

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Monday 4 September 2017*

Agenda item 8: *Draft Planning Principles – Petronella Natrass*

The following is a very early stage draft of a possible Planning Principles document, comprising a framework into which I have fitted all the points raised at the Planning workshop on 5 July.

The Forum are asked to consider whether this is an appropriate structure, and if so how they would like to progress the development of this document.

Petronella Natrass
August 2017

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM – draft Planning Principles (September 2017)

Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires

1. that local planning policies protect and enhance public rights of way and access,
2. that local authorities seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users of rights of way and other access, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks and
3. that the development does not hinder the creation and maintenance of a continuous signed and managed route around the coast.

A properly planned and maintained network of rights of way and other non-motorised access can also provide significant benefit within new developments, including

- Walking and cycling routes to schools, shops and other local amenities
- Car-free connections to bus stops and railway stations
- Connections to the wider area for people to explore the countryside on foot, cycle or horseback
- Opportunities for local dog-owners to exercise their pets directly from home, away from sensitive wildlife habitats and farm land
- Health and social benefits associated with active lifestyles

A network that is well laid out and that fulfils some or all of these adds to both the amenity and overall quality of any new development. Within the wider area it may also help reduce road congestion and mitigate impacts on sensitive areas protected for wildlife

1. The New Forest – a special place

- Particular importance of good on-site and local greenspace provision outside the SPA/protected areas, however it is vital that resources are identified for the future management/maintenance of these areas if they are to represent adequate, sustainable provision.
- Health benefits of active travel and recreational access close to dwellings
- While adequate green space should be provided close to home as much as possible, we need to accept that the New Forest Crown Lands will continue to draw local residents for recreation – route networks connecting to this area are still important to reduce car journeys.

Key points	Essential	Desirable
DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide SANGS (suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces) for dog walking and recreation, close to where people are living.• Adequate resources for the future maintenance of SANGS and other provision•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide short, multiuser circular access within the development site.• On larger sites consider more detailed provision to attract and retain dog walkers, e.g. enclosed dog walking area, dog agility course• Information boards showing circular routes
AVOID		

2. Impacts on the road network

- Increased traffic, including short journeys for dogwalking, etc.
- Road safety issues for NMUs due to number/speed of vehicles, leading to:
 - Cycling on pavements where a shared user route is not designated.
 - Fragmentation of RoW/countryside access network where what used to be quiet lanes linking RoW are now busy/fast traffic.

Key points	Essential	Desirable
DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide multi-user routes for sustainable walking and cycling to schools, employment, local amenities and wider countryside.• Where there are existing rights of way and other access to greenspace and countryside nearby, provide direct access to them from development sites• Provide safe/controlled crossing points for NMUs on major roads• Provide pedestrian links to bus stops and walking/cycling links to railway stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrade existing Footpaths to Bridleways, to provide off-road routes for cyclists and equestrians as well as pedestrians• Seek opportunities to develop circular routes by creating new links• Extend existing 'spine' routes such as the Castleman Trail to Burley from Ringwood• Create new on- and off-road cycle routes that will contribute to a connected cycle network within the New Forest area
AVOID		

3. Impacts on the Rights of Way network

- Increased use affecting the quality and sustainability of unsurfaced paths
- Enclosure of RoW between new structures and/or boundary features
- Narrowing paths

Key points	Essential	Desirable
DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve surfacing of rights of way close to settlements and in other areas of heavy use• Ensure that new and improved access is accessible to all (including baby buggies and mobility scooters)• Make sure that paths are wide enough to accommodate the users for whom they are designed• Identify and allocate resources for future maintenance of paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involve local groups in maintaining access areas and Rights of Way using grant funding (e.g. RCF) to get equipment and surface/drainage improvements
AVOID	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enclosing paths on two sides between structures and boundary features	