

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

19 APRIL 2012

The following statement has been prepared by **Purbeck District Council, Natural England** and **Mr and Mrs Hampshire** to set out areas of agreement in relation to the mitigation of European protected sites from any potential adverse effects of development of 50 dwellings at Huntick Road, Lytchett Matravers.

At a meeting on 13 March 2012 additional detail was agreed between the parties to address the requirement for the development to avoid harm to European protected sites including the Dorset Heathlands SPA and Ramsar, and the Dorset Heaths SAC and Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar. Parties agreed on two aspects:

- (1) Mitigation of visitor impacts to the heathland sites and
- (2) Mitigating harm caused by nitrates to Poole Harbour SPA, Ramsar

(1) Heathland Mitigation

Parties agreed that wording would be added to the Core Strategy to set out the requirements for SANGs to accompany the housing allocation. Natural England advised that this approach is suitable to satisfy The Habitats Regulations. The following changes will be made:

Policy NE will be amended as follows:

Insert “*designed in accordance with para 7.4.8 and Appendix 5*” to the 3rd criteria of the Huntick Road allocation, that starts with “New public open space...”

The following wording will be added to para 7.4.8::

“A suitable SANG at Lytchett Matravers would need to provide attractive, safe open space with a ‘wild feel’ that will attract new residents and other local people including dog walkers, walkers and families. Any SANGs should provide a range of walks of varying length, including ones of at least 2.5km that could include existing public rights of way and encompass semi-natural spaces, open areas and ideally a range of habitats. Access should be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead (e.g. no busy roads to cross or nearby, no grazing animals). A small amount of off-road parking, for example accommodating two-five cars would be ideal. Access for dogs, children etc. directly from the car onto the SANGs area is important. In order to achieve this, a dedicated parcel of land would need to be provided and its management secured in perpetuity. The size of this dedicated parcel would depend on it’s ability to attract people, links with wider countryside and the access to the surrounding countryside.”

The mapped area designated as heathland mitigation will be removed from Map 14 in Chapter 7 on and Inset Map 1 in Appendix 4.

A new Appendix 5 will be added to the Core Strategy and cross referenced in Policy NE and Policy DH.

“Guidance on the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS)”

Essential

- *The SANGS should be closely related to development and readily accessible on foot*
- *SANGS should be able to offer the features described below without their functionality being compromised by unsuitable size, shape, location, topography or other inherent characteristics.*
- *For all sites there must be adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local pedestrian use only, i.e. within easy walking distance (400m) of the developments linked to it. The amount of car parking space should be determined by the anticipated numbers using the site and arriving by car*
- *All SANGS with car parks must have a circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park.*
- *It should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.0-2.5km around the SANGS, and for larger SANGS a variety of circular walks.*
- *Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car and should be clearly sign posted.*
- *The accessibility of the site must include access points appropriate for the particular visitor use the SANGS is intended to cater for.*
- *Access points should have signage outlining the layout of the SANGS and the routes available to visitors*
- *The SANGS must have a safe route of access on foot from the nearest car park and/or footpath/s.*
- *SANGS must be designed so that they are perceived to be safe by users; they must not have tree and scrub covering parts of the walking routes.*
- *Paths must be easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel. A majority of paths should be suitable for use in all weathers*
- *SANGS must be perceived as semi-natural spaces without intrusive artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.*
- *All SANGS larger than 12 ha must aim to provide a variety of habitats for users to experience (e.g. some of : woodland, scrub, grassland, heathland, wetland, open water).*

- *Access within the SANGS must be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead.*
- *SANGS must be free from unpleasant visual, auditory or olfactory intrusions (e.g. derelict buildings, intrusive adjoining buildings, dumped materials, loud intermittent or continuous noise from traffic, industry, sports grounds, sewage treatment works, waste disposal facilities,).*
- *SANGS should be clearly sign-posted or advertised in some way.*
- *SANGS should have leaflets and/or websites advertising their location to potential users. It would be desirable for leaflets to be distributed to new homes in the area and be made available at entrance points and car parks.*
- *Land should be passed to an appropriate body with a commuted sum paid to the body to manage the land indefinitely¹*

Desirable

- *It would be desirable for an owner to be able to take dogs from the car park to the SANGS safely off the lead.*
- *Where possible it is desirable to choose sites with a gently undulating topography for SANGS*
- *It is desirable that SANGS provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of deciduous woodland and water features*
- *Where possible it is desirable to have a focal point such as a view point, monument etc within the SANGS*
- *It is desirable that smaller SANGS do not have grazing stock and that on larger SANGS there are always areas free from grazing stock.”*

(2) Poole Harbour

The parties agreed that the proposal must be nitrogen neutral, thereby not having adverse effect from nitrates leaching into Poole Harbour. Sufficient land will be taken out of agricultural use by the housing development and the SANGS to offset the increase in nitrates from sewerage resulting from the 50 dwellings. Natural England have used standard levels of N₂ arising from residential properties of 1.2kg/N/PE/yr and a standardised N reduction figure available in the draft Strategy for Managing Nitrogen in the Poole Harbour Catchment to 2035 (23 Jan 2012, v10). It has not yet been signed off by Natural England and the Environment Agency. Natural England advise that the applicant will be required to secure more accurate details of the Nitrogen diverted which are specific to the land put forward, as detailed applications are brought forward. Natural England has calculated that 50 units of development would be Nitrogen neutral if 6.3ha of managed grassland was maintained as rough

¹ An open book method will be used to ensure that the scheme remains viable

pasture in perpetuity. This excludes any credit arising from the area of land to be developed.

The following changes will be made to the Core Strategy:

Add to Policy NE under the bullets for the Lytchett Matravers housing allocation and in Policy NW:

“Mitigation measures that will ensure the development including the SANGS are nitrogen neutral”

Add to para 7.4.8. Addressing Impacts on European protected habitats and wildlife as follows:

“(iii) ensuring new development is nitrogen neutral”