

NE17 - Rivers, watercourses and their settings

- Support - 19
- Neither support of object - 6
- Object - 6

The changes to the supporting text and the Local Plan policies have not only been informed by the responses to the Regulation 18 consultation but they have also taken on board any additional feedback that has come out of discussions/meetings with statutory consultees and members in order to improve the clarity and understanding of the contents of the Local Plan.

Comments in support of NE17 - rivers, watercourses and their settings		
Respondent number	Comment	Officer comment
ANON-KSAR-NKS3-G Bishops Waltham Parish Council	NE17 - Comment: Welcome the inclusion of the River Hamble as a recognised waterway that needs protection from development, and the effects of development.	Comment noted no amendment to policy wording needed. Recommended Response: No Change
ANON-KSAR-NKRG-3	Our Chalkstreams are unique and precious. Everything must be done to preserve and protect them.	Comment noted no amendment to policy wording needed. Recommended Response: No Change
ANON-KSAR-NKBD-G	Rive Park, in Winchester needs to be protected from unnecessary development. It must remain as an asset for Winchester	Comment noted no amendment to policy wording needed. Recommended Response: No Change
ANON-KSAR-NKA3-X	Policy NE17 Rivers, watercourses and their settings The intention of this policy is supported. It should also be strengthened so that when deciding on proposed allocations in the Local Plan and neighbourhood plans, there is a need to avoid sites where the setting of surface water features/ rivers	Comments Noted. The NPPF is very clear about the approach that the Council needs to take towards flood risk from all sources of water. As this is clearly set out in the NPPF there is no need to set this out in the LP. Where a development

	<p>will be adversely impacted, and those where there is a risk of contamination due to surface water run off.</p>	<p>proposal lies within an identified area of flood risk, a Flood Risk Assessment would be provided to set out how flood risk can be mitigated against or areas of flood risk would be avoided.</p> <p>Recommended Response: No Change</p>
<p>ANON-KSAR-N8Q5-W</p>	<p>We support this policy, particularly para ii) reference to natural flood management.</p> <p>We recommend adding climate resilience to the list of features in paras iii-vi.</p> <p>Riparian shade helps maintain natural water levels, protecting freshwater habitats which are at risk from the effects of climate change.</p>	<p>Comments Noted. The NPPF is very clear about the approach that the Council needs to take towards flood risk from all sources of water. As this is clearly set out in the NPPF there is no need to set this out in the LP. Where a development proposal lies within an identified area of flood risk, a Flood Risk Assessment would be provided to set out how flood risk can be mitigated against or areas of flood risk would be avoided. This includes climate change resilience. Criteria ii can be slightly amended to include the words 'natural flood management' to make this point clearer.</p> <p>Recommended Response: Amend criteria ii as follows:</p> <p>Ability of groundwater, surface water features and watercourse corridors to function as natural flood management areas by natural processes throughout seasonal variations, within the immediate vicinity, and both upstream and</p>

		downstream of the site of the proposal including for flood risk management purposes;
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Comments which neither support nor object to NE17 - rivers, watercourses and their settings		
Respondent number	Comment	Officer comment
ANON-KSAR-NKF6-6	<p>All water courses/ ditches are not to be culverted which hides discharge and prone to blockages. This policy should reflect the HCC flood and water management recommendations “Hampshire County Council seeks to avoid culverting where possible due to the adverse ecological, flood risk, human safety and visual impact. We will therefore, only approve a culvert if there is no reasonable alternative, or if we think the detrimental effects would be so minor that a more costly alternative would not be justified. Where proposing a culvert you will be required to prove that reasonable and practicable alternatives have been considered. We do recognise that there are situations where culverting may be unavoidable.”</p> <p>HCCOrdinaryWatercourseConsenting.pdf (hants.gov.uk)</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Recommended Response: Add additional wording underneath the bullet points in paragraph 7.120 – see point made by EA.</p> <p>All development should consider restoring watercourses to their natural state wherever possible, with any culverts removed unless their removal is impractical, to enable flood storage and to enhance biodiversity and amenity. A culvert will only be approved if it has been demonstrated that there is no reasonable alternative, or the detrimental effects would be so minor that a more costly alternative would not be justified. Whilst recognising that there are situations where culverting may be unavoidable,</p>

		<p>the onus will be on applicants to prove that all reasonable and practicable alternatives have been fully considered as part of the planning application process.</p>
<p>BHLF-KSAR-N8Z7-8 South Downs National Park Authority</p>	<p>(2) Conserving and Enhancing the Region’s Biodiversity (Including Green Infrastructure) The varied landscapes of the National Park collectively contribute to the range of ecosystem services which the National Park provides. The condition of landscape features, and their management, is therefore essential to the continued function of ecosystem services and the benefits they provide. We hope that working with the SDNPA, the Winchester Local Plan goes further to identify and outline key projects to enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity networks that can link into the South Downs National Park (SDNP). The Itchen Valley is internationally designated for its habitat valley and is highly regarded as a beautiful chalk river. The South Downs People And Nature Network (PANN), published in 2020, brings together a range of partner organisations, stakeholders, communities, and businesses to identify areas and opportunities, for natural capital investment in biodiversity and green infrastructure, for the benefits of both people and nature. More specifically, the PANN identifies the “Winchester & Itchen” and “South Hampshire” areas – which both include areas of Winchester District inside and outside the SDNP - as Natural Capital Investment Areas (NCIAs). The PANN also includes; a case study about the Heritage Lottery Funded restoration of the water meadows and ditch systems at the Winnall Moors Nature Reserve; and the need to restore the health, vitality, and abundance of the landscape and nature of the “East Winchester Landscape”. The associated report for the latter was published in June 2021 and is</p>	<p>Comments Noted. In regards to comments on NE4, this has been addressed in the responses to this Policy. Whilst there are a number of documents that could be referred to in the Local Plan, it is considered that as these may change over the duration of the LP period and in view of this it is would not be appropriate to list them in the LP.</p> <p>Recommended Response: Continue to work with the SDNPA on the Local Plan.</p>

	<p>available on the SDNPA’s website. It is requested that the NCIA’s and East Winchester Landscape Area are shown on Map 9 and referenced in Policy NE4 and its supporting text. Further information on the above can be found on the SDNPA’s website here: https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/partnership-management/people-and-nature-network-pann/ Notwithstanding the above, we would welcome further dialogue in relation to Policies NE4 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), NE5 (Biodiversity), NE16 (Nutrient Neutrality), and NE17 (Rivers, Watercourses and their Settings), in relation to biodiversity net gain (BNG), Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA), and Nutrient Neutrality. This is to ensure that a consistent approach to improving biodiversity is being taken across the region as both local plans continue to develop and emerge.</p>	
<p>BHLF- KSAR- N8ZG-R</p>	<p>We are pleased to see a policy dedicated to Winchester District’s rivers and watercourses. In particular, it is positive to see the policy consider both water quality and quantity as well as developments’ impact on chemical and ecological status under the Water Framework Directive (or its replacement). We are also pleased to see the policy reference the ‘ability of groundwater, surface water features and watercourse corridors to function by natural processes throughout seasonal variations’, ensuring that development doesn’t hinder a watercourse’s natural process is vital. However, we are very concerned at the lack of mention of chalk streams within this policy. Winchester district’s chalk rivers, including the iconic River Itchen are habitats of international importance and world renown. Chalk streams are a vital natural capital asset. They provide key regulatory and provisioning services as an important source of water for drinking, agriculture and industry. Pressures from over abstraction, increased development pressure and a legacy of human modification and intervention have resulted in significant and</p>	<p>Comments Noted. The Local Plan already makes numerous references to Chalk Streams. However, given the importance of chalk streams in the district it is considered that reference to them could be added to the supporting text rather than Policy NE17.</p> <p>Recommended Response: Add the following text under paragraph 7.119:</p> <p>Chalk streams are a rare and valuable habitat, often referred to as the equivalent of England’s rain forests or Great Barrier Reef. 85% of all chalk</p>

	<p>ongoing declines in biodiversity and water quality. Given their importance, we would see increased weight within this policy to give chalk streams a higher level of protection from damage in local planning policy. If Winchester City Council wanted to pursue best-practice, we recommend creating a dedicated policy on chalk streams which aligns with the Catchment Based Approach's Chalk Stream Strategy and Implementation plan.</p>	<p>streams are found in England, mainly in the south and east of the country.</p> <p>Hampshire is considered a key area with the River Test, Itchen and Meon all being filtered through chalk and therefore nurturing a thriving ecosystem</p> <p>Chalk aquifers are also an important source of water for drinking, agriculture and industry, support angling for trout, salmon and coarse fish, are important for recreation in the district. They need good quality water in order for the different species of fish, plants and insects, many unique to them – such as the southern damselfly - to flourish and as a result of this it is important that they are protected.</p>
<p>BHLF- KSAR- N8BE-X</p> <p>Environment Agency Link here</p>	<p>Policy NE17 Rivers & Their Settings</p> <p>We would like the inclusion of a paragraph that states: 'All development should consider restoring watercourses to their natural state wherever possible, with any culverts removed unless their removal is impractical, to enable flood storage and to enhance biodiversity and amenity'. Para - 7.117 - The quality of ground water is easily polluted directly and indirectly. It is therefore better to prevent or reduce the amount of contamination at source rather than treat it afterwards.</p>	<p>Comments Noted.</p> <p>Recommended Response: Additional supporting text has been added to the supporting text.</p> <p>All development should consider restoring watercourses to their natural state wherever possible, with any</p>

	<p>Minor point groundwater should in this context be one word not “ground water”</p>	<p>culverts removed unless their removal is impractical, to enable flood storage and to enhance biodiversity and amenity. A culvert will only be approved if it has been demonstrated that there is no reasonable alternative, or the detrimental effects would be so minor that a more costly alternative would not be justified. Whilst recognising that there are situations where culverting may be unavoidable, the onus will be on applicants to prove that all reasonable and practicable alternatives have been fully considered as part of the planning application process.</p> <p>Recommended Response:</p> <p>The word Ground water has been split into two separate words.</p>
<p>BHLF- KSAR- N86F-K Natural England Link here</p>	<p>Policy NE17 Rivers, watercourses, and their settings Water quantity Southern Water’s Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2019, that covers the planning period 2020-2070, projects a significant supply demand deficit during periods of drought in the Western Area, and commits to implementing a long term water resources scheme to restore the supply demand balance whilst avoiding and/or mitigating impacts on European sites, including the River Itchen Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It is Natural England’s advice that in advance of any permitting of such</p>	<p>Comments Noted. It is important that the LP is read as whole – Policy CN4 adopts the Southern Water standard of 100 litres per person per day. Policy CN2 also includes reference to rain water harvesting, grey water harvesting). A similar point is made in relation to linking Policy NE17 to Policy NE6 – the LP should be read as whole.</p>

	<p>a suitable long term scheme, uncertainty remains with regards to water resources and the impacts of abstraction on protected sites. Although it is welcomed that Policy NE17 requires development to conserve and enhance water quantity to help achieve the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, Natural England strongly advise all new development within the Southern Water supply area adopt a higher standard of water efficiency of 100 litres/per person/day, including external water use and re-use, in line with Southern Water’s Target 100 demand reduction programme which is committed to within their WRMP19. Natural England also recommends that the Policy encourages the wise use of water in conjunction with the water companies, for example by developments incorporating grey water recycling systems and efficient appliances.</p> <p>Water quality – surface water and groundwater</p> <p>We welcome that this Policy will require development proposals to include measures to eliminate risk of pollution to ground water, surface water and watercourse corridor features. It is advised that the paragraph I refers to the Habitats Regulations in addition to the Water Framework Directive due to the international designation of the River Itchen.</p> <p>Additionally, we advise that paragraph vi should be linked to Policy NE6 regarding the incorporation and design of SuDS features.</p> <p>Functionally linked land</p> <p>The Plan does not include reference to functionally linked land in relation to designated sites, although this is assessed in the accompanying Habitat Regulations Assessment. Policy NE17 refers to the international designations of the River Itchen and Upper Hamble. A small number of Solent Wader and Brent Goose Strategy (SWBGS) sites are identified around the Upper Hamble as supporting high tide roosts of the Solent Maritime SAC. In this context we recommend that Policy NE17 refers to the SWBGS, which could also be linked to Policy NE4 and NE5. It is also of relevance to the North Whiteley</p>	<p>In relation to the Solent Wader and Brent Goose Strategy (SWBGS) sites reference to this can be added to Policy NE17.</p> <p>Recommended Response:</p> <p>Policy and supporting text amended to refer to SWBGC sites.</p> <p>Amend criteria i as follows:</p> <p>Water quality and quantity, and help achieve requirements of the European Water Framework Directive, or its replacement, in the case of the River Itchen and Upper Hamble, the Solent Wader and Brent Goose Strategy (SWBGS);</p> <p>In relation to a Construction Management Plan is not considered appropriate to include reference to this in Policy NE17 – this would be addressed as part of the validation checklist.</p> <p>Recommended Response: No Change.</p> <p>In relation to the point that the LP should identify suitable projects, this can be</p>
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	<p>allocation policy SH2.</p> <p>Solent Wader and Brent Goose mapping (as provided on the SWBGS website) may be subject to change over the plan period, therefore it is recommended the Policy ensures the latest mapping is sought in advance of determining planning applications.</p> <p>We recommend the Policy outlines that where impacts are identified or uncertainty remains, appropriate avoidance and/or mitigation measures should be secured in line with the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy Guidance on Mitigation and Off-setting requirements, to be agreed with Natural England.</p> <p>We advise that developments affecting SPA supporting habitat should produce a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to address potential impacts to these habitats during the construction phase. In particular, noise disturbance should be addressed by avoiding works over 69dB during winter months (as per our advice on applications).</p> <p>With regard to collection of financial contributions to address impacts on SPA supporting habitat (specifically Secondary and Low Use sites), it is recommended that the Local Plan identifies some suitable projects to which funds can be directed to ensure the protection and enhancement of the wider SWBG network.</p>	<p>addressed on a case by case basis rather than in the LP.</p> <p>Recommended Response: No Change.</p>
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Comments which object to NE17 - rivers, watercourses and their settings		
Respondent number	Comment	Officer comment
ANON-KSAR-NKBJ-P	<p>NE17 - Rivers and their settings</p> <p>Watercourses and ditches should not be culverted, this policy should</p>	<p>Comments Noted. A new paragraph has been added to the supporting text to address culverts.</p>

<p>Soberton Parish Council</p>	<p>reflect the HCC flood and water management recommendations. Culverting should be avoided where possible due to the adverse ecological, flood risk, human safety and visual impact.</p> <p>The use of culverts should only be approved if there is no reasonable alternative, or where the detrimental impact would be negligible and a more costly alternative would not be justified.</p> <p>If a culvert is proposed, any rejected alternatives should be set out.</p>	<p>All development should consider restoring watercourses to their natural state wherever possible, with any culverts removed unless their removal is impractical, to enable flood storage and to enhance biodiversity and amenity. A culvert will only be approved if it has been demonstrated that there is no reasonable alternative, or the detrimental effects would be so minor that a more costly alternative would not be justified. Whilst recognising that there are situations where culverting may be unavoidable, the onus will be on applicants to prove that all reasonable and practicable alternatives have been fully considered as part of the planning application process.</p> <p>Recommended Response: No Change</p>
<p>ANON-KSAR-NKZ5-S</p>	<p>7.116 Amend to include: 'and Climate Change.</p> <p>7.119 Add new sentence: Importantly, any new water side development should inc. canopy shading flora to assist with biodiversity and drought protection from increasing extreme climate change weather conditions.</p>	<p>In regards to 7.116, whilst it is recognised that Climate Change in the context of water security, it is considered that 'and Climate Change' is not correct in the context of this paragraph of the supporting text.</p> <p>The wording of paragraph 7.119 can be amended to address the importance of</p>

		<p>canopy shading that can assist with biodiversity and drought protection.</p> <p>Recommended Response: Amend paragraph 7.119 as follows: The corridor of a watercourse can be defined as the width of the channel in which water flows, plus its extensive influence on its surrounding landscape that is necessary for its natural functioning. Any development which could impact upon a watercourses in any way (pollution, abstraction, visual impact etc) must ensure that the watercourse corridor is protected. Proposals and must positively respond to the natural character and appearance, setting and functions, making the most of opportunities to enhance the watercourse environment, including providing public access where this is possible and appropriate. It will be important that proposals also provide canopy shading and address the positive role that this has in terms of increasing biodiversity, offering drought protection and providing people with shade to deal with changing climatic temperatures. Opportunities to access and enjoy rivers is important for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors with the possibility of various</p>
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		<p>recreational activities such as canoeing, fishing, walking or observing their wildlife. All development proposals alongside watercourses should maximise opportunities to enhance recreational public access, whilst ensuring biodiversity is conserved.</p> <p>Amend Policy NE17 as follows:</p> <p>Specifically for surface water features and watercourse corridors;</p> <p>iii. Increasing bBiodiversity;</p> <p>iv. Character, appearance and setting;</p> <p>v. Public access to and along the waterway for recreational opportunities and the importance of providing canopy shading for both the natural water environment and for people walking beside the waterway;</p> <p>vi. Include measures to eliminate risk of pollution to groundwater, surface water and watercourse corridor features which would harm their ecological and/or chemical status.</p>
ANON-KSAR-N8UA-D	I am concerned that the replacement for the European Water Framework Directive will have lower standards and hope that the plan will meet the requirements of which ever has the highest standards	<p>Comments Noted. The Council will await what standards come into force in due course.</p> <p>Recommended Response: No Change</p>

ANON-KSAR-N8E3-F	I fully support the parts about protecting rivers and waterways, but object to creating certain recreational activities such as canoeing (and wild swimming though this is not specifically mentioned) as it needs to be recognised that these can be harmful to wildlife whose protection should be a priority. Dog walking is a major problems for some of the river areas near the city as owners allow their dogs to enter the water to disturb birds and other wildlife as well as eroding the banks; this needs to be discouraged, if not banned in certain areas.	Comments Noted. The Council cannot prevent recreational activities along a river and would be a policing matter if dogs are allowed to enter place where they are not allowed (e.g. Winnall Nature Reserve). Recommended Response: No Change
ANON-KSAR-N8EX-M	Policy NE17 Rivers, watercourses and their settings The intention of this policy is supported. It should also be strengthened so that when deciding on proposed allocations in the Local Plan and neighbourhood plans, there is a need to avoid sites where the setting of surface water features/ rivers will be adversely impacted, and those where there is a risk of contamination due to surface water run off.	Comments Noted. Any site that is located within a Flood Risk area would be required to provide further supporting documentation on how any flooding will be mitigated against. Recommended Response: No Change
ANON-KSAR-N819-1	7.116 Amend to include: 'and Climate Change'. 7.119 Add new sentence: Importantly, any new water side development should include canopy shading flora to assist with biodiversity and drought protection from increasing extreme climate change weather conditions.	In regards to 7.116, whilst it is recognised that Climate Change in the context of water security, it is considered that 'and Climate Change' is not correct in the context of this paragraph of the supporting text. Recommended Response: No Change. The wording of paragraph 7.119 has been amended to address the importance of canopy shading that can assist with biodiversity and drought protection.

		<p>Recommended Response: Amend paragraph 7.119 as follows:</p> <p>The corridor of a watercourse can be defined as the width of the channel in which water flows, plus its extensive influence on its surrounding landscape that is necessary for its natural functioning. Any development which could impact upon a watercourses in any way (pollution, abstraction, visual impact etc) must ensure that the watercourse corridor is protected. Proposals and must positively respond to the natural character and appearance, setting and functions, making the most of opportunities to enhance the watercourse environment, including providing public access where this is possible and appropriate. It will be important that proposals also provide canopy shading and address the positive role that this has in terms of increasing biodiversity, offering drought protection and providing people with shade to deal with changing climatic temperatures. Opportunities to access and enjoy rivers is important for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors with the possibility of various recreational activities such as canoeing, fishing, walking or observing their wildlife. All development proposals alongside</p>
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		<p>watercourses should maximise opportunities to enhance recreational public access, whilst ensuring biodiversity is conserved.</p> <p>Amend the wording in Policy NE17:</p> <p>Specifically for surface water features and watercourse corridors;</p> <p>iii. Increasing bBiodiversity;</p> <p>iv. Character, appearance and setting;</p> <p>v. Public access to and along the waterway for recreational opportunities and the importance of providing canopy shading for both the natural water environment and for people walking beside the waterway;</p> <p>vi. Include measures to eliminate risk of pollution to groundwater, surface water and watercourse corridor features which would harm their ecological and/or chemical status.</p>
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	Recommendations	Officer response
Comments from SA	No recommendations made	N/A
Comments from HRA		

Supporting Text

7.116. Water plays an important role in the special qualities of the district and is important to biodiversity, flora and landscape character.

7.117. Ground-water is a key part of the water cycle: it provides an important source for rivers, sustaining flows in dry periods, and thus supporting wildlife habitats. Water for commercial uses and to supply domestic properties comes mainly from the district's underground aquifers, but also from surface waters such as the Rivers Itchen and Test. These rivers and the Meon which originate from the chalk ridges are of high ecological importance as are the upper reaches of the Hamble Estuary which flows through the district. The River Itchen and the Upper Hamble form part of the Natura 2000 network of sites designated under the Birds and Habitats Directives which are also covered by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) with the main objective of bringing all water bodies up to "good ecological (surface waters) quantitative (groundwater) and chemical (all) status" through the sustainable use of water as a natural resource.

Add new paragraph:

A small number of Solent Wader and Brent Goose Strategy (SWBGS) sites are identified around the Upper Hamble as supporting high tide roosts of the Solent Maritime SAC. The Solent Wader and Brent Goose mapping is available on [Solent Waders & Brent Goose Strategy – coastal bird conservation, waders and brent geese data and mapping \(wordpress.com\)](#)

7.118 .The quality of ground water is easily polluted directly and indirectly. It is therefore better to prevent or reduce the amount of contamination at source rather than treat it afterwards.

7.119. The corridor of a watercourse can be defined as the width of the channel in which water flows, plus its extensive influence on its surrounding landscape that is necessary for its natural functioning. Any development which could impact upon a watercourses in any way (pollution, abstraction, visual impact etc) must ensure that the watercourse corridor is protected. **Proposals** and must positively respond to the natural character and appearance, setting and functions, making the most of opportunities to enhance the watercourse environment, including **providing** public access where this is possible and appropriate. **It will be important that proposals also provide canopy shading and address the positive role that this has in terms of increasing biodiversity, offering drought protection and providing people with shade to deal with changing climatic temperatures.** Opportunities to access and enjoy rivers is important for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors with the possibility of various recreational activities such as canoeing, fishing, walking or observing their wildlife. All development proposals alongside watercourses should maximise opportunities to enhance recreational public access, whilst ensuring biodiversity is conserved.

Add new paragraph:

Chalk streams are a rare and valuable habitat, often referred to as the equivalent of England's rain forests or Great Barrier Reef. 85% of all chalk streams are found in England, mainly in the south and east of the country.

Hampshire is considered a key area with the River Test, Itchen and Meon all being filtered through chalk and therefore nurturing a thriving ecosystem. Chalk aquifers are also an important source of water for drinking, agriculture and industry, support angling for trout, salmon and coarse fish, are important for recreation in the district. They need good quality water in order for the different species of fish, plants and insects, many unique to them – such as the southern damselfly - to flourish and as a result of this, it is important that they are protected.

7.120. Hampshire county council take a holistic and joined up approach to managing flood risk. This approach seeks to provide a more joined up and integrated approach to flood risk management by all authorities, agencies and communities. This is known as the catchment approach and;

- Aims to look at a whole river catchment, or sub-catchment and identify areas that are at risk and that have experienced flooding in recent events
- Provides an understanding of how the catchment floods, which has not been based on administrative boundaries or flooding sources
- It makes clear that, when considering flood risk measures, there are likely to be a range of measures and options of varying in size, scale and complexity that may be appropriate
- Acknowledges that a number of authorities, agencies and communities need to come together to mitigate future flood risk
- <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/flooding/strategies/catchment-management-plans>
- Proposals that have the potential to impact on rivers, watercourses and their settings should be in accordance with the Hampshire County Council Strategy.

Add new paragraph:

All development should consider restoring watercourses to their natural state wherever possible, with any culverts removed unless their removal is impractical, to enable flood storage and to enhance biodiversity and amenity. A culvert will only be approved if it has been demonstrated that there is no reasonable alternative, or the detrimental effects would be so minor that a more costly alternative would not be justified. Whilst recognising that there are situations where culverting may be unavoidable, the onus will be on applicants to prove that all reasonable and practicable alternatives have been fully considered as part of the planning application process.

Amendments to policy

Development proposals that affect rivers, watercourses or their settings will be permitted where they conserve and enhance the following;

- i. Water quality and quantity, and help achieve requirements of the ~~European~~ Water Framework Directive, **and Habitats Regulations or their replacement, in the case of developments in proximity to the River Itchen SAC, and Upper Hamble (Solent Maritime SAC, and Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar), and habitats relied upon as identified in the Solent Wader and Brent Goose Strategy (SWBGS);**
- ii. Ability of groundwater, surface water features and watercourse corridors to function as **natural flood management areas** by ~~natural processes~~ throughout seasonal variations, within the immediate vicinity, and both upstream and downstream of the site of the proposal including for flood risk management purposes; and

Specifically for surface water features and watercourse corridors;

- iii. **Increasing** ~~b~~Biodiversity;
- iv. Character, appearance and setting;
- v. Public access to and along the waterway for recreational opportunities **and the importance of providing canopy shading for both the natural water environment and for people walking beside the waterway;**
- vi. Include measures to eliminate risk of pollution to groundwater, surface water and watercourse corridor features which would harm their ecological and/or chemical status.

Development that would result in the loss of habitats identified as 'Core Areas' in the SWBGS must undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to assess and mitigate the effects, in line with the SWBGS.