

Public Document Pack



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

*To be held as a Virtual Meeting on
Wednesday, 14th July, 2021 at 7.00 pm*

To:

Cllr J.B. Canty (Chairman)
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr P.J. Cullum (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Jessica Auton
Cllr Sophia Choudhary
Cllr Michael Hope
Cllr Prabesh KC
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr M.J. Roberts

Standing Deputies:

Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Enquiries regarding this agenda should be referred to the Administrator, Adele Taylor, Democracy and Community, Tel. (01252) 398831, Email. adele.taylor@rushmoor.gov.uk.

A G E N D A

1. **MINUTES –** (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th June, 2021 (copy attached).

2. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - BALANCING THE BUDGET CONSULTATION - UPDATE –**

To receive an update on the response to the Hampshire County Council Balancing the Budget consultation from Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive. A link to the consultation can be found [here](#) and a further more detailed consultation on Public Health Changes is available for reference [here](#).

3. **ALDERSHOT TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY –** (Pages 7 - 32)

To receive a presentation from Tim Mills, Head of Economy, Planning and Strategic Housing on the Aldershot Town Centre Strategy (copy attached).

4. **SOUTHWOOD COUNTRY PARK INTERIM MANAGEMENT PLAN –** (Pages 33 - 58)

To receive a presentation on the Interim Management Plan for the Southwood Country Park from Anna Lucas, Senior Planning Officer (copy attached).

5. **WORK PLAN –** (Pages 59 - 66)

To discuss the Policy and Project Advisory Board Work Plan (copy attached).

MEETING REPRESENTATION

Members of the public may ask to speak at the meeting on any of the items on the agenda by writing to the Panel Administrator at the Council Offices, Farnborough by 5.00 pm two working days prior to the meeting.

Applications for items to be considered for the next meeting must be received in writing to the Panel Administrator fifteen working days prior to the meeting.

POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

Virtual meeting held on Wednesday, 9th June, 2021 at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr J.B. Canty (Chairman)
 Cllr P.I.C. Crerar (Vice-Chairman)
 Cllr P.J. Cullum (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
 Cllr Jessica Auton
 Cllr Sophia Choudhary
 Cllr Michael Hope
 Cllr Prabesh KC
 Cllr Mara Makunura
 Cllr Sophie Porter
 Cllr M.J. Roberts

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMEN

RESOLVED: That Cllrs P.I.C. Crerar and P.J. Cullum be appointed Vice-Chairmen for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

An update was requested on the LGA Peer Review. The Chairman agreed to obtain an update to be circulated to Members and to include an item on the agenda for the following meeting of the Progress Group.

3. APPOINTMENTS TO GROUPS 2021/22

(1) Progress Group

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to serve on the Policy and Project Advisory Board Progress Group for the 2021/22 Municipal Year:

PPAB Chairman	Cllr J.B. Canty
PPAB Vice-Chairmen	Cllr P.I.C. Crerar Cllr P.J. Cullum
Conservative Group	Cllr Jess Auton
Labour Group	Cllr Sophie Porter Cllr M.J. Roberts

(2) Strategic Housing and Local Plan Group

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to serve on the Strategic Housing and Local Plan Group for the 2021/22 Municipal Year:

PPAB Vice-Chairman	Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Leader of the Council	Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Local Plan	Cllr Marina Munro
Chairman of Development Management Committee	Cllr C.J. Stewart
Conservative Group	Cllr P.J. Cullum
Labour Group	Cllr Sophie Porter Cllr M.J. Roberts
Liberal Democrat Group	One vacancy

(3) Transformation Task and Finish Group

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to serve on the Transformation Task and Finish Group for the 2021/22 Municipal Year:

PPAB Chairman	Cllr J.B. Canty
Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customer Experience and Improvement	Cllr K.H. Muschamp
Conservative Group	Cllr Sophia Choudhary Cllr P.J. Cullum
Labour Group	Cllr Gaynor Austin Cllr Sophie Porter
Liberal Democrat Group	One vacancy

(4) Elections Group

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to serve on the Elections Group for the 2021/22 Municipal Year:

PPAB Vice-Chairman	Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cabinet Member with responsibility for Electoral Issues	Cllr A.R. Newell
Chairman of Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee	Cllr Sue Carter
Conservative Group	Cllr C.J. Stewart
Labour Group	Cllr T.D. Bridgeman Cllr K. Dibble
Liberal Democrat Group	One vacancy

4. **FRIMLEY INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM (ICS) AND FRIMLEY CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP (CCG)**

The Board, welcomed the following representatives from the Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG):

- Kathy Atkinson – Lay Board Member, Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group
- Stephen Clarke - Clinical Lead NE Hants Farnham CCG and General Practitioner (GP), Branksomewood Healthcare Centre, Fleet
- Oliver White – System and Finance Performance Director, Integrated Care System (ICS)
- Russell Swart – Primary Care Network (PCN) Clinical Director (Farnborough) and GP, Giffard Drive Surgery, Farnborough
- Louise Payne – PCN Clinical Director (Aldershot) and GP Princes Gardens Surgery, Aldershot
- Alice Earl – PCN Clinical Director (Farnborough) and GP, Southwood Surgery, Farnborough

Ms Atkinson, explained the NE Hants and Farnham CCG geography. It was noted that the original five local CCG's had come together on 1st April 2021 to establish the Frimley CCG. However, in February 2021, a government white paper had been published on the future of the NHS. The paper covered the future direction and structure of the NHS and proposed to absorb the current CCG's into ICS's bringing the work of the providers and commissions together. It was noted that the paper was due to go through Parliament later in summer 2021, and the newly formed ICS's becoming statutory from 1st April 2022.

The assumption within the white paper had been that all ICSs' would be coterminous with county boundaries. Frimley CCG currently straddled Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey county boundaries and therefore wouldn't fit the required profile within the paper. Discussions were ongoing at the highest level on the implications of Frimley becoming an ICS due to its location and feedback was hoped for by end June, 2021.

It was noted that, should the request to retain the current set up be rejected, Rushmoor would become part of the Hampshire ICS but residents would still be able to utilise the facilities at Frimley Park Hospital. The ICS would ultimately be a conglomeration of all the health care services provided and a way to organise the resources and services by area.

The Board discussed the white paper proposals and supported the action being taken to retain a Frimley ICS in the future.

The Board then discussed local health priorities. Mr. White advised that in 2019 a number of priorities/ambitions were set for a period of 4-5 years. These priorities fell within the following five headings:

- NE Hants and Farnham (NEHF) Place – developing local place and operate effectively with PCNs, the voluntary sector and local authorities
- Restoration and Recovery – retention of local access to services through PCNs etc. wider integration with local authorities

- COVID Response 2021/22 – key areas included primary care vaccine programme roll out and remote monitoring of infection rates
- Improving health of the local population - how the ICS supported health and equalities
- Maintaining focus on core activities – engagement with local population

Dr Clarke gave an overview of some of the current work streams across the priorities, these included:

- A review of clinical leadership
- PCN Development
- Access to primary care, digital tools to access a doctor – under development
- New roles – more paramedics and physician associates working within practices
- 2hr crisis response – prevention of hospital admission
- Waiting list initiatives
- Data analysis to improve population health – joint working with partners, including local authorities
- Core activities – estate issues ensure all premises fit for purpose

The Board discussed the priorities, in particular, mental health issues in both the elderly and young people. It was noted that initiatives such as a targeted “mental health workforce” was being introduced on a need basis across the Borough and, in Aldershot, work was being undertaken with MIND, a mental health charity, to provide urgent on the day access to help and support. Nationally, resources were being provided for addressing mental health matters and recently a free to under 25’s online service called “Kooth” had been launched. It was suggested that joint working with private mental health care practitioners could also be considered to support the increasing number of cases as a result of the pandemic.

The importance of health and wellbeing was also discussed, it was advised that health coaches were to be introduced into practices to offer advice of healthy lifestyle choices. Collaborative working with the Council was also key in this area, in particular through the work of the Supporting Communities Strategy and health inequalities.

A discussion was held around the NEHF Place priority. It was noted that conversations were being had with the Council on utilising space within the new civic hub to incorporate health care provision on the site. It was also suggested that Council hubs could be utilised to provide space to hold virtual appointments for those without access to the internet.

It was recognised that the voluntary sector had provided valuable support during the pandemic. It was important to maintain the relationships created to utilise their assistance moving forward through possible befriending initiatives, wellbeing activities etc. The Board noted some of the ongoing work coming from the Supporting Communities Strategy which included, tackling obesity, mental health initiatives, digital inclusion and a Mens Shed/Repair Café. Joint working was also taking place with the Aldershot PCNs on reducing health inequalities and a Houses of

Multiple Occupation (HMO) liaison programme to engage with some of the Borough's harder to reach communities.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from the CCG for their presentation and it was noted that this item would be reviewed further at the Progress Group. Any further feedback and comments from Members should be referred to Karen Edwards who would collate a response.

5. **FARNBOROUGH CIVIC HUB**

The Board welcomed Michael Simpson, Associate, GT3 Architects and Gemma Kirk, Director, GLK Solutions, who were in attendance to give a presentation on the Farnborough Civic Hub and the vision which would inform the design of the new Civic Hub building.

It was advised that the Council had recently agreed to the demolition of the existing Farnborough Leisure Centre, which had led to the need to decide what the new space would look like and what would be incorporated into the build. The presentation would share the thinking and where it had led in terms of office requirements. It was proposed that a more interactive session could be ran with the Board in the early autumn.

Mr. Simpson gave a background to the work undertake that had established a need to bring people, services and activities together by providing a building with multiple activities/uses under one roof. Engagement with Council staff and elected Members had been undertaken through workshops and questionnaires. Key messages from the engagement were:

- An outward looking/community facility
- A multi-purpose and multi-agency facility
- Green agenda
- Creation of a destination location
- Workplace that is dynamic, exciting, innovative – resulting in better services for the community
- Flexible work space/IT
- Welcoming civic spaces – to encourage more participation

In response to a query, it was noted that commercial spaces within the Civic Hub were being considered. Work on sustainable building as part of the Green Agenda was being investigated and this was a key priority for the Council. It was also felt important to consider future planning when developing the final design.

The Board discussed the workplace equation taking into account new ways of working. Consideration would need to be given to how much space was needed; desk space metrics were being considered alongside occupancy, task and culture requirements. It would be important to consider the needs of partners such as Citizens' Advice, Rushmoor Voluntary Services, the NHS and the Police as part of this work. Consideration should also be given to a seven-day operation to allow for full flexible working. Safety issues for staff were raised and it was noted that different

technologies were available to ensure the safety of all users and these would be incorporated into the design.

In summary it was stated that, the space would be about bringing people together in a fit for purpose flexible space with variety and choice for all. Large open spaces would be broken down to create areas suitable for a variety of tasks with the introduction of colour/texture/character in order to draw people back into an inspiring office space. The area would be a balanced mix of healthy, efficient, effective and engaging spaces to create a high performing workplace.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Simpson and Ms Kirk for their presentation.

6. **MEETING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Board discussed meeting arrangements for the 2021/22 Municipal Year. It was noted that meetings of the Policy and Project Advisory Board could be held virtually as well as in person.

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting to be held on 14th July, 2021 would be held virtually and moving forward the arrangements would be agreed on an individual meeting basis by the Progress Group. The option to hold hybrid meetings would also be considered.

7. **WORK PLAN**

The Board **NOTED** the Work Plan and that it would be developed through the Progress Group.

The Board noted that Hampshire County Council had published a consultation on Balancing the Budget. It was felt that the Board could help shape the response which was due by 18th July, 2021. This would be picked up at the Progress Group meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.24 pm.

CLLR J.B. CANTY (CHAIRMAN)

Interim Aldershot Town Centre Strategy

2020 – 2025+

DRAFT

Introduction

The regeneration of Aldershot Town Centre is a key priority for Rushmoor Borough Council and identified in its business plan. Our commitment to achieving this objective is outlined in the 'Rushmoor Local Plan' which details the Council's long-term vision for the Borough.

It is important that progress towards this vision is clearly tracked, monitored and evaluated so we can properly realise our transformational ambitions. As such, this document identifies five themes which can be used to understand both what has been achieved in recent years, but also, what needs to be completed moving forward.

The strategy sets out how we will both communicate and implement the vision from 2020 – 2025 and beyond. It is an interim strategy recognising that the Covid-19 pandemic is accelerating change and potential creating very different trends moving forward. Therefore, the Council believes that it will need to review this plan within a relatively few years to test whether the plan needs modification. It is therefore a work in progress which will be developed further.

Aldershot was one of the initial 14 Towns invited to participate with the Future High Street Task Force. A Place Potential visit was undertaken in February 2020 and a final report including feedback received in May 2020. The report recognised the work underway to restructure the Town, and in through that, the repositioning of the Town was being enabled. It identified the key delivery challenges for Aldershot were around reinventing and particularly rebranding the Town. Covid-19 has delayed the work with the High Street Task Force Expert, now expected to take place in early 2021, to develop further the work the Council has already undertaken in these areas.

This document builds upon the Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus and the recent community consultation held by the Civic Society and recommendations of the Aldershot Task Force that have fed into this document. The Interim Strategy summarises what has been achieved since the SPD was adopted but also what still needs to be done.

This interim document takes account of changing market conditions that occurred prior to the Covid-19 pandemic such as the consolidation of bricks and mortar stores by retailer that have accelerated since restrictions were imposed such as the shift to online retailing.

There is a need to diversify the town centre and continue the momentum with regenerating sites as they become available.

Vision

Our borough, our town centres, our businesses, how we work and use our leisure facilities all continue to change. The way we respond to these changes will shape the borough for future generations and below is our vision that will inform how we do that.

- We want to see the heart back in Aldershot a place where people feel at home and have their home.
- The town will be a place where everyone is welcome and where families want to be, focused around a thriving town centre that provides a range of services to meet the needs of residents that is accessible to all and offers an experience across all generations and demographics for both the local community and visitors.
- Businesses, old and new, will enable residents to shop in a unique mix of independent and high street shops, providing places to work and the space to start a business.
- Aldershot's Victorian, military and diverse community heritage will be celebrated, maintained and developed.

Communicating and developing the Vision

There has been extensive consultation over many years with the community concerning the regeneration of Aldershot. This has included work with Thinking Place regarding the branding of Aldershot, the development of the Aldershot Prospectus and recently the extensive work by the Civic Society to create their vision. This interim strategy seeks to synthesise all this work together, drawing heavily on the vision and ideas in the Civic Society document.

What is most important is that the vision and plans in this interim strategy are owned by the people of Aldershot who form a remarkable community. This community is already active in shaping and regenerating the town. In addition to the convening role of the Civic Society, the work of Aldershot Together in helping to deliver the events programme, Aldershot Churches Together which focuses the work of local churches to support the place or individual community businesses such as Karuna Coffee and many others demonstrate the power of the community. Building on this foundation and ensuring all these organisations and groups are engaged is fundamental to successfully turning vision into reality. An important element of this is supporting the continued development of community initiatives to meet the needs of residents so that the community is not just consulted and engaged, but an active part of transforming Aldershot Town Centre. We want the community to feel that they can shape their town.

That this has not fully happened was recognised by the High Street Task Force as one the most significant barrier to the regeneration of Rushmoor. They identified that rebranding was the most important area that had yet to be effectively addressed. The work undertaken by Thinking Place has never been fully implemented although it has been used across the Wellesley development.

The Aldershot Taskforce has been established as the key stakeholder group to help lead the regeneration of Aldershot. This includes residents, community organisations, businesses, developers and the Local Authorities. The strategic place leadership group and its establishment and role was recognised as a

strength by the High Street Task Force. As one of its workstreams this group has reviewed the Thinking Place work and while recognising its value considered that time had moved on and that there was a need to develop the branding further. Initial work to review and develop the branding was undertaken prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. However significant work remains to fully develop the rebranding including fresh engagement with stakeholders and residents. Rebranding will only be successful if it is owned by the residents, businesses and other stakeholders in Aldershot. This will need to be supported by a structured communications programme and adoption of the branding across partners.

The process will be developed using the approach set out in Rebranding the High Street (2016) is based on five activities:

1. Research
2. Deliberation (working with a core group of stakeholders to create a proposition for a vision using the research findings)
3. Consultation (to initiate a discussion about the proposition to refine the vision and strategy)
4. Action (demonstrate some early wins, change the focus of longer-term initiatives in the light of the research and stakeholder engagement)
5. Communication (tell residents, businesses, the wider catchment, investors and others what you are doing)

As several elements of the process have already been undertaken to some degree, a more tailored approach to ensure that every element has been fully addressed will be developed.

- Aldershot Task Force to continue to provide the strategic place leadership
- The Aldershot Task Force will work with the High Street Task Force, key developers / property owners & the Civic Society to engage the community fully in the vision and further develop branding
- Develop a shared communication plan and ongoing campaign to tell the story of the “new Aldershot” to achieve widescale adoption of branding by businesses and community organisations
- A coalition of the community organisations supported to develop and implement initiatives in and around the Town Centre

Themes of the Vision

Theme 1 - A revitalised and diverse town centre offer

The town centre facilitates access to local services and provides places for communities to come together. A range of services and facilities in the town centre adds to the vibrancy and usefulness and encourages different people to come to the town centre and spend time there for a broad variety of reasons.

We want to work with partners to deliver a town centre that feels unique and welcoming with an independent retail offer and a variety of high-quality cafes and restaurants to socialise in.

Family friendly town centre

Aldershot is appreciated by residents as a safe and family-friendly town centre that serves its community well. It has an impressive range of sports facilities and activities, including the football club, dry ski slope, gymnastics centre and swimming pool. The council is continuing to explore the potential for establishing leisure facilities in the town centre to complement these and improve accessibility. With the Wellesley development under construction, alongside the development of the Union Street and Galleries town centre schemes, the Council is seeking to further enhance this offer.

Focus for services

The Council will encourage the relocation of services into the Town Centre and support partners in providing the relevant space.

Digital Aldershot

Re-orienting Aldershot away from being a retail town provides it with an opportunity to capitalise on its other strengths, in particular its emerging importance to the digital technology sector. There is a strong and growing digital economy in the Guildford - Aldershot axis with digital tech density significantly higher than the national average. The Council is seeking to capitalise on this connection between the towns / cities in the area and sees it as integral to promoting growth. A large proportion of these tech companies are start-ups operating as micro businesses on a very small scale. Investing and supporting these emerging businesses is vital to the sector's continued growth.

What has and is being achieved?

Union Street Regeneration

The Council successfully acquired vacant possession of the entire Union Street site through purchase of buildings along Union Street and High Street enabling the delivery of the Union Street East regeneration

scheme. The Council successfully bid for £6.2m of external funding towards the Union Street project better enabling the scheme to meet its transformational potential.

The Council achieved planning consent for its ambitious regeneration scheme for Union Street and the High Street in Aldershot town centre. Members of the council's development management committee approved the scheme at a meeting on 24 June 2020.

The consented scheme offers a mixture of high-quality retail / commercial space. At the heart of it is the new Union Yard, a public square around which will be flexible space designed to attract small, independent and local businesses and people wanting creative studio space.

A move away from big-brand retail provides an exciting opportunity for Aldershot to develop its independent offer, with the Council fully supporting the provision of a Makers' Yard. This would be a space, formed of a cluster of units, that would provide affordable accommodation for small scale local businesses and young creatives, brought into the town and supported by the introduction of student accommodation for the UCA. This will stimulate town centre diversity by providing a chance for these start-up businesses to test trade ideas. It is a model to encourage Small and Medium Enterprises to establish in and around the town and will provide a vibrant hub of independent retail activity boosting footfall.

Galleries Redevelopment

A major step in regenerating Aldershot town centre was reached with the submission of a planning application for the redevelopment of The Galleries shopping centre in July that was subsequently approved by the Council's planning committee in November 2020.

The consented scheme will see the High Street multi storey car park, The Arcade and The Galleries redeveloped in phases to provide 596 one and two bedroomed town centre homes, flexible commercial space for shops, cafes and restaurants; medical and civic space, public and residents' car and cycle parking.

Town Centre Uses Study (Part 1)

The Council commissioned Lambert Smith Hampton to prepare a Town Centre Uses Study to assess the quantitative need for town centre uses for the Borough as a whole, but consider in more detail how need can be met in Aldershot Town Centre and the potential to diversify the town centre's uses. The study takes account of major planned and proposed investment for the town centre, which if delivered, has the potential to revitalise Aldershot Town Centre.

The study is to be undertaken in two parts:

- Part 1 updating the evidence base (complete)
- Part 2 setting out a strategy for managing future change and growth in the Town Centre (postponed until 2021)

Part 1 of the study has identified that the development of Union Street and the Galleries/ Arcade sites will have a transformative effect on the town centre and provides the opportunity to close many of the gaps in retail and leisure offer that the health check assessment has identified, whilst strengthening the town centre's position within the regional hierarchy. The two regeneration schemes have the potential to revitalise Aldershot Town Centre, particularly through the diversification of its retail and service offer. This in turn will help to claw back expenditure leakage from the catchment and strengthen Aldershot's position in the sub-region's shopping hierarchy.

The study notes a key challenge in the short term is to retain existing retail occupiers and explore options to diversify retail offer over the short term; a challenge that is further compounded by the current Covid-19 pandemic and associated social distancing measures.

Opportunities to enhance Aldershot's commercial leisure offer will be dependent on market demand and changing consumer tastes and trends, but more crucially how the sector recovers from the closure of attractions from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Digital Hub Complete

The Council has worked with its partners to deliver a Digital Hub at the historic Old Town Hall to provide a 60-place collaborative workspace for existing and aspiring entrepreneurs, micro, small and developing businesses, and others working in the Gaming/Digital Sector.

The hub provides a physical space for a supportive and collaborative shared working environment offering state of the art facilities and flexible working arrangements together with support services. The hub will support the growing digital economy in the Guildford-Aldershot axis.

5g Coverage rolled out by a network operator (EE)

Aldershot is one of 12 towns in the UK where the network operator EE has introduced 5G mobile communication technology which offers data speeds several times that of 4G and allows for larger amounts of data to be transferred at once. The introduction of 5G complements the Games Hub and wider aspirations to drive digital growth in the town.

What do we need to do next?

Transition and Recovery Plan

Continue to work with our partners to implement the Transition and Recovery Plan to support existing business in the town centre during the construction phases of the Union Street East and Galleries Regeneration Schemes and attract new businesses to the town. The Transition and Recovery Plan identifies the following 7 priorities:

- A – Managing Safety, Distancing & Cleaning
- B – Gathering Data & Monitoring Footfall

- C – Telling the Story & Communication
- D – Encouraging Town Centre Use
- E – Supporting Businesses
- F – Attracting & Monitor External Funding
- G – Engaging with High Street Task Force

The Transition and Recovery plan focuses on methods of increasing footfall through events, activities and engagement.

Town Centre Uses Study (Part 2)

The second part of the Lambert Smith Hampton Town Centre Uses Study will set out a strategy for managing future growth and change in the Town Centre. The study will make recommendations on how to diversify the town centre considering the consolidation of ‘bricks and mortar’ retailing by the national chains and a degree of consolidation with chain restaurant operators.

Attracting and creating a mix of uses to new commercial floorspace

The Council and its partners will work to develop a plan for attracting and creating a mix of uses within the commercial floorspace provided as part of the Galleries and Union Street sites. This will include leisure, services and retail recognising that the retail approach of the past is no longer viable.

Develop a Strategy to attract a critical mass of employment

There is a need to attract more employees into the town centre and surrounding areas to increase footfall and support existing and future town centre services (office, flexible workspace, start-ups).

The Council will work with its partners to improve Aldershot’s office market. This should be taken as a long-term goal that seeks to increase the skills base of the catchment and create a labour pool that could attract interest from employers to locate to Aldershot. In the short term to medium term we will look for opportunities to develop new affordable office accommodation aimed at servicing start-ups and smaller businesses and to develop other employment uses.

Windsor Way and Victoria Road

As part of the strategy to bring employment to the Town Centre the Council and its partners will seek to undertake comprehensive master planning of the area to the east of the Town Centre including Windsor Way and Victoria Road to guide the regeneration of this area. We consider this area provides a suitable location for commercial uses such as flexible office accommodation, start-up units near the Town Centre or extension of the provision of small industrial units. The area is considered to be economic focused and any residential development would be incidental and must not compromise the primary economic purpose.



Wellington Centre

The Council already works closely with the Wellington Centre on attracting people into the Town centre through events. Shopping Centres are particularly challenged in the current Covid-19 situation and due to longer term trends in retail. The Council will support London and Cambridge in seeking to diversify the offer and adapt to the changing environment.

Westgate Leisure Park

The Council will work with Legal and General to support the recovery of the Westgate Leisure Park following the Covid-19 pandemic which has resulted in some of the restaurant units closing, the cinema to be temporarily closed and the delayed opening of a new gym facility.

Other Sites

Car wash site adjacent Empire and Gala Bingo – This site was identified in the Aldershot Prospectus as a potential site for leisure. This remains an aspiration, but other uses would be considered provided the quality of the scheme enhances the two adjacent buildings and provides vibrancy for the ground floor and contributes effectively to the regeneration of the Town centre and its use.

Enhanced digital connectivity

The Council will work with its partners including the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership to enhance fibre broadband and the mobile 5G offering in the Town Centre.

Theme 2 - Town Centre Living

The development of homes within the town centre build the resident base of our community and support a more vibrant future for the town.

There is potential for redevelopment of additional town / edge of centre sites and the conversion of existing premises outside of core retail / commercial areas.

What has and is being achieved?

Birchett Road scheme

This site featured in the Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus and has since been redeveloped to provide 58 affordable dwellings in the town centre.

52 Victoria Road

This site wasn't identified in the Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus, but consent was granted to redevelop this former commercial site to provide 54 new homes in August 2020. The development is now under construction.

Union Street Redevelopment

The Union Street development (planning consent granted June 2020) once complete will provide 100 residential units and a 128 bedrooms of student accommodation for students at the University of Creative Arts in Farnham.

By providing high quality student accommodation, this represents a significant opportunity to revitalise the town centre by bringing young, creative and innovative people into the heart of the town and introducing skill sets more attuned to emerging economic markets such as animation, computing and gaming. The energy and vibrancy of these young creatives will persist far outside the regimented shop opening hours of the past and will enthuse the town with much needed activity.

The regeneration of the town centre will also improve the attractiveness of residential development in Wellesley and may result in an accelerated delivery timescale due to improved market conditions.

Galleries Redevelopment

The consented Galleries redevelopment will, once complete, deliver 598 residential units within the Town Centre.

The scheme will bring about a step change in Aldershot. By providing homes in the town's heart for young professionals and new families it will re-energize and reinvigorate the town's offer, supporting Union Street East with vital consumer lifeblood. As such it will have a transformational effect offering the critical mass to stimulate real change.

Other Sites

There are a number of new sites that have received planning consent since the adoption of the Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus that have delivered new homes within or in close proximity¹ of the town centre which have provided approximately 165 dwellings between April 2015 and March 2020. The majority of which (over 85%) are the result of converting buildings from non-residential uses to residential use.

What do we need to do next?

The Council will ensure the delivery of Union Street and Galleries schemes is delivered in a timely way and that the implementation is integrated as far as possible.

The Council will seek to identify the opportunities for the provision of residential units as part of commercial / leisure led schemes that may come forward within or adjoining the town centre. Potential sites that could deliver residential units as part of mixed-use schemes include:

Princes Hall / Police Station and Magistrates Court

The Council and its partners will consider opportunities to redevelop the Princes Hall and police station / magistrates court site that feature in the Rushmoor Local Plan and Town Centre Prospectus through the comprehensive master planning of the site with partners to provide replacement community / arts / entertainment facilities. We consider there will be opportunity for residential dwellings to be provided as part of this scheme.

¹ Within 200m of the Town centre Boundary defined in the Rushmoor Local Plan Policies Map



Aldershot Town Football Club (Ebb Stadium)

The Council will continue to work with Aldershot Town Football Club to identify opportunities to improve the stadium and its facilities. We consider that there may be the opportunity for some residential development as part of future proposals for this site. The entire site is identified as recreational land and therefore subject to mitigation for any reduction in recreational land.



Parsons Barracks Car Park



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Other Sites

Hippodrome House was identified as a key redevelopment site in the Aldershot Prospectus due to its prominent corner location clearly visible from the station and marking the key access to the Town centre. The aspiration for this to be brought forward remains. However, achieving this aim particularly with regard to parking provision has proved problematic.

Willow House is also another key site. A high-quality scheme whether for residential, community or commercial use is desired which reflects the location close to the conservation area and significant heritage buildings and on a route into Aldershot. The difficulties of achieving adequate parking are also a significant issue on this site.

Edge of centre retail – The Council recognises the changes in the retail market and the reduced demand for such premises. Outside of its core shopping frontages and key linked routes it will encourage the conversion of retail premises to residential subject to the schemes providing appropriate quality of design and accommodation.

Theme 3 - Accessible and connected town centre with an improved public realm

An easily accessible town centre promotes its active use. The town centre should be accessible by a range of transport option including walking and cycling to encourage visits whether for a short errand, to meet a friend, or an extended visit making use of the diverse range of businesses and facilities

The look, feel, and usability of Aldershot Town Centre is absolutely key to its future success in both economic and social terms. It must be welcoming, accessible to all and encourage visitors to utilise the services and facilities on offer.

The way people can use key spaces in the town centre and move between them will be carefully designed so that people can gather around events at focal points whilst others move freely around them.

The Council will work with its partners to deliver high quality public realm that use quality materials and is designed to a high standard.

What has and is being achieved?

Parking Study

The Council commissioned a Parking Study that focused on Aldershot Town centre to examine the current parking situation taking account of previous off and on street parking surveys and to look at how supply and demand is likely to change in the future, given the planned regeneration projects and increasing use of sustainable and alternative modes of transport. The report identified several recommendations for the Council to explore and these are detailed in the following section.

Improved connectivity between the Town Centre and Wellesley Development

The following improvements have recently been completed that formed part of the Section 106 legal agreement to Wellesley Hybrid Planning Consent:

- Foot/cycle improvements at Gun Hill including crossing improvements to the A323.
- Hospital Hill South Improvements including improvements to A323 Wellington Avenue / Hospital Hill / Princes Way junction
- Foot/cycle improvements to Middle Hill including crossing improvements to the A323.

Improved public transport interchanges

The current bus station has not been used as a bus hub / transfer location for some time with the bulk of the transfers taking place within the town centre. It was agreed with Stagecoach (the bus operator) and HCC that the core bus service should relocate to a new bus hub within the town centre.

As part of the Aldershot Railway Station improvement scheme agreement was reached with the owner of the Bus Station that it should be redeveloped into residential with convenience retail below. A subsequent planning application was approved in early 2019.

The approach is aimed at serving the needs of shoppers visiting the town, but as importantly the community moving into the new residential properties within the town centre. The implementation shown below will be implemented as part of the town centre redevelopment and in the meantime interim arrangements will be in place.

The proposed new bus hub would be located adjacent to the current multi storey car park and the old Santander building. Stagecoach have advised they would run most of their services from here but maintain the Victoria Road route where the Council is also seeking to make improvements

The Layout (appendix 1) is an outline proposal, but would include green bus shelters with cycle parking, real time bus service updates and some form of soft landscaping all in keeping with the emerging style for the new town centre.

Station public realm improvements

The aim of the proposals is to create a simpler, clearer environment to minimise the impact of vehicle movements and to establish a more legible and comfortable approach to the station for pedestrians. The development proposals will also significantly improve public transport infrastructure in the town and will incorporate improved cycle storage facilities in an effort to encourage sustainable transport modes through improved connections.

Union Street Redevelopment

Building on the history of passageways and cut throughs across Aldershot, the development seeks to create routes that connect to existing street, opening up opportunities for public space.

Union Yard will provide a new dynamic pedestrian route between Union Street and High Street. Ramped access is provided from Union Street into a central courtyard at the heart of Union Yard. Due to the level change across the site, steps are provided down towards the High Street. A platform lift from the High Street to the courtyard ensures the space remains accessible for all.

A new route is also created connecting Short Street to Union Yard. This allows connectivity between The Trafalgar Public House alongside the new non-residential uses within the proposed shipping containers.

Additional public cycle parking will be provided within the scheme (check) and a car club vehicle will be provided that will be accessible to the wider public.

Galleries Redevelopment

The consented development once complete will provide a new linkage between High Street and Wellington Street with a public square at its core that will aid connectivity and movement around the town centre. This public square will be required to utilise high quality materials to ensure that this new space will become a focal point of the town centre and able to host a range of events. The public car park that will be provided as part of the scheme is envisaged to provide public charging infrastructure for Electric Vehicles.

The key public realm objectives of the scheme are to:

- Create a strong identity and sense of place, reflecting the town centre location of the site.
- Deliver new public frontages along Wellington Street, Little Wellington Street, The High Street, Court Road and Wellington Avenue.
- Develop a site wide response to the local context and reflect this where possible in the approach to landscape treatments.
- Provide high quality and secure private communal residential gardens.
- Encourage informal play throughout the entire development.
- Provide an uncluttered streetscape that uses high quality, sustainable materials.
- Promote active edges along the ground floor of each building.
- Create new plaza areas along Little Wellington Street, along with extensive semi-mature street tree planting.

What do we need to do next?

Connectivity Study

The Council will undertake or commission a study looking at the accessibility / permeability / connectivity of the town centre and its surrounding to identify where targeted improvements could be made.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

The Council will work with Hampshire County Council and other partners to produce a Local Cycling and Walking and Infrastructure Plan to identify key routes and priorities for improvement.

Implement the findings of the Aldershot Town Centre Parking Study

The study made a number of recommendations that the Council will continue to explore with its partners:

Off street parking: more strategic use of car parks and partnership working by the Council with the Wellington Centre and Westgate, improved use of technology for car parks and provision of electric vehicle charging.

On street parking: a strategic review of on-street parking, including reducing the number of spaces to create more public realm for pedestrians and cyclists. The study recommends improved management and digital (cashless) payment options be introduced.

Non car use: consider a cycle hub at the station, implement 2012 Town Access Plan Improvements and consider the introduction of Car Share Schemes

Draft Public Realm Guidance Consultation

The public realm guidance document sets out several strategic objectives which can be used to inform a co-ordinated approach to improving the public realm within our town centres.

It is part of an effort which aims to encourage the delivery and improvement of public realm in our two towns which is consistent, of the highest quality and functional, by providing a co-ordinated approach which helps the borough properly realise this once in a generation opportunity.

It is intended as a guide, steering the developers of key town centre schemes forward under a single co-ordinated vision.

We will undertake public consultation on the draft Public Realm Guidance that has been produced to guide future development within the Town Centre.

Targeted Public Realm & Shopfront Improvements

We will seek to identify opportunities to build upon the previous work that was undertaken to improve shopfronts in the town centre. A particular focus will be on key connecting routes such as the top of the High Street and Station Approach.

Toilets

The redevelopment of the High Street Car Park and Bus Station will mean the loss of the two sets of public toilets. Provision of modern accessible changing and toilet facilities are important for a Town centre. While there is provision within the Wellington Centre these are only available from 8am-6pm. A community toilet is provided at Princes Hall and will be available at Karuna Coffee. However, provision of replacement toilet facilities needs to be considered.

Public Art

We will seek to introduce and enhance public art into the town centre and will focus on installations that complement the rich heritage and culture of the town.

Theme 4 - An improved cultural offer

Events, entertainment and activities are the key to creating a town centre that Aldershot residents are proud of and attend regularly. They offer people an additional reason to visit the town centre and increase the footfall which will in turn increase the prosperity of businesses in the town.

Aldershot has a strong history of arts and culture, from the town's many early music halls and theatres to performances by the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix in the sixties. The West End Centre has served as a creative hub for artists, musicians and performers for more than 45 years and the Princes Hall for nearly 50 years.

What has and is being achieved?

Union Street Redevelopment

To build on this rich cultural heritage the Council is forging ties with the University of the Creative Arts to properly realise the cultural potential of the Union Street redevelopment. To keep this history alive and to nourish and grow Aldershot's cultural and creative spirit going forward, the Council wants Union Street to be a space where both new and existing residents, young people, local businesses and artistic industries can come together.

Expanded Cultural events programme

Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Council had broadened its cultural events programme:

- Running a diverse programme of major annual events, including:
 - Victoria Day, June
 - Armed Forces Day, June
 - PlayFest, August
 - Fireworks, October / November
 - Christmas Lights Switch On, November
- Smaller scale footfall building events programme in Farnborough Town Centre
- Expanded range of events at the West End Centre

Princes Hall continued to offer a diverse and exciting range of events to cater for a range of interests

What do we need to do next?

- Reintroducing a full events programme to the town centre and its performance venues when safe to do so.
- Work with our partners including the Arts Council to develop a Cultural Compact and Strategy for Rushmoor that will support the Town Centres among other aims.
- Work with Hampshire Cultural Trust to build on the offer provided at the West End Centre, including potential studio space.
- Review potential refurbishment of Princes Hall and enhancing its offer.

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Theme 5 - Affirming Aldershot's Heritage

To showcase the rich heritage of Aldershot and integrate it into the regeneration of the town centre and the activities and events that take place there.

Victorian heritage

One of Aldershot's frequently overlooked assets is the quality of the Victorian buildings which remain throughout the town centre

Aldershot's rapid growth as a Victorian Military town has left the town with a legacy of gridded streets populated by confident and striking Victorian buildings. These use a mix of materials including stone and yellow stock brick among the more common soft reds. Many of the best buildings occupy corner sites and are visible as landmarks, making them especially important.

As many towns across the UK begin to look similar in terms of character and shops, Aldershot can maintain a distinctiveness and attractiveness that reflects its heritage.

The Council wishes to showcase the fantastic historic built fabric in the town centre and sets out the Council's intention to enhance and preserve this. Aldershot's Victorian Heritage is celebrated annually on Victoria Day.

Gentle use of military connection

Aldershot's military Tattoo dates back to 1894 and, in its heyday of the 1920s and 1930s, attracted 500,000 visitors to see formation performances lit by flame torches. Aldershot's military history and Victorian heritage continue to be celebrated through regular events, including Armed Forces Day and Victoria Day.

Nepali/International heritage

Rushmoor is a borough built on community diversity and as such, is the most ethnically diverse in all of Hampshire. In Aldershot, the army's presence has helped grow a vital and vibrant international community which contributes greatly to animating the town. The army's historically strong links with the Commonwealth have expanded over the last 20 years to include ties to Africa, Europe, the Pacific Islands and most significantly Nepal.

The Nepalese community has a particularly strong presence in Rushmoor because of the Gurkha connection with Aldershot Garrison during their service. When the High Court ruled in 2009 to allow Gurkhas, who retired before 1997, the right to settle in the UK, many viewed Aldershot as their natural home and laid down roots which now extend far beyond simply a military connection. The Nepali

community's active participation in events is particularly valuable to the town, with the Food Festival and Victoria Day great examples of local people coming together.

These diverse residents are crucial to the vibrancy of the town and add another dimension to Aldershot's unique blend of heritage and culture. Their importance cannot be understated.

What has and is being achieved?

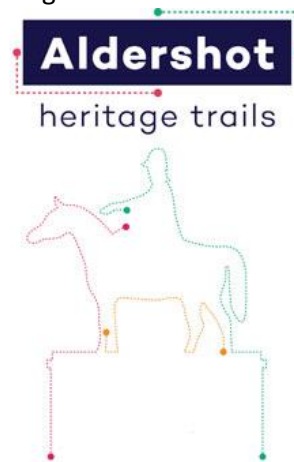
Heritage Trails

Funding has been secured for two heritage trails one within Aldershot Town centre and the other as part of the Wellesley redevelopment.

Aldershot has a wealth of rich military and civilian history, so we want the heritage trails to tell the story of this to residents and visitors, and to all ages. Each trail will be several miles long with information and navigation provided by a series of way-markers, totem poles, and plaques.

The proposed trails are:

- The Marlborough Trail
- The Stanhope Trail
- The Wellington Trail
- The Redan Trail
- Town Centre Trail



They have been developed by a heritage trails team, made up of representatives from Rushmoor Borough Council, Grainger Plc, the Aldershot Garrison and the Friends of Aldershot Military Museum.

Heritage Festival

The Council launched the Rushmoor Heritage festival which ran from the 3rd until the 31st October. The festival provided a wide range of activities to enjoy from home., including the Picturing Aldershot audio trail to discover images from Aldershot's past and present and listening to the 'Entertaining Aldershot' audio tour of the old music halls, theatres and cinemas.

Victoria Day

To celebrate the town's close links with Queen Victoria, the town centre is transformed into a sea of colourful activity for all the family to enjoy, including: Performances from local musicians and dancers and the grand parade through the town centre.

What do we need to do next?

- Consult on and finalise Public Realm Guidance
- Improving the high street shop frontages to emphasise the Victorian heritage of the town
- Implement Heritage Trials
- Develop approach to integrate Nepali heritage within town

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A Map of the Vision



Sites

Maps of the various sites will be created at some point once lockdown restrictions have been lifted.

1. Police Station Courts / Princess Hall
2. Winsor Way – comprehensive master planning to guide the regeneration of this area
3. Car wash site (High Street) - visually detracting from neighbouring buildings – cross ref SPD p56
4. Hippodrome House
5. Willow House (60's / 70's building) - high quality development that is sympathetic to surrounding-heritage assets
6. Ebb Stadium
7. Parson Barracks Car park

Map – key public realm schemes / priorities including frontages

Galleries – continue to work with developer to ensure that the public open space provided is high quality and can accommodate a range of events?

High Street – shopfronts + conversions of upper floors & potential lower ground floors to shop to resi (consolidated retail).

Station Road– shopfronts

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Southwood Country Park SANG

DRAFT Interim Management Plan 2021-2023

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is a network of heathland sites that was designated by European legislation in 2005 for its breeding populations of ground-nesting birds, namely the Dartford Warbler, nightjar, and woodlark. Studies have shown that the designated species have been declining in numbers since the early 2000s. The decline is thought to be due to increases in housing within South East England, which has led to unsustainable recreational pressure on the SPA birds. To endeavour to alleviate pressure, a mitigation strategy has been formulated across Berkshire, Hampshire, and Surrey, to provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANG) at 8ha/1000 new residents. It is hoped that SANG sites will provide natural habitat, away from the SPA, and alleviate recreational pressure within the designated sites. Southwood Country Park has been identified as a SANG to serve new development planned within Rushmoor Borough Council's Local Plan.
- 1.2 The delivery of the Park has been progressed in two phases. Phase 1 has delivered the immediate infrastructure required by Natural England to enable the former Golf Course to provide SANG mitigation. This included the provision of signage, car parking, fencing and circular walks. An Interim Management Plan was prepared for the initial 12-18 month period (Southwood Country Park Interim Management Plan 2019-2021).
- 1.3 Phase 2 will enable the Park to fulfil its purpose of alleviating recreational pressure on the SPA in the longer term, by undertaking further habitat work to naturalise the site and to provide additional facilities to attract visitors. The Council has been exploring options and progressing the delivery of the following facilities and services in phase 2:
- The employment of staff including a ranger to manage the SANG
 - A visitor centre, café, toilets and ranger's office
 - All weather paths
 - A pedestrian crossing on Ively Road to provide a safe link between the eastern and western sections, subject to traffic assessment and Hampshire Highways
 - A playground constructed of natural materials close to the Ively Road car park.
 - A fenced dog exercise area and washdown facilities
 - Cycle paths to encourage use of the SANG by cyclists, especially families

- Creation of focal points and/or adventure structures
- CCTV to provide security around buildings
- Educational aids such as a pond dipping platform for use by schools and clubs to study wildlife

2 Progress of Phase 2 planning since 2019

2.1 Due to Covid and other factors, Phase 2 of the Country Park has been delayed. As a result, the Council needs to prepare an updated Interim Management Plan for the next 2 years. There are interim arrangements currently in place to manage the SANG on behalf of the Council and options are currently being explored for the longer-term management of the site. A longer term (10 year) Management Plan will be prepared once these arrangements are in place.

The Southwood and Cove Brook Floodplain Improvement Project

2.2 The Cove Brook is a tributary of the River Blackwater, part of the wider Loddon and Thames catchments. The closure of the golf course and the plans to create Suitable Natural Alternative Greenspace now offers an opportunity to restore the habitats and physical processes associated with the Cove Brook corridor and associated floodplain, creating a more resilient ecosystem for the benefit of people and wildlife. Therefore, the Council has entered partnership with the Environment Agency, to progress a project which will achieve river floodplain and habitat improvements on the Southwood Country Park and Cove Brook as part of the Phase 2 development. The objectives of this project include:

- Improve the Water Framework Directive Status of the Cove Brook and its tributaries through physical habitat enhancement
- Enhance the biodiversity and ecosystem functioning of the project area
- Re-establish hydrological connectivity between the river and its floodplain (where this does not compromise the SANG)
- Increase tree cover within the former golf course to provide woodland and wet woodland habitat within the headwaters
- Create opportunities for nature-based recreation and education
- Identify any opportunities to secure flood risk benefits for local people (including the consideration of natural flood management interventions)
- Improve the biodiversity value of the four associated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) namely
 - Cove Valley, Southern Grassland
 - Cove Brook Grassland

- Southwood Woodlands
 - Southwood Country Park
 - Improve the landscape value of the project area
- 2.3 Consultants have been appointed to manage and lead on this project. A Baseline Report and Longlist of Options and draft Concept Designs has been prepared. Work is currently underway on the detailed design and the flood modelling work. The design will be published for public comment in summer, the Council then intends to tender for the Phase 2 works later in 2021, before work commences on site in early 2022.

Southwood Country Park Visitor Centre

- 2.4 The Council has also been considering the options regarding a visitor hub on the site and is now progressing the design development for a Visitor Centre and Café.

Pedestrian Crossing

- 2.5 The plan for the creation of Southwood Country Park includes provision of a pedestrian crossing. This has been subject to technical work and is awaiting confirmation from Hampshire County Council as to the requirements following submission of the relevant data.

ESSO Pipeline

- 2.6 A Development Consent Order (DCO) was granted in October 2020 for the Southampton to London Pipeline Project that will replace 90km of aviation fuel pipeline. Part of the new pipeline crosses the western and eastern sections of the park. A phasing plan has been published by Esso and is available, along with further information on the project, at www.slpproject.co.uk. Works affecting the park are expected to take place between May and October 2022, with some vegetation clearance in December 2021. Any interim or Phase 2 works will need to take the pipeline route into account.

3 Site Description

- 3.1 Southwood Country Park is a 57ha site, owned by Rushmoor Borough Council (the Council), incorporating a former golf course and adjacent land. Cove Brook, and four Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) support the most biodiverse habitats on site, however since the last interim management plan natural habitats have started regenerating across the site.
- 3.2 The Park is made up of two distinct parts – the area to the west of the A327 Ively Road ('western section') and the area to the east ('eastern section'). The Country Park was opened to the public in September 2019.

- 3.3 Southwood Country Park is located to the south west of Farnborough, within the Borough of Rushmoor in Hampshire, OS grid reference: SU8554. It forms a green oasis in a heavily urban environment and is a prominent natural feature within the local landscape. The site is visible from busy roads leading into Farnborough from neighbouring Fleet. Due to the size of the site and the habitat connectivity with Southwood Woodland and other open spaces views from the golf course are largely of naturalised habitats rather than urban sprawl.
- 3.4 The Country Park is directly adjacent to Southwood Woodland SANG to the west, comprising 30ha of oak/birch woodland and wet woodland, containing open acidic grassland glades and bog habitats. The head of the Ively stream is located within the woodland. This stream then forms the northern boundary of the site throughout the western section of the Country Park. There is no formal boundary and visitors can move freely between the two green spaces.
- 3.5 Southwood Playing Fields and the EA Flood Mitigation area are to the north of the SANG with Cove Brook bordering to the east. Cove Brook then runs under Cove Road and the Five Arches railway bridge before continuing through the Cove Brook Greenway and Horley Meadows, before joining the Blackwater within Blackwater Valley.
- 3.6 The site is predominantly flat though in a few places, the topography has been altered. The underlying geology is based on Windlesham Formation (sand, silt & clay) beds. Both the geology and recolonization of acid grassland indicate that there are likely to be opportunities to extend the acidic grassland habitats throughout the site.
- 3.7 Due to the site being low lying floodplain, it is prone to seasonal water logging. Surface water from the site is passed down open ditches and culverts towards the Ively stream, which then flows away to the east into the Cove Brook. The eastern land parcel drains into the Marrow Brook, which then flows into the Cove Brook before meandering northwards through Cove Brook Grasslands SINC and Cove Valley Southern Grasslands SINC into Cove. Floodplain grazing marsh and wet woodland habitats have formed within the SINCs, along the drainage network and within low lying areas of the site.
- 3.8 Southwood Country Park contains three Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) identified as of County importance for their wet habitats. Cove Brook Grasslands SINC supports a wide range of marshy grassland, swamp and floodplain habitats, with willow Carr scrub further diversifying the habitat complex. Cove Valley Southern Grasslands SINC is less diverse with much of the scrub having developed into species poor wet woodland. Within the area of open grassland, a good diversity of species is still present. Southwood Country Park SINC is designated for its wet woodland and remnant grazing marsh habitats.

4 Changes within the natural habitats since 2019

- 4.1 Since the golf course closed there has been limited management on the site. The ecological management detailed within the initial plan was felt to be inappropriate once the invertebrate surveys were analysed, and the habitat was seen to be regenerating naturally. It was decided, in consultation with Debbie Salmon (RBC ecologist), the EA and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust that the habitats should be unmanaged for a few seasons to allow them to recover from former intensive management, with regeneration being monitored. It is intended to undertake a flora survey this year to record the flora communities present on site. This will then be compared with the survey undertaken in 2017 to assess the increase in floral diversity.
- 4.2 Within the east, acidic grassland has become increasingly biodiverse. The surveys undertaken in the park identified an important community of terrestrial invertebrates, with many rare and vulnerable species noted. The bog habitat within the Cove Brook Grasslands SINC and the wet woodland within Southwood Country Park SINC were hotspots for terrestrial invertebrates, with some evidence these species were recolonising the regenerating habitats within the east.
- 4.3 The western side of Southwood Country Park is less biodiverse than the east, however there are signs of early acid grassland colonisation in some areas. The bunkers and areas within the grassland now contain acid grassland species, with the wetter areas beginning to form wetland flora communities. The rough grassland previously recorded on site appears to be diminishing, being replaced by fescue dominated grassland.
- 4.4 The habitats now require significant work to bring them into rotational management. The Council will bring the habitats into active management, within the Interim Management Plan period, in partnership with Blackwater Valley Countryside Project (BVCP) and the EA. This will ensure that the habitats and the associated fauna become increasingly diverse
- 4.5 In addition to the habitat work site furniture and trim trail will be installed, to provide facilities for the visitors. Signage will be reviewed throughout both Southwood Woodlands and Southwood Country Park to provide better way marking and information on the habitats and species present on site.

5 Interim Management

- 5.1 This Interim Management Plan relates to the management of the Country Park for the next 12 to 24 months (2021 – 2023). Within this time the Council, in partnership with the EA, will have undertaken the Phase 2 works and a longer term (10-year) management plan will need to be prepared and agreed.

- 5.2 The immediate infrastructure and changes required by Natural England to enable the former Southwood Golf Course to provide SANG mitigation at the earliest opportunity have now been delivered on site. A new car park was opened adjacent to Kennels Lane in April 2020, over 9km of mown paths were provided including circular walks and the site was fenced in 2019/20. Temporary signage was erected at all official entrances providing a map of the site and the footpath network. An all-weather path of 2.4km is to be constructed this summer within the western section, however due to the route of the ESSO pipeline it is unlikely that the all-weather path proposed for the east will be delivered, until the pipeline work is complete.
- 5.3 Under the interim arrangements, Southwood Woodlands and Southwood Country Park are now being managed as a single site by BVCP, with ranger and materials costed for both sites. Calculations show that the two sites require 1.5 rangers to undertake the habitat works and visitor engagement within the sites. As visitor engagement increases additional budget may be required to provide another 0.5 ranger, to provide staff to the level budgeted for within the original SANG calculations. Funding for the rangers, infrastructure and habitat works will come from developer SANG contributions for new residential development.

6 Management of the Habitat Complex

Grassland Management

- 6.1 An annual mowing regime will commence on site, within the grassland habitats in 2021 to reduce the predominance of invasive grass species and ensure the ground remains depleted of nutrients. The mowing will be undertaken on a three-year rotation to ensure there is shelter and overwintering habitat for reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates present on site. Care will be taken to ensure that reptiles which may bask on the close-cut paths, are not harmed. Mowing will take place after the end of August (*see Map 1, Grassland A Management*).
- 6.2 In the west, the grassland will be topped in the spring 2022 to control the invasive grass species and enable the tender species to grow and seed. Mown paths will continue to be maintained by SERCO as currently.

Wetland Creation and Management

- 6.3 Cove Brook Grasslands Area SINC supports the most important habitat on site. The bog and grazing marsh habitats contain rare flora species with both the habitats and species identified within the SINC designation. The habitats provide ideal conditions for many rare invertebrate communities and the entire populations of palmate newts and common lizard found on site.

- 6.4 The Cove Brook Grasslands Area SINC will be managed on a 10-year rotation with a tenth of the site mown each autumn. Habitats on the periphery of this site have become over-run with invasive species such as reeds. In these areas, scrapes will be provided to provide opportunities for recolonization by more valuable flora species and provide additional habitat for wetland birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. Scraping and scrub clearance will be undertaken to help to maintain a complex of habitats in different stages of growth.
- 6.5 There are opportunities to create wetland habitat adjacent to the Southwood Country Park SINC where the grassland is naturally wet. This habitat will provide opportunities for the invertebrate population within the woodland to expand into this habitat, as well as providing additional grazing marsh habitat to compliment that found within the SINC. The wetland area identified within map B will be stripped within the summer 2021 and seeded within green hay from the bog habitat when this is cut in August. The colonisation of this area will be monitored throughout 2022 with a further green hay seeding applied if required in August 2022 (*see Map B Wetland Management*).

Woodland, Copses, Hedgerows, Scrub and Trees

- 6.6 Work to the woodland blocks at Southwood Country Park SINC and Cove Brook Southern Grasslands will be delivered as part of the Southwood and Cove Brook Floodplain Improvement Project, with thinning of the canopy undertaken to increase light to the waterways. Any further access work required within the SINC's will be undertaken after the wider works are carried out in the winter of 2021/22.
- 6.7 However, it is proposed to plant a woodland edge, copses and the re-establish the historic hedgerow network throughout the western section of the site within the interim period. Some of this planting will be undertaken in September, using existing voluntary groups from Southwood Woodlands and Cove Brook Greenways Groups. Negotiations with Community Matters Partnership Project are ongoing to run a planting day for companies. It is possible that the volunteer days could deliver all the planting required, but if not either the rangers or contractors will complete the planting. Areas will need to be left unplanted until works are completed by ESSO and the Council. 1500 shrubs will be provided by Farnborough Airport to offset carbon, however a budget will need to be provided for the trees within the copses, as these need to be significantly larger than any offered by Carbon Footprint. Some additional shrubs are also likely to be required as the proposed planting will cover a significant area.
- 6.8 On opening the Country Park to the public, a schedule of works was drawn up to undertake health and safety works on a number of trees, most of which were conifer. The high and

medium priority works were undertaken in 2020, after the trees had been checked for bats. The low priority works will be completed in 2021/22, with bat surveys undertaken on all trees that require work.

- 6.9 Within the wider management plan the vision is to restore the landscape back to the 1800s and add a number of small copses to increase the habitat complex on site. From an ecological viewpoint it would be extremely beneficial to remove all the conifer species on site, as these will seed into the acid grassland and need to be removed by hand each season. Coniferous habitat is poor in biodiversity with few species using the trees, other than to nest and little flora being able to colonise the grassland within the tree's canopy. Therefore, all conifer will be felled, whatever its condition, with replacement tree planting carried out to create the copses and provide standards within the hedgerow network.
- 6.10 To ensure a diverse habitat complex within the Country Park, it is important that we provide some scrub habitat in which the reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates can shelter. Currently there is little scrub on site, with popular regeneration dominating the scrub habitat present. To create biodiverse scrub habitats mowing will not be undertaken in strategic areas. Popular scrub will be kept under control using hand tools to ensure no harm to the taxa using the habitats. To ensure this habitat remains as scrub, the areas selected will be coppiced every 7 years (*see Map C for the Woodland/Copse/Hedgerow/scrub network*).

Cove Brook, tributaries, and the ditch drainage network

- 6.11 It has been agreed that due to the extensive works to be undertaken to Ively Stream and Marrow Brook as part of the River enhancement, and the very poor ecological quality of the bankside vegetation along these tributaries, any works and management required will be undertaken within and after the wider river restoration works in 2022/23.
- 6.12 The drainage network this is currently very engineered with water piped into ditches. It has also been noted that this system can cause flooding to the surrounding properties and therefore needs to be cleared to ensure the safety of the properties. By naturalising the ditch network, the system will function as part of the riparian network with flora slowing down the water and the recreated wetland absorbing any excess flows before the water reaches the properties. The ditch network will be naturalised and connected into the riparian system as part of the Southwood and Cove Brook Floodplain Improvements project. This will be done in consultation with John Trusler and Helen Bristow, who currently manages the ditches for the council.

6.13 Work along Cove Brook will be undertaken during the winter of 2021 to clear the invasive vegetation, particularly the bramble, to enable bankside flora to regenerate and become more biodiverse. The bramble will be cleared on a two-year rotation to ensure cover is present throughout the river corridor for the invertebrates, otter and other fauna that use this corridor. The vegetation will be cut in 200m stretches, with 200m being cut on one side of the river, with a staggered 200m stretch cut on the alternate bank. The two-year rotational management will ensure a contiguous corridor of cover. This management will be undertaken in the winter months to avoid harm to nesting birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates (see Map D for the river and drainage network).

Bare Ground habitat, The Bunkers

6.14 Bare ground habitat is essential for many of the invertebrate species present within the site, as they use these areas to hunt. Bare ground also creates basking opportunities for reptiles. However, it has been noted that acidic grassland habitats are establishing on many of the bunkers. Therefore, to endeavour to establish a balance between these two important habitats, the bunkers will be reprofiled to create south facing slopes and scraped on a 10-year rotation. As there are 30 bunkers on site, three bunkers will be reprofiled and scraped per year, commencing in 2021. This will provide habitats in different phases of regeneration, increasing opportunities for colonisation by a wider and more varied invertebrate assemblage. (See map E for a plan of the bunkers and other invertebrate habitat found on site)

7 The benefits of habitat creation, management, and enhancement to species

Bats

7.1 Five species of foraging bats were recorded on site, common and soprano pipistrelle, Daubentons, noctule and an unidentified Myotis species. Most of the bat activity was focused along the tree lines and the woodland. This management plan will provide a diverse woodland edge and linear foraging routes providing greater areas over which the bats can hunt. By increasing the invertebrate populations bats will also be provided with more plentiful food. In the longer term, as the copse habitat matures, additional roosting opportunities will become available, enabling a greater number and diversity of bats to roost on site.

7.2 Lighting should be kept to a minimum, with the site preferably remaining dark. If works are required on mature broadleaved trees, bat surveys should be undertaken, with the appropriate licences obtained if roosts are to be impacted.

Badgers

- 7.3 Two outlier badger setts have been recorded within the western section, associated with the main sett within Southwood Woodlands SANG. Latrines were noted within the eastern and western parcels. The woodland complex will increase the foraging potential, providing fruit, nuts and berries and more varied invertebrate and vertebrate food sources. In the longer term the copses will provide shelter for sett creation, enabling the badger community to grow and expand.

Birds

- 7.4 36 bird species have been recorded on site. Bullfinch, house sparrow, reed bunting, song thrush and starling are listed in the Biodiversity Action Plan due to the sharp declines in numbers in recent years. The complex of habitats proposed within this management plan will increase habitat for species already using the site and encourage a greater diversity of birds. The woodland/copse/hedgerow habitat will enable woodland birds to expand their territory, with the heathland and wetland habitat providing additional foraging and nesting habitats for species which use more open habitats. The proposed scrapes within the bog area will provide habitat for wetland birds. The wetland habitats will be supplemented by a naturalised river network and further scrapes and ponds within the Southwood and Cove Brook River and Floodplain Enhancement Project. Bird boxes for a wide variety of species will be erected as part of a school's project in 2022, with monitoring undertaken by the children within the summer months.

Reptiles

- 7.5 A peak count of eleven common lizards were recorded, comprising 5 adults and 6 juveniles, comprising a medium breeding population of common lizard. All common lizards were recorded within Cove Brook Grasslands SINC. A peak count of 20 slow worms were recorded comprising 10 adults and 10 juveniles, with the site supporting an exceptional breeding population of slow worms.
- 7.6 The woodland/ copse/hedgerow network will increase shelter and provide a greater diversity of fauna for reptiles to hunt. This complex will be supplemented by log piles and other hibernacula positioned in strategic locations. The management of the open habitats will increase foraging and basking opportunities, with rotational scaping of bunkers creating a variety of basking and hunting conditions. The Southwood and Cove Brook River and

Floodplain Enhancement Project will increase wetland habitats for common lizards outside the bog by recreating and enhancing the riparian, floodplain, pond, and ditch network.

Amphibians

- 7.7 A peak count of 20 Palmate newts were found within the bog habitat indicating that a good population within the Cove Brook Grasslands SINC. A peak count of 4 frogs were found within the bog indicating a low population.
- 7.8 The creation of scrapes and the management of the bog habitats will provide more varied wetland habitats and thus increase foraging and breeding opportunities. The Southwood and Cove Brook River and Floodplain Enhancement Project will increase opportunities for amphibians outside the bog by recreating and enhancing breeding habitat and increasing the floodplain and ditch network used to hunt.

Aquatic Macroinvertebrates

- 7.9 The waterbodies and watercourses are considered to support aquatic macroinvertebrate communities of moderate to low ecological value. The pond in the north/north east is of highest value, whereas the ditches in the western section are of lowest ecological value. The presence of concrete and a thick layer of silt and leaf litter and the slow sluggish flows within the ditch/ stream network is having an adverse impact on the aquatic invertebrates, suppressing diversity. By providing scrapes within the bog and additional wetland adjacent to Southwood Country Park SINC, some temporary habitat will be provided to support aquatic invertebrates. However, the biggest benefits for this taxon will be provided through the Southwood and Cove Brook River and Floodplain Enhancement Project, which will re-naturalise the stream and ditch network, improving the water quality within the riparian system.

Terrestrial Invertebrates

- 7.10 The terrestrial invertebrate survey, undertaken 2019 found 596 species of which 37 had conservation status. This was the highest total of any three-visit survey carried out by the author. Looking at the site at a landscape scale, including Southwood Woodlands, an impressive 952 species have been recorded overall, with 73 having conservation status.
- 7.11 Within the Country Park the invertebrate interest was largely focused around the bog in the east and the wet woodland in the west. Some species have spread into the Country Park since the management has been relaxed, but the golf course habitats and the intensive mowing have blocked most of these specialist species from colonising new areas

- 7.12 A full invertebrate survey is six days, but only three days were commissioned for the Country Park as the invertebrate value of the site was unknown at this time. As the site supports an important extremely biodiverse invertebrate population,, an additional three visit invertebrate survey has been commissioned to ensure RBC has a full data set of the rare species that require conservation, to monitor the invertebrate colonisation of the site and provide advice on any future management required, above what is in this plan.
- 7.13 Due to the importance of this taxa, this management plan has focused heavily on providing for their needs. Within the west the Woodland/copse/hedgerow network will provide routes out of the Southwood Country Park SINC into newly created wet woodland interspersed through the site. The rotational management of the grassland and bog will ensure that overwintering habitat is available, with rotational scaping of the bunds providing habitats in different stages of progression, including bare ground in which many species hunt. The scrapes within the bog and the green hay seeding adjacent to the Southwood Country Park SINC will provide a more biodiverse wetland habitat complex for the species using the bog and the wet woodland and the hibernacula will provide additional overwintering habitat and shelter during the summer months. (See map E for a plan of the bunkers and other invertebrate habitat found on site)

Invasive Non-Indigenous Species (INNS)

- 7.14 Four schedule 9 species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were noted within the survey. Signal crayfish cannot be controlled.
- 7.15 Unfortunately, the variegated yellow archangel is spreading through the site, due to garden waste dumping from the adjacent housing. This is also an issue within Southwood Woodland. All garden waste needs to be removed from the site and a concerted effort made to try to stop this practice. This may include legal action if the offenders can be identified as it is an offence to spread schedule 9 species onto other people's land. However, before this action is taken the ranger will visit the properties surrounding the park with information regarding the damage done to ecological habitats from dumping and endeavour to persuade the occupants to dispose of their waste responsibly. The variegated yellow archangel will be sprayed this year to try to limit spread, but it is likely to require digging out which will be very labour intensive.
- 7.16 The Himalayan Balsam is contained within a small area adjacent to the EA bund. A work party pulled much of this last year. The site ranger will check for regrowth and control as required.

- 7.17 The crassula has now been sprayed for two years and has not spread further than first recorded. This spraying will continue this year, with the pond being filled within the Southwood and Cove Brook Floodplain Improvement Project.

8 Access and Infrastructure

Natural England Requirements

- 8.1 Natural England has published criteria for SANG to be used as mitigation or avoidance land to reduce recreational use of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. Some of these criteria are considered essential and others are desirable – further details of these criteria and how they have been met in the Southwood Country Park are set out in Appendix C.

Car Parking and Access

- 8.2 The former golf course car park, consisting of 75 spaces with approximately 20 spaces in the overflow area, serves the eastern parcel, with a new 29-space car park, with 2 additional accessible spaces and cycle provision, off Kennels Lane serving the western section. There is capacity to extend this car park if required. There is some informal parking along Kennels Lane which serves the Southwood Woodland SANG and Southwood Country Park SANG.
- ~~8.3~~ Pedestrian access points are via Ively Rd and Kennels Lane for the western parcel and via the Southwood Playing Fields, Ively Rd, Kempton Court and Cove Brook Greenway (Bridge Rd) for the eastern parcel.
- 8.4 All vegetation will be controlled to ensure clear sight lines into the site for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Chicanes have been placed within the eastern car park to secure access onto the site, with field gates to ensure access for vehicles required to manage the site. Directional signage will be provided in 2021 to inform the public of the location of the site and car parking. In addition, planting will be provided to screen the Council's compounds off Kennels Lane and Ively Road.

Circular routes

- 8.5 2.4km circular routes are available through the eastern and western parcels of Southwood Country Park. Paths are already significantly longer than the minimum required, at over 5 km within the western parcel and over 4 km within the eastern parcel. The network comprises existing hard surfaced paths linked by mown areas, providing strategic links to Southwood Woodland in the west and Southwood Meadow and the Cove Brook Greenway in the east. Due to the wet nature of the site an all-weather path of 2.4km will be constructed in the

spring/ summer of 2021, with a further 2.4km all-weather path planned for the east or as soon as the ESSO pipeline is completed.

Signage and information

- 8.6 Temporary signage has been erected at all entrances, with a view to permanent signage being installed during 2021. Interpretation signage will inform visitors of the reason for the SANG designation, the scale and diversity of the site, and provide a site map of the Southwood Country Park with a range of routes marked.
- 8.7 Fingerposts and way markers will link the SANG to Southwood Woodland and other long-distance paths, providing a clearly marked route within the more informal areas of Southwood Country Park.
- 8.8 Information about Southwood Country Park will be made available on websites and via social media to promote the site as a SANG and encourage its use as an alternative to the Thames Basin Heath SPA, especially by new residents moving into the area.

Fencing and gates

- 8.9 Dog-proof fencing has been provided along the busy and open boundary with Ively Road, the southern boundary of both western and eastern parcels (Ively Rd), along Kennels Lane (western parcel) and Bridge Rd (eastern parcel). In 2021 the area along the southern boundary along Elles Road and the boundary with Hazel Avenue, along the EA bund will also be fenced.
- 8.10 A field gate has been provided at Ively Road to limit access of vehicles into the western area with an accessible kissing gate along the Ively Road boundary as pedestrian entrance. A secure entrance at the Ively Road car park creates a sense of entrance.
- 8.11 Additional fencing is required in a small area adjacent to Elles Road and along the EA bund.

Other infrastructure

- 8.12 Combined litter and dog refuse bins have been provided close to all entrances accessible by road. New site furniture is planned to be erected in 2021 to enhance the visitor experience by providing a welcoming and attractive appearance and facilities that can be used by all residents regardless of age, or disability. Site furniture will include picnic benches and seating at strategic points around the site.
- 8.13 A combined trim trail and nature trail will be provided across the site with strategic stops to undertake physical and/or ecological activities.

- 8.14 Work will be undertaken to decommission the golf course infrastructure, including the pumps and pits in the summer of 2021. Bridges over the small ditches and watercourses within the site will be replaced or removed in 2021 to manage access and improve safety.

9 Maintenance

- 9.1 All hard infrastructure, including car parks, fencing, gates, signage etc will be checked on a regular basis to ensure it is safe and accessible, with repairs or vegetation clearance undertaken as necessary.

10 Visitor Usage

- 10.1 A visitor survey was undertaken by Footprint Ecology in 2018. However, since closure as a municipal golf course, the site has become publicly accessible, visitor numbers have increased, and the site is now very busy. The Council will commission BVCP to undertake an updated visitor survey, in the spring/summer of 2021, to monitor the increases in visitor numbers and provide an estimate of the total numbers of visitors likely to use the site when Phase 2 is delivered. This data will be used to inform the design of the visitor centre and provide evidence of use to Natural England in relation to the SANG. People counters will also be positioned in all official entry points to monitor use.

11 Monitoring and Review

Habitat Monitoring

- 11.1 The site will be managed by BVCP until at least January 2022. Details of how the SANG will be managed, and the organisation that will be responsible for the management in the longer-term will be set out in the 10-year Management Plan, likely to be approved after the delivery of Phase 2 in 2022/3. The SANG charge includes provision for a review of the management plan and appropriate monitoring surveys to take place on a 10-yearly basis.
- 11.2 Habitat monitoring will be undertaken throughout the interim management plan period by the BVCP, with flora surveys planned to provide a full up to date data set of species within the open habitats.
- 11.3 The invertebrate community will be monitored for increases in numbers and spread within the survey proposed.

Service Level Agreement Management and Monitoring

11.4 The SLA is overseen by a steering group consisting of officers from the Council and BVCP. There is ongoing communication between the Council and the BVCP Ranger and monthly reports are provided by BVCP detailing the works undertaken and the hours worked.

12 Conclusion

12.1 This Interim Management Plan has been developed to provide a clear schedule of works for BVCP to deliver. The Plan will provide benefits for access and the visitor experience as well as increasing diversity of the habitat complex within the site and management of existing ecological habitats.

12.2 The long-term management of the SANG will depend on the final site design, on which decisions are expected to be made in 2021. The design will incorporate decisions made on the EA feasibility study and wetland habitat proposals and the uses of the buildings. Consultation will be undertaken on the final site design with the public, Natural England, the Environment Agency, and any other interested parties. The long-term management plan will be signed off by Natural England, the Environment Agency, and the Council.

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Appendix A
Schedule of Works

Management		Location (Woodland, Country Park West, and East)	Project Lead	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	22/23
	Install dog fencing by Elles Rd and Hazel Av	Country Park East	RBC													
	Install finger posts to link Southwood Country Park with Woodland	Country Park and Woodland	BVCP													
	Creation of signage and site leaflet	ALL	BVCP and RBC													
Community engagement	Site patrols	ALL	BVCP													
	Volunteer Tasks	ALL	BVCP													
	Community engagement	ALL	BVCP													
	Admin - RBC liaison, reporting, meetings etc	ALL	BVCP													
	Events and guided walks	ALL	BVCP and RBC													
Countryside Mgt	Topping	ALL	BVCP													
	Cut and collect grassland (3rd west and east)	ALL	BVCP													
	Reprofile and scrape bunkers	Country Park West and East	BVCP													
	Extend/maintain glades	Woodland	BVCP													
	Remove log piles from woodland.	Woodland	BVCP													
	Tree planting for hedgerow restoration and woodland edge creation	Country Park West and East	BVCP													

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Appendix B
Habitat Creation and Management Maps

Maps are currently being prepared

Appendix C
Criteria for Suitable Alternative Natural Green
Spaces

SANG Criteria	Phase 1	During Phase 2 and ESSO pipeline works	Phase 2
For all sites larger than 4ha there <u>must</u> be adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local use, i.e. within easy walking distance (400m) of the developments linked to it. The amount of car parking space should be determined by the anticipated use of the site and reflect the visitor catchment of both SANGS and the SPA	The car park serving the western parcel can accommodate 29 cars, 2 accessible spaces and cycle provision. An overflow car park is available for events. The car park serving the eastern parcel can accommodate 75 spaces with approximately 20 spaces in the overflow area.	Both car parks will remain fully operational, with unimpeded access during the works	There is space for further car parking spaces to be constructed in the Kennels Lane car park if required.
It should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.3km – 2.5km	Walks of over 9km have y been created throughout the Country Park	Some paths may need to be closed to pedestrians but there will always be at least one 2.5km walk available.	
Car parks <u>must</u> be easily accessible by car and should be clearly signposted	The eastern and western car parks are easily accessible from Ively Road and Kennels Lane respectively. The Country Park will be clearly signposted	Both car parks will remain open, with access unimpeded during the works.	
The accessibility of the site <u>must</u> include access points appropriate for the visitor use the SANGS is intended to cater for.	There are many access points throughout the site which enable pedestrians, car drivers and cyclists to access the site from any direction.	All access points will remain open throughout any works.	
The SANGS <u>must</u> have a safe route of access on foot from the nearest car park and/or footpaths	All access points are safe Some of the pedestrian routes into the site are along busy roads and dogs should be kept on lead.	If routes adjacent to Kennels Lane require closure, alternative routes will be clearly signposted	A pedestrian crossing over Ively Rd will provide safe access between the eastern and western parcels.
All SANGS with car parks <u>must</u> have a circular route that starts and finishes at the car park.	Both car parks serve at least one 2.5km circular route around the park	Throughout the works at least one 2.5km route is available from each car park.	
SANGS <u>must</u> be designed so that they are perceived to be safe by users; they must not have tree and scrub cover along parts of the routes.	The routes within the SANGS have been designed to mirror the desire lines of existing users. All-weather paths will improve accessibility within the winter months	Any areas impacted by works will be fenced off and clearly signposted with alternative routes provided.	
Paths <u>must</u> be easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel	Existing hard surfaced paths have been retained and linked by mown paths boardwalks or hard surfaced routes are required due to	Paths will be kept open wherever possible.	

SANG Criteria	Phase 1	During Phase 2 and ESSO pipeline works	Phase 2
	inaccessible wetland habitats.		
SANGS <u>must</u> be perceived as semi-natural spaces with little intrusion of artificial structures except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.	See Management Plan for proposed habitat creation and management	There may be some disruption to the natural feel of the site during the works and until the new habitats have established,	The Southwood and Cove Brook Floodplain Improvement Project will complement the rewilding of the site
All SANGS larger than 12ha <u>must</u> aim to provide a variety of habitats for users to experience.	The relaxation of the management has increased the diversity and spread of acidic grassland and wetland, Phase I habitat creation and management will enrich the habitat complex present on site.	The variety of existing habitats will remain during the works with restoration and mitigation providing further habitat enhancement.	With the completion of Phase 2, the site could contain a riparian, acid grassland, grazing marsh, hedgerow, scrub, and wet and dry woodland habitat complex.
Access within the SANGS <u>must</u> be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead.	The 57ha site comprises largely open habitats and provides plenty of space for visitor's dogs and nature to co-exist.	Only a small proportion of the site will be inaccessible at any time	
SANGS <u>must</u> be free from unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment works, smells)	There are no intrusions on the site except for a large structure associated with Farnborough Airport	There may be localised disturbance due to the works.	
SANGS should be clearly sign posted and advertised in some way	Signage will direct visitors to the Country Park and demarcate the routes within the site. .	No change	
SANGS should have leaflets and/or websites advertising their location to potential users. It would be desirable for leaflets to be distributed to new homes in the area and be made available at entrance points and car parks.	Information about the Southwood Country Park will be made available on websites and via social media.	Websites and social media will be used to keep the public informed of the works and any impact on visitors	
It would be desirable for an owner to be able to take dogs from the car park to the SANGS safely off lead.	Fencing will be provided along busy roads abutting the site. The Kennels Lane car park will lead straight onto the site.	Some areas in or near both car parks may be disrupted due to planned works to restore the headwaters (Kennels Lane) and works to the buildings (Ively Rd).	There may be a need to keep dogs on leads around the car park off Ively Road as this area is likely to contain a playground, café, and visitor centre.
Where possible it is desirable to choose sites with a gently undulating topography for SANGS	This site is largely flat however there is some slight gradients.		Some of the topography maybe altered as part of the Phase 2 works, but this will not impact on the paths

SANG Criteria	Phase 1	During Phase 2 and ESSO pipeline works	Phase 2
It is desirable for access points to have signage outlining the layout of the SANGS and the routes available to visitors	Signs have been erected at all access points containing maps of the path network.	No change	Permanent signage and information boards will be designed and erected by 2022.
It is desirable that the SANGS provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense scattered trees and shrubs. The provision of open water on part but not the majority of sites is desirable	Copses/hedgerow/ woodland/ scrub complexes will provide a more varied experience and biodiversity links into Southwood Woodland beyond. The site will support predominantly open habitats.	Works may impact on the natural views within the site for a short period of time, but this will be limited to small areas of land.	Small collections of ponds and scraps are planned within the works, but no large waterbodies are being created.
Where possible it is desirable to have a focal point such as a viewpoint, monument etc within the SANGS	There are views looking across the SINC and towards Southwood Woodland that are particularly attractive.	No change	Phase 2 will include visitor facilities as a trim trail, a nature trail and pond dipping facilities. Education will be provided.

POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD WORK PLAN

The purpose of the work plan is to plan, manage and co-ordinate the ongoing activity and progress of the Council's Policy and Project Advisory Board, incorporating policy development work carried out through working groups.

(A) CURRENT WORKING GROUPS APPOINTED BY THE POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

GROUP	MEMBERSHIP 2020/21	CURRENT POSITION	CONTACT
Elections Group	Cllrs P.I.C. Crerar (as Vice-Chair of PPAB), A.R. Newell (Cabinet Member with responsibility for electoral issues) Sue Carter (Chairman of Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee), C.J. Stewart, T.D. Bridgeman and K. Dibble Chairman: Cllr C.J. Stewart	The first meeting is due to be scheduled in late September/early October 2021.	Andrew Colver, Head of Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships, Tel: (01252) 398820, andrew.colver@rushmoor.gov.uk

GROUP	MEMBERSHIP 2020/21	CURRENT POSITION	CONTACT
<p>Strategic Housing and Local Plan Group</p> <p>To steer the development of the Local Plan and monitor updates to the Housing and Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>Cllrs P.I.C. Crerar (As V-C of PPAB), D.E. Clifford (Leader of the Council), Marina Munro (Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Local Plan), C.J. Stewart (Chair of Development Management Committee) P.J Cullum, Sophie Porter and M.J. Roberts</p> <p>Chairman:</p>	<p>Position at March 2021 –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-visit Terms of Reference – consider purpose/does it still need to be active? • Gather principles for the Group • Draft a work programme for the year? 	<p>Tim Mills Head of Planning Tel: (01252) 398790 tim.mills@rushmoor.gov.uk</p> <p>Anna Lucas Principal Planning Officer</p> <p>Zoe Paine Strategy and Enabling Manager (Housing)</p>
<p>Transformation Task and Finish Group (formerly Rushmoor 2020 Modernisation and Improvement Programme)</p>	<p>Cllrs J.B. Canty (Chair of PPAB), K.H. Muschamp (as Cabinet Member with responsibility for this area of work), Sophia Choudhary, P.J. Cullum, Gaynor Austin and Sophie Porter</p> <p>Chairman:</p>	<p>The first meeting of this Group would take place on 7th July. The agenda would include items on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ICE Programme • The new customer operating model • The New Ways of Working Programme • Digital Services – The Council Website 	<p>Karen Edwards, Executive Director Tel: (01252) 398800 karen.edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk</p>

(B) OTHER ISSUES/MATTERS FOR THE WORK PROGRAMME

ISSUE	DETAILS	CONTACT DETAILS
REGENERATION		
Position at March 2021 – recommendation for Corporate Directors (IH/KE) to take stock early in 2021/22 Municipal Year on all aspects of the regeneration work across the Borough. KE to be invited to first Progress Group tom discuss way forward.		
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY		
Byelaws Review – Aldershot and District Military Lands	Pending publication of a consultation on the Byelaws Review of Aldershot and District Military Lands, the Chairman has requested that this issue be placed on the work programme.	
DEPRIVATION HEALTH AND WELLBEING		
Deprivation and Wellbeing Strategy	Position at March 2021 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This strategy would be discussed at the next meeting of the Joint OSC/PPAB Chairs meeting • Discussions to include Equality and Diversity Action Plan and Back Lives Matter 	Andrew Colver Head of Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Tel: (01252) 398820 andrew.colver@rushmoor.gov.uk

	OTHER MATTERS	
Leisure Facilities and Contracts	<p>In March 2021, a decision was taken to not re-establish the Leisure Facilities and Contracts Task and Finish Group until required.</p> <p>It was proposed that initial work could involve the Board as a whole and a Task and Finish Group established for specific work later down the line.</p>	<p>James Duggin Head of Operational Services Tel: (01252) 398543 james.duggin@rushmoor.gov.uk</p>
Black Lives Matter	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update – RB provided an update on progress. The Equalities Impact Statement would be shared with Members and it was noted that the Customer Satisfaction survey was currently open to the public.</p>	<p>Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive rachel.barker@rushmoor.gov.uk</p>

POLICY AND PROJECTS ADVISORY BOARD**AGENDA PLANNING – 2021-2022**

14 July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCC Balancing the Budget consultation - update • Aldershot Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan • Management Plan for Southwood Country Park
22 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Economic Framework • Housing and Homelessness Strategy • Future of the ICE Programme
24 November 2021	
26 January 2022	
23 March 2022	
<i>Items to be considered</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Investment Strategy</i> • <i>Cultural Impact</i> • <i>Building Control Changes</i> • <i>Carbon Footprint</i>

PROGRESS GROUP MEETINGS

Membership: Cllrs J.B. Canty (Chairman), P.I.C. Crerar (Vice-Chairman), C.J. Stewart (Vice-Chairman), P.J. Cullum, M.J. Roberts, Nadia Martin and T.W. Mitchell

31 March 2021	<p>Council Business Plan</p> <p>Any Other Business</p>	<p>Deadline for comments 19th April, 2021. Important to make as accessible as possible to all. Relate back to what Rushmoor is responsible for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place Protection Strategy/Community Safety – our responsibilities • Town Centre/High Street Recovery – involvement on a project basis • Parking Policies – increase in delivery drivers parking illegally/short stay options • Parking Standards Review • C19 Recover Task and Finish Group – immediate response/medium – longer term work
30 June 2021	<p>HCC Balancing the Budget consultation</p> <p>Cultural Strategy</p> <p>9th June meeting</p> <p>Community Wealth Building (MR)</p> <p>Housing and Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>Due by 18th July, 2021.links and summary to be circulated to Members. Item included on agenda for 14.07.2021 to provide position statement.</p> <p>Bring to PPAB in the Autumn</p> <p>KE to provide updates on ICS and Farnborough Civic Hub workshop.</p> <p>Links to work on the Strategic Economic Framework (September) – MR to pick up with TM</p> <p>Project plan to Progress Group, with potential for a meeting in November 2021/January 2022.</p>
28 July 2021		
5 October 2021		
13 December 2021		

9 February 2022		
29 March 2022		
FUTURE MEETINGS	<p><i>Items carried forward from 2020/21, for consideration:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Litter Enforcement Strategy</i> • <i>Medium Term Financial Strategy/Budget Strategy</i> • <i>Fair Funding consultation</i> • <i>Rushmoor Development Partnership – Site Appraisals</i> • <i>Income Crisis – policy development</i> • <i>Commercial Investment Strategy</i> 	

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