Local Plan 2036

Havant BOROUGH COUNCIL

Library Ref: EB41

Residential Density Evidence Paper

January 2019

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Purpose of this paper	To establish appropriate densities for residential development within Havant Borough
Why?	The National Planning Policy Framework states that councils should set their own policies on housing densities to optimise the use of land
Objectives	▪ Analyse guidance, and opportunities and constraints that may arise from differing density models in Havant borough ▪ To establish the local circumstances that should be reflected regarding residential density ▪ Identify parts of the borough w suitable for significantly increased densities, having regard to their accessibility to services and public transport ▪ To provide a robust evidence base for a minimum density standard(s) in Havant Borough

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1. Introduction

1.1 The finite amount of undeveloped land and environmental designations in the borough, means that there remain relatively limited opportunities for significantly new development. It is therefore important that development is provided in a sustainable way which maximises this finite resource. Building new homes at higher densities will be essential to ensure that Havant borough is able meet its own housing need.

1.2 This paper assesses national planning policy related to higher density housing, as well as opportunities and constraints that may arise from differing density models in Havant borough.

1.3 It will provide recommendations for parts of the borough which can accommodate differing densities of development including town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. This paper will also inform the Council's approach to assessing potential housing yields for development on proposed allocation sites within the borough.

Calculating Density

1.4 The main benefits for using and measuring density on developments include ensuring that:

(i) housing is available for the population;

(ii) what is built is appropriate to its location and in relation to surrounding areas;

(iii) households can easily access services, infrastructure and employment, and

(iv) available services and infrastructure are effectively used and can help planning for the provision of facilities and services in the future.

1.5 By measuring density, development can be appropriately planned in order to make the most efficient use of land available. Housing density can be measured as follows:

- Number of habitable rooms
- Quantity of floor area (in sq metres)
- Number of Dwellings per hectare (dph)

1.6 Dwellings per hectare (dph) is the most widely used density measure nationwide and is considered to be the most appropriate means of measuring density for the purposes of this document.

Calculating Site Area for Density Measures

1.7 Housing density can be assessed as either a measure of dwellings per hectare of the site's gross area or its net area. The term 'gross site area' is defined as the total land area of which the development will form part. The term 'net site area' is defined as the land that is available for development, otherwise known as the developable area.

1.8 In planning practice, it is common to determine the net site area as a percentage of the gross site area, known as the gross to net ratio. However, as individual sites developable area can vary, net

site areas can be broadly established through analysis of known constraints and designations affecting the site using GIS mapping tools.

1.9 Clarification of elements of development that would be included within any net area calculation are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Development Elements for Gross and Net Area Calculations

Net site area, including:

- Roads within the site;
- Private garden space;
- Car parking areas;
- Incidental open space;
- Children's play areas.

Gross site area, including:

- Major distributor roads and large-scale access requirements;
- Primary schools, churches, shopping areas etc.;
- Open spaces specifically designed to serve a wider area;
- Any significant buffer areas required for landscape, ecological or infrastructure such as underground pipes

2. Policy Context

2.1 Paragraph 122 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;

b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) The importance of securing well-designed and healthy places.

2.2 Paragraph 123 of the NPPF indicates where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

a. plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This should include the use of minimum density standards for town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;

b. the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas; and

c. local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework.

2.3 Paragraph 123 goes onto state that planning policies and decisions should avoid being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In this respect:

a. plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. These standards should seek significant uplift in the average density of residential development within city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;

b. the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and

c. local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider to fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework.

2.4 In addition to the above, paragraph 102 of the NPPF clarifies that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making so that opportunities from transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated.

3. Local Circumstances

Housing Supply

3.1 The Council's 2017 Housing Constraints and Supply Analysis provides an in-depth review of housing need within the Borough when assessed against potential land supply.

3.2 The analysis concludes that there is relatively limited potential for significant new development. As such, there is a need to make the most efficient use of land within Havant borough. It is therefore important to provide a policy framework that supports appropriate densities to provide sustainable development.

Access to Transport, Services and Open Space

3.3 Access to transport, services and appropriate open space are key considerations when considering appropriate densities for residential development.

3.4 Within the borough, there are a number of locations which benefit from good access to transport, services and open space. By assessing these areas alongside localised character and landscape considerations, it is possible to identify areas capable of supporting high density residential development. Areas considered to have the potential for higher density due to proximity to services (opportunity areas) are discussed further at section 4 of this report.

3.5 However, some parts of the Borough are relatively isolated and do not benefit from good proximity to goods services and public transport. The density and character of new development in such areas needs to reflect its accessibility. This will affect the way that new residents live, for example, the amount of parking needed to serve new dwellings in such areas.

Local Character and Design

3.6 To support development of an appropriate density, due regard should be given to the character of the local area as well as the design of the development as discussed at paragraph 1.10.

3.7 Information relating to the landscape character areas of the Borough can be found in the Council's 2015 Landscape Capacity Study. The Landscape Capacity Study assessed the capacity of different areas of the borough to accommodate development, using a 35dph benchmark and two and three storey dwellings.

Density and other Local Policies

3.8 The Havant Borough Local Plan 2036 (HBLP 2036) proposes the introduction of internal space standards, as well as requiring a third of all residential development required to be provided as 2-bedroom homes.

3.9 By following good urban design and the formation of residential layouts that promote terraced properties, the requirement for internal space standards would be achievable whilst achieving an appropriate density.

3.10 It should also be noted that where high density development is promoted then it is likely that the built form in these areas would support 3+ storey development and would therefore be able to meet the requirements for density, housing mix and internal space standards.

4. Opportunity Areas

Defining Opportunity Areas

4.1 Opportunities for higher density residential development are dependent on accessibility to services that would support future occupants. An accessibility hierarchy of areas within the borough by non-car means is provided within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Parking[1].

4.2 Using the existing hierarchy and the currently available public transport options provided in Appendix 1, as well as information on accessibility to shops, the following opportunity areas have been identified:

- Havant Town Centre (shops and services, train and bus stations withshops and services)
- Waterlooville Town Centre (shops and services, on a premium bus corridor)
- Emsworth (shops and services, train station, bus routes)
- Leigh Park (multiple bus routes, close proximity to Havant Town Centre, shops)

4.3 The town and district centres[2] are near to services, and have the most potential to support higher densities, with a reduced parking requirement.

4.4 The areas within easily accessible walking distance (ped-shed)[3] to the services concentrated in the opportunity areas also have the potential to support higher densities. Figure 2 below provides an indicative mix and characteristics for differing densities. Appendix 2 provides further illustration of the built form that differing densities can produce. Appendix 3 provides maps of the town or district centres, identified in paragraph 4.2 and the 'ped-shed' areas surrounding them.

Minimum Density Standards in Practice

4.5 It would not be appropriate to identify an upper limit to density, due to site specific design characteristics and differing local character profiles. To ensure that appropriate densities are achieved as far as possible, the applicant's design and access statement should clearly explain the rationale of the design and layout to justify the proposed density with reference to the accessibility to services and local character.

4.6 Appendix 2 provides a range of examples at varying densities which show the different types of built form which can be achieved according to their location and the character of the surrounding area. As shown by the examples it is anticipated that at least 1 parking space per dwelling can be provided at 55dph.

[1] http://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/parking-supplementary

[2] As defined on the Town Centre Policy Map – HBLP2036

[3] The walking times are created by setting the distance that would be walked within 10 minutes based on a walking speed of 3mph. The data this is based on is the Ordinance Survey ITN road and path network.

Figure 2: Indicative density and mix characteristics

	Density	10ha	3 ha	1 ha	0.5 ha	0.25 ha	0.1 ha
Urban	90 dph		270 dwellings: 1 bed flats: 30% 2 bed flats: 50% 3 bed flats: 20%	90 dwellings 1 bed flats: 30% 2 bed flats: 50% 3 bed flats: 20%	45 dwellings 1 bed flats: 30% 2 bed flats: 50% 3 bed flats: 20%	23 dwellings 1 bed flats: 30% 2 bed flats: 50% 3 bed flats: 20%	9 dwellings 1 bed flats: 30% 2 bed flats: 50% 3 bed flats: 20%
	70 dph (Base Case)	700 dwellings: 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 3 bed flats: 10% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 20%	210 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 3 bed flats: 10% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 20%	70 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 3 bed flats: 10% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 20%	35 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 40% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 10%	18 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 40% 2 bed houses: 40%	7 dwellings 2 bed flats: 60% 2 bed houses: 40%
	60 dph		120 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 20%	60 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 20%	30 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 20%	15 dwellings 1 bed flats: 20% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 50%	6 dwellings 2 bed flats: 50% 2 bed houses: 50%
Suburban	55 dph		115 dwellings 1 bed flats: 10% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30%	55 dwellings 1 bed flats: 10% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30%	28 dwellings 1 bed flats: 10% 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30%	14 dwellings 2 bed flats: 40% 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30%	6 dwellings 2 bed flats: 40% 2 bed houses: 60%
	45 dph (Base Case)	450 dwellings 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 20%	135 dwellings 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 20%	45 dwellings 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 20%	23 dwellings 2 bed flats: 30% 2 bed houses: 20% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 20%	11 dwellings 2 bed houses: 40% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 30%	5 dwellings 2 bed houses: 40% 3 bed houses: 40% 4 bed houses: 20%
	35 dph		105 dwellings 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 30% 5 bed houses: 10%	35 dwellings 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 30% 5 bed houses: 10%	18 dwellings 2 bed houses: 30% 3 bed houses: 30% 4 bed houses: 30% 5 bed houses: 10%	9 dwellings 3 bed houses: 40% 4 bed houses: 40% 5 bed houses: 20%	4 dwellings 3 bed houses: 50% 4 bed houses: 50%

Source: Havant Borough Council (2010)

4.7 Based on the general characteristics of the densities contained in Figure 2, sites within the town centres would be suitable to support a minimum density of 70dph. Outside of the town centre areas but within the area of opportunities, a minimum density of 55dph would be appropriate to make most effective use of land, whilst still respecting the nature of the built form surrounding these areas.

4.8 Outside of these areas, there are suburban parts of the borough. Here it is considered that a lower density of 40dph would be appropriate having regard to the lower capacity for change identified by the Council's 2015 Landscape Capacity Study.

5. Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that the following minimum density standards are set out in the HBLP 2036 based on access to services and the varying nature of local character within the borough:

- Development within the identified town and district centres of Havant, Emsworth, Waterlooville and Leigh Park should be expected to provide a minimum of 70 dwellings per hectare (net developable area).
- Whilst development within the areas of opportunity surrounding the identified town and district centres (shown at Appendix 3) should be expected to provide a minimum of 55 dwellings per hectare (net developable area).
- Development outside of the identified opportunity areas should be expected to provide a minimum 40 dwellings per hectare (net developable area).

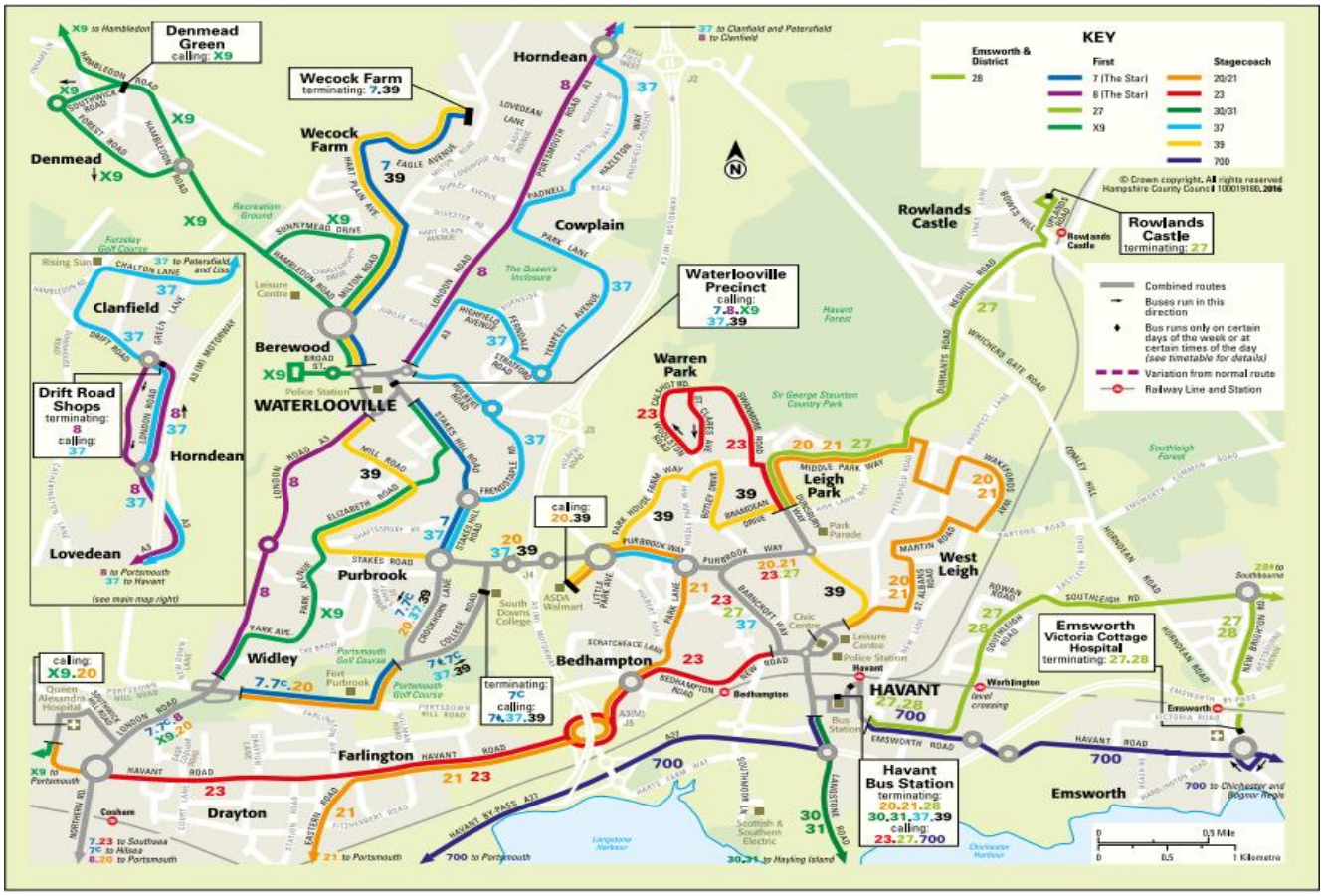
5.2 In order to provide flexibility with future changes in accessibility to services, and where a deviation from the minimum density requirements may be justified in the context of the site's character. It is recommended that applicants provide full justification for development which would fall below the minimum density standard. This should be provided within the design and access statement which would be expected to be submitted alongside the application.

5.3 Where development fails to optimise the use of land, and where there is insufficient evidence to support density lower than the minimum standard, this should result in refusal of an application. This reflects the finite amount of undeveloped land in the borough, and the importance of achieving development in a sustainable manner. Where development is proposed at significantly higher levels than the minimum density standard, the higher density proposed should be fully evidenced within the applicant's design and access statement. Such an increase will be considered appropriate subject to compliance with the other policies in the Local Plan together with any other material considerations.

5.4 In such cases where policy compliant affordable housing would render a scheme unviable, the density of the proposed development should be maximised as far as practicable, where design parameters permit. Furthermore, development proposals which appear to artificially lower the capacity of a site relative to the accessibility of their location should be resisted. Efforts to circumvent certain policy requirements in such a manner such as affordable housing and open space will not be accepted by the local planning authority.

Appendix 1

Public transport map



Appendix 2

Density Built Form Examples

Detached Housing at 35dph

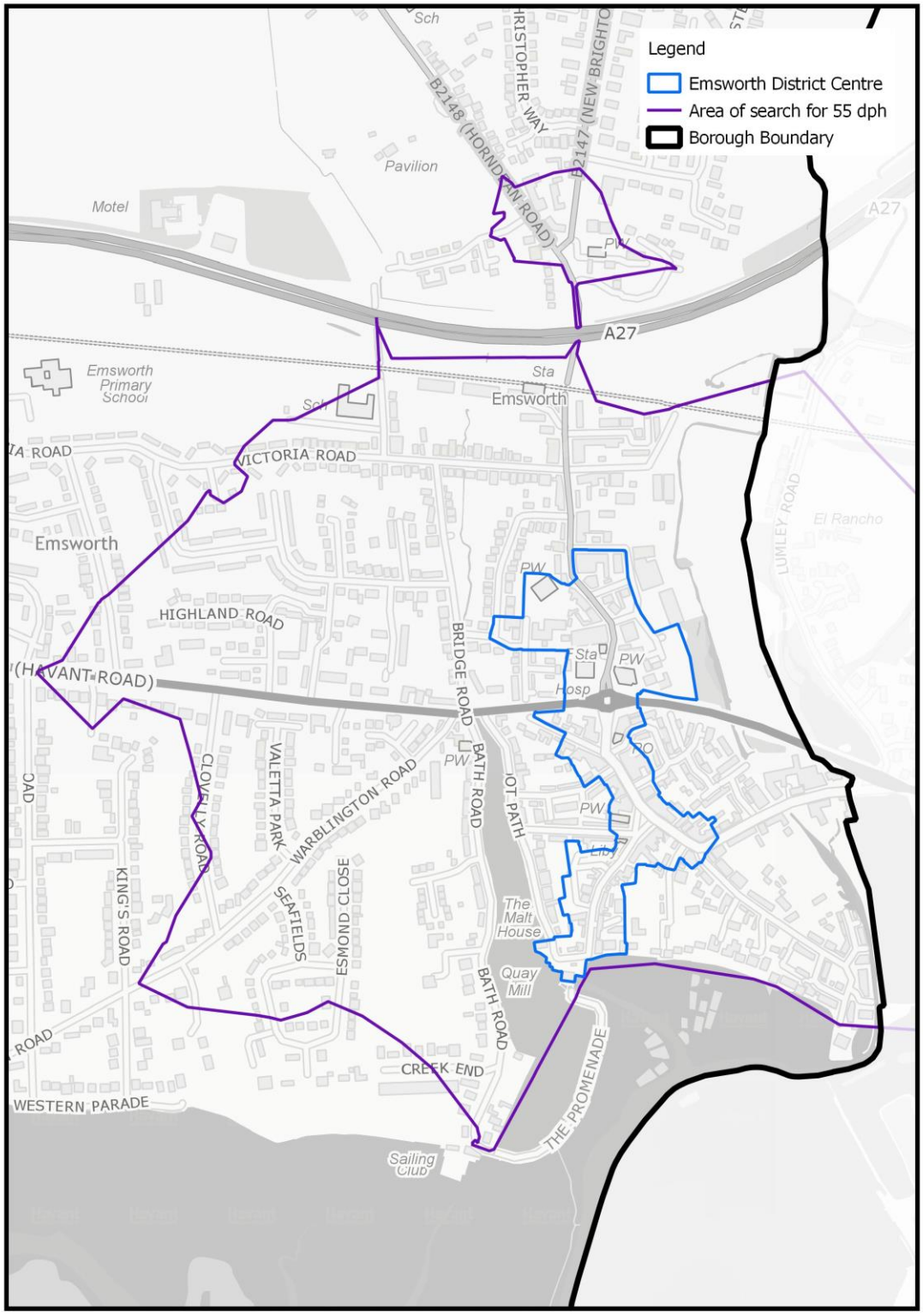
Townhouses – semi-detached and short terraces at 50dph

Mews houses at 80dph

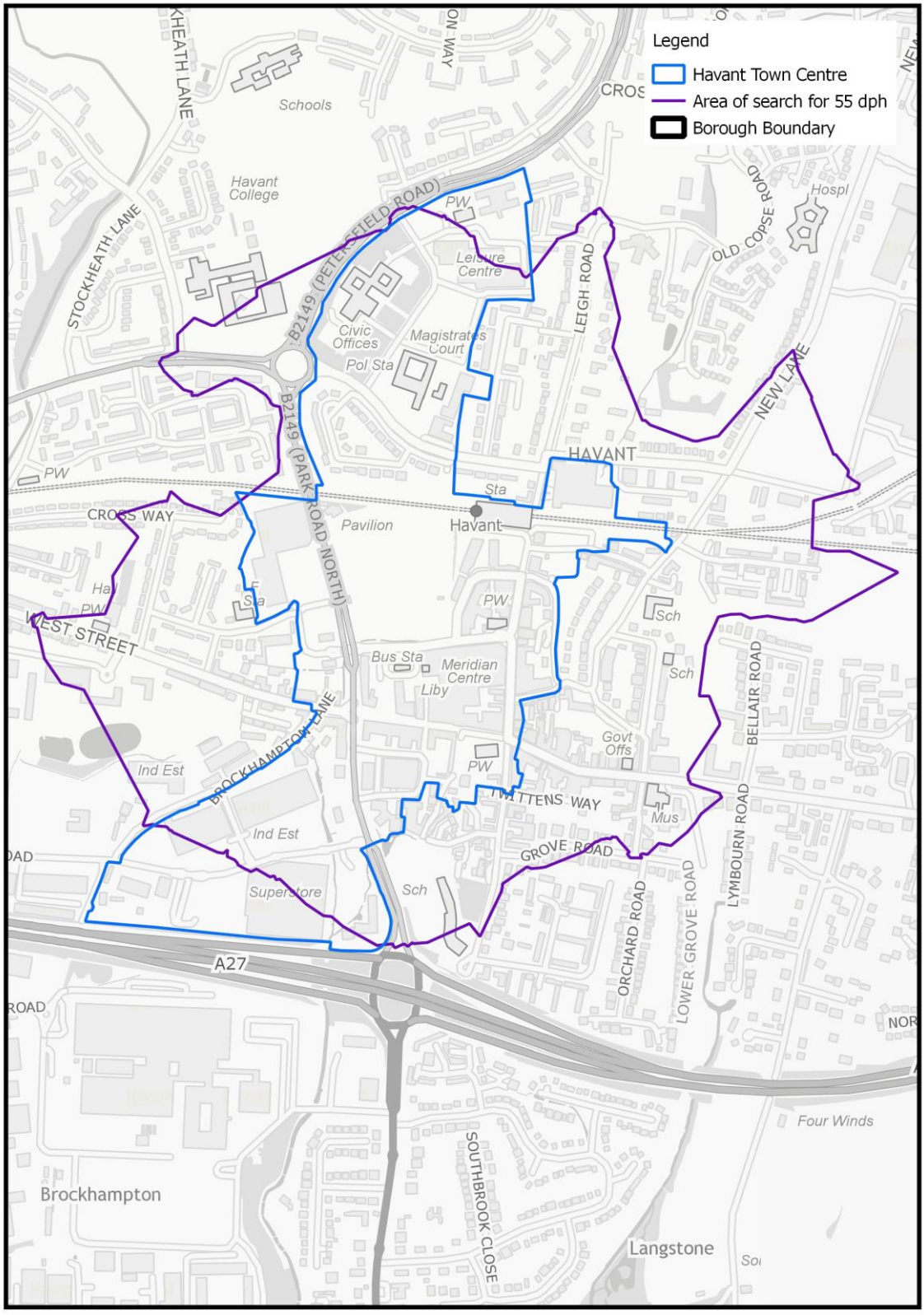
Appendix 3

Town Centre and Ped-Shed Areas

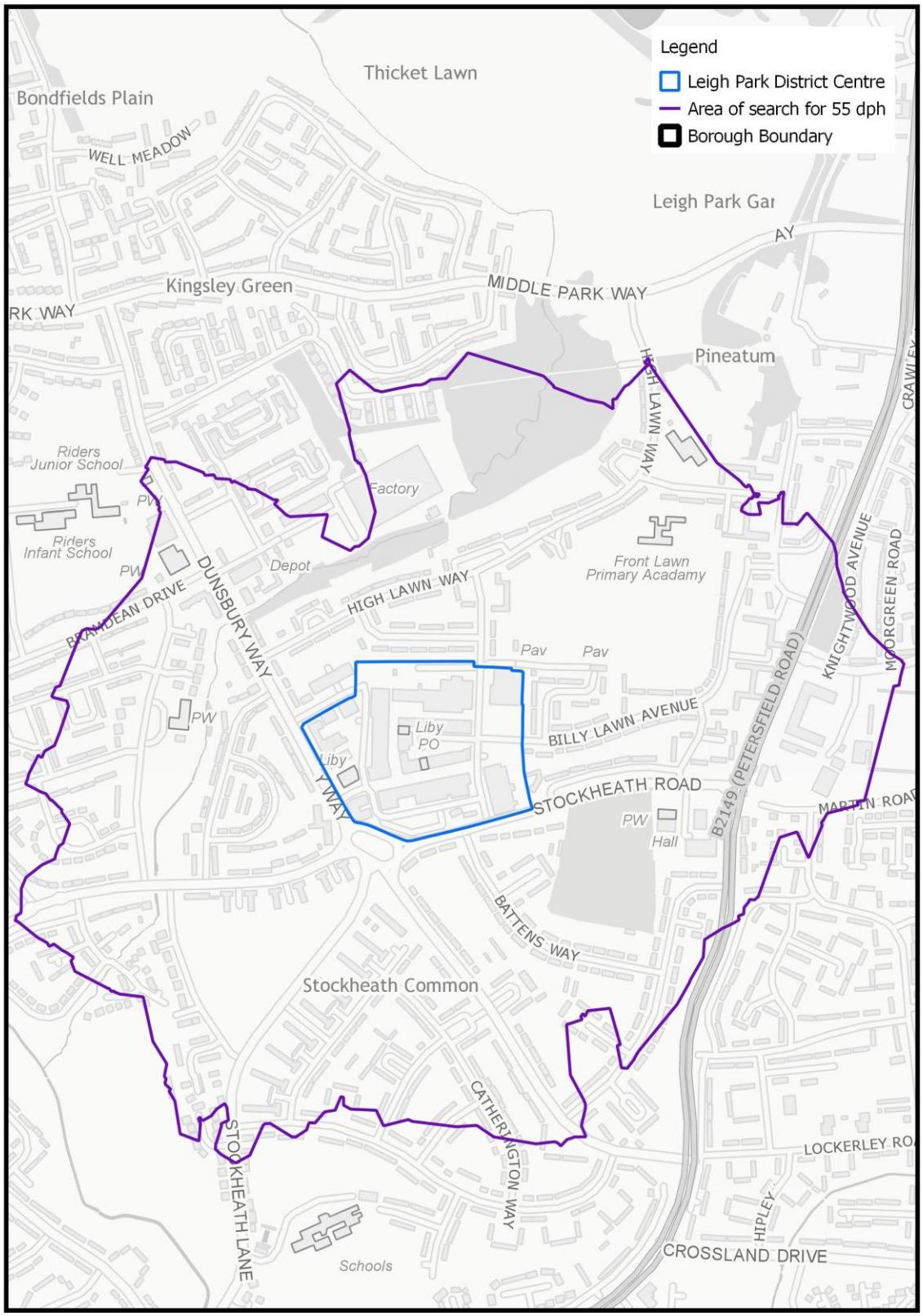
Emsworth District Centre



Havant Town Centre



Leigh Park District Centre



Waterlooville Town Centre