of HMS Collingwood, as some development in this area could be visually absorbed into the Gap without compromising the Gap function.
- An area to the north west of Stubbington south of Oakcroft Lane and east of Ranvilles Lane, as some development could be visually and physically absorbed into the Gap without compromising the Gap function.

It is also noted that the Newgate Lane Area (Newgate Lane West and East from Fareham to Peel Common Roundabout) has undergone a significant amount of change in the recent past.

In order to develop appropriate Green Infrastructure mitigation and enhancement associated with the areas of recent and future change described above, in the Fareham-Stubbington Gap, Green Infrastructure Frameworks or Strategies are required for each area.



## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps



Figure 4.1. Photograph taken from road that leads to The Great Barn, near Titchfield Abbey, looking East towards edge of Fareham, in The Meon Gap. Beyond the tree line is Fareham. Photograph: Charlotte Webb June 2020

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps Overview

1. This chapter describes the application of methodology to determine the extent of the two Strategic Gaps in the draft Fareham Local Plan 2036 and gives specific recommendations for each Gap:
  1. Fareham/Stubbington and the Western Wards (the Meon Gap)
  2. Fareham/Bridgemary and Stubbington / Lee-on-the-Solent (the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap)

### Role and purpose of the Strategic Gap

2. As a reminder of the previously stated purpose of the Strategic Gap:
 

*“The primary purpose of identifying Strategic Gaps is to prevent the coalescence of separate settlements and help maintain distinct community identities. Strategic Gaps do not necessarily have intrinsic landscape value but are important in maintaining the settlement pattern, protecting settlement identity and providing green infrastructure opportunities.”*  
(Fareham Publication Local Plan 2037)

### First Filter to establish Study Area Extents

3. The Strategic Gap Study Area extents are shown in Figure 4.1. and detailed site analysis sheets can be found in Appendix 5. The study areas were established to show specific tracts of land between the settlement boundaries of nearest neighbour settlements.

### Strategic Policy DS2: Development in Strategic Gaps

*“In order to prevent the coalescence of urban areas and to maintain the separate identity of settlements, Strategic Gaps are identified as shown on the Policies map between the following areas:*

- 1) *Fareham / Stubbington and the Western Wards (Meon Gap)*
- 2) *Fareham / Bridgemary and Stubbington / Lee-on-the-Solent (Fareham- Stubbington Strategic Gap)*

*Development proposals will not be permitted where they significantly affect the integrity of the gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements or the distinctive nature of settlement characters.”*

4. Both the Meon Gap and Fareham-Stubbington Gap are identified as ‘Cross-authority’ Gaps, with the Meon Gap running north into Winchester City Council Local Plan Area and the Fareham-Stubbington Gap running South-East into Gosport Borough Council Local Plan Area. Identified through PFSH Position Statement 2016.
5. Within the sub-region of South Hampshire, the purpose of the Meon Gap *“is of particular significance as it demarks the boundary of the Portsmouth and Southampton Housing Market Areas”* .(PFSH Position Statement 2016)



## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps Overview

- 
5. Within Fareham Borough the aim of the Meon Gap is to prevent coalescence of Fareham and Stubbington with the Western Wards, but also important is the avoidance of coalescence with the settlement of Titchfield, that lies within the middle of the Gap. As stated earlier, the Meon Gap runs northwards following the River Valley across the borough boundary into Winchester City Council Local Authority Area, where Winchester Local Plan Policy CP18 - Settlement Gaps' includes the 'Meon Gap' (Whiteley – Fareham/Fareham Western Wards), with a local gap between North Fareham SDA and Knowle and Wickham designated under Policy SH4: North Fareham SDA.
6. The aim of the Fareham- Stubbington Gap is to avoid coalescence between the settlements of: Fareham and , Bridgemyary, with Stubbington and Lee-on-the-Solent. Gosport Local Plan also supports P/SH Position Statement 2016 and has designated a Strategic Gap which runs from the Borough border through the Alver Valley, but also Brookers Field Recreation Ground on the border with Fareham, is designated as Strategic Gap. The settlement boundary for Bridgemyary, Gosport, lies on the Borough boundary with Fareham. The Strategic Gap designation is contained within Gosport Local Plan 2011-2029 adopted October 2015.
8. In addition to the two Appeal Sites at Posbrook Lane, Titchfield, and Old Street, Stubbington, which highlighted 'valued landscapes' in the Meon Valley, recent noteworthy planning applications which also highlight development pressures, within the Strategic Gaps are:
- P/14/0841/FP: Land of Cartwright Drive, Titchfield
  - P/19/0301/FP: Land East of Crofton Cemetery and West of Peak Lane, Fareham
  - P/14/0222/OA: Longfield Avenue, Land to the South – Fareham
- Housing and Employment Land Availability Study, December 2019. The pressure for development in the Fareham-Stubbington Gap, is very significant to the risk for complete loss of countryside gap. The pressure in the Meon Gap is more moderate, with a 'squeezing' of the central area around Titchfield, but with a significant pressure to develop pockets of land along the west side of Titchfield Road, between Titchfield and Stubbington. There is moderate pressure for development on the Western edge of Fareham and between Titchfield and Titchfield Common and Southwards pressure from Titchfield along Posbrook Lane. The indication of development pressure Southwards from Titchfield Common to Hook, is also of note, with the potential to put pressure on Chilling-Brownwich Coastal Plain.

### Potential Development Impact

7. As stated in Chapter 1, a key demonstration of pressure for development comes from the potential site allocations assessed in the Strategic

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps Overview

11. In the Meon Gap: P/14/0841/FP: Land of Cartwright Drive, Titchfield: Proposals for an 86 unit Care Homes, with associating landscape and car parking and a 15.4ha Country Park (with car parking), was approved though it was contrary to the current Policy C22: Strategic Gaps and within the setting of Titchfield Abbey Conservation Area. Construction on site was recently completed and is included in the site analysis.
12. P/19/0301/FP: Land East of Crofton Cemetery and West of Peak Lane, Fareham: refused for several reasons, such as design in relation to the setting of the Cemetery, but not for it's siting in the Fareham-Stubbington Gap.
13. P/14/0222/0A: Longfield Avenue, Land to the South – Fareham, an outline application for up to 1550 dwelling and associated infrastructure was withdrawn.

### Key Routes for experiencing the Strategic Gaps

14. Key routes for the primary purpose of experiencing the physical and visual separation of settlements have been identified and are shown in Figure 4.2. This work ties in closely with the previous analysis carried out by LDA and described in Chapter 3 of the Adopted Fareham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017. As much as is possible, the key routes (or 'paths') pass between the settlement edges identified in the first filter, so that a significant number of drivers and walkers should experience the sense of leaving one settlement, passing through a distinctly different space, i.e. countryside between settlements before reaching another distinctly different settlement. This was tested out as part of the site analysis and is described in Appendix 5.

### Settlement Edge Characteristics

15. This study builds upon the work previously carried out by David Hares Associates in the Fareham Borough Gap Review 2012. There have been negligible changes in the settlement edges since 2012 and the summary of settlement types shown in illustration 4 of the Fareham Borough Gap Review 2012 is still relevant:

*“The edges of new housing are often more visible than older housing stock as a result of garden tree planting, which has helped to screen the older properties adjoining the gap. Properties which back onto woodland have the most robust edge to the gap” (page 19, Fareham Borough Gap Review. David Hares, 2012)*

16. A key feature of many of Fareham's settlement edges is that of Woodland screening. Detailed findings are described in Appendix 5. The Spatial Visibility/Legibility maps A5.8-A5.10 show key long views and views towards settlement edges where dwellings or other landmark buildings can either be seen or are hidden or partially hidden from view by woodland, tree canopies or hedgerows. Primary measure 10 gives descriptions of the impact of the settlement edges on users from multiple vantage points.

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps Overview

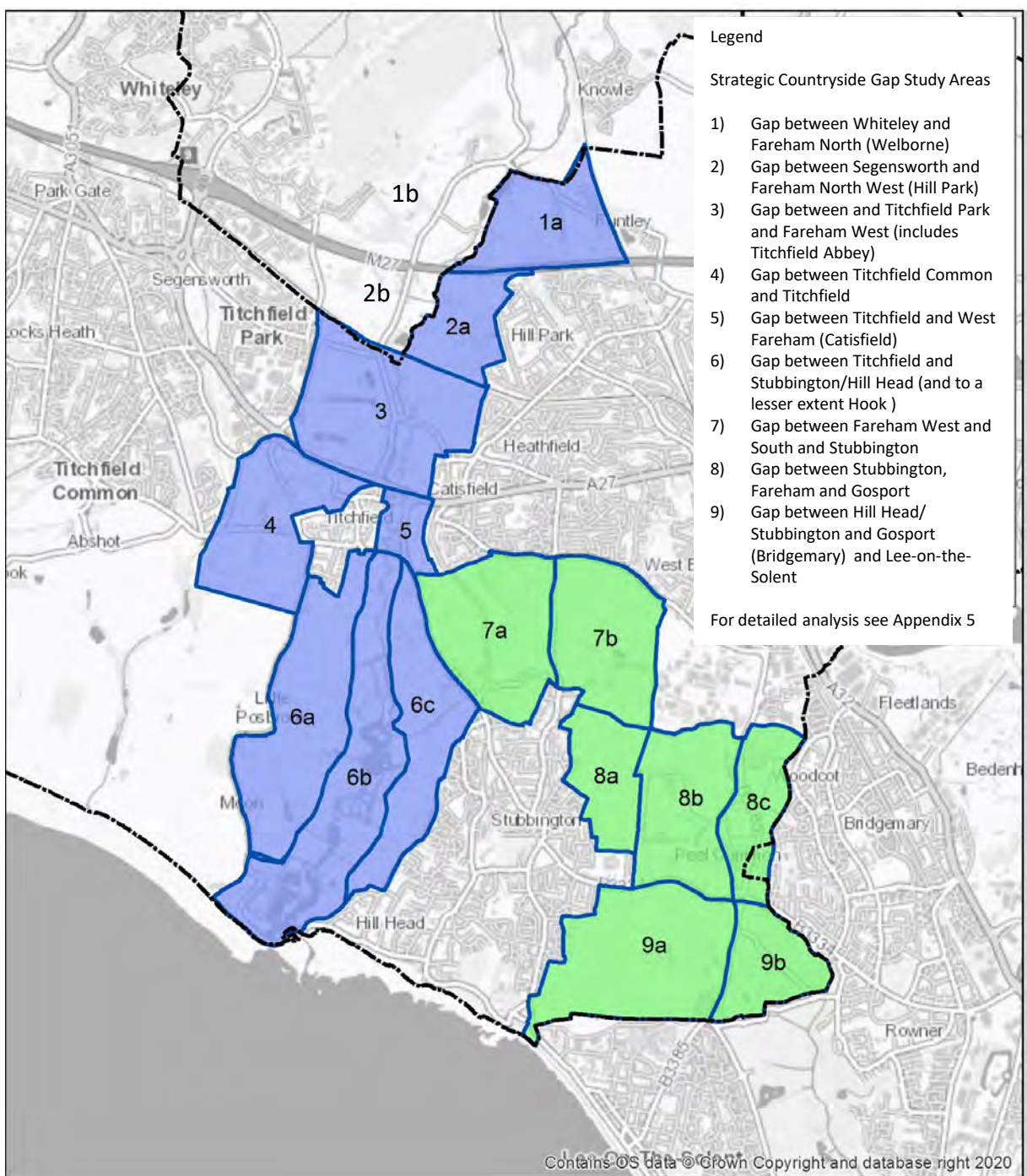


Figure 4.1. Plan showing Strategic Gap Study Area Extents



## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps Overview

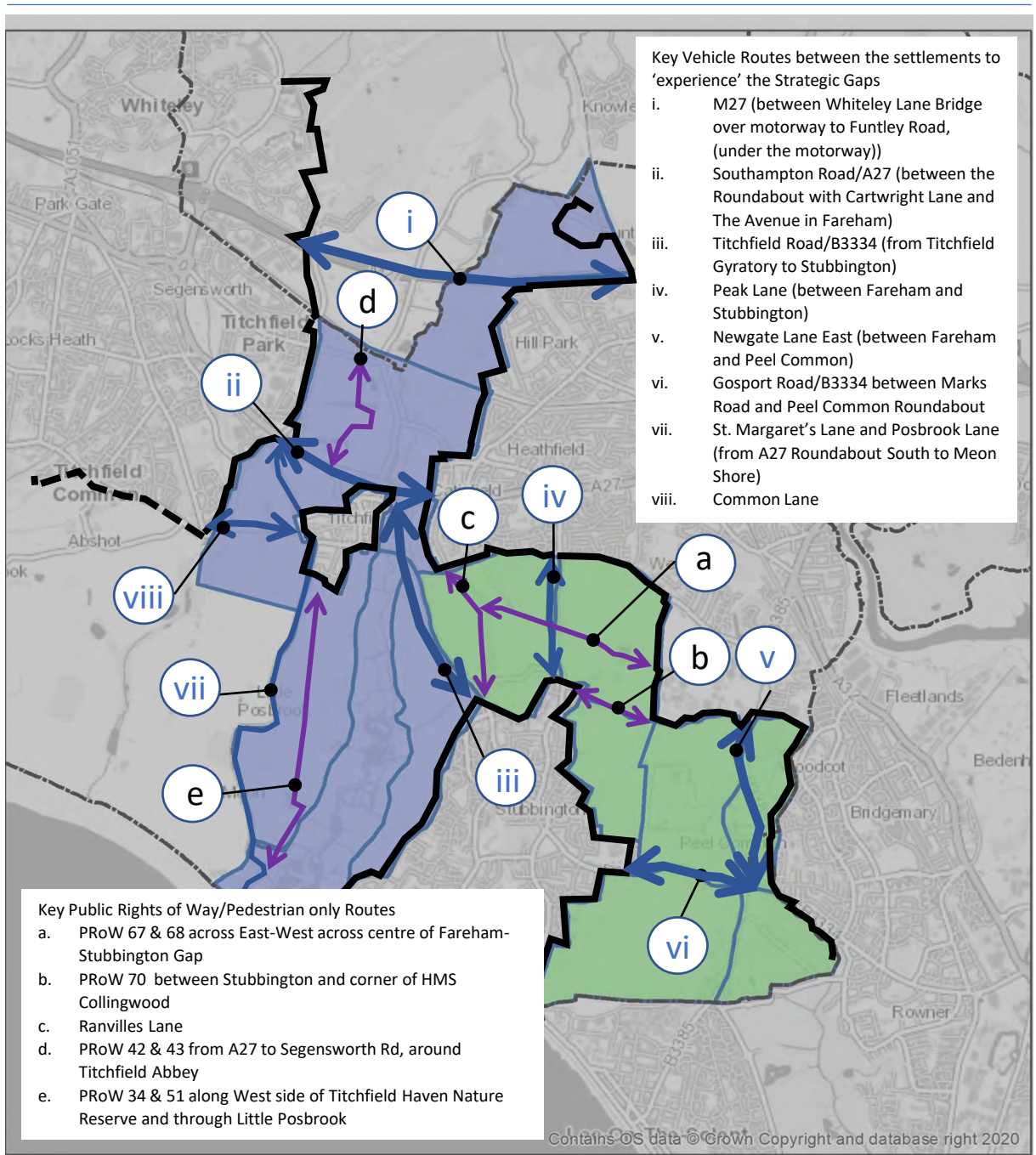


Figure 4.2. Plan showing key experiential routes through the Strategic Gaps





## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

#### Key features of the Strategic Gap

##### 1. Key Features of the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap are:

- Open, predominantly arable farmland and horticulture with some glasshouses, a weak hedgerow structure and few trees
- The settlement edges are for the most part well screened by mature tree canopy, but there is some minor visual intrusion from Fareham, Stubbington and HMS Collingwood
- a few scattered farmsteads/horticultural holdings and a mosaic of small fragments of open farmland and horse-grazed pastures sandwiched between:
- large-scale non-agricultural uses of Business and airfield development at Solent Airport in Daedalus to the South and the utilities of:
  - Peel Common Water Treatment Works enclosed from views by an earth bund and mature tree belt
  - Peel Common Solar Farm
- Construction site of Stubbington-bypass, which will provide an East-West and South route through the Gap that has not previously existed
- Urban fringe character of Peel Common residential area

- Recently completed highway works to Newgate Lane, and Peel Common Roundabout, with associated noise attenuation fencing and bus and cycle infrastructure.

#### Potential Development Impact

2. As stated earlier, the potential impact of development is high within the Fareham-Stubbington Gap, with the potential to develop large tracts of farmland.
3. It is too early to determine the full impact that Stubbington Bypass will have on the landscape character and development pressures of the Gap. As the Bypass is currently under construction and its alignment marked out, it is possible to see how it might affect the sense of separation between Fareham and Stubbington. In some respects it strengthens the sense of separation because it will be a physical demarcation and partial interruption to cross-movement. It also becomes another key route from which to experience the Gap, but it will bring more noise and activity and may exert a suburbanising influence on the landscape. It is strongly recommended that once the construction works have been completed and the road is fully operational a review of the Landscape Character Assessment for LCA 7: Fareham-Stubbington Gap is carried out.

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

#### Other Environmental and Planning Designations

4. Unlike the Meon Gap, the Fareham-Stubbington Gap does not have a significant number of environmental designations. The only are two areas of Ancient/Semi-Ancient Woodland: Oxleys Coppice, which is also a SINC (Southern edge of Fareham) and Tips Copse, (East edge of Stubbington, North of Crofton Secondary School). The Strategic Gap designation would be the key designation in this area.

#### Summary findings of the Study Area Assessments:

5. The descriptions run from West to East and then South. More detailed analysis of each area can be found in Appendix 5.

#### Area East of Titchfield Road and West of Peak Lane (Strategic Gap Study Area 7a):

6. Due to the significant number of viewpoints from long stretches of the key roads that run through the area: Titchfield Road and Peak Lane (and from the Stubbington Bypass, when it is completed) and from the numerous footpaths that run through the middle of this area, it is strongly recommended that the vast majority of this section of Strategic Gap remains intact. It provides a useful informal recreational resource, within a distinctive

landscape character, that is of good quality, where residents can walk in relative tranquility away from roads and enjoy long and varied views. Due to its moderate to large gap dimensions (800-1.2km) it has been able to retain a relatively high level of tranquility and dark nights skies, compared to other parts of Fareham and it would be a significant loss to local residents if they were not able to continue to enjoy this informal recreational resource.

7. For this section of the Gap, this analysis agrees with the summary findings of LDA in Chapter 3 of the Fareham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017 - *“The landscape performs a highly effective role in providing a 'sense' of separation and the experience of moving between one settlement and the other. ....Edges of Fareham and Stubbington are clearly defined by strong boundary vegetation and there is a clear distinction between 'town and country' there is a strong sense of leaving one urban area and moving through open countryside before entering another. Scale of the gap allows the time to appreciate sense of being in open countryside. Being able to see far across the gap and identify the edges, also strengthens the sense of separation.” (page 41) .*

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

8. However there exists the potential to make modifications to the settlement boundary of North Stubbington: to extend the boundary to run along Oakcroft Lane, as the isolated field that sits aside Crofton Cemetery, does not protrude into the landscape beyond the current Northern and Western edges of Stubbington. Largely sitting behind a mature line of Poplars also helps this isolated field absorb some development (subject to detail design), without risking the integrity of the Gap, as a whole. Retention and enhancement of GI will be required, within the site. **Development of a GI Framework or Strategy is recommended** for the site in its context.

#### **Area East of Peak Lane and West of HMS Collingwood (Strategic Gap Study Area 7b):**

9. Whilst this area comes under the same Landscape Character Area as Strategic Gap Study Area 7a, the terrain is much flatter, and the blocks of vegetation are less varied. Vegetation around the main large field screens the field from view from many vantage points. There are much fewer opportunities to see across this land, unless close to the field gates. From within the main field there are more visual detractors in the form of MOD buildings in HMS Collingwood, a low-rise tower in the

adjacent estate off Longfield Drive and a long view to the Fareham Borough Council Office Tower Block. Subject to detailed design, scale and functions, it is considered possible for the main field to absorb some development without a significant impact on visual quality of the Strategic Gap. If managed appropriately, development could have beneficial effect on the GI network (recreational and environmental) that exists around the periphery of the field subject to appropriate attention being paid to GI provision and design. Therefore a change in Strategic Gap boundary could potentially be accommodated without undermining the principal purpose of the gap to prevent coalescence of settlements. However, such adjustment would be driven by more detailed testing of development forms, scale, landscape and GI interventions. Such work would also need to consider the potential reduction of tranquility and dark night skies ratings in the area. **Establishing a GI Framework or Strategy is recommended.**

10. The experience of driving along Peak Lane is currently pleasant and it is recommended that with any potential boundary change that a GI zone of around 150m width between Peak Lane and any development, be established. This is to maintain the experience of

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

‘leaving’ Fareham driving through Countryside and arriving at the separate settlement of Stubbington.

#### **The Open Coastal Plain between Stubbington and the Peel Common Water Treatment Works, (Strategic Gap Study Area 8a)**

11. There are two key PRoW across this Landscape, that connect Stubbington and Fareham through a narrow gap of around 600m. The paths cross a dramatic flat landscape which has strong linear North-South views between Daedalus and Newgate Lane Farm, framed by blocks of woodland vegetation, on the boundary bund around the Peel Common Water Treatment Works and the east side of Stubbington, including Tips Copse Ancient Woodland. These views should be valued and retained, providing a great sense of space in an otherwise narrow corridor.
12. There is very little opportunity to absorb development in this corridor. Visual intrusion of buildings would be unwelcome, as it would reduce tranquility. Some of the tree belts are thin, and a substantial belt of woodland would strengthen the landscape structure and provide an attractive edge to frame North South Views and views towards the eastern edge of Stubbington. Advance planting of this

belt would be advised. A **GI Framework or Strategy is recommended.**

#### **Section of Fareham-Stubbington that provides a three-way Gap between Stubbington, Fareham and Gosport (Bridgemary) (Strategic Gap Study Area 8b)**

13. There are no proposed changes to the Strategic Gap in this area. The strong screening around the Peel Common Water Treatment works provides an effective visual and physical barrier between all three settlements.
14. There is pressure for development along Gosport Road (A334) between the Southern edge of Stubbington and Peel Common. It is strongly recommended that development pressure is resisted in this area as it would risk visual and physical coalescence between Stubbington and Gosport.

#### **Newgate Lane and Peel Common Area (Strategic Gap Study Area 8c)**

15. Despite the proximity of Fareham and Gosport in the north part, the gap is currently still effective in providing a ‘sense of separation’, but it is at risk. Substantial vegetation around boundaries currently prevents visual coalescence. There is a defined boundary along settlement edges and a gap of sufficient scale and

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

and coherence of character. Whilst the recently completed Newgate Lane South road development does not alter the experience of entering the urban area of Gosport beyond the Peel Common Roundabout, it does reduce tranquility and bring more built features (such as noise attenuation barriers) into this part of the gap. Further development within the gap in addition to the road scheme, together with existing urban fringe activity, is likely to cause visual, or even physical, coalescence of settlements on either side of the new road corridor.

16. Even with the development of Newgate Lane South, the previous analysis carried out by LDA and described in Chapter 3 of the Fareham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017, is still relevant: *“A cohesive area of undeveloped landscape which performs an important role in respect of the primary purposes of the Strategic Gap, i.e. in defining the edges, separate identity and settings of Fareham and Gosport, preventing their coalescence. Even minor encroachment beyond existing settlement boundaries could have an adverse effect on these functions and the overall integrity of the landscape and Strategic Gap.”* (page 43)

17. It is recommended that a **GI Framework or Strategy for the Strategic Gap Study Area 8c** would be beneficial to enhance the GI value of the current gap and potentially help determine an appropriate GI framework for moderately scaled development. The planting associated with the Newgate Lane Highway works will exert a stronger woodland/hedgerow edge as it establishes, and this should be factored into a GI Strategy. The GI Strategy or Framework should reassess the Open Coastal Plain Landscape Type: with a view to creating stronger GI structure throughout, but highlighting and retaining long North-South views, and largely undeveloped views eastward from old Newgate Lane, to retain a sense of space and ‘big skies’.

#### **Daedalus and Lee-on-the-Solent Golf Course (Strategic Gap Study Area 9a and 9b)**

18. This study does not suggest alterations to the Strategic Gap around the Airfield and Lee-on-the-Solent Golf Course. Current development within the Airfield is highly visible, but in keeping with current land uses/character of the area. Some further development could be accommodated in the Airfield but would depend on where within the site; scale and; what mitigation is delivered.



## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap



Figure 4.12 Photograph from PRow in Study Area 7a, looking North East towards Peak Lane, and South Fareham  
Photograph Charlotte Webb  
June 2020.



Figure 4.13 Photograph from Peak Lane, looking towards Southern edge of Fareham.  
Photograph Charlotte Webb  
June 2020.



Figure 4.14 Photograph from Stubbington By-pass Construction site, looking towards Crofton Cemetery, and distinctive row of Poplars.  
Photograph Charlotte Webb  
June 2020.

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

Figure 4.15 Photograph from Stubbington By-pass Construction site, looking South towards Glass houses on edge of Stubbington Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.



Figure 4.16 Photograph from Stubbington By-pass Construction site, looking East towards Newgate Lane Farm Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.



Figure 4.17 Photograph from Stubbington By-pass Construction site, towards Fareham South (Longfield Avenue) and Broadlaw Walk centre. Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.





## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap



Figure 4.18 Photograph taken near Newlands Farm, from Stubbington Bypass Construction site, looking North East to Tower block near Longfield Avenue, Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.



Figure 4.19 Photograph from Stubbington Bypass Construction site, looking North East to Peak Lane, Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.



Figure 4.20 Photograph from ProW crossing from Stubbington to Tanners Lane, looking South towards Meoncross School, Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.

## Chapter 4: Strategic Gaps

### SG 2: The Fareham-Stubbington Gap

Figure 4.21 Photograph from Newgate Lane West, looking South towards Peel Common Roundabout. Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.



Figure 4.22 Photograph from Brookers Field, looking West towards Newgate Lane. Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.



Figure 4.23 Photograph from verge on Newgate Lane East, looking towards settlement edge of Bridgemary. Photograph Charlotte Webb June 2020.







## Chapter 5: Summary Conclusions and Recommendations



Figure 5.1. Photograph of Titchfield Abbey, from the new Country Park adjacent to A27.  
Photograph: Charlotte Webb June 2020

## Chapter 5: Summary Conclusions and Recommendations

- 
1. The resultant analysis and site surveys of all Fareham Borough's Landscape Character Areas recommends that:
    - The six proposed ASLQ put forward for designation in the Fareham Local Plan Supplement (Reg 18 consultation document, Jan-March 2020), can be considered as 'valued landscapes' as they scored highly against the assessment criteria and therefore should be identified for ASLQ designation in the Fareham Local Plan 2037, with some modifications made to boundaries, to bring them into line with the current Fareham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017, but also;
    - Through this process, two further landscape character areas in Fareham were identified as having equivalently 'valued landscape' characteristics and so it is recommended that Chilling-Brownwich Coastal Plain and parts of the Cams to Portchester Coast should also be designated.
    - Conservation Areas where they sit in or adjacent to a proposed ASLQ should be included as part of the ASLQ because of their mutually supportive relationship.
  2. It is considered that there is a clear difference between the ASLQ designation, where the landscape value is the key reason for designation, in the context of Strategic Gaps, landscape character and its quality are a 'part of the picture' sitting amongst a broader range of criteria.
  3. The resultant analysis and site surveys of the two Strategic Gaps, conclude that the Meon Strategic Gap:
    - is proposed for continued designation, having both strong sub-regional justification for its designation, and a clear and continued role in preventing settlement coalescence, that could result from pressure for expansion of the Western Parishes; North and West Fareham, and from pressure for the expansion of Stubbington with;
    - one moderate amendment proposed to the North Eastern corner of the Meon Gap; that is an extension to the Gap around Funtley to prevent Funtley from coalescing with North and West Fareham.
  4. The Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap is proposed for continued designation, also having strong sub-regional justification for its designation, with an important role in preventing settlement coalescence from continued and heavy pressure for Southern expansion of Fareham and Northern and Eastern expansion of Stubbington, but it is considered that there may be potential for some development to be accommodated within the landscape, without compromising its Strategic Gap function.

## Chapter 5: Summary Conclusions and Recommendations

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5. Possible adjustments to the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap could be considered in the following locations:
  - An area to the south of Fareham, and west of HMS Collingwood, as some development in this area could be visually absorbed into the Gap without compromising the Gap function.
  - An area to the north west of Stubbington, south of Oakcroft Lane and east of Ranvilles Lane.
6. It also noted that the Newgate Lane Area (Newgate Lane West and East from Fareham to Peel Common Roundabout) has undergone a significant amount of change in the recent past.
7. In order to develop appropriate Green Infrastructure mitigation and enhancement associated with the areas of recent and future change described above, in the Fareham-Stubbington Gap, Green Infrastructure Frameworks or Strategies are required for each area.





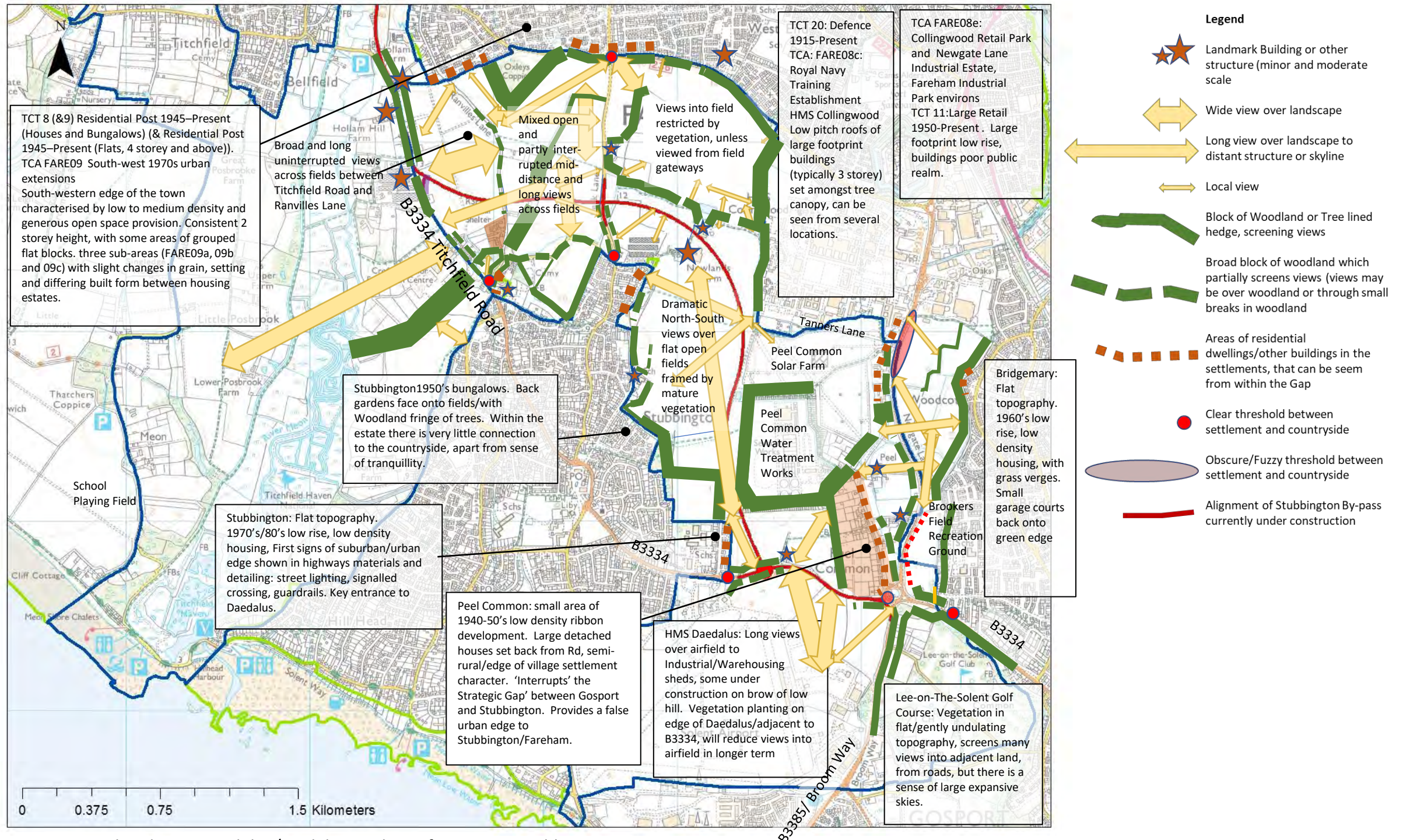


Figure: A5.10 Plan showing Visibility/Legibility Analysis of FAREHAM-Stubbington Gap



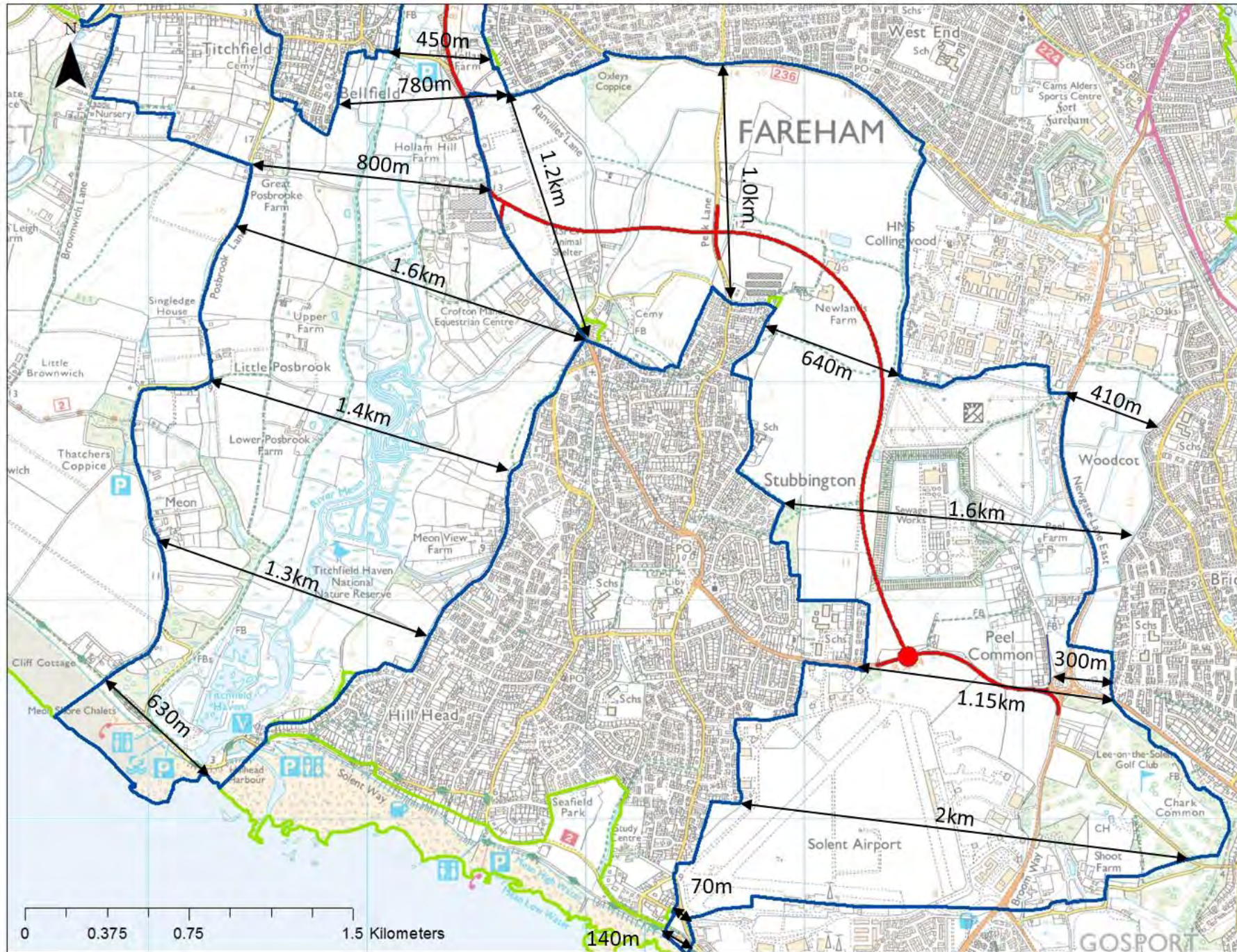
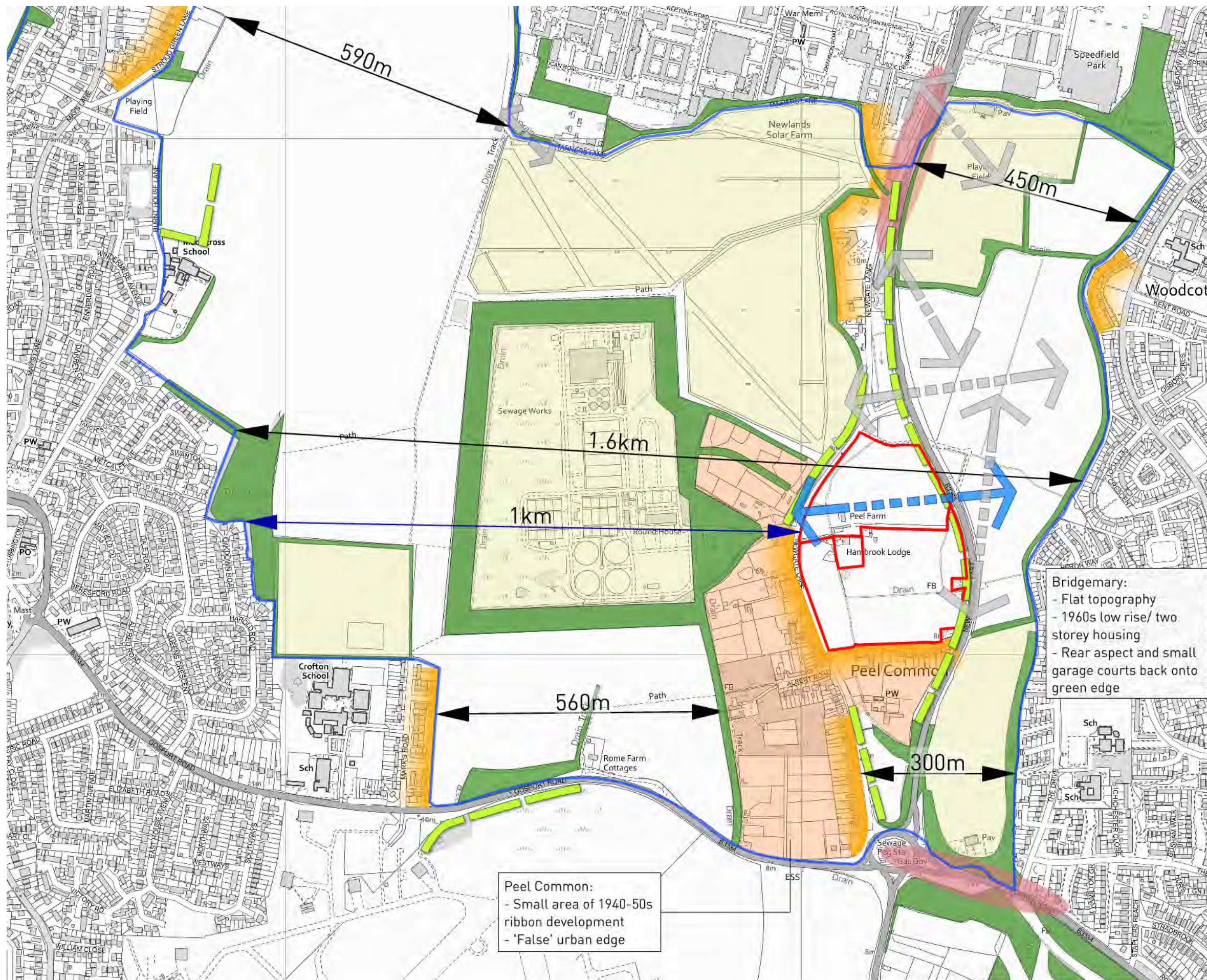


Figure: A5.12 Plan showing Key Distances across the Southern Part of Meon Strategic Gap and the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap between Settlement edges (distances are approximate)

## APPENDIX FL&BH 1.2.4 LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS OF THE STRATEGIC GAP





- KEY**
- Site boundaries (north and south)
  - Strategic gap boundary
  - Local view\*
  - Identified local view that is actually truncated by Newgate Lane East
  - Block of woodland or tree lined hedge, screening views\*
  - Broad block of woodland which partially screens views (views may be over woodland or through small breaks in woodland)\*
  - Areas of residential dwellings/ other buildings in the settlements, that can be seen from within the Gap\*
  - Obscure/ fuzzy threshold between settlement and countryside\*
  - Infrastructure and amenity uses are influential in the gap
  - Urbanising areas of Peel Common satellite
  - Key distances within the gap\*\*

**NOTES**

\* Based on analysis in Technical Review of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps, Hampshire County Council, 2020

\*\* Distances are approximate

Land at Newgate Lane (north) and Land at Newgate Lane (south), Fareham, Hampshire

Client: Fareham Land LP and Bargate Homes Ltd

**Appendix FL&BH 1.2.4 Landscape Analysis of the Strategic Gap**

Drawing no. : BRS. 4989\_82  
 Date : 21/10/2020  
 Drawn by : NF  
 Checked by : JWA  
 Scale : 1 : 7500 @ A3





APPEAL BY FAREHAM LAND LP AND BARGATE HOMES LTD

LAND AT NEWGATE LANE (NORTH) AND LAND AT  
NEWGATE LANE (SOUTH), FAREHAM, HAMPSHIRE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS:  
SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Qualifications and Experience

- 1.1. My name is James Atkin, Director (Landscape) in the Birmingham Office of the Pegasus Group and a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (2005). I have over 19 years experience specialising in the application of LVIA across a range of sectors including power, highways, rail, housing, waste, land reclamation and restoration, mineral extraction, commercial developments and renewable energy.
- 1.2. Since joining the Pegasus Group I have completed detailed LVIA's for sites across the UK, including schemes for residential, mixed use, care home, solar and commercial development. As an inherent part of this work I apply an iterative process of LVIA to inform masterplanning principles that respond appropriately to landscape and visual constraints and opportunities.

### Terms of Reference

- 1.3. This evidence is written on behalf of Fareham Land LP and Bargate Homes Ltd (the appellants) and relates to an appeal for non-determination by Fareham Borough Council in respect of two outline applications for residential development, both on land to the east of Newgate Lane. This evidence sets out an overview of relevant landscape and visual matters.
- 1.4. Principles and good practice for undertaking landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) and/or applying the principles of LVIA are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013)<sup>1</sup> (GLVIA3). The concepts and procedures set out in this guidance have been adopted where appropriate.
- 1.5. The evidence included in this supporting statement for this appeal (LPA reference: P/18/1118/OA - AND - P/19/0460/OA) is true and has been prepared in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution. I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

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<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (April, 2013)

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The appeal sites extend to ca. 10 hectares (ha) of agricultural land, situated close to the urban edge of Fareham. The appeal sites are bounded by Newgate Lane to the west, Woodcote Lane to the south and Newgate Lane East to the east.
- 2.2. The wider landscape context of the appeal sites includes the low-lying ground of the coastal plain and the adjacent urban environments of Fareham, Gosport (with Woodcot and Bridgemary). The settlement area of Stubbington forms the western extent of the Strategic Gap which extends across the coastal plain between the local settlement areas. Separation is most pronounced across the arable areas between Fareham/Peel Common and Stubbington.
- 2.3. The applications were submitted with a detailed LVIA which set out a comprehensive baseline and robust assessment of predicted impacts. These included details as to how landscape and visual matters have influenced the design of the masterplan, with mitigation measures consequently forming an inherent part of the proposals.
- 2.4. The reasons for refusal raises three main issues in respect of landscape and visual matters, stating that:
- b) The proposed development fails to respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics of the area and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside;
  - c) The provision of development in this location would significantly affect the integrity of the strategic gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements;
  - d) The application site is not sustainably located adjacent to, well related to or well-integrated with the existing urban settlement boundaries;
- 2.5. This evidence considers these issues against various information, including the submitted LVIA's, consultation responses, report to committee and other relevant baseline and evidence base documents related to landscape and visual matters.

### 3. SUMMARY

- 3.1. The submitted LVIAs address the key characteristics of the appeal sites and their context. The submitted LVIAs also set out an assessment of the impact and approach to mitigation. This process also enables judgements to be drawn in respect of the context of the appeal sites in relation to the existing urban settlement edges/boundaries.
- 3.2. With reference to this material, and supported by my own additional analysis where necessary, I conclude that the appeal schemes will not be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside, will not significantly affect the integrity of the Strategic Gap and will relate well to the existing patterns of settlement.
- 3.3. This is on the basis the relevant key landscape characteristics of the area have been considered through the process of LVIA, consequently informing the analysis of constraints and opportunities, and ultimately the landscape strategy for the mitigation. This forms an integrated part of the two masterplans for northern and southern schemes.
- 3.4. Consequently, I consider the approach taken to the design of the respective masterplans to have adopted a positive approach in landscape and visual terms.
- 3.5. The loss of the agricultural enclosures and replacement of these areas with residential development is largely the main cause of impact, however this is balanced by the response to the grain and pattern of the landscape and its scale, as well as the response to the characteristics of the landscape, several of which are defined as 'essential' by the published guidance. Where these are referenced, mitigation adopts an approach of retention and/or enhancement.
- 3.6. I consider that the subsequent residual impacts of the appeal schemes will be acceptable in landscape and visual terms.
- 3.7. In terms of the Fareham to Stubbington gap, I consider the appeal sites are well placed to accommodate development without undue consequences or impacts on the role and function of the Strategic Gap. This is on the basis that:
- In relation to distances, the appeal schemes will reduce the gap between Bridgemary and Stubbington physically from ca. 1.6km to ca. 1.1km which remains a considerable distance and well within the thresholds of the 'rule of thumb' appropriate distances set out in the FBC study;



- In terms of visibility, the appeal schemes will be physically and visually well contained – they sit within the strong green infrastructure framework that is evident in the form of blocks of woodland and tree lined hedges which screen or partially screen views – furthermore they will not be visible across the Strategic Gap from Stubbington;
- Existing screening is present immediately adjacent to the appeal sites in terms of the woodland around the waste water treatment works, along Newgate Lane and within the emerging framework of vegetation along Newgate Lane East that will continue to establish and increasingly provide a robust visual screen from the east;
- The surrounding context and urbanising influences, including the settlement area of Peel Common which reduce the degree of change;
- The opportunity to contribute to, and maintain, a strong green infrastructure network that complements both the strategic gap and the areas of settlement, in the form of the landscape d areas and landscape buffers along the eastern and western edges of the appeal sites which will reinforce and connect the linear routes which cross broadly north to south through this area; and
- In connection with the green infrastructure provision, the ability to incorporate substantial mitigation that will successfully avoid or minimise landscape and visual effects.

3.8. I also note that, notwithstanding differences in the technical approaches, the Pegasus Group and FBC Strategic Gap studies both independently acknowledge that the Strategic Gap can accommodate some form of growth and development within it. Both also recognise the need for additional, more detailed assessment on a site/project basis.

3.9. In respect of the conclusions of the FBC Strategic Gap study (where these note the relatively poor state of the gap at this point), I would think a logical and appropriate conclusion would be to amend the boundary to omit this part of the landscape from the Strategic Gap, creating capacity for development to come forward with a strong framework of green infrastructure and mitigation. This would place an emphasis on the importance of the core areas that are located further west, between Fareham and Stubbington where the Strategic Gap clearly delivers its role and function in full.

3.10. Finally, the reason for refusal suggests that the appeal schemes will not relate to, or integrate with, the existing urban settlement boundaries. However, my evidence demonstrates that the appeal sites are well related to Peel Common, being located to the east of Newgate Lane, physical contained by the alignment of Newgate Lane East and situated immediately adjacent to the existing residential dwellings off Woodcote

Lane and directly opposite the mix of dwellings and urban influences along the northern section of Newgate Lane.

- 3.11. With existing and proposed green infrastructure in place, the appeal schemes will consolidate the pattern of Peel Common within a clearly defined limit. As such I consider that the appeal schemes will integrate well, and in a positive way, with the settlement area at Peel Common.
- 3.12. Furthermore, there are some existing physical connections between Peel Common and Bridgemarky. With the appeal schemes in place, the consolidated pattern of Peel Common would continue to blend with the urban edge of Gosport and Bridgemarky, focused along the green route into Bridgemarky (along Woodcote Lane) and focussed on the large amenity open space of Brookers Field Recreation Ground.
- 3.13. If the previous emerging allocation of HA2 were to come forward, this broader area of development would reinforce the connection between Peel Common (including the appeal sites) and the edge of Fareham. In each eventuality, I consider there to be a good connection between the appeal schemes and the existing areas of the settlement.
- 3.14. In all respects, considering Peel Common in itself, connections to Gosport, and with the potential for HA2 to come forward, development in this area will maintain a robust gap between Fareham (aligned with the western edge of Peel Common) and Stubbington.
- 3.15. Overall, in the context of these limited issues, and with the appeal schemes in place, landscape and visual issues are not sufficient to support a prospective reason for refusal.