

PC 499/25

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING – 18 NOVEMBER 2025

HAMPSHIRE MINERALS & WASTE PLAN PARTIAL UPDATE: PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS FOR CONSULTATION

Report by: Sarah Applegate, Senior Policy Officer

1. Background

- 1.1 The New Forest National Park Authority, as a minerals and waste planning authority, works with Hampshire County Council, Southampton and Portsmouth City Councils, and the South Downs National Park Authority on the preparation and monitoring of minerals and waste planning policies. The current Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan, which was adopted in 2013, covers Hampshire and the whole of the New Forest National Park, including the area within south Wiltshire.
- 1.2 Preparation of a review to the Minerals and Waste Plan began in 2022 with public consultation on draft Plans undertaken in November 2022 to January 2023 (Regulation 18), and again in January to March 2024 (Regulation 19).
- 1.3 The draft Plan sets out overarching strategic planning policies and detailed development management policies for the extraction of sand and gravel, and provision of waste facilities. It will guide development up to 2040. In addition, there are a number of new site allocations proposed, but none within the New Forest National Park. Existing and proposed sites located around the National Park comprise the following:

Existing permissioned sites:

- Badminton Farm (Fawley) Quarry, Fawley (sharp sand and gravel)
- Bleak Hill Quarry (Hamer Warren), Harbridge (sharp sand and gravel)
- Downton Manor Farm Quarry, Milford on Sea (sharp sand and gravel)
- Blashford Quarry (including Plumley Wood / Nea Farm), near Ringwood (sharp sand and gravel / soft sand)
- Roeshot, Christchurch (sharp sand and gravel)
- Forest Lodge Home Farm, Hythe (soft sand / sharp sand and gravel)

New sand and gravel extraction sites:

- Ashley Manor, New Milton (sharp sand and gravel)
- Midgham Farm, Alderholt (sharp sand and gravel)
- Purple Haze, Ringwood Forest (soft sand / sharp sand and gravel)

2. Independent Examination

- 2.1 The Draft Plan was submitted to the Government on 29 July 2024 and an independent Planning Inspector, Mr Luke Fleming, was appointed.

- 2.2 Formal Hearing sessions were held in February 2025 at the Hampshire County Council offices in Winchester, and streamed online. The National Park Authority was represented at officer level at these hearing sessions. An additional Hearing session was held on 9 September 2025 to discuss the site allocation at Purple Haze in Ringwood Forest, following the requirement for further technical information and engagement with a number of key stakeholders. More details are set out below.
- 2.3 The list of issues identified by the Inspector for discussion included legal compliance of the Plan relating to the duty to cooperate, the Habitats Regulation Assessment and stakeholder and community engagement. Further questions related to the Plan vision, objectives, climate change issues, the detailed development management policies and the site allocations.
- 2.4 Prior to the Hearing sessions all participants were invited to submit any further written statements to address the Inspector's issues and questions. All of the written statements, Inspector's matters as well as the draft Plan and supporting documents can be viewed on [Hampshire County Council's website](#).
- 2.5 The Inspector considered representations made on the site allocations in the draft Plan, and also looked at the site selection process and methodology. However, the Inspector did not allow any discussion of possible alternative or omission sites. As there is likely to be a shortfall in supply from around 2036 onwards the Hearings also discussed how any windfall (unallocated) sites will be assessed against the policies.
- 2.6 Of those new site allocations proposed around the New Forest National Park the one that garnered most discussion at the Hearings was the proposal for sand and gravel extraction at Purple Haze in Ringwood Forest, especially as the Environment Agency and Natural England had made comments and had concerns about this site. Following the main Hearing sessions additional specialist advice was commissioned relating to drainage issues. This provides evidence on the potential hydrological impacts of the proposed Purple Haze site allocation and mitigation measures on the Ebble Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (Ebble Bog). Ebble Bog forms part of the Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation and the Dorset Heathland Special Protection Area and Ramsar site which are international designated sites for the purposes of Habitats Regulations Assessment. A further Hearing session was held to discuss the new information, and it was considered that the Purple Haze site was still viable with suitable mitigation and accordingly has been retained within the draft Plan.

3. Proposed Main Modifications

- 3.1 The Inspector has advised the partner authorities that a number of changes to the Plan are required to make it 'sound', and these are referred to as main modifications. This is not uncommon for Local Plan examinations. Before the Hearings began the partner authorities gave the Inspector a list of some suggested changes to policies and supporting text, and during the Hearings the Inspector suggested some additional ones.
- 3.2 The following issues are those proposed main modifications that have most relevance to the New Forest National Park.

- 3.3 There was some discussion at the Hearings around the issue of climate change in the Plan, and MM5 in the schedule of main modifications includes additional wording in Policy 2 (Climate Change), and the supporting text, to clarify what information applicants will be expected to set out in a climate change assessment accompanying a planning application for minerals and waste development.
- 3.4 Recommended amendments (MM6) to Policy 3 (Protection of habitats and species) include more detail on the implementation of the policy regarding Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and strengthened wording on the impacts of proposed development to the integrity of nature conservation sites.
- 3.5 Recommended amendments (MM7) to Policy 4 (Protected Landscapes) include strengthened wording on the setting of protected landscapes, and the requirements for applicants should the criteria for major development be met. Officers from both the New Forest and South Downs national parks authorities have input into this process.
- 3.6 Policy 10 (Restoration of minerals and waste developments) now includes additional text setting out the factors for applicants to demonstrate on any restoration scheme, including how it contributes to local and strategic priorities for habitats, species and biodiversity networks. The supporting text includes reference to National Park Management Plans, which we support.
- 3.7 Policy 20 (Local land-won aggregates) sets out the sources of supply of sand and gravel over the Plan period. It comprises the remaining reserves at existing permissioned sites, several new site allocations, and has now been amended (MM23) to include reference to windfall (unallocated) sites specifically for soft sand within a Preferred Area. There are currently low permitted reserves of soft sand and it is only present in limited locations in the Plan area. These Preferred Areas are based on British Geological Survey data for soft sand resources and, as identified in the NPPF, exclude the following constraints: National Parks, National Landscapes, International nature conservation designations, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, and conversation areas.
- 3.8 Policy 21 (silica sand) has been amended (MM24) to include reference to Badminton (Fawley) Farm Quarry, as recent data shows that industrial sand is being extracted here, primarily for agricultural use.
- 3.9 Further amendments relate to the monitoring section and the glossary. Appendix A of the draft Plan sets out the detailed development management considerations of each proposed site allocation. Amendments have been recommended for many of these sites. In addition, a new appendix has been suggested for inclusion which sets out the relationship between the policies in the draft Plan and those in the current adopted Plan. The text also clarifies that all the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013) policies are superseded by the updated Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan upon its adoption. This will provide clarity in the application of the statutory 'development plan' in planning decision-making.

4. Proposed Additional Modifications and supporting documents

- 4.1 In addition to the main modifications there are a number of editorial or grammatical changes, or factual updates, required, which are termed 'additional modifications'. These include an updated Policies Map, and changes in terminology from Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to National Landscapes for example.
- 4.2 The proposed main modifications have been subject to an updated Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA). The SA/SEA concludes that the proposed modifications to the policies continue to minimise the impacts to the environment and promote sustainable development and this is reflected throughout the policies and the Development Considerations.
- 4.3 Once the consultation on the main modifications has been undertaken a final SA/SEA Environmental Report will be prepared bringing the outcomes of the SA/SEA process together in one document.
- 4.4 A Habitats Regulations Assessment of the main modifications has also been undertaken. It concludes that the proposed main modifications would not result in material changes to the draft Plan from the perspective of the Habitats Regulations, and would not be likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of any International site or component SSSI unit, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. This is an important assessment, especially given the range of internationally designated sites in and around the New Forest National Park.
- 4.5 As the schedule of additional modifications are minor and not required to make the Plan sound they are not required to be assessed or subject to consultation.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Once the 5 partner minerals and waste planning authorities have endorsed the schedule of Main Modifications through their respective decision-making processes, the consultation is expected to run for a 10 week period, from 2 December 2025 until 10 February 2026. The schedule of Main Modifications will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment, which people can also comment on if they wish to.
- 5.2 The responses will be collated and submitted to the Inspector who will review them and may decide whether it is necessary to reconvene the Hearings.
- 5.3 The Inspector will finalise his report on the soundness of the Minerals and Waste Plan incorporating the main modifications, and submit this to the partner authorities. The Inspector's Report will be brought before Members at a future full Authority meeting for consideration prior to adoption, anticipated in Summer 2026.

Recommendations:

1. That members approve the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan: Partial Update – Main Modifications and supporting documents (Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Main Modifications; Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Main Modifications; Policies Map Modifications) for a period of public consultation.
2. Delegate authority to the Interim Head of Planning & Place to make any minor changes ahead of the consultation, where they do not affect the New Forest National Park or materially alter the strategy.

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Papers:

PC 499/25 – cover paper
Background documents relating to the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan Partial Update, including the Independent Examination, can be viewed online at [Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Partial Update](#)

Previous papers:

PC 439/23 – Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan Partial Update – Submission Draft

Equality Impact Assessment: No impacts have been identified.