

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CONSERVATION AREAS FOREST CENTRAL – NORTH AND SOUTH

BY FAX AND BY POST

1 General

- 1.1 The areas proposed are substantially of undeveloped open countryside with pockets of developed villages, the major parts of which are already 'protected' by Conservation Area status, for example at Minstead and Emery Down. All of the areas are within the National Park and significant parts are within areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and/or Ramsar Sites. There are already policies in the Adopted Local Plan to protect these areas from unsuitable development. No doubt the National Park Authority is putting its mind to the updating of these policies in due course. This is one of the Authority's proper functions.
- 1.2 All of these areas have survived in their present attractive form partly due to the estate ownership arrangements – barely mentioned in your Appraisal – and partly as a result of planning control under the Planning Acts since 1948.
- 1.3 The purpose of Conservation Areas is succinctly described (by the highly regarded Professor Malcolm Grant) in the Encyclopaedia of Planning as "to secure protection for groupings of buildings" and "to look beyond listing of individual buildings". In Section 2 of your paper, you properly expand upon the definition of such areas and you outline, in the first sentence of paragraph 4, the effect of designation. You omit specific reference to control over trees. In paragraph 5 you summarise the Authority's duty resulting from designation.
- 1.4 In the second sentence of paragraph 4 you refer rightly to the quality and interest of areas rather than that of individual buildings which should be the prime consideration. Throughout the remainder of the paper you highlight buildings, many of which are listed or protected by Ancient Monuments legislation, or are already in the existing Conservation Areas.

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2 Comments upon the proposals in general

2.1 You make no case for including such large areas of open undeveloped land in the proposed Conservation Areas.

2.2 It is undoubtedly the Authority's duty under the Acts to review existing designations from time to time. It may be that a review would result in proposals to enlarge the existing designations in accordance with the principal purpose laid down in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Your proposals for Forest Central North and South are excessive, unwarranted and unsupported by your paper.

3 Some detailed comments

3.1 The proposed boundaries are unclear. The scale of the plans is too small and the thickness of the boundary lines too great to identify precisely what land and buildings is proposed to be included and which is not. This can be very important for planning and development control purposes.

3.2 In the south-east of the South area the proposed boundary appears to divide a paddock and a private garden obliterating Little Picket farmhouse before running along Mill Lane (U139) to reach A337 at Furzey Lawn. Which side of the U139 is the line supposed to be? Does it include the property at Furzey Lawn?

3.3 West of Areas C and E of the South Area there is a mauve line on the plan. What is this supposed to represent?

3.4 There is similar apparent lack of clarity to the North Area where some proposed boundary lines do not appear to relate to any feature on the ground.

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4 Conclusion

- 4.1 There is no justification for adding yet a further degree of control over such large areas of open and undeveloped land to those already imposed and you have provided no evidence that without this additional control the areas are at risk of spoilation by inappropriate development.
- 4.2 Those of us who have generations of connection with the New Forest – and I draw attention to Dibden Purlieu settled by our Huguenot ancestors who fled persecution centuries ago – have preserved and I hope enhanced it. Your time would be better spent finding a solution to the traffic problems in and around Lyndhurst, in particular by promoting a proper bypass so that the U139, the C17 and other Minstead lanes do not have to put up with the volumes of unsuitable through traffic, bypassing Lyndhurst. Then we could perhaps remove the ugly “dragons teeth” along this lane and indeed enhance and protect the environment here.

William and Mary Dibben
Stable End
Emery Down
Lyndhurst
Hampshire
SO43 7FJ

We have spoken to Mr and Mrs B Cooper of Acres Down Farm. They have been extremely busy recently and have had no time to write separately but they wish to subscribe to these comments.