

Consultation on proposed Conservation Area Forest Central (North and South) – Analysis of consultation responses and copies of correspondence

County and District Councillors and Parish Councils representing the areas concerned were consulted together with the New Forest Consultative Panel, local landowners and representatives from other organisations including Ninth Centenary Trust, New Forest District Council (officers) and English Heritage.

Open afternoons and evenings were held on 4 and 5 December 2007 at Bramshaw and Emery Down village halls respectively, with an exhibition, information about the proposals and officers available to answer questions. Similar information was made available on the National Park Authority's web site.

A questionnaire was prepared to seek individuals' views.

Questionnaire Respondents - 17 respondents completed questionnaires

Other respondents – 9 responses were received by the National Park Authority about the proposal

Questionnaire analysis

Question1:

What do you feel are the most important characteristics of the proposed conservation area?

Please tick all those that you feel are important.

Number of respondents selecting characteristic	Characteristic
14 (82%)	The history of the area
16 (94%)	Traditions of the area (e.g. grazing of animals on the forest)
9 (53%)	The location of settlements on the edge of the forest
10 (59%)	Traditional small cottages
14 (82%)	Quiet narrow country lanes
14 (82%)	Trees and hedgerows
10 (59%)	The views out of the area
12 (71%)	Views within the area
9 (53%)	Attractive buildings

NFNPA Comments

It is the traditions of this area, through their complexities and peculiarities, that have led to its character and the importance of these traditions is clearly recognised by respondents; then the more specific characteristics. This is important as it is the quality and interest of the area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in designating a conservation area.

Question 2:

Do you consider that there are other important characteristics of the proposed conservation area not mentioned in question 1? If so, please list below:

Number of respondents	Characteristic suggested	NFNPA Comments
1	Clear views upwards.	This is not a matter which conservation area designation can address.
1	No unnecessary pavements and street lighting; no traffic calming measures which urbanise.	Agree; ensuring only appropriate changes take place could be managed through a conservation area management plan.
1	Diversity of landscapes	Agree.
1	Important to keep open forest open and important to retain existing small dwellings or allow new small dwellings to be built to serve local needs.	The scale, form and design of any new development can be influenced by conservation area designation.
1	In some parts of the Forest one can experience absolute silence; freedom to walk anywhere.	Noted but not matters which conservation area designation can address.
1	Local people	Noted.
1	Landscape and tranquillity of some of the areas. Quality of design and materials of some of the buildings.	Agree; landscape is critical to character of the areas, as is the character of the buildings.
1	Small open fields bordering woodland.	Agree; important part of landscape character.
1	Conserving the social fabric and social	Defining and protecting what exists such as buildings their

Number of respondents	Characteristic suggested	NFNPA Comments
	well being.	layout can help sustain other aspects of the area.
1	Peace and tranquillity; absence of commercial/retail activity; people of the area who have shaped what it is.	Defining and protecting what exists such as buildings their layout can help sustain other aspects of the area.
1	Size of fields and farm buildings. Character of larger residences and pubs.	Agree character and appearance of buildings important and should be respected in future changes.

NFNPA Comments

Many of the respondents made general comments about the area which do not relate to matters which conservation area designation can address directly, but they do show that the respondents recognise the distinctiveness of the area. Distinctiveness derives from more than just the appearance of the area, but also from elements of character that can be identified but not directly protected or controlled. Defining and protecting what exists such as buildings their layout can help sustain the other aspects which contribute to the special character. Other comments relate to the quality of new buildings and landscape features which conservation area designation seeks to address.

Question 3:

Do you agree with the proposed boundary of the Conservation Area?

Please circle either YES or NO:

Agree with the proposed boundary	
Yes – Number of respondents	No – Number of respondents

10 1 (who also suggested changes)	2 (Not in favour of conservation area generally) 4 (suggested changes)

59% of respondents agreed with the proposed boundary.
 29% of respondents queried the boundary (see below).
 12% of respondents thought there should not be a conservation area.

If NO, what changes would you like to see?

Number of respondents	Changes suggested	NFNPA Comments
1	None – do not see why the area is any more or less important than other parts of the Forest.	Agree that there are other parts of the Forest which it is considered will also meet the same criteria and where designation may be proposed,
1	Is change necessary? Too many outside suggesting what should go on in area.	Designation of a conservation area is not proposing change but rather a mechanism to ensure that change is managed so that it is positive and maintains the character of the area.
1	Please add Half Moon Common; does the boundary include the Rufus Stone Road?	These are areas of open forest which have not generally been included within the proposed boundary.

Number of respondents	Changes suggested	NFNPA Comments
1	Motorway in National Park – remove Southampton Road	The historic landscape has been severed by the motorway but remains linked by the underpass. The conservation area boundary has been drawn along the line of the embankment and excludes the motorway. Southampton Road forms the boundary to the conservation area but has itself been excluded.
1	Stagbury Hill and Cadnam Common should be included. Straighter lines would be helpful.	These are areas of open forest which have not generally been included within the proposed boundary.
1	Exclusion of Newbridge, many buildings are of no merit.	There are a number of Edwardian houses which are in their original condition and are considered to contribute positively to the area. These and the historic landscape warrant inclusion.
1	Include the areas to the north and east of Minstead; and the pub in the south.	Areas to the north and east of Minstead are open forest which have not generally been included within the proposed boundary; the pub to the south is included.

Question 4:

Do you feel that the character of the proposed conservation area could be enhanced?

Please circle either YES or NO.

Character of the proposed conservation area could be enhanced	
Yes – Number of respondents	No – Number of respondents
8	5
4 respondents did not answer yes or no.	

47% of respondents thought that the area could be enhanced.
29% of respondents thought that the area could not be enhanced.

Question 5:

What features do you feel detract from the character of the proposed conservation area?

Please tick all those that you feel detract.

Number of respondents selecting feature	Feature
7 (41%)	Loss of original details from buildings
14 (82%)	Appearance of some properties

Number of respondents selecting feature	Feature
10 (59%)	Inappropriate modern development
4 (24%)	Street furniture (e.g. bins, bus shelters, seats)
6 (35%)	Road signs
7 (41%)	Traffic management
6 (35%)	Parking
10 (59%)	Overhead lines
14 (82%)	Other

If you ticked 'Other', please explain below:

Number of respondents	Explanation
2	New air flight path over the proposed conservation area
1	No camping and caravan sites in the proposed conservation area
2	Volume and speed of traffic, south area.
1	Area J North (Cadnam) - sign for second hand car sales out of character; disused shopfront, poorly maintained frontage

Number of respondents	Explanation
1	Small cottages or houses extended into huge properties.
2	Fields have been subdivided into tiny horse paddocks and associated paraphernalia affecting the appearance of the area.
1	Cars; horses, logging operations, and trial bikes and 4 by 4s cause damage; aircraft noise should be controlled.
1	Litter, antisocial behaviour, visitors, over the top planning rules, not listening to Parish Council views.
1	Variability of planning decisions; poor upkeep of highways.
1	Gradual division of open farmland and grazing land into small parcels; then used for stables, sheds, parking, storage (boats, diggers etc). Key issue in this area.
1	Traditionally most of these areas are 'working areas – mall holdings and workers cottages. Have become, are becoming areas for the exclusive use of the wealthy.
1	Profusion of field shelters, caravans and vehicles; hardstandings. Speed limit on some narrow lanes inappropriate, unsafe.

NFNPA Comments

The local authority is required to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts and not only those which relate directly to historic buildings (such as demolition). It also extends to developments which affect the setting of the conservation area and views in or out of it. New development should aspire to a quality of design and execution related to its context. The appearance of properties was the most noted feature to detract from the character of the area. Conservation area designation, where there are proposals for change, provides the opportunity to influence this in relation specifically to the special character of the area.

A local authority's reasoning for designating a conservation area, as set out in the formal character appraisal, is taken account in the determination of planning appeals.

Following designation, local planning authorities have a duty, from time to time, to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their area and to consult the local community about these proposals. It is considered good practice for local authorities to draw up a management strategy for their conservation areas and therefore helpful to understand at this stage, should the conservation area be designated, the sort of issues that are arising in the area. A management strategy may consider the introduction of further planning controls, for example to prevent the loss of original details from buildings (through the use of Article 4 (2) see Annex 5), and issues such as traffic management, signage, matters related to statutory undertakers, Hampshire County Council. etc.

Question 6:

Do you have any comments about the proposed conservation area? If yes, please outline below:

Comments	NFPA Comments
To be a credible conservation area sky needs to be protected so it doesn't detract from what is trying to be achieved on the ground.	This is not a matter which conservation area designation can address.
"Rat-running" traffic should not be allowed to use conservation area as a short cut. Road signs useless. Close all turnings from Minstead and Emery Down to A31.	Traffic management measures have been taken by the Highways Authority to try to manage through traffic. The design of any further measures could be considered as part of a conservation area management strategy.
First time have read about the settlement of the area – found it interesting and feel even more strongly that the character of the area should be preserved.	By establishing what makes a conservation area special, the reasons for designation should be become clearer to those who live, work or propose to carry out development within them.

Comments	NFNP Comments
Conservation areas are not really needed if planners and councillors do their job properly.	A conservation area is a special designation recognising an area of special historic or architectural interest. Local planning authorities have a duty to review their areas and consider designation of conservation areas.
Always considered National Park status unnecessary. Own protection in place through verderers	Noted.
This initiative has come 25 years too late for this area – area ruined by the proliferation of leisure horse keeping.	It is considered that the area is of special historic and architectural interest.
Think it is important that the character remains as it is.	Designation of a conservation area is not intended to prevent change but rather to ensure that change is managed so that the character of the area is retained.
Hope that conservation area means that proposed development will be examined even more rigorously and will be required to meet even higher standards.	The importance of retaining the special character of the area will be fundamental in the consideration development proposals.
National Park seems to go ahead with rules about planning rather than address other aspects of residents' lives (and not give response outside our responsibility). NPA should not press people to sort the area out.	Local planning authorities have a duty to review their areas and consider designation of conservation areas, whether or not a National Park.
A shame not extended to the Salisbury District area in the Park.	The area to the north of the proposed conservation area boundary was carefully considered for inclusion. It was concluded however that the extent of modern development was such that its inclusion could not be justified.
Fear these areas will become preservation areas, exclusive areas for the wealthy. Planning policies have prevented villages providing homes for their children to detriment of broad social well being.	Defining and protecting what exists such as buildings their layout can help sustain other aspects of the area.

Comments	NFNPA Comments
Generally the proposal is welcome. Living working area which must move with the times, but respect history and beauty of vicinity.	Noted and agree.
Thought that all the Park would be a conservation area. Are we to expect modern mansions, campsites outside special areas? Have boundaries been influenced by planning applications?	A conservation area is a special designation recognising an area of special historic or architectural interest. Local planning authorities have a duty to review their areas and consider designation of conservation areas.

Other respondents - letters/e-mail/ telephone

From	Summary of view	NFNPA comments
Minstead Parish Council	Anything that supports the conservation of the environment and prevents inappropriate development is very welcome. Wholeheartedly supports the proposal.	Welcome support of Minstead Parish Council.
New Forest Association	Supports proposal. Recognises evidence of historic settlement pattern in areas and importance of this in making the New Forest what it is.	Welcome support of NFA.
Richard Reeves, Librarian, New Forest Museum	Annotated suggestions provided throughout the appraisal document.	Noted, with thanks – amendments have been made to the Character Appraisal.
Councillor H F Forse	Raises issues about vehicle speed and traffic calming, asking if there is any possibility of the NPA assisting in the funding of pinch points and suggesting that all roads in the National Park should have a speed limit of 50mph.	Any proposals for traffic calming could be managed through a conservation area management plan. At present there are no funds available for works in conservation areas specifically. (Letter passed to Chris Gregory, Tourism and Transport Officer, in respect of other opportunities for funding and issues raised).
Lyndhurst Parish Council	The Clerk to Lyndhurst Parish Council confirmed that there was no concern about the proposals (telephone conversation).	Noted.
Verderers of the New Forest	Accept that in principle conservation areas should be made. Concerned that efficient management of commoners holdings should not	Welcome support. Designation of a conservation area should not prevent efficient management of commoners small holdings.

	<p>be stifled by new controls and raise points in relation to restrictions related to trees.</p>	<p>Essentially the same planning powers will apply as now but it will be important to ensure that change is managed so that it is positive and is of a quality and design related to its context. Work to hedgerows is subject to Hedgerow regulations and is not changed by designation of a conservation area. Tree works required for safety and nuisance are exempt from the normal requirements of giving notice. Normal pruning work will require notification, there is no charge and it can relate to work for a two year period.</p>
<p>Bramshaw Parish Council</p>	<p>Very much in favour of the proposals, feel will help the policy of retaining the quality and interest of the area and, if the implications of being a conservation area mean tighter controls on the demolition and alteration of buildings or the cutting of trees, then this is to be very much welcomed.</p> <p>Note Bramble Hill and Roundhills are not included. We would ask you to reconsider these two areas, which have a number of striking buildings as well as some fine landscape. We hope you will be able to see your way to including these two areas within the conservation area.</p>	<p>Welcome support.</p> <p>The value of the two areas suggested for extension is acknowledged, however they are separated from the proposed conservation area by areas of open forest which have not generally been included within the proposed boundary. They are separate buildings in their own right rather than being part of the historic settlement pattern on which the conservation area is based.</p>
<p>English Heritage</p>	<p>English Heritage are supportive of Conservation</p>	<p>Support welcomed.</p>

	<p>Area designation and note that 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. It is also suggested that the bullet points set out as <i>key characteristics</i> at the end of each area could be usefully summarise the historic values and significances to be attributed to each area.</p>	<p>Amendments will be made to Character Appraisals as suggested.</p>
<p>Mr W and Mrs M Dibben (supported by Mr and Mrs B Cooper)</p>	<p>No case for including such large areas of open undeveloped land. Proposals excessive, unwarranted and unsupported.</p> <p>Boundaries unclear.</p> <p>Time would be better spent finding a solution to the traffic problem around Lyndhurst.</p>	<p>The proposed area shows a special relationship between buildings and the landscape as a result of the way in which the land has evolved and been managed. This includes settlements around the edges of unenclosed Forest, and areas of larger privately owned estates beyond.</p> <p>Small scale plans only were available at the exhibition to take away. More detailed boundary information was made available on the website. Boundaries of the area to be designated have been drawn at a detailed level to avoid any confusion.</p>