

New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016 – 2036

Statement of Common Ground between the New Forest National Park Authority and Hampshire County Council May 2018

1. Introduction

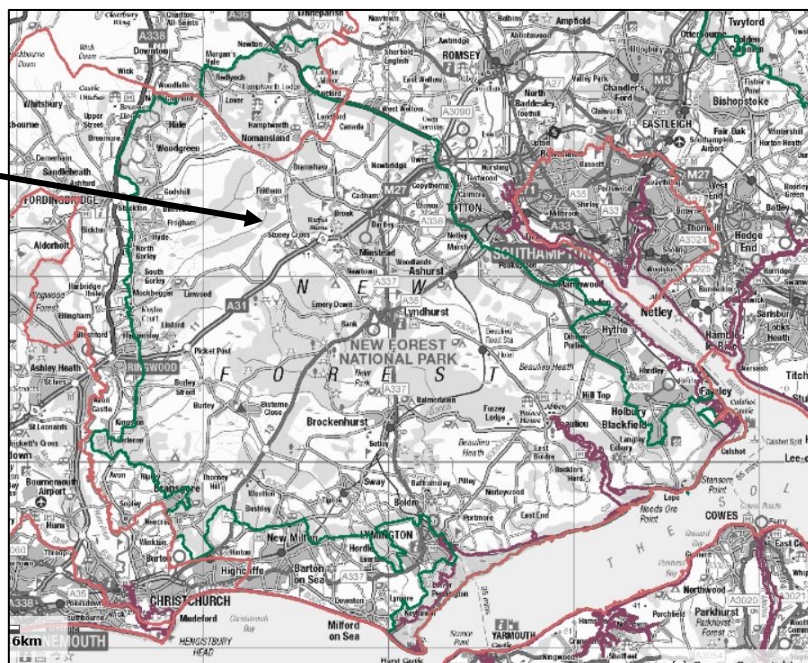
- 1.1 The *Localism Act 2011* places a legal duty on planning authorities and other prescribed bodies to cooperate with each other on strategic planning matters throughout the preparation of their development plan documents. It is expected that engagement and cooperation will be constructive, active and ongoing.
- 1.2 Both the National Park Authority and Wiltshire Council are required to publish ‘Duty to Cooperate Statements’ setting out how this legal duty has been fulfilled in the preparation of their respective Local Plans. This separate ‘Statement of Common Ground’ focuses on the main areas of agreement and has been prepared following the publication of the amendments to national planning practice guidance in March 2018, which include the requirement for Statements of Common Ground. It has been jointly agreed by the National Park Authority and Wiltshire Council and should be read in conjunction with the Duty to Cooperate Statement that accompanies the National Park Authority’s Submission draft Local Plan.

2. The administrative areas covered by the Statement of Common Ground

- 2.1 Approximately 95% of the New Forest National Park lies within the county of Hampshire, as illustrated below.

Area of the New Forest National Park within the county of Hampshire

(County and unitary boundaries shown in red)



2.2 Since 2006 the National Park Authority has been the sole planning authority for the whole of the New Forest National Park. The Authority's planning responsibilities include the minerals and waste planning function, where the National Park Authority works in partnership with Hampshire County Council and the other minerals and waste planning authorities in the county to deliver a consistent planning policy framework. Hampshire County Council is the statutory education and highways authority for the whole the County (outside the two unitary authorities of Portsmouth and Southampton), including the area within the National Park.

3. The key strategic matters being addressed by the Statement

3.1 The NPPF (2012) states that the Government expects joint working on areas of common interest and paragraph 156 of the Framework sets out a number of strategic priorities. Of particular relevance to the New Forest, these priorities include the homes and jobs needed in an area; the provision of infrastructure for transport; and the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape.

3.2 The National Park Authority and Hampshire County Council agree that the main strategic matter for the two planning authorities relates to highways and transport. Hampshire County Council has made representations on other detailed aspects of the National Park Authority's Submission draft Local Plan (January 2018), but these are generally more local in nature (e.g. local community facilities), rather than strategic cross boundary matters.

Transport & Highway Matters

3.3 Hampshire County Council is the statutory highway authority for the 95% of the New Forest National Park that lies within the county of Hampshire. The County Council is a statutory consultee on the National Park Authority's draft Local Plan and has been directly notified of each of the consultation stages undertaken by the National Park Authority dating back to Summer 2015.

3.4 Hampshire County Council has confirmed that the proposed Local Plan housing allocations within the National Park are strategically placed within the main settlements of Lyndhurst, Ashurst, Sway and the village of Calshot. Set out below are the areas of common ground between the National Park Authority and Hampshire County Council relating to the proposed site allocations.

(i) Land at Whartons Lane, Ashurst (draft Policy SP22)

3.5 The Transport Assessment carried out for the site demonstrates that the main junction access (Whartons Lane / A35) would work well within capacity based on the trip generations generated from the proposed development. Hampshire County Council will assess impacts on the junction as part of a future application and junction improvements may be required if additional traffic loading is considered problematic.

(ii) *Land at the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel (draft Policy SP23)*

- 3.6 Given that access to the site would be via the A35 and its proximity to the Lyndhurst Air Quality Management Area, Hampshire County Council have asked for a Transport Assessment to assess the impacts of development traffic on the area and the heavily constrained one way system. The National Park Authority agrees with this representation and has proposed a minor modification to the wording of draft Policy SP23 to reflect the views of Hampshire County Council.

(iii) *Land to the south of Church Lane, Sway (draft Policy SP24)*

- 3.7 Hampshire County Council has confirmed that there are no strategic transport implications arising from the proposed allocation of the site for housing and public open space. The National Park Authority concurs with the County Council's view that given the proximity of the site to the local school, reference should be made within draft Policy SP24 and its supporting text to encouraging local walking trips between the site and the school to reduce linked car trips from the development site to the school and onwards. This is reflected in a proposed minor modification to the wording of draft Policy SP24.

(iv) *Land adjacent to the former Fawley Power Station site (draft Policy SP25)*

- 3.8 Hampshire County Council requested additional wording be added to criteria (c) of draft Policy SP25 to include reference to an 'integrated transport strategy' for the entire Fawley Power Station site. The National Park Authority concurs with this representation and it is reflected in a proposed minor modification to the wording of policy SP25.

4. Governance arrangements for the cooperation process

- 4.1 Hampshire County Council directly appoints five of the National Park Authority's 22 members and the County Council delivers a range of statutory functions for the area of the National Park that lies within Hampshire, including highways, education and public health. Hampshire County Council is also represented on the National Park Partnership Plan Leadership Group and as a result there are existing channels at both officer and member/councillor level for cooperation between the two authorities.
- 4.2 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed at officer level between the two authorities.

5. Distribution of housing need in the area as agreed through the plan-making process

- 5.1 Hampshire County Council's planning responsibilities do not include Local Plan preparation and the allocation of proposed housing sites. Consequently, the distribution of housing need is a strategic matter that the National Park Authority is discussing with neighbouring planning authorities within the same Housing Market Areas, but not with Hampshire County Council.

6. A record of where agreements have (or have not) been reached on key strategic matters

- Hampshire County Council has submitted representations on a range of matters in the Authority’s draft Local Plan. The majority of these are more local in nature (e.g. local policies on the protection of open space, local community facilities and the historic environment). The main strategic matter relates to transport and highways.
- It is common ground between the National Park Authority and Hampshire County Council that the development sites proposed in the Authority’s proposed Submission draft Local Plan are strategically placed in relation to the main settlements of the National Park, where residents would have access to a wider range of services and transport links.
- Hampshire County Council has made representations on the detailed wording of the draft policy wording relating to the proposed housing site allocations. The National Park Authority agrees with a number of these and has proposed a series of minor modifications to the relevant policy wording to reflect the views of the County Council in their capacity as the statutory highway authority for the majority of the National Park.

7. Signatories

Signed on behalf of the New Forest National Park Authority		
Name and position	Signature	Date
David Illsley Policy Manager		09/05/2018

Signed on behalf of Hampshire County Council		
Name and position	Signature	Date
Chris Murray Head of Strategic Planning		09/05/2018