

PC 441/23

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 19 DECEMBER 2023

PROPOSED PLANNING APPLICATION REVISED LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

Report by: Natalie Walter, Principal Planning Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Paragraph 43 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the right information is crucial to good decision-making. All planning applications must include a minimum level of information before they can be registered, such as ownership certificates and relevant drawings. These are known as national requirements. In addition, local planning authorities can specify their own “local requirements” to respond to specific local issues or circumstances.
- 1.2 The Government requires all local planning authorities to review their own local requirements at intervals in order to ensure that they are kept up-to-date and accord with current policy and guidance. Following recent changes to policy and guidance, a review of the Authority’s local requirements is necessary.
- 1.3 This report therefore seeks Members’ agreement to the proposed local requirements that will be the subject of a formal consultation in the new year. The matter will then referred back to Committee, taking on board any comments received, for a final decision on the proposed requirements. As in previous years, it is proposed to consult with planning agents, internal and external consultees and Town and Parish Councils.

2. The Proposed Revised Local Requirements

- 2.1 The current list of requirements was adopted in 2020. The new list of proposed local requirements is set out in Appendix 1, with the proposed changes highlighted in red. The NPPF sets out that the requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions. Further guidance in the online National Planning Policy Guidance states that information requested with a particular planning application must be:
 - Reasonable having regard, in particular, to the nature and scale of the proposed development; and
 - About a matter which it is reasonable to think will be a material consideration in the determination of the application.

The changes reflect this guidance and provide a more realistic reflection of what is deemed necessary from recent experience of validating using the current requirements.

- 2.2 The table provides an overview of all the information and drawing requirements and how they are applied to specific application types and/ or in specific circumstances. The aim is to ensure that applications contain the necessary information for assessment of the application without creating unnecessary requirements for applicants, particularly for householder applications.
- 2.3 The current planning application registration practices, such as only seeking additional information when absolutely necessary and contacting applicants promptly for additional information that may be required, will be continued. However, it must be stressed that it is also part of the agent's role to present their client's proposal in an appropriate manner, with a level of information that aims to meet the national and local requirements.
- 2.4 If it is considered that information outside of the scope of the requirements would assist with determination of the application, then the applicant/ agent will be advised accordingly. The Authority has wider powers to insist on the provision of information post-registration but these will be used sparingly.
- 2.5 It should also be noted that some other important documentation, notably Environmental Impact Assessments and Habitat Regulation Assessments, are covered under separate legislation.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 In accordance with current Government advice and, subject to the agreement of the Planning Committee, the revised list will be published on the website for eight weeks in the new year with key stakeholders contacted by email and invited to comment. Any comments received will be collated and report to the Planning Committee, together with a copy of the final schedule of requirements amended to take on board any comments received. It is possible that amendments may take place to national policy (the NPPF) by the end of the year. Delegation is therefore sought to make minor or factual adjustments to the proposed list of requirements should this be required, prior to the consultation period commencing.

Recommendation:

Members authorise that:

- (i) **The proposed revised local requirements as set out in the table attached in Appendix 1 to this report be published for consultation with planning agents, internal and external consultees and Town and Parish Councils (subject to any minor or factual amendments should national policy or guidance be updated), with a view to considering comments received prior to the adoption of the final revised list.**
- (ii) **Officers subsequently report the final revised list, to include any changes made as a result of the consultation period, for adoption at a future meeting.**

Contact: **Natalie Walter**
natalie.walter@newforestnpa.gov.uk

Documents:

Appendix 1: Proposed Local List, with proposed areas of change highlighted in red.

Appendix 2: Existing Local List

Equality Impact Assessment: There are no equality of diversity implications arising directly from this report.