

New Forest National Park Local Plan

Consultation Draft

September 2016

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New Forest National Park Local Plan – Consultation Draft

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Executive Summary

The current set of local planning policies for the New Forest National Park were adopted in 2010. They represent the first set of consistent Park-wide local planning policies and have performed well over the last five years.

In recent years there have been significant changes in national planning policy and the National Park Authority must ensure it continues to have an up-to-date planning policy framework in place to guide planning decisions within the New Forest. The planning system plays an important role in the delivery of the two statutory National Park purposes and fostering the well-being of the 35,000 people who live within the New Forest National Park. The Local Plan sits at the core of the planning system.

Work on the review started in Autumn 2015 with an initial public consultation on the scope of the Local Plan review and the main planning issues to be addressed in it. Consultation responses were received from local parish councils, residents, Estates, business groups and local residents. This initial consultation highlighted views regarding the protection of important habitats within the National Park; the conservation of the Forest's rich and varied built heritage; the need to provide appropriate housing to meet local needs; and the need to support the local economy to ensure the area remains a living, working Forest.

Following this initial public consultation and follow up meetings with a wide range of groups in early 2016, the Authority has prepared a draft Local Plan for people to comment on. This is a working draft and asks for people's views on the proposed approach and reasonable alternatives. The draft Plan will be updated following consideration of all of the responses received during this public consultation. We are looking to publish a final draft Local Plan in 2017 which will then be submitted to the Government for independent examination.

This draft Local Plan document seeks to respond to the views raised in the earlier consultation and the requirements of national planning policy. All of this is undertaken within the clear framework that exists to protect the New Forest National Parks as one of the country's finest landscapes. The draft Local Plan sets out a range of draft policies that seek to protect the Forest's natural environment; conserve the built and historic heritage of the area; meet local needs for housing where possible; and ensure the local economy remains strong.

Your comments and views on the draft Local Plan are invited by 28 November 2016 and they will all be considered as we work up a final draft Plan next year, following which there will be one further round of consultation before the Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for approval and subsequent adoption by the Authority.

1. Introduction

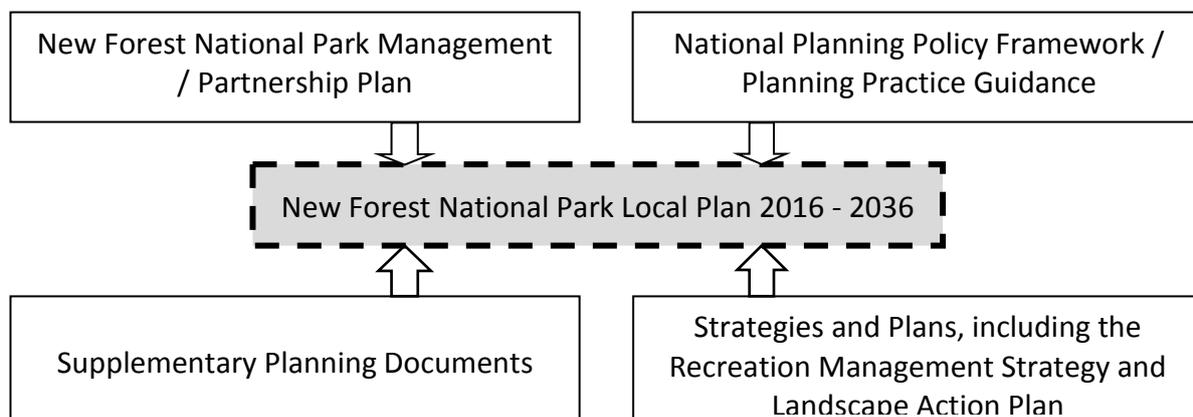
1.1 The planning system plays a key role in keeping our National Parks special and ensuring they remain living, working landscapes. It is for this reason that the Government has made national park authorities the sole planning authorities for their respective areas. As part of its statutory planning role, the New Forest National Park Authority is required to prepare, monitor and review a Local Plan for the National Park. Once adopted, the Local Plan will form part of the statutory ‘development plan’ (alongside any Neighbourhood Plans and the separate Minerals and Waste Local Plan) for the New Forest and will be the principle guide for planning decisions within the National Park. The Local Plan focuses on the area within the National Park boundary, and it is the responsibilities of New Forest District Council, Wiltshire Council and Test Valley Borough Council to prepare the development plan for their respective planning areas outside the National Park.

Links to other plans and strategies

1.2 The Local Plan aims to deliver the long term planning vision for the New Forest National Park and forms a key part of the statutory ‘development plan’ for the area. National policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) also form material considerations when preparing the Local Plan.

1.3 The Environment Act 1995 requires each National Park Authority to prepare a National Park Management Plan. The Management Plan (also referred to as a Partnership Plan) is the overarching strategic document for the National Park and is intended to guide the work of all organisations within the Park (not just the Authority). Management Plans do not form part of the statutory development plan, but should be taken into account in preparing Local Plans and may also be material considerations in assessing planning applications.

1.4 In addition to these statutory documents, the Authority has prepared a series of more detailed Supplementary Planning Documents which provide more detail on planning policies, as well as a number of specific strategies to guide the delivery of the two Park purposes, including the Recreation Management Strategy and Landscape Action Plan. These latter documents are not formal planning policy documents but provide detailed strategies and guidance on important issues within the New Forest National Park.



- 1.5 The first set of consistent, National Park-wide planning policies were adopted through the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD in December 2010. The Core Strategy will continue to form a key part of the statutory ‘development plan’ for the National Park until it is formally replaced by this revised Local Plan in 2018. Since the adoption of the Core Strategy in late 2010 there have been significant changes in national planning policy – most notably the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. Although the vast majority of the policies within the adopted Core Strategy are in general conformity with the NPPF, there is a need to ensure the New Forest National Park continues to be covered by an up-to-date planning framework that accords with relevant national planning policies.
- 1.6 This draft Local Plan has been prepared following the initial consultation with relevant bodies and evidence gathering for the Local Plan in 2015/16. The policies set out in this draft Local Plan have been tested against a number of environmental, economic and social indicators within a Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Recommended changes from the SA/SEA have been incorporated in the draft Plan. A Habitats Regulations Assessment of the potential impacts of the Plan on internationally important wildlife sites will be carried out to inform the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017. The Authority will use the consultation on this draft Plan in late 2016 to inform this Assessment.

Stage in the Process



- 1.7 The initial public consultation on the scope of the Local Plan Review and the main planning issues to be addressed commenced in summer 2015, with information on the review being presented at the New Forest Show. A more formal six week Regulation 18 public consultation on the review of the Local Plan – and the related ‘Call for Sites’ exercise - was held between September and October 2015. This initial consultation included liaison with a wide range of interested groups including local parish councils, neighbouring planning authorities and business groups. This consultation draft Local Plan has been prepared following consideration of all the responses received during the initial Regulation 18 consultation.
- 1.8 This draft Plan has also been informed by a series of topic-based workshops the Authority held in Spring 2016 with a range of organisations and bodies, including socio-economic groups, representatives of the main estates in the New Forest, local parish councils and surrounding local authorities.

- 1.9 Following public consultation on this draft Plan between October and November 2016, further revisions will be made to the document before the publication of the Submission draft Local Plan in summer 2017. This document will ultimately be submitted to the Government for independent Examination in late 2017. If found sound at Examination, the revised Local Plan 2016 – 2036 will replace the existing New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD, (adopted in December 2010) as part of the statutory development plan for the National Park.

The New Forest National Park

- 1.10 The New Forest National Park was designated in 2005 and covers an area of 220 square miles within the counties of Hampshire and Wiltshire. The National Park has two statutory purposes:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the New Forest; and
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the New Forest by the public.

- 1.11 The National Park Authority also has a duty under Section 62(1) of the Environment Act 1995 in taking forward the two Park purposes to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park. This duty reflects the fact that the New Forest is a living, working area, home to 2,500 local businesses and 35,000 residents. More detail on the National Park is set out in Chapter 2 – the Spatial Portrait.

- 1.12 These statutory purposes and related duty form the starting point for the draft Local Plan. The proposed vision for the National Park and strategic objectives (Chapter 3) link to these purposes and duty.

Cross Boundary Planning Issues

- 1.13 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a legal requirement for local planning authorities – including national park authorities - to co-operate strategic cross boundary planning matters. The ‘duty to cooperate’ aims to ensure that neighbouring planning authorities continue to engage with each other constructively.

- 1.14 The New Forest National Park Authority is well placed to fulfil its duty-to-cooperate duties due to:

- Its co-ordinating role in the preparation and adoption of the National Park Management Plan. The updated New Forest National Park Management Plan 2015-2020 was overseen by a group of statutory bodies working alongside the National Park Authority and this has helped establish good working links.
- The National Park Authority is the statutory planning authority for the Park, but the constituent authorities have retained their responsibilities for housing, economic development, environmental health, highways and education in the New Forest. The National Park

Authority has therefore always worked closely with its constituent authorities on a wide range of matters.

- The membership of the National Park Authority is drawn from constituent local authorities, and town and parish councils across the National Park, thereby ensuring good links at member/councillor level with other tiers of local Government.

1.15 Following meetings with surrounding local planning authorities in early 2016, it has been agreed that the main areas of strategic cross-boundary planning interest are:

- Habitat protection – over half of the New Forest National Park is designated as being of international importance for nature conservation. Consequently there is a shared need to ensure that the planned level of development within the National Park and surrounding areas does not impact on the integrity of the New Forest's protected habitats.
- Housing provision – there is a significant housing need within the New Forest and surrounding areas. The Government recognises that National Parks are not appropriate locations for major development and unrestricted housing, and is clear that unmet needs should be considered under the 'duty-to-cooperate'.

1.16 The Authority has worked closely with its neighbouring planning authorities during the production of this draft Plan, including on the joint commissioning of evidence base studies. More detail can be found in the accompanying 'Duty to Cooperate Statement'.

National Policy and Guidance

1.17 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, first published 2012) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, first issued in 2014) set out the Government's planning policies, relevant to the work of all planning authorities. They constitute guidance for planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications. The development plan remains the starting point for determining planning applications and planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.18 The NPPF states that Local Plans should set out the strategic priorities for the area (chapter 3). This should include strategic policies to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area and conservation and enhancement of the environment, including landscape.

1.19 The UK Government National Park Vision and Circular (2010) provides policy guidance specifically for the English National Parks and for all those whose decisions or actions that might affect them. The Circular calls for a renewed focus on achieving the two National Park purposes and for the fostering of vibrant, healthy and productive living and working communities.

- 1.20 More recently (March 2016), the Government has published a policy paper '*National Parks: 8-point plan for England (2016 to 2020)*' which sets out how Government intends to protect, promote and enhance the National Parks in England from now until 2020. The paper reaffirms the Government's commitment to the English National Parks, recognising them as "...*national treasures at the heart of our national identity.*"
- 1.21 The NPPF, National Parks Circular, PPG and the 8-point plan have been taken into account in the preparation of this draft Local Plan.

Minerals and Waste Planning Framework

- 1.22 The New Forest National Park Authority is the minerals and waste planning authority for the whole of the National Park. This statutory role includes the preparation and adoption of the planning policy framework for minerals and waste development within the National Park. The Authority works in partnership with the other minerals and waste planning authorities in Hampshire and has adopted the following planning policy documents:
- Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan (adopted 2013) – forms part of the statutory development plan for the National Park;
 - Oil & Gas Development in Hampshire SPD (adopted 2016); and
 - Minerals & Waste Safeguarding in Hampshire (adopted 2016)
- 1.23 With this up to date policy framework in place for minerals and waste development in the National Park, this draft Local Plan does not include any coverage of minerals and waste planning matters.

Planning Enforcement

- 1.24 To support the protection afforded to the New Forest as a nationally designated landscape, the Authority has a dedicated Planning Enforcement Team to ensure unauthorised development is not harmful to the National Park, its recognised interest features and to protect the amenities of residents. In accordance with paragraph 207 of the NPPF the Authority has adopted a Local Enforcement Plan to explain how it will handle breaches of planning control. This adopted document can be viewed via:

http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20041/enforcement/291/local_enforcement_plan

2. Profile of the New Forest National Park



 New Forest National Park boundary

- 2.1 The New Forest is a place of outstanding natural beauty. First created around 1079 as a royal hunting Forest, it has survived for over 900 years to become a highly valued part of the national heritage. It is a unique mixture of ancient woodland, heather covered heath, wide lawns, boggy mires, rivers and streams, picturesque villages and unspoilt coastline. The National Park extends from the wooded slopes of Wiltshire in the north across the central New Forest plateau to the open coastline of the Solent in the south. It has been formed through the close relationship between the land and its people over many thousands of years. A wealth of archaeological and historic features have been preserved and much of the area is still managed by traditional agriculture and a strong system of commoning.
- 2.2 The local communities within the National Park are continually changing and adapting to modern life, but remarkably the Forest has largely escaped the effects brought about elsewhere by large scale development and intensive agriculture. The villages retain their local character and distinctiveness and the medieval landscape of the Nova Foresta – William the Conqueror’s royal hunting forest – is still clearly apparent. Today the National Park attracts large numbers of visitors each year, who come to enjoy the peace and quiet, natural beauty and wildlife of one of the last ancient, unspoilt and open landscapes in England.

Area and Population

- 2.3 The National Park covers 567 square kilometres (220 square miles), making the New Forest the smallest of the 14 national parks in the UK. In 2014 the National Park had a population of 35,197 people¹ and with around 62 people per km it is the second most densely populated National Park after the South Downs. The housing stock within the National Park amounted to 15,582 dwellings (based on 2011 Census data), of which an estimated 7% are second homes or holiday lets. The main settlements of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Burley, Cadnam, Landford, Lyndhurst and Sway have between 1,000 and 3,500 residents.

Landscape Character

- 2.4 The New Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2013) describes 19 character areas in the Park. A Landscape Action Plan for the National Park (2013) extends the landscape assessment work and provides guidance for individuals and organisations wanting to help enhance and conserve the special landscape character of the New Forest. At the heart of the New Forest is an extensive area of unenclosed woodland, grassland and heath which is of international nature conservation importance and is maintained largely by the grazing of commoners' stock. Recent figures show that 10,692 animals are depastured on the Open Forest by 771 practising commoners². This historic form of land management faces threats from the high land and property costs.

Nature Conservation

- 2.5 In total 56% of the National Park is designated of international value for nature conservation – the highest proportion of land in any planning authority area in the country. The New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar sites cover more than 30,000 hectares (112 square miles) in the core of the New Forest, including the most extensive area of heathland and valley mire in lowland Europe. Much of the coastline is similarly designated, principally for the populations of wintering wildfowl and waders and a mitigation framework is in place along the Solent (including the National Park) to ensure the impacts of new residential development on the coastal are mitigated.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.6 The National Park contains more than 340 Bronze Age barrows, a number of fine Iron Age hill forts, and numerous remnants of medieval and later buildings, enclosures and other earthworks associated with the royal forest. The main rivers supported a boat and shipbuilding industry and the coastal salt workings were among the most important in the country during the 18th century. The National Park has 214 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 624 listed buildings and 17 designated Conservation Areas, plus three which straddle the Park boundary with New Forest District.

¹ New Forest National Park mid-2014 Population Estimates (ONS)

² Verderers of the New Forest data 2016

Access and Recreation

- 2.7 The New Forest is a major recreational resource, with 42 km of coastline, 325 km of Public Rights of Way (PROW), and over 30,000 hectares of accessible land (more than 50% of the area of the National Park). The major attractions, including Buckler's Hard, Lepe Country Park, Calshot Activities Centre, the National Motor Museum in Beaulieu, Paulton's Park, and the villages of Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst, Beaulieu and Burley, attract people throughout the year.
- 2.8 Research by Tourism South East (2005) indicated that there were 13.5 million visitor days spent per annum in the National Park. 15 million people live within a 90-minute drive of the National Park. Research commissioned by the Authority, New Forest District Council, Natural England and the Forestry Commission estimated that housing development in the period 2006-2026 within 50 kilometres of the New Forest will result in an additional 1.05 million visits per annum – an increase of 8% over the period.

Communities and Settlement Pattern

- 2.9 There are 37 parish and town councils wholly or partly within the National Park. The review of the Local Plan proposes the retention of the current basic settlement hierarchy within the Park with Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway identified as defined villages due to their character, population and the range of facilities and services they provide.
- 2.10 Other settlements with a basic range of local services within the National Park include Burley, Cadnam, East Boldre, Landford, Netley Marsh and Woodgreen. The surrounding urban areas of Southampton, Bournemouth and Salisbury are easily reached by rail or road from the National Park and provide a wide range of housing, shops, leisure facilities and employment opportunities. The towns of Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood, Totton and the Waterside, are important local employment centres and provide services to meet most of the needs of National Park residents.

Economy

- 2.11 Whilst the National Park is predominantly rural in nature, the economy is diverse and is highly integrated with its surrounding areas. In 2015 there were 2,540 businesses in the National Park, reflecting a very broad range and types of businesses, with the largest sector, in terms of the numbers of individual businesses, being professional, scientific and technical services. Residents of the National Park are employed in a wide range of businesses and services, with the health sector, tourism, wholesale and retail, professional and technical services and education all being particularly important employers. Only a small proportion of employment is now found in traditional rural land-use activities such as farming, forestry and commoning, but these activities remain vital in maintaining the land use management practices that help conserve the landscape character of the National Park. Unemployment within the National Park is at its lowest level for ten years, and

during that time it has remained at lower levels than in the south east and the UK as a whole. Looking forward, a large decline in the working age population is forecast.

- 2.12 The Authority has an important duty in pursuing the two statutory Park purposes to foster the socio-economic well-being of the communities within the New Forest. The 'English National Parks and the Broads UK Government Vision and Circular' (2010) confirms that national park authorities should continue to focus their expenditure on the delivery of their statutory purposes, whilst seeking to maximise the socio-economic benefits available from such activity. Experience to date has shown that by harnessing the economy to environmental ends, tangible economic benefits can be delivered through the statutory purposes whilst at the same time achieving those purposes.

Transport

- 2.13 The National Park is crossed by several major routes which carry high volumes of traffic. The A31, linking South West England with Southampton and the wider South East, is the most heavily used road in the National Park, carrying up to 77,000 vehicles daily and effectively cuts the area in two. The National Park is well-served for long-distance rail travel, with connections at Ashurst, Beaulieu Road, Brockenhurst and Sway. Lymington – located just outside the National Park - also has two train stations which link with the Isle of Wight ferry. There are a number of regular scheduled public bus services through the Park, including a regular service between Southampton and Lymington, via Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst. However many of the rural settlements are less well-served and here public transport is not a practical option for the majority of residents.
- 2.14 Southampton and Bournemouth Airports are located within close proximity to the National Park. Plans for the expansion of both airports are set out in the respective Airport Masterplans, with combined annual aircraft movements predicted to increase from 71,000 in 2005 to 146,000 in 2030. The scale of the impact of this increase of passenger aircraft flights will depend on future flight paths and the extent of improvements in aircraft engine technology.
- 2.15 Southampton is a major international gateway port with significant global and economic importance. Land at Dibden Bay, adjoining the National Park, has been identified as the only area of land physically capable of accommodating significant expansion of the port. Any future development proposals for Dibden Bay must have regard to the potential impacts on the adjacent New Forest National Park (as required by Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995); national planning policy on major development affecting National Parks (currently set out in paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework); and the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

3 Vision and Objectives

- 3.1 The Local Plan aims to deliver sustainable development within the context of a nationally protected landscape, in conformity with the objectives of national planning policy and the ambitions in the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan. The proposed Vision and Objectives for the Local Plan set out how the New Forest will look in 2036.
- 3.2 The draft Vision has been informed by the ‘Special Qualities’ of the National Park. The special qualities of the New Forest are those qualities that define it, make it unique and immediately recognisable and, when taken together, distinguish it from all other parts of the country. These qualities are fundamental to the two purposes of the National Park and are the underlying reason for its designation. The special qualities of the New Forest were identified through public consultation and are set out in Annex 1 of this draft Local Plan.

Vision for the New Forest National Park for 2036

In 2036 the New Forest’s outstanding natural beauty has been safeguarded and enhanced. Sites of international, national and local importance for nature conservation and the National Park as a whole continue to host a variety of wildlife and habitats. The New Forest remains an area with a unique and immediately recognisable sense of place, with a mosaic of distinctive landscapes and habitats including lowland heath, mire, ancient woodland, the Solent coastline and farmed landscapes. Tranquillity and a feeling of naturalness pervade large parts of the National Park.

At the same time it is a place where people can enjoy the wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery. Recreation and visitor pressures have been successfully managed through a shared understanding of the issues. Traditional land management practices, particularly commoning, are supported and continue to thrive and shape the Forest’s landscape and cultural identity. The impacts of climate change are better understood and are being actively addressed through adaptation and change but without compromising the special qualities of the New Forest. People live and work sustainably and everyone contributes in appropriate ways to keeping the New Forest a special place for present and future generations.

The limited development that has taken place within the National Park has been focused on catering for the socio-economic needs of local people rather than meeting external demand. Small scale housing development on allocated sites and within the defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway has provided a mix of appropriate new housing to meet local needs arising within the National Park. Rural exceptions schemes and new dwellings focused on the needs of New Forest Commoners and Estate workers have delivered appropriate housing in the rest of the National Park.

The cultural heritage and historic environment is better understood and appreciated through its continued protection and enhancement. The inherent characteristics and local distinctiveness of the individual villages has been retained and enhanced through the highest standards of design that respect the natural and built heritage of the Park. The rural economy has been supported by small scale employment development that does not conflict with the special qualities of the National Park.

The communities within the New Forest National Park continue to look to adjoining areas, including the urban areas in South Hampshire, South East Dorset and South Wiltshire for a range of services. The relationship with adjoining areas has been managed to the mutual benefit of all areas, including a shared approach to mitigating the impacts of new development on the National Park.

Key Challenges for the Local Plan

3.3 The revised Local Plan will have a key role in addressing the planning challenges likely to affect the New Forest National Park over the next 20 years. The earlier Regulation 18 'Call for Views' consultation the Authority undertook in late 2015 highlighted some of the key challenges facing the National Park, including:

- *Conserving and enhancing the nationally protected landscape of the New Forest* – the outstanding natural beauty of the New Forest's landscape is the primary reason for its designation as a National Park and has the highest status of protection in the NPPF.
- *Ensuring the impacts of new development on the national and internationally protected habitats of the New Forest are avoided or fully mitigated* – over half of the National Park is designated as being of international importance for nature conservation and new development must not impact on the integrity of the New Forest and coastal habitats.
- *Addressing concerns regarding the impact of new development on the local distinctiveness and heritage assets within the New Forest's built environment* – the Forest has a rich built and cultural heritage and its conservation is key to the delivery of the first statutory National Park purpose.
- *Delivering new housing to help address local needs while at the same time ensuring development does not compromise the delivery of the two statutory National Park purposes* – national planning policy recognises that National Park Authorities have an important role to play in delivering housing for local people within the context of a nationally protected landscape.

- *Sustaining a diverse local economy* – in delivering the two statutory Park purposes, the Authority has an important duty to foster the socio-economic wellbeing of the 35,000 people living within the National Park.
- *Supporting sustainable tourism and recreation within the Park* – the New Forest attracts millions of visitors each year and the Authority has a statutory purpose to promote the understanding and enjoyment of the Park’s special qualities.

Strategic Objectives

3.4 The Vision and the key challenges facing the New Forest over the next twenty years have been translated into nine strategic objectives, which are consistent with those in the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan and reflect the Authority’s overarching remit in delivering the two statutory purposes and related socio-economic duty. Once adopted, the policies within the Local Plan will contribute towards meeting the Vision and Strategic Objectives.

Strategic Objective	Link to Park purposes & duty	Relevant Policies
1. Protect and enhance the natural environment of the National Park, including the natural beauty of the landscape and the range of habitats and species.	First purpose To conserve and enhance the natural beauty and wildlife of the National Park	4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9
2. Conserve and enhance the cultural heritage and historic environment of the National Park, especially the wealth of individual characteristics that contribute to its local distinctiveness.	First purpose To conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the National Park	15, 16 and 17
3. Plan for the likely impacts of climate change on the special qualities of the New Forest.	First purpose To conserve and enhance the natural beauty and wildlife of the National Park	10, 11, 12, 13 and 14
4. Strengthen the well-being, identity and sustainability of rural communities and the pride of local people in their area.	Socio-economic duty To foster the socio-economic well-being of communities within the National Park	38, 39 and 40

<p>5. Promote appropriate housing to meet local needs and maintain the vibrant communities of the National Park.</p>	<p>Socio-economic duty</p> <p>To foster the socio-economic well-being of communities within the National Park</p>	<p>18 – 37 (inclusive)</p>
<p>6. Develop a diverse and sustainable economy that contributes to the well-being of local communities throughout the Park.</p>	<p>Socio Economic Duty</p> <p>To foster the socio-economic well-being of communities within the National Park</p>	<p>41, 42, 43 and 44</p>
<p>7. Encourage land management that sustains the special qualities of the National Park.</p>	<p>Two purposes and duty</p>	<p>47, 48, 49, 50, 51 and 52</p>
<p>8. Support development which encourages sustainable tourism and recreation, and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.</p>	<p>Second Purpose</p> <p>To promote the understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities by the public</p>	<p>45 and 46</p>
<p>9. Reduce the impacts of traffic on the special qualities of the National Park and support a range of sustainable transport alternatives within the Park.</p>	<p>Second purpose and duty</p>	<p>53 and 54</p>

4. Strategic Policies

Supporting sustainable development

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Plans should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through both plan making and decision taking. In addition, the National Park Circular (2010) states that the National Park Authorities' primary responsibility is to deliver their statutory purposes and in doing so, that they should ensure they are exemplars in achieving sustainable development.
- 4.2 There are three dimensions to sustainability:
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, through the supply of housing, accessible local services and by creating a high quality built environment;
 - An environmental role – protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment and adapting to climate change; and
 - An economic role – contributing to a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by support local businesses and land managers.
- 4.3 The National Park's statutory purposes, together with the duty, broadly reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development in the NPPF. The draft policy on sustainable development (below) takes a positive approach to sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF, while taking account of the National Park purposes and related duty.

Policy 1: Supporting sustainable development

The New Forest National Park Authority will support sustainable development proposals that will conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park and its special qualities; promote opportunities for their understanding and enjoyment by the public, and when doing so, will foster the social and economic well-being of local communities. Where there is an irreconcilable conflict between the statutory purposes, the conservation and enhancement of the National Park will take precedence (consistent with the Sandford Principle³).

Sustainable development in the National Park is considered to be that which:

- a) Makes the New Forest National Park a high quality place to live, work and visit – including appropriate new housing to address local needs; accessibility to local employment opportunities; improved public transport links; local infrastructure provision, enhanced community and recreational facilities.
- b) Enhances the landscape of the New Forest through high quality design and responding to the local distinctiveness of the area.
- c) Contributes positively to the built and historic environment of the New

³ The relationship between the two Park purposes is commonly referred to as the Sandford Principle. This makes it clear that every effort should be made to reconcile any conflict between the two purposes, but that if such efforts fail, the first purpose should take precedence.

Forest.

- d) Improves habitats and biodiversity; and
- e) Is resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change through improved energy efficiency and making appropriate use of small scale renewable energy.

- 4.4 This approach is consistent with the NPPF which sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and indicates where development should be restricted. National planning policy is clear that objectively assessed needs should be met unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Specific policies indicating where development should be restricted include those relating to sites protected under the Habitats Directive, sites of special scientific interest; and land within a National Park.

Major development in the New Forest National Park

- 4.5 National planning policy dating back to 1949 has contained a clear presumption against major new development in National Parks because of the harm it would cause to the nation's long term interest of conserving those places. Major development is therefore only permitted within protected landscapes in very exceptional circumstances, as outlined in paragraph 116 of the NPPF. In short, proposals have to demonstrate that they are absolutely necessary; in the public interest; and that there is no practical alternative before they can be supported.
- 4.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that it will be a matter for the relevant decision taker as to whether a proposed development within the National Park should be treated as major development, taking into account the proposal in question and the local context. For the purposes of the draft policy, the phrase 'major development' will not be restricted to the definition of major development in the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 or to proposals that raise issues of national significance.
- 4.7 Major development is development of more than local significance (i.e. it would exceed the local-scale development needed to address the socio-economic needs of the New Forest's 35,000 residents) which would have a long term impact on the landscape, wildlife or cultural heritage of the National Park because of its scale and form. This can include major residential and commercial development, significant infrastructure projects and power generation. Major development can have a significant impact on the special qualities of the New Forest and the reasons why the National Park was formally designated in 2005 – relating to its outstanding natural beauty; the variety of landscapes; and habitats and the opportunities provide for the public to enjoy the Forest - whether it is located inside or adjacent to the boundary.

Policy 2: Major Development in the New Forest National Park

In the context of the New Forest National Park, major development is defined as development which has the potential to have a significant impact on the National Park and its special qualities due to its scale, character and nature.

Planning permission will only be granted for major development within the New Forest National Park in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the overriding public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations;
- b) the impact on the local economy of permitting or refusing it;
- c) the scope for developing it outside the New Forest National Park, or meeting the need for it in some other way;
- d) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities and the extent to which that could be moderated;
- e) any detrimental impact on the special qualities of the New Forest National Park and whether they can be mitigated; and
- f) the cumulative impact of the development when viewed with other proposals.

Fawley Power Station

- 4.8 The redundant Fawley Power Station lies outside the New Forest National Park and is therefore under the planning jurisdiction of New Forest District Council. The site owners are currently considering the long term potential of the site, which could include a range of uses including an element of housing.
- 4.9 Although it is not proposed to allocate land within the Park adjacent to the Power Station site for development, it is appropriate for the Authority's Local Plan to set out the range of factors to be considered should the site come forward for redevelopment with proposals that could affect the New Forest National Park and/or include land within the Park. These include:
- Any proposals for the redevelopment of the Fawley Power Station site to include land within the New Forest National Park would need to satisfy the clear national planning policy tests for major development in a National Park set out in paragraph 116 of the NPPF and the tests set out in draft Policy 2 on major development in the New Forest National Park.
 - Areas of the land to the south of the Power Station within the National Park are in the highest Zone 3 for flood risk so a sequential test and flood risk assessment would be required to confirm suitability for

development and inform any appropriate site-based flood measures, potentially including enhanced flood defences.

- The land to the south of the Power Station within the National Park is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). In addition, the coastline in this area of the New Forest is covered by a range of national and international habitat designations. Any future development in this area would therefore need to avoid and/or mitigate impacts (including habitat loss and increased recreational pressures) on the adjoining Solent and Southampton Water and New Forest Natura 2000 sites and the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Dibden Bay

- 4.10 Land at Dibden Bay, adjoining the National Park, is identified in the adopted New Forest District (outside the National Park) Core Strategy (2009) and the Port of Southampton Masterplan 2009-2030 as the only area of land physically capable of accommodating significant expansion of the port. The site is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the foreshore is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site.
- 4.11 Prior to the designation of the New Forest National Park in 2005, the Secretary of State refused a previous proposal for major port development at Dibden Bay, primarily on the basis that the environmental harm outweighed the predicted economic benefits.
- 4.12 Any future application for port use at Dibden Bay would likely be of a scale that would qualify as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the 2008 Planning Act. Consequently the Authority would be invited to submit a Local Impact Report setting out the potential impacts of the development on the adjacent National Park, but would be a consultee rather than a decision maker. It would be the Planning Inspectorate who would consider and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State whether a Development Consent Order should be issued. The Secretary of State would make the final decision.
- 4.13 As a strategic site located immediately adjacent to the National Park, it is appropriate for the Authority's Local Plan to set out the range of factors to be considered should the site come forward for development and these include:
- Any proposals for the development of Dibden Bay to include land within the New Forest National Park would need to satisfy the clear national planning policy tests for major development in a National Park set out in paragraph 116 of the NPPF and the tests set out in draft Policy 2 on major development in the New Forest National Park.
 - Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995 confirms that development proposals that could affect the New Forest National Park, including those located outside the Park that could impact on it, must have regard to the two statutory National Park purposes - namely the conservation and

enhancement of the Forest's landscape, wildlife and scenic beauty; and the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the New Forest.

- Meeting the legal requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 in terms of the likely effects on the internationally designated Natura 2000 sites in the area, including the Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site and SPA; the Solent Maritime SAC; and the New Forest SPA and SAC

Spatial Strategy

- 4.14 The New Forest is a rural area with small, dispersed settlements that generally have a limited range of facilities. Higher order services are normally provided in the larger towns and urban areas that fringe the National Park. The Local Plan sets out where new development will take place within the principles of sustainable development and the statutory framework of the National Park purposes. National planning policy confirms that planning should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable. The *New Forest National Park Partnership Plan 2015 – 2020* includes a priority action to improve the connectivity of routes between settlements in the New Forest. Sustainable development in rural areas should be promoted by focusing development where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and sustain the settlements over the long term.
- 4.15 The Spatial Strategy sets out the basic settlement hierarchy, with the villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway retained as 'Defined Villages'. Future development in the National Park is likely to be modest, but it will be important to ensure that the main villages continue to prosper. These villages provide important community facilities, affordable housing for local needs, local employment opportunities and a good range of other services for residents and visitors. The strategic approach for the defined villages seeks to:
- Sustain and enhance the local services in the villages;
 - Support the important role of the villages in the local tourism economy;
 - Support the provision of appropriate small-scale housing, employment, retail and community facilities; and
 - Conserve the distinctive character and heritage of the villages.
- 4.16 Appropriate development will be supported elsewhere in the National Park through specific allocations which support the principle of focusing development towards the most sustainable locations within the Park with access to local services. Elsewhere the provision of affordable housing in and adjoining settlements will be supported through a more enabling rural exception policy to help to address the high level of housing required throughout the National Park, and through the delivery of housing specifically for New Forest commoners, Estate workers and dwellings tied to the rural economy, for example agricultural and forestry workers housing.

- 4.17 The spatial strategy also reflects the proximity of the National Park to surrounding urban areas which provide a range of services. These areas are more appropriate locations for development due to their size and role in area.

Policy 3: Spatial Strategy

The following villages within the New Forest National Park have defined settlement boundaries:

- Ashurst
- Brockenhurst
- Lyndhurst
- Sway

The principle of development within the settlement policy boundaries as defined on the Policies Map will be supported, provided that it complies with the other relevant policies and is of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of the settlement.

In addition to these defined villages, land use allocations are also made in other parts of the National Park to contribute towards meeting local community needs across the New Forest.

Development proposals will only be permitted outside the defined village boundaries and allocated development sites where:

- a) It is in accordance with Policy 28 on Rural Exception Sites; or
- b) It is in accordance with Policy 48 on sustaining the rural economy, or
- c) There is an essential need for a countryside location, or
- d) It meets the specific locational needs for commoners, Estate Workers or agricultural dwellings;
- e) It is an appropriate reuse or redevelopment of an existing building(s) in accordance with Policy 48.

- 4.18 The Policies Map shows the boundaries of the defined villages which have been reviewed as part of the Local Plan process. It is essential that any new development within the defined New Forest villages safeguards their character. Any proposals for development within the defined villages will be considered against all of the planning policies in this Plan, including those relating to local distinctiveness and design quality.

5. Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 5.1 This chapter takes forward the spatial objectives for protecting and enhancing the natural environment of the National Park.
- 5.2 The New Forest is one of the last remaining extensive areas of unspoilt countryside and semi-natural habitat in lowland Britain. The heart of the Forest, with its mosaic of ancient pasture woodland, lowland heath, lawns and wetlands and river systems, are intimately connected to the small-holdings and farms of the surrounding countryside. The National Park extends from the wooded slopes of Wiltshire in the north across the central New Forest plateau to the open coastline of the Solent in the south. It has been formed through the close relationship between the land and its people over many hundreds of years and much of the area is still managed by traditional agriculture and the historic system of commoning.
- 5.3 The New Forest National Park is a nationally protected landscape, which has the highest status of planning protection in the NPPF in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The Framework also confirms that great weight in decisions must be given to the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.
- 5.4 In addition, over half of the National Park is further protected by international nature conservation designations. The New Forest is home to a wide variety of important and often rare wildlife, habitats and species. The importance of these mean that large areas of land in the Park and its coastline have been designated as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and RAMSAR sites. Therefore, they enjoy a high level of protection under international nature conservation Directives. The NPPF confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development could affect the integrity of these areas.
- 5.5 The New Forest National Park has a higher proportion of its land covered by these international nature conservation designations than any other planning authority in England, including all other English National Parks. However, it is the smallest National Park and is under intense pressure from development in surrounding areas.
- 5.6 The sense of naturalness, peace and quiet and feelings of remoteness and tranquillity found within the National Park contrasts dramatically with the intensively developed residential and industrial environments close to its boundaries. Indeed, the Parliamentary Order⁴ which established the New Forest as a National Park recognised that over the years the Forest has come under increasing development pressure from surrounding urban areas, and that there has also been pressure from heavy and growing recreational use. It highlighted that these national, regional and local pressures are threatening its future and the very qualities that make it special⁵. In the face of these pressures it is essential that the reasons for the designation of the New Forest as a nationally important landscape are retained and enhanced, whilst at the

⁴ Explanatory Memorandum to the New Forest National Park Authority (establishment) Order 2005

⁵ The "special qualities" of the National Park are highlighted in the New Forest National Park Management Plan 2010

same time facilitating the enjoyment of the Park's special qualities.

- 5.7 Measures to help the area adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change are also set out, and include supporting small scale renewable energy generation, considering flood risks, and provision of open space.

Strategic Objective for Protecting the Forest's Natural Environment

- **Protect and enhance the natural environment of the National Park, including the natural beauty of the landscape and the range of habitats and species.**

Protection of internationally important nature conservation sites

- 5.8 Internationally designated nature conservation sites in the National Park are Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance) and are shown on the Policies Map. Within the New Forest National Park the area covered by SAC designation is 30,112 hectares, by SPA designation is 30,643 hectares, and by Ramsar designation is 30,152 hectares. These cover most of the core of the Forest and the coastal areas, and in many cases are also protected by the national designation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, these internationally designated sites enjoy the highest level of statutory and government policy protection to maintain and restore their nature conservation interests. Unless in exceptional circumstances, specific and stringent tests within the Habitats Regulations are set to ensure that no harmful development will affect the integrity of these areas.

Policy 4: Nature Conservation Sites of International Importance

Development which may affect the integrity of an internationally important site for nature conservation will not be permitted unless:

- a) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development, and there are no alternatives. If this is the case, the Authority will require compensatory measures to ensure the overall coherence of the designated site; or
- b) it is directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of the designated site

However, in many cases, development can proceed if sufficient and effective measures are put in place to avoid or fully mitigate any likely significant adverse effects of the proposal (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) on the designated site. Avoidance or mitigation may not be possible in all cases due to the scale, type, or proximity of the proposed development in relation to the designated site and so the Authority will assess each case on its merits.

A full Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will inform this draft Policy and the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017.

- 5.9 For development to comply with the Habitats Regulations, the Authority will need to be certain that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of any of the designated sites. To achieve this, the Authority will need to be satisfied that sufficient and effective measures to avoid or fully mitigate any likely significant adverse effects from a proposed development (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) will be put in place. This will include, in relevant cases, appropriate contributions to the Authority's Habitat Mitigation Scheme in relation to the land based designated sites, and the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership's (SRMP) Scheme for development within 5.6 kilometres of the Solent based designated sites. Financial contributions from developments will be used by the Authority and the SRMP to implement a range of measures that will mitigate the impacts of new development on the designated sites. However, due to the scale, type, or proximity of the proposed development in relation to the designated site, avoidance or mitigation and the use of off-site contributions may not be possible in all cases.
- 5.10 *Details of the current schemes can be found in the Development Standards SPD⁶, and the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership scheme Explanatory Note⁷. The Authority will reassess its Habitat Mitigation scheme to reflect the Local Plan Review and any recommendations in the HRA of the Local Plan Review and consider future mitigation measures. The revised Scheme will support the published Submission draft Local Plan Review and will be outlined in a separate Explanatory Note. The SRMP scheme is in the process of being revised to incorporate longer term strategic mitigation measures. Its Explanatory Note will be updated.*
- 5.11 Applicants are not precluded from considering the potential impacts on the designated sites and devising appropriate measures to offer for assessment that will allow the Authority to be certain that there will be no likely significant adverse effects from a proposed development (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) on the designated site. Applicants will need to provide sufficiently detailed information about the potential impacts of their proposed development on the designated features, species and habitats of the internationally protected sites and their proposed mitigation measures to demonstrate conclusively to the Authority that it will comply with the Habitat Regulations and there will be no likely significant adverse effects on the designated site.
- 5.12 Developments covered by prior approval and permitted development (contained in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015) are granted planning permission by central government and, therefore, a planning application is not required. These developments, however, must still comply with the Habitats

⁶ http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20040/planning_policy/108/development_standards

⁷ http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/downloads/download/215/solent_disturbance_and_mitigation_project

Regulations and, therefore, must adhere to the principles set out in Policy CP1. Where mitigation and/or avoidance measures are required, these can either be provided by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Authority, or where appropriate, a financial contribution can be made to the schemes set out above.

Protection of nationally and locally important sites and features of the natural environment.

- 5.13 There are many nationally, regionally and locally important sites and features that characterise the New Forest and these should be protected, conserved and enhanced. This includes development proposals that would affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in Hampshire, County Wildlife Sites in Wiltshire, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodlands, and trees and hedgerows.

Policy 5: The Natural Environment

Proposals should protect, maintain and enhance nationally, regionally and locally important sites and features of the natural environment, including habitats and species of biodiversity importance, geological features and the water environment.

Development which would harm the notified special interest feature of a Site of Special Scientific Interest, or the nature conservation interest of other nationally important nature conservation sites will normally be refused.

Development proposals which adversely affect locally designated sites, priority habitats and species populations, protected species or those identified of importance by national or local biodiversity plans will be refused unless the Authority is satisfied that:

- a) It has been demonstrated that suitable measures for mitigating or compensating adverse effects will be provided and maintained in order to achieve no net loss of biodiversity value; and
- b) There are no alternative solutions; and
- c) There are overriding reasons which outweigh the harm.

In addition, opportunities to enhance ecological or geological assets should be maximised, particularly in line with local Biodiversity Action Plan priorities.

- 5.14 National planning policies support the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes, geological conservation, and recognise the wider benefits of ecosystem services. They also require that impacts on biodiversity should be minimised, net gains in biodiversity provided where possible, and coherent ecological networks should be established that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 5.15 Seeking opportunities to enhance large-scale landscapes and habitats that are characteristic of the New Forest is one of the priority actions of the Partnership Plan for the New Forest National Park (2015). Proposals include the restoration of land to lowland heathland and measures to improve the condition of sites of special scientific interest, such as wetland restoration
- 5.16 It has long been recognised that trees help built-up areas appear more attractive, as well as being important habitats for wildlife and helping to improve air quality. They also provide shelter, help reduce the effect of heavy rain, and are integral to the character of the New Forest. Trees also play a significant role in the sustainability of new developments, and by retaining existing trees and carefully planting new trees in a well-designed layout, new developments can be successfully integrated. The Authority's Tree Guidance Leaflet⁸ provides advice on how this can be achieved. All trees, regardless of their protected status, are a material consideration in planning applications. The Authority can make Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) when considering planning applications to either prevent the removal of significant trees, or to protect significant trees from damage.

Policy 6: General Development Principles

All new development and uses of land within the New Forest National Park must uphold and promote the principles of sustainable development. New development proposals must demonstrate high quality design and construction which enhances local character and distinctiveness. This includes, but is not restricted to, ensuring:

- a) development is appropriate and sympathetic in terms of scale, appearance, form, siting and layout;
- b) development respects the natural and built environment, landscape character and biodiversity
- c) development takes opportunities to protect and enhance the setting of groups and individual trees and to including new planting;
- d) materials are appropriate to the site and its setting;
- e) amenity is not adversely affected in terms of additional impacts, visual intrusion, overlooking or shading; and
- f) no adverse impacts associated with traffic or pollution (including noise and light pollution)

New development must also comply with required standards for:

- g) car parking (see Annex 2);
- h) open space (as set out in Policy 9)

⁸ See http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/downloads/file/1194/new_forest_npa_tree_guidance_leaflet

Water Resources

- 5.17 The Environment Agency monitor the water quality of rivers in the National Park, based on both ecological and chemical status. Of the total river length of 482 km, about 280 km are covered by Water Framework Directive monitoring stations. About one quarter of the rivers in the New Forest are of good water quality, but the majority are moderate quality, while a significant proportion are poor⁹. There has been a decline in the length of rivers with 'poor' and 'good' water quality between 2011 and 2014, and a rise in those in 'moderate' condition. The Environment Agency objective is to achieve high or good ecological status for 70% of the monitored rivers in the New Forest by 2027. The issues and pressures affecting the long term quality of the region's water resources include abstraction, pesticides, phosphates, nitrates, physical modification and transport pollution¹⁰.

Policy 7: Safeguarding and Improving Water Resources

Development will not be permitted if it would risk harm to the quality and yield of water resources, including abstraction sites, groundwater, rivers, streams and still waters.

Green Infrastructure and Open Space

- 5.18 'Green infrastructure' can be defined as a planned and managed network of open spaces that perform a number of functions. It can bring a wide range of benefits to both communities and the natural environment, and particularly has a role to play in providing recreational opportunities, maintaining a good quality of life for local communities, and encouraging a healthy lifestyle. Green infrastructure includes such areas as parks and gardens, green corridors, amenity greenspace and allotments.
- 5.19 A study of accessible greenspace in the South East identified that the National Park has around 30,769 hectares of accessible natural greenspace, which amounts to 54% of the area of the National Park¹¹. Furthermore, it concluded that all households in the Park had access to accessible natural greenspace using the definitions of the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt). However, this does not take account of any effects from the high level of visitors to the National Park.
- 5.20 The New Forest PPG17 study acknowledges the importance of open space and recreational facilities within, and close to, the National Park in protecting the Park through potentially relieving some of the recreational pressures on it by directing recreation away from such areas and the provision of alternative greenspace in more robust locations.

⁹ See the State of the Park Report 2016

¹⁰ Environment Agency, South East River Basin – Significant Water Management Issues 2008

¹¹ An analysis of accessible natural greenspace provision in the South East, McKernan & Grose, 2007

Policy 8: Green Infrastructure

Proposals which create, maintain and enhance green infrastructure will be supported, particularly where they:

- a) encourage connectivity between different habitats and designated sites;
- b) provide opportunities for local communities to access open space and provide for healthy recreation; and
- c) relieve recreational pressures on internationally important nature conservation sites.

The Authority will work with other partners and adjoining authorities to develop green infrastructure, and to ensure the impacts of development within and outside the Park's boundary do not affect the landscape character of the Park or the internationally important nature conservation designations. However, providing a new Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) in the nationally protected landscape of the National Park as mitigation for development outside the National Park is not appropriate, and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where very significant benefits for the landscape, biodiversity and internationally designated sites of the National Park can be clearly demonstrated.

- 5.21 Within the National Park, the Authority will continue to work with partners and communities to support opportunities to create or enhance green infrastructure. In recent years the Authority has supported a range of local open space enhancements. Green infrastructure can provide additional opportunities for local communities to access open space, provide for healthy recreation, and help to relieve some of the recreational pressures on the internationally designated nature conservation sites.
- 5.22 Provision of alternative natural greenspace may also be considered along with a range of other measures¹² to mitigate the effects of development within the National Park (in combination with the large levels of development planned in adjoining authorities) on the internationally important nature conservation designations.
- 5.23 To deliver its first purpose, the Authority believes that it is important to consider landscapes on a wider scale. The Authority will deliver, together with 10 partner organisations, the Our Past Our Future Partnership scheme for the New Forest, which will undertake projects to restore lost habitats. The Authority will also discuss opportunities with our neighbouring authorities and other organisations to create a 'green halo' for the National Park – a buffer around our boundary to strengthen the resilience of the internationally-protected habitats and the ecosystems of the National Park. This will include exploring opportunities for new green infrastructure. For example, green infrastructure will be delivered as part of the Green Infrastructure Strategy for the South Hampshire sub-region that will be implemented by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH).

¹² The Authority will decide what measures are acceptable for a development to comply with the Habitats Regulations – see Policy CP1 and accompanying text.

- 5.24 The Authority will also work with Natural England and other local authorities, as well as a range of relevant stakeholders, to develop a strategic approach to prevent adverse effects on internationally designated nature conservation sites in the New Forest.
- 5.25 To take forward the actions within the Recreation Management Strategy (RMS) a RMS Steering Group comprising six organisations with statutory responsibilities for aspects of recreation, and an RMS Advisory Group, comprising the same six organisations plus 10 key other organisations, have adopted the following Priority Task...”to agree an overall plan for where within and around the National Park we should encourage people to go to enjoy outdoor recreation, and how this should be achieved. The aim would be to both improve the New Forest’s recreational experience and enhance the other special qualities (including its rich wildlife, tranquility and commoning tradition) and to avoid inadvertently damaging the special qualities which people come to the New Forest to enjoy”.

Policy 9: Open Space

Proposals that result in the loss of existing open space will not be permitted.

Development should either provide for the enhancement of existing open space and amenity areas, or provide on-site open space to the minimum provision standard of 3.5 hectares of public open space per 1,000 population.

- 5.26 National planning policy confirms the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation, and Policy 9 supports this approach. The open space requirement of 3.5 hectares of open space per 1,000 population has been developed from the PPG17 Study commissioned by the National Park Authority and New Forest District Council (2007). The standard comprises the 0.2 hectares per 1,000 population of designed play spaces for children and young people, 1.25 hectares of formal recreational space per 1,000 population and 2 hectares of informal open space per 1,000 population. Based on the open space requirement as set out above, the Authority requires 35 square metres of public open space to be provided per person.
- 5.27 New housing development should incorporate open amenity areas and features, preferably within the site boundary to enhance the quality of the environment for the benefit of residents and the locality.
- 5.28 National planning policies allow for local communities to be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them through local and neighbourhood plans. A Local Green Space can only be designated when a plan is being prepared or reviewed, and is capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. It can only be designated where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; where it is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance; and where it is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The Authority would welcome any proposals from local communities to identify ‘Local Green Spaces’ within their communities at this stage of the preparation of the Local Plan Review

Climate Change

Strategic Objective for Planning for Climate Change:

- **Plan for the likely impacts of climate change, particularly on the Special Qualities of the area.**

5.29 Climate change will be one of the most significant factors influencing change in all aspects of the National Park in the future. The government is now clear that climate change is happening, and it is due to human activity, and it includes global warming, and greater risks of flooding, droughts and heat waves. The Committee on Climate Change has identified¹³ six key areas of climate change risk that need to be managed as a priority:

- flooding and coastal change,
- the impact of high temperatures on health and wellbeing,
- risks to natural capital,
- risks of future water shortages,
- impacts on the global food system, and
- risks arising from new and emerging pests and diseases

5.30 The main issues resulting from potential climate changes in the National Park are expected to be the likely impacts on habitats, landscape, archaeology, property, human safety, recreation, land management, water resources and the rural economy

5.31 The UK Climate Projections were published in August 2009 and estimate that by the 2080s southern England could face an increase in average summer temperatures of between 2 and 7 degrees Celsius. There could be about a 40% decrease in average summer rainfall in parts of the far south of England. This emphasises that the UK's climate is changing, and that in order to prevent the problem becoming worse, cutting carbon emissions globally is a priority.

5.32 Through the Climate Change Act the Government has set statutory targets to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 80% on 1990 levels by 2050, and to achieve at least a 34% reduction by 2020, and 57% by 2030

5.33 The Authority aims to minimise the vulnerability and provide resilience to the impacts of climate change on the National Park, in particular on its special qualities.

¹³ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Synthesis report

Policy 10: Climate Change

The Authority will support proposals to mitigate climate change and adapt to the impacts of climate change through:

- a) avoiding development in areas at highest risk of flooding;
- b) locating development so as to reduce the need to travel by car;
- c) sustainable design and construction including improved water and energy efficiency;
- d) supporting small scale renewable and low carbon energy generation; and
- e) enabling wildlife and habitats to adapt to climate change.

- 5.34 There is some uncertainty over how individual species and habitats in the New Forest will respond to climate change, but it is likely that some habitats will change or be lost, particularly coastal habitats, together with the introduction of new species. Maintaining a network of green infrastructure can help to increase the robustness of habitats by reducing their fragmentation by creating and restoring habitat and wildlife networks.
- 5.35 Measures to reduce the National Park's vulnerability to climate change include sustainable transport, considering flood risks, supporting more energy efficient new development and local food production.

Flooding and the Coast

Policy 11: Flooding and the Coast

Development proposals will not be permitted if they:

- a) would increase the risk of coastal or fluvial flooding or coastal erosion;
- b) do not comply with the sequential test or are inappropriate in high flood risk areas (as defined by the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 and 3 and the New Forest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment); and
- c) are not compatible with the appropriate Shoreline Management Plan and Coastal Defence Strategy.

Appropriate developments will require a flood risk assessment.

- 5.36 Although the Authority has no direct responsibility for flood protection or coastal defence, as the local planning authority for the coastline in the National Park, it is important that future strategic planning and development management decisions are consistent with the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan.

- 5.37 Shoreline Management Plans are non-statutory plans that evaluate the known risks to people, property and the built and natural environment from the sea and coastal processes – and develop policies for each section of coast based on the findings. The coastline of the National Park is covered by the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan, and it sets out detailed policies for coastal management over the next 100 years.
- 5.38 Within the National Park the Shoreline Management Plan¹⁴ proposes to Hold the Line (i.e. maintain or upgrade the level of protection provided by existing coastal defences) in built-up locations on the coast such as around Lymington, but proposes No Active Intervention (i.e. a decision not to invest in providing or maintaining any defences) for other less inhabited areas. It also makes allowance for landowners to maintain their own defences where these already exist, even though landowners are advised to contact the Authority before undertaking any works. The Authority will consult New Forest District Council as the Coastal Authority on planning applications where necessary. The Authority will also continue to be a member of the Solent Forum, which considers and provides advice on strategic issues for authorities involved in planning and management of the coast in the Solent area.
- 5.39 Flood zones have been developed by the Environment Agency and their use is outlined in the National Planning Practice Guidance¹⁵. Zone 1 is where there is little or no risk of flooding, in Zone 2 there is a low to medium risk and in Zone 3 there is a high risk. The Environment Agency publishes maps of flood risk on its website which shows the location of these zones and should be referred to as the most up to date source of information on flood risk. These maps are continually being updated and will be used in the consideration of this policy. The National Park is at most risk of coastal flooding, but there is also significant flooding from the Lymington River in Brockenhurst and to a lesser degree the Beaulieu River.
- 5.40 National Planning Practice Guidance sets out the ‘sequential test’ that will be used to assess all planning applications to direct development away from flood zones 2 and 3 as the areas at highest risk of flooding. This will also need to take account of the broader considerations set out in the New Forest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (*an update of which will be used to inform the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017*). Only if there are no suitable alternative sites should development in areas of higher risk (flood zones 2 and 3) be considered.
- 5.41 It will be necessary to ensure that the main settlements, including Lymington, are given protection through carefully designed defences which do not adversely affect the sites of European nature conservation importance or create additional flooding issues for other parts of the coast. In addition to coastal protection works, other small scale coastal development might include coastal access works, upgrading existing coastal car parks and replacing beach huts and existing mooring facilities.

¹⁴ See <http://www.northsolentsmp.co.uk/>

¹⁵ See <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/> and [Environment Agency floodmaps](#)

Policy 12: Coastal Development

Small scale proposals for development on the coast will be permitted provided that they:

- a) will not have adverse impacts on coastal processes;
- b) are in keeping with the character of the coast;
- c) will not significantly prejudice landscape interest and will have regard to the importance of seaward and landward views;
- d) protect or enhance coastal habitats and species; and
- e) will not lead to the consolidation of scattered development.

Renewable Energy

- 5.42 The National Planning Policy Framework supports the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure, and requires local planning authorities to have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources.
- 5.43 National planning policy states that planning authorities should design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts. However, the NPPF also clarifies that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Consequently, the potential for renewable energy generation within the National Park will need to be balanced against the potential adverse visual and amenity impacts on the landscape, including views into and out of the National Park.

Policy 13: Renewable Energy

Development proposals for, or incorporating, renewable energy generation will be permitted where they:

- a) are small-scale and provide energy for individual households or businesses, or for small local community facilities; and
- b) are located and designed to avoid visual impacts; and
- c) do not have impacts on the special qualities of the National Park.

- 5.44 To avoid compromising the landscape character, and beauty of the National Park, the policy emphasis is on appropriate, small scale renewable energy developments that provide energy for an individual household or business use, or for a small local community within the National Park. Appeal decisions from the Secretary of State confirm that larger renewable energy developments to meet a wider-than-local need are not appropriate within the New Forest National Park.

- 5.45 All forms of small scale energy production will be supported where these are shown to be economically viable in the long term and can be designed and located with very minimal impacts on the special qualities of the National Park.
- 5.46 Some small scale renewable energy development does not require planning permission, particularly the use of solar panels in a domestic setting. However, domestic scale wind turbines do require planning permission and the above policy will apply.
- 5.47 Proposals should take account of the need to protect the natural and built environment, including consideration of potential visual and noise impacts of this type of development. The Authority's Design Guide provides advice on the incorporation of energy efficiencies into the design of buildings.

Pollution

- 5.48 Lying as it does between the large urban areas of Southampton, the heavy industrial areas along Southampton Water and the South East Dorset conurbation, the National Park is vulnerable to pollutants from industry, vehicles and many other sources which can harm human health, together with general noise and light pollution associated with urban areas.
- 5.49 An unpolluted environment is recognised as one of the key ingredients to a good quality of life, particularly clean air. Whilst air quality is generally good in the National Park there is a problem in Lyndhurst, where an Air Quality Management Area has been designated due to the presence of excessive transport related pollutants. The Air Quality Action Plan for Lyndhurst sets out traffic management measures including the restriction of HGVs using the High Street, and reviewing signage in Lyndhurst directing visitors into Lyndhurst's main car park. In addition, measures to reduce the use of cars and encourage more sustainable forms of transport will help reduce the impacts of pollution on air quality, including potential impacts of air pollution on nature conservation designations.

Tranquillity

- 5.50 Paragraph 123 of the NPPF confirms that planning policies should aim to protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise. The relative tranquillity of larger parts of the New Forest National Park is cited as one of its most valued 'special qualities' and it is therefore appropriate that the local planning policies for the Park seek to protect it. The Authority has developed a map highlighting the tranquil areas of the New Forest. It identifies areas in the north and south-east of the New Forest as being the most tranquil in the National Park. The key criteria used to determine the levels of tranquillity were the amounts of manmade noise and visual disturbance in the natural environment. In order to retain this special quality for future generations the potential impacts of noise and light pollution will be carefully controlled. The Authority will aim to acquire International Dark Sky Reserve status from the International Dark Sky Association.

Policy 14: Tranquillity

New development should avoid, or provide mitigation measures, if the proposal will lead to noise, visual intrusion, nuisance and other unacceptable environmental impacts on the National Park and its special qualities.

This should include reducing the impacts of light pollution on the 'dark skies' of the National Park and control of development to prevent artificial lighting from eroding rural darkness.

6. Protecting and Enhancing the Historic and Built Environment

- 6.1 This chapter takes forward the spatial objectives for protecting and enhancing the historic and built environment of the National Park.
- 6.2 The New Forest has a distinctive character which is made up not only of the numerous listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments, but also the many and varied locally important features. Many unlisted cob buildings, simple brick cottages, and early bungalows give parts of the New Forest their distinctive character, but every year fewer - and fewer in original condition – survive.
- 6.3 There is a variety of historic landscapes within the National Park that show evidence of past human interaction with the land. Significant components of historic landscapes include field systems (including lynchets, ridge and furrow), historic woodland management, medieval settlements, traditional farmsteads and settlements, and networks of ancient routeways.
- 6.4 Archaeological sites and evidence in the New Forest range from finds that date from up to 500,000 years ago to observation posts from the Cold War period. Known sites and features are recorded on the publicly available Historic Environment Record, but many still await identification and recognition.
- 6.5 Small-scale changes to the local landscape, buildings, settlements and sites take place almost constantly in responses to shifting values, fashions, availability of products and the spread of new technology. Although change is inevitable it is often at the expense of those features which give the New Forest its particular character. Over time these can cause a real impact leading to a general suburbanisation and loss of character.

Strategic Objective for Protecting the Forest's Historic and Built Environment

- **Conserve and enhance the cultural heritage and historic environment of the National Park, especially the wealth of individual characteristics that contribute to its local distinctiveness.**

Heritage Assets

- 6.6 The National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. Designated heritage assets in the National Park include Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, and Conservation Areas.
- 6.7 However, the New Forest also contains a wealth of historic interest that is not formally designated as heritage assets. These include sites identified on the Authority's local list, which sets out buildings of architectural or historic interest

which contribute to the character and appearance of the National Park. The Authority uses criteria set out by Historic England to determine whether a building should be included on the local list.

Policy 15: The Historic and Built Environment

Proposals should protect, maintain or enhance nationally, regionally and locally important sites and features of the historic and built environment, including local vernacular buildings, archaeological sites and designed and historic landscapes, and, where appropriate, help secure a sustainable future for those heritage assets at risk.

- a) Proposals will be supported where they conserve and enhance the significance of designated or undesignated heritage assets, including their setting. In particular where:
 - (i) it does not harm the significance, or result in the loss of a scheduled monument, listed building, or registered park and garden; and
 - (ii) it makes a positive contribution to, or better reveals the significance of a heritage asset or its setting; and
 - (iii) any harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum viable use; and
 - (iv) helps secure the long term conservation of a heritage asset.
- b) All development proposals that affect a designated or undesignated heritage asset will need to be accompanied by a proportionate assessment of the significance of the asset including any contribution made by its setting.
- c) Where proposals are likely to affect a site of archaeological interest, an appropriate desk-based assessment will also be required, including field evaluation where necessary.

6.8 On the Historic England register there are seven historic parks and gardens in the National Park¹⁶, whilst a much longer list of locally important sites is set out on the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens¹⁷.

6.9 Historic England maintains a register of Heritage assets at risk which identifies those sites most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. On the register within the National Park there are currently 5 scheduled monuments, consisting of 12 heritage assets, plus two buildings.

¹⁶ Avon Tyrrell, Brockenhurst Park, Cadland House, Exbury House, Hale Park, Pylewell Park, Rhinefield

¹⁷ Published by Hampshire County Council, 2000

- 6.10 National planning policy emphasises that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset the applicant must demonstrate that that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - conservation by grant funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Local Distinctiveness and Design Principles

- 6.11 The different villages and landscapes in the National Park all have a distinctive character, although they are also all recognisably part of the New Forest, linked by its particular history, economy and culture.
- 6.12 One of the Park's statutory purposes, together with national planning policy, recognises the importance of conserving and enhancing an area's character. The level of development pressure within the National Park is evidenced by the level of planning applications received by the Authority each year. Over the last six years the Authority decided an average of 788 planning applications per year despite the fact that the New Forest is the smallest National Park in England¹⁸.
- 6.13 Whilst the vast majority of these applications entail minor development, increasing amounts of such small scale household development can, if not properly checked, result in a creeping suburbanisation of the National Park, slowly eroding the Forest's distinctive character¹⁹.
- 6.14 Many of the grass verges within the Forest are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and are of national importance for nature conservation. They are therefore legally protected against damage. In addition, grass verges contribute to the appearance and character of the local communities in the National Park. Parking, driving or storing building materials on the grass verges can cause serious damage and have a harmful impact on their landscape, ecological and grazing value. Much work has been undertaken on this issue in the Western Escarpment Conservation Area, and through the work undertaken by the Verderers and Forestry Commission as part of the Higher Level Stewardship scheme.

¹⁸ Development Control statistics, NFNPA 2016

¹⁹ National Park Authority's Annual Monitoring Report 2015

- 6.15 To build a new drive or access over a SSSI verge, planning consent from the National Park Authority and approval from Natural England and the Verderers should be gained, as well as consent from the Forestry Commission if it is on Crown Land. Where possible, the Authority will consider the use of planning conditions restricting the storage of building materials and parking of contractor's vehicles on the grass verges.

Policy 16: Local Distinctiveness

Built development and changes of use which would individually or cumulatively erode the Park's local character or result in a gradual suburbanising effect within the National Park will not be permitted.

- 6.16 Development, whether of a traditional or modern design, should be sympathetic and in keeping with its surroundings. New buildings should have a low (or no) carbon footprint and all new development should make a positive contribution to the National Park particularly through its design, scale and layout.
- 6.17 Sustainable design and construction focusing on maximising a site's natural resources and energy efficiency can include the use of passive design techniques, where this would not be inappropriate due to any impact it may have on the historic environment.

Policy 17: Design Principles

All new development will be required to achieve the highest standards for the design, external appearance and location of new development within the National Park, with particular regard to:

- a) enhancing the built heritage of the New Forest;
- b) creating a safe environment where people want to live, work and visit;
- c) ensuring new development is accessible where appropriate;
- d) ensuring all new development incorporates sound sustainable design and construction principles and good environmental practices; and
- e) ensuring development does not harm key visual features or other valued components of the landscape, and enhances these where appropriate.

- 6.18 National planning policy emphasises that new development should create safe communities where crime and disorder, or the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life. Employing the principles of 'Secured by Design', which is a national police initiative focussing on the design and layout of new residential and commercial development, can help address these concerns. Principles, which include places where publicly accessible spaces are overlooked and places that promote a sense of ownership and respect, should be taken into account in new development proposals.

- 6.19 A Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document for the National Park was adopted by the Authority in 2011, which sets out more details on the characteristics of the New Forest and ways of incorporating local distinctiveness and various design principles into new development proposals.
- 6.20 In addition, several communities within the National Park have produced a Village Design Statement, which sets out a statement of the individual character of a particular town or village. These are then adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents by the Authority and are used in assessing relevant planning applications. The Authority will continue to support parishes that wish to undertake a Village Design Statement.

Adopted Village Design Statements

- Hordle Village Design Statement (2015)
- Sway Village Design Statement (2013)
- Boldre Parish Design Statement (2013)
- Ashurst & Colbury Village Design Statement (2013)
- Hyde Village Design Statement (2012)
- Landford Village Design Statement (2011)
- Wellow Village Design Statement (2011)

Sustainable design and construction

- 6.21 National planning policy expects all new development to adopt and incorporate sustainable construction standards and techniques.
- 6.22 New buildings should be designed to maximise energy efficiency and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy use and CO₂ emissions. Innovative design and technologies, such as low carbon technology, will be encouraged where these are shown to be effective and the use of materials sourced as locally as possible will be preferred.
- 6.23 The Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document sets out more details on how to incorporate sustainable design features into the design and layout of new development proposals.

Listed buildings and conservation areas

- 6.24 Listed buildings are buildings officially defined as being of special architectural or historic interest and there are 624 listed buildings in the National Park, which range from palaces and country houses to many smaller but more typical cottages and hovels built of brick, timber frame or cob - clay earth reconstituted with water and binding aggregates.

- 6.25 Conservation areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance'. There are 17 Conservation Areas wholly within the National Park, with a further three straddling the boundary with New Forest District Council. The boundaries of all these Conservation Areas are shown on the Policies Map.
- 6.26 In pursuance of its responsibilities under both national park purposes and through the duty imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, the Authority is developing a framework for the management of conservation areas in the National Park. This comprises:
- **Conservation area character appraisals**, one for each conservation area, which identifies the special historic and architectural qualities of an area which justify its designation
 - **Conservation Areas Management Plan**, covering all conservation areas (adopted 16 Oct 08)
 - **Conservation area specific management plan** covering individual conservation areas.
- 6.27 Development to listed buildings and in Conservation Areas, and their settings will be carefully controlled to ensure that their character is retained. The Conservation Area Character Appraisals are important sources to refer to in making planning applications and they will be used in evaluating the appropriateness of development proposals in those areas.

7 Vibrant Communities

- 7.1 National planning policy recognises the need for small-scale, sustainably located development within National Parks to support the socio-economic well-being of their communities. This includes the provision of local affordable housing and local community facilities. This chapter therefore takes forward the strategic objectives to promote affordable housing to meet local needs and to strengthen the well-being and sustainability of rural communities.

Strategic Objectives for Supporting Vibrant Communities:

- **promote appropriate housing to meet local needs and maintain the vibrant communities of the National Park; and**
- **strengthen the well-being, identity and sustainability of rural communities and the pride of local people in their area.**

Housing

- 7.2 The provision of housing to meet the local needs of people living within the National Park is a key part of supporting the communities of the New Forest. The revised Local Plan will establish the level of new housing to be delivered in the National Park between 2016 and 2036 in a way that is consistent with the two statutory Park purposes and related duty.

National Policy Context

- 7.3 The Government's National Parks Vision and Circular (2010) – cross-referenced within the NPPF - recognises that National Parks are not suitable locations for unrestricted housing. The expectation is that new housing in National Parks will be focused on meeting local affordable housing requirements, rather than catering for external demands. National park authorities are expected to work with local authorities and other agencies to ensure that the needs of local communities in the Parks are met and that affordable housing remains so in the longer term. Previous strategic and local plans for the New Forest and surrounding areas have acknowledged the sensitivity of the New Forest and its landscape and the area has been protected from large scale new development.
- 7.4 The NPPF confirms that local plans should meet 'objectively assessed needs' identified for Housing Market Areas unless the adverse impacts of doing so would outweigh the benefits; or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted (paragraph 14). These include policies relating to National Parks, sites protected under the European Birds and Habitats Directive, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and designated heritage assets. The New Forest National Park is covered by a wide range of national and international landscape and ecological designations and therefore national planning guidance on meeting housing needs must be considered alongside the protection afforded to the New Forest's landscape and habitats in primary legislation. Within this specific context, and when considered against paragraph 14 of the NPPF, meeting the area's full housing need is not achievable within the National Park. The Authority will therefore engage with neighbouring authorities to see if housing needs can be met outside the Park.

- 7.5 The NPPF also states that planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups. One of the roles of a Local Plan is to identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing required.

New Forest Strategic Housing Market Assessment

- 7.6 In line with Government policy, the process for determining the amount of housing to be delivered in the National Park starts with the identification of the ‘objectively assessed need’ for new housing. This should be informed by a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which in the case of the New Forest was jointly commissioned by the National Park Authority and New Forest District Council in 2014. This Assessment concluded that the National Park falls within three separate housing market areas centred on the Southampton, Bournemouth and Salisbury urban areas, but that there is no specific ‘New Forest Housing Market Area’. The objectively assessed need for housing within the National Park is set out below (affordable and open market), as well as the need figure identified within the National Park for affordable housing alone.
- 7.7 The NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) are clear that the assessment of need should not take account of development constraints, such as those related to the environment or land availability. These factors will however clearly affect the potential supply of land for housing and are relevant in translating the assessments of need into policy. The figures below therefore represent an objective, ‘policy off’ analysis and take no account of land supply or development constraints within the New Forest, including its National Park status and the significant areas subject to national and international nature conservation designations.
- 7.8 The Government has confirmed that, “...*the outcome of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is untested and should not automatically be seen as a proxy for a final housing requirement in Local Plans. It does not immediately or in itself invalidate housing numbers in existing Local Plans...*” before going onto state that local planning authorities, “...*will need to consider Strategic Housing Market Assessment evidence carefully and take adequate time to consider whether there are environmental and policy constraints, which will impact on their overall final housing requirement.*” – December 2014

Area and type of housing	SHMA identified need 2011 – 2031	Per annum
New Forest National Park (affordable + open market)	2,800 – 3,280 dwellings	140 – 164 dwellings
New Forest National Park (affordable need only)	1,680 dwellings	84 dwellings

7.9 The current housing stock within the National Park stands at just under 15,000 dwellings, of which it is estimated that just under 7% are second homes, vacant properties or holiday lets²⁰. Since the National Park Authority assumed its planning responsibilities in 2006 a total of 239 dwellings have been completed within the National Park, at an annual average of 24 new dwellings per annum (net). The need figures identified above in the SHMA therefore far exceed the current rate of development within the National Park.

7.10 Draft Policy 18 below sets out the current thinking on the level of new (affordable housing and market housing) housing to be provided within the New Forest National Park over the Plan period. This figure of 700 additional dwellings in the National Park between 2016 and 2036 is informed by the evidence from the New Forest Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment, evidence on constraints, and takes into account paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF. **This figure will continue to be refined prior to the submission of the Authority's draft Local Plan to the Government following further public consultation in 2017.** However, given the wide range of designations covering the New Forest National Park, it is clear that the full identified need for housing will not be met, as to do so would clearly conflict with the statutory National Park purposes. The Submission draft Local Plan will therefore need to consider how and where any housing need that cannot be met in the National Park might be addressed, including discussion with neighbouring planning authorities under the Localism Act's 'duty to cooperate'.

Policy 18 – New residential development in the New Forest National Park

An additional 700 dwellings will be delivered within the New Forest National Park between 2016 and 2036. To meet this requirement, new residential development will be permitted within the National Park to maintain the vitality of local communities and support local services where the proposal involves:

- a) The development of sites allocated for housing in the Local Plan (225 dwellings);
- b) The implementation of extant planning permissions (75 dwellings at 31/03/16);
- c) The development of land previously unallocated or unidentified (windfall development) within the National Park, including the four defined villages (estimated at 400 dwellings over the Plan-period, at an annual average of 20 dwellings per annum);
- d) Development that comes forward on appropriate rural exception sites (Policy 28); and
- e) Housing for New Forest Commoners (Policy 29); Estate Workers (Policy 30) and tied agricultural dwellings (Policy 31).

7.11 In addition, the Authority awaits further details on proposals contained within the Housing and Planning Act 2016 for 'permission in principle' and a brownfield register which could result in further residential development in the National Park.

²⁰ Office National Statistics, 2011 Census data

Addressing the Needs of an Ageing Population

- 7.12 The New Forest Strategic Housing Area Assessment (2014) confirms that the population profile of the New Forest National Park is characterised by a noticeably older age structure than the surrounding county (Hampshire) and regional (South East) figures. The population of the National Park aged 60 and over has increased by 24% over the 2002 – 12 period with most age groups up to age 59 having decreased over the same time period. This trend is predicted to continue over the Plan-period.
- 7.13 The National Park Authority recognises the importance of supporting the housing needs of an ageing population and, within the context of National Park designation and other housing policies in this plan, considers it is important that opportunities should be taken to address the local need for specialist housing for older people. The provision of new specialist accommodation for older people will therefore be supported within the four defined villages as shown on the Policies Map. Extensions to existing specialist accommodation will be supported providing it can be achieved in a satisfactory manner within the existing site.

Size of New Dwellings

- 7.14 Paragraph 50 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends; and identify the size of housing that is required, reflecting local demand.
- 7.15 The New Forest Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (2014) identifies a clear need for smaller homes within the National Park, with the vast majority of local housing need being in the 1 – 3 bedroom dwelling categories. The Assessment concludes that in the National Park - where the level of housing development is likely to be restricted - consideration should be given to focusing delivery towards smaller properties. This conclusion reflects the demographic profile of the National Park and also the existing stock of dwellings within the New Forest which is heavily skewed towards larger, detached properties.
- 7.16 In response to the clear evidence on local needs relating to dwelling size, Policy 19 therefore proposes a maximum floor area on the size of new dwellings to ensure that the new housing delivered addresses the identified local housing needs as much as possible. This approach is adopted within other English National Parks in response to the finite land resource for new development and the clear need to target new development towards meeting the identified local housing needs (given that the majority of the housing stock for the National Park in 2036 already exists).

Policy 19: The size of new dwellings

To ensure the dwelling stock of the New Forest as a whole is balanced, new dwellings permitted in the National Park will have a maximum total internal habitable floor area of 100 square metres. Where permission is granted for new dwellings of up to 100 square metres, a condition will be attached removing permitted development rights in respect of extensions.

This policy applies to applications resulting in net new dwellings. Proposals for replacement dwellings will be assessed against Policy 35 and proposals for commoner's dwellings, Estate Workers dwellings and agricultural / forestry workers dwellings will be assessed against their specific policies.

Housing Site Allocations

- 7.17 In response to the requirements of national planning policy introduced in 2012, the Authority has concluded that in updating the local planning policies for the Park:
- the boundaries of the four defined villages should be reviewed²¹; and
 - positive land use allocations within the National Park should be considered for the first time since the Park was designated in 2005.
- 7.18 To inform this, the Authority undertook a 'Call for Sites' exercise in 2015 which assessed a wide range of potential development sites for housing, employment and gypsy and traveller use. All of the sites submitted, as well as those identified through other sources, have been assessed against a range of relevant criteria, including an assessment of the services and facilities within settlements across the whole of the Park. This has all been undertaken within the context of considering development within a landscape that has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty due to its National Park status. In addition, the New Forest includes a wealth of internationally protected habitats and the potential impacts of the proposed housing allocations will be considered through a detailed Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that will inform the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan. Work will continue in assessing the deliverability of sites put forward to inform the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017.
- 7.19 The following section of the Plan proposes the allocation of a number of sites for new housing within the National Park. The distribution of these sites is in accordance with the spatial strategy for the Park which seeks to direct new development towards the most sustainable locations. Having assessed sites within and adjacent to the four defined villages, the Authority has also considered sites within and adjacent to the other larger settlements in the National Park. Further details on the Authority's assessment of all of the sites submitted can be found in the separate 'Call for Sites' evidence base document.

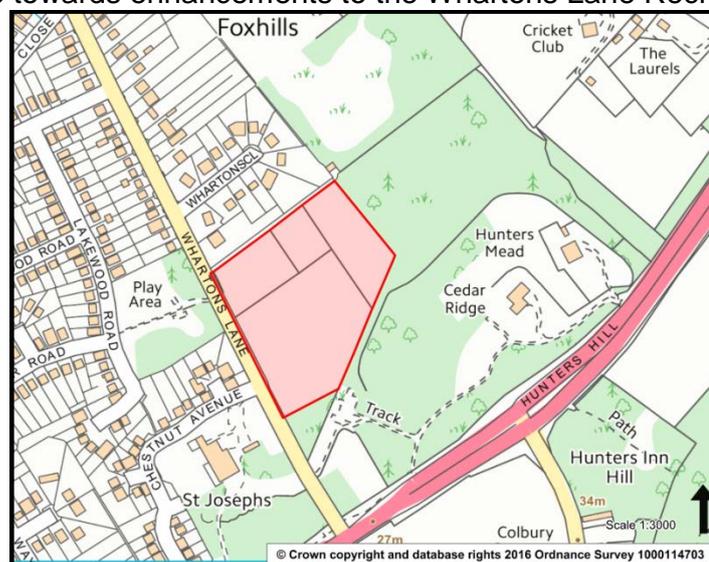
²¹ The defined village boundaries for the villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway have not been reviewed since they were established in the 1980s and 1990s.

Ashurst

- 7.20 Over the last decade the village of Ashurst (2,100 residents) has seen significantly fewer residential completions than the other defined villages, with less than 20 net new dwellings accommodated since the National Park was designated in 2006. The assessment of the defined village boundary of Ashurst concluded that there is limited scope for new development to the south of the A35 and north of the main railway line. Land may become available at the Ashurst Hospital site during the Plan-period, but there is no certainty around this and the Authority is keen to ensure the continued viability of the hospital.
- 7.21 Consequently attention has focused on the east of the village, which is less constrained by the range of national and international habitat designations that cover the Open Forest to the west of Ashurst. In doing so consideration has also been given to the adopted Ashurst Village Design Statement (formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in June 2013) which highlights the value residents of Ashurst place on the greenfield land around the edge of the village. The Village Design Statement expresses the desire to prevent the development of these greenfield areas which provide a natural boundary between Ashurst and West Totton.
- 7.22 Land off Whartons Lane has been put forward through the 'Call for Sites' exercise. The site is well screened by mature trees and therefore the potential development of this site would not open up adjacent fields for larger scale development. The site is considered to be well located for the facilities of Ashurst and would not reduce the gap between the village and the National Park boundary to the east.

Policy 20 – Land at Whartons Lane, Ashurst

It is proposed to allocate 2.5 hectares of land to the east of Whartons Lane in Ashurst – illustrated below – for the development of up to 50 dwellings. Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to maximise the delivery of affordable housing on site; respect the amenity of the dwellings adjoining the site in Whartons Close; and contribute towards enhancements to the Whartons Lane Recreation Ground.

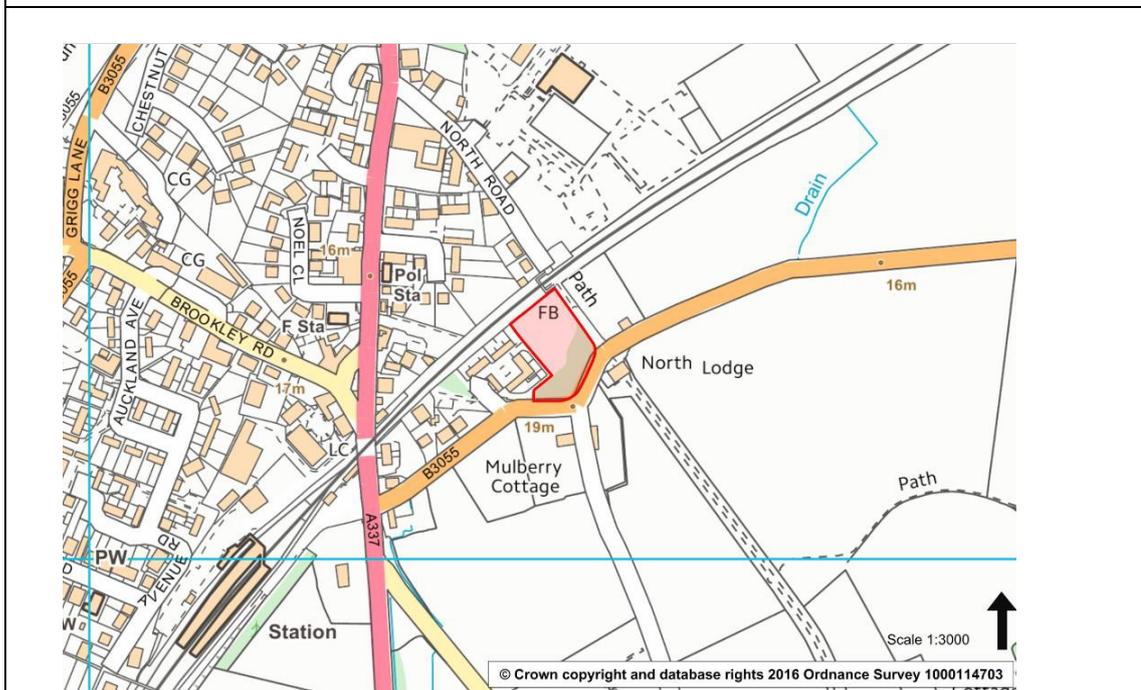


Brockenhurst

- 7.23 Of the four defined villages in the New Forest National Park, Brockenhurst (population 3,500 people) is possibly the most constrained by international habitat designations and significant areas at risk from flooding. Consequently there is limited scope for reviewing the defined village boundary, although there remain opportunities for the small-scale development within the defined village boundary.
- 7.24 Land at Mill Lane in Brockenhurst was developed as a rural exception site in 2006 and Hampshire County Council own adjoining land that has the potential to deliver further development to meet local housing needs arising in the parish.

Policy 21 - Land at Mill Lane, Brockenhurst

It is proposed to allocate 0.4 hectares of land at Mill Lane in Brockenhurst – illustrated below – for the development of around 11 dwellings. New development in this location would be expected to maximise the delivery of on-site affordable housing; provide secure pedestrian access to the village centre; respect the amenity of the existing dwellings adjoining the site in Vinneys Close; and respect the predominantly rural character of the area in terms of the scale, form and mass of new development.



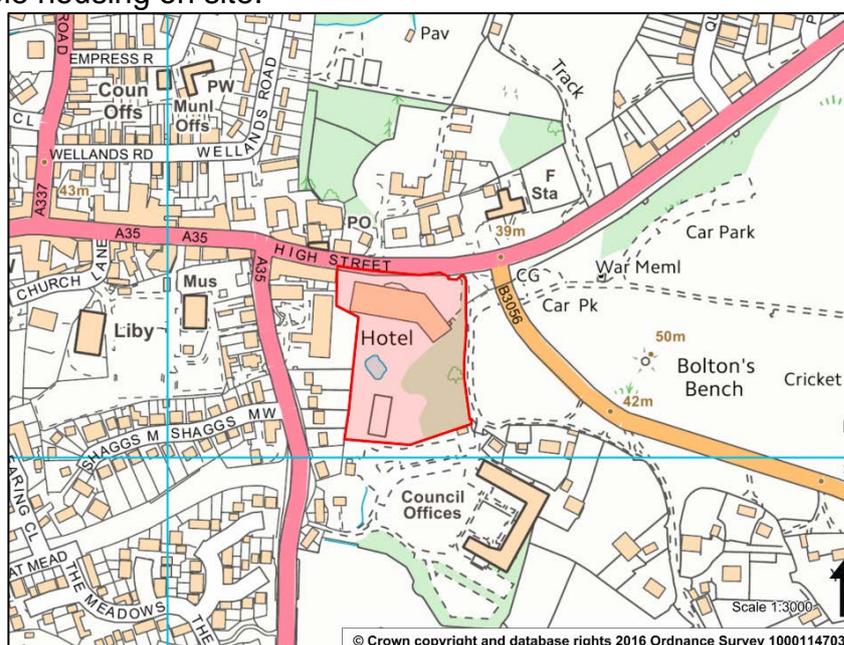
Lyndhurst

- 7.25 The village of Lyndhurst (population 3,200 people) has the widest range of services and facilities of the settlements within the New Forest National Park. The village has a strong built heritage focused on the High Street, but is also affected by traffic congestion, with the village centre covered by a designated Air Quality Management Zone.
- 7.26 The defined village boundary of Lyndhurst was established in the 1980s and has not been reviewed since. In response to the requirements of the NPPF a review of the defined village boundary has been undertaken which has identified land at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel as the main area with some development potential. The Lyndhurst Park Hotel site represents one of the largest brownfield sites within the National Park and is located at a prominent gateway into the village, on the edge of the Lyndhurst Conservation Area and linking the High Street with the popular Bolton's Bench area. The future redevelopment of this site would be required to respect these site specific factors.

Policy 22 – Land at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel, Lyndhurst

It is proposed to allocate 1.6 hectares of land at the site of the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel – illustrated below – for a mixed use development including retail, employment-generating uses and residential. The residential element of the site has the potential for around 30 dwellings. The proposed mixed use allocation reflects the site's relationship with the High Street in the village.

Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to comprise a comprehensive redevelopment of the site; enhance the Lyndhurst Conservation Area through a landmark development; ensure that there is an active High Street frontage at ground floor level including potentially retail use and floorspace for smaller businesses; retain the important trees on the site and maximise the delivery of affordable housing on site.



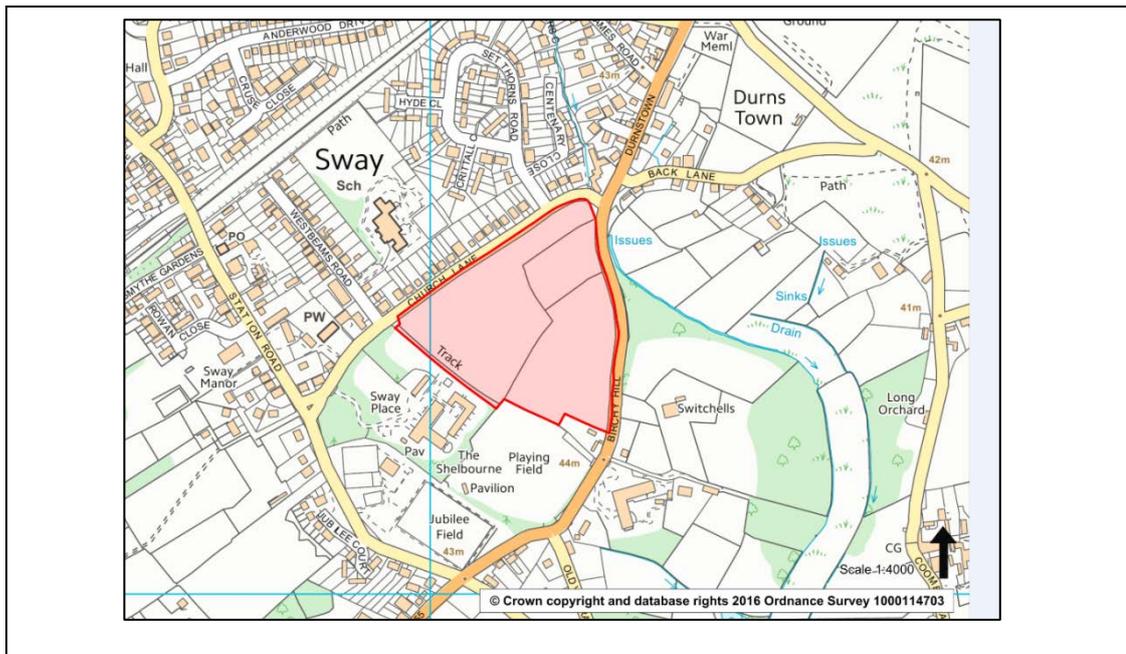
Sway

- 7.27 The village of Sway (population 2,700) includes a station on the main railway line and a modest range of services, local shops, businesses and accommodation. The Sway Village Design Statement (VDS) was formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Document in 2013 following extensive public consultation. The VDS identifies Jubilee Field as a major open space asset to the village and includes a guideline that any new development should take into account the inclusion of public open space provision. The VDS also states that the preservation of the valued open spaces within the village is a high priority, including the fields between Church Lane and Birchy Hill, which are also identified as one of the key views in the village.
- 7.28 The defined village boundary of Sway was identified in the 1980s and has not been reviewed since. With international nature conservation designations adjoining the village boundaries to the north and the east the only real area of potential is to the south and west of the village, which is also located closer to the services in the village centre. A Housing Needs Survey for the Parish in 2013 identified a significant local housing need for 98 dwellings.
- 7.29 Land to the south of Church Lane in Sway has been proposed through the 'Call for Sites' exercise as having the potential to make a significant contribution towards meeting local housing needs, as well deliver further community benefits through enabling the extension of the public open space provision at Jubilee Field. However, there is some conflict between the potential development of this site to meet local housing needs and the aims of the VDS outlined in paragraph 7.24. The area also suffers from problems caused by school parking in the Church Lane and Westbeams Road area and there may be scope to potentially address this issue through future development south of Church Lane.

Policy 23 – Land south of Church Lane, Sway

4.8 hectares of land south of Church Lane in Sway has been put forward for residential use – as illustrated below. The site has the potential to accommodate up to 90 dwellings and facilitate the extension of the Jubilee Field public open space.

Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to maximise the delivery of affordable housing on site; deliver wider community benefits through the extension of the Jubilee Field public open space (and potentially the relocation of the existing sports pitches from the Open Forest); be informed by a detailed transport assessment which focuses on the local road network and includes consideration of the role the site could have in helping to alleviate traffic issues related to the adjacent school; and respect the predominantly rural character of this part of the village and National Park in terms of the scale, form and mass of new development;



7.30 As well as assessing the capacity of the defined villages, the Authority has considered the potential of other settlements to accommodate small-scale development. Although there is no formal ‘second tier’ of settlements within the Park, current policies support appropriate rural exceptions schemes in settlements with basic local services across the National Park. An assessment of the services available in settlements across the Park highlights that a number of villages – including Burley, Cadnam, East Boldre, Landford and Woodgreen – have a basic range of services available. **The review of the Local Plan provides an opportunity to positively identify sites in these other villages that could contribute towards meeting local housing needs and this process will continue prior to the publication of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017.** Set out on the next few pages are the potential sites identified to date.

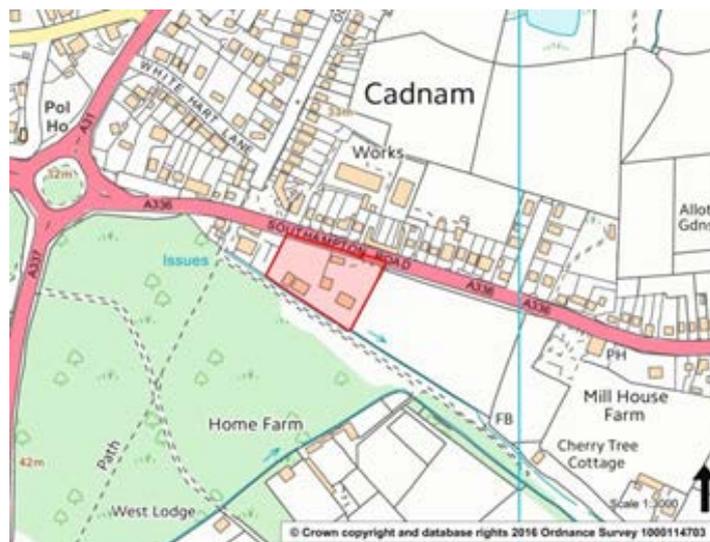
Cadnam

- 7.31 The village of Cadnam has a basic range of services including a village shop, petrol station, primary school, public house, church and garage. Although previous Inspector's Reports into development plans for the area have concluded that the village should not be elevated to the status of a 'defined village', it does have some of the services and facilities that other more rural parts of the Forest lack. In 2014 a Housing Needs Survey was undertaken which identified a significant local housing need in the Parish. The survey concluded that a small (10 – 15 unit) housing scheme should be supported.
- 7.32 Land at 'The Yews', Southampton Road, Cadnam has been put forward through the 'Call for Sites' process. This is a brownfield site comprising a range of current uses including car sales and a mobile home, with an existing access off Southampton Road. Further work on the development potential of the site will be undertaken and at this stage the Authority would expect any redevelopment of the site to include an element of employment use.

Policy 24 – Land at 'The Yews', Southampton Road, Cadnam

It is proposed to allocate 0.4 hectares of land at 'the Yews', Southampton Road, Cadnam, for a mixed use redevelopment including employment and residential. The residential element of the site has the potential for around 12 dwellings.

Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to involve the comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site; include an element of employment generated use on the Southampton Road frontage; and maximise the delivery of affordable housing on site.

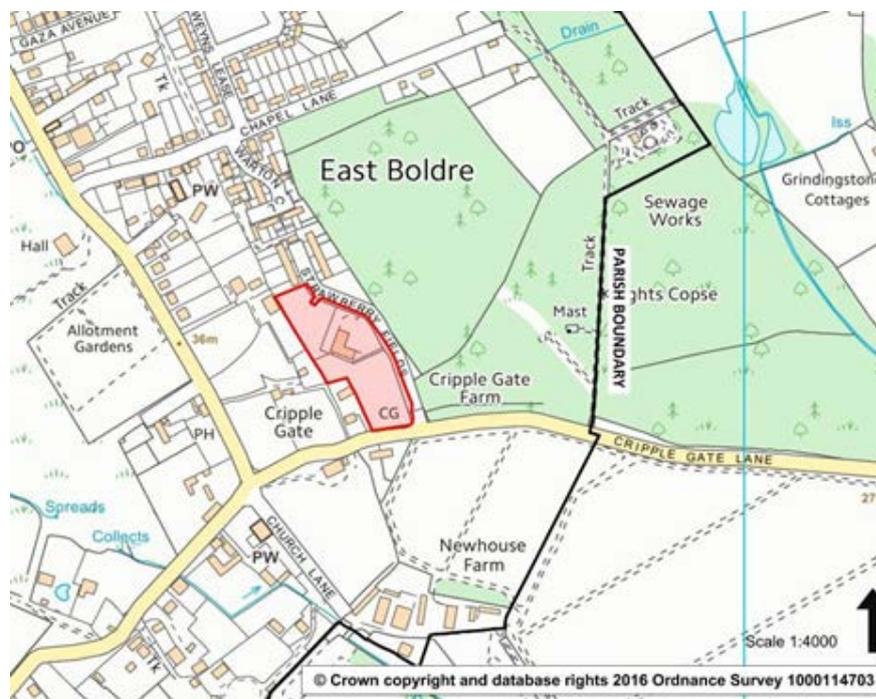


East Boldre

- 7.33 The village of East Boldre is one the larger villages within the National Park outside of the four defined villages and has a range of local services, including two public houses, two village halls, a shop and post office, garage and recreation ground. The village is located close to the Open Forest in the core of the National Park. The 'Call for Sites' process identified two potential infill sites within the built up part of the village that were put forward by the respective landowners and already each have an existing highway access and limited views from the wider National Park landscape. It is therefore proposed that two small sites are allocated within the village, as set out below.

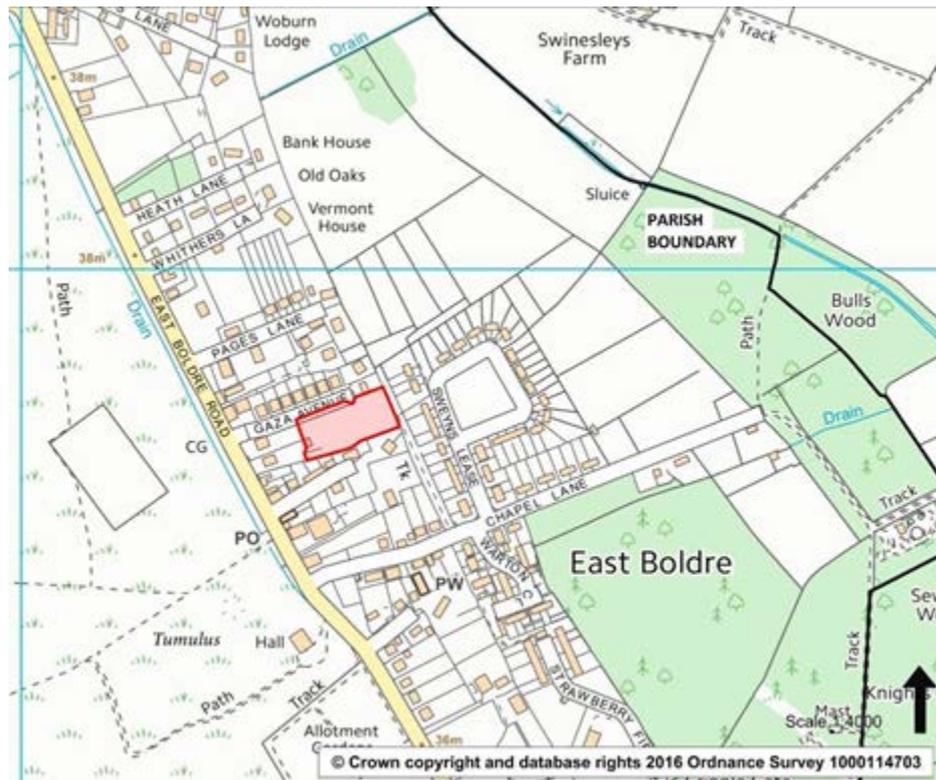
Policy 25 – Land at Strawberry Fields, East Boldre

It is proposed to allocate 1.0 hectares of land at the Strawberry Fields in East Boldre – illustrated below – for the development of around 20 dwellings. Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to include consideration of whether the East Boldre Sports and Social Club should be relocated within the locality; maximise the delivery of affordable housing on site; and respect the rural character of East Boldre in terms of the scale, form and mass of new development.



Policy 26 – Land at Gaza Avenue, East Boldre

It is proposed to allocate 0.4 hectares of land at the Gaza Avenue in East Boldre – illustrated below – for the development of around 12 dwellings. Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to maximise the delivery of affordable housing on site; and respect the amenity of the existing dwellings adjoining the site in Gaza Avenue and Matthews Lane.



Windfall Development

- 7.34 Successive local plans for the New Forest have not included specific housing allocations. Instead appropriate development proposals have been supported within the main villages as ‘windfall developments’ – sites not specifically allocated for housing or identified in a Housing Land Availability Assessment – and on rural exception sites and through the delivery of specialist housing (e.g. commoners dwellings, tied agricultural dwellings).
- 7.35 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities can make an allowance for windfall sites if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. Any windfall allowance should have regard to historic windfall rates and expected future trends and development on windfall sites will contribute towards meeting the identified housing requirement.

- 7.36 Evidence from the monitoring of dwelling completions in the National Park over the last decade highlights the consistent delivery of housing on windfall sites. A total of 219 additional dwellings have been completed within the New Forest between 2006 (when the National Park Authority assumed its planning responsibilities) and 2016 on unallocated ‘windfall sites’ (in addition, 20 dwellings have been delivered on rural exceptions sites). This equates to an annual average of 22 dwellings per annum and justifies the inclusion of a windfall allowance within the draft Local Plan.
- 7.37 This draft Plan includes an estimated future figure of 20 dwellings per annum from windfall developments, including dwellings delivered through the Permitted Development route which have increased in recent years through the office-to-residential rights. The estimate of 20 dwellings per annum acknowledges that the historic level of windfall development in the National Park since 2006 includes dwellings delivered under the inherited Test Valley and Salisbury District (as was) local plans which formed part of the statutory development plan for the Park between 2006 and 2010, and these have been discounted to give a windfall allowance lower than the historic trend of the last decade.

Affordable Housing

- 7.38 The provision of affordable housing in the New Forest is consistently raised as one of the biggest challenges facing local communities in the Park. As already outlined, the Government’s National Parks Vision & Circular (2010) states that national park authorities have an important role to play in the delivery of affordable housing and the Local Plan should include policies that pro-actively respond to local needs.
- 7.39 The NPPF requires local planning authorities, through the Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment, to identify the range of types and sized of accommodation likely to be needed by the population in future. The SHMA analysis shows the need for 84 affordable dwellings per year within the New Forest National Park. The Assessment of affordable housing needs indicates that in delivery affordable units, a strategic policy target of 25% intermediate and 75% social / affordable rent would be appropriate. Given the identified local need for affordable housing, the SHMA concludes that the Authority is *“...justified in seeking to secure the maximum viable level of affordable housing in future.”*
- 7.40 National planning policy also requires planning authorities to balance meeting local affordable housing needs with the economic viability of development²². To ensure viability, the costs of any affordable housing requirements applied to development should provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable. It is clear that in reviewing the local planning policies for the National Park, the revised Local Plan should seek to maximise the delivery of affordable housing within the context of national planning policy. The

²² paragraph 173, NPPF

Submission draft Local Plan, which is due to be published in summer 2017, will be informed by a viability assessment as required by the NPPF.

- 7.41 Following legal challenges, changes to the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) introduced in May 2016 have set a dwelling threshold for affordable housing requirements on new development sites, below which affordable housing cannot be sought. This threshold excludes rural exceptions sites. The NPPG allows national park authorities to choose to apply a lower threshold of 5 units and if this threshold is applied the NPPG states, “...*local planning authorities should only seek affordable housing contributions from developments between 6 and 10 units as financial contributions and not affordable housing units on site.*” The New Forest National Park Authority chose to implement this lower threshold in May 2016 due to the significant contribution of small sites to affordable housing delivery.
- 7.42 The National Park Authority has an existing framework in place for seeking financial contributions towards affordable housing. The level of financial contributions sought from developments of between 6 and 10 residential units (net) will be determined prior to the publication of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017. As is currently the case, developers and landowners are expected to consider the overall cost of development prior to negotiating the sale or purchase of land.

Policy 27 – Affordable Housing provision within the defined villages

A target of at least 50%* of all net dwellings developed within the defined village boundaries of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway will be provided as affordable homes to meet local needs. In practice:

- a) On developments of 5 dwellings or less (net) and with a combined gross floorspace of less than 500 square metres no affordable housing will be sought.
- b) On developments of between 6 and 10 units and with a maximum combined gross floorspace of less than 1,000 square metres, a financial contribution towards affordable housing provision off-site will be required.
- c) On development sites of 11 dwellings or more (net) or with a maximum combined gross floorspace greater than 1,000 square metres, affordable housing provision will be made on-site.

The layout and design of affordable housing will be appropriately integrated into each development.

The tenure (social and affordable rented, intermediate, shared ownership and other) of affordable homes will be based on up-to-date evidence of local needs. A suitable mix will be determined through liaison with the local housing authority.

* 50% is the affordable housing target in the existing Core Strategy for the Park. The affordable housing target in the Submission draft Local Plan will be informed by a viability assessment.

Alternative Option: The Authority's preferred policy option is to seek to maximise the delivery of affordable housing on sites within the National Park within the parameters set by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). An alternative option would be to continue to adopt a zero site size threshold (i.e. seek affordable housing on all residential development sites) as justified by the profile of development within the New Forest National Park and potentially supported by the Court of Appeal's judgement in May which stated,

"...although it would normally be inappropriate to require any affordable housing or social infrastructure contributions on sites below the thresholds stated, local circumstances may justify lower (or no) thresholds as an exception to the national policy...if in future an LPA submits for examination local plan policies with thresholds below those in the national policy, the Inspector will consider whether the LPA's evidence base and local circumstances justify the LPA's proposed thresholds. If he concludes that they do and the local plan policy is adopted, then more weight will be given to it than to the new national policy in subsequent decisions on planning applications."

Rural Exception Sites

- 7.43 The NPPF confirms that in rural areas authorities should plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites. Rural exception sites have the potential to provide an important source of affordable housing to meet local needs on land that would not normally be used for housing. The existing Core Strategy (2010) supports the principle of rural exception sites in appropriate locations across the New Forest National Park.
- 7.44 Paragraph 54 of the NPPF has changed the definition of rural exception sites to allow, at the National Park Authority's discretion, for small numbers of market homes where essential to enable the delivery of significant additional affordable housing. However, given the reduction in affordable housing delivery within the defined villages through changes in national planning policy, draft Policy 28 proposes to retain the existing approach of seeking 100% affordable housing on rural exception sites.
- 7.45 The National Park Authority is part of the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) which seeks to address the need for affordable housing in rural villages across Hampshire. The Authority will continue to work with HARAH and local communities across the National Park to identify suitable affordable housing exceptions sites.

Policy 28 – Rural Exceptions Sites

Small-scale affordable housing developments may be permitted as “exceptions” on sites in or adjoining villages to meet the identified needs of local people in these areas. Proposals for exceptions sites should:

- a) meet a particular local need that cannot be accommodated in any other way;
- b) be subject to a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) to ensure that the dwellings provide for low- cost housing for local needs in perpetuity; and
- c) be capable of management by an appropriate body, for example a Registered Social Landlord, the Authority, or a village trust or similar accredited local organisation; and
- d) be located where there are appropriate local facilities (e.g. shops, schools and public transport).

The expectation is that 100% of the housing on rural exception sites will be affordable housing.

Alternative Option: The Authority's preferred option is to continue to seek 100% affordable housing on rural exceptions sites. An alternative option to this would be to enable an element of open market housing on rural exception sites.

Commoners Dwellings

7.46 The *New Forest Commoning Review* (2007) states that the lack of affordable housing for commoners could be the single largest threat to sustaining commoning in the future. The Authority is committed to supporting commoning through the Commoners' Dwelling Scheme (CDS), which was originally established in 1992 to provide a mechanism by which commoners could enter into an appropriate legal agreement to meet the requirement for obtaining planning permission to build dwellings from which they could common. The existing local planning policies for the National Park (contained within the Core Strategy, 2010) support appropriate proposals for commoners' dwellings, as did successive local plans prepared by the predecessor planning authorities.

7.47 Since its inception in 1992, the CDS has delivered 18 new homes for commoners across the New Forest, and in most cases, this has also included associated farm buildings to help establish viable new commoners' holdings. The CDS was last reviewed in 2011 and is administered by the Authority. It consists of a three stage process:

- (i) Stage One is the consideration of an applicant's commoning history and need for housing. This is undertaken by a Commoners' Dwelling Scheme Panel which includes representatives from the CDA and the Verderers as well as the Authority. The Panel assesses an applicant's eligibility and makes a recommendation as to whether the application is within or without the remit of the Scheme.
- (ii) Stage Two is the determination of the planning application by the Authority within the policies of the adopted Local Plan. If the Authority is minded to grant consent, the application proceeds to Stage Three.
- (iii) Stage Three is the completion of various legal agreements, obligations, transfer and leasing arrangements to ensure that the property remains available for commoning in perpetuity.

7.48 In reviewing the local planning policies for the Park, the Authority believes it would be beneficial to include a separate policy on commoners' dwellings, rather than including it within the general policy on affordable housing. This reflects the specific factors that must be considered when assessing proposals for commoners' dwellings. For example, in order to guarantee the long term availability of dwellings built for commoners under this scheme, applicants will be required to enter into legal agreements, and to demonstrate a long term personal and family commitment to the exercising (or use) of common grazing rights on the New Forest. The Authority will also encourage proposals for commoners' dwellings to consider the re-use of existing buildings where appropriate.

7.49 As part of the local plan review the Authority also wishes to consider whether the CDS could be extended to include provision of rented accommodation to better assist commoners on lower incomes.

Policy 29 – New Forest Commoners Dwellings

Exceptionally dwellings to meet the specific needs for New Forest Commoners may be permitted outside an existing settlement. As with other new dwellings in the National Park, the habitable floorspace of the dwelling should not exceed 100 square metres.

Applicants for commoners' dwellings must fulfil the requirements of the Commoners Dwelling Scheme. This includes demonstrating:

- a) an established recent history of active commoning;
- b) why they cannot common from their exiting property; and
- c) that they do not have access to a property from which they can carry out their commoning.

Applicants will be required to sign a legal agreement to ensure the dwellings remains in use for commoning in perpetuity.

Estate Workers Dwellings

- 7.50 Outside the Crown Lands at the core of the New Forest, the National Park is characterised by a number of large land-owning Estates including Beaulieu, Cadland, Exbury and Meyrick. Between them the larger Estates in the New Forest manage a significant area of the Park and play an important role in the conservation of the landscape and cultural heritage of the New Forest, as well as the development of a sustainable rural economy. However, given the increasingly broad range of work undertaken by Estate Workers, many are ineligible for agricultural or forestry worker dwellings.
- 7.51 The review of the local planning policies for the National Park is an opportunity to recognise the role large landowners play in the delivery of the two statutory National Park purposes and related socio-economic duty. Draft Policy 30 (below) therefore encourages the production of Estate Plans to inform the consideration of development proposals within the larger Estates. This allows a comprehensive picture of the whole Estate to be shared and helps place individual development proposals within their wider context.
- 7.52 Where the need for additional development is identified through an Authority endorsed Estate Plan, the Authority would encourage the re-use of existing buildings as a first preference. Where small-scale new housing is proposed (either through new build or a change of use) occupancy will be controlled through the use of appropriate planning conditions and/or planning obligations. In considering proposals for new build dwellings for Estate workers the National Park Authority will need to be satisfied that there is no existing accommodation potentially available, or that the conversion / change of use of existing buildings is not a viable alternative. In accordance with Policy 19, the floorspace of new dwellings will be a maximum of 100 square metres.

Policy 30 – New Forest Estate Workers Dwellings

Development proposals - including small-scale housing through the conversion or change of use of existing buildings as the first preference, and then new build - within the larger Estates of the New Forest National Park will be supported where:

- a) The development proposals comply with other relevant policies in this Plan and are part of an comprehensive Estate Plan endorsed by the Authority;
- b) The development proposals as part of an agreed Estate Plan deliver multiple benefits in line with the purposes, duty and special qualities of the National Park;
- c) The housing is subject to an occupancy condition and remains available for Estate's Workers in perpetuity; and
- d) No other dwellings on the Estate have been recently sold or let to non Estate workers.

For the purposes of applying this policy, small-scale housing schemes should not exceed a maximum of 3 units.

Agricultural and Forestry Workers Dwellings

- 7.53 National planning policy has long acknowledged that certain agricultural and forestry activities may require a worker to live close to the site. Where this is justified, it is crucial that any housing provided is subject to strict criteria and conditions to ensure they are only use for the accommodation of essential workers.
- 7.54 Agricultural and forestry workers' dwellings will not be permitted on holdings where other dwellings on or closely connected with that holding have recently been disposed of, for example, by sale or by removal of restrictive conditions so that the dwelling can be let out on the open rental market.
- 7.55 The proposed size restriction of 100 square metres is consistent with draft Policy 19 and seeks to ensure that the size of a worker's dwelling is commensurate with the needs of the holding. Applicants seeking additional accommodation will be expected to justify their special need. Permitted development rights to provide further accommodation will normally be removed by condition.

Policy 31 – Agricultural and Forestry Workers Dwellings

Permission will be granted for an agricultural or forestry worker's dwelling provided:

- a) The nature of the work concerned makes it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, the site of their work;
- b) The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned;
- c) no other dwellings either on or closely connected to the holding/enterprise have been sold separately or in some way alienated from the holding/ enterprise;
- d) the size of the proposed dwelling would not result in a total habitable floorspace exceeding 100 square metres; and
- e) where practicable and appropriate first consideration has been given to the conversion of an existing building under the terms of Policy 48.

Where evidence of the financial soundness and future sustainability of the holding/enterprise appears inconclusive, consideration may be given to permitting a caravan or other temporary accommodation for a limited period of time in order to provide time for the viability of the holding / enterprise to be proven.

Removal of Agricultural Occupancy Conditions

- 7.56 There are some 100 dwellings in the New Forest National Park that are subject to agricultural occupancy conditions. These dwellings have usually only been supported due to a particular agricultural need and they are located in areas where planning permission would not usually be granted for housing.
- 7.57 A more detailed development management policy on the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions is justified to ensure that dwellings which have been permitted specifically to meet the needs of the rural economy normally remain available for that purpose. It relates not only to the needs of the particular holding but includes the general need for workers' dwellings in the surrounding area.

Policy 32 - Removal of Agricultural Occupancy Conditions

An occupancy condition restricting the occupancy of a dwelling to a person solely, mainly or last working in agriculture or forestry will not be removed unless the Authority is satisfied that the long term need for the dwelling has ceased and there is no evidence of a continuing need for housing for persons employed or last employed in the locality in these categories or practising commoning.

- 7.58 In order to demonstrate that the long term agricultural need for the dwelling has ceased the applicant will normally be expected to show that appropriate steps have been taken to try to sell the property with the occupancy condition intact and that marketing has been correctly targeted, financially realistic and sustained. This would be expected to include:
- contacting other local land and estate owners in the vicinity of the dwelling to establish whether they require further accommodation either presently or in the near future.
 - the property being placed with local estate agents and advertised locally for at least a 12-month period at a price reflecting the occupancy condition (typically no more than 70% of the deemed open market value).
 - the property being advertised widely in local newspapers and appropriate publications including specialist trade organisation journals; and
 - Contacting the Commoners Defence Association to establish whether the property would meet the requirements of a New Forest commoner in housing need.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 7.59 Local communities across the National Park have the option of preparing their own Neighbourhood Plans should they chose to. Neighbourhood Plans can be as broad or narrow in scope as the local communities wish and the Authority will work positively with any of the 37 town and parish councils within the National Park who chose to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. The allocation of further land to deliver affordable housing within settlements in the National Park in accordance with the strategic policies in the Local Plan is an option that could be taken forward through neighbourhood planning.

Self / Custom Build

- 7.60 The Government wants to enable more people to build and own their own home. All relevant authorities are required by the [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#) to maintain a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire a serviced plot for self-building. The register will be used to help identify and address the local need for housing in the National Park.
- 7.61 The Government defines custom build housing as either a builder being contracted by a home owner to create a 'custom built' home or where a private individual builds their own home as a 'self-build'. The National Park Authority has established a self-build register of people interested in self-build or custom build. The register will be used to help identify and address the local need for housing. Some of the sites assessed through the 'Call for Sites' process may be appropriate for small self-build schemes.

Alternative Options: One option considered by other local planning authorities is to allow self-build housing on rural exception sites. However, this is not supported by the Authority on the basis that self-build housing does not comply with the NPPF definition of affordable housing and would be unlikely to remain affordable to meet local needs in perpetuity.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 7.62 The New Forest has a long and rich heritage of travelling communities and their needs are recognised in national planning policy. The Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) outlines the overarching aim to ensure the fair and equal treatment of gypsies and travellers in a way that facilities their traditional way of life while respecting the interests of the settled community.
- 7.63 National policy requires local planning authorities to assess the need for gypsy and traveller provision using robust evidence. National policy also makes it clear that, as with any other forms of development, planning permission should only be granted in National Parks where it is demonstrated

that the objectives of the designation will not be compromised by the development. It also confirms that planning authorities should strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside away from existing settlements. The Hampshire Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (2013) covers the whole of the New Forest National Park (including the Wiltshire part of the Park). The Assessment concluded that there was a need for two additional pitches within the National Park.

- 7.64 An update to this study is currently in the process of being undertaken and the updated study (which may amend the identified need figure for the Park) will be taken into account in preparing the Submission draft Local Plan for consultation in 2017. At this point the Authority's preferred approach is to positively allocate land to meet the identified need for gypsy and traveller sites; and to support this with criteria based policy should further proposals come forward. Any planning permission granted will include a planning condition or obligation to ensure that the occupancy of the site is limited to persons able to demonstrate an essential need for the accommodation.

Policy 33 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The existing site at 'Forest View' in Landford - illustrated below – is allocated for two permanent gypsy and traveller pitches (a net gain of one pitch). Detailed proposals for the site are still to be worked up and new development in this location would be expected to include a detailed landscape plan (rather than hard landscaping, high walls and fencing) to positively enhance the site and its surroundings within the National Park; and ensure the amenity of surrounding land uses is protected.



In addition to this proposed allocation, further proposals for the provision of permanent and / or transit accommodation to meet an established need of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople will be supported within the National Park where it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the site to be located within the National Park; and

- a) the impact of the site on the landscape character of the National Park is acceptable;
- b) the site is well located on the highway network and will not result in a level of traffic generation inappropriate for the roads in the National Park;
- c) there are adequate on-site facilities for parking and storage;
- d) in the case of any permanent site, be located where there are appropriate local facilities (e.g. shops, schools and public transport); and
- e) the site does not detrimentally affect the amenities of surrounding occupiers.

Alternative Option: The Authority's preferred approach is to positively respond to the requirements of national planning policy and identify an appropriate site for gypsy and traveller use. An up to date assessment of need will inform the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan in 2017. An alternative option would be to continue the current planning policy approach of not identifying specific sites within the New Forest National Park for gypsy and traveller use, and instead rely on a criteria based policy to assess site specific proposals that come forward through the development control process

7.65 The following draft policies on residential development, replacement dwellings, extensions to dwellings and outbuildings reflect the local importance of these issues and the cumulative impact such development can have on the National Park. The policies in this draft Local Plan are based on those contained within the existing Core Strategy (2010) and aim to protect the special qualities of the New Forest, while also recognising the need for development to meet the needs of local communities.

Residential Density within the Defined Villages

7.66 The NPPF highlights the great importance the Government attaches to the built environment and the need to plan positively for the achievement of high quality development. Paragraph 58 of the NPPF confirms that local plans should aim to ensure that development responds to local character and seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

7.67 This is particularly pertinent within the main villages of the New Forest National Park. The four defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway are small in size (all less than 3,500 residents) and are an important part of the New Forest landscape. Many of the residential

areas within these villages are spacious in character and distinguished by mature trees and gardens, which make an important contribution to the quality and character of the villages in which they are situated. It is essential that general pressure for development within the Park does not lead to inappropriate and high density development in the main villages. It is therefore important that proposals for infilling and redevelopment within the villages respond to the local character and reflect the local development densities where appropriate.

Policy 34 - Residential Density in the Defined Villages

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the built heritage of the defined villages, development densities within the villages must be informed by consideration of the character of the local area. The four defined villages are rural areas often characterised by spacious residential plots set within mature landscapes, and development densities should reflect the strong built heritage of the villages and their location within a nationally protected landscape.

Replacement Dwellings

- 7.68 The Authority continues to receive a significant number of planning applications for replacement dwellings in the National Park. To address concerns raised regarding the long term urbanisation and the erosion of local distinctiveness within the New Forest, as well as a reduction in the stock of smaller dwellings, successive local plans have sought to limit the impact of replacement dwellings through the use of appropriate planning policies.
- 7.69 The existing Core Strategy includes a detailed planning policy on replacement dwellings and this approach was endorsed by the Planning Inspector for the examination in public into the Core Strategy in 2010 who recognised the value of including a policy relating to replacement dwellings, especially in such a sensitive landscape as the New Forest National Park. Recent changes in national planning policy have not altered the protection afforded to the National Park, or the justification for such a policy.
- 7.70 In reviewing the local planning policies for the National Park it is clear that the concerns regarding the impact of large replacement dwelling on the character of the New Forest remain. It is therefore proposed to retain a detailed planning policy stating that replacement dwellings should be of a similar footprint, scale and size as the existing dwelling. As before the Authority will continue to impose appropriate planning conditions to remove permitted development rights to extend and/or alter the approved replacement dwelling to ensure that the stock of smaller dwellings in the Park is maintained.

Policy 35 - Replacement Dwellings

The replacement of existing dwellings will be permitted except where the existing dwelling:

- a) is the result of a temporary or series of temporary permissions or the result of an unauthorised use; or
- b) makes a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the locality.

A replacement dwelling may be sited other than in the same position as the dwelling to be replaced, providing that there are clear environmental benefits.

Caravans and mobile homes may not be replaced by permanent dwellings.

In the case of small dwellings and those permitted by Policies 19 – 30 of this Local Plan, replacement dwellings must not result in a total habitable floorspace exceeding 100 sq. metres and in the case of other dwellings outside the defined villages, the replacement dwelling should be of no greater floorspace than the existing dwelling. In exceptional circumstances, a larger dwelling may be permitted if it is essential to meet the genuine family needs of an occupier who works in the immediate locality. In respect of this exceptional circumstance, the maximum habitable floorspace of the replacement dwelling must not exceed 120 sq. metres.

- 7.71 This policy does not apply to former dwellings that have either been demolished or abandoned. Abandonment is likely to have occurred where there has been a deliberate intention to cease the residential use of the property by (i) leaving the dwelling vacant for a considerable period or (ii) allowing the dwelling to deteriorate to the extent that residential re-use would involve what would be tantamount to rebuilding or (iii) introducing a different use that supplants the earlier residential use.

Alternative options / variations on the Authority's preferred approach to replacement dwellings include:

- a) *A more subjective policy that places no specific restrictions on the size of replacement dwellings, instead requiring each proposal to be assessed on its site-specific merits.*
- b) *Extend the requirement for replacement dwellings to be of no greater floorspace than the existing dwellings to also cover the four defined villages.*
- c) *A more innovative policy approach which could allow the replacement of substantial dwellings with more than one smaller dwelling – effectively a “2 for 1 policy” – so long as there was no increase in floorspace. This could potentially increase the stock of smaller dwellings within the National Park in response to identified local needs. This could also be extended to the conversion of existing dwellings across the National Park.*

Extensions to Dwellings

- 7.72 Even with extended Permitted Development Rights, the Authority continues to receive a significant volume of applications each year for residential extensions. As with the concerns outlined above regarding replacement dwellings, proposals to continually extend dwellings in a nationally designated landscape such as the New Forest can affect the locally distinctive character of the New Forest. In addition, extensions can over time cause an imbalance in the range and mix of housing stock available. For these reasons it is considered important that the revised Local Plan continues to include a clear policy to guide decisions for extensions to dwellings. The Planning Inspector for the examination in public in 2010 into the Core Strategy concluded that the policy approach, “...strikes an appropriate balance between meeting changes in householder requirements whilst maintaining a stock of small-sized dwellings for the benefit of the wider Park community. Limiting the 30% restriction to dwellings outside the defined villages is justified as extensions in these locations are likely to have a greater impact upon the unspoilt qualities of the New Forest.”
- 7.73 The floorspace limitations proposed build on those contained within the existing Core Strategy for the National Park and are the maximum limit. The 30% limit is not an allowance or entitlement and it is important to emphasise that although an extension may comply with the criterion on size, there could be another harmful impact which would make the proposal unacceptable. In all cases, the Authority will have regard to the scale and character of the core element of the original dwelling (rather than subsequent additions) in determining whether or not an extension is sympathetic to the dwelling.

Policy 36 - Extensions to Dwellings

Extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted provided that they are appropriate to the existing dwelling and its curtilage.

In the case of small dwellings and new dwellings permitted by Policies 19 – 30 of this Local Plan, the extension must not result in a total habitable floorspace exceeding 100 sq. metres, and in the case of other dwellings (not small dwellings) outside the defined villages the extension must not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than 30%. In exceptional circumstances a larger extension may be permitted:

- a) to meet the genuine family needs of an occupier who works in the immediate locality; or
- b) to meet design considerations relating to the special character of the dwelling (e.g. listed buildings).

In respect of these exceptional circumstances, the maximum habitable floorspace of an extended small dwelling must not exceed 120 sq.metres.

In the case of agricultural or forestry workers' dwellings, the extension must not result in a total habitable floorspace exceeding 120 sq. metres.

Extensions will not be permitted where the existing dwelling is the result of a temporary or series of temporary permissions or the result of an unauthorised use.

7.74 Where necessary the Authority will use appropriate planning conditions to ensure that permitted extensions are not used in conjunction with national Permitted Development Rights to undermine the aims of this local planning policy.

7.75 For the purposes of applying Policies 35 and 36:

- **original dwelling** means the dwelling as first built;
- **existing dwelling** means the dwelling as it existed on 1 July 1982, or as the dwelling was originally built or legally established, if the residential use post-dates 1 July 1982;
- **small dwelling** means a dwelling with a floor area of 80 sq. metres or less as it existed on 1 July 1982, or as the dwelling was originally built or legally established, if the residential use post-dates 1 July 1982;
- **floorspace of original, existing and small dwellings** will be measured as the total internal habitable floorspace of the dwelling but will not include floorspace within conservatories²³, attached outbuildings and detached outbuildings (irrespective of whether the outbuilding's current use is as habitable floorspace);
- **floorspace of proposed extensions** will include conservatories and attached outbuildings and any habitable floorspace provided within a detached outbuilding;
- a **conservatory** is defined as having not less than three-quarters of the area of its roof and not less than one-half of the area of its external walls made of translucent material;
- a modest **basement** will not normally be regarded as habitable floorspace. However, some judgement will need to be applied in terms of whether it is genuinely a secondary space in association with the main dwelling. Key criteria to consider include availability of light; size (in relation to the main dwellings); access; use; layout and headroom. Basements to houses set into a hillside with any form of exposed elevation will usually be treated as habitable accommodation.
- **genuine family need** is defined as an exceptional and unique family need that could not have been reasonably anticipated at the time of purchase of the property. For example, additional floorspace may be required to cater for specialist equipment and facilities required in connection with an unforeseen event, such as a severe disability arising from an accident whilst in occupation of the property; but, it normally would not cater for the needs of growing families or the need to care for elderly relatives, as these needs are not considered to be so 'exceptional' as to warrant a departure from the floorspace restrictions set out in this policy.

Outbuildings

7.76 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010 there has remained considerable development pressure to provide for ever larger outbuildings. Concerns were raised during the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation in late 2015 that proposals for outbuildings are: (i) impacting on

²³ This only applies to conservatories in New Forest District that have previously been permitted as an 'exception' to policy and which are the subject of a planning condition that limits their use as a conservatory.

the character of the New Forest; (ii) increasingly being used to circumvent restrictions on residential extensions and replacement dwellings; (iii) taking up important amenity space, including parking provision, within the curtilage of dwellings and this is resulting in parking being pushed beyond sites onto protected verges; and (iv) resulting in the overdevelopment of sites.

- 7.77 The Authority will therefore continue to look to carefully control proposals for outbuildings through its Local Plan, while at the same time recognising the role of outbuildings in supporting home-working for example. The Authority will normally impose a planning condition limiting the use of the outbuilding to purposes incidental to the dwelling on the site and excluding any use as habitable floorspace.

Policy 37 – Outbuildings

Domestic outbuildings will be permitted where they:

- a) are proportionate and clearly subservient to the dwelling they are to serve in terms of scale, size, height and massing;
- b) are located within the residential curtilage;
- c) are required for purposes incidental to the use of the main dwelling;
- d) are not providing additional habitable accommodation; and
- e) will not reduce private amenity space – including parking provision - around the dwelling to an unacceptable level.

- 7.78 The use of outbuildings to support home working and home-based businesses will be considered acceptable where this does not involve a change of use of the main dwelling or have an adverse impact on the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers or the special qualities of the National Park.

Infrastructure Provision

- 7.79 New development, even on the relatively limited scale planned for in the National Park, can place extra demands on existing infrastructure. In such cases where it is not possible to make the necessary provision on site, the Authority will seek financial contributions from the developer in accordance with the framework provided by national planning policy and guidance. Within the context of the development that takes place within the National Park, developer contributions may be required towards highway works; affordable housing; education provision; recreation provision (including public open space enhancements); and nature conservation mitigation measures.
- 7.80 Following the recent introduction of further restrictions on the use on the use of Section 106 agreements to secure financial contributions towards local infrastructure, the Authority has revisited the merits of introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) within the National Park. The preparation of a Charging Schedule for the National Park will go through its own consultation and examination process and once in place will largely replace Section 106 agreements.

- 7.81 However, even with CIL in place there is likely to remain a role for Section 106 agreements in the future to: (i) secure necessary contributions towards infrastructure that cannot be funded through CIL (for example habitat mitigation measures that are not deemed ‘infrastructure’, such as ranger provision or an education campaign; and financial contributions towards affordable housing provision on sites of between 6 and 10 dwellings); and (ii) secure site specific contributions from individual developments for measures that do appear on the general Park-wide infrastructure list.

Policy 38 - Infrastructure Provision and Developer Contributions

Development proposals shall make provision for the infrastructure necessary to ensure that the development is acceptable in planning terms in the context of the New Forest National Park Local Plan. Where appropriate, financial contributions for the provision of infrastructure off-site will be sought.

Contributions will be secured through the appropriate mechanism – including the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 agreements – as required by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

In implementing this policy regard will be had to economic viability considerations at the site specific level.

Community Facilities and Services

- 7.82 In pursuing the two statutory National Park purposes, the Authority is committed to fostering, “...*the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park*²⁴.” The special qualities of the New Forest National Park includes its strong and distinctive local communities and one of the strategic objectives identified in this draft Local Plan is to further strengthen the well-being and sustainability of local communities.
- 7.83 Local communities in the New Forest face similar challenges to those in many rural areas. Community facilities and key services that are essential in sustaining local villages are often under threat and therefore it is important that local planning policies for the area support their retention and improvement. In recent years the planning policy framework for the National Park has supported the development of new and enhanced community facilities, such as Woodgreen Village Shop and this approach will be retained.

²⁴ Section 62(1), Environment Act 1995

- 7.84 The draft policy below is based on the existing Core Strategy approach which supports the retention of existing community facilities and the provision of essential facilities (including village shops and local educational services) in villages across the whole of the National Park where there are clear community benefits.

Policy 39 – Local Community Facilities

The Authority will support the retention of existing community facilities throughout the National Park and prevent their loss or redevelopment where they contribute to the sustainability of local communities. The Authority will support the development of essential local community facilities where the proposal is of clear and direct benefit to the local village or rural community.

- 7.85 Essential local community facilities are facilities that are of direct benefit to the immediate local community that provide an essential service, including village shops, pubs and village halls as well as small-scale health and educational services, sports and social facilities.

Retail Development within the National Park

- 7.86 Paragraph 28 of the NPPF states that that to support a strong rural economy, local plans should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Draft policy 39 (above) covers the retention and development of local community facilities.
- 7.87 Although there are no designated ‘town centres’ within the National Park (the largest villages have less than 3,500 residents), successive local plans have sought to safeguard the role of the four defined village centres of the National Park in meeting some of the day-to-day retail needs of local residents and visitors. This has typically been done by setting a proportion of the designated shopping frontages that should be kept in A1 (retail) use. However, recent changes in national Permitted Development Rights mean that many changes of use no longer require full planning permission (although Permitted Development Rights are tighter within the National Park than outside). At this stage in the Plan-preparation process views are invited on the approach to be taken to safeguarding the retail role of the main villages.

Alternative Options:

- a) *The Authority seeks to safeguard existing A1, A2 and A3 uses within the four identified defined village shopping frontages from development proposals to non-A uses (such as residential).*
- b) *No Local Plan policy is included regarding changes of use within the retail frontages on the basis that the majority of changes are now Permitted Development*
- c) *The Authority includes a simple policy stating that in the cases where a planning application is required, the loss of A1 retail uses below a certain proportion (40 – 50%) will not be supported.*

- 7.88 The growing importance of the local produce market to the New Forest economy is acknowledged and it is therefore proposed to retain a local planning policy supporting appropriate small-scale retail development (including farm shops) outside the main villages.
- 7.89 Farm shops which sell goods produced on the farm do not normally require planning permission. In addition to goods produced on the farm, farm shops can also retail a small percentage of imported goods (typically 10%) without the need for planning permission. In each case, judgement needs to be exercised in determining whether the scale and proportion of imported goods amounts to a retail use requiring planning permission.

Policy 40 - Retail Development outside the Defined Villages

Outside the defined villages small-scale convenience shops within rural settlements that serve local needs, and farm shops that are part of a farm diversification will be permitted, together with small scale extensions of existing shops. Any development should not extend into the open countryside or have impacts on adjoining land uses. The potential effects of farm shops on other shops in neighbouring villages will be assessed.

8. A Sustainable Local Economy

- 8.1 This chapter takes forward the strategic objectives for a sustainable local economy, land management and tourism.
- 8.2 A healthy local economy is essential in maintaining the life and vibrancy of the National Park, providing local employment, and sustaining its rural communities. This Local Plan Review aims to achieve a sustainable local economy which provides business and employment opportunities that benefit the National Park's communities without compromising the special qualities and rural character of the area. This approach will help to deliver the Authority's duty²⁵ to foster the social and economic well-being of its local communities and, in doing so, will support the New Forest District Council, Wiltshire Council, and Test Valley Borough in their responsibility for promoting economic development in their administrative areas.
- 8.3 It is recognised that maintaining a high quality natural environment can contribute substantial economic benefits by supporting tourism and helping to attract high value employees and businesses. Research suggests that National Park designation brings economic benefits for businesses both within a National Park and in the wider region²⁶. By successfully pursuing its two statutory purposes, therefore, the National Park Authority can make a positive contribution to economic prosperity both locally and in surrounding areas.
- 8.4 The economic approach of this Local Plan Review takes into consideration some key aspects of the economic and employment characteristics of the Park. There is a very low level of unemployment, which has been no higher than 1.5%²⁷ for the last ten years and has been consistently lower than regional and national levels during that period. Employment has been supported by a long history of investment in new business space with recent new floorspace development being consistent with the long term trend. The local economy is very diverse with the leisure, tourism, agriculture, health, and the professional, scientific and technical sectors all important in creating a wide range of employment opportunities. However, whilst many residents have high skill levels, the local economy would benefit from improved skills and business support. Looking forward to the next few years, a decline in the working age population is forecast.
- 8.5 Within relatively short distances, the National Park is surrounded by local employment centres, such as Lymington, Ringwood and Totton, and large urban areas that provide significant employment opportunities. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that there is net out-commuting by residents to these larger centres, and, given their proximity, it is likely that some of the employment needs of Park residents in the future will continue to be met beyond the Park's boundaries.

²⁵ See Chapter 1: Introduction and the Environment Act 1995.

²⁶ Prosperity and Protection: The economic impact of National Parks in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Council for National Parks 2006; Valuing England's National Parks: Cumulus Consultants Ltd and ICF GHK – Final Report for National Parks England 2013

²⁷ Unemployment measured by the % of the working age population that are claiming Job Seekers Allowance

- 8.6 With strong economic expansion planned in the surrounding employment centres in South Hampshire, Southern Wiltshire and South East Dorset the task for the local economy will be to find ways of benefiting from the National Park's advantages whilst retaining its special character. Taking into account the forecasted decline in the working age population, competition from surrounding areas, and the need to maintain the special environmental qualities of the Park, supporting the economic well-being of the Park's communities will be best served by focusing on small businesses, with locally distinctive, higher value and low impact types of businesses being most appropriate. Given that most businesses in the Park are relatively small²⁸, the appropriate requirements for business space are likely to be of modest scale.
- 8.7 In relation to sustainable development that is appropriate in a nationally designated area, throughout the Park the Local Plan Review will support:
- the re-use and extension of existing buildings;
 - the redevelopment of existing business use employment sites;
 - retaining existing employment sites
 - farm diversification;
 - home working
- and, in addition to the above, in the defined villages the Local Plan Review will also support:
- small scale employment development also using new buildings.
- 8.8 This approach does not require the allocation of new land specifically for employment development. Neither the National Park Authority's Core Strategy nor any of the Local Plans prepared by the predecessor planning authorities (and inherited by the Authority in 2006) included employment land allocations within the National Park in recognition of the protection afforded to the landscape and the high proportion of internationally protected habitats within the New Forest. Moreover, the very diverse nature of the local economy means that it does not rely heavily on the B1 to B8 Land Use Classes that need office and industrial spaces. Coupled with the forecast decline in the working age population, it is not considered necessary to allocate any new land solely for employment use in this Local Plan Review.
- 8.9 This approach does not mean, however, that employment opportunities will not be created. Indeed, past trends of development show that employment opportunities continue to be generated for local communities in the National Park area, and unemployment has consistently been below regional and national levels since the designation of the National Park. Given the long history of business development that spans a wide range of economic environments, it is anticipated that employment development will continue to come forward that will support the well-being of the Park's communities.
- 8.10 The Authority recognises, however, that the government's changes to permitted development rights will lead to the loss of certain types of business spaces, which could have a negative impact on the local economy. These

²⁸ Over 90% of businesses in the National Park have 10 or fewer employees

loses will offset some of the new business space development that is brought forward in the future. In these circumstances, for the local economy to continue to provide sufficient employment opportunities for its communities, the Authority will not only retain all existing employment sites (where not impacted by the permitted development right changes), but will encourage the redevelopment of redundant brownfield employment sites for employment use by supporting a wider range of business uses than the prior use, and ensure business space is provided on sites allocated for a mix of housing and employment use as outlined in Policy 22 and Policy 24.

Strategic Objective for a Sustainable Economy:

- **Develop a diverse and sustainable economy that contributes to the well-being of local communities**

Policy 41: Business and Employment Development

Small scale employment development will be permitted within the four defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway.

Outside these defined villages, small scale employment development that helps the well-being of local communities will be permitted through the re- use or extension of existing buildings, the redevelopment of existing business use employment sites, farm diversification schemes and through home-working.

Particular encouragement will be given to businesses that help to maintain the land-based economy and cultural heritage of the National Park, or contribute to the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's Special Qualities. Providing local communities with a variety of employment opportunities will also be supported where these do not have an adverse impact on the Special Qualities of the National Park.

- 8.11 It will be important to support new small scale business development throughout the National Park to provide the employment and services needed by local communities. The priority will be to locate such services within the defined villages to take advantage of existing facilities and transport links within these villages. However a considerable number of current employment sites are already located outside the defined villages and it will be important to enable some further business development of an appropriate scale where this helps improve the long term sustainability of the more rural communities.
- 8.12 Greater use of technological and communication advances that aid employment development will be supported as these can improve efficiency and productivity, raise value added, and are identified as a key business requirement in the latest Business Needs Survey. Businesses that use such technology tend to have less environmental impacts and can also support home working to provide more employment opportunities.

- 8.13 Improving broadband and mobile telecommunications is an important objective set out in the Partnership Plan for the National Park. The Authority supports the rollout of superfast broadband across the National Park and the initiative to seek additional funding to provide complete coverage across the Park.
- 8.14 The visual impacts of telecommunications infrastructure will be considered using national planning policy and guidance, to ensure that any such proposals are sensitively designed and sited and it must be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative locations.
- 8.15 Taking advantage of local distinctiveness will also be particularly important for the local economy. Many existing producers and entirely new businesses related to the rural economy are benefiting from this through the local produce and products market. There is widespread recognition of the New Forest Marque and an increasing number of small businesses, farmers markets and farm shops are using this New Forest brand. Proposals for farm shops will be considered under Policy 40 in Chapter 7.
- 8.16 The local economy would also benefit from raising productivity through improved skills and business support, which are both encouraged by the Enterprise M3 and Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnerships and the New Forest LEADER Local Development Strategy. The Local Plan Review recognises the importance of increasing the skills of the local workforce to improve their employment prospects. The Authority will support the role of the New Forest District Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Wiltshire Council in co-ordinating the provision of skills training for the workforce. It will also support the provision of training facilities through the re-use and extension of existing buildings and the redevelopment of existing business use employment sites.

Policy 42: Existing Employment Sites

Existing employment sites will be retained throughout the National Park where these contribute to the sustainability of local communities.

- 8.17 In addition to supporting business development to sustain the well-being of local communities, it is important to recognise that existing employment sites are under pressure from higher value land uses such as housing, particularly given the high level of house prices in the National Park. With concerns about declining facilities and services in communities, and competition from surrounding towns and urban areas, it will be important to retain existing employment sites²⁹ to ensure the provision of future employment opportunities.

²⁹ The Policy applies to employment sites which are not subject to permitted development rights contained in the most recent version of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order

Policy 43: Redevelopment of Existing Employment Sites

The redevelopment of established employment sites for industrial, office, and business uses will be permitted where:

- a) there would be minimal additional effect on the visual impact of the site in the landscape, or on the amenities of nearby properties, or on traffic or other disturbances from the site; and
- b) where feasible, the redevelopment scheme deals comprehensively with the full extent of the site; and
- c) the replacement buildings would be appropriate to their surroundings in terms of scale, design and materials; and
- d) the redevelopment scheme would be contained within the existing site boundary.

- 8.18 The redevelopment of existing employment sites should help to support the economic well-being of communities throughout the Park. The Authority will encourage the redevelopment of redundant brownfield employment sites for employment use by supporting a wider range of business uses than the previous use, other than storage and warehousing. Proposals for small scale starter units/offices, rural business units and easy in/out units, will be considered favourably. However, the redevelopment of existing employment sites for general storage and warehousing purposes will not be encouraged as this type of development does not generate significant employment opportunities relative to the space required, and typically results in additional traffic.

Extensions to Non Residential Buildings and Uses

Policy 44: Extensions to Non Residential Buildings and Uses

The limited extension of existing non-residential buildings and uses will be permitted where it:

- a) would not materially increase the level of impact of the activity on the site; and
- b) is contained within the existing site boundary.

- 8.19 This policy applies to a range of non-residential buildings and uses including agricultural, business, community and tourism uses³⁰ (excluding holiday parks and camp sites). It seeks to maintain existing non-residential buildings and uses while avoiding potential adverse impacts on the National Park arising from additional activity, such as increased visitor pressures and traffic.

- 8.20 A limited extension will normally be considered as one which is capable of being achieved with minimal impact on the overall physical appearance and prominence of the building and/or site and one which results only in marginal changes to the nature of the existing use.

³⁰ Extensions to existing serviced accommodation and uses will be supported by this Policy as long as the extension also operates as serviced accommodation – forms of self-catering accommodation and uses that are separate and proposed as extensions to existing serviced accommodation will not be supported by this Policy. Extensions to all forms of camping will be considered under Policy 46

Tourism

Strategic Objective for Tourism:

- **Support development which encourages sustainable tourism and recreation, and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.**
- 8.21 The New Forest National Park's unique environment attracts many visitors and the tourism industry is of considerable importance to the National Park's economy. Spending associated with leisure trips to the National Park is significant, supporting the accommodation, retail and other business sectors, providing employment, and thus supporting local communities.
- 8.22 The development and implementation of sustainable tourism in the New Forest involves a wide range of partners and stakeholders. The District Council has the key destination management role, and works with a wide range of partners such as the New Forest Tourism Association and the National Park Authority to promote and market the New Forest, encourage sustainable tourism, and provide interpretation and information services. The Authority is supportive of the delivery of sustainable tourism and recognises the important contribution it makes to the National Park's communities and its economy.
- 8.23 In addition to developing the competitiveness and economic success of the tourism sector, a great deal of work has been undertaken to promote sustainable tourism in the New Forest, based on bringing together the interests of visitors, the tourism industry, local communities and the environment. This approach aims to support the local tourism economy, whilst ensuring that the special qualities and local distinctiveness of the New Forest are conserved. There is still, however, a need to raise the profile of tourism businesses as examples of good environmental practice and be bolder in developing the image of the National Park as a sustainable tourism destination focusing on the special qualities of the area.
- 8.24 With regard to tourism related developments, the Authority aims to support sustainable tourism and provide opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities without compromising its purpose to conserve and enhance the Park's natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. To achieve this, new tourism development will be supported in the following policy.

Policy 45: Tourism Development

Tourism development will be supported where it provides opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park in a way that either enhances, or does not damage the special qualities. This will be facilitated by:

- a) supporting small scale development of visitor facilities and accommodation using new or existing buildings in the four defined villages, or outside these villages through the re-use or extension of existing buildings, including as part of a farm diversification scheme;
- b) retaining existing serviced visitor accommodation where it contributes to the sustainability of local communities; and
- c) supporting opportunities to relieve visitor pressures where this would assist the conservation or enhancement of internationally or nationally designated nature conservation sites.

Extensions to existing tourism developments will be considered in accordance with Policies 44 and 46.

- 8.25 Small scale development of new visitor facilities and accommodation will be supported within the four defined villages. These villages already provide many restaurants, shops and other services used by visitors and together with their access by public transport make them sustainable locations for tourism developments³¹. Elsewhere throughout the National Park development of visitor facilities and accommodation will be supported through the re-use or extension of existing buildings, including as part of well conceived farm diversification schemes.
- 8.26 It is also important to recognise that existing serviced accommodation is under pressure from higher value forms of development, such as housing. Given that serviced accommodation makes a significant contribution to the local economy by providing employment and supporting business services and local produce markets, retaining the existing stock is considered important. Outside the National Park, the adjacent towns (including Ringwood, Lymington, Fordingbridge and New Milton) are likely to continue to perform a particular role as centres for accommodation and visitor information and in providing a greater range of services and cultural facilities.
- 8.27 Existing holiday parks and campsites provide significant opportunities to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park. They are well provided for in and around the New Forest and this means that no additional camping facilities³² are needed. Although many sites are seasonal they can have a significant impact on the New Forest environment, particularly those located in areas of designated nature conservation importance. Proposals for ancillary developments to support seasonal campsites, such as hardstandings and toilets, will not be viewed favourably. In the longer term, it would be of benefit

³¹ Consistent with paragraph 28, National Planning Policy Framework

³² Including all forms of self-catering camping accommodation

to the New Forest environment to reduce the overall number of camping and caravan pitches in the most sensitive areas. Policy 46 carries forward a long standing earlier policy from the New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration.

- 8.28 Recently there has been a large increase in 28 day ‘pop up’ campsites which account for some extra 7000 overnight stays in the Forest. If this trend continues over the lifetime of Plan consideration may have to be given to the use of Article 4 Direction to ensure this type of development is properly planned for.

Policy 46: Holiday Parks and Camp Sites

New campsites and extensions to existing holiday parks, touring caravan or camping sites will only be permitted to enable the removal of pitches from sensitive areas by the relocation of part of a site to a less sensitive area adjoining an existing site, providing:

- a) there would be overall environmental benefits;
- b) there would be no increase in the overall site area or site capacity;
- c) the area where pitches or other facilities are removed from would be fully restored to an appropriate New Forest landscape, and any existing use rights are relinquished.

The land-based economy

Strategic Objective for the land-based economy

- **Encourage land management that sustains the special qualities of the National Park**

- 8.29 The land-based economy in the New Forest encompasses agriculture, forestry, commoning and other traditional rural businesses. These have all generally declined in economic importance, and now provide only a small proportion of local jobs. However, farming, commoning, forestry and woodland management remain vital in maintaining the land use management practices that help conserve the landscape character and cultural identity of the National Park.

- 8.30 In relation to rural activities, the National Park’s Management Plan outlines the important role that agriculture and forestry play in supporting the rural economy and maintaining the characteristic New Forest habitats and landscapes.

Policy 47: The Land-based Economy

Land-based businesses that help maintain the overall character and cultural identity of the National Park will be supported by:

- a) working with key organisations to ensure the future viability of commoning through:
 - (i) enabling affordable housing for commoners, that includes land suitable for holdings (as set out in Policy 29 in Chapter 7); and
 - (ii) maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands; resisting the loss of back-up grazing through development or change of use.
- b) Supporting farming and forestry that would be beneficial to the Forest through:
 - (i) the provision of agricultural and forestry buildings subject to Policy 49;
 - (ii) farm diversification where this would help to sustain the long-term agricultural operation of the land and would be:
 - agricultural diversification based on an extensive system of land management, or
 - non-agricultural diversification, through the re-use of redundant farm buildings, where the new use would remain ancillary to the farming business
 - (iii) Helping to support markets for local produce and products.

8.31 In the National Park the practice of commoning is particularly recognised as being integral to the maintenance of the essential landscape character and cultural heritage of the area. Commoners' animals remain part of the identity of the Forest and a major attraction for visitors. Whilst commoners have rights to graze their animals in the historic area of common grazing, they also require back-up grazing areas in the enclosed agricultural lands. Consequently it is important that agricultural land, which is used for these purposes, is not developed or lost to other uses.

8.32 Farming and farm diversification will be given particular support to enhance or maintain the characteristic landscapes and habitats, provide local produce, allow greater public access or create local employment. Diversification of a scale or extent which is likely to provide an incentive to reduce the long term agricultural operation of the land will not be supported.

8.33 Forestry has become an important feature of the New Forest over the past 150 years, providing local employment and training and enabling much of the timber to be sourced and processed locally. It will be important for the industry to adapt to changing markets for forestry products, including wood fuel, and continue to champion sustainable production in the local context.

Re-Use of Existing Buildings

- 8.34 The re-use of existing buildings is important for business and employment development to ensure the provision of future employment opportunities for local communities in the Park. The following policy sets out the detail of the strategic policy which supports the re-use of redundant buildings for employment purposes in order to broaden the rural economy.

Policy 48: Re-use of Buildings outside the defined villages

The re-use of buildings outside Defined Villages will be permitted provided that:

- a) the proposal would not result in the loss of an employment use or community facility; and
- b) the proposal would not involve a residential use (other than in accordance with Policy 18); and
- c) the building is appropriate in scale and appearance to its location, and should be capable of conversion without significant extension or detriment to itself or its surroundings. The building must be structurally sound and capable of re-occupation without re-building; and
- d) in the case of agricultural or forestry buildings, the building must be genuinely redundant in its existing use and not capable of fulfilling any beneficial agricultural use.

- 8.35 This policy is intended to enable the re-use or change of use of existing buildings which are appropriate to their New Forest setting, are a re-usable resource capable of conversion without significant reconstruction and are on sites which meet highway and other local authority standards. The policy enables the use of a building to change to an alternative use which is considered to be appropriate in the New Forest under the policies of this plan. The building to be re-used should be suitable for the new use proposed without the need for additions or extensions.
- 8.36 Given the importance that land management practices have in maintaining the landscape, the Authority will support farm diversification schemes which re-use existing farm buildings in accordance with Policy 48, where the proposal relates to the diversification of an existing and continuing farm business. However, where proposals for farm buildings do not relate to a farm diversification scheme, the Authority will take into account the potential of the buildings to continue in some form of beneficial agricultural use, in particular one which serves the interests of the New Forest.

- 8.37 The Authority is concerned to ensure that wherever practical, New Forest commoners should be given the opportunity of utilising the existing stock of agricultural/ forestry buildings. While some agricultural buildings may no longer be required by a particular farm they may still be suitable for use by commoners, e.g. for storage of feedstuffs or housing animals, or for conversion to a commoners' dwelling. Accordingly the Authority will need to be satisfied that agricultural and forestry buildings cannot continue to fulfil any beneficial agricultural use before giving favourable consideration for their re- use independently of a farming enterprise.
- 8.38 The re-use of purpose-built or pre-fabricated agricultural buildings, e.g. glasshouses or prefabricated barns, particularly those of a large scale, are unlikely to be considered favourably under this policy, as such buildings are often out of character with the New Forest. This policy does not apply to agricultural buildings that are subject to a planning condition requiring their removal on the cessation of the agricultural use.

Agricultural and Forestry Buildings

- 8.39 This policy seeks to enable development necessary to sustain agricultural activity, including forestry and commoning. However, development associated with agriculture can have a substantial environmental impact, and the Authority will not support buildings or other structures that would be damaging to the ecology, landscape or character of the National Park.

Policy 49: Agricultural and Forestry Buildings

Permission will be granted for buildings required for agriculture or forestry purposes where:

- a) there is a functional need for the building and its scale is commensurate with that need;
- b) the building is designed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;
- c) the site is related physically and functionally to existing buildings associated with the business unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to agricultural necessity for a more isolated location; and
- d) they do not involve large or obtrusive structures or generate a level of activity which would have a detrimental effect on the National Park.

- 8.40 In the case of buildings required for pony and horse breeding, the Authority will need to be satisfied that the enterprise is a commercial operation carried out by commoners in conjunction with grazing on the New Forest. In the case of buildings required in connection with the turning out of stock onto the Open Forest, the Authority will also need to assess the associated impacts of any additional grazing pressures on the Open Forest.

- 8.41 A planning condition will normally be imposed requiring the building to be removed and the land restored to its former condition should the building no longer be required for agricultural purposes. In assessing the functional need for a building, first consideration will be given to the conversion of any existing building under the terms of Policy 48.

Horse riding and horse keeping

- 8.42 Horse riding and horse keeping have a long history in the New Forest and are part of the New Forest scene. In the region of 3,500 horses are kept within and immediately surrounding the National Park³³. Together with horses kept by farmers and commoners, the local equine community makes a valuable contribution to the local economy.
- 8.43 When it is done well, horse keeping can make a positive contribution to the management of the New Forest and assist farmers and commoners seeking to diversify their activities. But also in the few cases when it is done badly there can be problems associated with overgrazed fields, poor fencing and inappropriate lighting, all of which can lead to a negative impression of horse keeping. There are examples of both within the New Forest.
- 8.44 Planning permission is usually required for most horse related development. However, under the General Permitted Development Order 1995, there may be some scope to provide buildings or enclosures associated with the keeping of recreational horses, incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house, in the garden of a domestic dwelling. It will be advisable to seek the advice on the need for planning permission for such buildings from the Authority.

Policy 50: Recreational Horse Keeping

Permission will be granted for recreational horse keeping provided that the proposal does not:

- a) have an adverse impact on the landscape or any nature conservation interests;
- b) harmfully increase riding pressures on the open Forest; or
- c) result in the loss of back-up grazing land.

- 8.45 The Authority cannot control the use of land for grazing. However, the keeping of recreational horses involves a more intensive use of land which is subject to planning control. The distinction between grazing and keeping is not always clear although a judgement can normally be made on the basis of the area of grazing land available per animal. As a guideline, the keeping of horses generally occurs when there is less than 0.5 ha of land per horse³⁴. Other key indicators can include the existence of stables and other facilities, and the condition of the land.

³³ Recreational Horse Keeping in the New Forest. Update of grazing survey 2007

³⁴ Defra Consultation on Code of Practice for the Welfare of Equines November 2008 reports that as a general rule, a horse will require a minimum of 0.4 to 0.6 hectares (one to one and a half acres) of good grazing if no supplementary feeding is being provided.

- 8.46 Planning applications should be accompanied by sufficient information to demonstrate that the associated impacts of any new recreational horse keeping use is positive rather than negative, for example by including details of fencing and landscaping.
- 8.47 The high demand in land for horse grazing and keeping can reduce the amount of back-up grazing available for commoners' animals and there is a need to maintain an adequate supply of back-up grazing land available to commoners³⁵.
- 8.48 This policy also seeks to ensure that horse keeping does not impinge on the New Forest by adding to riding activity in the area and/or contributing to the erosion of the Open Forest.

Policy 51: Field Shelters and Stables

Permission will be granted for field shelters provided that the building is:

- a) sensitively sited to be unobtrusive in the landscape; and
- b) simple in appearance and modest in scale; and
- c) constructed of appropriate materials.

The same considerations apply to stables although these should be located close to existing buildings.

- 8.49 The Authority seeks to limit the proliferation of buildings in the New Forest, primarily because of their impact on the landscape. However, the need for field shelters (which are commonly characterised by one side of the building being left open) is recognised and therefore they will normally be permitted providing they are sensitively designed and can be accommodated without being obtrusive in the landscape. The same considerations apply to stables although these should be located close to existing buildings.

Policy 52: Maneges

The development of outdoor maneges will be permitted provided that:

- a) they do not result in any detrimental impact on the landscape and ecology of the New Forest; and
- b) they do not involve the installation of lighting.

The development of indoor maneges will not be permitted other than in accordance with Policy 48 (Re-use of buildings).

- 8.50 Maneges are all-weather riding arenas used for the schooling of animals and the training of riders. While the Authority recognises that the availability of maneges may reduce the use of the open Forest, particularly by riding schools, there are concerns about the physical impact of their development on the New Forest landscape and ecology. The Authority wishes to minimise the environmental impact of these proposals and considers that this form of development is likely to be acceptable only where it is contained within or closely related to an existing group of buildings and makes use of materials that blend in well with the New Forest landscape.

³⁵ New Forest Commoning Review 2007 Full Report identified the need to protect backup grazing land from competing land uses such as private horse keeping

9 Transport and Access

- 9.1 The National Park has an extensive road network, with a number of major trunk routes and several A-roads that carry high volumes of traffic from commuters, residents and visitors alike.
- 9.2 National predictions of an increase in total car travel of between 19% and 55% (depending on different scenarios) by 2040, combined with the impacts of 150,000 additional dwellings proposed in South Hampshire and South East Dorset between now and 2036, will generate additional demands on the road network within the National Park.
- 9.3 However, unlike many National Parks, the New Forest is easily accessible by train through four railway stations at Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Sway and Beaulieu Road, which are on the London Waterloo to Weymouth line. Therefore, there are real opportunities to encourage arrival by train, although these stations are currently poorly connected to other forms of public transport. Whilst a number of bus routes cross the Forest the services are greatly reduced in the evenings and at weekends.
- 9.4 The New Forest Tour, a seasonal open top bus, is aimed primarily at visitors and operates during the summer months, with three interlinked routes across the Park stopping at popular villages and major attractions within the National Park. The Tour links to rail stations at Brockenhurst, Lymington Pier, Ashurst and New Milton, as well as ferry services to the Isle of Wight and Southampton. In addition, a new Beach Bus service also operates during the summer and, and links Hythe, Lepe Beaulieu and Lymington.

Strategic Objective for Transport:

- **Reduce the impacts of traffic on the special qualities of the National Park and provide a range of sustainable transport alternatives within the Park.**
- 9.5 Across the National Park traffic volumes are high, especially during the summer months, and trends indicate a general increase each year on a number of routes. The National Park receives an estimated 13.5 million visitor days each year, with the vast majority of both staying and day visitors using the car to reach their destination³⁶.
- 9.6 In addition to residents and visitors, there are high levels of commuter traffic crossing the Park, particularly from the surrounding areas. A significant proportion of the local workforce is either self-employed and work from home (about 11%) or commute to work outside the area, particularly to Southampton. Overall there is a significant net outflow of people from the National Park travelling to work in urban areas such as Southampton (providing employment for 15% of the National Park's working population) and Bournemouth (providing employment for 8% of the National Park's working population).

³⁶ Tourism South East visitor survey 2004-2005

- 9.7 The increase in traffic within and around the National Park raises a number of significant issues. Campaigns in recent years have seen a reduction in the numbers of commoners' livestock (ponies, cattle, pigs, sheep and donkeys) killed or injured on the Forest's unfenced roads, but the figure still remains relatively high with 76 animals killed or injured during 2015. Although this was one of the lowest figures in many years for animal accidents, every animal killed is a loss to the Forest and its commoners and the Authority is working with partners to develop initiatives to reduce the numbers of accidents year on year, including the consideration of traffic calming measures where appropriate.
- 9.8 Traffic speeds can be a concern to local communities and can contribute to human and animal accidents. Hampshire County Council has introduced 30 mph speed limits in many New Forest villages and advisory 20 mph limits in the vicinity of many schools.
- 9.9 Traffic also detracts from the tranquillity of the New Forest, and can conflict with other recreational users, especially on more minor roads and increases the carbon footprint of the Forest. Over the coming decades, with a potential increase in recreation pressure on the New Forest, it will be important to develop further education and traffic management initiatives to ensure quality of life, environmental quality and experience of visitors is not undermined.
- 9.10 The principles of this transport objective are also carried through in a number of other policies in this Local Plan. In particular the Spatial Strategy (set out in Chapter 4) is based on the objective of reducing the need to travel and therefore the location of development is based on the most sustainable settlements in the National Park, which have the best access to public transport, including rail, and existing community facilities and services.

Policy 53: Transport Infrastructure

Further development of the strategic transport network will only be supported where:

- a) it is an integral part of a longer term strategy to address traffic congestion on the A31, or
- b) alternative solutions including potential traffic demand management measures have been explored and are not feasible or appropriate.

- 9.11 Only a relatively limited amount of small scale housing and associated development is proposed for the National Park. Additional new or improved transport infrastructure is not needed to service this level of development. Consequently the expansion of the existing road network will not be supported within the National Park, other than in exceptional circumstances.
- 9.12 Working in partnership with Hampshire County Council and Wiltshire Council, the Authority will use the transportation contributions it collects from larger development schemes within the Park under Policy 38 to help mitigate the likely effects of increased levels of trip generation within the National Park by addressing accessibility, road safety, air quality and traffic congestion.

- 9.13 Of greater concern is the impact of increased trip generation on the National Park arising from development outside the National Park boundary; some 150,000 dwellings are proposed for South Hampshire and South East Dorset up to 2036. It is important that the likely impacts are researched and fully understood to allow the development of measures which will mitigate the impact on the special qualities of the National Park.
- 9.14 The National Park Authority will take account of national transport policy and the Hampshire and Wiltshire Local Transport Plans with regard to the consideration of any major new traffic or demand management measures over the longer term of this Local Plan. Any such measures will not be considered without further detailed research and public consultation.
- 9.15 Where proposed development would generate significant amounts of traffic movement then a detailed Transport Statement or Transport Assessment will be required, as set out in national planning policy. This will be identified on a case by case basis.

Parking standards

- 9.16 Since the adoption of the Authority's Core Strategy in 2010, the National Planning Policy Framework has been implemented which now states that "*Local planning authorities should only impose local parking standards for residential and non-residential development where there is clear and compelling justification that it is necessary to manage their local road network*". The Authority consequently adopted the Development Standards Supplementary Planning Document in 2012 which set out the Parking and Cycle Standards for the National Park. These were broadly based on those published by Hampshire County Council in 2002. The Authority considers that the parking standards set out in Annex 2 are still relevant for the National Park.

Alternative Option

The Authority considers that the parking standards set out in Annex 2 are still relevant for the National Park and the preferred option is to incorporate them within the revised Local Plan. However, an alternative option is not to identify local parking standards but to rely on national planning policy and assess planning applications on a case-by-case basis.

Access

Policy 54: Access

The Authority will promote safer access and more sustainable forms of transport to and within the National Park for enjoyment, health and well-being, where appropriate by supporting:

- a) local transport initiatives such as the New Forest Tour;
- b) community transport initiatives such as the Lymington to Brockenhurst Community Rail Partnership;
- c) improvements to make existing paths, tracks and roads safer and more user friendly;
- d) opportunities for the creation of a more joined-up network of routes for non-motorised transport;
- e) appropriate improvements to public transport facilities; and
- f) the safeguarding of disused railway lines and roads from development that would compromise their future reuse as sustainable transport routes

- 9.17 National planning policy and guidance and the local transport plans all emphasise the need to reduce the reliance on the car, improve public transport and access to a range of services and community facilities. This will prove beneficial to both residents and visitors alike.
- 9.18 The dispersed nature of settlements in the National Park, seasonal congestion, and a limited public bus network, can create barriers to accessibility. In recent years, there have been reductions in some less well-used public bus services which have added to the problem. The National Park Authority recognises the importance of maintaining an effective network of public transport and the added value that community transport initiatives can bring.
- 9.19 Seasonal traffic congestion in Lyndhurst causes local pollution problems and affects local residents' quality of life. It can also create accessibility issues for local people and reduce the quality of experience for visitors. A number of traffic management measures have been trialled in order to reduce journey times for different flows of traffic. The Hampshire Local Transport Plan identifies that future Implementation Plans will set out the following measures for the National Park:
- Closer partnerships with neighbouring counties to ensure a co-ordinated approach to transport;
 - Managing the road network to protect and enhance the area's rural character;
 - Reduction of 'sign clutter';

- Supporting local sustainable tourism through footpath, cycle, equestrian, public transport and rights of way improvements, and enhancing the network to allow increased leisure use.
- 9.20 Although there are more than 325 km of rights of way within the National Park, outside of the Crown Lands, the Hampshire Countryside Access Plan 2015-2025 together with the Wiltshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2015-2025 both highlight the need for improved connectivity of routes, with particular emphasis on encouraging suitable routes for less mobile people. This is important for the New Forest given the forecast ageing population, and reflects the objectives of national planning policy which promotes accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. It also supports the aims established in the 'Recreation Management Memorandum of Understanding for the New Forest' drawn up by the National Park Authority in partnership with Natural England, the Forestry Commission, the Verderers, New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council. This sets out the guiding principles for the management of recreation across the New Forest, and will be used by relevant statutory organisations.
- 9.21 The Partnership Plan for the National Park (2015) sets out an action for the period 2015 to 2020 to explore the funding and feasibility for adjacent carriageway cycle routes on fenced roads between main settlements to improve safe access for commuting and leisure cycling, including a link between Lymington and Cadnam. Policy 54 supports the principle of such coordinated routes, especially between key settlements and public transport hubs.
- 9.22 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 the National Park Authority is the statutory access authority. However, responsibility for the maintenance of rights of way remains with Hampshire County Council and Wiltshire Council as the relevant highway authorities.
- 9.23 The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced new powers to improve public access to and enjoyment of the coastline of England. Natural England is responsible for developing a suitable route in consultation with local communities and organisations, which will be subject to restrictions in certain areas for nature conservation or land management purposes. The stretch of coastal path within the New Forest National Park is expected to open in 2018.

Draft text to be completed for Submission draft Local Plan in 2017

A detail monitoring and implementation framework for the revised Local Plan will be developed prior to the publication of the Submission Draft Local Plan in 2017. This will build on the existing framework set out in Chapter 10 of the current Core Strategy & Development Management Policies DPD (2010).

The National Park Authority is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report to assess the effectiveness of the Local Plan and to assess whether they are achieving the intended targets and objectives. This Report has been prepared annually since 2006 and this will continue.

Annex 1 – New Forest National Park Special Qualities

The special qualities of the New Forest described below were published in the 2010 Management Plan and are included here for completeness. They were agreed through public consultation in 2007.

The New Forest’s outstanding natural beauty: the sights, sounds and smells of ancient woodland with large veteran trees, heathland, bog, autumn colour and an unspoilt coastline, with views of the Solent and Isle of Wight.

The National Park encompasses a wide variety of different landscapes, from the woodlands and rolling heathland in the centre of the Forest, to the flat and wild coastline and the farmed landscape of small fields, hedgerows and narrow lanes. Together these form an extensive area of unspoilt and ancient countryside, with hidden villages and hamlets, which has largely been lost from other parts of lowland Britain.

An extraordinary diversity of plants and animals and habitats of national and international importance.

The mosaic of lowland heath, mire, ancient pasture woodland and Forest lawns that forms the Open Forest is unique in Britain and Europe. In addition the Solent coastline comprises extensive areas of mudflats, salt marsh and shingle, backed in places by low cliffs, supporting large populations of wintering wildfowl and waders. The inter-connectedness and scale of these habitats allows many rare or restricted species of plants, birds, animals and insects to thrive, as well as the commoner species that are in many cases declining elsewhere in the country. In total 56% of the National Park is designated for its national or international nature conservation value - a far higher proportion than any other English National Park.

A unique historic cultural and archaeological heritage, from royal hunting ground, to ship-building, salt making, the two world wars and 500 years of military coastal defence.

The cultural landscape of the New Forest has developed continuously from prehistoric times to the present. A wealth of features have survived to indicate this long use by human society, including more than 340 Bronze Age barrows, a number of fine Iron Age hill forts and many Roman pottery production sites. Throughout the area there are numerous remnants of medieval and later buildings, enclosures and other earthworks associated with the royal forest. The main rivers supported a boat and shipbuilding industry and the coastal salt workings were among the most important in the country during the 18th century. The National Park has 214 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, constituting almost 10% of all scheduled monuments in the south east region, together with many important unscheduled sites.

An historic commoning system that maintains so much of what people know and love as ‘the New Forest’ forming the heart of a working landscape based on farming and forestry.

Although common rights were once widespread in Britain and Europe, they have been lost in many areas due to the enclosure of common land and the

disafforestation of former royal forests. The New Forest remains one of the few extensive lowland commons where rights are still widely practised and a strong commoning culture continues. Over the centuries commoning has largely been responsible for shaping the distinctive landscapes and habitats of the Open Forest. There were six traditional rights of common, several of which are still practised today: the right of mast allows the turning out of pigs to feed on the acorn crop, while common pasture allows the grazing of ponies, cattle and donkeys.

The iconic New Forest pony together with donkeys, pigs and cattle roaming free.

The grazing of ponies and cattle has always been central to the pastoral economy of the New Forest. The animals are free to roam over the Open Forest, across the unfenced roads and along many of the verges within the Perambulation. Approximately 9,000 ponies, cattle, donkeys, pigs and sheep are currently depastured on the Forest as a whole. They are one of the most obvious and distinctive features of the area, and for many visitors they are undoubtedly a very important part of their experience of the New Forest.

Tranquillity in the midst of the busy, built up south of England.

The tranquillity and sense of remoteness that can still be found in many parts of the National Park is a quality of importance to many people. The relative peace and naturalness, combined with the open and unfenced landscape of much of the area, gives a sense of space and freedom. This contrasts with the increasingly built up and intensively managed landscape of southern England and provides a means of release from the pressures of modern life.

Wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery in one of the last extensive gentle landscapes in the south including unmatched open access on foot and horseback.

The gently rolling countryside of much of the National Park represents a traditional English lowland landscape that feels familiar and safe, and is accessible to many people. There is open access on foot or horseback to more than 30,000 hectares (116 square miles) in the centre of the National Park, and an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths across the rest of the area. There are many opportunities for quiet recreation and the exploration of the landscape, while a range of visitor facilities and organised events make it easy for people to learn more about different aspects of the New Forest.

A healthy environment: fresh air, clean water, local produce and a sense of 'wildness'.

Quality of life within the National Park is underpinned by the overall environmental quality of the area. The coastal location and prevailing south westerly winds means that air pollution is generally low, and water quality in the New Forest rivers and streams, and on the coastal beaches, is also good. The variety of food and other products produced and sold locally continues to increase, giving the opportunity for people to live healthily and sustainably and at the same time support the local economy.

Strong and distinctive local communities with a real pride in and sense of identity with their local area.

The New Forest communities have a strong cultural identity, with a wealth of local traditions and a thriving commoning community. Many local people have a strong sense of New Forest history and are deeply committed to the protection of the area. Local dialect, unique place names, rural skills and traditional events still continue, while new village events created by local people may become the traditions of the future. Community life is constantly evolving and adapting to modern ways of living and working. Many communities are involved in work to help shape the future of their local area and in initiatives to make their villages or towns more socially and economically sustainable. Local businesses continue to thrive, often providing services or products for residents and visitors, or taking advantage of the recognised image and distinctiveness of the New Forest.

Annex 2: Car Parking and Cycle Standards

Residential

Type	Car Parking Standard	Cycle Parking Standard	
		Individual	Communal
1 bedroom units	1 space per unit	1 stand [^]	1 stand
2-3 bedroom units	2 spaces per unit	2 stands [^]	1 stand
4 or more bedroom units	3 spaces per unit	2 stands [^]	1 stand
Active elderly with warden control	1 space per unit	1 stand per 4 staff	
Nursing and rest homes	1 space per 4 residents and 1 space per staff	1 stand per 4 staff	

[^] Where a garage is provided for storing sufficient cycles individual cycle parking will not be required

Commercial development

Type	Car Parking Standard	Cycle Parking Standard
B1 (a) office	1 space per 30 m ²	1 stand per 150 m ²
B1 (b)(c) high tech/light industry	1 space per 45 m ²	1 stand per 250 m ²
B2 general industrial	1 space per 45 m ²	1 stand per 350 m ²
B8 warehouse	1 space per 90 m ²	1 stand per 500 m ²

Education establishments

Type	Car Parking Standard	Cycle Parking Standard
Schools	1.5 spaces per classroom	*
16+ Colleges and further education	1 space per 2 full time staff	*
Day nurseries / playgroups (private) and creches	1.5 spaces per 2 full time staff	1 stand per 6 full-time staff

* Cycle provision to be assessed on an individual case-by-case basis

Health establishments

Type	Car Parking Standard	Cycle Parking Standard
Health centres	5 spaces per consulting room	1 stand per 2 consulting rooms or
Doctors, dentists or veterinary surgery	3 spaces per consulting room	1 space per 6 staff

Leisure facilities and places of public assembly

Type	Car Parking Standard	Cycle Parking Standard
Hotels / motels / guest houses / boarding houses	1 space per bedroom	1 stand per 6 staff or 1 per 40m ²
Eating and Drinking establishments	1 space per 5m ² dining area / bar area / dance floor	1 stand per 6 staff or 1 per 40m ²
Places of worship/church halls	1 space per 5 fixed seats and 1 space per 10m ² open hall	1 stand per 6 staff or 1 per 40m ²