

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STRATEGY & PLANNING AND CHAIR OF PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE (PDCC)

DESIGNATING THE NEW MILTON NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AS IT RELATES TO THE AREA WITHIN THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK

Report by: David Illsley, Policy Manager

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Plans were 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 choose 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 NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

- 2.1 In a letter dated 1 December 2014, New Milton Town 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 New Milton Town Council were the relevant body to make such a request.
- 2.2 New Milton Town Council justified the proposed inclusion of the whole of their Parish by explaining;

The parish of New Milton represents the full extent of the New Milton Town Council's administrative area of responsibility to provide services. The parish supports 24,500 residents and the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan will give the local community the opportunity to engage in locally-based land-use decision making.

- 2.3 The National Park Authority and New Forest District Council ran a concurrent statutory consultation on the designation of the Neighbourhood Area for a period of six weeks, ending on Friday 23 January 2015. In accordance with Regulation 6, the National Park Authority and New Forest District Council publicised the request to designate the Neighbourhood Area on their respective web pages. In addition a joint press release was issued by 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 Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 in publicising the application to designate the Neighbourhood Area.

- 2.4 During this 6-week consultation, a total of two representations were received by the National Park Authority and the District Council in relation to the proposal to designate the Neighbourhood Area. The Marine Management Organisation confirmed that they had no detailed comments to submit. English Heritage confirmed they had no objection to the proposed Neighbourhood Area and also helpfully outlined the support they can offer in relation to Neighbourhood Plans

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 As the local planning authority, the Authority is required to formally designate the Neighbourhood Area. It is considered that for the reasons the Town 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 Town Council. There is logic and consistency in the Neighbourhood Plan covering the same geographic area as the Town Council. It should be noted that the Authority's decision only relates to the part of the Parish within the New Forest National Park (approximately 6 square kilometres, as illustrated in Annex 1). 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, it is recommended that the Executive Director (Strategy & Planning) and the Chair of the Authority's Planning Development Control Committee accept the case made by New Milton Town Council and formally designate the boundary of the New Milton Neighbourhood Area as it relates to the area of the Parish within the New Forest National Park. Once the Neighbourhood Area has been formally designated, the Town Council will continue work on developing the draft Plan which will be the subject of future public consultation.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Director (Strategy & Planning) and the Chair of the Authority's Planning Development Control Committee formally designate the New Milton 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, Executive Director (Strategy & Planning)**

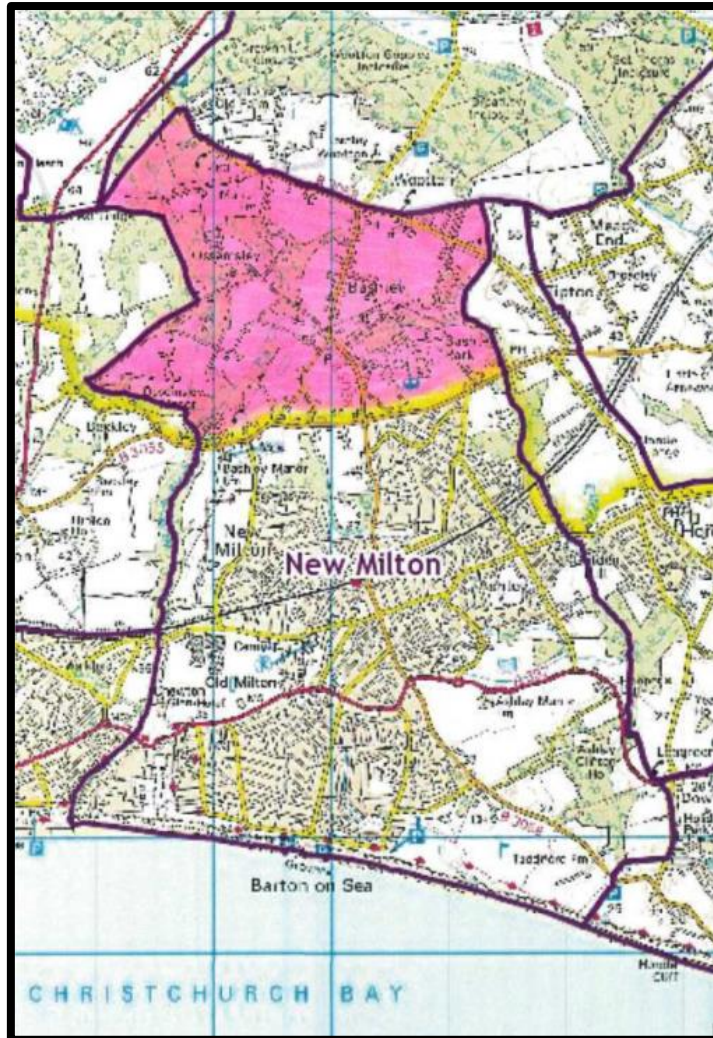
Signature: Pat Wyeth **Pat Wyeth, Chair of PDCC**

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Annex 1 – Area of the New Milton Neighbourhood Area formally designated within the New Forest National Park (16 February 2015)



KEY:

Parish Boundary: 

New Forest National Park Boundary: 

New Milton Neighbourhood Area designation within the National Park: 