

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 18 MAY 2006

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
PRE SUBMISSION DRAFT CONSULTATION STAGE**

Report by: David Illsley, Policy Advisor (Planning)

Summary:

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement setting out how the Authority intends to consult the public and other stakeholders on the preparation of planning policy documents and the consideration of planning applications. Following an initial pre-production consultation exercise with the statutory consultees (including the parish and town councils within the New Forest National Park and the neighbouring local authorities), this paper presents the Pre-Submission Draft of the New Forest National Park Authority's Statement of Community Involvement and sets out the stages towards adoption.

Recommendation:

That members approve the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement (Annex 1) for formal consultation, as required by Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

Resources: Not significant

Other major considerations: None

Papers

NFNPA 91/06: cover paper

NFNPA 91/06: Annex 1 Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community
Involvement

Annex A

Annex B

Annex C

Annex D

Annex E

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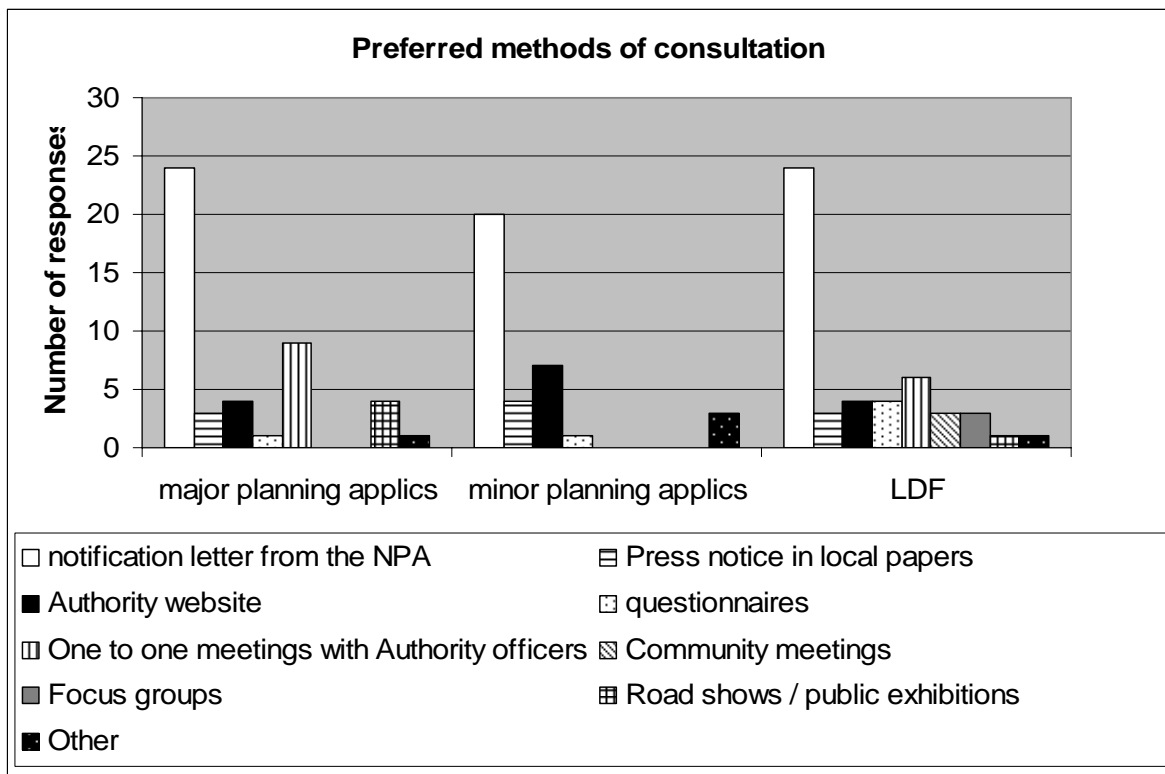
1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced the requirement for local planning authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), setting out how communities will be engaged in the preparation of planning policy documents and the consideration of planning applications. The majority of local authorities are well advanced in adopting their statements, including the other English National Park Authorities.
- 1.2 The New Forest National Park is currently covered by three separate statements of community involvement (prepared by New Forest District Council, Salisbury District Council and Test Valley Borough Council) that are in various stages of adoption. The preparation of a New Forest National Park Authority Statement of Community Involvement enables members to decide on the Authority's approach to consultation and will enable consistent community consultation across the whole of the National Park.
- 1.3 Background information on the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement is provided in NFNPA 75/06, considered at the Authority meeting on 14 March 2006. This paper set the context and outlined the requirements to consult certain bodies at the pre-production stage in accordance with government guidance.

2. Pre-Production Consultation – Regulation 25

- 2.1 Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 states that before producing a draft Statement of Community Involvement, a local planning authority must consult the regional planning body, each relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority, and the Highways Agency.

- 2.2 The New Forest National Park Authority has met this requirement through the pre-production consultation letter and questionnaire that was sent out to 76 recipients at the beginning of April 2006 (**Annex E of Annex 1**). This consultation exercise included all of the parish and town councils within and adjoining the New Forest National Park, as well as neighbouring local authorities and the regional planning bodies.
- 2.3 In accordance with comments received from members at the March 2006 Authority meeting, the pre-production consultation was widened from the statutory minimum to include the Regional Assemblies for the South East and South West of England, the Verderers of the New Forest, the Forestry Commission and the Commoners Defence Association.
- 2.4 A total of 27 responses were received during the four week consultation period, representing a response rate of 36%. The breakdown of responses on planning applications and the Local Development Framework is set out in the chart below.
- 2.5 Almost all respondents identified a notification letter from the National Park Authority as a standard method of consultation on major and minor planning applications and the Local Development Framework. The next most popular forms of consultation were one to one meetings with officers, especially on major planning applications and the Local Development Framework, and use of the Authority's website.



3. Statement of Community Involvement – Pre-Submission Draft

- 3.1 Following the receipt of the pre-production responses, a Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement for the New Forest National Park has been prepared – set out in **Annex 1**. The format of this draft has been informed by the responses received during the pre-production consultation exercise and the previous resolutions of the National Park Authority.

Resolution to support the New Forest District Council Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.2 At the September 2005 National Park Authority meeting, members resolved to support in principle the New Forest District Council Statement of Community Involvement.

Pre-Production consultation responses

- 3.3 The comments received during the pre-production consultation illustrate that respondents appear relatively content with the existing planning consultation arrangements. The response from Breamore Parish Council for example, states,

“A similar system as New Forest District Council in respect of planning applications, tree works etc would be essential.”

- 3.4 For the reasons set out below the National Park Authority’s draft Statement of Community Involvement follows closely the approach taken by New Forest District Council:

- the National Park Authority has already formally supported the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by New Forest District Council;
- the pre-production consultation responses have not identified a need significantly to alter the consultation arrangements from those that existed before the National Park Authority assumed its full planning responsibilities;
- the potential for joint preparation of planning policy documents between the National Park Authority and New Forest District Council would be facilitated by a consistent approach.

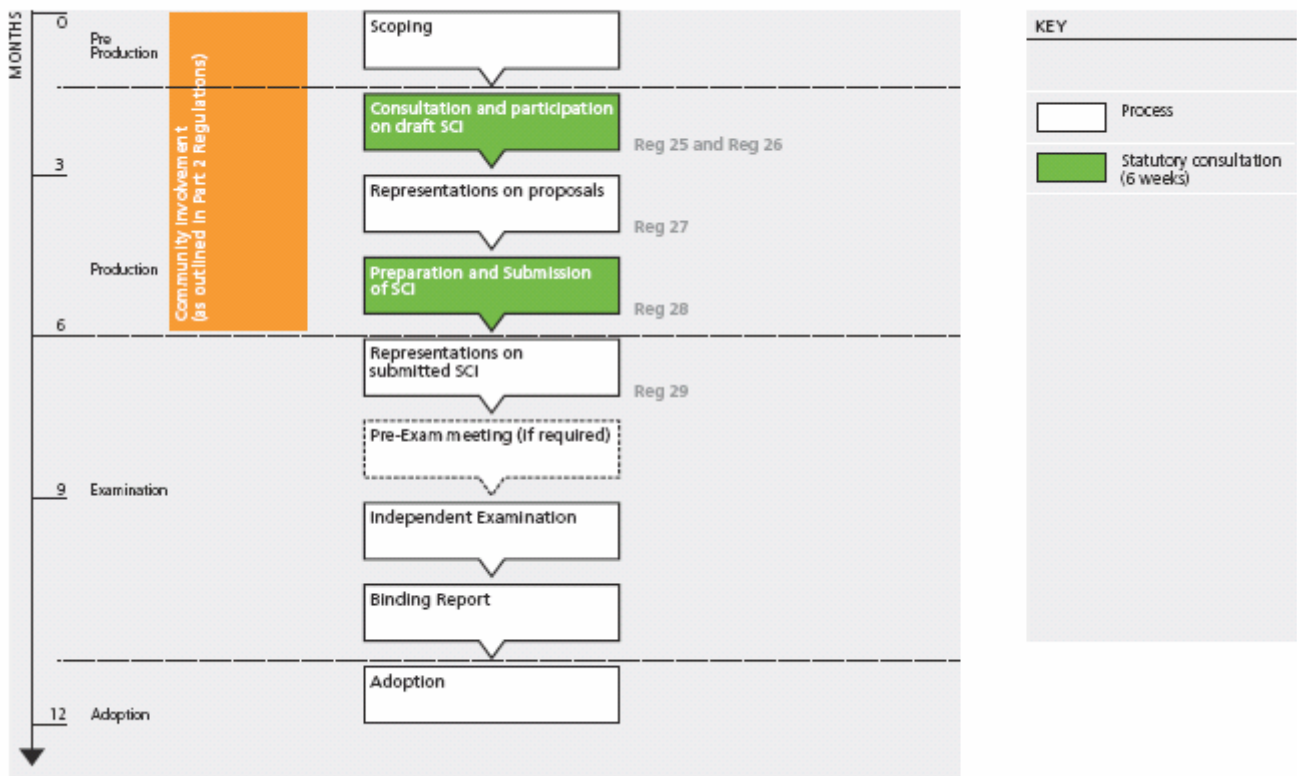
- 3.5 Although based on New Forest District Council’s statement, the Pre-Submission Draft National Park Authority Statement of Community Involvement has been shaped by the specific National Park Authority requirements. For example, reference is made to the ‘Planning for Real’ exercises which members at the March 2006 Authority meeting suggested might be used. The draft statement also reflects the establishment of the Authority’s Planning Development Control Committee and the potential for linked consultation between the Local

Development Framework and the National Park Management Plan review process.

4 Next steps

- 4.1 Paragraph 3.9 of Planning Policy Statement 12 (Local Development Frameworks) states that local planning authorities should publish the draft Statement of Community Involvement and invite representations over a period of six weeks in accordance with Regulation 26 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Community involvement on a draft statement allows the community and stakeholders to influence the scope and form of community involvement.
- 4.2 Following approval of the National Park Authority's pre-submission draft statement for consultation:
- copies will be available for inspection at the Authority's Efford office;
 - the draft statement will be published on the Authority's website;
 - copies of the draft statement will be sent to the required consultation bodies, with comments invited within six weeks (a period likely to stretch until early July 2006);
 - advertisements will be placed in the local press.
- 4.3 Once these responses have been received, the Authority will consider them before (if necessary) revising the statement and submitting it to an independent examination. The figure overleaf is taken from Planning Policy Statement 12 and sets out the processes involved before the Statement of Community Involvement can be adopted.

Figure 3.1 – The Statement of Community Involvement Process



Recommendation:

That members approve the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement (Annex 1) for formal consultation, as required by Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.