



New Forest National Park Authority

Local Plan Review 2024 – 2043

Regulation 19 Consultation

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General Questions regarding the Local Plan Review

Q1. What is the New Forest National Park Local Plan?

A1. A Local Plan sets out planning policies and proposals to guide and manage future development in an area. Every planning authority is required by law to produce a Local Plan. The New Forest National Park Local Plan was adopted in 2019 and addresses a range of issues, including management of the natural environment, design and heritage, housing and employment.

Q2. Why does the existing Local Plan need to be updated?

A2. National planning policy confirms that Local Plans should be reviewed every five years to determine if any updates are required. The current New Forest National Park Local Plan was adopted in 2019 and, whilst many aspects of the existing plan are working well and there is much that we will retain of the existing Local Plan, some policies would benefit from an update as there have been changes to national policy and guidance.

Q3. What happens if a new Local Plan is not produced?

A3. If we don't have an up-to-date Local Plan, development will still take place, but we will not be able to use our own local planning policies to help decide where development should go, and what form that development should take. We will also be less able to require the infrastructure needed to support development.

Changes to the Local Plan following consultation in Dec 2025

Q4. How has my previous feedback been used?

A4. Two rounds of consultation have already taken place, the most recent Regulation 18 (Part 2) occurred during November and December 2025. The National Park Authority has prepared a Consultation Statement summarising the comments received during the last consultation and how they have been addressed. The statement can be found here: <https://nfnpalocalplan.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/v3/additional-information-and-supporting-documents?step=step1>

Q5. What additional evidence has been prepared since the last consultation?

A5. Local Plans need to be underpinned by a wide range of up-to-date evidence to help ensure that policies are robust, justified and consistent with national policy and guidance. Since the last consultation, the following evidenced-based studies have been completed:

- Sustainability Appraisal – which includes an assessment of reasonable alternatives
- Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)
- Whole Plan Viability Assessment
- Cemetery Space Requirements Study
- A Review of Barbastelle Bats in the New Forest and Mottisfont Bats SAC – Potential Impacts from Development at Landford Corner

These can be viewed and downloaded from
www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/LocalPlanReview

Regulation 19 Consultation and Engagement Opportunities

Q6. Where can I find out more information about the Local Plan Review?

A6. Details of the Regulation 19 consultation, the draft Local Plan and its supporting evidence base, can be viewed on the Authority's website, as well as physical copies of the documents available to view at our office at Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, SO41 9ZG during normal office hours.

Q7. Is the National Park Authority holding drop-in sessions again? When and where are these sessions being held?

A7. Yes, the National Park Authority will be holding drop-in sessions again to allow members of the public to find out more information about the Regulation 19 Local Plan. Please see details below:

- Wednesday 2 September: Landford Village Hall, Lyndhurst Road, Landford
- Friday 4 September: Bartley Village Hall, Bourne Road, Woodlands
- Monday 7 September: The Copythorne & District Royal British Regional Hall, Southampton Road, Cadnam
- Tuesday 8 September: Jubilee Field, Station Road, Sway
- Friday 11 September: Lyndhurst Community Centre, Main Car Park, Lyndhurst
- Wednesday 16 September: Redlynch Village Hall, Vicarage Road, Redlynch

All drop-in sessions will be open between 2pm – 7pm

Between 2pm and 5pm there will be opportunities to informally discuss the revised draft Plan with Authority officers around the display boards.

Starting at **5.30pm**, a presentation by NPA officers will be delivered at each session, explaining the changes made to the draft Local Plan since the last consultation held in late 2025 and setting out the legal tests of soundness that apply to it.

The presentation will be followed by a managed Q&A session. If you would like to submit a question in advance, please email the Policy Team at: policy@newforestnpa.gov.uk, and outline which drop-in session you will be attending, otherwise your question will be included within the updated FAQ document, available to view here: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/LocalPlanReview

For those unable to attend any drop-in sessions, an online session will be hosted by the National Park Authority on **Thursday 10 September, 4pm – 5.30pm** Further details of the online session will be made available at: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/LocalPlanReview

Q8. What is different about this consultation?

A8. The Regulation 19 consultation focuses on two key questions:

1. Is the Plan legally compliant?	Does it follow the required planning laws and regulations?
2. Is the Plan sound?	Does it meet the tests (see below) set out in national planning policy?

Soundness test	What it means
Positively prepared	Meets local needs for housing, jobs and development.
Justified	Based on strong evidence and better than reasonable alternatives.
Effective	Can realistically be delivered between 2024 and 2043.
Consistent with national policy	Fits national planning policy while supporting local priorities and sustainable development.

Your comments should seek to address these questions. In your response you will need to explain whether you think the revised draft Plan passes these tests and give clear reasons.

Q9. How should I respond to the consultation?

A9. Representations on the National Local Plan Review should be made during the consultation period closing on Wednesday 30 September 2026 using the online consultation platform on our website here: <https://nfnpalocalplan.commonplace.is/>

If you need help responding to this consultation, please contact us at: policy@newforestnpa.gov.uk or on 01590 646600.

Q10. Should I resubmit my previous comments?

A10. The Planning Inspector will be provided with all representations made during the Regulation 19 consultation. If you submitted comments during previous consultations at Regulation 18, please note that if you feel your comments still stand

you will need to re-submit them during the Regulation 19 to ensure that the Inspector receives them.

Q11. Can I comment anonymously?

A11. Anonymous representations will not be accepted as these cannot be considered by the Planning Inspector. To ensure an effective and fair examination, it is important that the Inspector and all other participants in the examination process are able to know who has made representations on the Plan.

Q12. Can campaign groups or people with shared views submit a single representation, and what weight would this carry?

A12. Where groups or individuals share a common view on the draft Local Plan, they are encouraged to submit one authorised representation on behalf of all supporters appending the names and addresses of those represented. This will carry the same weight as the equivalent number of individual representations. When submitting the shared response, the lead representative coordinating the representation will be given the opportunity to opt in to receiving notifications about the next stages of the Local Plan process.

Common questions relating to... Strategic policies

Q13. Why are you proposing to change the Spatial Strategy?

A13. The Local Plan Review offers an opportunity to assess how the current spatial strategy and distribution of small-scale development across the National Park can meet the needs of our local communities. The current (adopted) Local Plan identifies that the largest villages – Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway – provide some basic services for local communities. This ‘spatial strategy’ has been in place for decades and, in light of updated information on local housing needs, has been revised to reflect current and future (up to 2043) local need. The Regulation 19 Submission draft Local Plan identifies three additional villages which offer a basic range of local facilities and services that could contribute towards meeting the need for new, small-scale development within the Park. The villages identified are: Cadnam - Bartley, Landford - Nomansland, and Redlynch.

Common questions relating to... Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

Q14. Why aren't we using Brownfield sites first?

A14. Our priority has always been to develop brownfield sites first. This is reflected in the redevelopment of sites including the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel, surplus land at

Ashurst Hospital and the redevelopment of the former Redmayne Engineering site in Brockenhurst. However, the supply of brownfield land in the Park is very limited and will not be sufficient to accommodate many new homes over the Plan period.

Q15. What about the impact of development on the environment and landscape of the New Forest National Park?

A15. It is a legal requirement for Local Plans to be assessed on their environmental impact. These reports are called Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and form part of the draft Local Plan's evidence base, alongside other detailed analysis of environmental issues. Mitigation measures are also proposed to address potential negative impacts.

Common questions relating to... Vibrant communities

Q16. Who decides how many new homes need to be built?

A16. Currently national policy requires local planning authorities – including national park authorities – to identify their local housing needs and meet them within their administrative areas where possible. The NPA commissioned an updated Housing Needs Assessment based on the Government's standard method for calculating housing need, which concluded that over the period 2024 to 2043 the number of new homes needed within in the National Park amounts 4,940 new dwellings (circa 260 dwellings per annum). This assessment does not take account of development constraints such as land availability or the environment. The draft Local Plan makes provision for 950 new homes over the period 2024 to 2043 and this scale of development is considered deliverable and appropriate within the context of a nationally protected landscape.

Q17. What is the definition of affordable housing? Where can I find more information on how affordable housing is formally defined?

A17. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) defines affordable housing as, "*...housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)*". The term 'affordable housing' applies to several different types of housing provision, such as "Social Rent", "Other affordable housing for rent", "Discounted market sales housing" and or "Other affordable routes to home ownership". For the full definition of affordable housing, please refer to page 70 of the [National Planning Policy Framework December 2024](#).

Q18. If the proposed housing site allocation policies set a policy target of 50% affordable housing, how do we know that will be stuck to?

A18. Site allocation policies set out a series of requirements that subsequent planning applications should meet, and this typically includes a target for affordable housing delivery (NB it is a target, rather than an absolute). There is a significant need for affordable housing arising within the communities of the New Forest National Park, and the evidence on affordable housing need indicates that the Authority should be maximising delivery wherever possible. National planning policy confirms that the site-specific viability of development is also a material planning consideration in the final planning decision. Developers are expected to ensure their schemes are policy compliant by considering the Local Plan policy requirements before purchasing a site. Any deviation from the main policy requirements – including the target for affordable housing provision – will require justification.

Q19. How were the proposed site allocations selected?

A19. During the plan-preparation process, the Authority held a ‘Call for Sites’ and ‘Call for Brownfield Sites’. These involve inviting landowners, developers and others to submit details of parcels of land to be considered as potential development sites for allocation within the new Local Plan.

National planning guidance sets out a process for consideration of such sites. This is then published in a Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA), which is an essential part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review. The SLAA identifies potential land and assesses the availability, suitability and achievability of submitted sites. The SLAA does not determine whether a site should be allocated for development. However, it does help to identify a prospective pool of sites for further consideration through a range of technical work.

Q20. Can site allocations be added or removed from the Local Plan as a result of consultation responses?

A20. You may submit representations on the sites proposed for allocation within the Regulation 19 Submission draft Local Plan. However, only the Planning Inspector can add or remove sites from the Local Plan, after considering evidence during the examination. If the Inspector decides that changes are necessary to make the Local Plan sound, a further public consultation will be held on the proposed modification before the Inspector decides whether to approve the changes.

Q21. If a site is allocated in the Local Plan, does that mean that it will definitely be developed?

A21. The allocation of a site within the Local Plan indicates that there is an expectation that a developer/landowner will bring the site forward for development but does not guarantee it. Full planning applications are still required to develop sites allocated in Local Plans.

Q22. Why are planning applications allowed to ignore the quantum of development set out within site allocations of the adopted Local Plan? What is the point of local planning policies if developers can submit a higher no. of dwellings?

A22. At the plan-making stage, the exact layout of development is not known. Instead, the Local Plan establishes the principle of development which will be used to assess any planning applications coming forward. The dwelling numbers set out on site allocations are therefore indicative, and in the case of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan, the policies are worded as “around XX dwellings”, rather than an absolute total or ceiling limit. Detailed planning applications will need to be submitted and assessed, and it is only at the decision-making stage of the planning process that the final total will be known.

If a site can accommodate a higher level of development, and still be acceptable in planning terms, there is no reason to refuse it. Several of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan (2019) site allocations have subsequently been granted planning permission for levels of development very close to the site allocation figures (e.g. land at Whartons Lane, Ashurst was allocated for ‘around 60 dwellings’ and then received planning permission for 62 dwellings; land at Church Lane, Sway was allocated for ‘around 40 dwellings’ and received planning permission for 46 dwellings).

Q23. Several of the proposed site allocations are in areas with limited services (e.g. secondary schools) – how have you selected the sites and proposed new defined villages?

A23. The significant local housing need arising from the communities within the National Park – allied with the national Government’s drive to increase housing delivery – means that the review of the New Forest National Park Local Plan must consider further development options.

The Local Plan Review provides an opportunity to review the existing settlement hierarchy to assess how development is distributed across the National Park, which helps to address housing needs and support local services. The settlement hierarchy ensures that the level of growth reflects the sustainability of settlements, which means that the small-scale development that occurs in the National Park is directed towards settlements that fulfil the most functions and provide the most services. As with many rural areas, the New Forest National Park’s villages and hamlets offer a basic range of local services, and communities will continue to look to larger urban areas beyond Park boundary to meet some of their needs.

Common questions relating to... A Thriving local economy

Q24. What are you doing about the protection of back up grazing? Do you have a policy to protect grazing land within the National Park, situated around the open access (cattle grid) area?

A24. The existing New Forest National Park Local Plan (2019) includes planning policy protection for back up grazing land within the National Park, and it is intended to retain this policy approach in the revised Local Plan. In relation to the limited number of proposed housing site allocations in the draft Local Plan, the Authority has considered the history of the sites and whether they have been used for back up grazing before deciding whether to put them forward for allocation. Back up grazing land is also located outside the National Park boundary, and it is the role of our neighbouring planning authorities to protect this resource through their own local planning policies.

Next steps

Q25. What will happen after the consultation?

A25. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out a timetable for the Local Plan, detailing each stage in the process, including when consultations are due to take place. The [LDS](#) is available from the NFNPA website.

Following the consultation, your representations will be collated together and sent to the appointed independent Planning Inspector, who will review all the comments received, as part of their evaluation of the draft Local Plan during Public Examination. The table below is taken from the LDS and shows an indicative timetable for the remaining stages. The precise timetable for the examination will be in the hands of the appointed Inspector.

Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation	August 2026 – September 2026	The draft Local Plan is published for final representations before submission.
	↓	
Submission to Secretary of State	December 2026	The Local Plan is submitted for independent examination.
	↓	
Examination and Inspector's Report	January 2027 – November 2027	An Independent Inspector examines the Plan and considers representations.
	↓	
Inspector's report issued	November 2027	The Inspector issues their findings on the Local Plan.
	↓	
Proposed modifications	November 2027 – December 2027	Any proposed changes to the Plan are considered before adoption.
	↓	
Adoption	December 2027	The Local Plan is formally adopted by the Authority.

Q26. What are Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and how do they impact the Local Plan Review?

A26. Devolution is the transfer of powers and funding from national to local government. The Government considers that devolution will ensure that decisions are made closer to the people, communities and businesses that they effect. Devolution in Hampshire and Wessex (which includes Wiltshire) will be enacted through the election of a mayor and new Mayoral Authorities, which will have some strategic planning powers.

Local Government Reorganisation refers to the restructuring of the current two-tier system of district and county councils, to create fewer, larger unitary authorities. The Government has indicated that for most areas, this will mean creating new unitary authorities with a population of 500,000 or more. The new structure is expected to be in place in Hampshire from April 2028. The Government's proposals for [Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire](#) were published in March 2026. Wiltshire is not affected by the current latest Local Government Reorganisation proposals, with the unitary Wiltshire Council having been established in 2009.

Under both devolution and Local Government Reorganisation, the New Forest National Park Authority will continue to be the statutory planning authority for the National Park, responsible for local plan-making and development management decisions, and our Local Plan will continue to guide future development within the National Park.

Q27. What weight do the pre-submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan policies carry in decision-making?

A27. The pre-submission version of the Local Plan sets out how the NPA intends to address future growth requirements in a planned and sustainable way within the New Forest National Park for the period up to 2043, and beyond. However, until the Plan has been declared 'sound' by the Planning Inspector, following the Public Examination hearings, and has then been adopted by the New Forest National Park Authority, the policies will have limited weight during decision-making. They will only have full weight once the Local Plan is adopted by the Authority, when it will replace the current adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016 – 2036.