

NFDC LOCAL PLAN REVIEW – ISSUES AND SCOPE CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

(Copythorne Parish Council Responses)

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 14

1. What would you like see as our main focus for our review?

How the annual new homes target (as set out in the latest National Planning Policy Framework, 2024) can be achieved in a balanced way and at the same time ensuring that the additional demands on things like health services; schools; water, energy and communication infrastructure; and transport provisions will also be satisfied.

2. What do you think the key issues will be to deliver a new vision and why?

Overcoming the challenges of squeezing the new homes required into limited space due to the restraints that exist (i.e. the National Park; adjoining National Landscape; environmental designations (RAMSAR, SSSI, Nature Conservation Sites, etc.) along with the increasing impact of Climate Change on flooding. Another issue will be the impact of new housing on the existing national infrastructure (fresh water supply, electricity demands, struggling sewage systems). Consideration to whether the trend of increasing age and decreasing working age within the population is something that will benefit the New Forest. Perhaps consideration could be given to adjusting planning decision criteria to encourage more families to live and work here. ie to boost the local economy.

3. How should our Plan look to address the ‘duty to seek to further the purposes’ of the New Forest National Park and the Cranborne Chase National Landscape?

By developing policies alongside those of the New Forest National Park Authority that collectively support the purposes of the New Forest National Park and the Cranborne Chase National Landscape as strengthened by the levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

4. How long ahead should we plan for in the new Plan, and why?

For a period in line with that of the New Forest National Park Authority’s Local Plan and for at least a 20 year term. This would ensure that a consistent approach to development is in place for the whole of the local area.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 16

5. In seeking to meet our identified development needs, what should our strategy be?

Continue to make “Calls for Sites”. Paragraphs 45 and 46 of the document are important to any strategy as are most of the bullet points within paragraph 47 (the exception being the last one re the Cranborne Chase National Landscape, as development in this location needs a separate strategy given the importance of this landscape). A focus on brownfield and inner tow centre regeneration would also make sense.

6. Is the existing settlement hierarchy appropriate, or are there changes that should be included?

We believe so, although as only a very small part of our Parish (Copythorne) has New Forest District Council as its Local Planning Authority it is difficult for us to justify commenting on other settlements.

7. Do you think it is appropriate for us to consider new development within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape?

Yes, although the special characteristics of this National Landscape make new development of significant size challenging and so new development (see last bullet point of paragraph 47) needs to be carefully controlled.

8. Are there other strategic options that could help meet the need for development that we should also consider?

A review of potential brownfield sites and the re-visiting of unused permissions for significant levels of development. Looking proactively at the desired demographic the New Forest aspires towards when considering home densities and locations. e.g. Creating housing for young families to stay in the New Forest. The effect of the Freeport will have on the District should be taken into consideration with regards to the siting of commercial development.

QUESTION ON PAGE 17

9. Are our Corporate Plan priorities of 'People', 'Place' and 'Prosperity' appropriate to also be used within the Local Plan?

Yes

QUESTIONS ON PAGES 22-23

10. Do you have any comments on our housing need and how it can be met?

Pages 18 to 22 of this consultation set out the challenges well, in particular paragraph 60 relating to the housing register. Paragraphs 61 and 62 do start to address the need for housing for younger people and families. It should be balanced and have due regard for affordable housing and first time buyers as well as looking at the longer term trend for suitable housing for our aging population.

11. Are there any specific sites not currently allocated in existing Local Plans or otherwise permitted for development that should be considered for their development potential?

None that we are aware of within our own parish.

12. What role can town and parish councils have in addressing the development needs of the area, such as through preparing neighbourhood plans?

Town and Parish Councils have a role to play in highlighting through Neighbourhood Plans and Village (Parish Design Statements - that have been adopted by their Local Planning Authority - what is appropriate and not appropriate for their locations. Those with such documents need to have confidence that the Local Planning Authority will take them into account.

13. Should we consider a policy to restrict second home ownership within the area?

We do not have the benefit of data to understand how big an issue this might be within the New Forest District Council area (outside of the National Park). However, the principle of restricting the number of second homes to protect communities is sensible.

14. Are there any specific forms of affordable housing that we should aim to prioritise to provide for those most in need locally?

Affordable housing development should match the specific needs identified from those on the Housing Register for the possible location but be forward focussed when looking at improving the outcomes of the whole community. Consider accessibility and future proofing of affordable housing.

15. How should we aim to meet the housing needs of our population and the current population trends?

The population trend for the New Forest District Council area between the 2011 and 2021 Census would suggest a reducing population, yet housing allocation targets are rising? With the population decreasing and aging, is there opportunity to allow the repurposing larger properties into smaller residences?

16. Do you have any comments on the range of densities that should be sought on new development sites?

The mix of housing on individual sites should be a major consideration when considering density levels. A development designed for families with children should be afforded more space than retirement homes for example.

17. How should we aim to meet the identified accommodation need of the Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Show people community?
It is important to listen to those that represent these recognised communities that are an important part of the heritage of the New Forest.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 25

18. What are the key infrastructure priorities that need to be delivered and how can they best be delivered?
Transport options, green spaces, school places, healthcare, utilities etc. should be seen as a high priority with all developers being expected to support the cost of their provision. The required infrastructure should be built first so residents have full access to services on moving in and before money runs out.

19. What do you think are the key considerations for increased electricity generation from renewable sources in the New Forest (outside the national park), such as onshore wind or solar power?
That a “rooftop solar first” approach should be taken. Onshore wind is not an option for most of the New Forest (either inside or outside of the National Park).

20. Do you have any suggestions for incorporating art and culture into our Local Plan?
Consider the provision of funding for art & culture from s.106 and CIL contributions from developers. In particular the provision of community centres within areas of higher new development. Village halls play an important part in bring art and culture to local communities – by staging plays, panto’s, putting on photo exhibitions etc. Consideration should be given to expanding these facilities to meet the needs of a growing population.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 26

21: Do you agree with the description of issues regarding health and wellbeing, and are there other issues to consider?
Broadly yes, paragraph 80 sums up very nicely the reason for considering health and wellbeing. Paragraphs 81 and 82 gives a good description of the issues.

22: What options do you think should be followed for addressing health and wellbeing?
As mentioned before, the provision of things that support health and wellbeing needs to be made. Open spaces and easy access to them are important along with safe cycle paths. Access to local health services is equally so.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 28

23. Are we identifying the correct principles for creating a place people want to live and work, or are there any other principles that need to be considered?
Yes.

24. Should we seek to set a policy for the size of houses and gardens that are different from those set nationally?
We do not believe so. Although there may be a case to be made for the sizes to be different in rural vs urban environments. Review the parking spaces guidelines to reflect higher levels of vehicle ownership by households

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 30

25. How do you think we should work towards achieving net zero?
By encouraging developers to incorporate as many energy saving methods of construction as possible to reduce energy use. Things like the use solar roof tiles; improved insulation; air source heat pumps. When residents wish to extend their properties or build an outbuilding for an extra playroom or office, they could be required to demonstrate a reduction in carbon emissions of the whole property. (Similar to a biodiversity net gain requirement.)

26. What measures do you think we should take to ensure appropriate climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resilience?

Other issues related to the impact of climate change definitely need to be considered, such as lower water consumption; porous garden/driveway paving to aid surface water drainage, electric sockets at higher levels, etc. Look at the possibility of residents having "flood buffering/alleviation" areas in their gardens for larger properties.

27. Should we seek more ambitious targets and measures to address climate change?

Yes

28. Other than the private car, what other form of transport (including buses, walking, cycling, rail and water transport) would you use more if you could?

All of the above.

29. What approach should we take to large-scale renewable energy generation?

As mentioned previously a "rooftop solar first" approach needs to be taken. There is huge scope for adding solar panels to the roofs of industrial units, supermarkets etc. Pasture land should not be given over to solar farms. Where large scale developments can help to regenerate land in terms of biodiversity and grazing, then these could be considered.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 35

30. What should be our approach to ensuring that people do not harm the particularly environmentally sensitive parts of the New Forest? For example, additional rangers, considering providing a new country park or new more local areas of accessible green space.

All of the above. Educating the public to the importance of protecting and not damaging the unique environment in which they live.

31. What are the key mechanisms we should use to achieve benefits for the environment? How can this be measured?

Imposition of a net biodiversity gain target for ALL new development (including property extensions). A reduction in the level of energy and water consumption across the New Forest which, with the help of the relevant utility companies could be measured. Remove the ability of developers to offset the effects of their developments by buying green field sites elsewhere.

32. How should we look to introduce biodiversity net gain targets above the mandated 10%?

By supporting Hampshire County Council (or the strategic authority that will replace it) in developing the required Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Include a higher target figure say 15% in the local plan and meanwhile lobbying government to raise the level above 10% in the NPPF.

33. How can we make greenspaces more accessible? Should we include minimum standards of access to green space (for example, by size and type)?

By seeking to incorporate them within new developments rather than accepting a developer contribution to pay for their establishment somewhere else. Walking routes within the greenspaces to be accessibility friendly. Ensure that all developments have a minimum requirement for open public green space.

34. How should we look to address the issue of backup grazing land? If so, what evidence is there to inform future considerations?

Engage constructively with organisations like the Commoners Defence Association, the Verderers, Forestry England, National Trust and other local land owners. Introduce a planning policy to protect it which would also require the setting up of a formal register of it.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 36

35. How should our previous Green Belt study be updated and what factors should be considered?

Our parish is too far removed from areas with designated “Green Belt” for us to justifiably comment. We would urge New Forest District Council to engage with those better placed than us to comment (CPRE Hampshire for example). That said, in general look to see if any of it meets the criteria for changing it to grey belt. Bearing in mind of course if it forms part of the backup grazing land identified above it shouldn’t be considered.

36. Are there current Green Belt sites that you feel have the potential for more positive uses?

See response to question 35 above.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 37

37. Do you have any views on what the approach should be to existing site allocations that have not yet come forward or progress has stalled?

No we don’t. We do believe though that a review should be undertaken as a matter of urgency rather than wait to the latter stages of the Local Plan review. The options detailed within paragraph 120 are worth considering.

38. Are there further sites for any type of development that we should consider?

None that we are aware of.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 39

39. What should we do to ensure there is sufficient provision of open space, which is also functional and attractive to our residents?

Developers need to be required to incorporate open space within larger scale development with s.106 and/or CIL funds be used to allow the relevant local authority to maintain the open space for an agreed period after the development has been completed. Once a space within a development is agreed upon engage with the relevant Town or Parish Council should take place on how the open space could be best used.

40. What do you believe should be our approach to providing open space? This could be either creating a few new larger sized destinations for play areas, sports pitches, smaller scale areas as part of new developments or a new country park?

Given that the “land outside the National Park” is not enormous we are not sure where a new country park could be developed. Therefore, smaller areas should be considered unless within a particular area a large enough parcel of land could be set aside for sports pitches.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 41

41. What should our approach be in relation to the historic environment?

Paragraph 136 sums up the importance of the historic environment and makes a strong case that it should be protected. Look at capturing all aspects of the historic environment at an early stage of the Local Plan review so that they can all be considered at outset.

42. How can we secure the sustainable long-term use of our heritage assets, and help to protect archaeological features as part of new development?

By valuing them. Protection can come from strong conditioning of development at or near to them. Proactive visits from Planning Enforcement should be undertaken rather than reactive when the damage has already been done. Need to properly resource Planning Enforcement teams.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 45

43. How can we make our high streets more vibrant?

Being predominately rural, our Parish has no high streets and as such it would not be appropriate for us to make suggestions.

44. How can we ensure that the opportunities from the Solent Freeport designation are made available to all New Forest residents?

By supporting the ability of residents from across the New Forest have access to public transport to allow them to take up the job opportunities that it is hoped the Solent Freeport will create.

45. Are there any existing business/employment sites that are no longer appropriate, or fit for purpose for that use and should be considered for alternative development?

Not that we are aware of within our own parish.

46. What should be our approach towards town centres and primary, secondary, and local shopping frontages? Do the boundaries that appear on our policies map need to be changed and if so, how?

As a mainly rural parish this is not an area that it would be right for us to comment upon.

47. In relation to tourism, should we consider allocating new, or protecting existing, land or sites for new tourist attractions or accommodation?

As a parish with one of – if not - the busiest tourist attractions in the New Forest (Paultons Park) we would not wish to have other sites within the parish allocated to tourism or accommodation (not that we feel other such sites exist within the parish). We would though like to see New Forest District Council restore its grant to organisations like “Go New Forest” to help promote the area in a sustainable way.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 48

48. What are the key transport issues to be addressed to help new development come forward?

Rural bus services (many of which are unprofitable) continue to be required and with support from Hampshire County Council reducing there is perhaps an argument for NFDC (or the unitary authority that will replace it) to try and fill the funding gap and keep these buses running.

49. How can our planning policies help make you, and our communities, travel by the sustainable modes of walking, cycling and public transport?

By adopting a “joined up approach” to their use, particularly their safe use when walking and cycling are considered.

QUESTION ON PAGE 51

50. Are there any other issues that you feel we have missed and should be addressed?

No.