

Part A

Introduction

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A1 How to use this plan

How is this document structured?

Part A: General Information

Part B: Strategy

Part C: District-wide Policies

Additional policies for parts of the District:

Part D: The New Forest

Part E: Countryside Outside the New Forest

Part F: Built-up Areas Outside the New Forest

Part G: Appendices

What is the New Forest (Part D)?

The New Forest in this plan always refers to the New Forest National Park. This includes the defined New Forest villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway.

What is the Countryside Outside the New Forest (Part E) ?

This covers those parts of the District which are outside both the New Forest and the defined built-up areas (listed below).

What are the Built-up Areas (Part F) ?

These are: Ashford, Blackfield and Langley, Bransgore, Everton, Fawley, Fordingbridge, Hardley and Holbury, Hordle, Hythe and Dibden, Lymington and Pennington, Marchwood, Milford-on-Sea, New Milton and Barton-on-Sea, Ringwood, Sandleheath, Totton and Eling. These are all outside the New Forest.

Part F contains:

- i general policies applying throughout these defined built-up areas; and
- ii additional policies for each individual built-up area, including detailed policies for the centres of Fordingbridge, Hythe, Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton.

How do you find the parts of the plan dealing with a particular area or topic?

There are two indexes to the plan (by policies and subjects) at the end of the plan.

How are policies numbered?

The policies are numbered using a two-part code: (e.g **NF-R1**).

The first part (**NF**) gives the **Area** code and the second part (**R1**) gives the **Topic** code (except for the site-specific policies) and includes a **policy number**.

The Area codes are:

AV	Avon Valley
BE	Beaulieu
BG	Bransgore
BU	Built-up Areas Outside the New Forest (general policies applying to all defined built-up areas)
CO	Countryside Outside the New Forest (general policies)
DW	District-wide Policies

EV	Everton
FA	Fawley
FB	Fordingbridge
FP	Fawley Power Station
HD	Hythe and Dibden
HH	Hardley-Holbury
LP	Lymington and Pennington
MA	Marchwood
MS	Milford-on-Sea
NF	New Forest (general policies)
NM	New Milton and Barton-on-Sea
PP	Paultons Park
RW	Ringwood
SC	Sopley Camp
TE	Totton and Eling
TA	Tatchbury Mount

The Topic codes are:

AH	Affordable Housing
B	Industrial/ business/ office development
C	Coast
CE	Commercial and employment development
E	Environmental design, conservation and protection
F	Food and drink
G	Gypsies
H	Housing
LC	Leisure and community uses
P	Public utilities and community facilities
R	Recreation
RB	Re-use of buildings
S	Shopping
T	Transport
TC	Town centres
TM	Tourism

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) may be detailed guidance on aspects of development control, policy, design or site briefs adopted by the District Council to supplement policies of this plan. References to SPG/ SPD are made as appropriate in the text of this plan. SPG/ SPD is additional to, but not part of, the statutory development plan and is published separately from the Local Plan.

A2 General information on this plan

What is the Development Plan?

This local plan is part of the statutory Development Plan for New Forest District. The Development Plan for the District comprises:

- the Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Review) – adopted in 2000
- the New Forest District Local Plan (as amended by the First Alteration)
- the Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton Minerals and Waste Local Plan

The adopted Structure Plan Review provides the broad strategic framework for the area up to 2011. The District Local Plan provides detailed planning policies to guide and control the use of land, against which applications for planning permission will be determined. The District Local Plan must conform generally to the adopted Structure Plan.

Detailed policies for mineral and waste are in a separate local plan, the Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton Minerals and Waste Local Plan, prepared by the minerals and waste planning authorities, Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council.

The policies of the Development Plan should reflect relevant Government policies, as expressed principally through Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), Planning Policy Statements and Circulars. This includes Regional Planning Guidance.

What is the status of this document?

This is the adopted New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration. It is part of the statutory development plan for New Forest District under the provisions of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

How does this document fit into the whole process?

New Forest District Local Plan

Consultation Draft Plan	Published November 1994
Deposit Plan	Published November 1995
Inquiry	Public Local Inquiry was held September 1996 – April 1997 (Inspector's Report published September 1998)
Proposed Modifications	Published February 1999 and July 1999
Adopted Plan	Adopted November 1999

New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration

First Stage Deposit	July 2001 and November 2001
Revised Deposit	February 2003
Inquiry	September – December 2003 (Inspector's Report published October 2004)
Proposed modifications	February 2005
Adopted First Alteration	August 2005

What area is covered by the plan?

This local plan covers the whole of New Forest District. It does not cover the parts of the New Forest National Park outside the District.

What period is covered by this local plan ?

This plan (in line with the current Structure Plan) broadly covers the period up to 2011.

Many policies (which are not directly related to Structure Plan end-dated policies) will continue to be valid beyond this end-date; others may need to be reviewed well before then.

How has the community been involved in preparing this Alteration to the local plan?

In preparing this plan, the Council has encouraged the participation of local community interests (e.g. parish and town councils) and other affected parties (e.g. house-builders' representatives, conservation and amenity groups).

With regard to the First Alteration, comments were invited on a series of Issues Papers and meetings of invited Panels were held to discuss the issues, before the First Stage Deposit proposals were drawn up. The First Stage Deposit proposals were published for public consultation, and in response, some 870 people made over 1500 representations which were considered in amending the alterations for Revised Deposit. Outstanding objections from First Stage Deposit and further objections to Revised Deposit proposals were the subject of recommendations by a Local Plan Inquiry Inspector, all of whose recommendations have been considered by the District Council. Proposed Modifications in response to the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector's Report were published for public consultation before the plan was adopted.

How much importance is given to protecting the environment?

The District Council attaches great importance to protecting the environment. The impact on the environment of all policies and proposals of this plan has been carefully assessed. The Environmental Appraisal statement (Appendix G9) summarises this assessment.

Will the plan's performance be monitored?

New Forest District Council will:

- i review the objectives of the plan regularly;
- ii monitor carefully the performance of the policies in achieving the plan's objectives; and
- iii revise any part of the plan which needs to be updated as a result of changed circumstances or because experience shows that it could be improved; any such revisions will be subject to public consultation.

A3 New Forest District

A3.1 New Forest District lies in the south western corner of Hampshire, between the large urban areas of Southampton and Christchurch/ Bournemouth/ Poole. The District covers 75,100 hectares (290 sq.miles).

A3.2 The District has a high quality, diverse environment, including the New Forest (which covers some three-quarters of the District) and 64 kilometres of coast-line.

A3.3 Despite the District's largely rural character, it contains a substantial number of towns and villages, and its population of 171,000 currently ranks 2nd highest among all non-metropolitan districts in England.

A3.4 The paragraphs below briefly highlight some of the main characteristics and features of the District.

The New Forest

A3.5 The New Forest is a very diverse and complex landscape comprising unenclosed ancient woodland, Inclosures, open heaths and lawns, mires and ponds, back-up grazing land, and scattered dwellings and villages. The character of the landscape ranges from intimate woodland and pastoral scenes to exposed heathlands. The New Forest has been shaped over the centuries by a unique blend of natural forces and human activity.

A3.6 In March 2005 the Secretary of State confirmed the designation of the New Forest National Park. The South Hampshire Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is revoked, as it lies substantially within the area of the National Park. The New Forest National Park is the definition of the New Forest relevant to planning which is used in this Local Plan.

A3.7 The New Forest is subject to a number of other designations. Much of it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Its importance for nature conservation is recognised internationally by designation of most of the SSSI as a Ramsar site (Wetlands of International Importance) and a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, 1979. The SSSI is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Habitats Directive, 1992. The countryside adjoining it to the south and west is the only part of Hampshire designated as Green Belt.

The coast

A3.8 The District's coastline is one of contrasts. Along Southampton Water, much of the shoreline is influenced by urban and industrial development, although there are valuable remnants of a wooded farmland (Forest fringe) landscape. The petro-chemical complex at Fawley is visible in the landscape for miles around. Despite development, significant areas of this part of the coast remain important to wildlife and are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The area is part of a Ramsar site and SPA, and part of it is included in a SAC.

A3.9 Some of the most untouched coastal landscape in south east England is to be found where the New Forest meets the sea along the north west Solent shores between Calshot and Lymington. The Beaulieu and Lymington Rivers are particularly attractive and popular sailing areas. Most of this coastline is in SSSIs and part is a National Nature Reserve. These are included in a Ramsar site, SPA and a SAC. Public access is largely confined to Calshot Spit and Lepe Country Park.

A3.10 Most of the coastline between Lymington and Barton-on-Sea is accessible to the public. Much of this coast is designated as SSSIs, parts of which are included in a Ramsar site and SPA and SACs. The soft fossil-bearing cliffs at Barton are of international geological importance. Coastal erosion in Christchurch Bay and the north west Solent shore is a major issue.

A3.11 None of the District's coastal settlements are seaside resorts, although Lymington has strong connections with the sea as a yachting and boat-building centre.

The Avon Valley

A3.12 In the west of the District the New Forest escarpment drops into the Avon Valley which separates the New Forest from the Dorset heathlands. Much of the valley floor is high grade agricultural land. To the north of Ringwood is a significant area of sand and gravel workings, most of which is gradually being transformed into lakes.

A3.13 The Avon Valley is of international importance to wildlife, particularly birds. Large sections of the valley are designated SSSIs and are included in a Ramsar site and SPA. The River Avon itself with some of its tributaries is a SSSI and a SAC. Part of the valley was designated an Environmentally Sensitive Area in 1993.

The western downlands

A3.14 The rolling open chalk downlands in the north west corner of the District are part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This area offers a marked contrast to the landscapes of the New Forest. It contains a number of nature conservation designations of national importance.

Towns and villages

A3.15 The District's main towns and villages include:

Town/Village	Population (parish)
Totton	28,200
New Milton and Barton-on-Sea	24,500
Hythe and Dibden	20,500
Lymington	14,500
Fawley, incl. Blackfield and Holbury	14,200
Ringwood	13,700
Fordingbridge	5,800
Marchwood	5,700
Milford on Sea	4,600
Bransgore	4,300
Brockenhurst	3,300
Sway	3,400
Lyndhurst	3,000
Ashurst	2,100

(All figures are 2004 estimates of total parish population).

A3.16 Many of these towns and villages are of historic interest - for example, Ringwood and Lymington have 13th century charters.

A3.17 All of the District's main towns and villages are close to, or in, the New Forest. Their affinity and historic links with the Forest are reflected in the fact that historic Forest grazing rights extend well beyond the Forest itself to encompass most of the towns and villages in the District.

A3.18 Nearly all of these settlements have grown substantially in recent decades. The very large population growth since the Second World War has been concentrated in the eastern parishes of the District (Totton and the Waterside) and to the south of the Forest in the coastal towns.

A3.19 Of the District's 171,000 residents, only about 34,000 live within the New Forest, concentrated in the larger Forest villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway. Scattered across the New Forest is the traditional commoning community. Although now relatively small in number, the survival of this community and its way of life is vital to the Forest's ecology and landscape.

A3.20 Compared with national and county populations, the District has a relatively elderly population. Almost 28% are of pensionable age and only 17% are aged under 16. There are, however, wide variations within the District. The age structure in Totton and the Waterside parishes is younger and similar to that of Hampshire as a whole. In the coastal area including Lymington and New Milton, however, 38% of the population is of pensionable age.

A3.21 When New Forest District Council was established in 1974, the District had a population of 132,000. Since then the population has increased by around 30%. Despite the District's predominantly rural character, the District had the highest house-building rate in Hampshire in the 1980s. The housing and population growth that has taken place in the 1990s and 2000s has been considerably lower. It is estimated that by 2010 (the latest date for which population estimates are available) the population of the area will still be about 171,000 (Source: Hampshire County Council 2000-based Small Area Population Forecasts - provisional).

