

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Southbourne Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD)

SA Report

April 2026

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
CB: Associate Director	MF: Associate Director	IM: Associate Director	NCB: Technical Director

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V0.1	01 April 2026	First draft for internal review	CB	AD: AECOM
V1.0	13 April 2026	First draft for client review	CB	AD: AECOM
V2.0	27 April 2026	Final for Cabinet	CB	AD: AECOM

Prepared for:

Chichester District Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited
3 Rivergate
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6ER

T: +44 (0)117 901 7000
aecom.com

© 2026 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited ('AECOM') in accordance with its contract with Chichester District Council (the 'Client') and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

Table of Contents

Non-Technical Summary	1
1. Introduction	6
Part 1: Defining and appraising reasonable alternatives	10
2. Overview	11
3. Defining growth scenarios.....	11
4. Growth scenarios appraisal	12
5. The Council's preferred approach.....	23
Part 2: Appraisal of the DPD	25
6. Overview	26
7. Appraisal findings	28
Part 3: Next steps.....	37
8. Plan finalisation and monitoring	38
Appendix A – Scoping information.....	40

Non-Technical Summary

Context for plan-making and SA

AECOM has been commissioned by Chichester District Council (CDC) to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in support of the emerging Southbourne Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD). SA/ SEA is a legal requirement for plans and a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of a plan, and alternatives, in terms of sustainability issues.

The Chichester Local Plan (adopted 2025) identifies clear intentions for Southbourne to continue to grow and develop its role as a settlement hub – providing a good range of services and facilities and rail connectivity. Under Policies H2 and A13, significant new residential-led development is expected within the identified ‘broad location for development’ at Southbourne, delivering 1,050 new homes, employment opportunities and supporting local facilities. Policy A13 identifies that (after considering committed development) the Southbourne Allocation DPD will be developed to allocate land suitable to deliver the residual 800 new homes and supporting infrastructure and masterplan the strategic allocation site. This will include defining the site boundaries.

The geographical focus for the DPD is therefore at Southbourne, which lies in the west of the district, on the A259 Emsworth to Chichester Road and benefits from a centrally located train station.

The DPD is being developed in the context of both the Chichester Local Plan and the Southbourne Modified Neighbourhood Plan, and aligning with this policy context, the following vision for the development of Southbourne is identified:

“The new development will deliver a diverse range of housing options, for the benefit of the whole community, which will be successfully integrated with the existing village, embracing its existing character, landscape and ecological assets. The development will benefit from new community infrastructure and sports facilities, creating a vibrant ‘heart’ for the development and the wider community. New and existing residents will be connected with nature, featuring a network of inclusive open space, including a safe and inviting Green Ring. The allocation and associated masterplanning will maximise the opportunities to use sustainable transport options, through proximity and connectivity with the train station and bus routes, and by maximising active travel through the appropriate location of key movement generating uses and the utilisation of safe, attractive and highly useable active travel routes.”

Underpinning the vision and site assessment process are six objectives based on the themes of an integrated and well serviced community, housing for all, transport and sustainable travel, climate change and moving towards net zero carbon living, environment, and character.

Aligning with regulatory requirements, the SA process to date has already established a scope for the assessment. A Scoping Report was shared with statutory consultees in consultation in August 2024, and upon consideration of responses, an SA framework of 12 SA themes was finalised. The SA framework provides a structure for the appraisal of options and the draft plan.

Reasonable alternatives appraisal

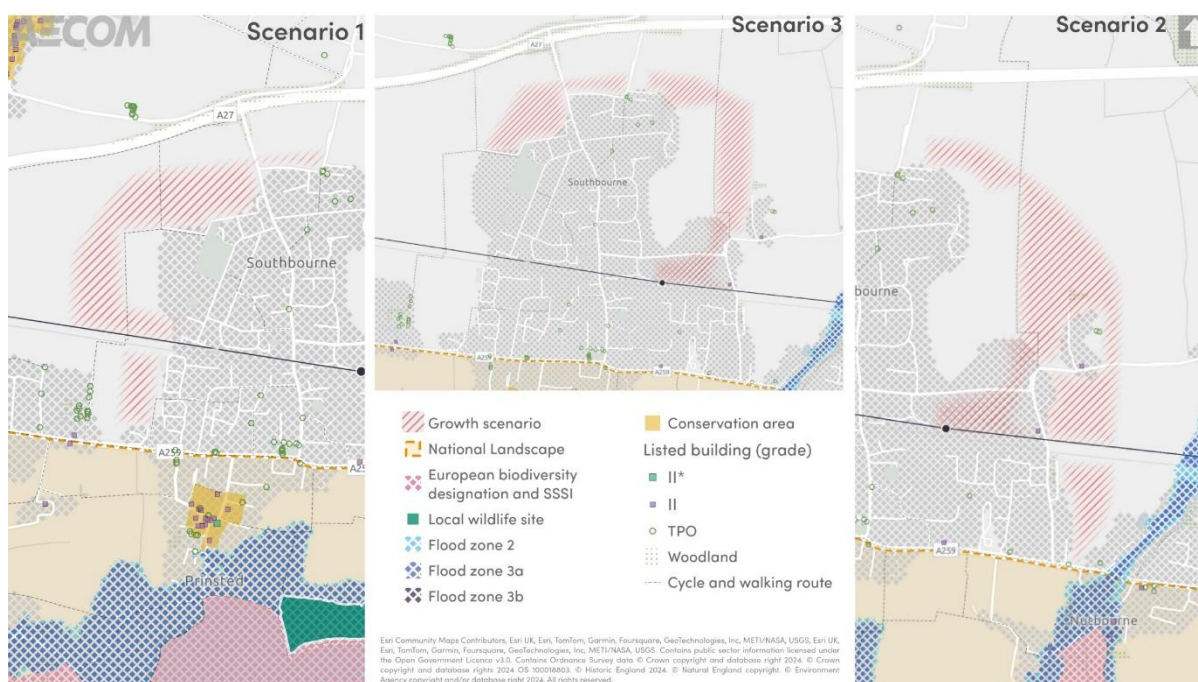
Any growth alternatives are relatively limited by both the geographical scope of the DPD (confined to the identified broad location) and the wider policy context set by the Local Plan.

Policy A13 of the Local Plan identifies the residual housing requirement to be planned for within the DPD is a minimum of **800 homes**. Within the broad location, plan makers have considered **three large areas** for development (i.e., 'growth scenarios') which could feasibly deliver the development approach outlined through Policy A13. The growth scenarios in 2024 were as follows:

- **Option 1:** Land to the West of Southbourne village
- **Option 2:** Land to the East of Southbourne village
- **Option 3:** Mixed Scenario (combining areas of land to the west and to the east of Southbourne village)

These remain broadly the 'reasonable' scenarios at the current time, in light of the consultation in 2024 and wider updates to the evidence base. However, matters have moved on somewhat in respect of growth options to the east of Southbourne and, in particular, the intention is no longer to allocate land south of the railway line.

Figure A: The reasonable alternative growth scenarios (N.B. maps from 2024)¹



In terms of methodology for the appraisal of alternatives, for each of the options, the appraisal identifies / evaluates '**likely significant effects**' on the baseline, drawing on the SA topics/objectives identified through scoping as a methodological framework.

Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging and where there is a need to rely on assumptions in order to reach a conclusion on a likely effect, this is made explicit in the detailed appraisal findings.

¹ To reiterate, Scenarios 1 and 2 have evolved somewhat during the process, but the fundamental choice is unchanged.

This being the case, it is also appropriate to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate **a rank of preference**.

Summary appraisal findings are presented in the table below. These align closely with the equivalent appraisal findings from 2024, but some adjustments are made to reflect latest understanding of the alternatives and the latest evidence.

SA theme		Option 1: Land to the West	Option 2: Land to the East	Option 3: Mixed Scenario
Air / Env. Quality	Rank	3	★1	2
	Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Biodiversity	Rank	3	★1	2
	Significant effect?	Negative	Uncertain	Negative
Climate Change Adaptation	Rank	2	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Climate Change Mitigation	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Communities and Health	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	Positive	Positive	Positive
Economy and Employment	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Historic Environment	Rank	★1	3	2
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Housing	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	Positive	Positive	Positive
Land, Soils, and Resources	Rank	★1	★1	3
	Significant effect?	Negative	Negative	Negative
Landscape	Rank	3	2	★1
	Significant effect?	Negative	Negative	Negative
Transport and Accessibility	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	Negative	Negative	Negative
Water	Rank	2	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No

The Council's preferred approach is to allocate the land east of Southbourne (Option 2) for strategic development. The allocation site avoids development within the National Landscape and would be expected to establish an effective landscape gap and defensible eastern boundary. Development would be located to maximise access to sustainable transport options and connectivity with the existing settlement area. New infrastructure delivery would be effectively integrated to develop a dynamic new community that extends its benefits to the existing communities.

Appraisal of the DPD

Whilst detailed findings are presented in Chapter 6, the appraisal of the proposed submission version of the DPD concludes the following:

“Most notably, significant positive effects are predicted as likely in relation to housing. Not only is the DPD identifying the land to deliver the 800 homes as outlined by the Local Plan, but it goes further by identifying an effective masterplan for the site that would integrate a range of housing types with new infrastructure development and connect well with the existing settlement area. Considering the significant new infrastructure proposed, including recreational facilities and educational facilities, alongside new housing and employment opportunities, significant positive effects are also predicted in relation to communities and health.

Moderate to significant positive effects are predicted in relation to biodiversity, given the significant emphasis within the wider masterplan on nature improvements and green and blue infrastructure delivery in both the east and west of the development area, connecting with the Green Ring concept developed within the made Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan.

Minor positive effects are also considered likely in relation to economy and employment given the integrated economic activity at the proposed new local centre including new retail development, event/ gathering space, and potentially small-scale employment units (albeit anything in this regard would be of limited significance).

A range of minor to moderate negative effects and minor positive effects are concluded in relation to landscape. This reflects extensive new development in previously undeveloped areas that is largely mitigated by a landscape-led approach that incorporates significant green infrastructure development and maintains landscape gaps between settlement areas. The proposal is no longer to allocate land to the south of the railway line, and the delivery of recreational spaces in the east of the site also have good potential to reduce pressures at nearby designated landscapes which is of benefit. The likely effects are expected to be more explicit at the planning application stage with the benefit of Design and Access Statements supporting proposals.

Minor positive effects are concluded as most likely in relation to climate change mitigation, reflecting the good accessibility and connectivity of the site, providing opportunities to access sustainable transport modes and engage in active travel, alongside the promotion of high-quality design standards, efficiency measures, and renewable energy generation. Additionally, minor positive effects are also concluded as most likely in relation to the historic environment. Whilst there are heritage assets in close proximity, the DPD supports high-quality design proposals that integrate and respond positively to these settings and the historic features that contribute to local character.

Broadly neutral to minor positive effects are concluded as most likely in relation to climate change adaptation. This reflects the avoidance or mitigation of flood risk constraints and the opportunities to bolster climate resilience, particularly through the significant green and blue infrastructure development plans.

Broadly neutral effects are also concluded in relation to water, reflecting the lack of significant issues with the confirmed funding for wastewater treatment upgrades in place to address the growth needs.

Minor to moderate negative effects are predicted in relation to both air quality and transport and accessibility, predominantly reflecting the scale of growth and inevitable increase in local car usage and congestion, despite the opportunities provided by accessible and connected development and the delivery of new infrastructure.

Whilst a range of different effects have been identified across the SA themes, no significant negative effects are considered likely that would warrant re-investigation of proposals or stringent monitoring. Recognising the knock-on effects of recommendations in terms of viability and reasonable planning expectations in new development, no recommendations are made. The DPD works well to maximise the opportunities associated with the broad location and integrate development with the existing settlement area.”

Next steps and monitoring

This SA Report accompanies the Regulation 19 proposed submission version of the Southbourne Allocation DPD to consultation.

Once the period for representations on the Regulation 19 DPD and SA Report has finished, the main issues raised will be identified and summarised by CDC. This will inform whether, in light of the representations received, the plan can be deemed ‘sound’. If this is the case, the DPD will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination, alongside a statement setting out the main issues raised during the consultation. CDC will also submit the SA Report alongside it.

At Examination, the Inspector will consider the representations received on the Southbourne Allocation DPD (alongside the SA Report) before then reporting back. If the Inspector identifies the need for modifications to the DPD, these will be prepared (alongside SA if necessary) and will then be subject to consultation.

Once found to be ‘sound’, the Southbourne Allocation DPD will be formally adopted by CDC. At the time of adoption, an SA ‘Statement’ must be published that sets out (amongst other elements) ‘the measures decided concerning monitoring the Plan’.

The SEA Directive states that ‘*member states shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes....in order, inter alia, to identify at an early-stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action*’ (Article 10.1). The SA Report should provide a ‘*description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring*’ (Annex I (i)).

It is considered that Local Plan monitoring will cover the environmental effects of the Southbourne Allocation DPD. This could include measures such as (but not limited to): measuring air quality at new and existing monitoring locations, the proportion of new development which incorporates nature-based solutions to flood risk, and the number of affordable dwellings completed (net).

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AECOM has been commissioned by Chichester District Council (CDC) to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in support of the emerging Southbourne Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.1.2 SA/ SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of a plan, and alternatives, in terms of sustainability issues. It is a legal requirement for development plans and follows the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

1.2 DPD context and objectives

- 1.2.1 The Chichester Local Plan (adopted 2025) identifies clear intentions for Southbourne to continue to grow and develop its role as a settlement hub – providing a good range of services and facilities and rail connectivity. Under Policies H2 and A13, significant new residential-led development is expected within the identified ‘broad location for development’ at Southbourne, delivering 1,050 new homes, employment opportunities and supporting local facilities. Policy A13 identifies that (after considering committed development) the Southbourne Allocation DPD will be developed to allocate land suitable to deliver the residual 800 new homes and supporting infrastructure and masterplan the strategic allocation site. This will include defining the site boundaries.
- 1.2.2 DPDs set out planning policies and proposals. They are subject to community involvement, consultation, and independent examination. The Southbourne Allocation DPD will be a statutory planning document that will become part of the Development Plan for Chichester upon adoption. It will be used in decision making for planning applications relevant to the site (and the landscape gap).
- 1.2.3 The geographical focus for the DPD is therefore at Southbourne, depicted in **Figure 1.1**. Southbourne lies in the west of the district, on the A259 Emsworth to Chichester Road and benefits from a centrally located train station. The DPD is being developed in the context of both the Chichester Local Plan and the Southbourne Modified Neighbourhood Plan, and aligning with this policy context, the following vision for the development of Southbourne is identified:

“The new development will deliver a diverse range of housing options, for the benefit of the whole community, which will be successfully integrated with the existing village, embracing its existing character, landscape and ecological assets. The development will benefit from new community infrastructure and sports facilities, creating a vibrant ‘heart’ for the development and the wider community. New and existing residents will be connected with nature, featuring a network of inclusive open space, including a safe and inviting Green Ring. The allocation and associated masterplanning will maximise the opportunities to use sustainable transport options, through proximity and connectivity with the train station and bus routes, and by maximising active travel through the appropriate location of key movement generating uses and the utilisation of safe, attractive and highly useable active travel routes.”

1.2.4 Underpinning the vision and site assessment process are the following six objectives:

- Integrated and well serviced community: Create an integrated village where everyone can live healthy lives with equal opportunities for all, accessing services and promoting health and well-being through access to nature, active travel, and recreational opportunities. A thriving place that is well served by community facilities and services.
- Housing for all: Deliver a range of suitable, well-designed and energy efficient housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local needs. This will include affordable housing, specialised housing, serviced self/custom build plots and Traveller sites, as part of a mixed and balanced community.
- Transport and sustainable travel: Connect new and existing neighbourhoods to the train station with good pedestrian and cycle priority routes, promoting active travel throughout and across the village and facilitating greater use of public transport.
- Climate change and moving towards net zero carbon living: Respond positively to the environment to ensure climate resilience and future-proofing, by facilitating highly sustainable approaches to design, strengthening green and blue infrastructure, promoting walking and cycling as the preferred options for short journeys, and contribute towards achieving net zero lifestyles.
- Environment: Preserve and enhance biodiversity and wildlife and deliver an eastern section of the continuous Green Ring that will encircle Southbourne, connecting multifunctional green spaces, parks and natural habitats.
- Character: Harmoniously integrating development into the wider landscape setting, protecting and mitigating impact on views and character of the Chichester Harbour National Landscape and South Downs National Park. Create a built form that is influenced by and respects the local character and heritage whilst using best practice design principles.

1.3 SA context and scope

1.3.1 Aligning with regulatory requirements, the SA process to date has already established a scope for the assessment. A Scoping Report was shared with statutory consultees in consultation in August 2024, and upon consideration of responses, an SA framework was finalised. The SA framework provides a structure for the subsequent appraisal of options and the draft plan, with each appraisal considering effects in relation to a range of sustainability themes and objectives. A summary SA framework is provided in **Table 1.1** whilst more detailed scoping information, including the key sustainability issues identified, is provided in **Appendix A**.

Figure 1.1: Southbourne Parish and ‘Broad Location for Development’ (BLD)

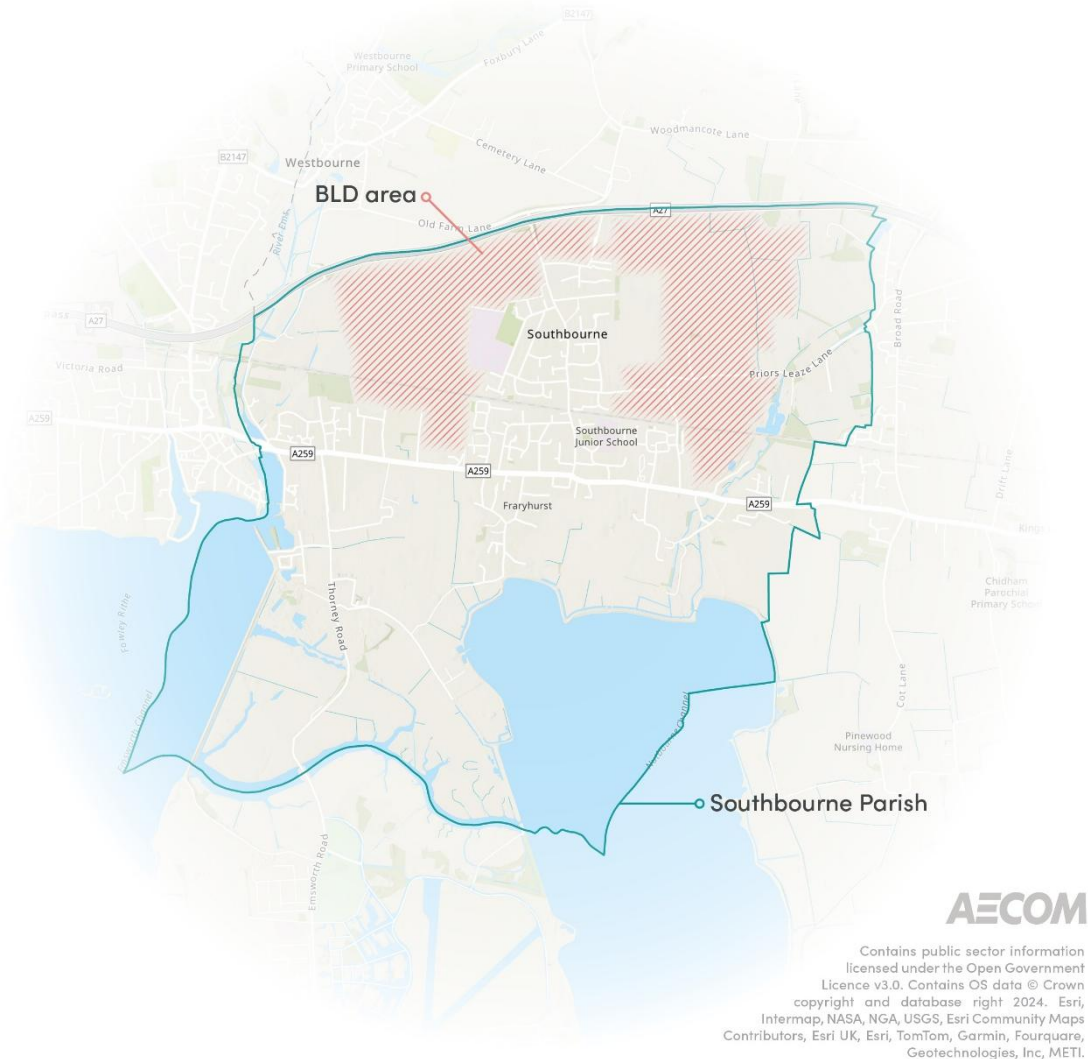


Table 0.1: Summary SA framework

Sustainability theme	SA objective
Air/ environmental quality	Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the plan area.
	Support the reduction or mitigation of noise pollution within the plan area.
Biodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity.
Climate change adaptation	Increase the resilience of the plan area to the potential effects of climate change, including the risk and effects of flooding – fluvial, surface water, and groundwater.
Climate change mitigation	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the plan area.
Communities and health	Ensure growth in the plan area is aligned with the needs of all residents and supports cohesive and inclusive communities.
Economy and employment	Support sustainable economic development.
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the plan area.
Housing	Ensure growth in the plan area is aligned with the housing needs of all residents (reflected in housing types and tenures), improves accessibility, and anticipates future needs and specialist requirements.
Land, soil, and resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land.
	Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use, and recycling of waste.
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.
Transport and accessibility	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.
Water	Protect and enhance water quality and use water resources in a sustainable manner.

1.4 Structure of this report

1.4.1 At a relatively advanced stage of plan-making, this SA Report accompanies the Regulation 19² proposed submission version of the DPD in consultation. This SA Report is structured in three parts as follows:

- **Part 1** (Chapters 2, 3, and 4) is focused (in line with regulatory requirements) on defining and appraising reasonable alternatives and provides the Council’s reasoning behind the preferred approach.
- **Part 2** (Chapters 5 and 6) provides an assessment of the likely significant effects of implementing the DPD; and
- **Part 3** (Chapter 7) details the next steps for plan-making and SA, it also outlines proposed monitoring measures.

1.4.2 A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) is provided at the start of the report.

² Under the Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Part 1: Defining and appraising reasonable alternatives

2. Overview

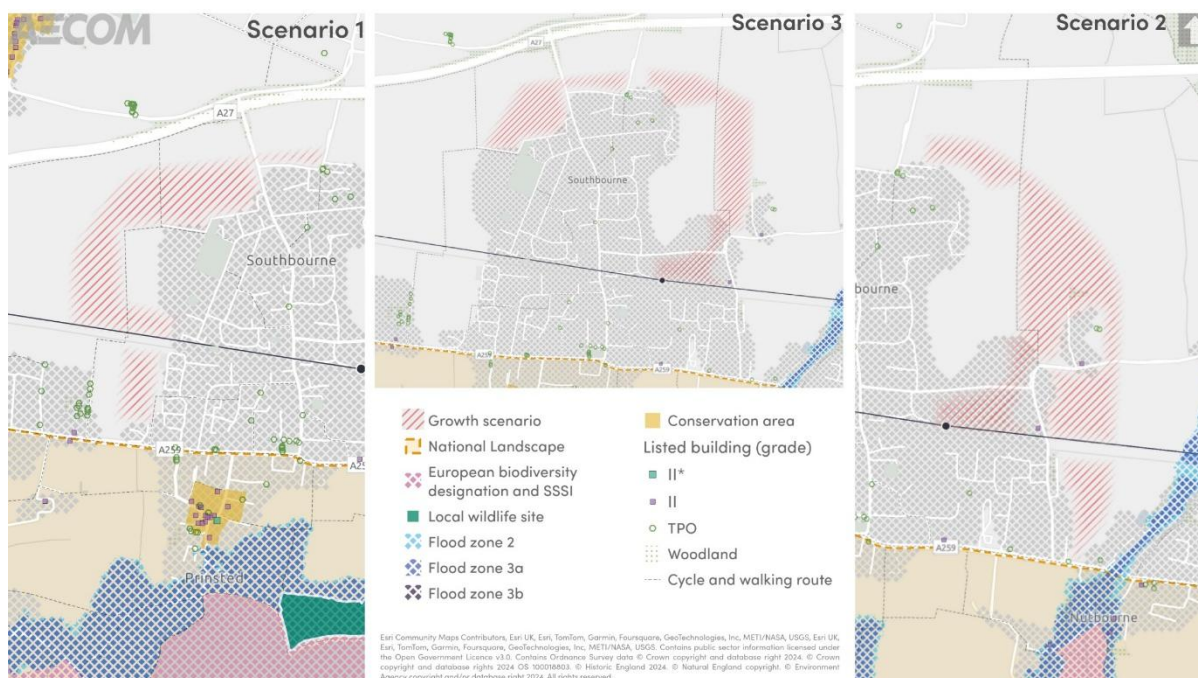
- 2.1.1 The aim of Part 1 is to present ‘an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’ and an appraisal of these options, in accordance with the Regulations.³ The section is broken down into three chapters that 1) identify potential growth scenarios (alternatives), 2) appraise the alternative growth scenarios, and 3) identify the reasoning behind the Council’s preferred approach in light of the alternatives.

3. Defining growth scenarios

- 3.1.1 Any growth alternatives are relatively limited by both the geographical scope of the DPD (confined to the identified broad location) and the wider policy context set by the Local Plan.
- 3.1.2 Policy A13 of the Local Plan identifies Southbourne as a location suitable for a comprehensively master planned mixed-use development of up to 1,050 homes, with local employment, education provision and appropriate community facilities. Considering recent planning approvals within the identified broad location, the residual housing requirement to be planned for within the DPD is a minimum of **800 homes**.
- 3.1.3 Policy A13 also states that to enable a comprehensive and coordinated development approach, piecemeal or unplanned development proposals within the broad location which are likely to prejudice its delivery will not be permitted.
- 3.1.4 Within the broad location, plan makers have considered **three large areas** for development (i.e., ‘growth scenarios’) which could feasibly deliver the development approach outlined through Policy A13. These options were considered in the Interim SA Report (2024) and consulted on alongside the draft DPD under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulation.
- 3.1.5 The latest situation is these growth scenarios from 2024 remain broadly ‘reasonable’, but detailed understanding of what each would involve has evolved. In particular, to the east the proposal is no longer to allocate land to the south of the railway, and in respect of both the west option (Option 1) and the east option (Option 2) further work has been undertaken in respect of access and delivery of new/upgraded transport infrastructure, including with consideration given to what can viably be achieved / delivery risks.
- 3.1.6 The growth scenarios encompass the available land within the broad location that connects with the existing settlement area and could be delivered as an urban extension. Specifically, the options are:
- **Option 1:** Land to the West of Southbourne village
 - **Option 2:** Land to the East of Southbourne village
 - **Option 3:** Mixed Scenario (combining areas of land to the west and to the east of Southbourne village)

³ Schedule 2 (8) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Figure 2:1: The reasonable alternative growth scenarios (N.B. maps from 2024)



4. Growth scenarios appraisal

4.1 Methodology

- 4.1.1 For each of the options, the appraisal identifies / evaluates **'likely significant effects'** on the baseline, drawing on the SA topics/objectives identified through scoping as a methodological framework (see **Table 1.1**).
- 4.1.2 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging and where there is a need to rely on assumptions in order to reach a conclusion on a likely effect, this is made explicit in the appraisal text. This being the case, it is also helpful to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and indicate **a rank of preference**.
- 4.1.3 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking into account the criteria presented within the SEA Regulations (Schedules 1 and 2). For example, account is taken of the duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.
- 4.1.4 The outcomes of the assessment are presented under each SA theme that forms part of the SA framework (see Table 1.1) before a summary table is presented.

4.2 Air / Environmental Quality

- 4.2.1 There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within proximity to Southbourne Parish. The most recent Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) for Chichester (2023)⁴ highlights that air quality across most of Chichester is generally good; however, there are roads in and adjacent to Chichester city where air quality is less good and there are elevated concentrations of pollutants. The main pollutant of concern in the district is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), the key source being road traffic.
- 4.2.2 In light of the above, impacts on air quality largely depend on the degree to which each option proposes to manage an increase in traffic and congestion, considering the relative constraints of each location. This includes how well connected each option is to the existing transport network. This is discussed in detail under the **Transport and Accessibility** SA topic below. Ultimately, the delivery of 800 homes under each option will likely lead to an increase in traffic and congestion in Southbourne, which could adversely impact air quality locally, but not necessarily to a significant degree.
- 4.2.3 Overall, **Option 2** is considered to perform most favourably as it utilises the existing multi-modal crossing across the railway line via Inlands Road and provides a pedestrian / cycle bridge. However, it is recognised that the existing crossing is considered unsafe by Network Rail, and access off the end of South Lane could be constrained due to the character and nature of this historic lane. This is followed by **Option 3** as it has multiple points of potential vehicular and pedestrian / cycle access, as well as the opportunity to deliver a complete pedestrian / cycle route around the northern part of the village through the delivery of a green ring. **Option 1** is considered to perform least favourably as it proposes an all modes bridge and delivery is uncertain. If the all-modes bridge proves undeliverable it would depend on only one potential point of vehicular access. However, it is recognised that there is an area of land immediately to the south of the site, which is safeguarded for access via a Section 106 agreement associated with a neighbouring development, which could potentially alleviate these concerns. If the bridge were to be delivered there would also be a concern regarding generating car travel, i.e. discouraging modal shift to walking, cycling and use of the train station.
- 4.2.4 It is recognised that the delivery of 800 homes will ultimately lead to a notable increase in traffic and congestion in Southbourne village, where movement is already constrained in the north-south direction due to the railway line. This could adversely impact local air quality. However, the incorporation of green infrastructure through all three options has the potential to positively contribute to air quality by absorbing pollution.
- 4.2.5 Ultimately, impacts are largely dependent on the design and layout of development, including points of access; the delivery of vehicular and/or pedestrian / cycle bridges across the railway line; and the delivery of new public transport and active travel infrastructure. Taking this into consideration and recognising that there are currently no air quality issues in Southbourne Parish, **uncertainty** is noted.

⁴ Chichester District Council (2023): [2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report \(ASR\)](#)

4.3 Biodiversity

- 4.3.1 All options have the potential to deliver at least 20ha of open greenspace, linking with a 'green ring' around Southbourne. **Option 3** could most effectively support the green ring, and so is flagged as performing well.
- 4.3.2 None of the options are considered likely to impact on wildlife corridors. Conversely, they all have the potential to enhance wildlife corridors through biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements.
- 4.3.3 All options are within proximity to the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site and SSSI, as well as the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), to the south of Southbourne village. As such, all options have the potential to contribute to an increase in recreational disturbance to these internationally designated.
- 4.3.4 There are no significant concerns regarding onsite Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats within the sites under consideration.
- 4.3.5 **Option 1** would result in significant loss of land within the Brent Geese 'Secondary Support Area'. Whilst less significant, **Option 3** would also result in some loss of land within the Secondary Support Area. However, it is noted that there is a potential area of mitigation north of the A27.
- 4.3.6 Overall, whilst it is difficult to differentiate the options, **Option 2** is considered to perform more favourably than **Options 1 and 3** as it does not result in the loss of any land within the Brent Geese Secondary Support Area. Significant effects are also difficult to determine as impacts on biodiversity are largely dependent on the inclusion of mitigation measures, particularly during the design phase of development (although it is assumed that a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain will be delivered in line with national policy).
- 4.3.7 Due to this, **uncertainty** is noted under **Option 2**, whilst **significant negative effects** are predicted under **Options 1 and 3** due to the potential loss of land within the Brent Geese Secondary Support Area.

4.4 Climate Change Adaptation

- 4.4.1 Whilst all three options contain isolated areas at low-high risk of surface water flooding, **Option 1** is particularly constrained in the event of an all modes bridge being delivered as part of that option, as that would need to be located in a relatively large area of high risk surface water flooding. If no bridge is to be provided, or a pedestrian/cycle bridge were to be provided in a different position then the flood risks associated with this option would be much easier to avoid/mitigate.
- 4.4.2 An all modes bridge is no longer proposed in relation to **Option 2**, and the land south of the railway line is not included within the allocation, all of which should make it relatively easy to avoid flood risk areas.
- 4.4.3 All three options provide opportunities to incorporate climate change adaptation measures into their design. This could include natural drainage solutions, such as green space and permeable pavements. The inclusion of trees and other vegetation will also ensure that new development is resilient to the effects of climate change, e.g. increased storminess and heat waves.

- 4.4.4 Overall, there are no major concerns regarding flood risk, which is the key issue, but it is appropriate to flag a potential concern under **Option 1**.

4.5 Climate Change Mitigation

- 4.5.1 Development through any of the three options will ultimately lead to an increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions *locally* as a result of an increase in the built footprint of Southbourne village and an intensification of uses in this location. However, when focusing on per capita GHG emissions, the picture is more positive given Southbourne village contains a number of services and facilities, including several schools, supermarkets and a surgery, as well as a railway station and several bus services which facilitate sustainable transport.
- 4.5.2 All three options have the potential to deliver development with a high environmental performance, but there are not known to be any particular site specific opportunities. The aim might be to deliver energy/carbon standards over-and-above the minimum requirements set out in Building Regulations.
- 4.5.3 Transport is a focus of standalone discussion below, but in summary: All three options have the potential to support a mix of uses and facilities, minimising the need to travel and supporting modal shift, but there is a degree of concern with the proposal to deliver a new bridge under Option 1 that could encourage car use / impact objectives relating to modal shift.
- 4.5.4 As all three options deliver the same quantum of growth, they will likely lead to similar overall emissions. In this respect, it is difficult to differentiate the options, and they are therefore ranked equally. Given the global nature of climate change, and the relatively small level of development delivered through all three options, **no significant effects** are predicted at this stage.

4.6 Communities and Health

- 4.6.1 All three options propose the allocation of new / enhanced educational and community facilities, and would be within proximity to quality, open green space. All three options also have the potential to ensure all homes are within 5 minutes' walk of the nearest open space, subject to detailed design.
- 4.6.2 **Option 1** has the potential to create a community hub co-located with the existing college, leisure centre and recreation ground, creating a single hub of activity north of the railway line. However, this would be located away from existing facilities in the village centre and may result in residents located in other parts of the village feeling disconnected from the community hub.
- 4.6.3 **Options 2 and 3** also have the potential to create a community hub, however this would be separated from the existing college, leisure centre and recreation ground in the northwest of the village, with limited opportunity for co-location with existing facilities. Nevertheless, new facilities would be located closer to the village centre and more parts of the settlement.
- 4.6.4 **Option 3** presents difficulties associated with two different site promoters, where infrastructure delivery obviously impacts on viability and there will likely be complex land equalisation negotiations.

- 4.6.5 All options have the potential to deliver 20ha of open greenspace, along with parts of a green ring around Southbourne. **Option 3** would deliver the most complete version of the green ring, and it performs most favourably in this respect. Conversely, **Option 1** would only deliver the eastern part of the green ring, whilst **Option 2** would only deliver the western part of the green ring. Notably, by delivering a green ring, all three options – and especially **Option 3** – will likely encourage opportunities to engage in active travel and healthier lifestyles, with potential to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.
- 4.6.6 Overall, it is difficult to differentiate the options as they all present individual merits and constraints. Due to this, the options are ranked equally. **Significant positive effects** are predicted under all three options as they all have the potential to deliver educational and community facilities and open green space, which will contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents.

4.7 Economy and Employment

- 4.7.1 All three options will deliver mixed-use development, providing local employment opportunities, and they perform well in this respect. However, it is difficult to envisage delivery of significant new employment land, e.g. recognising challenging connectivity by road. Rather, new employment opportunities would be within local centres. It is recognised that Southbourne has limited opportunities for employment, but through the process of preparing the DPD it has not been possible to identify the opportunity to deliver significant new employment land.
- 4.7.2 In terms of access to employment opportunities further afield, **Option 1** is approximately 650m-1.5km from the railway station, whilst **Options 2 and 3** are approximately 350m-1.3km from the railway station. In this respect, the latter two options perform most favourably. The railway station provides direct connections to Portsmouth and Southampton in the westbound direction, and Chichester, Brighton, and London Victoria in the eastbound direction. There are also bus services to Chichester, Havant and Portsmouth.
- 4.7.3 In relation to the above, **Options 2 and 3** provide the opportunity to improve access to and from the railway station for the wider community through the provision of land for a new pedestrian / cycle bridge adjacent to the railway station. Conversely, opportunities to improve pedestrian / cycle access to and from the railway station are less likely through **Option 1**.
- 4.7.4 Overall, it is difficult to differentiate between the options as they will all deliver mixed-use development, providing local employment opportunities. Due to this, the options are ranked equally.

4.8 Historic Environment

- 4.8.1 Whilst all options are in proximity to listed buildings, **Options 2 and 3** are particularly close to grade II listed buildings 'Thatchways' and 'Loveders Farmhouse' on Inlands Road and Priors Leaze Lane respectively. **Option 2** delivers development on both sides of these listed buildings and is therefore likely to lead to the greatest impact on these designated heritage assets.

4.8.2 Overall, **Option 1** is considered to perform most favourably, although it is recognised that this option has the potential to impact the setting of listed buildings in Hermitage and Lumley. This is followed by **Option 3** and then **Option 2**; both of these options have the potential to impact the setting of nearby listed buildings. All three options will impact the wider historic landscape. Significant negative effects are not predicted for Option 1 at this stage, in light of the Regulation 18 consultation and latest understanding in respect of the site extent / masterplanning proposals.

4.9 Housing

4.9.1 All three options propose to deliver 800 homes and will meet the residual housing needs for Southbourne. Given the options comprise large areas of land which will be subject to detailed master-planning, it is anticipated that proposals (through any option) will deliver a mix of housing types and tenures, including affordable housing. This will support a well-balanced community.

4.9.2 In terms of the location of housing, all three options deliver housing at locations adjacent to the existing village. However, given the scale of development proposed under each option, there is potential for development to feel self-contained and separate from the existing built-environment. This is further reinforced by the railway line, which will likely lead to a degree of severance between proposed development and the southern portion of Southbourne village. It will be important that the design and layout of development considers measures which support connectivity and community cohesion.

4.9.3 Overall, it is difficult to differentiate between the options as they all meet the residual housing needs for Southbourne as identified within the adopted Local Plan; therefore, the options are ranked equally. **Significant positive effects** are predicted under all three options due to this, especially given development will deliver a mix of housing types and tenures.

4.10 Land, Soils and Resources

4.10.1 All three options will lead to the loss of greenfield land. However, it is recognised that this is largely unavoidable given the scale of development proposed, and the relatively limited availability of brownfield land.

4.10.2 According to Natural England's Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) map for London and the South East⁵, the undeveloped areas of Southbourne Parish are underlain by Grade I (Excellent) and Grade II (Very Good) agricultural land. In this respect, all options would result in the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

4.10.3 With regard to mineral resources, according to the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018)⁶, Southbourne Parish falls within the sharp sand and gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA). As this MSA covers a large area, extending outside of the parish boundaries, it is perhaps less likely that new development areas through any of the three options would significantly impact the integrity of the MSA. In addition, there has been a significant shift

⁵ Natural England (2010): [Agricultural Land Classification map London and the South East](#)

⁶ West Sussex (2018): [Joint Minerals Local Plan](#)

in sharp sand and gravel production away from land-won and towards marine-won sources. Nevertheless, the Joint Minerals Local Plan seeks to safeguard existing mineral resources, and all three options perform unfavourably in this respect.

- 4.10.4 Notably, a sizable area of all three options, including space for an access road, is covered by a consultation zone for a utilities pipeline. **Option 3** would deliver a greater percentage of new homes to the north of Southbourne village, within proximity to the gas pipeline, and it performs least favourably in this respect.
- 4.10.5 Overall, **Options 1 and 2** are ranked slightly more favourably than **Option 3** as they do not fall within such a large area of the consultation zone for the utilities pipeline.
- 4.10.6 **Significant negative effects** are predicted under all three options as they will lead to the loss of a significant area of greenfield / BMV land and the potential sterilisation of sharp sand and gravel reserves. However, it is recognised that these effects are unavoidable given the relatively limited availability of brownfield land.

4.11 Landscape

- 4.11.1 None of the options would deliver new development within a National Park or National Landscape. Chichester Harbour National Landscape is located to the south of Southbourne village, but concerns previously flagged in 2024 are now reduced as the proposal is no longer to allocate land to the south of the railway line under **Option 2**. There may also be some sensitivities relating to the eastern extent of this area, but likely of limited significance.
- 4.11.2 **Options 1 and 2** would both deliver development within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) of the South Downs National Park to the north. However, impacts could be reduced and/or mitigated through design, in addition to embedding a strong green infrastructure framework which shields sensitive views. **Option 3** would lead to similar impacts to the other two options with regard to the National Park to the north, but less severe impacts with regards to the National Landscape to the south.
- 4.11.3 All options have the potential to deliver 20ha of open greenspace, which would support the 'green ring' vision for Southbourne, as has been discussed above.
- 4.11.4 The most recent Landscape Capacity Study for Chichester (2019)⁷ highlights that a key issue for future development in the East-West Corridor is the prevention of coalescence between the settlements of Southbourne, Prinsted, Nutbourne, Bosham, Fishbourne and Chichester along the A259. The study shows that the land to the north of Southbourne village has a medium capacity for change, whilst the land to the south of Southbourne village has a low capacity for change.

⁷ Terra Firma (2019): [Chichester Local Plan Review - Landscape Capacity Study - East to West Corridor](#)

- 4.11.5 All three options fall within an identified landscape gap according to the Landscape Gap Assessment for Chichester District Council (2019).⁸ **Option 1** largely falls within the identified landscape gap between Southbourne and Hermitage. However, it is noted that a planning application has already been permitted in this gap. **Option 2** partially falls within the identified landscape gap between Southbourne and Hambrook. It is recognised that the size of the areas covered by the options may help to safeguard the integrity of these gaps through the inclusion of green buffers. However, this is dependent on the design of the schemes which come forward.
- 4.11.6 With regard to village character, **Options 1 and 2** would lead to one sided growth of the village, unbalanced with its original form and structure. Conversely, **Option 3** would create a more sympathetic growth structure that allows the village to expand more equally and performs well in this respect. Nevertheless, it is recognised that all three options would significantly alter village character due to the scale of development proposed.
- 4.11.7 **Options 1 and 2** both contain trees with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). However, it is recognised that these trees are afforded protection through this designation, and any potential adverse impacts on these trees could be mitigated at the design stage of development.
- 4.11.8 All three options have the potential to contribute to the character of Southbourne village through design. This could be achieved through the retention and integration of trees with TPOs (**Options 1 and 3**), historic orchards (**Options 2 and 3**), existing hedgerows (**Options 2 and 3**), and public footpath (all options).
- 4.11.9 Overall, **Option 3** is considered to perform most favourably as it would support the green ring vision; minimise concerns in respect of the National Landscape; and create a more sympathetic growth structure that allows the village to expand more equally and organically.
- 4.11.10 This is followed by **Option 2** and then **Option 1**, which is ranked least favourably because it largely falls within the identified landscape gap between Southbourne and Hermitage.
- 4.11.11 **Significant negative effects** are predicted under all three options; however, it is recognised that impacts will largely depend on the design and layout of development. Hence, a degree of uncertainty is noted.

4.12 Transport and Accessibility

- 4.12.1 All three options are located to the north of the railway line that passes through Southbourne village, which could lead to a degree of severance between proposed development and the southern portion of Southbourne village if appropriate access is not delivered alongside development. At present, there are only two vehicular crossings across the railway line; these are both level crossings, with one located in the centre of the village (Stein Road) and the other to the east of the village (Inlands Road). There are also two informal and unsafe pedestrian / cycle crossing to the west of the village, as well as one to the east.

⁸ Terra Firma (2019): [Landscape Gap Assessment for Chichester District Council](#). This was updated by the council in 2025.

- 4.12.2 **Option 1** has the potential to improve this informal and unsafe crossing by providing a new pedestrian / cycle bridge as a minimum, or a multi-modal bridge using safeguarded land to the south of the railway. However, a multi-modal would be costly and its deliverability is uncertain. Were it not to be delivered then traffic on Stein Road would be a concern.
- 4.12.3 **Options 2 and 3** have the potential to improve pedestrian / cycle connectivity within the village and to the station by providing land for a new pedestrian / cycle bridge immediately east of the station (utilising safeguarded land and subject to funding).
- 4.12.4 Under **Option 1** the concern, as discussed, is access via Stein Road. **Option 2** has two potential points of vehicular access: one to the north of the village, off the end of South Lane; another to the east of the village, off Priors Leaze Lane / Inlands Road. South Lane is currently relatively narrow in places, and would need some widening, but the main site promoter has demonstrated that is achievable. Moreover, access off Priors Leaze Lane / Inlands Road could lead to increased pressure on these roads and will require the upgrading of the Inlands Road crossing to a double arm barrier.
- 4.12.5 With regard to active travel access, **Option 1** has potential points of pedestrian / cycle access to the north of the railway line, though these are limited. It is also connected to an existing network of public footpaths and Network Rail have expressed support for improvements to the informal and unsafe pedestrian / cycle crossing across the railway line.
- 4.12.6 **Option 2** also has multiple potential points of pedestrian / cycle access to the north of the railway line. It is also connected to an existing network of lanes, public footpaths and there is an opportunity to improve connectivity across the railway line via a new centrally located pedestrian / cycle bridge.
- 4.12.7 **Option 3** has four potential points of pedestrian / cycle access to the north of the railway line. It is also connected to an existing network of lanes, public footpaths and there is an opportunity to improve connectivity across the railway line via two new pedestrian / cycle bridges to the west of the village and in the centre of the village. There is also an opportunity to deliver a complete pedestrian / cycle route around the northern part of the village through the delivery of a green ring.
- 4.12.8 All three options have the potential to connect with a proposed cycling route (ChEmRoute) along Main Road.
- 4.12.9 With regard to access to the bus network, options for supporting new bus connectivity were discussed at the Regulation 18 stage, but following consultation it seems unlikely that that this is achievable. Under **Option 1**, approximately 50% of development would be within 400m of an existing bus stop. Under **Options 2 and 3**, only 10% and 30% of development (respectively) would be within 400m of an existing bus stop.
- 4.12.10 With regard to access to the railway station, all three options are within walking distance from the railway station. **Options 2 and 3** provide the opportunity to improve access to and from the railway station for the wider community through the provision of land for a new pedestrian / cycle bridge adjacent to the railway station. Conversely, **Option 1** provides limited opportunities to improve pedestrian / cycle access to and from the station.

- 4.12.11 Overall, whilst Option 1 was highlighted as the favourable option at the Regulation 18 stage, at this stage this is less clearly the case, in light of consultation and detailed technical work. Amongst other things, there is a need to factor-in the uncertainty regarding delivery of a multi-modal bridge.
- 4.12.12 **Significant negative effects** are predicted under all three options as the delivery of 800 homes will ultimately lead to a significant increase in traffic and congestion in Southbourne, where movement is already constrained in the north-south direction due to the railway line. However, it is recognised that impacts are largely dependent on the design and layout of development, including points of access; the delivery of multi-modal and/or pedestrian / cycle bridges across the railway line; and the delivery of new public transport and active travel infrastructure, including extensions to the existing bus and pedestrian / cycle network. Hence, a degree of uncertainty is noted.

4.13 Water

- 4.13.1 The provider of water in Southbourne Parish is Portsmouth Water, whilst the provider of sewerage is Southern Water. Portsmouth Water's revised draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2024⁹ outlines that over the planning period (2025/26 to 2074/75), a reduction in the water available to supply housing is forecast, primarily related to a reduction in abstraction to meet environmental protection, but also due to the effects of climate change. Significant supply deficits during the plan period are forecast, during which demand will rise from 54.5 MI/d in 2035 to 179.8 MI/d in 2075.
- 4.13.2 In light of the above, growth in Southbourne Parish through any of the three options is likely to place additional stress on an already stressed location with respect to water supply issues. However, it is recognised that growth would likely come forward with or without the Southbourne Allocation DPD. In addition, the WRMP sets out how to bridge the identified supply demand balance gap, including via demand reduction and new supply schemes.
- 4.13.3 No waterbodies pass through the areas covered by the options; however, the catchment for the Ems Water Body¹⁰ borders the north of Southbourne Parish and overlaps slightly with the parish in the northwest. Hence, development – particularly under **Option 1** – has the potential to impact the ecological status of this water body, which is vulnerable as it currently has a poor ecological status. This is given that the area of land proposed through **Option 1** is closer to the water body in comparison to **Options 2 and 3**.
- 4.13.4 Overall, it is difficult to differentiate between the options given they all deliver the same quantum of growth and will therefore likely lead to similar impacts on water supply. However, **Options 2 and 3** are ranked slightly more favourably than **Option 1** as they are less likely to impact the ecological status of the Ems Water Body. **No significant effects** are predicted under any of the options as the WRMP, in addition to national planning policy, should ensure that any development in Southbourne Parish is suitable in terms of water supply.

⁹ Portsmouth Water (2024): [Revised Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024](#)

¹⁰ Environment Agency (2024): [Ems Water Body](#)

4.14 Summary findings

4.14.1 Table 4.1 brings together the summary findings for the assessment of the alternatives.

Table 4.1: Summary findings of the reasonable alternatives appraisal

SA theme		Option 1: Land to the West	Option 2: Land to the East	Option 3: Mixed Scenario
Air / Env. Quality	Rank	3	★1	2
	Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Biodiversity	Rank	3	★1	2
	Significant effect?	Negative	Uncertain	Negative
Climate Change Adaptation	Rank	2	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Climate Change Mitigation	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Communities and Health	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	Positive	Positive	Positive
Economy and Employment	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Historic Environment	Rank	★1	3	2
	Significant effect?	No	No	No
Housing	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	Positive	Positive	Positive
Land, Soils, and Resources	Rank	★1	★1	3
	Significant effect?	Negative	Negative	Negative
Landscape	Rank	3	2	★1
	Significant effect?	Negative	Negative	Negative
Transport and Accessibility	Rank	★1	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	Negative	Negative	Negative
Water	Rank	2	★1	★1
	Significant effect?	No	No	No

5. The Council's preferred approach

- 5.1.1 The council's preferred approach is to allocate the land east of Southbourne for strategic development (Option 2). Set out below is text provided by CDC officers setting out their reasoning in light of the alternatives appraisal:

"The council's view is that the assessment of the reasonable alternatives, unsurprisingly, largely echoes our own site assessment process, with the overall thrust being that the options are quite similarly matched in many respects. This is also unsurprising as these are ultimately three options in the same vicinity as each other and hence with a similar context and set of constraints, which is an inevitable part of the process, given that the DPD just relates to the broad location for development identified in Policy A13 of the adopted Local Plan.

Consequently, the decision making about the preferred alternative comes down to some quite subtle and nuanced judgements of the relevant issues. Some of these issues are also quite detailed and hard to truly account for in a relatively high level appraisal such as the SA. The council also considers that some of the categories are more determinative than others in terms of which is the preferred option.

Two key factors from the council's perspective are considered to be biodiversity and transport (which overlaps to some degree with climate change).

Turning firstly to biodiversity, the western and mixed options involve the development of a Secondary Support Area for Brent Geese. The council's appraisal of the evidence is that it's certain that the western and mixed options would have a negative impact in this regard, and it is not yet certain that this can be adequately mitigated. While mitigation land is available, it is considerably smaller than the land being lost, and further work is required in terms of demonstrating that satisfactory mitigation can be achieved. Whereas, the council is relatively confident that the eastern option will not have negative impacts in this regard, or in terms of biodiversity generally.

The other key issue, which is essentially interlinked in many ways, is transport and climate change mitigation. The western option proposes a vehicular bridge, which while being beneficial in terms of reducing traffic congestion, is essentially vehicular traffic orientated, which is problematic in terms of sustainability (i.e. as the adopted Local Plan strongly emphasises the encouragement of modal shift, not making it easier for people to drive). The council is also not convinced that the bridge is deliverable, and if it's not then the western option is potentially dependent on a singular vehicular access, which could lead to increased congestion on Stein Road.

The site promoter for the eastern option is able to utilise two vehicular accesses, which helps to disperse the traffic and have agreed the key aspects of their access strategy with the Local Highway Authority. This option is also considered to be the easiest to integrate with existing movement networks and is preferable in terms of gaining access to the railway station. Ultimately, the council considers that the eastern option is likely to be the more sustainable and practical option to deliver in transport terms.

In terms of landscape, the council agrees with the appraisal, and considers that the mixed and eastern options are superior in this regard, particularly now that the eastern option is more contained, with development not coming south of the railway line, which minimises its impact on the National Landscape to the south.

The council agrees that the western option is superior in terms of heritage impacts. However, that is just an overall conclusion, and the heritage impacts are considered to be relatively modest, and don't change the overall conclusion that on balance the eastern option is preferable.

In coming to its view regarding the preferability of the eastern option, the council has also factored in considerations around deliverability, which have been alluded to above. This is reflective of the way in which site selection is based on the consideration of a multitude of factors, of which the SA is an important component. More information on the council's site assessment considerations is set out in the Site Assessment Framework produced by the council and Tibbalds."

Part 2: Appraisal of the DPD

6. Overview

6.1 Section overview

- 6.1.1 This Part of the report seeks to provide an appraisal of the current consultation version of the DPD, identifying any potential significant effects associated with its implementation. Conclusions and recommendations are provided at the end of Chapter 6.

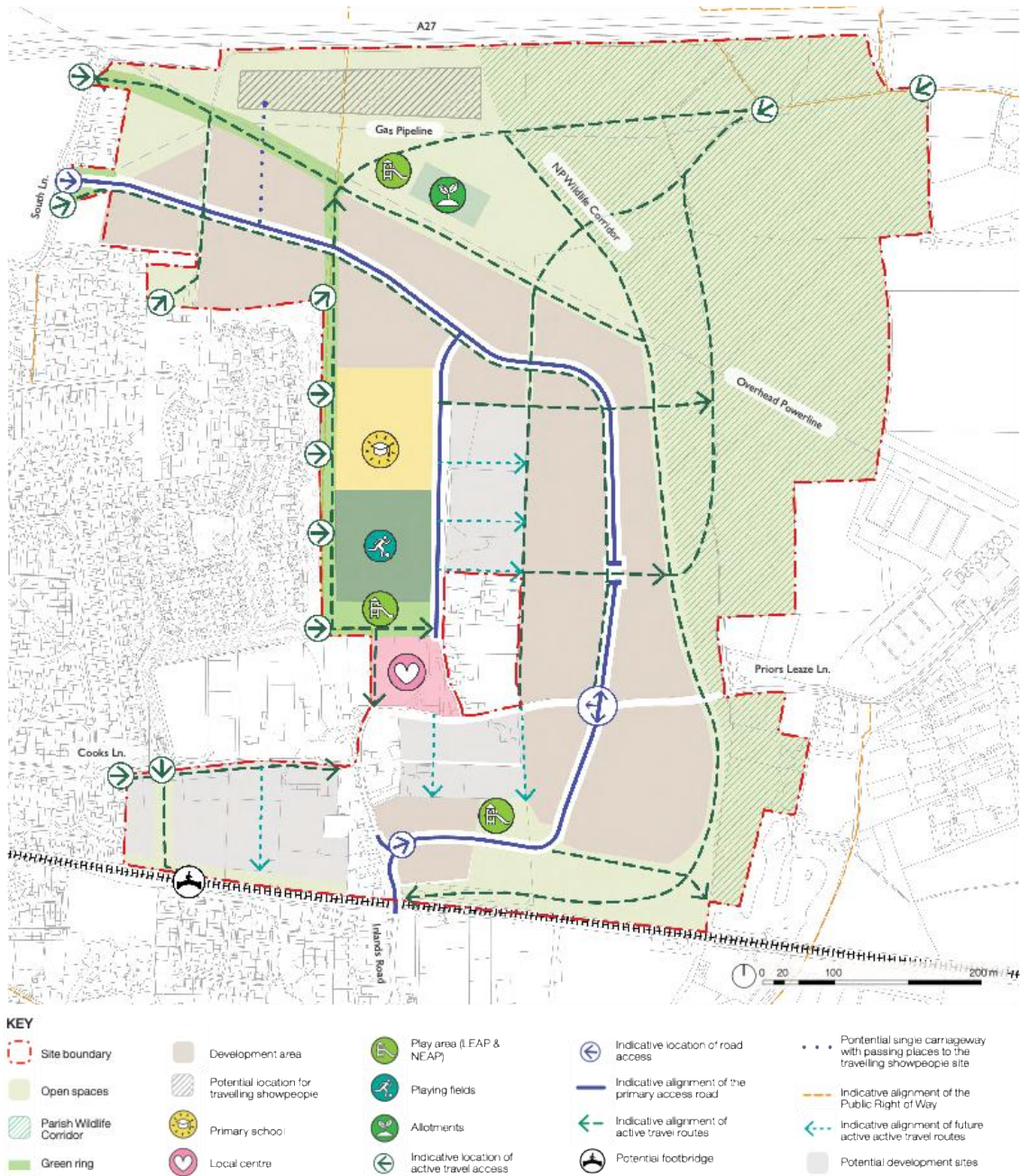
6.2 DPD overview

- 6.2.1 The DPD identifies and defines the site allocation which flows from Policy A13 in the adopted Chichester Local Plan. It provides a high-level masterplan for development of the site – including how it relates to the surrounding area – and provides one policy necessary to ensure the successful design and delivery of development. Supporting text is also provided to assist interpretation of the policy. Key to the DPD is the framework masterplan depicted in **Figure 6.1**.

6.3 Methodology

- 6.3.1 The appraisal identifies and evaluates ‘likely significant effects’ of the plan on the baseline, drawing on the 12 SA objectives identified through scoping (see Table 1.1) as a methodological framework.
- 6.3.2 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, where there is a need to make assumptions, e.g., in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted, they are made cautiously and explained within the text (with the aim to strike a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness/ accessibility). In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict ‘significant effects’, but it is nonetheless possible and helpful to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the DPD in more general terms.
- 6.3.3 Within the appraisal narrative below specific policies are referred to only as necessary and relevant to each SA theme (i.e., it is not the case that systematic consideration is given to the merits of every plan policy in terms of every sustainability objective).
- 6.3.4 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the effect characteristics and ‘significance criteria’ presented within Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered, i.e., the potential to impact an aspect of the baseline when implemented alongside other plans, programmes, and projects.

Figure 6.1: Southbourne Allocation DPD framework masterplan



7. Appraisal findings

7.1 Air/ environmental quality

- 7.1.1 The DPD focuses growth in one strategic location east of Southbourne, and this area is not within or within the vicinity of any declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). The most recent Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) for Chichester (2025)¹¹ demonstrates that air quality across most of Chichester is generally good but there are key sensitive areas at St Pancras, Chichester and Rumbolds Hill, Midhurst that experience elevated concentrations of pollutants, namely nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from road traffic.
- 7.1.2 A key consideration for growth in Southbourne is therefore self-containment measures (that reduce the need to travel) and the connectivity of growth with sustainable transport options. These measures provide strategic mitigation to avoid negative effects on air quality locally within Southbourne, and further away such as at Chichester city.
- 7.1.3 The connectivity of growth with sustainable transport options is discussed in more detail under the ‘transport and accessibility’ theme, but headlines are that the settlement and strategic development location connect well with the local train station and existing bus network. However, the railway line in Southbourne does sever the settlement, and the level crossing on Stein Road causes congestion and the displaced effects of ‘rat-running’ – both affecting local air quality. Despite its connectivity, increased car usage in the area is still expected as a result of 800 new homes, which will likely exacerbate the existing congestion issues to some degree. The transport evidence supporting the DPD and the subsequent masterplan for the site suggest that traffic needs to be split between two different access points to reduce the impact of the additional traffic on the local road network. The DPD identifies these access points at South Lane in the north and off Inlands Road and Priors Leaze Lane in the south of the growth area. Based on the supporting evidence and suggested mitigation, it is assumed that significant impacts on air quality could therefore be avoided, but minor to moderate impacts are still considered likely.
- 7.1.4 A key benefit for both existing and new residents will be the proposed delivery of a new local centre off Priors Leaze Lane alongside a new play area, primary school and a substantial area of parks and recreation. Within the local centre, a range of local retail, services and facilities are expected, set around a central space that provides opportunities for gathering. Placed within walking distance of new residents and the existing central area, active travel opportunities are maximised, and the settlement offer increases (thus reducing the need to travel elsewhere).
- 7.1.5 Based on the points outlined above, **no significant effects** are predicted as likely at this stage once the proposed mitigation has been considered. However, given the scale of growth and inevitable increase in local traffic and congestion, residual **minor to moderate negative effects** are considered most likely.

¹¹ [Chichester Air Quality Annual Status Report 2025](#)

7.2 Biodiversity

- 7.2.1 The impacts of development at the strategic development location are considered relatively limited for biodiversity. There are no significant concerns in respect of onsite or adjacent priority habitat, and the built form is also expected to avoid any intrusion upon the wildlife corridor along the eastern edge of the site which is the focus for Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) provisions that seek to mitigate the impacts of recreational pressure on the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA). Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been undertaken and leads to a conclusion of no Likely Significant Effects either alone or combination with other plans and projects.
- 7.2.2 A key concept, linking with the made Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan, is that of a 'Green Ring' surrounding the settlement that provides a means of mitigating pressure on the sensitive areas within the National Landscape, contributes to resolving public open space deficits, and provides areas for nature improvement. The DPD intends to deliver a section of the 'Green Ring' along its eastern boundary as a "seamless and generous" linear park. Additionally new allotments and orchards are expected in development (adjacent to the 'Green Ring') to provide community growing opportunities.
- 7.2.3 Given these points, significant biodiversity net gains are predicted in future growth at the strategic development location, whilst negative impacts are likely to be avoided by the mitigating provisions outlined. On this basis, **moderate to significant positive effects** are concluded as most likely overall and in the longer term (recognising the time needed for nature improvements to become fully established).

7.3 Climate change adaptation

- 7.3.1 In relation to flood risk, the only potential effects arising at the strategic development location relate to surface water flooding. Reflecting this, the DPD identifies mitigation measures that will be required – including a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (focused on surface water and the access and egress arrangements), development outside of areas at risk, drainage systems to manage groundwater, and onsite infiltration rates assessments as part of a drainage strategy. Such measures should avoid any significant effects arising, and furthermore, any targeted improvements to drainage rates at Priors Leaze Lane could lead to longer-term benefits. Design principles for drainage systems are outlined which include nature-based solutions, open low gradient slopes and porous paving.
- 7.3.2 Climate change resilience is expected to be bolstered by the significant green and blue infrastructure development proposals. These are expected to enhance the existing wildlife corridor to the east of the site and support the vision for a 'Green Ring' around the settlement. Habitat expansion, new planting, and natural drainage solutions could support greenfield drainage rates and support shading and cooling as a mitigation for future heat waves.
- 7.3.3 Resilience is further bolstered by sustainable design considerations, which the DPD outlines some core principles for. Namely in relation to adaptation this includes shading and sun capture in building orientation, and ventilation considerations.

- 7.3.4 Factoring in the mitigation measures outlined above, no significant effects are anticipated. With no significant deviation from baseline conditions anticipated, **broadly neutral to potentially minor positive effects** are concluded as most likely.

7.4 Climate change mitigation

- 7.4.1 With regards to climate change mitigation, the focus is largely on accessible development that is well connected to sustainable transport options, as well as high-quality design principles that seek efficient use of natural resources and maximise opportunities for new renewable energy developments.
- 7.4.2 The strategic development location benefits from close connectivity with the existing train station, and the DPD outlines that integral to design will be high-quality, well integrated, safe and highly useable walking and cycling routes. Factored into these considerations is also the wider delivery of a new primary school, new open spaces and play areas, and a new local centre, which will enhance the opportunities for walkable trips that meet most day-to-day needs. Additionally, new opportunities for local food production are expected with the provision of new allotment spaces and community orchards, supported by a new designated community space within the proposed local centre that would allow for local markets. This again provides new opportunities that reduce the need to travel.
- 7.4.3 Furthermore, the DPD outlines principles for low carbon design in new development at the site, including in building orientation, energy efficiency opportunities, and renewable energy generation.
- 7.4.4 Given the connectivity of development and the delivery of supporting infrastructure, alongside the promotion of high-quality and efficient design standards, **minor positive effects** are concluded as most likely.

7.5 Communities and health

- 7.5.1 There are notable community benefits arising from the proposed strategic development east of Southbourne. First and foremost is the strategic connectivity of the site, within good walking distance of the local train station and central area.
- 7.5.2 This is supported by the wider delivery of a new primary school, new open spaces and play areas, and a new local centre including retail spaces and a community space for events and gathering.
- 7.5.3 A key part of the new local centre will be the provision of a community centre, of a sufficient size to accommodate a variety of recreational and social activities and inclusive of disabled users. It is expected that the community centre, with the provision of a badminton court, will also link to and provide changing facilities for adjacent sports pitches and form an active frontage connecting to the open spaces.
- 7.5.4 The delivery of new open spaces and facilities will make significant contributions to addressing the recreational space deficits identified in Southbourne. The DPD outlines ambitions for inclusive spaces, incorporating all ages and sexes, and including consideration for the 'Make Space for Girls' campaign targeting local parks.

- 7.5.5 Affordable housing would be integrated, along with specialist housing that seeks to meet the needs of different communities, including providing social care for the elderly and incorporating plots for Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople communities.
- 7.5.6 Considering the significant new infrastructure proposed, including recreational facilities and educational facilities, alongside new housing and employment opportunities, **significant positive effects** are considered likely in relation to communities and health.

7.6 Economy and employment

- 7.6.1 There will be modest new employment opportunities associated with the proposed retail development and community infrastructure development at the new local centre. Smaller scale localised opportunities could also be realised through the co-location of new allotment spaces and community event space.
- 7.6.2 Given these considerations, **moderate positive effects** are concluded as most likely in relation to economy and employment.

7.7 Historic environment

- 7.7.1 There are Listed Buildings in the immediate vicinity of the development area, but it is set back from the conservation area further south at Prinsted. The Listed Buildings include Thatchways on Inlands Road and Loveders Farmhouse on Priors Leaze Lane. There is also a locally listed Gate House on Inlands Road.
- 7.7.2 The DPD identifies the historic assets – extending to Prinsted Conservation Area – as integral to character and a key consideration for design proposals, which should respond both sensitively and positively to the settings and context provided. Locally distinctive materials such as red brick, flint, and other traditional finishes should be used in housing development to reinforce the local identity, and contemporary design is expected to integrate traditional forms and detailing in a modern context.
- 7.7.3 Homogenous development is to be avoided, including by varying development densities across the site, creating clear transitional areas, and considering the different contexts provided by historic enclosed development and open suburban areas in the settlement.
- 7.7.4 When considering the additional policy protections afforded to both designated and non-designated heritage assets in the local plan, no significant effects are considered likely. High-quality design proposals have good potential to integrate heritage settings and respond positively to local character. With the steer provided by the DPD in this respect, **minor positive effects** are concluded as most likely.

7.8 Housing

- 7.8.1 In line with the provisions of the Local Plan, the DPD identifies land to deliver around 800 new homes within the plan period (of the Local Plan). The DPD identifies that development should deliver a variety of homes, including market housing, affordable housing, and specialist housing. Specialist

housing is inclusive of accommodation for elderly, self/ custom build plots, and plots for Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. The masterplan for the site also identifies a suitable location for the provision of Travelling Showpeople plots, ensuing storage areas are closest to the A27 boundary to minimise impacts on living accommodation.

- 7.8.2 With regards to market housing, the preference for smaller homes is outlined, aligned with the evidence underpinning the Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst with affordable housing, the requirement to consult with the Local Housing Authority to obtain the latest needs position is outlined, providing flexibility in the context of the housing register being updated.
- 7.8.3 Additionally, the masterplan and DPD proposals seek to integrate the delivery of housing with new employment opportunities, significant new open spaces and recreational areas, a new local centre, and a new primary school, with the intention of creating a vibrant new community. The new community would be well situated to integrate with the existing settlement area and be well connected to its existing offer – including the train station.
- 7.8.4 Considering these points, **significant positive effects** are predicted as likely, given an effective masterplan that integrates a range of housing types with new infrastructure delivery and connects well with the existing settlement area.

7.9 Land, soils, and resources

- 7.9.1 As a strategic development area identified by the Local Plan, the loss of greenfield land at Southbourne is expected and the opportunities for the DPD to minimise the effects of this are minimal.
- 7.9.2 Predictive national datasets indicate that the soil resources in this area are likely to be of high agricultural quality and the loss of ‘best and most versatile’ agricultural land is therefore highly likely. The Parish also lies within the ‘sharp sand and gravel’ Mineral Safeguarding Area, which encompasses a much larger landscape.
- 7.9.3 However, these impacts were a consideration for the wider district spatial strategy, determined through the Local Plan process. Whilst significant negative impacts are considered likely for soil resources, this must be factored into the baseline, as with or without the DPD, the expectation for development in this area has been set by the Local Plan. On this basis, the DPD is considered likely to lead to **broadly neutral effects**.

7.10 Landscape

- 7.10.1 There are varying landscape considerations across the strategic development area, recognising the settings of South Downs National Park and Chichester Harbour National Landscape, and the local planning context of retaining local landscape gaps and identifying a ‘Green Ring’ around Southbourne. A key consideration has been the preservation of landscape boundaries between settlements and the avoidance of coalescence.
- 7.10.2 The resultant masterplan places significant emphasis on landscaping measures that create open spaces, recreational areas and biodiversity

enhancement opportunities that create defensible boundaries for development and maintain landscape gaps. In addition, the DPD places an emphasis on the need for subsequent proposals to be informed by an appropriate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Of significance to Southbourne, is the elevation of the South Downs National Park and the implications this has on key viewpoints. Also of importance is key views from the National Park and National Landscape recognising that one lies just east of the allocation site. These will be elements that will need to be considered through the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

- 7.10.3 The DPD, aligning with the Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan, identifies the potential for the 'Green Ring' surrounding the settlement (being delivered in part at the strategic development area) to provide a means of mitigating recreational pressures on the sensitive areas of the Chichester Harbour National Landscape by providing alternative attractive spaces with seating and play opportunities.
- 7.10.4 Additional emphasis is placed on development design that responds positively to both local character and landscape setting. A thorough understanding of the local context is expected to be demonstrated in Design and Access Statements supporting development proposals, which includes consideration of views and landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and waterbodies. Two character areas are identified within the settlement itself, typified by open suburban influences or enclosed historic areas, both of which are expected to serve as inspiration for design proposals, where the DPD clearly states that "a homogenous approach across the entire site is unsuitable". Reflecting this approach, densities across the site are also expected to vary (whilst averaging out at 35 dwellings per hectare), with higher densities expected in the immediate surroundings of the local centre for example and lower densities forming a transition to landscaped edges.
- 7.10.5 Ultimately, large-scale development proposals will affect the landscape setting of this area, but the masterplan sets out a landscape-led approach that provides the benefit of potentially reducing recreational pressures in the immediate surrounding designated landscape areas. A mix of effects are therefore expected overall, **ranging from minor to moderate impacts of new built form in a previously undeveloped area, to minor positive effects associated with the new green infrastructure delivery.**

7.11 Transport and accessibility

- 7.11.1 In terms of sustainable transport options, the site is well connected to the central train station, which is of significant benefit to transport objectives. The site has relatively good access to the central area, with buses currently serving Main Road and Stein Road. The masterplan further proposes that a potential bus route through the two parts of the site should be facilitated. Of additional benefit is the proposed wider infrastructure delivery that is also likely to reduce the need to travel, particularly for most day-to-day needs. Notably this includes new a primary school, and a local centre including new retail space and community facilities.
- 7.11.2 With regards to active travel opportunities, the masterplan sets out key active travel routes to establish good connections and permeability within the site and beyond and states that "all relevant applications must demonstrate

that they will either deliver or facilitate these routes/ connections”. This includes a new pedestrian/ cycle bridge over the railway line. Additionally, emphasis is placed on redirecting and encouraging traffic priority onto the new main routes through the development. This is to reduce the impact of traffic and improve the comfort and safety of walking and cycling on Priors Leaze Lane, Inlands Road, and Cooks Lane – noting that these are key route connections to the local centre, central area, and train station.

- 7.11.3 Despite these measures, it is recognised that the delivery of 800 new homes will ultimately increase vehicular usage in Southbourne. This has particular implications for existing congestion issues, including at Stein Road where the impacts of the level crossing are a notable local concern. The transport evidence underpinning the strategic development location demonstrates that the vehicular traffic needs to be split between two different access points to mitigate the impacts of the additional traffic on the local road network. The masterplan therefore identifies that the development will be accessed via South Lane in the north, and off Inlands Road and Priors Leaze Lane in the south. Additionally, the new junctions on Priors Leaze Lane and Inlands Road are expected to be designed to direct traffic into the southern parcel of the new development area, to ensure that through traffic uses the widest and safest routes.
- 7.11.4 Overall, the development area benefits from good strategic connectivity and provides good opportunities to support active travel. However, the scale of development is still expected to increase vehicle usage in Southbourne, and whilst mitigation is proposed to manage the impacts of this, **residual minor to moderate negative effects** are predicted as most likely.

7.12 Water

- 7.12.1 Wastewater capacity is not considered to be an issue for the strategic development proposals given Southern Water has confirmed that funding is in place to increase treatment capacity at Thornham Wastewater Treatment Works (which will serve the site). The main concern would be around the timely provision of any necessary upgrade works which should be factored into phasing plans for the site. Local Plan Policy NE17 which states that no surface water from new development may be discharged to the public foul or combined sewer system which will assist in maintaining sewerage infrastructure requirements.
- 7.12.2 The provider of mains water supply in Southbourne is Portsmouth Water, and the catchment area is notably stressed with forecasted supply deficits within the next 50 years. Portsmouth Water are mainly addressing this through new demand reduction options and new supply schemes. Water efficiency measures are expected in new developments so there is little further action within the scope of the DPD, recognising that supply is strategically planned and managed by Portsmouth Water.
- 7.12.3 Given that there is confirmed funding in place to deliver upgrades to the Thornham Wastewater Treatment Works, no significant effects are expected in relation to this SA theme. With no significant deviations from the baseline expected, the residual effects are considered likely to be **broadly neutral**.

7.13 Cumulative effects

- 7.13.1 Positive cumulative effects are considered likely by the DPD links to the made Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan, which will support the wider delivery of a 'Green Ring' around Southbourne and multiple benefits for biodiversity, climate change resilience, communities, health, soil resources, and the landscape.
- 7.13.2 The alignment of three plans covering this area: the Local Plan, the Southbourne Site Allocation DPD, and the Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan will ultimately lead to positive cumulative effects in terms of housing delivery across the wider Housing Market Area, landscape settings – including retaining landscape gaps between settlements and avoiding coalescence, and climate resilience.

7.14 Conclusions and recommendations

- 7.14.1 Most notably, significant positive effects are predicted as likely in relation to housing. Not only is the DPD identifying the land to deliver the 800 homes as outlined by the Local Plan, but it goes further by identifying an effective masterplan for the site that would integrate a range of housing types with new infrastructure development and connect well with the existing settlement area. Considering the significant new infrastructure proposed, including recreational facilities and educational facilities, alongside new housing and employment opportunities, significant positive effects are also predicted in relation to communities and health.
- 7.14.2 Moderate to significant positive effects are predicted in relation to biodiversity, given the significant emphasis within the wider masterplan on nature improvements and green and blue infrastructure delivery in both the east and west of the development area, connecting with the Green Ring concept developed within the made Modified Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.14.3 Moderate positive effects are also considered likely in relation to economy and employment given the integrated economic activity at the proposed new local centre including new retail development.
- 7.14.4 A range of minor to moderate negative effects and minor positive effects are concluded in relation to landscape. This reflects extensive new development in previously undeveloped areas that is largely mitigated by a landscape-led approach that incorporates significant green infrastructure development and maintains landscape gaps between settlement areas. The delivery of recreational spaces in the east of the site also have good potential to reduce pressures at nearby designated landscapes which is of benefit. The likely effects are expected to be more explicit at the planning application stage with the benefit of Design and Access Statements supporting proposals.
- 7.14.5 Minor positive effects are concluded as most likely in relation to climate change mitigation, reflecting the good accessibility and connectivity of the site, providing opportunities to access sustainable transport modes and engage in active travel, alongside the promotion of high-quality design standards, efficiency measures, and renewable energy generation. Additionally, minor positive effects are also concluded as most likely in

relation to the historic environment. Whilst there are heritage assets in close proximity, the DPD supports high-quality design proposals that integrate and respond positively to these settings and the historic features that contribute to local character.

- 7.14.6 Broadly neutral to minor positive effects are concluded as most likely in relation to climate change adaptation. This reflects the avoidance or mitigation of flood risk constraints and the opportunities to bolster climate resilience, particularly through the significant green and blue infrastructure development plans.
- 7.14.7 Broadly neutral effects are also concluded in relation to water, reflecting the lack of significant issues with the confirmed funding for wastewater treatment upgrades in place to address the growth needs.
- 7.14.8 Minor to moderate negative effects are predicted in relation to both air quality and transport and accessibility, predominantly reflecting the scale of growth and inevitable increase in local car usage and congestion, despite the opportunities provided by accessible and connected development and the delivery of new infrastructure.
- 7.14.9 Whilst a range of different effects have been identified across the SA themes, no significant negative effects are considered likely that would warrant re-investigation of proposals or stringent monitoring. Recognising the knock-on effects of recommendations in terms of viability and reasonable planning expectations in new development, no recommendations are made. The DPD works well to maximise the opportunities associated with the broad location and integrate development with the existing settlement area.

Part 3: Next steps

8. Plan finalisation and monitoring

8.1 Next steps for plan-making and SA

- 8.1.1 This SA Report accompanies the Regulation 19 proposed submission version of the Southbourne Allocation DPD to consultation.
- 8.1.2 Once the period for representations on the Regulation 19 version of the Southbourne Allocation DPD and SA Report has finished, the main issues raised will be identified and summarised by CDC. This will inform whether, in light of the representations received, the plan can be deemed 'sound'. If this is the case, the DPD will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination, alongside a statement setting out the main issues raised during the consultation. CDC will also submit the SA Report alongside it.
- 8.1.3 At Examination, the Inspector will consider the representations received on the Southbourne Allocation DPD (alongside the SA Report) before then reporting back. If the Inspector identifies the need for modifications to the DPD, these will be prepared (alongside SA if necessary) and will then be subject to consultation (potentially alongside an SA Report Addendum).
- 8.1.4 Once found to be 'sound', the Southbourne Allocation DPD will be formally adopted by CDC. At the time of adoption, an SA 'Statement' must be published that sets out (amongst other elements) 'the measures decided concerning monitoring the Plan'.

8.2 Monitoring proposals

- 8.2.1 The SEA Directive states that '*member states shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes....in order, inter alia, to identify at an early-stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action*' (Article 10.1). In addition, the SA Report should provide information on a '*description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring*' (Annex I (i)).

It is considered that Local Plan monitoring will cover effects of the Southbourne Allocation DPD. This could include measures such as (but not limited to): measuring air quality at new and existing monitoring locations, the proportion of new development which incorporates nature-based solutions to flood risk, and the number of new affordable homes delivered.

Appendices

Appendix A – Scoping information

Following on from Chapter 1, this appendix presents scoping information.

Drawing on the review of the sustainability context and baseline, the SA Scoping Report identified a range of sustainability issues that should be a particular focus of SA, ensuring it remains targeted on the most important issues. These issues were then translated into an SA ‘framework’ of objectives and appraisal questions.

The SA framework provides a way in which the sustainability effects of the DPD and alternatives can be identified and subsequently analysed based on a structured and consistent approach.

A.1 Scoping Consultation Responses

The SEA Regulations require that “*When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England.¹² These authorities, as well as the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, were consulted on the scope of the SA in August 2024.

Comments received from the consultees on the SA Scoping Report, and how they have been addressed, are set out in **Table A1.1** below. No response was received from the Environment Agency.

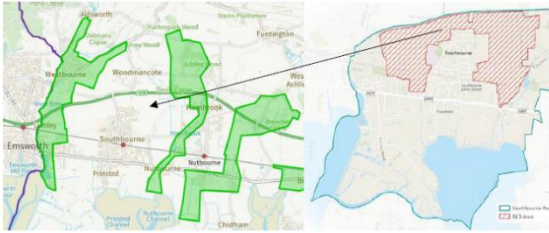
Table A1.1: SA Scoping Report consultation responses

Consultation response	How the response has been considered through the SA
<p>Historic England</p> <p>We are content that the scoping report for Southbourne Allocation DPD adequately covers the issues that may arise in respect of the potential effects of proposed development sites on heritage assets. We concur that historic environment effects should be scoped in as noted in paragraph 2.8.3.</p> <p>Historic England has prepared generic guidance with regards to our involvement in the various stages of the local plan process which you may find helpful in preparing the Sustainability Appraisal. This is available to download here: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response. The guidance provided has been used to inform the Sustainability Appraisal process.</p>

¹² These consultation bodies were selected “by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effect of implementing plans and programmes” (SEA Directive, Article 6(3)).

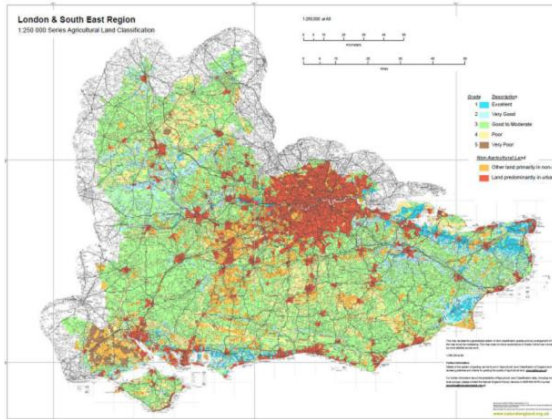
Consultation response	How the response has been considered through the SA
<p>Natural England</p> <p>Natural England is not able to provide specific advice on this application and therefore has no comment to make on its details. Although we have not been able to assess the potential impacts of this proposal on statutory nature conservation sites or protected landscapes, we offer the further advice and references to Standing Advice.</p> <p>Natural England advises Local Planning Authorities to use the following tools to assess the impacts of the proposal on the natural environment:</p> <p><u>Impact Risk Zones:</u> Natural England has provided Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) with Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) which can be used to determine whether the proposal impacts statutory nature conservation sites. Natural England recommends that the LPA uses these IRZs to assess potential impacts. If proposals do not trigger an Impact Risk Zone then Natural England will provide an auto-response email.</p> <p><u>Standing Advice:</u> Natural England has published Standing Advice. Links to standing advice are in Annex A If after using these tools, you consider there are significant risks to statutory nature conservation sites or protected landscapes, please set out the specific areas on which you require Natural England's advice.</p> <p>Further information on LPA duties relating to protected sites and areas is here- Protected sites and areas: how to review planning applications - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Further guidance is also set out in Planning Practice Guidance on the natural environment Natural environment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and on Habitats Regulations Assessment Appropriate assessment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Non detailed advice from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether the proposal is consistent with national and local environmental policies. Other bodies and individuals may provide information and advice on the environmental value of this site and the impacts of the proposal on the natural environment to assist the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Thank you for your response and the referenced tools, they have proven useful in informing this SA Report.</p>

Consultation response	How the response has been considered through the SA
Chichester Harbour Conservancy	
<p><u>Pages 19/20</u></p> <p>Table 2.10. We suggest three further key sources of information here: Chichester Harbour Landscape Character Assessment (2018) Chris Blandford Associates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Views Study (2020) David Hares Landscape Architecture • Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2024-25) <p>Links: https://www.conservancy.co.uk/the-conservancy/planning/ https://www.conservancy.co.uk/the-conservancy/managing-land-water/management-plan/</p> <p>The Priority Views Study considered long-distance views between Chichester Harbour National Landscape and the South Downs National Park. One of the views is to the east of the BLD area.</p> <p>In making the reference to the Management Plan, AECOM should also cite the CRoW Act (2000) which placed a new duty on local authorities and other relevant authorities that when exercising or performing any function in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the AONB, to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB (Section 85). This was amended in 2023 to (Emphasis added):</p> <p>“When exercising or performing any function in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the AONB, to seek to <u>further to the purpose</u> of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB (Section 85).”</p> <p>This is important because the BLD area will affect land in the AONB by virtue of its proximity, therefore any proposed development must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB (now National Landscape).</p> <p>We feel the SA should include this statement.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We have incorporated the outlined evidence as part of the assessment contained within this SA Report. We have also sought to ensure that effects in relation to the National Landscape setting have been considered through the assessment process.</p>

Consultation response	How the response has been considered through the SA						
<p><u>Page 57</u></p> <p>Under Appendix C of page 57, the SA refers to having regard to the setting of the South Downs National Park. There is no reference to the setting of Chichester Harbour National Landscape. AECOM are asked to include this.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 555 762 790"> <thead> <tr> <th>SA theme</th> <th>SA objective</th> <th>Supporting assessment questions (will the option proposal...)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Landscape</td> <td>Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the objectives and policies highlighted in Chichester Harbour National Landscape Management Plan? Have regard to the setting of the South Downs National Park? Identify and protect locally important landscape and viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place? Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the landscape setting, local identity, settlement character? </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Although AECOM are aware of the emerging work on Wildlife Corridors, these are not mentioned in the SA. A map including the nearest Wildlife Corridors would be helpful.</p>  <p>As is shown, the BLD area abuts Wildlife Corridors to the west and east, as well as the National Landscape boundary.</p>	SA theme	SA objective	Supporting assessment questions (will the option proposal...)	Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the objectives and policies highlighted in Chichester Harbour National Landscape Management Plan? Have regard to the setting of the South Downs National Park? Identify and protect locally important landscape and viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place? Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the landscape setting, local identity, settlement character? 	<p>Thank you, the supporting assessment questions have been updated accordingly. Wildlife Corridors have been considered through the assessment process.</p>
SA theme	SA objective	Supporting assessment questions (will the option proposal...)					
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the objectives and policies highlighted in Chichester Harbour National Landscape Management Plan? Have regard to the setting of the South Downs National Park? Identify and protect locally important landscape and viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place? Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the landscape setting, local identity, settlement character? 					
<p><u>Page 18</u></p> <p>The agricultural land in and around Chichester Harbour is some of the most fertile land in South East England. This is acknowledged in the SA:</p> <p>“The provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) for London and the South East indicates that much of the plan area is underlain with Grade 1 ‘Excellent’ and Grade 2 ‘Very good’ quality land, with some Grade 4 ‘Poor’ in the southern extent, and Grade 3 ‘Good to moderate’ in the eastern extent. Land in urban use is on the western extent – linked to the Emsworth settlement.”</p> <p>AECOM are advised to calculate the exact land cover space of Grade 1-4 land within the BLD area which will be foregone to development. Again, this about providing clarity and transparency one would be expect in a SA.</p>	<p>The DPD does not identify specific site proposals to the extent that an accurate assessment of predictive agricultural land loss could be calculated. Additionally, the loss is considered inevitable and a result of the directions of the Local Plan rather than the DPD.</p>						

Consultation response

How the response has been considered through the SA



<https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/141047?category=5954148537204736>

Consultation response	How the response has been considered through the SA
On the Biodiversity section it could / should cover the SPA features such as breeding birds, and acknowledge that the SAC boundary and SPA boundary are the same. Also quoting BAP priority habitats (Page 7) seems rather out of date as they are now called Section 41 species/habitats under the NERC Act.	Noted with thanks. UK BAP Habitats and the NERC Act are separate and different legislative frameworks. The Priority Habitats dataset is made available through Magic Maps which has been utilised through the assessment process, whilst recognising that this dataset has not been updated in recent years, it is still considered to be a relevant indicator.
On Appendix B Land, soils, resources Figure 1: ALC quality and mineral resource appears to be incorrect showing much of the farmland in the south of the parish as 'urban'.	Unfortunately, we are unable to amend the national dataset used to generate this map, but this valid point is noted and considered through the assessment process.
On Page 14 you could cite Tuppenny Barn as a local business within the area, as it is atypical and fondly considered by locals. https://www.tuppennybarn.co.uk/who-we-are/	Noted with thanks, Tuppenny Barn will be considered as a valued local business through the assessment process.
Finally, the SA could include a map of the PRoW network and explain that it is protected by law.	Whilst a map has not been generated, the presence of PRoW in and around the site have been considered through the assessment process.

A.2 Key Sustainability Issues

Air / Environmental Quality

- New development in the plan area (Southbourne parish) will likely increase the number of vehicles on the local road network. This could contribute additional air and noise pollution to the baseline through increased vehicle movements.
- Facilitating sustainable and active travel opportunities through the design of new development areas is important to reduce the reliance on private vehicles (and associated air quality concerns).
- The northern half of the plan area is more constrained by noise pollution, associated with the A27 on the northern boundary, and the A259 and railway intersecting the middle of Southbourne. Opportunities to deliver new develop at a further distance from existing areas of noise concern may help to limit any additional impacts.
- Opportunities to incorporate natural noise buffers into the design of new development areas will support a limitation in noise effects within the plan area.

Biodiversity

- Nutrient neutrality is a big concern in relation to the plan area, and new development areas will likely be required to demonstrate that they are nutrient neutral and don't exacerbate the current issues.
- A large proportion of land in the southern half of the plan area contributes to internationally, nationally, and locally important designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity. As such, large scale development is less likely to be deliverable in this direction due to the potential to adversely impact upon these important designations. Additionally, growth to the east or west has the potential

to indirectly impact upon the integrity of these sites – for example, by exceeding Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) thresholds.

- The Chichester and Langstone Harbour SPA is an important area for wintering birds, especially brent geese. Development will need to appropriately consider and reflect the provisions outlined in the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy and the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy in order to ensure adverse impacts to the area are avoided or mitigated.
- There are a number of important habitat types within the plan boundaries, largely concentrated in the southern half of the plan area. Given this, larger scale development is unlikely to be deliverable within the southern section of the plan area.
- Given the northern half of the plan area intersects with Network Enhancement and Expansion Zones, it is considered that development could more readily achieve biodiversity net gains in this part of the Southbourne Parish. Opportunities are perhaps more readily achievable in the eastern section of Southbourne.

Climate Change Adaptation

- Much of the southern part of the plan area is at risk of fluvial or sea flooding, with the land to the east and west of the Southbourne village boundary at a much lower risk. Development to the east and to the west of Southbourne, whilst less constrained from a flood risk perspective, may still increase flood risk issues in the plan area if the design of schemes do not incorporate appropriate drainage solutions and adaptation measures.
- Surface water flood risk and groundwater flood risk is a constraint across the plan area, with surface water flood risk being more prevalent in the northern half of the Southbourne Parish. Given the scale of growth likely to come forward in the plan area, surface water flooding issues could be exacerbated due to increases in non-permeable surfaces linked to new development.
- The extent to which fluvial, sea, surface water and groundwater flood risks are considered in the design of new development is a key consideration.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Given transportation is the largest contributing sector of carbon dioxide emissions, the extent to which development can encourage a limitation from private vehicles within the plan area is a key consideration. Specifically, development should encourage engagement with existing and / or new sustainable transport infrastructure and seek opportunities to provide a good level of community infrastructure. These considerations will help to reduce the contribution of the transport sector on carbon emissions in the plan area due to the reduced need to travel to access services and providing good alternative travel opportunities to private vehicles.
- Green infrastructure has played an integral part in offsetting greenhouse gas emissions in the Chichester District. As such, development provides an opportunity to incorporate a good level of green infrastructure, which could contribute to increased levels of carbon capture and storage in the Southbourne.

Communities and Health

- There is an ageing population in Southbourne, and a greater proportion of residents that are disabled in comparison to the wider Chichester District. As such, it is important that the needs of these groups are met, and access to key services and facilities that support health and wellbeing is maintained and enhanced. This could be achieved by focusing development as close to the existing Southbourne village as possible – to the east or west.
- There are varying levels of deprivation across the neighbourhood area, especially linked to barriers to housing and access to services. It will be important for new development to incorporate a mix of housing types and tenures that reflects the needs of the Southbourne community – including affordable housing for first time buyers. This will contribute to supporting a well-balanced community.
- According to the Open Space Study Update (2024)¹³, the open space supply in Southbourne is below the Chichester Local Plan's quantity standards. As such, new development is likely to put pressure on the existing provision in the plan area. Consideration of the effects new development will have on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents should be a focus.

Economy and Employment

- There is a current lack of vacant business and industrial space in the plan area. As such, growth could put pressure on the existing employment sites through increased use and demand for space. However, growth may also encourage opportunities to increase the provision of employment land within Southbourne Parish.
- Opportunities for development to facilitate home working and support flexible working practices is a key consideration, given that a high percentage of the working population currently travel outside of the plan area to access employment. Opportunities for development to provide additional employment floorspace is also a key consideration.

Historic Environment

- There are several heritage designations across the parish, and areas with greater concentrations of assets are likely to be more sensitive to new development given the potential direct and indirect impacts to designations (and their settings). Land to the east of the village is perhaps less constrained given the distance of this location from heritage assets and areas.
- Locally important, non-designated heritage features are likely to be distributed across the parish. As such, development in the parish could present an opportunity to enhance the community's understanding of their contribution to the historic environment of Southbourne.

Housing

- The scale of development expected to come forward in the plan area presents the opportunity to provide a mix of housing types and tenures, with affordable housing provision increasing in line with housing numbers.

¹³ Ethos (2024): [Open Space Study 2024 Update](#)

- There is an ageing population in Southbourne. As such, the ability for housing to cater for the changing needs of residents over their lifetime (for example, adaptable homes) is an important consideration.
- Opportunities for development to deliver housing which meets the needs of specific population groups within the plan area should be encouraged (wherever possible).
- In light of the climate emergency declaration at both the local and national level, opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency measures within new homes is a key consideration for new development areas.

Land, Soils and Resources

- Much of the plan area is underlain with land that has the potential to support productive agricultural activity. The scale of development which is likely to come forward during the plan period, alongside the lack of suitable and available brownfield site options in Southbourne, is likely to result in the permanent loss of BMV land - which cannot be mitigated.
- If development were to come forward in the plan area, it is likely to require consultation with West Sussex County Council due to the overlap with a mineral safeguarding zone and potential proximity to the waste management site. In this regard, development to the south would likely be less constrained, given some of the land in this part of the plan area is outside of these designated areas.

Landscape

- Development in the BLD area has the potential to impact upon the setting of and views to / from the South Downs National Park, given its proximity. Growth in the southern part of the plan area past the A259 Main Road would bring forward development within the Chichester Harbour National Landscape. Avoiding impacts to these important landscape designations will be a key consideration of development going forward. It is recognised that allocation(s) within the DPD will likely be focused in the BLD area, which is outside of the National Landscape boundary (but within its setting).
- Broadly, the landscapes within Southbourne Parish have a low capacity for change. The landscape sensitivities and capacities will need to be a key consideration of development going forward to ensure that the sensitivities are appropriately safeguarded and reflected within the design of any new development areas. It is noted that land directly to the west of the Southbourne village and land to the east has a medium to high capacity for change, and as such could more readily accommodate new development.
- There are two landscape gaps to the east and west that are important contributors to character and settlement identity in the plan area. These should be retained through development as far as possible, in order to avoid coalescence between Southbourne and Hambrook and Emsworth.

Transportation and Accessibility

- Traffic congestion is a key concern, primarily associated with the A27 / A259. Highways infrastructure upgrades to the A27 is an important factor concerning the scale of growth that could come forward during the plan period, and therefore the ability for the site allocations to contribute towards those upgrades and also to facilitate active and sustainable transport opportunities will be a key issue.

- Development within Southbourne would likely increase private vehicles on the local road network, based upon current transportation trends. This would contribute to reducing the spare capacity of the local road network. As such, development will need to fully consider the impacts it will have on the local road network, and how best to mitigate traffic impacts. Development to the east and west of the Southbourne village could contribute to reducing traffic levels by being located close to existing services and facilities and the significant sustainable transport option in the form of the railway station, and easily integrating with the existing transport network.
- If growth were focused to the east or west of the Southbourne village, it would likely be intersected and / or constrained by the rail line. Crossing the line is possible at two existing locations, however these currently have a high-risk classification which could be exacerbated by further development. There are also two informal pedestrian crossings over the railway line to the west of Southbourne which are considered dangerous by Network Rail. As such, potential development to the east and west of the settlement will need to appropriately consider its impact on the Stein Road and Inlands Road crossings and could explore alternative crossing opportunities. This could include a road and/or pedestrian/cycle bridge options.

Water

- Growth anywhere in the plan area is likely to cause increased pressure on the local water network and water quality designations, due to an increase in development and the associated water usage. This includes the potential to exacerbate existing sewer issues. Increased growth in the plan area will also likely impact upon the capacity of the Thornham wastewater treatment works that serves it.
- Opportunities for the design of new development to minimise the risk to watercourses (either via the application of sustainable drainage systems or natural features to limit run-off) is a key consideration.

A.3 SA Framework

SA theme	SA objective	Supporting questions (will the option / proposal...)
Air / environment al quality	Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the plan area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement measures (such as green infrastructure), which will help to support good air quality in the plan area? • Promote and encourage more sustainable and active transport opportunities, including walking, cycling and public transport?
	Support the reduction or mitigation of noise pollution within the plan area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement mitigation measures to help reduce the impact of noise pollution, including noise insulation and green infrastructure buffers?
Biodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites within and in proximity to the plan area, including supporting habitats and species that are important to the integrity of these sites?

SA theme	SA objective	Supporting questions (will the option / proposal...)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats as well as priority habitats and species – in particular, habitats and species which are the qualifying features for these designated sites? • Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change?
Climate change adaptation	Increase the resilience of the plan area to the potential effects of climate change, including the risk and effects of flooding – fluvial, surface water, and groundwater.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that development does not come forward in areas at higher risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing runoff where possible? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
Climate change mitigation	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the plan area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of more sustainable and active travel methods, including walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure? • Increase the level of housing and commercial development meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
Communities and health	Ensure growth in the plan area is aligned with the needs of all residents and supports cohesive and inclusive communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community, supporting community vitality and social inclusion? • Improve accessibility and the availability of local services and community infrastructure? • Deliver green infrastructure enhancements, including improved access to open space? • Enhance the quality of life of existing residents?
Economy and employment	Support sustainable economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve accessibility to employment opportunities? • Support the transition to more flexible working practices observed since the pandemic?
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the plan area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings? • Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of Prinsted Conservation Area and its setting? • Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?

SA theme	SA objective	Supporting questions (will the option / proposal...)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the plan area?
Housing	Ensure growth in the plan area is aligned with the housing needs of all residents (reflected in housing types and tenures), improves accessibility, and anticipates future needs and specialist requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing? Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? Meet the housing needs of all sectors of the community? Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?
Land, soil, and resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible? Identify and avoid the development of best and most versatile agricultural land? Protect the integrity of mineral safeguarding areas?
	Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use, and recycling of waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste? Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction? Encourage development to demonstrate nutrient neutrality in line with the latest guidance?
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the objectives and policies highlighted in the Chichester Harbour National Landscape Management Plan and protect the setting of this National Landscape? Have regard to the setting of the South Downs National Park? Identify and protect locally important landscape gaps and viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place? Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the landscape setting, local identity, and settlement character?
Transport and accessibility	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement? Improve road safety and reduce pollution from vehicles?
Water	Protect and enhance water quality and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered within new development areas? Protect waterbodies from pollution and support improvements to water quality?

SA theme	SA objective	Supporting questions (will the option / proposal...)
	water resources in a sustainable manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water recycling?

