

Development Strategy and Strategic Policies

Introduction

- 2.1 This section sets out the strategic policies in accordance with the NPPF which will help deliver the vision and objectives of the Local Plan. The section is organised as follows:
- Policy D1: Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change – Given that climate change is the overriding challenge affecting all planning decisions during the plan period and beyond, it is considered that this needs to be the overarching strategic policy which informs the rest of the Local Plan including the overall development strategy.
 - Policy D2: Development Strategy covers the overall approach to development in the Borough including key locational and land use considerations, and the quantum of development.
- 2.2 Policies D3 to D12 are arranged around the following strategic themes:
- Policy D3: Marine Employment
 - Policy D4: Green Infrastructure Network
 - Policy D5: Internationally and Nationally Important Sites and The Local Ecological Network
 - Policy D6: Gosport Strategic Open Spaces
 - Policy D7: Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion
 - Policy D8: Healthy Communities
 - Policy D9: Design
 - Policy D10: Historic Environment
 - Policy D11: Securing Infrastructure
 - Policy D12: Sustainable Travel

Policy D1: Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change

Introduction

- 2.3 Climate change is the long-term shift in average weather patterns across the world. Since the mid-1800s humans have contributed to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, which help to trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere. This causes global temperatures to rise, resulting in long-term changes to the climate²² impacting on the quality of the environment and human health²³.

²² www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/what-is-climate-change

²³ www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health

POLICY D1: ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- 1. The Council is committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and supporting the wider community in reaching this target through land use decisions. This overarching strategic objective will be delivered through:**
 - a) promoting a sustainable pattern of development by directing growth towards locations that reduce the need to travel and maximise the ability to make trips by sustainable modes of travel (Policies D2 and D12);**
 - b) delivering higher densities of development on the most accessible sites (Policies D2 and H1);**
 - c) promoting sustainable design and construction methods in the built environment (Policy DE1);**
 - d) addressing flood risk and promoting sustainable water management (Policies D7 and LE13); and**
 - e) enhancing blue and green infrastructure and biodiversity (Policies D5 and LE8 and other nature conservation Policies LE5-LE7).**

EXPLANATION OF POLICY D1

- 2.4 There is clear evidence to show that climate change is happening, with the average temperature of the Earth's surface having risen by around 1°C since the pre-industrial period when large amounts of greenhouse gases began to be emitted. This increase in greenhouse gases is almost entirely due to human activity, with the main sources being the burning of fossil fuels, agricultural and deforestation, and the manufacturing of products²⁴.
- 2.5 Climate change is likely to have many impacts upon the built environment including increasing the risk of overheating and flooding. As a coastal town, this is of particular concern to Gosport. The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017²⁵ provides a full list of the climate risks for the country, while the UK Climate Projections²⁶ show how the climate is likely to change.
- 2.6 By reducing carbon emissions, the likely impacts of climate change can be lessened. Measures can also be taken to adapt to the likely impacts. The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended in 2019) legally commits the UK to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero levels by 2050, when compared to a 1990 baseline. To achieve this it will require significant effort from all levels of government, communities, businesses and individuals.

²⁴ www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-explained

²⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017

²⁶ www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp

- 2.7 According to Government data, carbon dioxide emissions in Gosport have reduced by 50% between 2005 and 2020. When considering the emissions covered by this data, Gosport's emissions as of 2020 are the lowest per capita in Hampshire and less than the majority of local authorities in the UK. This is a strong starting position but is mostly the result of national policies, while eliminating the remaining emissions will require a concerted effort across the Borough, including from new developments.
- 2.8 The Council is committed to reducing its own emissions to net zero by 2050 or sooner, and assisting the wider community in reaching the same target. In February 2020 the Council adopted its Climate Change Strategy to show how this target will be achieved²⁷. The strategy identified the following areas of focus which relate to the planning system:
- promoting sustainable communities and low carbon lifestyles;
 - reducing flood risk and securing resilience to climate change;
 - encouraging higher environmental standards; and
 - increasing green infrastructure and improving biodiversity.
- 2.9 These objectives are addressed through this climate change policy and other policies within this Local Plan (including Policies D2, D4-D7, D12, H1, DE1 and LE8).
- 2.10 Increasing renewable energy production within the Borough and across Hampshire would be an effective approach to reducing climate change, promoting sustainable communities and low carbon lifestyles, and delivering economic benefits to the sub-region, including enhanced energy security.
- 2.11 A 2023 report compiled by the University of Southampton²⁸ considered the potential for renewable energy generation across Hampshire. It identified that whilst there are opportunities across Hampshire, the opportunities within Gosport Borough were limited due to land constraints.
- 2.12 Potential was shown for some utility-scale photovoltaic (PV) within Gosport, however the identified locations, such as the Alver Valley Country Park are not considered appropriate. The Borough also has potential for rooftop solar PV, primarily on residential roofs.
- 2.13 It is considered the impact of grid constraints on the deployment of renewables, as well as the estimated 250% increase in electricity demand by 2050, primarily due to the electrification of heating and transport. This report showed that there are currently significant grid constraints across Hampshire, and without large-scale investment from utility companies, only between 9.6% and 13.5% of renewable potential could be realised. In urban

²⁷ www.gosport.gov.uk/article/2279/Climate-Change-Strategy-2022

²⁸ www.gosport.gov.uk/GBLP2042

areas such as Gosport it did note that the increased deployment of rooftop solar PV would be feasible, particularly with battery storage, as it would more evenly balance energy supply and demand.

Directing development towards locations that reduce the need to travel and maximise the ability to make trips by sustainable modes of travel (Point 1a of Policy D1)

- 2.14 One of the core principles of sustainable development is ensuring that development is directed towards locations where the need for travel is reduced. Given the compact nature of the Borough many locations within Gosport are accessible however it is important to ensure that balanced communities develop with a range of jobs, services and facilities, with the appropriate level of infrastructure to serve them.
- 2.15 Hampshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4²⁹ (LTP4) provides a framework to guide all future transport planning investment and sets out a vision for Hampshire in 2050: 'A carbon neutral, resilient and inclusive transport system designed around – and with – people, which: supports health, wellbeing, and quality of life for all; supports a connected economy and creates successful and prosperous places; and respects and seeks to enhance Hampshire's unique natural and built environment.' LTP4 includes a number of transformational changes which aim to:
- shift away from planning for vehicles, towards planning for people and places;
 - meet national priorities to decarbonise the transport system;
 - reduce reliance on private car travel;
 - gives people a choice of high quality travel options;
 - support sustainable economic development and regeneration; and promote active lifestyles.
- 2.16 Policy D2: Development Strategy provides further guidance on selecting sustainable locations for development. The principles of LTP4 have informed the Council's Development Strategy.
- 2.17 Where travel is required, development should be designed to maximise sustainable modes of travel; primarily walking and cycling, followed by public transport and car pools. Where travel by personal vehicles is required, the provision of electric vehicle charging points will help to ensure that emissions are reduced. Further details can be found in Policies D11: Securing Infrastructure and D12: Sustainable Travel.

²⁹ www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan

Delivering higher densities of development on the most accessible sites (Point 1b of Policy D1)

- 2.18 With the scarce land resources in the Borough, it is important to make efficient and effective use of development sites to meet the significant need for new housing. Developing at higher densities in accessible locations (see Policies D2 and H1) will help create sustainable communities by reducing the need to travel and making local shops and services more viable.

Promoting sustainable design and construction methods in the built environment (Point 1c of Policy D1)

- 2.19 The built environment contributes around 40% of the UK's carbon emissions³⁰. Of this, approximately half of this is energy used in buildings, while around 3% is from the construction industry itself. In order to reach UK goals for the reduction of carbon emissions, and other environmental targets such as enhanced water efficiency, sustainable design and construction methods will be required from all developments (see Policy DE1).

Addressing flood risk and promoting sustainable water management (Point 1d of Policy D1)

- 2.20 As a coastal town, the Borough faces significant flood risk which is likely to increase with climate change. Proposals will need to address the requirements of Policy D7. It is also necessary to manage water sustainably in accordance with Policy LE13.

Enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity (Point 1e of Policy D1)

- 2.21 Green infrastructure provides many multifunctional benefits including recreation and wellbeing opportunities, improved air, water and soil quality, and flood and climate change mitigation. For example, the planting of trees can help lock in carbon, reducing levels within the atmosphere, while also providing increased shading and evaporative cooling to help regulate local temperature.
- 2.22 In addition, green infrastructure can deliver biodiversity benefits, including helping wildlife adapt to a changing climate. The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan³¹ has a goal for the planning system to enhance and increase the provision of green infrastructure and help address the loss of biodiversity and abundance, including through development providing biodiversity net gain. Further guidance can be found within Policies D5: The Local Ecological Network and Internationally and Nationally Important Sites and LE8: Securing Measureable Biodiversity Net Gain as well as other environmental policies within this Local Plan.

³⁰ www.ukgbc.org/climate-change

³¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan