

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Revised draft

December 2009

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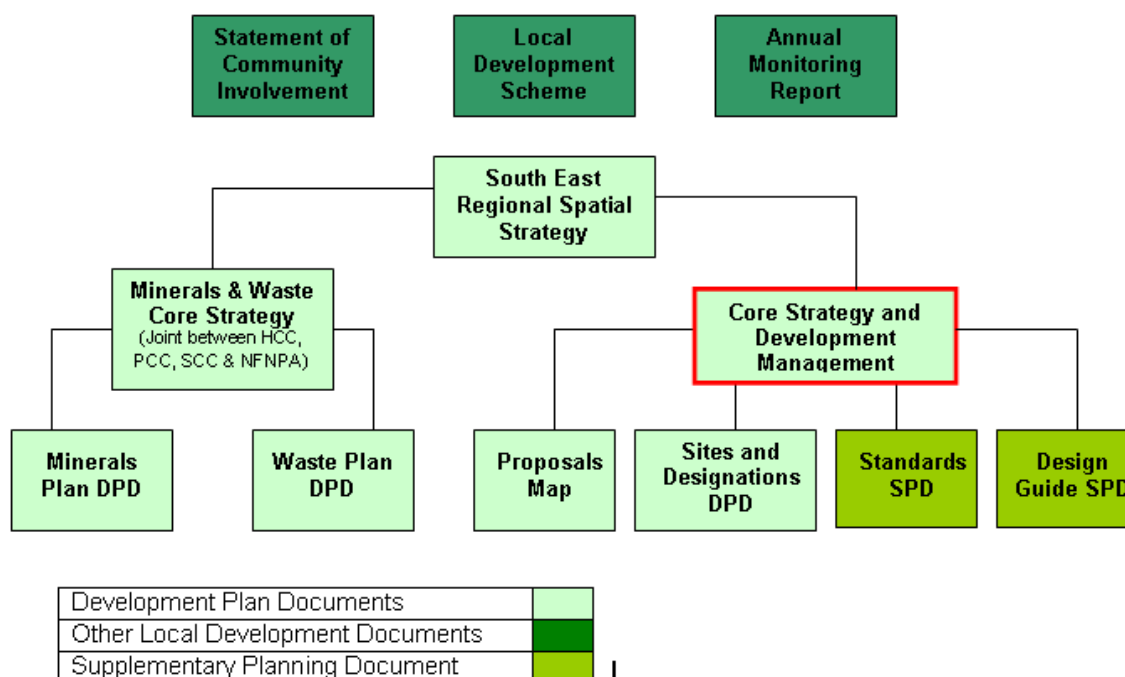
Chapter 1: Introduction

What is the Core Strategy and the Local Development Framework?

The *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* introduced a new system for development plans in England, replacing the previous system of Local Plans. Authorities now produce Local Development Frameworks comprising a series of planning documents and the **Core Strategy** is a key document in the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy makes decisions about what will happen where within the New Forest National Park.

The New Forest National Park was designated in March 2005 and includes land within three local authority areas (New Forest District, Wiltshire Council, and Test Valley Borough), two counties (Hampshire and Wiltshire), and two Government regions (South East and South West). The National Park Authority assumed full planning responsibilities in April 2006 and inherited over 1,000 existing planning policies contained in the plans prepared by the constituent local authorities. This Core Strategy provides the first set of consistent National Park-wide planning policies for the New Forest and replaces the saved policies contained in the various planning documents covering the National Park – as set out in more detail in Annex 1.

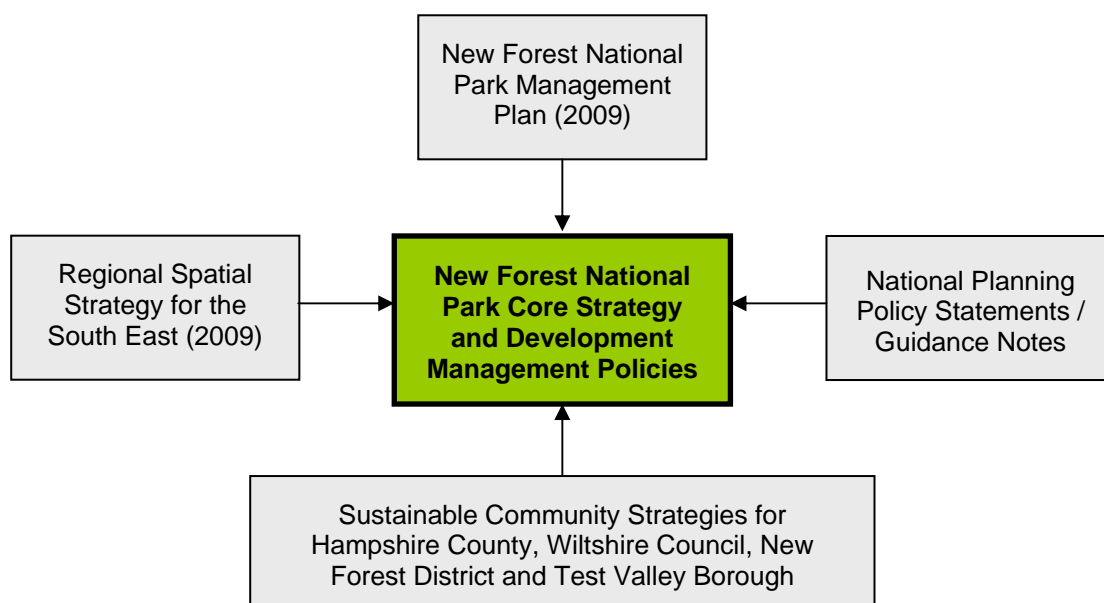
The Authority’s Core Strategy, together with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East, will deliver the long term planning vision for the National Park. The Core Strategy provides a planning policy framework up to 2026 consistent with the statutory National Park purposes and sets the context for the preparation of other planning policy documents within the **Local Development Framework (LDF)**. The diagram below sets out the main documents within the Authority’s LDF. Further information is available within the Authority’s Local Development Scheme.



The Core Strategy includes both core policies and development management policies to take forward the vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the National Park. The development management policies help to deliver the core policies by providing further detailed guidance against which planning applications will be assessed.

It is also important to note that national planning policy contained in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements, relevant legislation and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East also form material considerations when determining planning applications in the National Park.

The diagram below illustrates the relationship between the Authority's Core Strategy and other important documents. The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East and the Government's Planning Policy Statements/Guidance notes. PPS12 confirms that, "...unitary and district councils..." should align their Core Strategy with their Sustainable Community Strategy¹. National Park Authorities do not prepare their own Sustainable Community Strategies, so the Authority's Core Strategy will instead reflect the relevant parts of the five Sustainable Community Strategies prepared by the constituent authorities. Finally, the Core Strategy must reflect the National Park's Management Plan (December 2009) which sets out the vision for the future of the Park and the overall policy approach for the area.



¹ Paragraph 4.34 – Planning Policy Statement 12: *Local Spatial Planning*, CLG, 2008

National, Regional and Local Planning Context

Designated in 2005, the New Forest became the first National Park to be created in England for nearly 50 years and the first in the South East region. The National Park operates within a detailed planning policy and legislative framework which is set out below.

Statutory National Park purposes

National Parks have two statutory purposes and a duty that set out the main reasons for their designation and describe the overall focus for their management. All relevant authorities are required to take the two purposes into account in any work that may affect the area and make every effort to reconcile any conflict between the two. If such efforts fail, then only as a measure of last resort should the first purpose take precedence.² The two National Park purposes as set out in the **Environment Act 1995** are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

National Park Authorities also have a duty, in taking forward the Park purposes, to, “...seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.”

National Planning Policy Context

National planning policy for National Parks is set out primarily in **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7 ‘Sustainable Development in Rural Areas’**. Paragraph 21 states that National Parks have been confirmed by Government

“...as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of the natural beauty and the landscape and countryside should therefore be given great weight in planning policies and development control decisions in these areas....As well as reflecting these priorities, planning policies...should also support suitably located and designed development necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of these designated areas and their communities.”

Paragraph 22 of PPS7 clarifies that, “*Major developments should not take place in these designated areas, except in exceptional circumstances...*” Major development proposals should be demonstrated to be in the public interest before being allowed to proceed.

² Section 62 of the Environment Act, 1995. The relationship between the two purposes is commonly known as the Sandford Principle and is clarified in the government Circular 12/96. This makes it clear that the principle should only be applied as a measure of last resort, after every effort has been made to reconcile any conflicts.

PPS7 also seeks to concentrate development in rural areas in or near to the main villages where employment, housing and local services can be provided close together. It also recognises that limited development may be considered in smaller villages and hamlets to maintain the vitality of the community.

Regional Planning Context

The New Forest National Park lies wholly within the South East for regional planning purposes.³ The Authority's Core Strategy must therefore be in general conformity with the **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East – The South East Plan** (May 2009). Policy C1 of the South East Plan relates directly to the New Forest National Park and confirms that:

- high priority will be given to conserving and enhancing the specific character of the New Forest National Park;
- the emphasis of development within the National Park should be on small-scale, sustainably located and designed proposals;
- proposals which support the socio-economic well-being of the Park and its communities will be encouraged where they do not conflict with the statutory National Park purposes; and
- planning decisions should have regard to the setting of the National Park.

The whole of the South East Plan forms part of the statutory 'development plan' for the National Park and particularly relevant policies include:

- Policy H1 which gives the National Park an annual housing requirement of 11 dwellings per annum (220 dwelling over the Plan period to 2026);
- Policy H3 which supports small-scale affordable housing development within or well-related to rural settlements; and
- Policy NRM5 which confirms that authorities must give the highest level of protection to sites of international nature conservation importance and shall avoid damage to nationally important sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs). In total 56% of the New Forest National Park is of international value for nature conservation.

Development immediately adjoining the National Park within the South West region (e.g. within Wiltshire, East Dorset, Christchurch) can also impact on the Park and this is reflected within the draft **Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West**. Paragraph 7.2.7 of the *Government's Proposed Changes* (2008) states:

"Although policy coverage for the New Forest National Park is given in the 'South East Plan', development in the South West region adjoining the Park should not prejudice the achievement of the Park's purposes..."

Local Planning Context

The New Forest attained National Park status for planning purposes in 1994 with the acknowledgement of the special character of the New Forest Heritage Area. Consequently, the relevant Structure Plan policies for Wiltshire and Hampshire, and the Local Plan policies for New Forest District, Salisbury District and Test Valley Borough have been equivalent to National Park status for the New Forest for over 15 years. In many places the policies in the Authority's first Core Strategy build on the planning policy framework established in the previous plans.

³ Ministerial Order, 2007 No. 3276 - *The Town and Country Planning (Regions) (New Forest National Park) (England) Order 2007*

Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework

The National Park Authority is a Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, and is preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework jointly with Hampshire County Council, and Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils. The *Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and New Forest National Park Minerals and Waste Core Strategy* was adopted in 2007, and states that there will be no large scale minerals and waste development within the National Park other than in exceptional circumstances. In addition, developments on sites adjacent to the Park will not be permitted where these are likely to undermine the National Park purposes. The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy forms part of the statutory 'development plan' for the New Forest National Park and there is no need therefore to repeat the policies in this Core Strategy. Development Plan Documents setting out sites for future mineral extraction, and waste management sites are currently being prepared.

Relationship with surrounding areas

What happens in the New Forest National Park is clearly affected by what takes place in the surrounding areas, which includes the large South East Dorset and South Hampshire conurbations on either side of the National Park Plan Area, and to a lesser extent Salisbury lying to the north. Together these areas offer a wide range of employment, shopping, social, cultural and transport facilities that benefit the local communities within the National Park. But these areas also add to visitor, traffic and other pressures on the National Park. The New Forest's relationship with these surrounding areas has therefore been a key consideration in drawing up this Core Strategy.

Further major growth is planned in South Hampshire and in South East Dorset in their respective regional and sub-regional plans. In South Hampshire, the South East Plan proposes an additional 80,000 new dwellings and 2 million sq. m. of employment 2006 - 2026; in the Bournemouth and Poole Housing Market Area, the South West Plan (Secretary of State's Proposed Changes) proposes an additional 48,100 dwellings and 45,400 jobs in South East Dorset over the same period.

The recently adopted New Forest District Council Core Strategy rightly recognises the close links between its Plan Area and the National Park in terms of managing visitor pressures, supporting traditional land management activities, sustaining local communities and mitigating the impacts of new development on or close to the boundary of the National Park.

These cross boundary issues are explored in further detail in the spatial portrait of the National Park in Chapter 2. Close working relationships with other local authorities, the National Park Authority and other partners will continue to be essential.

Links to other plans and strategies

Relationship with the New Forest National Park Management Plan (2009)

Section 66(1) of the Environment Act 1995 requires each National Park Authority to prepare a National Park Management Plan. The Management Plan is the overarching strategic document for the National Park and is intended to guide the work of all organisations which operate within the National Park (not just the Authority).

Parish Plans prepared by local communities

New Forest District Council has helped to facilitate the production of parish and town plans within the District, including most of the National Park, and has been working with other key organisations to establish mechanisms that will help implement the plans effectively. Village Design Statements are being pursued by some parishes in liaison with the National Park Authority. Where possible the spatial themes from the Parish Plans have been taken into account in developing this Core Strategy and other elements will be taken forward through future plans, such as the Authority's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

The Authority will seek to strengthen the well-being of communities by supporting them in developing proposals for their area and undertaking practical projects to improve village life and the local environment.

Relationship with the Sustainable Community Strategies

The *Local Government Act 2000* requires local authorities (but not national park authorities) to draw up community strategies to contribute towards sustainable development in their area. The Authority's Local Development Framework reflects the relevant priorities set out in the five relevant Community Strategies prepared by the constituent authorities. The current Community Strategies covering the New Forest National Park are as follows:

- *Future Matters – A Sustainable Community Strategy for the New Forest District, 2008 – 2012*, prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership for New Forest District. The Vision is for “*A thriving New Forest, where people, the environment and the economy provide an exceptional quality of life.*”
- *Your Test Valley – Community Plan*, June 2007, prepared by the Test Valley Partnership. The aim is, “*To create a Test Valley community where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and to enjoy a good quality of life.*”
- *Making a Difference Together – Community Strategy for Salisbury and South Wiltshire*, prepared by the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance. The Vision is for, “*A safe and caring place, where it is easy to get about and where value for money services contribute to a high quality of life and environment with equality of opportunity for all.*”
- *Shaping Our Future Together, Hampshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2018*, prepared by Hampshire County Council in conjunction with the Hampshire Strategic Partnership. The Vision is that, “*Hampshire continues to prosper, providing greater opportunity for all without risking the environment.*”
- *A Sustainable Community Strategy for Wiltshire, 2007 – 2016*, prepared by the Wiltshire Strategic Board, with a Vision for “*Strong and sustainable communities in Wiltshire.*”

The Local Development Framework plays an important role in delivering the spatial aspirations of the five Community Strategies covering the New Forest, within the context of the statutory National Park purposes and duty. The table below summarises the relevant priority themes and objectives for the New Forest National Park that have been identified from the Community Strategies. Annex 2 illustrates how the Core Strategy carries forward these themes.

Theme	Relevant Community Strategy Objectives
Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape and habitat restoration and enhancement where character or condition has been lost or degraded ▪ Support land management that sustains the special qualities ▪ Protection of land with high environmental and wildlife value ▪ The strategic management of recreation to allow greater enjoyment while conserving the special qualities of the area
Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protection and enhancement of the quality of the built environment ▪ Promote understanding and achievement of high quality design ▪ Protect distinctive and valued local character ▪ Raising the quality of public space and access to greenspace
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce the carbon footprint of new development ▪ Reduce the use of non-renewable resources ▪ Adaptation to climate change
Local Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved availability of affordable housing to meet local needs ▪ Improved community engagement
Rural Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support local tourism industry to improve standards and services ▪ Support for a strong rural economy ▪ Promote the New Forest Marque to the visitor industry
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People have better access to local services and facilities where public transport is not an option

Sustainability Appraisal

The Authority is required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) of all Development Plan Documents as they are prepared. The Sustainability Appraisal undertaken during the preparation of the consultation draft National Park Plan (August 2008) considered a number of different options and the revised Core Strategy has undergone the same process. A summary of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Submission draft Core Strategy is contained in Annex 3.

Appropriate Assessment:

In total 56% of the National Park is designated of international value for nature conservation. This is a far higher proportion than any other English National Park. The New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site covers more than 29,000 hectares (112 square miles) in the core of the National Park. To meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive⁴, a full Habitats Regulations Assessment has been carried out. A summary of the Assessment is contained in Annex 4.

⁴ The Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC)

How the Plan has been prepared

The preparation of the Core Strategy has involved significant consultation with stakeholders and communities within the New Forest. The Consultation Statement⁵ explains in more detail how the Authority has engaged people and how the document has been amended to take account of the comments received at various stages. The consultation has followed the requirements of the relevant Planning Regulations (as updated in 2008) and the Authority's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The key stages in the preparation of the Core Strategy are summarised below:

- Future Matters consultation was a joint public consultation exercise held between November 2006 and January 2007 by the National Park Authority, New Forest District Council and the New Forest District Local Strategic Partnership. The consultation focused on the key issues facing the New Forest and the future of the area. A total of 442 individuals and 138 organisations gave their views, with 95% of organisations and 96% of individuals stating that managing the impact of development pressures in and around the National Park is 'important' or 'very important'.
- The New Forest New Chapter events were a series of 10 workshops held by the Authority between October 2007 and March 2008. It brought together more than 100 people from 70 organisations and interest groups to discuss the direction the National Park should be taking now and over the next 10 to 20 years. The advice and conclusions from the workshops helped to inform the consultation draft *National Park Plan* (see below).
- The consultation draft National Park Plan was published for a 12 week period between August – November 2008. The publication of the draft Plan was widely publicised and over 2,000 free copies of the Plan were distributed. The draft Plan received extensive media attention and in total the Authority received just under 10,000 responses. Once the consultation had closed, the Authority embarked on an extensive programme of further engagement to take forward work on revising the Plan.
- As part of the post consultation engagement, the Authority set up a series of working groups (held between March – April 2009) and meetings with parish and town councils and ward councillors focusing on addressing the issues that generated the most interest during the consultation on the draft National Park Plan. The Authority also held a public meeting in September 2009 to discuss the final stages in the preparation of this Core Strategy and the Management Plan. This further engagement informed the decision to prepare a separate National Park Management Plan and a separate Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

⁵ The Core Strategy Consultation Statement is listed as document X in *Annex 2 – Evidence Base documents*

Chapter 2: Spatial Portrait of the New Forest National Park

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.

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 many thousands 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

The National Park covers 571 square kilometres (220 square miles), making the New Forest the smallest national park in the UK. The National Park has an estimated population of 34,935 people⁶, making it the UK's most densely populated National Park (61 persons per km²). The housing stock within the National Park amounts to 14,927 dwellings (based on 2001 Census data), of which an estimated 3% are second homes or holiday lets.⁷ The main settlements of Ashurst, Burley, Cadnam, Brockenhurst, Landford, Lyndhurst and Sway have between 1,000 and 3,200 residents.

Landscape Character

The New Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2000) describes 21 character areas in the Park. A Landscape Strategy for the National Park⁸ will extend this work and consider in more detail ways to conserve and enhance local landscapes. 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 7,690 animals are depastured on the Open Forest by 629 practising commoners⁹. This historic form of land management faces threats from the high land and property costs.¹⁰

⁶ Office of National Statistics - National Park Population Estimates for England and Wales, 2007 - http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Mid-2007_National_Park_quinary.xls

⁷ Estimate based on 2001 Census

⁸ To be produced by the National Park Authority and partner organisations in 2010.

⁹ Verderers of the New Forest, 2008

¹⁰ New Forest Commoning Review 2007

Nature Conservation

In total 56% of the National Park is designated of international value for nature conservation – a far higher proportion than any other English National Park (18% of the Lake District is covered by such designations for example). The New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site covers more than 29,000 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.

Cultural Heritage

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, 610 listed buildings and 18 designated Conservation Areas, three of which straddle the Park boundary with New Forest District.

Access and Recreation

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 Lepe Country Park, Calshot Activities Centre, Beaulieu Motor Museum, Paulton's Park, and the villages of Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst, Beaulieu and Burley, attract people throughout the year.

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 12% from today.¹¹

Communities and Settlement Pattern

There are 37 parish and town councils wholly or partly within the National Park. This Core Strategy retains the existing 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. The table below profiles the main villages.

¹¹ Footprint Ecology: *Changing patterns of visitor numbers within the New Forest National Park, with particular reference to the New Forest SPA*, 2008

Village	Profile
Ashurst	<p>Meaning “<i>Ash wooded hill</i>” – Ashurst grew following the development of the Southampton – Dorchester railway line in the nineteenth century. Ashurst currently has a resident population of 3,166¹². Today most shops and businesses in Ashurst are concentrated along the Lyndhurst Road. The village is an important gateway to the New Forest and the station links the village with Southampton, Bournemouth and London.</p>
Brockenhurst	<p>Brockenhurst developed as a popular holiday and residential settlement with the arrival of the railway in the nineteenth century. The western part of the village expanded between the 1970s and 1990s and the current population is 2,990. Today the village contains a number of important employers, provides a wide range of services for local people and is home to Brockenhurst College. Brockenhurst’s accessibility to the Open Forest, allied to its public transport links, village character and its variety of shops, pubs and restaurants make it an important visitor destination.</p>
Lyndhurst	<p>Lyndhurst is often referred to as “The Capital of the New Forest”. New Forest District Council, the Forestry Commission, the Verderers, Natural England and Hampshire Constabulary are all currently based within the village. Lyndhurst is also home to the New Forest Centre – the main visitor centre in the National Park. Lyndhurst has a population of 2,325. The village today offers many of the day to day services, community facilities and cultural activities used by both local people and visitors. The village has a strong built heritage, with the Lyndhurst Conservation Area alone containing twenty listed buildings or structures.</p>
Sway	<p>The Parish of Sway was formed in 1849 when over 2,000 acres were taken from the extensive adjoining parish of Boldre. The arrival of the railway line in the nineteenth century led to the village expanding in the following decades. Today the village retains a station on the main railway line and the population of the Parish has increased to 2,341. The village retains a modest range of local shops, businesses and accommodation; and is surrounded by the Open Forest, offering fine walking and camping facilities</p>

Other settlements of note include Cadnam (1,850 residents), Landford (1,150 residents) Burley (1,400 residents) and Beaulieu (830 residents). 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.

¹² All village population figures taken from Hampshire County Council 2006 Population Forecasts for Urban Areas (as defined by ONS 2001 Census)

Economy

Whilst the National Park is predominantly rural in nature, the economy is diverse and is highly integrated with its surrounding areas. The most important employment sectors are distribution, hotels and restaurants, which are supported by tourism, followed by public administration, education and health, and then finance and business services. 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. A lower proportion of the population are economically active compared with that in Hampshire, and importantly this level is forecast to fall further in the coming years. The overall population is also expected to decline. Unemployment levels continue to be lower than those in the South East and the UK.

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. Circular 12/96 *National Parks* clarifies this by confirming that it is not appropriate for national park authorities themselves to assume the role of promoting economic development within National Parks, and national park authorities must ensure they carry out this duty in ways which are compatible with their pursuit of National Park purposes.¹³

Transport

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. There are a number of regular scheduled public bus services through the Park, including an hourly 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.

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.

The South East Plan also recognises Southampton as a major international gateway port with significant global and economic importance. Land at Dibden Bay, adjoining the National Park, is identified by the *Port of Southampton Masterplan 2009-2030* as the only area of land physically capable of accommodating significant expansion of the port. Any future development proposals for Dibden Bay must have proper regard to the New Forest National Park¹⁴, Government guidance on major development affecting National Parks and the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

¹³ Paragraphs 22 - 24, Circular 12/96, *National Parks*

¹⁴ As required by Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995 and policy C1 in the South East Plan.

Minerals and Waste

Within the National Park there are a number of existing small-scale operational mineral extraction and waste management sites, including a landfill site at Pound Bottom in the north of the Park. These sites are likely to continue for at least part of the lifetime of this Core Strategy.

There are also several mineral extraction sites immediately surrounding the National Park, particularly to the west of the Park boundary in the Avon Valley in New Forest District.

Challenges for the Local Development Framework

The Core Strategy and Development Management Policies must respond to a number of major issues and trends that are likely to affect the National Park and its special qualities fundamentally over the next 20 years. The summary below suggests the broad changes that may occur in the medium term, based on issues already apparent locally or suggested by national forecasts.

Climate change is likely to alter the character of large parts of the National Park over the next 20 years and beyond, modifying landscapes, habitats and biodiversity, affecting local communities and influencing the way the Park is perceived and used. The broad predictions that are relevant locally include:

- a rise in sea-levels affecting coastal habitats, property and access;
- an increase in the number of hot, dry summers, with implications for wetland habitats, land management, and the pattern of recreational use;
- an increase in extreme weather events, such as storms, flooding and heat waves, with impacts on the day to day lives of local people and businesses, and on the natural environment.

Local distinctiveness is the sum of all the individual features of local landscapes and the built environment which create the particular character of different parts of the National Park. Although the New Forest as a whole is still clearly different in many ways from its surroundings, there has been a gradual and continuing loss of character, including:

- suburbanisation of the villages;
- inappropriate scale and design of new buildings;
- increase in signs and other infrastructure in the countryside; and
- decline in traditional rural crafts and land management.

Traditional land management has created the landscape of the New Forest over the last 1,000 years, but is under threat from uncertainties facing agriculture and commoning. Future trends are likely to include:

- increasing competition from different land uses, including more intensive arable production (in response to global food shortages), bio-fuels and growing demand for natural resources;
- a growing market for local produce;
- long-term changes to commoning as a result of climate change and the lack of affordable housing and land; and

- the need to create revenue for the continued management of publicly owned land if central government funding is reduced in the future.

Economic growth within the Park and in the surrounding areas brings both pressures and opportunities. There is a continued demand for new development within and immediately adjacent to the Park, and the need for careful design to avoid impacts on the rural character of the area, its visual setting and the conservation of its rich historic and natural heritage. Trends over the next 20 years are likely to include:

- major housing growth in South Hampshire, South East Dorset and South Wiltshire, with the likelihood of further increased traffic and recreational pressure;
- economic development in and around Bournemouth and Southampton, including the expansion of both airports and the Port of Southampton;
- continued pressure for new development within and adjacent to the Park;
- a growth in businesses using ‘environmentally friendly’ technologies and practices,
- a more sustainable approach to transport and building design;
- an increasing interest in high value sustainable tourism; and
- an increase in home-working and the use of new information technologies.

The development of new ‘greener’ technologies, the very strong identity of the New Forest and the interest of local communities in seeking new ways of living and working all give the potential for the National Park to become an example of sustainable development in action at the local level.

Society and social expectations can change rapidly over a few decades. Many people have already been attracted to live in the New Forest because of the quality of its environment and affordable housing for local people is a major issue. Residents and those living in surrounding communities have clear, and sometimes varying, expectations of what the Park should provide for their enjoyment and recreation. Future trends are likely to include:

- an increasing proportion of retired or older people;
- continuing threats to rural services and facilities and the sustainability of smaller communities;
- increasing recreational use of the National Park by different groups with different needs;
- continued reliance on the private car as the main mode of transport and consequently increased congestion and general pressure on the road network; and
- increasing costs of fossil-fuel based energy, affecting residents and businesses.

Local policies can help to influence the provision of local services, housing, and energy sources, which will all help to create more sustainable communities. The National Park does have the potential to meet many of the recreational needs of its communities, but this will need careful consideration and positive management of recreation both within and outside the Park.

Chapter 3: Spatial Vision and Spatial Objectives

The Spatial Vision and Objectives for the Core Strategy set out how the New Forest National Park will look by the end of the plan period – 2026, and how this will be achieved.

The Spatial 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. Although particular features that are valued about the New Forest today may alter over time, conserving the essence of the place, and ensuring its uniqueness can be experienced by future generations, is the central priority for the National Park and is at the heart of this Management Plan.

The special qualities of the New Forest, identified through public consultation in 2007¹⁵, are:

- **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 that 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 more common 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 and 500 years of military coastal defence.

¹⁵ New Forest National Park Authority paper 191/07: A Statement of Special Qualities for the New Forest National Park Authority (June 2007).

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. In recent years between 6,000 and 7,400 ponies, cattle, donkeys, pigs and sheep have been 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 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 local services or products, or taking advantage of the recognised image and distinctiveness of the New Forest.

Vision

To ensure consistency with the New Forest National Park Management Plan (2009), the Authority has adopted the same overarching Vision for the National Park within its Core Strategy.

Overarching Vision for the New Forest National Park

The Vision for the New Forest National Park in 2026 is of an area which has a unique and immediately recognisable sense of place, where:

- tranquillity and a feeling of naturalness pervade large parts of the Park;
- the mosaic of distinctive landscapes and habitats are all of the highest quality and a great variety of wildlife is able to flourish;
- there is a strong sense and understanding of the heritage and living culture of the Forest;
- all visitors can gain inspiration, enjoyment, health and well-being and enjoy the extensive areas of land with open access;
- the far reaching consequences of climate change are taken into account in all policies and future plans;
- people live and work sustainably and contribute to the care of the Forest;
- local, regional and national organisations recognise the value of the National Park and there is a shared understanding of its role within the wider area; and
- everyone contributes in appropriate ways to keeping the National Park a special place for present and future generations.

In order to highlight what will happen in particular areas of the National Park, the Core Strategy also contains a spatial vision for the different parts of the National Park, which has had regard to the relevant elements of the various Sustainable Community Strategies covering the New Forest.

Vision for the Countryside, Coast and Sensitive Landscapes

The areas of open countryside, the coastal environment and the designated landscapes and habitats make up the vast majority of the National Park. By 2026 these areas have been protected and enhanced where necessary, and continue to be enjoyed by visitors and residents alike.

Traditional land management practises, particularly commoning, are supported and continue to thrive and shape the Forest's landscape and cultural identity. The impacts of climate change are being addressed through a range of measures, including locating development in areas not at risk of flooding, allowing appropriate renewable energy schemes, and encouraging energy efficient development.

Vision for the Rural Settlements

Small-scale development in the rural settlements outside the four defined villages has enabled the local communities to become more self-sufficient with employment opportunities by re-using existing buildings and access to essential community facilities. Rural exceptions schemes have allowed housing development in the rural settlements to be focused on local housing needs. Rural settlements continue to look towards nearby higher order settlements, including towns outside the National Park, for a range of other cultural and retail needs.

Vision for the Defined Villages

By 2026, the defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway have continued to attract small-scale development that has helped retain and support these vibrant and sustainable local communities. The inherent characteristics and local distinctiveness of the individual villages has been retained and enhanced through the emphasis on the highest standards of design of new development that respects the natural and built heritage of the Park.

Within the defined villages, development will have provided a mix of open market and affordable housing to meet the needs of local people. The rural economy of the defined villages has been supported by small-scale employment development and appropriate retail and community facilities to meet the everyday needs of these communities.

Spatial Objectives

Nine strategic objectives have been developed to work towards achieving the Vision for the New Forest National Park over the lifetime of this Core Strategy, within the overarching remit of the delivery of the Park's two statutory purposes and related socio-economic duty. These objectives address the main issues and challenges identified for the National Park over the lifetime of this Core Strategy up to 2026 and also over the longer term, for instance with regard to climate change. They take account of the objectives within the National Park Management Plan; the relevant Sustainable Community Strategies covering the Park; and the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Spatial Objective		Relevant Core Strategy 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.	CP1, CP2, DP1, DP2, CP3, and DP3
2.	Conserve and enhance the wealth of individual characteristics that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the built environment of the New Forest.	CP7, CP8 and DP6
3.	Plan for the likely impacts of climate change on the special qualities of the New Forest and reduce the overall environmental footprint of the National Park.	CP4, DP4, DP5, CP5 and CP6
4.	Strengthen the well-being, identity and sustainability of rural communities and the pride of local people in their area.	CP9, DP7, DP8, CP10, CP12, DP9, DP10, DP11, DP12, and DP15
5.	Promote affordable housing to meet local needs and maintain the vibrant communities of the National Park.	CP11, DP13, DP14 and CP13
6.	Develop a diverse and sustainable economy that contributes to the well-being of local communities.	CP14, CP15, DP16 and DP17
7.	Encourage land management that sustains the special qualities of the National Park.	CP17, DP19, DP20, DP21, DP22 and DP23
8.	Support development which encourages sustainable tourism and recreation, and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.	CP16 and DP18
9.	Reduce the impacts of traffic on the special qualities of the National Park and provide a range of sustainable transport alternatives within the Park.	CP18 and CP19

Chapter 4: Spatial Strategy

The strategic direction for the National Park over the period to 2026 is underpinned by the delivery of the Park's two purposes and the related socio-economic duty. The Regional Spatial Strategy (2009) recognises the New Forest as a special place in the South East region, as a living and working landscape that has a richness and beauty. In that context it confirms the emphasis of the development that takes place will be on small-scale proposals that reflect the area's diverse character and distinctiveness. The emphasis is very much on a level of development that maintains the needs of the local communities in the Park.

Focusing on allowing change and adaptation but also maintaining and enhancing the essence of the New Forest is at the heart of the National Park's spatial strategy. Whilst this fundamentally requires a whole-Park approach, the spatial strategy recognises that there are particular geographical areas of the Park that require different policy approaches to maintain their different characters and functions. These areas comprise:

- the New Forest's countryside, coast and sensitive locations
- the numerous rural settlements within the National Park
- the four defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway

Countryside, Coast and Sensitive Landscapes

The wider countryside, coast and sensitive landscapes of the New Forest represent a significant proportion of the National Park, and include coastal habitats, relatively tranquil and remote areas, the Open Forest, and nationally and internationally important nature conservation sites. The outstanding natural landscape beauty of the New Forest is the principle reason for its designation as a National Park and, in accordance with the statutory Park purposes, the Core Strategy seeks to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and wildlife of the National Park.

In accordance with national planning policy, to minimise harm to the most sensitive and fragile habitats and landscapes of the National Park new development, including recreational facilities and infrastructure, will be directed away from these areas and towards more accessible locations.

Rural Settlements

The National Park is a rural area with small and dispersed settlements that have a limited range of facilities, services and transport accessibility. The small and scattered nature of many of these rural settlements, and the need for all development to be of a scale and character appropriate to the National Park, means that the level of development in the rural settlements will be relatively limited. However, this approach allows for the provision of affordable housing through 'rural exception sites', some limited employment opportunities and essential local community facilities needed to create a village and community which is sustainable in the longer term.

The priority will be to retain existing facilities and services wherever possible and encourage the provision of new essential services, such as village shops, recreation facilities and community buildings where there is a local need. Local employment and business opportunities will be supported where these have a low environmental impact, for instance through the re-use of local buildings, farm diversification schemes and home working.

Provision of affordable housing in and adjoining the rural settlements, through 'rural exceptions schemes' will help to address the high level of local needs housing required throughout the National Park and help to support local communities. This includes affordable housing for commoners, in order to help maintain the viability of commoning, which will help ensure that this form of traditional land management continues to shape the future of the Park¹⁶.

Defined Villages

Appropriate small scale employment and housing development to meet the needs of the local communities will be supported in the four current defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway, continuing policies in the previous Local Plan. It will be important to maintain the vitality and character of these villages, accepting that together they provide homes for nearly one third of all National Park residents, have the broadest range of community facilities, services and local employment opportunities and have relatively good transport links, including public transport. Any new development will be carefully designed and of a scale which will contribute to the essentially rural character of the villages.

Due to the high house prices in the New Forest, the level of local need in the area, the low rate of development, and the significant existing dwelling stock, the Authority will seek 50% of new residential developments within the defined villages to be for local affordable housing needs. The remainder will be open market housing.

The South East Plan does not identify any strategic employment requirements for the National Park, and it is envisaged that only a modest amount of new employment development will be appropriate in the National Park. Therefore the Core Strategy focuses on retaining existing employment sites as well as allowing some new development in the four defined villages. This will help to minimise the need to travel, provide local employment opportunities to potentially redress some of the out-commuting traffic issues and enable small scale tourism development such as visitor accommodation.

The strategic policy 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 local housing, employment and community facilities; and
- conserve the distinctive character and heritage of the villages.

Surrounding Urban Areas

As noted in Chapter 1, the National Park is surrounded by a number of larger towns and cities that provide the major shopping, leisure and cultural facilities for New Forest residents and visitors (see Key Diagram). These urban areas provide a wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities enjoyed by National Park residents. The Spatial Strategy is based on the approach that these areas will continue to fulfil these functions for the National Park communities. However, the provision of small-scale local community facilities and services to help sustain the socio-economic well-being of the Park's communities is a key issue addressed in this Core Strategy.

¹⁶ New Forest Commoning Review, 2007

Settlement Hierarchy

The proposed settlement hierarchy that underpins the spatial strategy for the National Park is based on an audit of community facilities and services in the Park's settlements¹⁷ and an assessment of future capacity for development¹⁸; and reflects a continuation of the current settlement pattern. It recognises the role played by the larger settlements outside the Park which fulfil some of the higher order functions for the Park such as larger cultural and retail needs.

Major urban areas <u>outside</u> the National Park	Southampton Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch Salisbury
Larger towns and settlements <u>outside</u> the National Park	Downton (Wiltshire Council) Fordingbridge (New Forest District) Romsey (Test Valley Borough) Hythe and Dibden (New Forest District) Lymington and Pennington (New Forest District) New Milton and Barton on Sea (New Forest District) Ringwood (New Forest District) Totton and Eling (New Forest District)
Defined Villages <u>in</u> the National Park	Ashurst Brockenhurst Lyndhurst Sway
Rural Settlements <u>in</u> the National Park	Numerous small dispersed settlements throughout the Park

Key diagram

The key diagram (following page) illustrates the spatial approach of this Core Strategy and highlights the main relationships with areas outside the National Park boundary.

¹⁷ Topic Paper 5: Settlements and Services, NPA, 2009

¹⁸ Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, NPA, 2009

Chapter 5: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

This chapter takes forward the spatial objectives for protecting and enhancing the natural environment of the National Park.

The New Forest National Park has the highest proportion of area covered by nature designations of any other English National Park, is the smallest National Park and is under intense pressure from development in surrounding areas, as illustrated in the spatial portrait (chapter 3). The New Forest is home to a variety of wildlife habitats and species. It is internationally recognised as one of the largest areas of heathland in Europe and is designated as both a Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area, and therefore enjoys protection under European Directives as a Natura 2000 site.

The sense of naturalness, peace and quiet and feeling of remoteness found within the National Park contrasts dramatically with the intensively developed residential and industrial environments close to its eastern and western boundaries. In this context it is essential that the reasons for the designation of the New Forest as a nationally important landscape are retained and enhanced, whilst facilitating the enjoyment of the Park's special qualities.

Measures to help the area adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change are also set out and include encouraging energy efficient development, renewable energy schemes and provision of open space.

Spatial 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 habitats

Special Protection Areas (SPA), and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance) are listed in Appendix X and are shown on the Proposals Map. In accordance with Planning Policy Statement 9 they enjoy the highest level of statutory and government policy protection to maintain and restore any nature conservation interest. Specific and stringent tests within the Habitats Regulations 1994 ensure that harmful development will only be approved if there are no alternative solutions, and if there is an overriding public interest for the use and providing that the overall coherence of the network is maintained.

Policy CP1: Nature Conservation Sites of international Importance

Development which may affect the integrity of an internationally important site for nature conservation (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) will not be permitted unless:

- i) there is no alternative solution and
- ii) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development

In particular, any new housing that is proposed to be located within 400m of the boundary of the New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) will require special justification in view of the potential for adverse impacts on the SPA such as fly tipping and disturbance to wildlife.

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Core Strategy identified that increased populations within close proximity to sensitive European nature conservation sites can have a number of impacts, such as increased fly tipping and disturbance to wildlife. This is based on detailed research conducted by Natural England and partners on the proximity of development to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, as set out in more detail in the Authority's HRA which concluded that development located within 400m of a SPA boundary cannot be mitigated due to disturbance to wildlife. Therefore in the National Park housing should not be located within 400m of the boundary of the New Forest SPA unless a site specific special justification can be provided, for instance for agricultural workers' or commoners' dwellings.

Policy CP2: 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.

In addition, opportunities to enhance ecological or geological assets should be maximised, particularly in line with local Biodiversity Action Plan priorities, and the South East Plan Areas of Strategic Opportunity.

There are many nationally, regionally and locally important sites and features that characterise the New Forest and these should be protected. 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), ancient woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

The South East Plan sets regional biodiversity targets for improvements and identifies several areas of strategic opportunity for biodiversity improvement, some of which are in the New Forest.

Policy DP1: 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:

- development is appropriate and sympathetic in terms of scale, appearance, form, siting and layout;
- development respects the natural and built environment, landscape character and biodiversity;
- materials are appropriate to the site and its setting;
- amenity is not adversely affected in terms of additional impacts, visual intrusion, overlooking or shading; and
- no adverse impacts associated with traffic or pollution (including noise and light pollution)

New development must also comply with required standards for:

- car parking;
- open space;
- Code for Sustainable Homes; and
- BREEAM standards for commercial and industrial buildings

A Standards Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared setting out the required standards for car parking and open space.

National and regional planning guidance and the New Forest Management Plan identify the aim of reducing the carbon footprint of new development, and particularly moving towards zero carbon in new housing. Therefore this policy refers applicants to the need for compliance with the standards in the Code for Sustainable Homes for new residential development and the BREEAM standards for commercial and industrial buildings. Zero carbon dwellings have a level 6 rating under the Code for Sustainable Homes standards. The Government has stated that all new dwellings should be zero carbon from 2016.

Water Resources

There is 224 km of designated river within the National Park. Evidence identifies that at least 96% of assessed river length was of good quality (on both chemical and biological assessments), with 2% classified as fair or poor quality¹⁹. A number of issues and pressures affecting the long term quality of the region's water resources include abstraction, pesticides, phosphates, physical modification and transport pollution²⁰. In addition, evidence from Natural England indicates that habitats that are currently in 'unfavourable condition' include wetlands, rivers and coastal habitats, largely as a result of past drainage, forestry operations and coastal change²¹.

¹⁹ Environment Agency, 2006 figures

²⁰ Environment Agency, South East River Basin – Significant Water Management Issues 2008

²¹ New Forest National Park Authority Annual Monitoring Report 2008

Policy DP2: 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

'Green infrastructure' is defined in the South East Plan as a planned and managed network of open spaces that perform a number of functions²². It can bring a wide range of benefits to both communities and the environment, and particularly has a role to play in 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.

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 Park²³. 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 detrimental effects from a high degree of visitor pressure in the National Park.

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.

Policy CP3: Green Infrastructure

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

- encourage connectivity between different habitats and sites; or
- relieve recreational pressures on internationally important nature conservation sites.

The Authority will work with adjoining authorities and other partners to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the National Park, and to ensure the impacts of development outside the Park's boundary do not affect the Park, especially internationally important nature conservation designations.

A Green Infrastructure Strategy for the South Hampshire sub-region has been commissioned by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). The draft strategy seeks to provide a common framework for local authorities in the sub-region to incorporate within their individual local development frameworks. It recognises the importance of the National Park in the region and sub-region and aims to create a network of green infrastructure to increase the resilience of the New Forest ecosystem.

²² South East Green Infrastructure Framework – From Policy into Practice, LUC, June 2009

²³ An analysis of accessible natural greenspace provision in the South East, McKernan & Grose, 2007

The draft PUSH Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies the potential for a new country park to be located in southern Test Valley Borough.

The Authority will 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 from recreational pressures. Although the South East Regional Spatial Strategy only proposes an annual housing requirement of 11 dwellings in the National Park, appropriate provision of alternative natural greenspace should be made to prevent the cumulative effects of this and development in adjoining authorities on the internationally important nature conservation designations.

A Recreation Management Strategy for the National Park is being produced to help ensure the National Park can be enjoyed by local people and visitors while minimising any potential adverse impacts. It will include measures for managing recreational pressure within the Park boundary and should be referred to for more detail on the issues, opportunities and management of recreation.

Policy DP3: Open Space

Proposals that result in the loss of existing open space and amenity areas will not be supported.

Development should either provide for the enhancement of existing open space and amenity areas or provide on-site open space. Regard should be had to the Authority's Open Space Standards, which will be set out in a Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

Current standards for open space provision vary between the different district areas of the National Park from 2.43 to 2.8 hectares per 1000 population of open space to be provided on-site, or, where this is not feasible, a contribution to off-site provision. A recent PPG17 Study undertaken by consultants recommends an increased open space requirement in connection with new development to 4.05 hectares per 1000 population.

It is likely given the small-scale of future housing development within the National Park that on-site open space provision will not be viable in most instances. In these circumstances, the Authority is likely to seek a contribution towards open space enhancements in the locality (*see policy DP15 on infrastructure provision*). New housing development should however, 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.

Detailed local standards will be developed in the Standards Supplementary Planning Document and will have regard to the advice in PPG17 – Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation – as well as the New Forest Area PPG17 Study²⁴.

²⁴ PPG17: Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study for the New Forest Area, Main Report (2007)

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, in particular policies CC8 and NRM5
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- PUSH Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy
- New Forest PPG17 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2007)
- The New Forest National Park Recreation Management Strategy (revised draft to be published in January 2010)

Climate Change

Spatial Objective for Planning for Climate Change:

- **Plan for the likely impacts of climate change, particularly on the Special Qualities of the area and reduce the overall environmental footprint of the National Park.**

Climate change is likely to be one of the most significant factors influencing change in all aspects of the National Park in the future. The publication of the Stern Report in October 2006 confirmed that there is widespread evidence and overwhelming consensus amongst scientists that human-induced global warming and climate change is now taking place due to emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

The main issues resulting from potential climate changes are the likely impacts on habitats, landscape, archaeology, property, human safety, recreation, land management, water resources and the rural economy from:

- continuing sea level rise;
- increased flooding and storm events;
- drought and water shortages in summer; and
- general increase in average temperatures, including effects on established wildlife populations and the possible spread of invasive species and new plant and animal diseases.

The UK Climate Projections were published in August 2009 and estimate that by the 2080s South East England could face an increase in average summer temperatures of between 2 and 6 degrees Celsius. Also anticipated is a 22% decrease in average summer rainfall. 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.

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.

The South East Regional Sustainability Framework identifies three priorities for action where the region is underperforming against its climate change objectives. These are:

- achieving sustainable levels of resource use;
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and
- ensuring the region is prepared for the impacts of climate change.

The New Forest District has one of the highest levels of CO₂ emissions in the South East, across the sectors industrial and commercial; domestic and road transport. However, one of the major contributors is the electricity and oil related industries.²⁵

By improving the New Forest's resilience, we can aim to minimise the damage to the special qualities and reduce the level of disruption whilst maximising benefits from the new opportunities.

Policy CP4: Climate Change

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

- avoiding development in areas at highest risk of flooding;
- locating development so as to reduce the need to travel by car;
- sustainable design and construction including improved water and energy efficiency;
- increasing small scale renewable and low carbon energy generation;
- reduce the overall environmental footprint of the National Park; and
- enabling wildlife and habitats to adapt to climate change

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.

Measures to reduce the National Park's overall environmental footprint²⁶ include sustainable transport, more energy efficient new development and supporting local food production. The South East Plan (2009) states that a sustained programme of action is needed to reduce the South East's ecological footprint by 2026.

Standards for new residential development is set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes, which was published in 2006 to accompany the other government measures aimed at reducing green house gas emissions. The Code is important in addressing climate change as housing is responsible for 30% of the UK's CO₂ emissions. See Development Policy 2 for general development principles, including the application of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

²⁵ South East Regional Monitoring Report 2008

²⁶ The 'environmental' or 'ecological' footprint goes further than carbon-footprinting by measuring the overall environmental costs of human activity, including not only the energy consumed, but also the food imported, natural resources used and the amount of waste and pollution created. The Stockholm Environmental Institute has published initial comparative figures for local authority areas throughout Britain (The Ecological Footprint of the New Forest, Stockholm Environment Institute, 2006).

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, particularly policy CC2
- Planning Policy Statement 1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change
- Planning Policy Guidance 20: Coastal Planning
- Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy
- Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk
- New Forest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- New Forest National Park Authority Topic Paper 3: Climate Change

Flooding and the Coast

Policy DP4: Flooding and the Coast

Development proposals will not be supported if they:

- would increase the risk of coastal or fluvial flooding or coastal erosion;
- are in high flood risk areas (as defined by PPS25 Flood Zones 2 and 3a and the New Forest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment); and
- are not compatible with the appropriate Shoreline Management Plan and Coastal Defence Strategy.

Appropriate developments will require a flood risk assessment.

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.

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 is being undertaken by a partnership of local, regional and national authorities and agencies that have various responsibilities and powers for managing the coast. It sets out detailed policies for coastal defence over the next 100 years.

Within the National Park the Shoreline Management Plan is likely to propose continued coastal defences for the main settlements, including Keyhaven and Lymington, and will make allowance for landowners to maintain their own defences where these already exist. It is anticipated that in due course there will be an advice note accompanying the Shoreline Management Plan that will provide detailed advice on its interpretation and implementation. The National Park Authority will also consult New Forest District Council as the Coastal Authority on planning applications where necessary.

Flood zones have been developed by the Environment Agency. 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, and significant flooding from the Lymington River in Brockenhurst and to a lesser degree the Beaulieu River and these areas are shown on the Spatial Issues Map on page X.

Planning Policy Statement 25 sets out the 'sequential test' that will be used to assess all planning applications to direct development away from flood zones 2 and 3a 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. Only if there are no suitable alternative sites should development in areas of higher risk (flood zones 2 and 3a) be considered.

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.

Policy DP5: Coastal Development

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

- will not have adverse impacts on coastal processes;
- are in keeping with the character of the coast;
- will not significantly prejudice landscape interest and will have regard to the importance of seaward and landward views;
- will not adversely affect coastal habitats and species; and
- will not lead to the consolidation of scattered development.

Renewable Energy

Currently the South East has the highest resource consumption of any other region in the country. If everyone consumed as much of the earth's resources as the South East region then three and a half planets would be needed to support the world's consumption.

Both national planning policy and the South East Plan expect all new development to promote and encourage renewable and low-carbon energy generation. In particular the Government's commitment is that all new homes built from 2016 will be carbon neutral in ongoing energy consumption.

However, the potential for renewable energy within the National Park will need to be balanced against the potential adverse visual and amenity impacts on the landscape, particularly views into and out of the National Park. National planning policy clearly states that within nationally recognised designations, such as National Parks planning permission for renewable energy projects should only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of the designation will not be compromised; and that small scale developments should be permitted provided that there is no significant environmental detriment to the area concerned.

Policy CP5: Renewable Energy

Development proposals for, or incorporating, renewable energy schemes that assist in contributing towards the achievement of the South East regional renewable energy targets will be supported where they:

- are small-scale;
- are located and designed to reduce visual impacts; and
- do not have significant impacts on the special qualities of the National Park.

All forms of small scale energy production will be encouraged where these are shown to be economically viable in the long term and can be designed and located with minimal impacts on the special qualities of the National Park.

Some small scale renewable energy schemes do 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.

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.

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, particularly policies CC2, CC4 and NRM11
- Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1
- Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy

Pollution

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.

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. A finalised Air Quality Action Plan for Lyndhurst has now been endorsed by Defra and published. It sets out traffic management measures including enforcing 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.

Additionally noise and light pollution can impact upon the special qualities of the National Park, especially the tranquillity of the area. The Campaign to Protect Rural England has produced maps highlighting the tranquil areas of Britain. It identifies areas in the north of the New Forest as being the most tranquil in the National Park. In order to retain this special quality for future generations the potential impacts of noise and light pollution will be carefully controlled.

Both national planning policy and the South East Plan also support proposals that improve air quality and reduce the impacts of noise.

Policy CP6: Pollution

Opportunities should be taken to control and reduce the impacts of 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, except where this is outweighed by overriding public safety considerations.

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, particularly policies NRM9 and NRM10
- Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control
- Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise

Chapter 6: Protecting and Enhancing the Built Environment

This chapter takes forward the spatial objectives for protecting and enhancing the built environment of the National Park.

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.

Small-scale changes to the local landscape, buildings and settlements 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.

Spatial Objective for Protecting the Forest's Built Environment

- **Conserve and enhance the wealth of individual characteristics that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the built environment of the New Forest.**

On the English Heritage register there are seven historic parks and gardens in the National Park²⁷, whilst a much longer list of locally important sites is set out on the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens²⁸.

Policy CP7: The Built Environment

Proposals should protect, maintain and enhance nationally, regionally and locally important sites and features of the built environment, including local vernacular buildings, archaeological sites and designed landscapes.

Local Distinctiveness and Design Principles

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.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East states that high priority should be given to conserving and enhancing the specific character of the New Forest, acknowledging that the National Park is “*under intense pressure*” (paragraph 11.6) This is evidenced by the level of planning applications received by the Authority each year. In 2007/2008, the Authority decided significantly more planning applications than any other National Park Authority in England (nearly 1,250), despite the fact that the New Forest is the smallest National Park in England²⁹.

²⁷ Avon Tyrrell, Brockenhurst Park, Cadland House, Exbury House, Hale Park, Pylewell Park, Rhinefield

²⁸ Published by Hampshire County Council, 2000

²⁹ Development Control Statistics, England, 2007-08, CLG, Oct 2008

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 character³⁰.

Policy CP8: 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 supported.

Policy DP6: 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:

- enhancing the built heritage of the New Forest;
- designing out crime through the use of Secured by Design principles and standards;
- ensuring new development is accessible where appropriate;
- ensuring new residential development takes account of the lifetime homes principles where appropriate; and
- ensuring all new development incorporates sound sustainable design and construction principles and good environmental practices.

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.

The Sustainable Community Strategies covering the National Park highlight crime and the fear of crime as areas of real concern to local communities. 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.

Given the forecasted ageing population in the New Forest during the period of the Core Strategy and beyond, the Core Strategy, in line with Government guidance³¹, aims to encourage 'lifetime homes'. These are homes that are adaptable to meet a lifetime's changing needs, and the Lifetime Homes standards comprise 16 different features that facilitate this. Lifetime Homes Standards will be made a mandatory part of the Code for Sustainable Homes to encourage progressively increased take-up in new build projects. The Government's aspiration is that by 2013 all new homes will be being built to Lifetime Homes Standards.

³⁰ National Park Authority's Annual Monitoring Report 2008

³¹ Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, CLG, Feb 2008

A Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document for the National Park is being prepared by the Authority which will set out more details on the characteristics of the New Forest and ways of incorporating local distinctiveness and various design principles into new development proposals.

Sustainable design and construction

Both national planning policy and the South East Plan expect all new development to adopt and incorporate sustainable construction standards and techniques.

The aim will be to achieve a low, or no, carbon and environmental footprint for new buildings – Government guidance emphasises zero-carbon dwellings by 2016. Innovative design and technologies will be encouraged where these are shown to be effective and the use of materials sourced as locally as possible will be preferred.

The Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, when adopted, will set out more details on how to incorporate sustainable design features into the design and layout of new development proposals.

Listed buildings and conservation areas

Listed buildings are buildings officially defined as being of special architectural or historic interest and there are approximately 610 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.

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 proposals map.

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.

Development to listed buildings and in Conservation Areas will be carefully controlled to ensure that their character is retained, as set out in Planning Policy Guidance notes 15 and 16. The Government has recently consulted on a new PPS 15 Planning for the Historic Environment, to incorporate former PPGs 15 and 16. Applicants should refer to this revised national planning guidance in due course when it is published.

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, particularly policies NRM11 and CC4
- Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning
- Hampshire and Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plans
- New Forest Biodiversity Action Plan (in preparation)
- New Forest Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (in preparation)
- New Forest Cultural Heritage Strategy (in preparation)
- Secured by Design

Telecommunications Proposals

The visual impacts of telecommunications proposals, including masts, will be considered using the national planning guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 8 on telecommunications. This advises that high priority should be given to safeguard areas of particular importance such as National Parks, and therefore telecommunication proposals should be sensitively designed and sited and it must be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative locations.

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, particularly NRM7 and NRM8
- Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications
- Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control
- Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise

Chapter 7: Vibrant Communities

This chapter takes forward the spatial objectives for strengthening the well-being and sustainability of rural communities and promoting affordable housing to meet local needs.

The New Forest National Park has the highest population density of any English National Park and the strong and distinctive local New Forest communities have been identified as one of its 'special qualities'. National and regional planning policy recognises the need for small-scale, sustainably located development within the National Park to support the socio-economic well-being of its communities. This includes the provision of local affordable housing and local community facilities.

Measures to support and help to retain the local character of the National Park are also set out to ensure the New Forest communities continue to thrive while the special character of the Forest is conserved.

Spatial Objectives for Supporting Vibrant Communities:

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

The people living within the New Forest have a strong pride in their local area and the New Forest as a whole. However, local communities also 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. Affordable housing for local people is also a particular issue as the gap between house prices and local earnings has widened over the last decade.

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*³²." The Authority's basic approach will be to:

- focus residential development within the Park on meeting local affordable housing needs;
- focus the majority of local housing, employment development and community facilities within the defined villages in accordance with national planning policy; and
- allow facilities to meet local community needs for housing and employment in the other rural settlements across the National Park where appropriate.

³² Section 62(1), Environment Act 1995

Parish Plans

A number of parishes in the New Forest National Park have produced or are producing Parish Plans, which contain an analysis of local issues and an action plan to address these. The Authority is working with the Community Planning Officer at New Forest District Council and the local community groups to help guide the production of the Plans. Where appropriate, the Authority will look to support Parish Plans and Village Design Statements through the planning policy framework. Parish Plans can play an important role in identifying potential rural affordable housing sites for example.

Defined Villages

Government planning guidance³³ states that the priority for new development in rural areas should be in or near to the main settlements where employment, housing, services and other facilities can be provided close together. The Spatial Strategy (Chapter 4) 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. This approach carries forward the existing settlement hierarchy established in the 1990s by New Forest District Council.

Policy CP9: Defined Villages

The Authority will support small-scale development proposals to meet local needs, including employment, retail and community facilities within the four 'Defined Villages' of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway provided that the proposals conform with other policies in the Core Strategy.

The Proposals Map shows the boundaries of the defined villages. 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 Core Policies and Development Management Policies in this Plan, including those relating to local distinctiveness and design quality.

Government advice on development in rural areas also notes that provision should be made for some development outside main villages, in order to support local shops, rural businesses and allow local affordable housing needs to be met in local parishes. Policy CP10 supports small scale development in the rest of the National Park to meet local needs.

Retail Development within the National Park

The strategic policies in the Core Strategy seek to allow the provision of a range of services for local people, including specifically retail uses, in the defined villages. The Authority monitors the proportion of retail uses in the defined shopping areas of the four main villages annually and the proportions of retail use sets out in policy DP7 are the same as those established in the previous Local Plans for the New Forest.

³³ Para. 3, Planning Policy Statement 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, ODPM, 2004

Policy DP7: Change of Use from Retail in the Defined Villages

The change of use of ground floor premises from retail to financial and professional services or food and drink uses within the local shopping frontages of the Defined Villages (as defined on the Proposals Map) will be permitted provided that it will not result in the proportion of retail units in the shopping frontages of Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst being reduced to less than 50%; and in the frontages of Ashurst and Sway to less than 40%.

The Authority also recognises the need for local retail facilities outside the main villages, and policy DP7 supports appropriate small-scale retail development (including farm shops) outside the main villages.

Policy DP8: 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 supported, 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.

Policy DP8 seeks to support small scale farm shops whilst guarding against unrestricted retail uses in the countryside which could have significant effects on existing village shops and the local environs.

Farm shops can provide a valuable local facility and an additional source of income for farms which in turn helps to sustain the local economy. The growing importance of the local produce market is acknowledged in Chapter 8.

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. Where it is determined that planning permission is required, then applications will be assessed against Policy DP8.

Community Facilities and Services

In order to sustain the well-being of the communities in the New Forest, it is important to support and encourage the retention and improvement of community facilities. Policy CP10 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 CP10: 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.

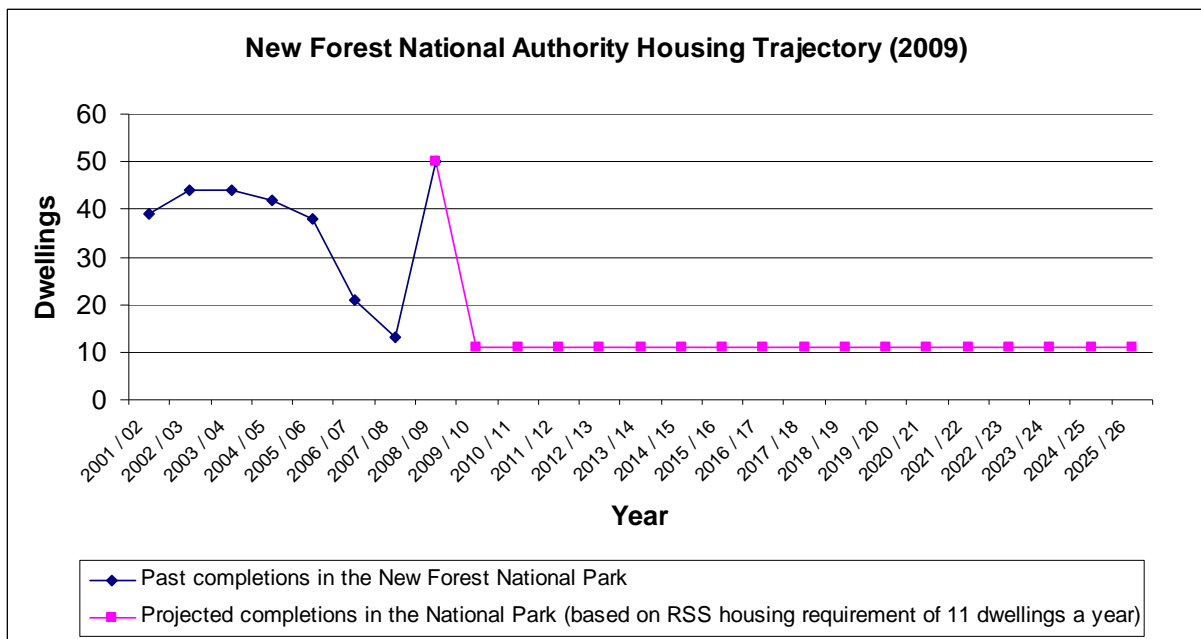
Essential local community facilities are facilities that are of direct benefit to the immediate local community that provide an essential service, including village shops, pubs and village halls as well as small-scale health and educational services, sports and social facilities.

Housing

The New Forest District, Wiltshire and Test Valley Borough Councils remain the housing authorities for their respective areas of the National Park. The Authority's primary role is to guide appropriate development to meet local housing needs and in particular ensure affordable housing is more readily available for those with a local connection.

The current housing stock within the National Park stands at just under 15,000 dwellings, of which it is estimated that just under 3% are second home or holiday lets³⁴. The New Forest National Park has a notional annual housing requirement of 11 dwellings per annum in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East, totalling 220 dwellings over the period 2006 to 2026.

The graph below illustrates the rate of housing completions in the New Forest National Park for the last eight years and compares this to the Regional Spatial Strategy requirement of an additional 11 dwellings per annum.



³⁴ Office National Statistics, 2001 Population Census

Dwelling completions within the National Park have exceeded the Regional Spatial Strategy requirement in each of the last eight years without the allocation of land for housing. Over this period, dwelling completions have averaged 36 dwellings per annum, compared to the South East Plan requirement for an additional 11 dwellings per annum between 2006 – 2026.

There is a significant level of sites with outstanding planning permission for residential development in the National Park. At March 2009, this figure stood at an additional 128 dwellings – nearly 60% of the total South East Plan housing requirement for the National Park in the period 2006 – 2026. (110 in the New Forest District area of the National Park; 16 in the Wiltshire area; and two in the Test Valley Borough area³⁵).

The local circumstances listed above justify the Authority's preferred approach of meeting the regional housing requirement through supporting (i) appropriate development within the defined villages; (ii) the conversion of existing buildings; and (iii) rural exceptions sites. The Authority is confident that the regional housing requirement will be met without the need to allocate sites. Housing completions will continue to be monitored in the Annual Monitoring Report and the Authority will review this approach if completions drop below the regional requirement.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing can be generally defined as subsidised accommodation for those whose income levels deny them the opportunity to purchase houses on the open market and can, for example, comprise affordable rented housing and shared equity or shared ownership housing.

Housing affordability is a major issue facing the National Park and the Core Strategy aims to, "*promote affordable housing to meet local needs and maintain the vibrant communities of the National Park*". However, residential development on a scale sufficient to reduce open market house prices substantially would be incompatible with the statutory Park purposes, and the Authority must therefore seek alternative measures to address local needs. Given the limited scale of future development in the Park (the provision of 11 dwellings per annum would increase the stock of housing within the National Park by approximately 1.5% by 2026), it is appropriate to seek to maximise the proportion of affordable housing. The *New Forest District and National Park Affordable Housing Economic Viability Study (2007)*, as updated in October 2009, provides the robust evidence for the affordable housing percentages sought within the Defined Villages through Core Policy 11.

The Core Strategy focuses on providing for affordable housing to meet local needs from within the National Park. Maximising the number of additional affordable homes provided within the overall limited number of new dwellings that will be developed in the National Park is a key objective of this Core Strategy and open market housing will therefore be limited to no more than 50% of development sites within the Defined Villages. Affordable housing occupation will be for people who have a defined local community New Forest connection as well being in housing need.

³⁵ Source: Hampshire County Council Annual Monitoring Data

There will need to be a balance in provision between social rented and intermediate housing. The Authority recognises that the nature of the local need will differ between settlements and there should be flexibility to vary the relative proportions of social / intermediate housing on a site by site basis with the benefit of advice from the respective local housing authority (New Forest District Council, Wiltshire Council or Test Valley Borough Council). Effective delivery of affordable housing will need a partnership approach involving both the housing authorities and the major land managers and estates holding stocks of rented properties. Continued support will be given to those working closely with communities to identify the level of local need and agree appropriate sites.

National guidance in PPS3 also makes it clear that planning authorities in rural areas may adopt a rural exceptions policy for the provision of affordable housing for local needs. The rural exceptions policy has been used successfully for many years in the New Forest and the Authority retains this policy approach to delivering local affordable housing in communities outside the Defined Villages through policy CP11. Proposals should meet the needs of local people identified in a Housing Needs Survey and the housing must remain affordable and available to local people in perpetuity. Occupation is normally restricted to a local person, which means someone who lives or works in, or who has strong connections with the settlement or parish in which the scheme is proposed.

The National Park Authority is also 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 also work with local communities across the National Park to identify suitable affordable housing exceptions sites, and Parish Plans also have a role in identifying potential sites.

Policy CP11: Affordable Housing

The development of affordable housing to meet local needs will be supported:

- Within the four defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway, or
- Across the National Park through the release of “exceptions” sites within or adjacent to other villages, provided that:

Within the four Defined Villages at least 50% of the residential development on all sites should be affordable housing, with the remainder being open market housing. Proposals for single dwellings within the defined villages will be required to make an affordable housing contribution to be used in the local area, rather than on site provision.

Across the rest of the National Park (including the other villages not included as ‘defined villages’), 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:

- meet a particular local need that cannot be accommodated in any other way; and
- 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
- 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
- be located where there are appropriate local facilities (e.g. shops, schools and public transport).

The Authority has commissioned research looking at the issue of the economic viability of affordable housing within the National Park (Three Dragons, 2007 and 2009) and it is expected that the provision of affordable housing as part of the development will normally be economically viable for all developments within the four defined villages. It will be up to developers to clearly demonstrate why any deviation from Core Policy 11 is necessary based on 'open book' information relating to a particular development. In these circumstances negotiations will aim to provide a percentage of affordable housing as close as possible to the target level set in this policy, having regard to a site specific economic viability assessment.

Commoners' Dwellings

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 and will consider such proposals through Core Policy 11 or Policy DP13. In order to guarantee the long term availability of dwellings built for commoners under this policy, 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.

New Residential Development in the New Forest National Park

The following development management policies on residential development, replacement dwellings, extensions to dwellings and agricultural workers dwellings reflect the local importance of these issues and the cumulative impact such development can have on the special qualities of the Park. The Core Strategy policies on housing development within the National Park aim to protect the special qualities of the New Forest, while also recognising the need for development to meet the needs of local communities.

Policy CP12: New Residential Development

New residential development will be supported within the New Forest National Park to maintain the vitality of local communities, and support local services, where the proposal is:

- within the defined New Forest villages set out in CP9; or
- a replacement of an existing dwelling in accordance with Policy DP10; or
- an extension to an existing dwelling in accordance with Policy DP11; or
- an agricultural or forestry workers dwelling in accordance with Policy DP13; or
- affordable housing for local needs in accordance with CP11.

Permission will not be granted for new residential caravans or mobile homes, except in accordance with Policy DP13.

Monitoring data³⁶ highlights that the New Forest National Park Authority deals with more planning applications for residential development than any other National Park Authority in England. Residential development in the New Forest is an important issue for this Core Strategy to address, and this is done through a number of more detailed development management policies set out below.

³⁶ Development Control Statistics, England, 2007 – 8, CLG

Residential density within the Defined Villages

Both national³⁷ and regional³⁸ planning policy state that authorities should develop local housing density policies, with the local character of the area an important consideration. This is particularly important within the four 'defined villages' of the National Park. The defined villages 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 DP9: 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. Within the local circumstances of the New Forest National Park, where the four defined villages are often characterised by spacious residential plots set within mature landscapes, development densities below the national indicative minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare will usually be justified.

Replacement Dwellings

In the period 2006 – 2009, the Authority received over 100 applications for replacement dwellings in the National Park. The cumulative impact of the replacement of existing dwellings across the New Forest with larger modern properties has led to concerns regarding the long-term urbanisation and erosion of local distinctiveness within the New Forest, as well as a reduction in the stock of smaller dwellings. For these reasons, policy DP10 states that any replacement dwelling should be of a similar footprint, scale and size as the existing dwelling. The National Park Authority will normally impose a planning condition removing 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.

³⁷ Paragraphs 46 – 47, Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (2004)

³⁸ Policy H5, Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (2009)

Policy DP10: Replacement Dwellings

Within the Defined Villages the replacement of existing dwellings will be permitted except where the existing dwelling:

- is the result of a temporary or series of temporary permissions or the result of an unauthorised use;
- has been abandoned;
- has been demolished; or
- 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.

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

For the purposes of applying this policy, 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.

Extensions to Dwellings

In the period between 2006 – 2009, the Authority received nearly 1,200 applications for extensions within the National Park. Proposals to extend dwellings can affect the locally distinctive character of the New Forest and increasing the size of dwellings has the potential to cause an imbalance in the range and mix of housing stock available. For these reasons it is considered important to limit the size of extensions to dwellings and include a more detailed development management policy on the issue.

The Core Strategy enables small dwellings (including those within the Defined Villages) to be extended while retaining a modest size capable of making a contribution to the housing stock at the lower end of the market. In implementing this policy, the National Park Authority will have particular regard to the potential impact of such development proposals on the existing dwelling or curtilage, adjacent properties and upon the environment of the New Forest.

The floorspace limitations set out in policy DP11 build on those contained within the previous Local Plan for the majority of the National Park and are the maximum limit and although the 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. Further guidance is set out in the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document that will support this Core Strategy.

Policy DP11: 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, 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:

- to meet the genuine family needs of an occupier who works in the immediate locality; or
- 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.

For the purposes of applying Policies DP10 and DP11:

- **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 conservatories³⁹, attached outbuildings and detached outbuildings (irrespective of whether the outbuilding's current use is as habitable floorspace);

³⁹ 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.

- **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; and
- **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

There are more limited permitted development rights for outbuildings within National Parks. This recognises the potential adverse impacts of large outbuildings on the landscape character of the National Parks. The New Forest is the most densely populated National Park in the UK and coupled with the existing policy limitations on extending dwellings in the New Forest, there is considerable development pressure to provide for ever larger outbuildings. In the period 2006 – 2009, the Authority received nearly 1,500 applications for outbuildings within the National Park.

The Authority will, therefore, carefully control those proposals which by reason of size and / or siting require planning permission. Such proposals will usually be for large buildings, which may be visually intrusive or detrimental to the character of the New Forest. 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 DP12: Outbuildings

Domestic outbuildings will be permitted where they:

- are located within the residential curtilage;
- are required for purposes incidental to the use of the main dwelling; and
- are not providing additional habitable accommodation

For the purposes of applying this policy, habitable floorspace will include living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens. 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.

Dwellings for Agricultural or Forestry Workers

Annex A to PPS7 sets out the necessary functional and financial tests that need to be met in order to establish whether there is a genuinely essential need for a new agricultural dwelling, based on the requirements of the enterprise concerned.

The Authority receives a number of planning applications each year for new agricultural dwellings (including mobile homes) that justifies a more detailed development management policy on agricultural workers' dwellings in the context of the National Park.

Policy DP13: Dwellings for agricultural or forestry workers

Permission will be granted for an agricultural or forestry worker's dwelling provided that the tests of Annex A of PPS7 are met and:

- 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;
- the size of the proposed dwelling would not result in a total habitable floorspace exceeding 120 square metres; and
- where practicable and appropriate first consideration has been given to the conversion of an existing building under the terms of Policy DP19.

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.

The size restriction 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.

Removal of Agricultural Occupancy Conditions

There are some 100 dwellings in the National Park that are subject to agricultural occupancy conditions. These dwellings have usually only been supported due to a particular agricultural need.

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. In restricting the occupancy of any dwelling where an agricultural occupancy condition has been removed to a person in local housing need, the Authority is adopting a similar approach to that taken by Exmoor National Park Authority in their Local Plan 2001-2011 and the North York Moors National Park Authority in their adopted Core Strategy (November 2008).

Policy DP13: 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. If such evidence can be produced, then the local planning authority will seek to restrict the occupancy of the dwelling to a person in local housing need, by means of a similar agreement to that for individual dwellings permitted in accordance with Core Policy 11.

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 a reasonable period of time at a price reflecting the occupancy condition; and
- the property being advertised widely in local newspapers and appropriate publications including specialist trade organisation journals.

Applicants should also refer to:

- Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing, 2006
- Planning Policy Statement 7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, 2004
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East, Policy C1
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East – particularly policies H1 and H3
- New Forest Commoning Review, 2007
- Design Guide SPD – New Forest National Park Authority, 2009

Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Government Guidance in Circular 01/2006 (*Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*) and Circular 04/2007 (*Planning for Travelling Showpeople*) highlight the need for local housing authorities to make specific provision to meet the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. The Circulars also confirm that planning permission should only be granted for such sites within National Parks where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of the designation will not be compromised by the development. There are currently no sites for gypsy and traveller accommodation within the New Forest National Park, although there is a site occupied by travelling showpeople at Netley Marsh.

A partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East regarding provision of accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is currently being considered. The emerging pitch requirements are for the combined area of New Forest District and the whole of the National Park. The Authority will work closely with New Forest District Council in considering how any future requirement can be accommodated across the two administrative areas. Circular 01/2006 confirms that co-operation between neighbouring planning authorities is particularly important where an authority has strict planning constraints across its area and any allocations for sites within the New Forest National Park will be addressed in the Sites and Allocations Development Plan Document.

Policy CP13: Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

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 there are no suitable sites outside the National Park boundary; and

- the impact of the site on the landscape character of the National Park is acceptable;
- 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;
- there are adequate on-site facilities for parking and storage;
- in the case of any permanent site, be located where there are appropriate local facilities (e.g. shops, schools and public transport); and
- the site does not detrimentally affect the amenities of surrounding occupiers.

Applicants should also refer to:

- Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East – paragraphs 7.27 – 7.30
- Circular 01/2006 – Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites
- Circular 04/2007 – Planning for Travelling Showpeople

Infrastructure Provision

New development, even on the limited scale planned for in the National Park, may place extra demands on existing infrastructure within the National Park, such as recreational facilities and highways. In such cases where it is not possible to make the necessary provision on site, a tariff based developer's contribution will be sought depending on the scale, type and location of the proposal and the particular needs of the development concerned. Within the context of the small-scale development that takes place within the National Park, developer contributions may be required towards highway works; affordable housing; education provision (from larger development sites); recreation provision (including public open space enhancements); and nature conservation mitigation measures.

The Government's Community Infrastructure Levy also enables local planning authorities to apply a levy to most new developments in order to provide funding for the infrastructure requirements arising specifically from development in the area. The Community Infrastructure Levy will be taken on board in implementing Policy DP15 below.

New infrastructure requirements (including a tariff based developer's contribution) will usually be secured by a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Policy DP15: Infrastructure Provision and Developer Contributions

Development proposals shall make provision, through planning contributions, for the infrastructure necessary to secure that the development is acceptable in the context of the Core Strategy. Where appropriate, financial contributions for the provision of infrastructure off-site will be sought.

The mechanism by which developers' contributions are achieved will be reviewed in the light of changes in national policy. Tariff-based approaches and the Community Infrastructure Levy will be considered where this would simplify procedures and better ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure.

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

Applicants should also refer to:

- Circular 05/2005 - Planning Obligations, CLG, July 2005

Chapter 8: A Sustainable Local Economy

This chapter takes forward the spatial objectives for a sustainable local economy, land management and tourism.

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 Core Strategy 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.

The National Park Authority has a duty⁴⁰ in pursuing its two statutory purposes to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of its local communities. This duty is also reflected in the specific policy for the New Forest National Park in the South East Plan. This outlines that the emphasis for development should be on small scale proposals that are sustainably located and that development which assists the economic well being of the Park and its communities should be supported provided that it does not conflict with the Park's purposes.

The South East Plan recognises 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 region⁴¹. 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.

The economic approach of this Core Strategy also takes into consideration some key aspects of the economic and employment characteristics of the Park. These include a forecasted decline in the economically active and overall population, a history of relatively low levels of unemployment in recent years, and the fact that lower skill jobs are over represented in the area. Furthermore, 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.

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 economically active and overall population, lower skilled jobs, competition from surrounding areas, and the environmental constraints, 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. Increasing small businesses and the economic benefits derived from local distinctiveness are economic priorities for the New Forest District Sustainable Community Strategy.

⁴⁰ See Chapter 1: Introduction and the Environment Act 1995

⁴¹ Prosperity and Protection: The economic impact of National Parks in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Council for National Parks 2006

In relation to sustainable development in nationally designated areas, PPS7 confirms that National Parks “*should also support suitably located and designed development necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of these designated areas and their communities...*’ To achieve this suitably located and designed development, the Core Strategy will support the re-use and extension of existing buildings, the redevelopment of existing business use employment sites and farm diversification throughout the Park, together with small scale employment development also using new buildings in the defined villages, but without allocating land specifically for employment development.

None 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. This approach will be continued, particularly in light of the forecast decline in the economically active and overall population. This approach has not meant, however, that employment opportunities have not been created. Indeed, past trends of development show that employment opportunities have been generated for local communities in the National Park area, even though the level of development has been lower than in surrounding areas. Given the long history of business development that spans a wide range of economic environments⁴², it is anticipated that employment development will continue to support the well being of the Park’s communities.

Business and employment development

Spatial Objective for a Sustainable Economy:

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

Policy CP14: Business and Employment Development

Small scale employment development will be supported 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 supported 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.

⁴² See Background Paper 9 : Economy and Employment

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 and 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.

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 consistent with the South East's Regional Economic Strategy priority for rural areas to exploit the potential of the knowledge economy. Businesses that use such technology tend to have less environmental impacts and can also support home working to provide more employment opportunities.

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 retail development, including farm shops, will be considered under Policy DP7 and DP8 in Chapter 7.

The Core Strategy recognises the importance of increasing the skills of the local workforce to improve their employment prospects. The National Park 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.

The use of sustainable technologies and practices in new and existing businesses will also be encouraged. The Authority will support sustainability projects through the grant scheme from the National Park's Sustainable Development Fund. The grant scheme aims to encourage sustainable living within the National Park, and to support projects that will bring environmental, economic and community benefits as well as furthering at least one of the Park's purposes.

Policy CP15: Existing Employment Sites

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

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 sites to ensure the provision of future employment opportunities⁴³.

⁴³ The importance of retaining existing employment sites was supported in the Future Matters consultation (2007) and the New Forest District's business needs survey 2005 - New Forest District Council Submitted Core Strategy background document 19

Policy DP16: Redevelopment of Existing Employment Sites

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

- there would be environmental benefits such as a reduction in the visual impact of the site in the landscape, an improvement to the amenities of nearby properties, or a reduction in traffic or other disturbances from the site; and
- where feasible, the redevelopment scheme deals comprehensively with the full extent of the site; and
- the replacement buildings would not materially increase the existing floorspace of displaced buildings or materially increase the level of impact of the activity generated in terms of employment, visitors and traffic, and
- the replacement buildings would be appropriate to their surroundings in terms of scale, design and materials; and
- the redevelopment scheme would be contained within the existing site boundary.

The redevelopment of existing employment sites should help to support the economic well being of communities throughout the Park. However, the redevelopment of existing employment sites for general 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 DP17: Extensions to Non Residential Buildings and Uses

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

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

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

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.

Tourism

Spatial Objective for Tourism:

- **Support development which encourages sustainable tourism, and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.**

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.

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, National Park Authority and Tourism South East 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.

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.

With regard to tourism related developments, national planning policy⁴⁴ suggests that there should be scope for these in National Parks, but they should be subject to appropriate control over the number, form and location to ensure the conservation of the particular qualities of the Park.

⁴⁴ Planning Policy Statement 7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, 2004

Policy CP16: 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 detract from, the special qualities. This will be facilitated by:

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

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 developments⁴⁵. Elsewhere throughout the National Park development of visitor facilities and accommodation will be supported through the re-use or extension of existing buildings as part of well conceived farm diversification schemes.

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.

Holiday parks and campsites are well provided for in and around the New Forest. 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. In the longer term, it would be of benefit to the New Forest environment to reduce the overall number of camping and caravan pitches in the most sensitive areas. Development Policy 18 carries forward an earlier policy from the New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration.

Access and use of the New Forest will be carefully managed under measures outlined within the Authority's Recreation Management Strategy (RMS) which will include strategies to avoid adverse impacts on the most sensitive parts of the forest including internationally designated conservation areas. The RMS approaches will be informed by up-to-date information on recreational usage of the National Park.

⁴⁵ Consistent with paragraph 5.1, the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, DCLG 2006

Policy DP18: Extensions to Holiday Parks and Camp Sites

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:

- i there would be overall environmental benefits;
- ii there would be no increase in the overall site area or site capacity;
- iii 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

Spatial Objective for the land-based economy

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

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.

Policy CP17: The Land-based Economy

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

- working with key organisations to ensure the future viability of commoning through:
 - enabling affordable housing for commoners, that includes land suitable for holdings; and
 - maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands and adjacent to the National Park; resisting the loss of back-up grazing through development or change of use.
- Supporting farming and forestry that would be beneficial to the Forest through:
 - the provision of agricultural and forestry buildings subject to Policy DP 13;
 - farm diversification where this would help to sustain the existing farm business 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 have a low environmental impact
- Helping to support markets for local produce and products.

In relation to rural activities, the South East Regional Plan outlines the important role that agriculture, horticulture and forestry play in the management of the landscape and biodiversity, as well as in commercial production. It encourages the strengthening of these land-based industries, and their ancillary industries, to enable them to undertake these functions and support and maintain incomes and commercial viability. Specifically within the New Forest National Park it outlines that supportive sustainable land management policies should be developed, and these should also cover the protection of grazing land outside the National Park. Moreover, one of the priorities for rural areas in the South East's Regional Economic Strategy is to assist the food and farming sectors and support the development of premium local products and the land-based products supply chain.

National planning policy⁴⁶ states that agricultural development that enables farm businesses to be more competitive and sustainable, adapt to changing markets, legislation, and technologies, and diversify into new agricultural opportunities should be supported. It also supports the important role that agriculture plays in maintaining and managing the countryside and landscape, and outlines that the best and most versatile agricultural land should be considered alongside other sustainability issues when determining planning applications on agricultural land.

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.

Farming and farm diversification will be given particular support to enhance or reinstate the characteristic landscapes and habitats, provide local produce, encourage greater public access or provide local employment in rural businesses. Diversification which replaces the farm business or which entails intensive production methods will not be supported.

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

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.

⁴⁶ Planning Policy Statement 7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, 2004

Policy DP19: Re-use of Buildings outside the defined villages

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

- the proposal would not result in the loss of an employment use or community facility; and
- the proposal would not involve a residential use (other than in accordance with policies CP12); and.
- 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
- 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.

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.

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 DP19, 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.

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.

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

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 DP20: Agricultural and Forestry Buildings

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

- i. there is a functional need for the building and its scale is commensurate with that need;
- ii. the building is designed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;
- iii. 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
- iv. they do not involve large or obtrusive structures or generate a level of activity which would have a detrimental effect on the National Park.

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.

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 DP19.

Horse riding and horse keeping

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 Park⁴⁷. Together with horses kept by farmers and commoners, the local equine community makes a valuable contribution to the local economy.

⁴⁷ Recreational Horse Keeping in the New Forest. Update of grazing survey 2007

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.

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 DP21: Recreational Horse Keeping

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

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

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 horse⁴⁸. Other key indicators can include the existence of stables and other facilities, and the condition of the land.

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.

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 commoners⁴⁹.

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.

⁴⁸ 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.

⁴⁹ New Forest Commoning Review 2007 Full Report identified the need to protect backup grazing land from competing land uses such as private horse keeping

Policy DP22: Field Shelters and Stables

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

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

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 DP23: Maneges

The development of outdoor maneges will be permitted provided that:

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

The development of indoor maneges will not be permitted other than in accordance with policy DP19 (Re-use of buildings).

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.

Applicants for proposals relating to this Chapter should also refer to:

- Planning Policy Statement 7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, 2004 (possible partial revision pending)
- Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms, 1992 (possible revision pending)
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East, particularly, Policy C1

Chapter 9: Transport and Access

The National Park has an extensive road network, with several major trunk routes and a number of A-roads that carry high volumes of traffic from commuters, residents and visitors alike.

National predictions of an increase of 30% in total car travel by 2025⁵⁰, combined with the impacts of 110,000 additional dwellings proposed in South Hampshire and South East Dorset, will generate additional demands on the road network within the National Park.

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.

The New Forest Tour, a seasonal open top bus, is aimed primarily at visitors and operates during the summer months, on a circular route between Lyndhurst, Lymington and Beaulieu, stopping at major attractions within the National Park.

Transport

Spatial 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.**

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 destination⁵¹.

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).

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 commoner's livestock (ponies, cattle, pigs, sheep and donkeys) killed or injured on the Forest's unfenced roads, but the figure still remains relatively high with 94 animals killed or injured during 2008.

⁵⁰ Compared with 2003 figures

⁵¹ Tourism South East visitor survey 2004-2005

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.

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.

The principles of this transport objective are also carried through in a number of other policies in this Core Strategy. 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 CP18: Transport Infrastructure

Further development of the transport network will only be supported where

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

Only a 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.

Of greater concern is the impact of trip generation on the National Park arising from development outside the National Park boundary; some 110,000 dwellings are proposed for South Hampshire and South East Dorset up to 2026. 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.

It is recognised that the proposed levels of development within the National Park will not create sufficient developer contributions to mitigate the likely effects of the increased levels of trip generation.

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 Core Strategy. Any such measures will not be considered without further detailed research and public consultation.

Applicants should also refer to:

- The South East Plan, particularly Chapter 8 Transport
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport
- Hampshire Local Transport Plan
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan

Access

Policy CP19: 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, particularly by supporting:

- local transport initiatives such as the New Forest Tour;
- community transport initiatives such as the Lymington to Brockenhurst Community Rail Partnership;
- improvements to make existing paths, tracks and roads safer and more user friendly; and
- opportunities for the creation of a more joined-up network of core routes for non-motorised transport.

Government advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport and the conclusions of the Sustainable Community Strategies covering the National Park 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.

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.

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. In 2007 Hampshire County Council undertook a scrutiny review of the transport situation in Lyndhurst, considering evidence from a wide range of stakeholders. The review groups conclusions included:

- prioritisation of New Forest-wide approaches to traffic management with a view to known hot spots such as Lyndhurst benefitting from such measures;
- demand management measures, such as junction improvement, within the village; and
- not supporting the prioritisation of a Lyndhurst focused bypass at the present time.

The Authority will support Hampshire County Council, and other stakeholders, in progressing the review recommendations over the plan period.

Although there are more than 300 km of rights of way within the National Park, outside of the Crown Lands, the New Forest and South West Hampshire Countryside Access Plan 2008-2013 identifies a number of gaps in the provision of access into the National Park in some areas, especially in the south of the Park. On the eastern boundary of the Park the A326 is a barrier to pedestrian and cyclist movements and causes significant severance, affecting Waterside residents accessing the New Forest.

The Countryside Access Plan together with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Wiltshire both highlight the need for a joined-up network 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 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport which promotes accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling.

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.

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced new powers to improve public access to and enjoyment of the coastline of England. Natural England will be 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.

Chapter 10: Delivery and Monitoring Plan

As the local planning authority the National Park Authority is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report to assess the effectiveness of the Core Strategy and Development Management policies and assess whether they are achieving the intended objectives and targets, or if trends indicate an early review of one or more policies is necessary. Reference is also made to the relevant organisations that influence the implementation of these policies, particularly where these are taken forward in other plans and strategies

In addition the Authority is required to publish a State of the Park Report every five years, describing any changes to the condition of the National Park through the monitoring of indicators relating to objectives in the New Forest National Park Management Plan.

Implementation

There are about a dozen key organisations involved in the day-to-day administration and management of the National Park. Many are statutory agencies with responsibilities covering a wider geographical area (such as the county councils, Natural England, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency), others are local land managers or service providers (including the district and borough councils). Parish and Town Councils also have an important role in many aspects of management at a local level and in reflecting the wider views of their communities.

Cross boundary issues

The National Park covers a relatively small geographical area and therefore the importance of cross-boundary partnership work is critical to its functioning. The land use of the surrounding areas provides its visual setting, including links to Southampton Water.

As recognised in Chapter 1, closer working relationships with neighbouring authorities should be developed in order to facilitate a more integrated approach to a number of issues such as a strategy for green infrastructure, and consideration of coastal issues.