

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

REPORT TO DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND CHAIR OF PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE (PDCC)

DESIGNATING THE MILFORD-ON-SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AS IT RELATES TO THE AREA WITHIN THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK

Report by: David Illsley, Policy Manager

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is new type of plan introduced by the Localism Act 2011 to allow local communities to prepare a plan for development and land use in their area. Neighbourhood Plans are statutory documents that, once adopted, form part of the 'development plan' for the area. As the New Forest is a parished area, neighbourhood plans can be undertaken by parish or town councils if they chose to prepare one. The National Park Authority has a role in supporting communities in preparing a neighbourhood plan by giving advice and assistance to the town/parish council.
- 1.2 Under the relevant Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012), in order to start the formal process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan a town/parish council first makes an application to the local planning authority for the designation of the area that their Neighbourhood Plan will cover (Regulation 6).

2. APPLICATION BY MILFORD-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

- 2.1 In a letter, dated 2 November 2012, Milford-on-Sea Parish Council applied to New Forest District Council and the National Park Authority (as the Parish includes land within both the boundary of the District and the National Park) for the Area of their proposed Neighbourhood Plan to cover the whole of the parish area. In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 the letter was accompanied by a plan showing the area to be designated and included a statement explaining (i) why the area is considered to be appropriate; and (ii) confirming that the Parish Council were the relevant body to make such a request.
- 2.2 The Parish Council justified the proposed inclusion of the whole of their Parish by explaining;

The parish boundary of Milford-on-Sea was established under the changes made in the Local Government Act alterations in the 1970s and therefore has a clearly defined and recognised boundary. We are a medium sized village community comprising 4,700 residents spread between the main settlement area of Milford-on-Sea village and the smaller hamlets of Keyhaven, Lymore and Downton. Keyhaven falls entirely in the New Forest National Park, while the village and other hamlets area within the New Forest District Council area.

The village and hamlets retain their individuality and the community as a whole share the same aspirations. We therefore feel it appropriate that the whole of the parish boundary be defined as the Neighbourhood Plan Area [my emphasis].

- 2.3 The National Park Authority and New Forest District Council ran a concurrent statutory consultation on the designation of the Neighbourhood Plan Area for a period of six

weeks, ending on 31 December 2012. In accordance with Regulation 6, the National Park Authority and New Forest District Council publicised the request to designate the Neighbourhood Plan area on their respective web pages and the Authority also publicised the consultation via Twitter. In addition a joint press release was issued by both the National Park Authority and the District Council at the start of the six-week consultation. In summary, the Authority fulfilled the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Government's Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 in publicising the application to designate the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

- 2.4 During this 6-week consultation, no representations were received by either the National Park Authority or the District Council in relation to the proposal to designate the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The experience of other areas (for example proposals to designate a number of neighbourhood Areas within the South Downs National Park) would suggest this level of response is not unusual.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 As the local planning authority, the Authority is required to formally designate the Neighbourhood Plan Area. It is considered that for the reasons the Parish Council have set out, allied to the lack of public and consultee opposition, the most appropriate area for the Neighbourhood Plan is that which coincides with the boundary of the Parish Council. There is logic and consistency in the Neighbourhood Plan covering the same geographic area as the Parish Council. It should be noted that the Authority's decision only relates to the part of the Parish within the New Forest National Park. The rest of the Parish lies outside the Authority's planning remit and therefore it is for New Forest District Council to formally designate the Neighbourhood Area here.
- 3.2 In accordance with the Authority's Scheme of Delegation (as extended at the meeting of the Authority held on 28 March 2013, NFNPA 428/13 para 3.1.2.2), it is recommended that the Director Park Services and the Chair of the Authority's Planning Development Control Committee accept the case made by the Parish Council and to formally designate the boundary of the Milford-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan Area as it relates to the area of the Parish within the New Forest National Park. Once the Neighbourhood Plan area has been formally designated, the Parish Council will continue work on developing the draft Plan which will be subject to public consultation later this year.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Director of Park Services and the Chair of the Authority's Planning Development Control Committee formally designated the Milford-on-Sea Neighbourhood Area as it relates to the area of the Parish within the New Forest National Park (illustrated in Annex 1).

Signature: Steve Avery

Steve Avery, Director of Park Services

Signature: Pat Wyeth

Pat Wyeth, Chair of PDCC

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Annex 1 – Area of the Milford-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan Area formally designated within the New Forest National Park (10 April 2013)



KEY: Parish Boundary:  New Forest National Park Boundary:  Milford-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan Area designation: 