

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PLANNING COMMITTEE – 15 APRIL 2025

UPDATED PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR TEMPORARY CAMPSITES

Report by: David Illsley, Policy & Conservation Manager

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In January 2024 the Authority confirmed a National Park-wide Article 4 Direction that provides greater planning control over temporary campsites that meet the relevant criteria set out in the Direction. This was in response to concerns from communities and others that the increase in temporary campsites delivered through national Permitted Development Rights was detrimentally impacting the landscape, habitats and residents of the New Forest National Park.
- 1.2 At the same time the Article 4 Direction was confirmed in January 2024, members approved a Planning Guidance Note to assist applicants when applying for planning permission for temporary camping uses caught by the Article 4 Direction. It is important to emphasise that the Planning Guidance Note does not create new planning policy, but summarises the main considerations and provides worked examples of how the requirements placed on temporary campsites can be addressed. The guidance note is available online at [National Park-wide Article 4 Directions – temporary campsites - New Forest National Park Authority](#).

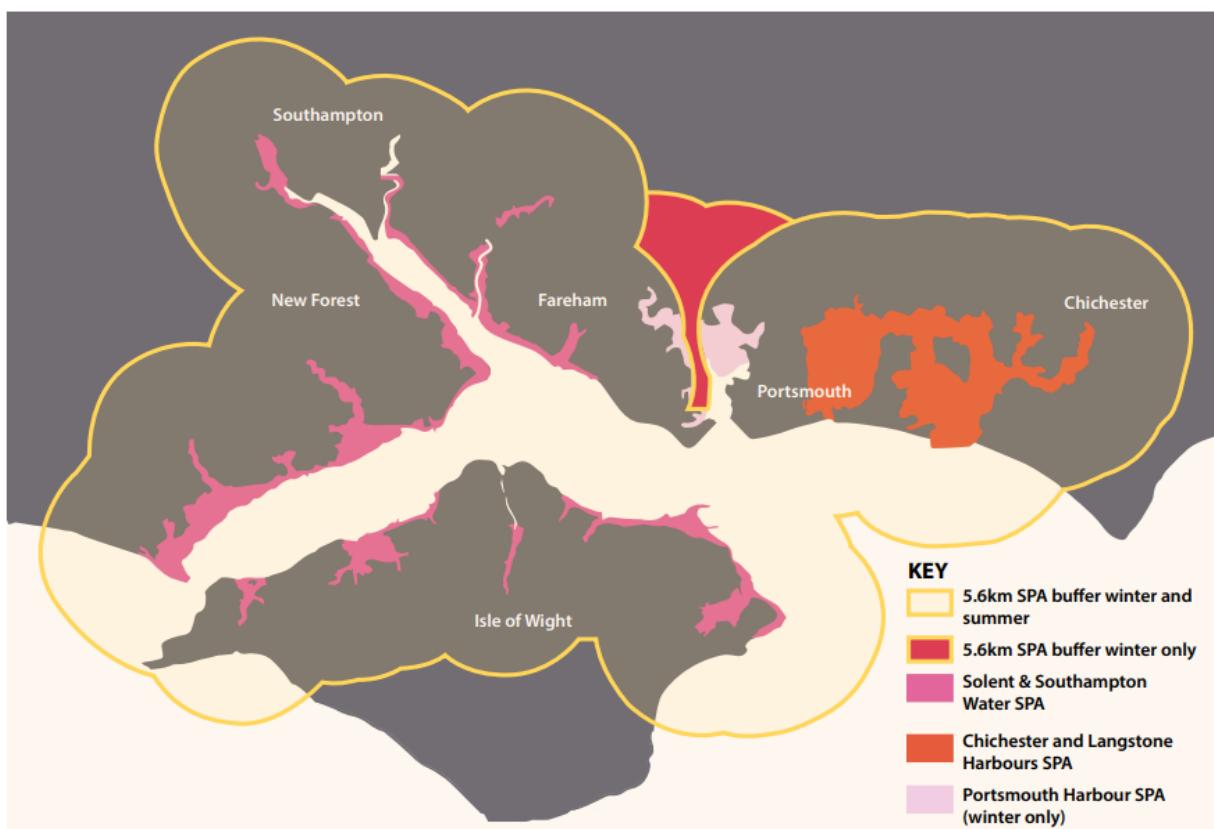
2 The need to update the Planning Guidance Note

- 2.1 One of the main matters covered in the existing Planning Guidance Note is how campsite operators can address the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations. These help to protect the internationally designated nature conservation sites of the National Park, which include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites in the New Forest heathlands, the Solent coast and the Avon Valley in the west of the National Park. Development is legally required to address potential impacts on the integrity of these designated sites whether planning permission is required or not.
- 2.2 Temporary campsite developments can address their potential recreational impacts on these designated sites through a proportionate financial contribution to the established mitigation schemes for the New Forest and Solent coastal sites. These contributions are revised on 1 January and 1 April respectively each year and so the Planning Guidance Note should be updated to reflect the latest figures.
- 2.3 More significantly, from 1 April 2025 the recreational impacts from temporary campsites on the Solent designations need to be addressed for legal compliance. It has been established for over a decade that development has the potential to impact on overwintering birds in the various designated sites on the Solent coast. However, as temporary campsites are seasonal summer uses, to date recreational impacts from camping uses on the Solent's designations have not been 'in scope'.

2.4 However, in late 2024 the Bird Aware Solent mitigation strategy ([Bird Aware Solent Revised Strategy September 2024 - Bird Aware Solent](#)) was updated based on the recommendations of the independent 5 year review and the findings of a research report commissioned by the Partnership for South Hampshire which considered the likelihood of impacts on summer breeding birds around the Solent from increasing recreational disturbance. The New Forest National Park Authority formally endorsed the revised Bird Aware Solent Strategy at the full Authority meeting on 17 October 2024 (report AM 696/24).

2.5 The evidence base for the Bird Aware Solent mitigation scheme indicates that new overnight accommodation – including housing, hotels, campsites and traveller sites – is likely to result in increased recreational pressures on the designated coastal sites. A 5.6 kilometre ‘zone of influence’ has been established, indicating the area within which new development could have recreational impacts on the Solent’s designations. Within this zone mitigation measures funded through proportionate developer contributions are sought to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations. The extent of this zone is illustrated below.

Map: Developer contribution winter and summer zones.



2.6 With the evidence base indicating potential recreational impacts from development on summer breeding birds within the Solent Special Protection Areas are now ‘in scope’, proportionate mitigation will be required from summer camping uses within the 5.6 kilometre zone of influence. The revised Bird Aware Solent contribution figures that came into effect on 1 April 2025 include a contribution figure applicable to campsites operating between 1 April and 30 September and it is appropriate that these figures are reflected in our updated Planning Guidance Note.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 Since 2022 we have published a 'Planning Guidance Note' for temporary campsites which sets out the relevant material planning considerations drawn from our adopted local planning policies and national legal requirements. The current version of the Planning Guidance Note was published in January 2024 and would benefit from an update to reflect the latest developer contribution figures for addressing recreational impacts prior the summer camping season starting.
- 3.2 As well as setting out the updated contribution figures, the update to the Planning Guidance Note is an opportunity for the National Park Authority to highlight the need for summer seasonal camping uses to now address potential recreational impacts on the Solent coastal designations. This became a matter for campsites to address from 1 April 2025 and it is therefore timely that we are updating our Planning Guidance Note and other relevant information available on our website. It is therefore recommended that members endorse the revised 'Planning Guidance Note' set out at Annex 1 for immediate use as we engage with site operators, landowners and communities regarding seasonal temporary campsites.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that members of the Planning Committee endorse the 'Planning Guidance Note – applications for temporary camping uses' in Annex 1 for use in the delivery of our statutory planning functions within the National Park

Papers

PC 485/25 – cover report

Annex 1 – Updated 'Planning Guidance Note – applications for temporary camping uses'

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no specific equality or diversity implications arising out of this report

Contact:

David Illsley

Policy & Conservation Manager

Tel: 01590 646672

Email: david.illsley@newforestnpa.gov.uk