

Paula Freeland  
Head of Environmental Design  
New Forest National Park Authority  
South Efford House  
Milford Road  
Everton Lymington  
Hampshire  
SO 41 0JD

Direct Dial: 01483 252040

Direct Fax: 01483 252001

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Dear Paula,

**Proposed Conservation Areas – New Forest National Park area.  
Proposals for Forest South East and Forest Central, North and South.**

Thank you for your consultations regarding the above, I apologise for the later than anticipated comments herewith, I found the meeting yesterday very helpful.

It is clear that a considerable amount of research and on the ground work has gone into the appraisal work for the proposed designations, pulling together the evidence base and using our *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* document to form the appraisal. The breaking down of the areas into character areas or zones is helpful to the understanding of the particular sense of place of each area.

As you know we had doubts over the extent of apparent open land included within the proposed boundaries. However, using the Forest South East proposal as the example, we are struck by the apparent substantial level of surviving early field patterns and plot forms, how the storyboard of the working cultural way of life in these areas of the Forest is still reflected in the standing landscape evidence and, how the prevailing scale of building fitted into these patterns. The examples used in our document are perhaps not so readily transferable to the complexity and extent of the areas you are dealing with.

The draft text of the appraisal as we discussed, refers and gives description of the characteristic features of the area. However, from our discussions, we consider the apparent extent of survivals of fields pattern, early physical and visual boundaries ( just for one example, the Beaulieu rails) the cottages, farmsteads and outbuildings - their form, scale and siting and the overall historic value and significance to the areas character and sense of place should be clearly summarised.

With reference to 3.8 /4.3 -4.5 of our advisory document. While the use of maps, illustration and captions in any final document will no doubt assist in

providing a focus, the bullet points set out as *key characteristics* at the end of each area could be usefully summarise succinctly the historic values and significances to be attributed to each area; the special interest of each area having been evaluated, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts and this should be articulated and defined – what is important and why.

I briefly referred also to our latest version of *Conservation Principles* (sections- understanding values and assessing significance) which may assist you in determining heritage values and significance in your dealing with future appraisals in your programme.

Finally, as discussed, in any Conservation Area designation, we would encourage the use of Article 4 directions as appropriate to protect those buildings that contribute to the areas character and value.

English Heritage, based on the information provided and discussed yesterday, are most supportive of Conservation Area designation for the above areas, while the natural environment of the New Forest is often recognised, the areas significant sense of place, cultural and physical heritage is perhaps far less well understood, recognised and valued. The appraisals are an important piece of work towards managing this heritage.

Yours sincerely

**Graham Steaggles**

Historic Areas Adviser

E-mail: [graham.steaggles@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:graham.steaggles@english-heritage.org.uk)

Cc R Massey.