



# A Vision for the Waterside



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## Executive Summary

The Waterside is situated on the west side of Southampton Water and is the home to nationally significant infrastructure and industrial assets which play a critical role in the UK economy. We have ambitious plans to support the growth of our economy and provide much needed homes, but also to deliver this in a way that enhances the special environment of the area. We believe the Waterside has the potential to become a national exemplar for delivering growth in an environmentally sensitive area.

### **The Growth Opportunity**

- Fawley Refinery (ExxonMobil) – the UK’s largest refinery, representing 20% of UK capacity, with a major ongoing investment programme encompassing increased output of ultra-low sulphur diesel;
- Fawley Waterside – the former Power Station and one of the largest brownfield development sites in the South of England, with plans to deliver a new sustainable community and centre of marine and maritime innovation;
- Marchwood Military Port (Solent Gateway) – the UK’s only combined military and commercial port, with plans to deliver significant commercial space utilising existing on-site rail infrastructure and deep-water dock capacity;
- Port of Southampton expansion (ABP) – has proposals to develop a deep-water port providing extra capacity for the UK’s leading export port;
- New homes – offering development capacity for 5000 new homes

### **What help do we need to make this happen?**

- Investment in the A326 to reduce congestion, improve journey time reliability and connectivity to the wider UK economy;
- Investment that enhances choice and the accessibility of public transport, cycling and walking routes;
- Investment in Environmental Infrastructure to support connectivity for people, places and nature

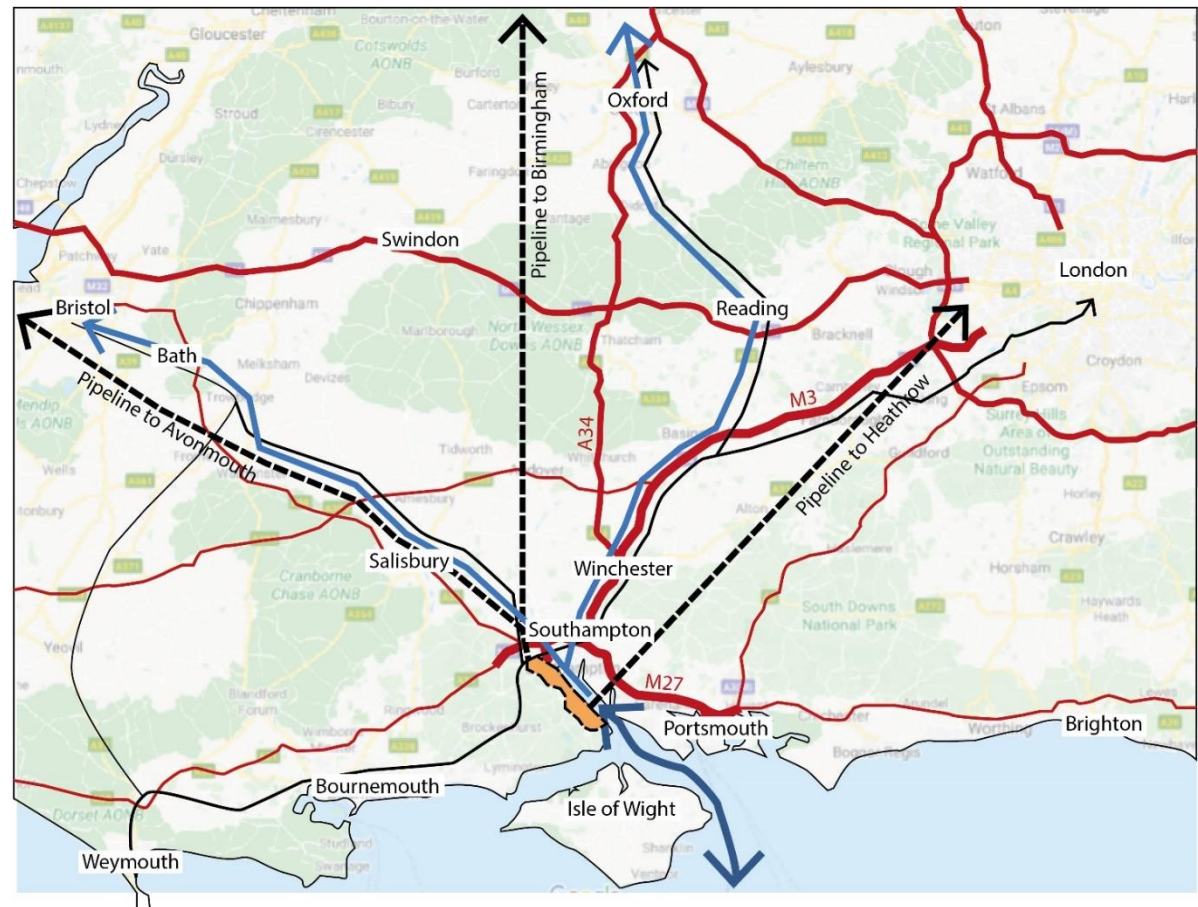
# The National Context

Situated on the west side of Southampton Water, and facing the Port of Southampton, the Waterside is the home to nationally significant infrastructure and industrial assets which play a critical role in the UK economy. The area sits between Southampton Water and the New Forest National Park

The Waterside gains access principally from the M27, with connectivity through to the M3 and A34, providing an important road link to the automotive sector in the West Midlands. The main distributor road within the Waterside is the A326.

Bournemouth and Southampton airports lie close to the Waterside, providing air connections to the UK and mainland European destinations. The Waterside is close to 5 universities including Russell Group Member, the University of Southampton.

The Port of Southampton is the UK's leading export port and plays a significant role in enabling significant vehicle exports, underpinning the UK automotive sector of the West Midlands and beyond.



Aside from the New Forest National Park, the area also benefits from a number of national and international nature conservation designations that include the New Forest SSSI, the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.

Southampton Water is a unique natural deep-water harbour, having a unique double tide which allows unrestricted access for the world's largest vessels.

The main landside operational area of the Port of Southampton is located within the City of Southampton, and the port operators Associated British Ports (ABP) owns a significant land holding within the Waterside

ABP concluded in its Draft Port of Southampton Masterplan (2016) that the Port of Southampton needs to expand within its land holdings on the Waterside.

The area is also home to ExxonMobil, owners and operators of the Fawley refinery, the largest refinery in the UK, representing around 20% of UK capacity. The refinery supplies fuel directly, via pipelines, critical international airports including Birmingham, Heathrow and Gatwick.

To the south of the refinery is the former Fawley Power Station, one of the largest brownfield regeneration opportunities in the south of England. The vision for Fawley Waterside is a new 'smart town', with 1500 new homes and deep-water access to enable the development of a centre of excellence in marine and maritime innovation.

Marchwood Military Port, the UK's only combined military and commercial port, is operated by Solent Gateway, is now being developed for more commercial uses, with an emerging masterplan for up to £400M of future investment. The site benefits from extensive developable land and existing rail and port connectivity.

Over 5000 homes will be built within the Waterside over the next 10 to 15 years.

## A Shared Vision for the Waterside

The whole of the Waterside falls within the administrative boundaries of the Hampshire County Council and the Solent LEP; the majority of the Waterside area lies within the administrative boundary of the New Forest District Council, with the remaining part lying in the New Forest National Park Authority area.

A public-private consortium has been formed between the 3 statutory authorities, the Solent LEP and the major landowners: ABP, ExxonMobil, Solent Gateway, Barker Mill Estates and Fawley Waterside.

It is agreed that to achieve economic growth in an innovative way this internationally important and sensitive nature conservation area must be enhanced to create a flagship area where people, the economy and the environment thrives.

This document sets out our shared vision of the opportunity across the whole of the Waterside, our collective assessment of the cumulative impact of the development aspirations, and our understanding of the total infrastructure needed to support and enable the growth plans for the area, to be delivered in a way compatible with the shared vision.

This is a blueprint for how to deliver growth in an environmentally sensitive area.

To achieve economic growth in an innovative way that enhances this internationally important and sensitive nature conservation area creating a flagship area where people, the economy and the environment thrives.

## The Place

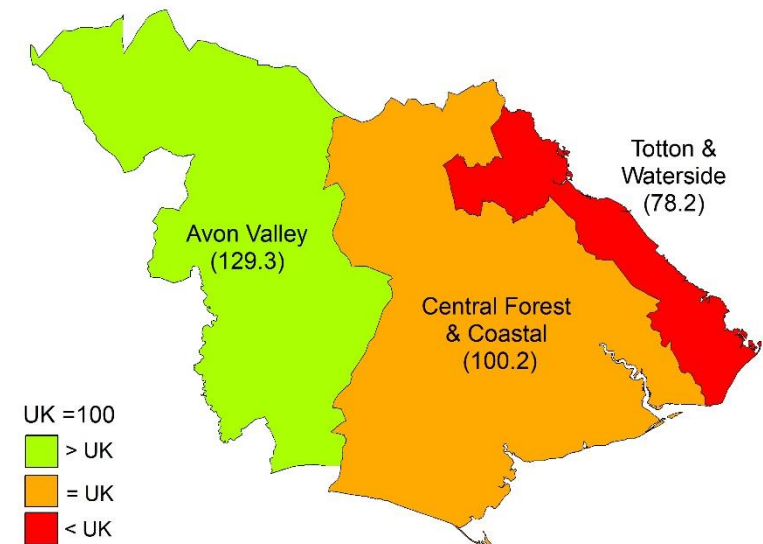
The Waterside is a unique area between two internationally protected nature conservation areas, Southampton Water and the highly protected landscape of the New Forest National Park. The most significant settlement is Totton; the communities of Marchwood, Hythe and Fawley also lie within this area, together with nationally significant infrastructure and industrial assets which include Marchwood Military Port, the Fawley Refinery and former Fawley Power Station site. The whole area provides a setting to the New Forest National Park. Key opportunities for environmental infrastructure have been identified through this vision, supporting anticipated development in the area and delivering environmental net gain. Physical infrastructure is also needed to ensure that the area can deliver sustainable growth and support the economy, both locally and nationally.

The A326 is the main strategic road that provides access to/from the M27, with a high level of outward and inward commute resulting in congestion at peak periods.



## Socio-Economic Profile

- Totton and the Waterside is the most urbanised, industrial and densely populated sub-area of the New Forest
- The levels of economic prosperity in Totton & the Waterside are over a fifth below the national average.
- Totton & Waterside has a skills gap, in terms of residents with degree or higher qualifications, with the UK average of almost 6%.
- Totton & Waterside has a large (5%) and increasing gap with the national average in terms of residents with higher-skilled occupations.
- In terms of commuting, Totton & the Waterside experiences a net outflow of people (7,200), with some 69% of commuting by car or van.
- The local economy is characterised by concentrations of manufacturing and distribution-related activities, with manufacturing primarily concentrated in lower value-added activities.
- Totton & Waterside and New Forest suffers from a low proportion of knowledge intensive employment. Sectors such as ICT and finance/insurance are significantly underrepresented in the area relative to the UK and Hampshire.
- In terms of sectors, the Waterside has, unsurprisingly, a high concentration of marine and maritime businesses, but with a trend of decline of the sector (around 6.9% per annum in employment terms between 2010 and 2016).



Economic prosperity in New Forest relative to UK average



## The Growth Opportunity

The development aspirations for the New Forest District area have been confirmed in the Local Plan adopted in July 2020. The Plan demonstrates how some 5000 new homes creating 3 new communities and 18 hectares of employment land can be delivered within the Waterside.

The Plan references the use of Marchwood Port for commercial, economic and local employment, and notes the potential expansion of the Port of Southampton which could provide opportunity for significant economic growth within the area.

Together with the National Park's recently adopted Local Plan, the Plan promotes the regeneration of the former Fawley Power Station for a new mixed-use community of 1500 homes, 10 hectares of employment with deep water access.

The Waterside is also home to the Fawley Refinery, operated by ExxonMobil. This is the UK's largest refinery, representing 20% of the UK's refinery capacity. Significant investment is planned in the plant to shift to production of ultra-low sulphur diesel.



## Economic Outcomes

The overall economic benefits that will be delivered from our growth plan are:

- up to 6,700 new jobs with a significant proportion in the Waterside area
- Up to £566M per annum increase in GVA
- Improve the quality of jobs within the area by creating more knowledge intense employment
- Create training and development opportunities through growth to upskill the local population
- Unlocking over £3bn of private sector investment in the area

Wider economic benefits associated with the growth plan along the Waterside includes;

- Improving UK energy security and the UK balance of payments
- Supporting global export sales for the UK automotive sector through the ABP proposed port expansion, safeguarding the UK's export competitiveness

The Waterside also offers the potential to strengthen the already prominent marine and maritime cluster in South Hampshire which is currently estimated to generate an economic value of £5.8bn GVA and support directly and indirectly around 152,000 jobs (source: CEBR).

This vision also sees the delivery of 5000 new homes in an area that has seen a low level of growth.

## Environmental Outcomes

The Waterside presents a unique opportunity to lead a national green recovery, embedding the principles set out in the Government's 25 year Environment Plan by delivering a World Class Economy in a World Class Environment. Our ambition is to increase environmental benefits by:

- Planning, designing and managing the environment as vital infrastructure
- Investing in Natural Capital
- Creating a connected green network
- Connecting the coast to the forest
- Creating healthy towns and villages
- Building strong communities and integrating the new with the old
- Building resilience and adaptivity to climate change
- Enhanced environmental benefits (environmental net gain)
- Connected ecological sites and species (nature recovery networks)
- Creating and enhancing community spaces and places
- Delivering coastal renaissance in Waterside town and village centres
- Improving cycling and walking and connections to Southampton
- Linking to Southampton's Green City Charter

# Environmental Infrastructure

## What is Environmental Infrastructure?

It is a network of natural features.

## Why is it important?

With limited space on the Waterside an Environmental Infrastructure approach allows us to make the best use of what we have now and what we need in the future.

## How are we going to harness the benefits of Green Infrastructure?

Protecting what we have now, connecting it to other Environmental Infrastructure and enhancing it to work better for all in the future.

## What will it be on the ground?

**Ecological Network Enhancement** – For example linking existing broadleaved woodlands with new hedgerows or linear woodland. To help connect the coast to the forest making use of existing Environmental Infrastructure and adding sites to create links or overcome existing barriers.

**Sustainable Transport Network** – Creating cycleways and improving footpaths to make it easier for people use travel without needing to drive.

**Neighbourhood Green Infrastructure** – Improving existing parks and greenspaces to encourage use by all. Creating towns and villages that are:

- easy to walk around to encourage activity and increase use,
- good places to live with treelined streets which improve air quality, lower wind speed and provide shade;
- accessible to improve how people feel and engage the community through access to nature, streams and the coast; and
- multifunctional with spaces for sport, recreation and play.

**Water Management** – With more frequent storms we need to increase the amount of water that can be stored upstream by managing land to flood to protect homes and businesses downstream. We need to improve the quality of the water that flows into Southampton Water and the Solent by capturing nitrates and phosphates through mechanisms such as special wetlands.

**Land Management Opportunities** – Land can be managed in ways that have greater benefit for the economy, the environment and society. By working with landowners, we can change existing management practices to increase their benefits, for example gains for nature through connecting or buffering important sites.



Neighbourhood Green Infrastructure:  
Connectivity enhancements



Land Management Opportunities:  
To enhance the landscape, ecology and public enjoyment



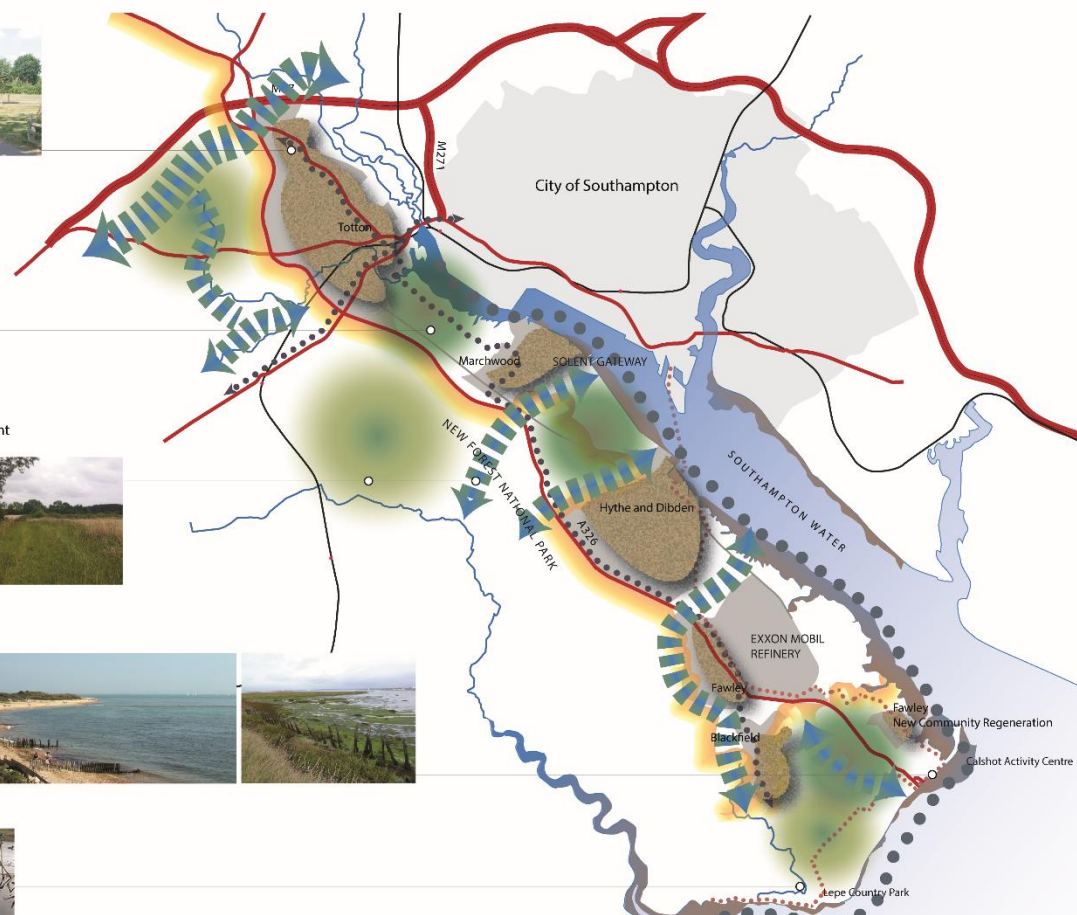
Land Management Opportunities:  
Ecological blue and green network enhancements



Coastal access opportunities



Land management Opportunities:  
Water management -  
Up stream catchment enhancements



## The Waterside Environmental Infrastructure Vision

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH THAT ENHANCES THIS UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT

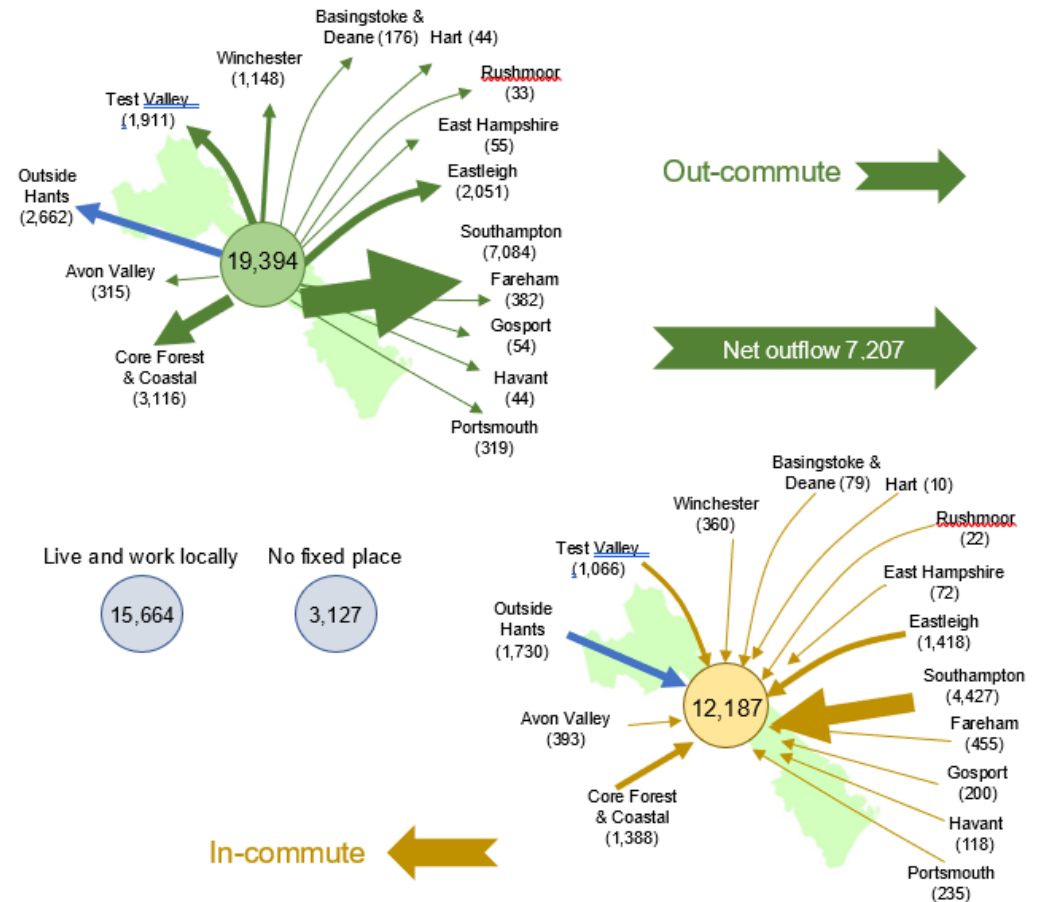
## Social and Community Outcomes

- Significant new knowledge-based employment opportunities
- Investing in skill and training opportunities - significant opportunities will be delivered from the proposed growth for creating training opportunities for local residents and upskilling the existing workforce
- Improving access to education and training - with better transport links across the Waterside and to education and training opportunities in Southampton
- Delivering a mix and range of housing and housing tenures providing a wider choice for local residents to meet their housing needs and attracting new households into the area
- Promoting health and wellbeing, through the investment in green infrastructure and improved walking and cycling, creating more resilient communities
- Improving accessibility and enjoyment of natural green space
- Reusing brownfield sites including the redevelopment of the former Fawley Power Station
- Improving the cultural and heritage

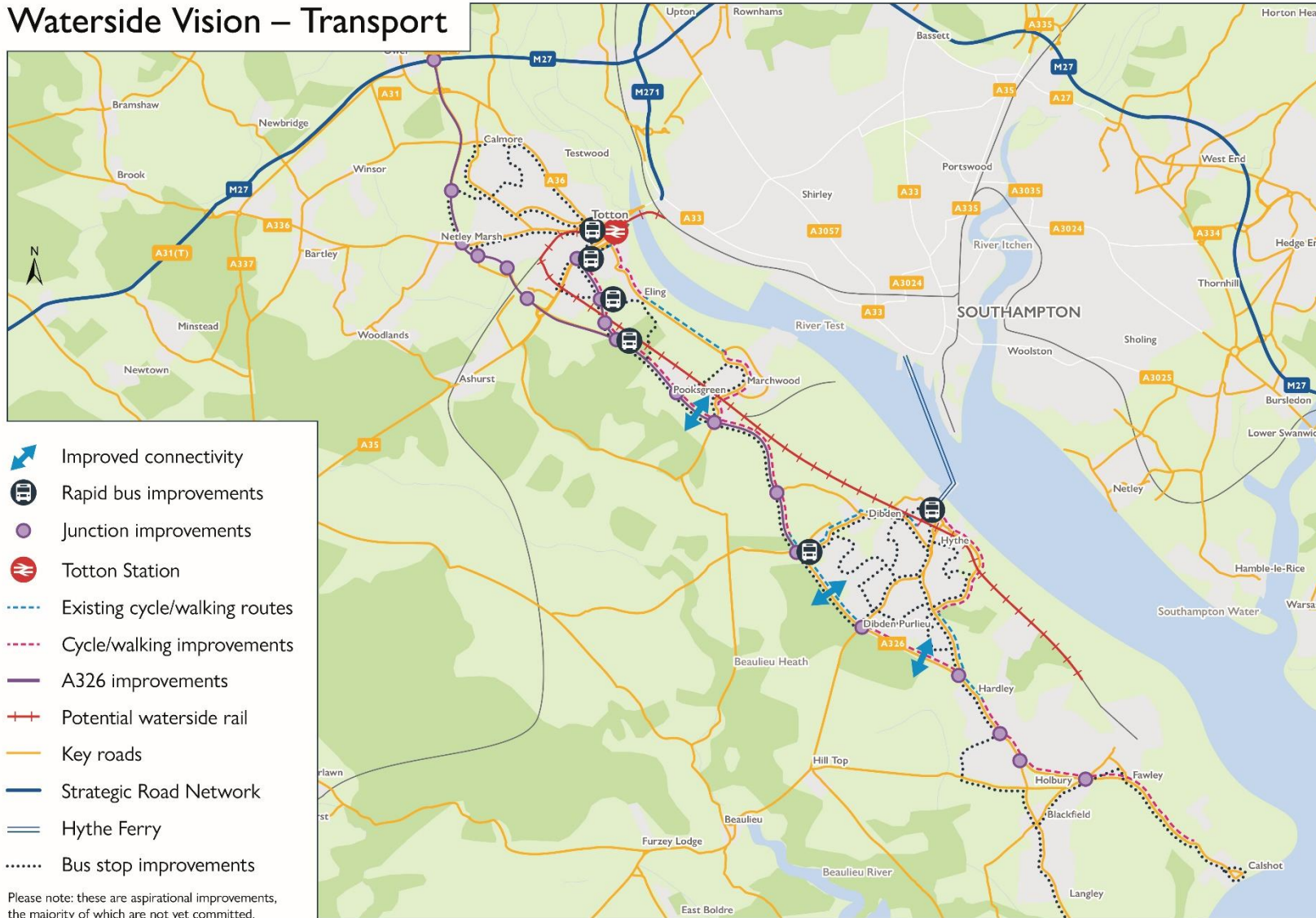
# Strategic Approach to Transport

Our strategic approach to transport needs across the Waterside will encompass the following key objectives:

- To develop a fully integrated multimodal transport strategy to improve connectivity across the Waterside area and with the wider region
- To reduce dependence on the private car by enhancing choice and the accessibility of public transport, cycling and walking routes
- To ensure that all transport improvements account for the sensitive environment and habitats of the New Forest
- To enhance access between communities and to key destinations by reducing the barrier the A326 represents
- To reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability on the A326 by providing critical network resilience, especially for the existing national assets on the Waterside including the Fawley Refinery and Marchwood Military Port and also for the proposed growth in the capacity of the Port of Southampton
- To enhance the efficiency of multi-modal trade routes from the Waterside to the manufacturing regions of the Midlands and North



## Waterside Vision – Transport





## What we need

- Investment in environmental infrastructure to support connectivity for people, places and nature
- Investment in the A326 transport corridor to reduce congestion and better connect the Waterside with the wider regional and national economy
- Investment in more sustainable alternatives to the car including cycling and walking, and exploring the future potential of water-based transport
- Investment in 5G digital connectivity across the Waterside area, to enable greater adaptability and innovation in the local economy
- Improvements to Totton town centre to better fulfil its role as the key urban centre for the Waterside and its communities