

P&D Scrutiny Panel – 22nd February

Planning Strategy Update

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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3. Water companies consultations on Water Resource Management Plans
4. Bird Aware – successful bids

Local Plan Update

Main Modifications Consultation

- We received just 38 responses to the main modifications consultation (11 from residents, 27 from organisations).
- The responses were mixed including several 'no comment' responses including from National Highways and the Environment Agency.
- Support for the modifications from Natural England, the Woodland Trust and the Fareham Society.
- A small number of developers and house builders responded and in almost equal measure, they supported the modifications to allocation policies on their sites, with one or two trying to introduce further changes at this late stage.
- A number commented that our housing need was higher and we should be making additional allocations or a firmer commitment to reviewing the plan early in light of the wider unmet need issue.
- Some detailed comments were submitted on sites that already have planning permission through the lapse of time.

Main Modifications Consultation

- Comments were collated and the responses sent to the Inspector before Christmas, along with our summary and commentary on the responses.
- The Inspector has confirmed receipt of the responses to the consultation.
- It is very much hoped that the examination process will conclude shortly, and will complete when the Council receives the Inspector's report.
- Assuming the Inspector finds the plan to be sound with modifications, it is proposed that Council will receive a report on the Inspector's findings, and will consider whether to adopt the Plan.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Consultation

Background

- The Government opened a consultation on planning reform on 22nd December 2022.
- It is a wide-ranging consultation. It includes proposals for immediate implementation in a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposals linked to a wider review of national planning policy scheduled for later in 2023, and proposals which will come through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in 2024.
- The consultation closes on 2 March 2023 and the Government have suggested that they will respond to the consultation in the spring.

Current planning strategy context

Five year housing land supply (5YHLS) position

- Has been challenging since 2017
- Improved recently
- Latest position (January 2023) 5.49 years
- Therefore 'tilted balance' does not apply via this route

However, latest Housing Delivery Test result was 62%

Therefore, need to add 20% to the 5YHLS calculations and apply the tilted balance to our applications.

Impact on Local Plan

- None of the proposed changes are anticipated to impact the conclusion of the examination process of the emerging Local Plan for Fareham.
- There is clarity that these changes will not take effect until Spring 2023.
- The Government will need time to review the responses before pressing ahead with the changes and so this is likely to be April or May given that the consultation closes in early March.
- It is anticipated that the Inspector's report on the Local Plan will be received in advance of this, which will conclude the examination.
- The Council will be responding to the consultation (deadline 2nd March)

Proposed changes –Spring 2023

Proposal	Response
'Alternate method' for calculating housing need – little detail in consultation. Two scenarios suggested – high proportion of older people or students	Support but believe Fareham has justification for an alternate method – south coast, two National Parks, accessibility/traffic issues, many protected sites and environmental mitigation to be found. Housing need needs reform
The application of local constraints and character in attempting to meet that need	Support but want more detail or local decision making
Removal of 5% and 20% 'buffers' to 5YHLS	Support
No need to produce 5YHLS statement if plan less than five years old	Support
Greater reference to beauty and the importance of food production	Support

Housing delivery test

$$\frac{\text{Number of homes built in the borough over the past three financial years}}{\text{Annual housing requirement for the past three years}} \times 100$$

Currently	Proposed changes
If less than 95%, write an action plan	If less than 95%, write an action plan
If less than 85%, add 20% to the five year housing land supply calculation (for the next five years)	
If less than 75%, apply the tilted balance in favour of granting permission for new homes.	If less than 75%, apply the tilted balance in favour of granting permission for new homes UNLESS....
	The number of homes permitted is at least 15% greater than the housing requirement

Response – Support but many queries

- Over what timespan?
- What counts as a permission (full, outline etc)?
- What about permissions for large sites that take years to come forward.
- 15% additional permissions too high.

Proposed changes –Wider review

Proposal	Response
National Development Management Policies to be consulted upon	Agrees in principle with scope and principles, but they need to be clearly written to be unambiguous.
Further protection for irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland	Support
Work with Defra on ways to avoid degradation of sites before planning applications are submitted	Support
Replacing the Duty to Co-operate with an 'alignment' policy	Want more detail, but support the removal of the need for authorities adjacent to urban areas to pick up 'overspill' of city's unmet need

Proposed changes – New system

Proposal	Response
The calculation of housing need could be reviewed depending on 2021 census data to be released in 2024.	Situation needs reform and to allow more local input
Streamlining Local Plans – 30 months to produce	Supports but wants more detail on what constitutes the start. Pleased to see removal of sanctions and penalties for missing deadlines, which were referenced in earlier consultations.
Increasing the accountability of developers and data regarding their performance on housing delivery	Support but needs careful thought, for example how many years, and what is acceptable improvement in behaviour.

Other Consultations

Portsmouth Water Draft Water Resources Management Plan

Southern Water Draft Water Resources Management Plan

Portsmouth Water Draft WRMP

- Sets out how they intend to secure reliable healthy drinking water supplies for the next 50 years.
- Plan takes account of improving the environment, population and housing growth, climate change and drought resilience.
- Focused on making better use of existing water, and strategies include:
 - Constructing and filling Havant Thicket Reservoir by 2029
 - Installing smart meters in most home by 2035
 - Supporting customers in reducing water usage to 119 litres per day
 - Introducing government-mandated water efficiency labelling to appliances
 - Reducing non-household water use
 - Halving Portsmouth Water leaks by 2050
 - Upgrading a water supply 'booster' station in West Sussex by 2030
 - Increasing resilience to reduce likelihood of emergency drought restrictions
 - Reducing the amount of water they supply to Southern Water's customers
 - Looking at receiving supplies from Southern Water after 2049.

Council Response

- The Council considers that deadline to halve leakage by 2050 is not ambitious enough and should be brought forward. [24million litres of water are lost per day]
- Support plans to help homeowners and businesses to save water including installing meters at homes.
- That basing water bills on the amount of water a household uses is fairer approach than using rateable value.
- Support the use of smart meters, making customers aware of how much water they are using encourages saving, and enabling more leaks to be found.

Southern Water Draft WRMP

- Supporting customers in reducing water usage to 109 litres per day by use of water meters, public campaigns, provide water efficiency measures, introduce innovative tariffs
- Halving leaks across all catchments by 2050
- Water recycling at Budds Farm, Storage at Havant Thicket Reservoir and transfer to water treatment Plan in Otterbourne to receive up to 90 mil litres of water to be achieved by 2025-2035
- Creation of a series of new pipe networks to transfer water across catchment and to receive water from neighbouring suppliers.
- Between 2035-2050 begin receiving up to 120 million litres a day from a new reservoir in Thames Water's area
- Catchment Schemes to reduce nitrates and pesticides

Council Response

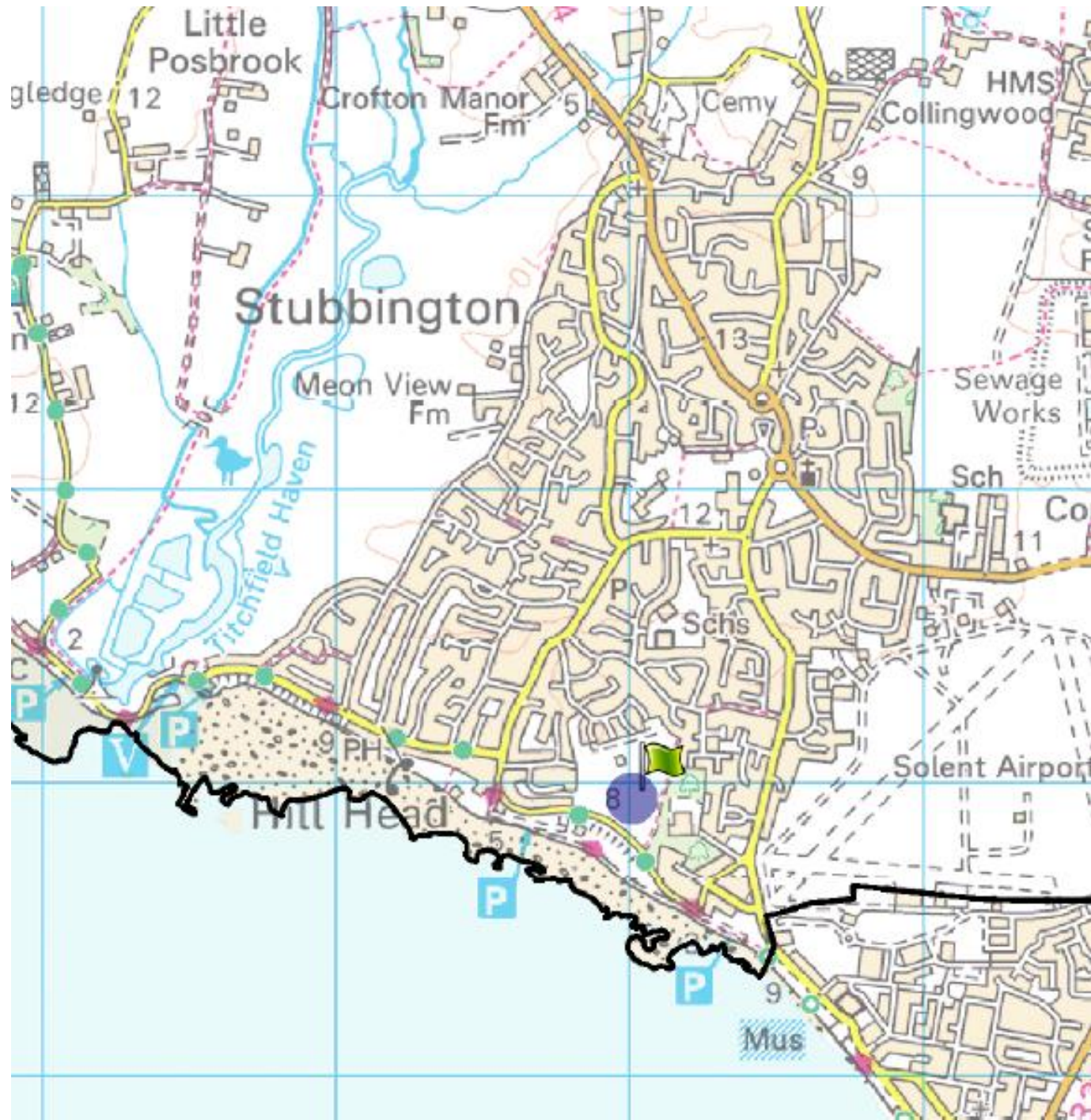
- Welcomes the proposal to pursue ‘high environmental improvement and climate change’.
- Encourages Southern Water to continue working with LPAs in the region to understand the future demands for development.
- The Council considers that deadline to halve leakage by 2050 is not ambitious enough and should be brought forward. [92million litres of water are lost per day]
- Reiterates that the best approach to reduce the risk of drought scenarios is to address the leakage issue.
- Questions the role of water recycling in securing water supplies for the future – sorting out the leaks would be more effective.
- Suggests that existing developments attain 110 litres/person/day level of water consumption sooner than 2040 to be in line with new development.
- Supports the principle of new pipelines that will transfer water into the region however, the routes these new pipelines take will need to be carefully considered and selected to ensure minimal disruption.
- Questions the principle of desalination to provide extra water – expensive and complicated.
- Supports the ambition to proactively use catchment and nature-based solutions where possible to help improve the quality of the water sources, recognising the wider environmental benefits it will bring.

- Bird Aware Fareham projects

Bird Aware Solent: Background

- The Solent is home to internationally important numbers of overwintering birds with three Special Protection Areas (SPAs) being designated in the Solent to protect them.
- New housing around the Solent is likely to lead to more people visiting the coast for leisure, with the potential to cause more disturbance to the birds.
- Bird Aware Solent is a tool used to lessen potential impacts from increased local housing development. The planned mitigation measures are set out in the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy.
- The initiative is run by the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership made up of 19 organisations (including Fareham) and is funded by contributions from all new residential dwellings within 5.6km of the SPAs.
- Developer contributions are paid to local planning authorities, through legal agreements.
- Contributions are pooled by each authority and transferred quarterly to the Partnership which then implement the mitigation measures via a project bidding round

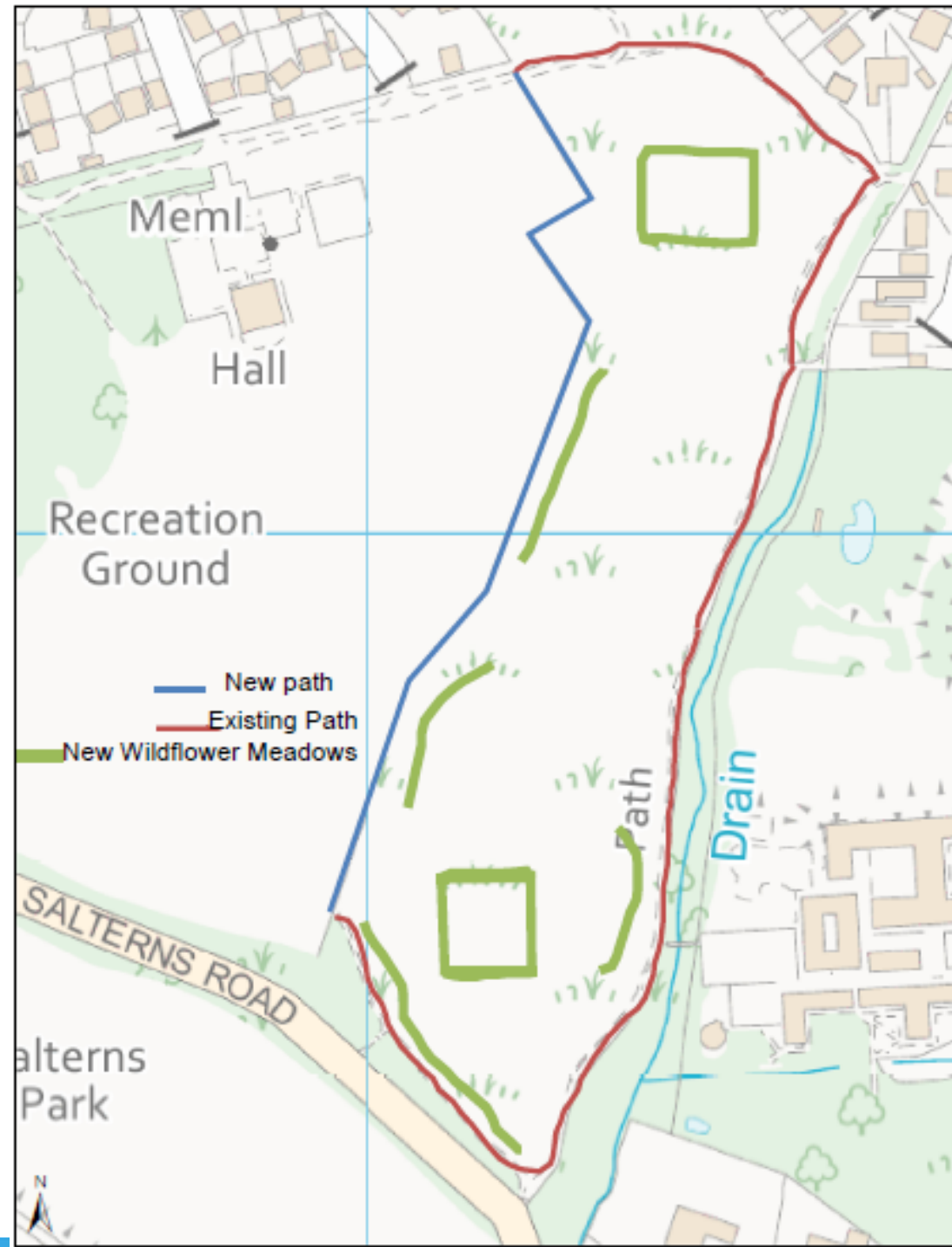
Seafield Park, Hill Head



Existing paths difficult to use in poor weather, users cut across playing fields and Salterns Road to access Monks Hill.

A well-maintained path around the whole site would reduce the need to do this, and therefore benefit birds using the adjacent sites

Seafield Park, Hill Head



Creation of new 500m wheelchair accessible pathway to form 1km circular route at Hill Head, alongside the creation of two wildflower meadows.

Total cost £46,000 for 2023/24
Implemented by FBC Countryside team

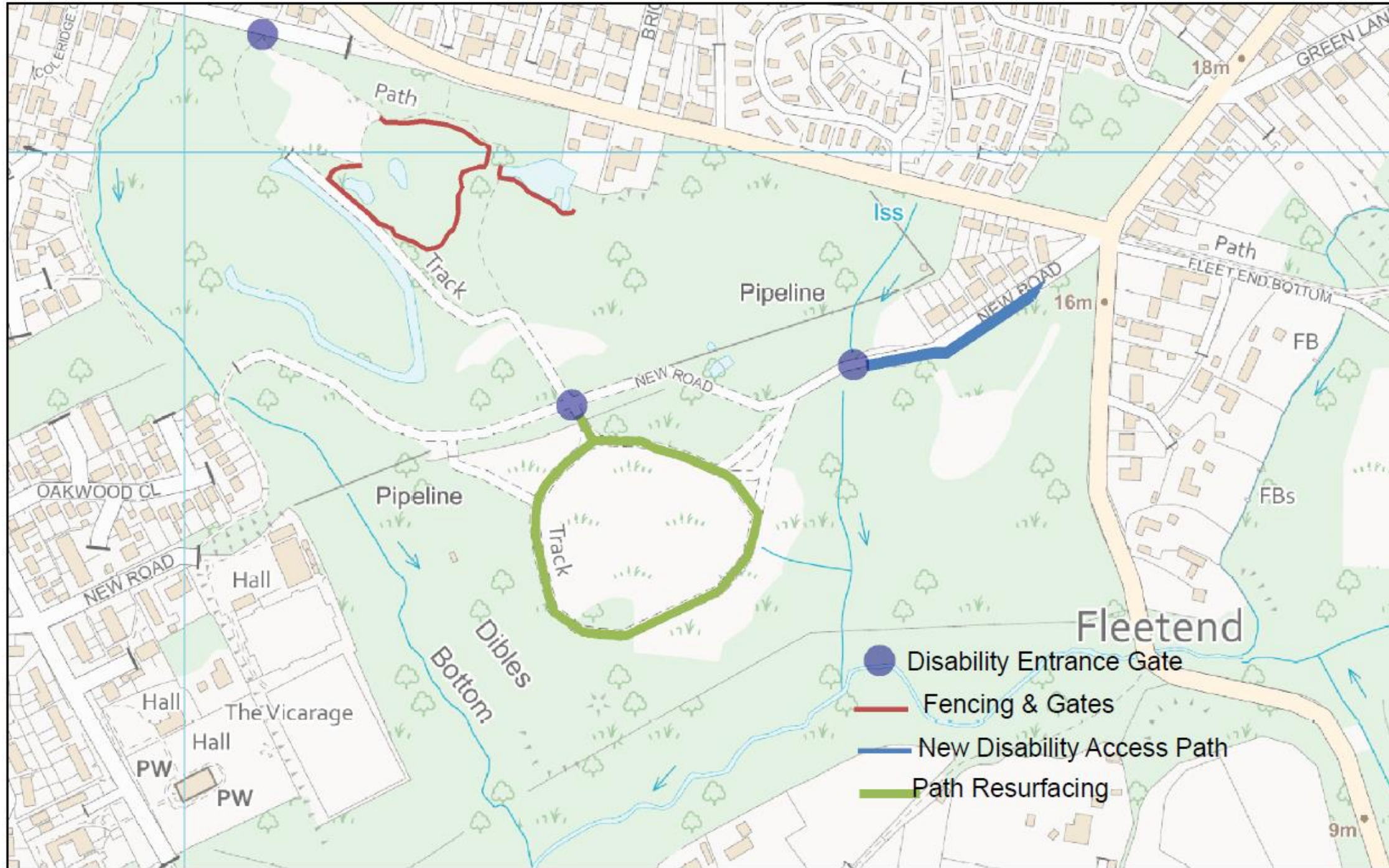
Warsash Common LNR



Very popular area with walkers and dog walkers

Footpath network exists but there is an opportunity to make 2.5km wheelchair and mobility scooter friendly path.

Warsash Common LNR



1km path resurfacing

Tarmac the car park and provide at least 2 disabled bays

Total cost £42,130 for 2023/24

Implemented by FBC Countryside team