

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welborne Plan

Statement of Common Ground

Fareham Borough Council
and
Natural England

October 2014

CD-23

Welborne Plan Statement of Common Ground

Natural England

Fareham Borough Council (the local planning authority) and Natural England have prepared a Statement of Common Ground ahead of the Welborne Plan Examination Hearings.

The enclosed statement has been agreed on the 7th October 2014 by:

Name: Claire Burnett

Position: Head of Planning Strategy and Regeneration

Organisation: Fareham Borough Council

Signed:



Name: Simon Thompson

Position: Lead Adviser – New Forest, Hampshire Coast and Isle of Wight

Organisation: Natural England

Signed:



Introduction

1. The purpose of this statement is to set out the agreed position of the Borough Council and Natural England on the approach to biodiversity in the Welborne Plan.
2. This statement builds on a substantial dialogue and correspondence that has been undertaken between the parties throughout the preparation of the Welborne Plan, including representations by Natural England on the Regulation 19 Publication Plan.

Avoiding and Mitigating the Impact on Internationally Protected Sites and Off-site Green infrastructure

3. Both parties have been in extensive dialogue regarding a suitable strategy to avoid or mitigate potential impacts of the Welborne development, either alone or in combination with other planned developments in the area, to habitats and biodiversity of all sites of national and international importance.
4. Those discussions have resulted in the approach set out in Policy WEL30 of the submitted Welborne Plan. This policy is in line with Natural England's advice on how the policy may guide development at Welborne in an acceptable manner.
5. Policy WEL30 of the Welborne Plan requires a full assessment of potential impacts to accompany development proposals at Welborne. This will form the basis of the Competent Authority's (Fareham Borough Council) Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). It sets out a mixed approach, with the provision of suitable natural alternative green space on or immediately adjacent to the site, along with a financial contribution towards coastal access management measures delivered via the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership (SRMP).
6. This mixed approach is appropriate for the Welborne development to provide for the mitigation of potential impacts upon sites along the Solent coastline that cannot be achieved solely through the delivery of on and off-site green infrastructure.
7. Based on the information available to date, the policy reflects advice from Natural England that a combined approach of on-site accessible natural green space and at-coast access management measures would likely avoid adverse effects to the Solent SPA sites. The policy, as drafted, strikes an appropriate balance between utilising opportunities for creating SANGS on and around the site with the likely effectiveness of this in mitigating recreational disturbance effects on the SPA.
8. The approach set out in policy WEL30 has been provided for the purposes of providing guidance for subsequent planning applications and associated documents. It is common ground that this is based on the best available information to date and would avoid an adverse effect on the sensitive sites. It is not the only approach which is capable of doing so. The policy allows for the

development of alternative strategies, based upon evidence gathered and submitted as part of the HRA process and any development proposals will be informed by an accompanying HRA assessment which will provide detailed information to enable a decision to be made on the acceptability of any strategy proposed.