

**SOUTH WILTSHIRE CORE
STRATEGY**

EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

**Statement of Common Ground as
agreed between
Wiltshire Council and The New
Forest National Park Authority**

19 FEBRUARY 2010

Plan reference: Map 1

Representation Number: 11022

Issues Raised

From this map it is difficult to place South Wiltshire into context as it is impossible to read any of the place names on the map. In order to be more meaningful the map needs to show the main towns and cities, in addition to surrounding local authority boundaries (including the New Forest National Park Authority boundary).

Wiltshire Council Response

The map is intended to identify the location of the plan area in broad terms.

Agree that enlarging place names of major settlements would assist in this.

Do not agree that showing all adjoining local authority boundaries would add any benefit.

However, note that the part of South Wiltshire that lies within the National Park is not omitted from the plan area on this map.

Agreed position

Enlarge place names of major settlements to assist in identifying the location of the plan area in broad terms.

Indicate on map the area of Wiltshire covered by the New Forest National Park Authority for planning purposes.

Plan reference: Paragraph 1.11

Representation Number: 11023

Issues Raised

The Authority wishes to draw attention to the Council's legal obligation under the provisions of Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 of the following;

In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in a National Park' to have regard to the statutory national park purposes of;

- (a) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the New Forest; and
- (b) to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

Specific reference also needs to be made to *Policy C1: The New Forest National Park* of the recently adopted South East Plan. This policy is of direct relevance, given the fact that part of South Wiltshire lies within the New Forest National Park and that this Strategy is imposing additional development pressures and associated recreational pressures on the National Park's boundary. The New Forest National Park Authority would therefore expect to see this requirement outlined in this section on the relationship with other plans and strategies.

Mention also needs to be made here of the New Forest National Park Authority's Management Plan and Core Strategy which are currently being produced.

Wiltshire Council Response

The Council is well aware of its obligations with regard to the National Park and this is explicit in Core Policy 15.

The supporting text to Core Policy 15 makes reference to the National Park Authority's emerging plans (at paragraph 9.16) and it is not felt appropriate to repeat this information in paragraph 1.13, in a list which only relates to documents specifically covering the plan area and is, in any case, not intended to be exhaustive.

It is however acknowledged that paragraph 9.16 does not refer to the National Park Authority Core Strategy. There is also no objection to including a reference to the South East Plan but it is again felt this would be more appropriate in the supporting text to Core Policy 15.

Agreed position

Insert additional text at start of paragraph 9.16:

Policy C1 of the South East Plan confirms that planning decisions should have regard to the setting of the National Park. This is complemented by paragraph 7.2.7 of the RSS, which states that ‘...development in the South West region adjoining the Park should not prejudice the achievement of the Park’s purposes...’

NB: Note also further changes to paragraph 9.16 agreed below.

Plan reference: Paragraph 2.5

Representation Number: 11024

Issues Raised

The Authority is pleased to note that our previous comment has been taken on board and welcomes the acknowledgement within the Document of the fact that the south east corner of South Wiltshire bounds the New Forest National Park and that parts of the Wiltshire parishes of Redlynch, Landford and Whiteparish lie within the National Park and for planning purposes fall under the jurisdiction of the National Park Authority. The Authority is also pleased to note that it is stated in this paragraph that development proposals in the Southern Community Area, and to some extent Salisbury, will place pressure on the National Park and that care must be taken to ensure that proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the National Park.

Wiltshire Council Response

Noted.

Agreed position

No changes necessary.

Plan reference: Paragraph 3.8

Representation Number: 11025

Issues Raised

The Authority is pleased to note that reference has been made to the challenge of having to allow for the growth necessary to meet local needs whilst having full regard to the conservation objectives of the valued landscapes, including the New Forest National Park.

Wiltshire Council Response

Noted.

Agreed position

No changes necessary.

Plan reference: Paragraph 4.0

Representation Number: 11026

Issues Raised

The Authority objects to the fact that in the first paragraph of the Spatial Vision, specific reference has not been made to the New Forest National Park as part of the 'superb environment' that residents of South Wiltshire can enjoy.

Wiltshire Council Response

South Wiltshire is fortunate to have a range of elements making up this superb environment both within, and adjacent to, the plan area. None of these elements are specifically named here and there is therefore no 'omission' of the National Park.

Agreed position

No changes necessary.

Plan reference: Map 2

Representation Number: 11027

Issues Raised

The Authority objects to the fact that the area covered by the New Forest National Park has been excluded from this map. For the purpose of clarity it would be helpful if the New Forest National Park area was shown on this map.

Wiltshire Council Response

Agree that the area covered by the New Forest National Park should be indicated on this map.

Agreed position

Indicate on map the area of Wiltshire covered by the New Forest National Park Authority for planning purposes.

Plan reference: Map 3

Representation Number: 11028

Issues Raised

This map is again inaccurate and needs amending to show the correct position of the New Forest National Park boundary in relation to surrounding settlements.

Wiltshire Council Response

Disagree that boundary of National Park is shown inaccurately. However, note that location of Morgans Vale and Woodfalls is shown as straddling the National Park boundary.

Although the settlement is shown for indicative purposes only, there is no objection to its relocation to avoid the National Park boundary.

Agreed position

Correct location of Morgans Vale and Woodfalls to avoid it's being shown as straddling the National Park boundary.

Plan reference: Paragraph 9.9

Representation Number: 11029

Issues Raised

The Authority is particularly disappointed to note that despite the comments made on the previous consultation by this Authority, the level of housing has increased from 590 homes to 740 homes in this area. Furthermore, the Authority is particularly concerned to note that this is likely to generate an increase in population of 1746 people by 2026 and this is likely to result in an additional 60,000 local day visits within 8km and over 7000 additional local day visits from the remainder of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy area per year to the New Forest (Habitats Regulations Assessment Appendix 13 para 8).

The Assessment states that this is not considered to be significant alone, but when considered in combination with other increases it cannot conclude that no adverse impacts will occur. It is of particular concern to this Authority that the Assessment adopts the approach of leaving more in depth assessment to the site allocations DPD level. The Authority wish to query whether this approach of allocating housing development on a strategic level so close to the Park's boundary (and designated sites) in the Core Strategy is acceptable given the possible impacts.

Notwithstanding this, the Authority is pleased to note in para 9.5 page 108 that specific reference has been made to the following;

'The protection of the natural environment is a priority, especially given the proximity of the Area to the New Forest National Park. The preservation and enhancement of local heritage is also an important issue, with a need to ensure that new buildings or alterations to buildings are of a high quality.'

Wiltshire Council Response

Given the location, role and function of Salisbury itself, as well as the characteristics of the Southern Wiltshire Community Area and its settlements in comparison to other rural parts of the plan area, it is inevitable that a significant number of the dwellings required to meet identified local needs, and to accord with the Regional Spatial Strategy, would be allocated in this area.

Continued/...

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (“HRA”) states that this alone is not considered to be significant in terms of impact on the National Park, and it is not therefore considered inappropriate to allocate broad numbers of dwellings to the Community Area at this stage.

However, it is acknowledged the HRA states that when considered in combination with development in other areas it cannot conclude that no adverse impacts will occur: the HRA therefore proposes that the subsequent Site-Specific Allocations (“SSA”) DPD should consider the provision of further mitigation, as well as greenspace provision/access, to address its own contribution to this potential effect.

It is noted that the National Park Authority is somewhat comforted by paragraph 9.5, the content of which will be a material consideration in the assessment of sites for the SSA DPD. This paragraph is amplified by the content of Core Policy 15.

The National Park Authority will of course be consulted on the SSA DPD at the appropriate stages.

Agreed position

Add text to paragraph 9.9:

Sites for these new homes will be identified in a subsequent Site-Specific Allocations DPD. Where appropriate this DPD will also include the identification of a range of mitigation measures to address the potential impact on the New Forest National Park.

Plan reference: Core Policy 23

Representation Number: 11031

Issues Raised

The Authority is particularly pleased to note that our previous comment that housing development should be matched by a requirement in the Core Strategy to provide investment in green infrastructure, or other informal outdoor recreational opportunities, appropriately located and sufficient to avoid any additional recreational pressures *beyond* its boundaries has been taken on board with the inclusion of *Core Policy 23 – Green Infrastructure and Habitat Networks*.

The Authority welcomes the approach in the Policy whereby;

'Until such time as the Green Infrastructure Plan is produced a development that would adversely affect the integrity and value of the existing Green Infrastructure network, or prejudice the implementation of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Plan will not be permitted.'

In line with this requirement the Authority would welcome the opportunity to be involved in any discussions on development of this nature through joint working arrangements.

As regards the production and implementation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy, this Authority would welcome the stated 'pro-active partnership working' and would wish to be involved in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, particularly in relation to site recreational management.

Core Policy 23 requires developers to provide for suitable alternative greenspace provision; whilst this approach is welcomed, there is currently no evidence to demonstrate the efficacy of such measures, the other forms of mitigation i.e. Site habitat management and visitor access measures should be considered alongside and be the subject of developer contributions.

Wiltshire Council Response

Noted. The latter issue is already referred to Core Policy 23.

Agreed position

No changes necessary.

Plan reference: Paragraph 9.14

Representation Number: 11032

Issues Raised

In terms of delivering a thriving economy for this area, the Authority agrees in principle that in line with sustainable development principles, any new housing provision should be balanced with new employment opportunities.

This approach would help to avoid the creation of additional commuting and shopping journeys through the National Park. In line with this comment, the National Park Authority would welcome the opportunity to be consulted on any subsequent Site Specific Allocations DPD.

Wiltshire Council Response

Noted. The National Park Authority will of course be consulted on the SSA DPD at the appropriate stages.

Agreed position

No changes necessary.

Plan reference: Map 8

Representation Number: 11033

Issues Raised

The Authority objects to this map. Whilst the Authority is pleased to note that the New Forest National Park is shown on this map, it is felt that a more accurate map, rather than a diagrammatic map of this nature should be included. The secondary villages of Whiteparish and Morgan's Vale actually lie adjacent to the boundary, whereas on map 8 they appear to be some distance away.

Wiltshire Council Response

Agree.

Agreed position

Show full extent of the area of Wiltshire covered by the New Forest National Park Authority for planning purposes.

Relocate Morgans Vale and Woodfalls to correct side of B3080.

Plan reference: 9.15

Representation Number: 11034

Issues Raised

The National Park Authority is pleased to note that in line with our previous comments, reference has been made to the fact that certain parishes fall under the New Forest National Park Authority for planning purposes.

Wiltshire Council Response

Noted.

Agreed position

No changes necessary.

Plan reference: Paragraph 9.16

Representation Number: 11035

Issues Raised

This paragraph needs updating to reflect the current status of this Authority's documents. A revised Management Plan will be out to consultation in October and a revised Core Strategy will be published for consultation early in the New Year. Please refer to the Authority's website for up dates.

Wiltshire Council Response

No objection in principle to suggestion.

Agreed position

The New Forest National Park Management Plan (2010 – 2015) was formally approved by the National Park Authority in December 2009. The Authority's Core Strategy & Development Management Policies DPD is timetabled for adoption in 2011 and will cover the whole of the National Park, included the parts of the Park in South Wiltshire. Until such time as the Authority's Core Strategy is adopted, the Salisbury District Local Plan 2003 will remain in force in those areas of Wiltshire that lie within the National Park. This includes all those policies otherwise stated as being replaced by policies contained within this Strategy.

NB: Note also further changes to paragraph 9.16 agreed above.

Plan reference: Core Policy 15

Representation Number: 11036

Issues Raised

The Authority welcomes this policy which clearly recognises that some development in South Wiltshire might impact on the National Park and that development which does have a negative impact on the Park will not be permitted. The Authority would wish to continue to be consulted on proposals that are considered to potentially impact on the Park's aims.

Wiltshire Council Response

Noted.

Agreed position

No changes.

Plan reference: Paragraph 1.2.1 (HRA)

Representation Number: 11037

Issues Raised

HRA Chapter 3 Screening

Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA

The National Park Authority is disappointed to note that our previous comment on the decision to screen out these sites from appropriate assessment has not been taken on board. The Authority would therefore wish to reiterate, that we are aware of current research being undertaken into the effects of recreational disturbance on these sites. It may therefore be premature to conclude that there are no significant effects in combination with other plans or programmes. The Authority is of the opinion that it is important to demonstrate in the Core Strategy that development will not adversely affect these sites through impacts on water quality and supply.

Wiltshire Council Response

These sites are considered sufficiently distant from the developments promoted in the Core Strategy for significant effects not to arise. The focus of research into these sites is the potential effects arising from housing developments around the shoreline, including in Portsmouth, Southampton and Fareham.

The HRA concludes that the mitigation measures included in the Core Strategy in relation to Green Infrastructure, particularly in relation to the New Forest, would also be likely to secure protection for these sites, so as to avoid any significant effects. The HRA confirms that Natural England has specifically confirmed agreement to this approach.

Agreed position

No changes.