

MEDSTEAD & FOUR MARKS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025 – 2043



M&FMNP Site Allocation Process Report
March 2026



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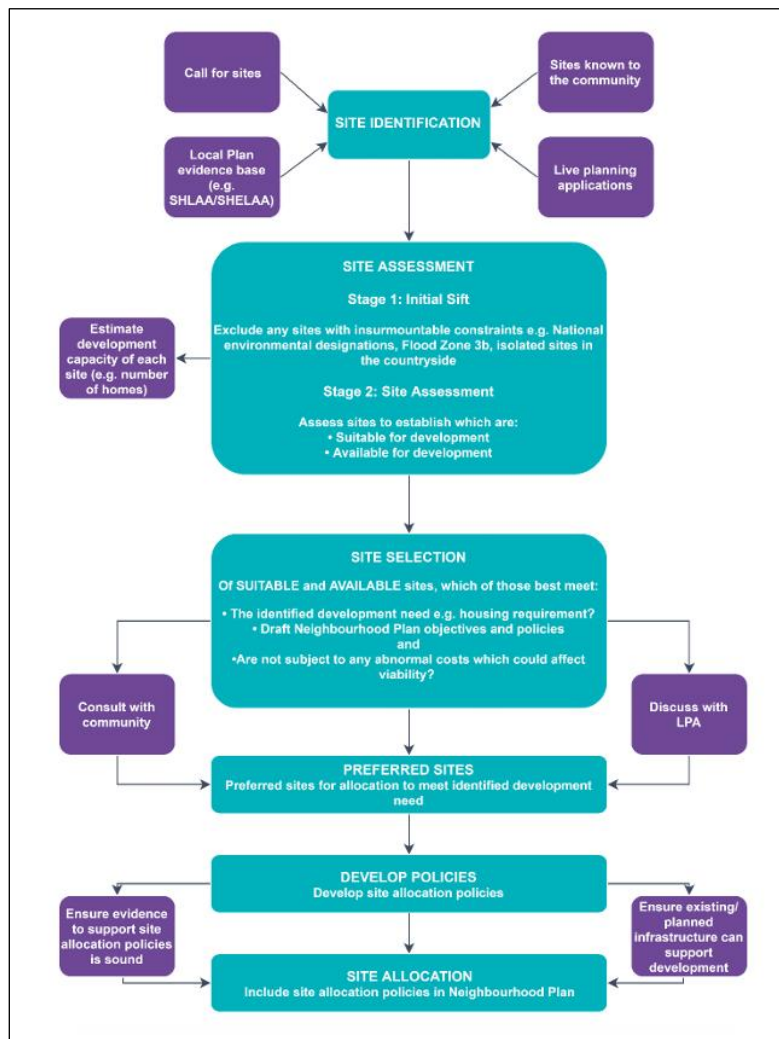
The Medstead & Four Marks Neighbourhood Development Plan Site Allocation Process

1. Introduction

In 2024, after considering the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, the Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan (M&FMNP) concluded that for its Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), its effect would be strengthened if the revised plan made 'housing allocations'. With advice from Locality, the Neighbourhood Plan support charity, the M&FMNP used its Neighbourhood Planning support document '*How to assess and allocate sites for development – A toolkit for Neighbourhood Planners*'¹.

The selections process employed by the M&FMNP to identify housing sites that could be used to allocate housing under the current revision of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is set out below.

The Locality Process



¹ Locality: How to assess and allocate sites for development – A toolkit for Neighbourhood Planners
<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

2. Identification of available sites.

The LPA, East Hampshire District Council (EHDC), manages a Land Availability Assessment (LAA) process. It is updated annually and contains details of plots that have been put forward by landowners/promoters. To ensure it had given the opportunity to other landowners/ promoters to offer land the M&FMNP for possible site allocations, it made a call for sites in June 2025.

The M&FMNP also noted the recent EHDC Draft Local Plan 2021 to 2040, Reg 18 Consultation which allocated sites in Four Marks/'South Medstead' and in Medstead Village.

3. Consultant's advice.

The M&FMNP had taken advantage of the Government support, at that time to the production of Local Development Plans through Locality, who commissioned AECOM to carry out a Site Opportunities Assessment of the sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA using) the EHDC LAA Report 2024 and the sites submitted to the M&FMNP 'Call for Sites'.

Each site was reviewed against the national standard process of over 37 areas using the Locality *Site Assessment Template guidance notes*², and its *Site Assessment Template*³. The Assessment of each site employs a 'traffic light' system to assess each site on more than 40 critical areas.

AECOM presented the M&FMNP with its report *Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan Final Site Assessment Report* in November 2025. It identified a range of sites that were developable, although with a list of constraints, and a similar list for sites assessed as not developable with their constraints.

4. Consultation

4.1 Public Consultation

Before selecting sites for consideration for allocation the M&FMNP carried out two public consultations. In January 2025 it was held in Four Marks Village Hall. A second was held in December 2025 in both Medstead and Four Marks Village Halls. Both were supported by online surveys.

4.2 Landowner Engagement

Following the receipt of the SOA report, or reasons of transparency for residents, the M&FMNP chose to engage a Planning Consultant to engage with Landowners on its behalf.

4.3 Engagement with the Local Planning Authority – EHDC

² Locality: Site Assessment Template guidance notes

[Appendix-A-Site-assessment-blank-template-including-Una-tweak-FINAL-110220.docx](#)

³ Locality: Site Assessment Template

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

The M&FMNP noted that the LPA has a statutory duty to support and constructively engage with it throughout the neighbourhood plan process. It has engaged with EHDC in the NDP Process, advising it in August 2024 of the Revision of the NDP, following up with a detailed letter advising of its intention for making housing allocations in November 2024 with a formal meeting in December.

In January 2025 EHDC published to the Parish Councils an indication of the numbers of dwellings expected to be provided in each Parish between 2024 and 2043. EHDC assisted the M&FMNP with its advice on running its 'Call for Sites' in June 2025.

The M&FMNP has shared its SOA with the LPA and met in January 2026, providing it with an indication of the trends regarding areas of the village that could be considered suitable for allocation.

The M&FMNP discussed the results from its due diligence with the LPA together with its supporting evidence ensuring that the emerging preferred sites are aligned, as much as possible, with the other documents that make up the development framework, including the adopted local plan and any emerging policies in the Draft Local Plan.

This resulted in sites being identified as the most appropriate options to allocate in the NDP to meet the identified development need, e.g. for housing or community use. This forms the basis of the site allocation policies that should be presented in the Draft NDP.

5. Due Diligence

During the M&FMNP process to allocate sites, in December 2025, the MHCLG published its consultation on a proposed revision to the NPPF. Within the document it points those making Local Plans, including Neighbourhood Plans, to *Create or update a local plan using the new system*⁴, which contained a process for *Selecting sites for development*. The M&FMNP used the AECOM SOA as compliance to its Stage 2 process, and its Stage 3 to determine, including its *Connectivity Tools lite* as filters to create a short list of sites.

Under its Stage 3 determination, the M&FMNP considered:

- settlement hierarchy and function (linking to related evidence and the plan vision and spatial strategy) Four Marks/'South Medstead' Hierarchy level 3 and Medstead Hierarchy Level 4
- proximity to existing settlements
- existing and future connectivity by private, public and active transport
- accessibility to services and facilities
- the efficient use of land

⁴ MHCLG - Create or update a local plan using the new system
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-new-system>

- alternative or competing land uses such as employment, minerals extraction or safeguarded land
- timescales for delivery to ensure new development can be provided throughout the plan period – for housing sites consider the deliverability and developability of sites
- ability to deliver strategic development, either alone or combined with other sites (linking to the plan vision and spatial strategy)
- any relevant environmental considerations or objectives of the plan
- economic sustainability considerations such as jobs and skills, regeneration and social inclusion
- local considerations, such as constraints relating to neighbouring or nearby uses or existing or emerging policy designations
- other new or emerging local plan evidence – for example, your whole draft plan's viability study may give you a more complete picture of how sites meet the needs of your area

The results were determined:

- The Settlement Hierarchy was used to discriminate between Medstead Village and Four Marks/'South Medstead'.
- The *Connectivity Tool Lite* link was used to identify the 'connectivity of the sites, but the M&FMNP believed that the resultant data produced by each site was too close to adjacent sites to give an accurate determination between sites.
- The accessibility to facilities was determined using 10-minute walking isochrons from convenience stores, bus stops and access to the A31, junctions on Winchester Road, Four Marks.
- Any land with a competitive use was excluded, particularly SINC's, or for employment, transport or recreation.
- Sites with indication of 1 to 5 years completion were afforded greater weight than those of 6 – 10.
- All sites were considered against any adjacent sites to determine if it could be combined to provide a larger site, benefiting from that size of development.
- Sites were considered against NPPF paragraph 8 sustainability, particularly social inclusion. Those assessed to have social inclusion were scored more highly
- The M&FMNP, due to the similarity of results across the Neighbourhood Plan area, did not consider
 - the connectivity to larger towns, Basingstoke, Farnham, Petersfield and Winchester or London and Guildford;
 - any environmental considerations or objectives of the immediate local area, apart from the possibility of phosphate contamination the Solent;
 - local considerations, constraints relating to neighbouring or nearby uses or existing or emerging policy designations;
 - other new or emerging local plan evidence, unless site specific.
- To ensure that any site with Planning permission is removed from the process, it will be scored at -1,000.

A part of its due diligence, the M&FMNP has extended its enquiries regarding its developing list of site allocations to ensure that the optimum of available sites is allocated. To do this it has:

- taken advantage of an offer from the EA to review of possible sites, particularly as the parishes overlay a principal aquifer.
- Sought comment on capacity and timescales utility companies serving the NPA (Scottish and Southern Energy Networks, Thames Water for foul water, South East Water for potable water, as gas services for domestic heating is to be phased out, it has not consulted the gas network company) to gather their views on the proposed allocations.
- Consulted CPRE regards local Valued Landscape
- Reviewed geological surveys of the proposed sites, due to concern over difficult ground conditions including sinkholes in the chalk substrate under the overlaying clay cap.

The information provided was added to the database being used to determine the final list of allocated sites.

6. Site Allocations

The site allocations were made by the M&FMNP from the AECOM 'non red ' Site Opportunities Assessment, primarily using the information received on each site provided by the EA, supported by the report from Geological Consultancies.

Greater weight was placed on the sustainability of local transport links, including walking and cycling, with particular regard to walking distances as required by the *Model National Design Code Part 2 Guidance Notes*⁵, *Check List Movement: M.1 Connected Places – 'The provision of public transport and the distance of all dwellings from a stop'*, and the connectivity both between developments and to the Medstead and Four Marks Green infrastructure network, *Policy 9. M&FMNP 2015 to 2028*⁶, public footpaths, bridleways and roads with footways.

The responses from residents were also taken into account.

The M&FMNP has noted the national declining birth rate together with the demography of the NPA as determined by the M&FMNP commissioned AECOM *Housing Needs Assessment* via Locality, that determined the majority of villagers were of mature years, and considered that the access to convenience stores and bus stops was important.

⁵ **Model National Design Code Part 2 Guidance Notes**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/611105f98fa8f506c58e786f/National_Model_Design_Code_-_Part_2_Guidance_Notes_web.pdf

⁶ **EHDC Portal Medstead& Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan**

<https://www.easthants.gov.uk/media/4538/download?inline>

It also noted the *Hampshire County Council Education Authority's Transport Policy*⁷ that *For children of compulsory school age, transport is provided if their nearest suitable or catchment school, measured from the child's home to the nearest available entrance to the school grounds', is:*

- *Beyond two miles (if below the age of eight); or*
- *Beyond three miles (if aged between eight and 16)*

7. Site Allocation Policies

7.1 Land Use

The site allocation would be identified with regard to the proposed land use and quantum of development allocated regarding the current numbers required to meet the EHDC housing numbers. Where land on adjacent sites was put forward, the sites were amalgamated into an 'area', offering a 'gain' to the community of an improved masterplan and better infrastructure.

The site allocation(s) were shown on an Ordnance Survey (OS) map to define the site boundary, to ensure it will be reflected as part of the EHDC Local Development Plan when the NP is 'made'.

7.2 Quantum of Development on site

The site allocation determines the quantum of development permitted within the site boundary and includes any areas that should be protected from development e.g. due to flood risk or for landscaping. The M&FMNP extrapolated the recent housing permissions in the area between 2022 and 2025 to identify a mean approximation of a dwelling, including an allowance for open space, play areas and biodiversity, of 500m² per dwelling. When reflected into the EHDC Land Availability Allocations the number of dwellings per site were very similar.

7.3 Housing Numbers

The 'weighted' scores from the process identified in *Section 5 Due Diligence* were used to identify the better sites in Four Marks/'South Medstead' and Medstead Village to provide the numbers required to fulfil the EHDC derived Housing need for the parishes, taking into account the legacy permissions and any permission granted to the end of the EHDC year 2025.

Using the above criteria a short list of sites was generated.

7.4 Design

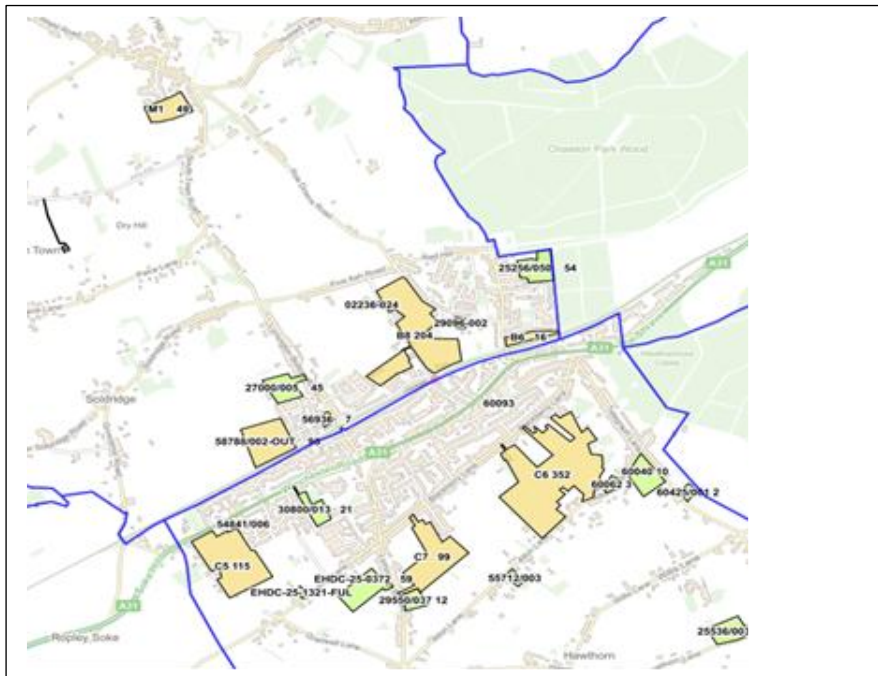
The M&FMNP allocated areas will be included in the Master Plan for the NP and be subject to a M&FMNP specific Design Code. Any new development is expected to encourage development that respects and enhances the local character and setting. This may include:

⁷ Hampshire County Council School Transport Policy

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/transport-home-to-school/schooltransportpolicy2025.pdf>

- ## 8. Site Allocations

By chance the most sustainable sites, identified through the selection process, are adjacent to sites that have outline planning permission, and the M&FMNP realised that benefits of 'economies of scale' are obtained by grouping these sites together.



NEED UPDATED MAP

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The M&FMNP identified the following areas for additional housing to fulfil the current EHDC need:

Parish	Area	Area	Additional Allocation
Medstead	Medstead Village	M1	49
	South Medstead	B1	17
	South Medstead	B6	16
	South Medstead	B9	126
Total			208
Four Marks	Four Marks	C5	115
	Four Marks	C6	255
Total			370

9. Testing of NP site allocation policies

The M&FMNP has tested its preferred sites, against the following criteria to prove that that the most appropriate sites have been chosen, using the checklist in Appendix 2, to ensure that its decisions can be justified, and that the selected sites meet the identified development need, e.g. a housing requirement:

- show the M&FMNP sites are suitable
- show the M&FMNP sites are available
- show the M&FMNP site(s) are achievable (i.e. economically viable)
- show how the M&FMNP sites have been selected as the best option over alternatives
- show that the M&FMNP proposals aligned with the latest DLP documents, including the local plan evidence base.

Using the above, sites complying with the above were identified. and those that scored the highest in the selection process, and collectively providing the required necessary quantum of the identified housing need, were selected to be an M&FMNP Allocated Sites.

10. Delivery and monitor progress of site allocation policies

Once the M&FMNP is 'made' it becomes a statutory document and part of the Local Development Plan to be used to determine planning applications. The policies of the M&FMNPP are implemented by EHDC or the subsequent LPA but the M&FMNP can play a positive role in supporting and monitoring the NP and the allocated sites.

The M&FMNP will play an active role in monitoring the allocations, including monitoring the planning applications in the neighbourhood area and making representations on planning applications to explain how the proposed development aligns or conflicts with the neighbourhood plan policies. It will also monitor legislation and where there are implications for the made NP, these should be noted so that modifications to the plan can take these into

account. The phasing of sites should be used to monitor the delivery of the site allocations. In the event of shortfalls or an excess of land supply over time, the plan will be amended.

11. Conclusion

By following the government guidance, the M&FMNP has identified the necessary sites to allocate in Medstead and Four Marks to accommodate the quantum of dwellings determined by EHSD in its paper *Neighbourhood Plans – Indicative Housing Figures Guidance Note*, January 2026 allocated to the Parishes of Medstead and Four Marks.

Appendix 1

Selecting sites for development

Understand the process of identifying, assessing and selecting sites for allocation in a local plan.

- [Introduction to identifying, assessing and selecting sites](#)
- [Stage 1: Identifying sites](#)
- [Stage 2: Assessing sites](#)
- [Stage 3: Determining your draft allocations](#)
- [Stage 4: Confirming your draft allocations and recording your decisions](#)

Appendix 2

Site Allocation Check List

Question	Yes/No
Have a reasonable number of people been involved in site assessments and have they declared any relevant interests from the outset? Have the same people been involved in assessing all sites?	
Have sites within the local planning authority Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) been included in the assessment? Have current planning applications been included? Has the location of local plan allocations and sites with planning permission been identified?	
Have the preferred sites been assessed to ensure they are suitable, available and achievable i.e. viable?	
If adding your own local criteria to the site assessment, are they fair? Avoid criteria that will only discriminate against one site. Has the same criteria and rating method been used for each site?	
Have you clearly 'told the story' with regards to why sites have been rejected, shortlisted or become preferred sites?	
Have you clearly documented every assessment meeting and, in particular, short-listing meeting(s) and preferred sites meeting(s)? Identify how this was done from minutes etc.	
Have you integrated a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) into your site selection process, if required?	
Is the proposed amount of development, e.g. number of new homes, appropriate for the site? Density of development should be consistent with the adopted or emerging local plan policies.	
Has the site selection process and its conclusions been properly communicated to local people, site owners, promoters and other stakeholders?	
Have the reasons for the preferred sites been properly and effectively explained? This may be presented on the website, at exhibitions and through newsletters.	

Add Completed Check Lists