NEW MILTON

(including Ashley, Bashley and Barton)

Town Design Statement
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Introduction

This Town Design Statement has been prepared by the New Milton Town Partnership as representatives of the community of New Milton, supported and guided by New Milton Town Council, primarily members of the Planning Committee, New Forest District Council and the Countryside Agency.

The Town Design Statement aims to ensure that any future development and change in New Milton is based on an understanding of the area's historic past as well as its present and future needs. It provides a source of information that respects the character of New Milton, raises awareness of what is special about the town – its buildings, open spaces and the travel links that connect the town, both internally and externally – and gives the community a voice in the future development of the town.

The Planning Policy Framework

New Forest District Council (NFDC) is the local planning authority for New Milton.¹ The current Local Plan, the New Forest District Local Plan (First Alteration) adopted in August 2005, will gradually be replaced by the Local Development Framework, a suite of planning documents which will include the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) (2009) and the Sites and Development Management DPD. These documents will be supplemented by ‘Supplementary Planning Documents’ (SPDs) which provide additional detailed guidance about the implementation of planning policies.

It was originally intended that the District Council endorse the Town Design Statement as equivalent to a SPD. However, as the production of the document has become concurrent with the production of the District Council’s SPD on Local Distinctiveness in New Milton, it is now proposed to feed the findings from the Town Design Statement into the District Council’s Local Distinctiveness work, and include the Town Design Statement as an Annex to the SPD. The Local Distinctiveness Document as a whole, including the Town Design Statement Annex, will be adopted as SPD and will be taken into account when making future planning decisions.

In order to be included as an Annex to the Local Distinctiveness SPD, the Town Design Statement has met the requirements in Planning Policy Statement (PPS)12 for public consultation and has ensured that the guidance it contains is consistent with national, regional and development plan policies. Details on how the requirements for public consultation have been met can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.

What the Town Design Statement will mean for the Town

New Milton continues to suffer from severe development pressures. The Town Council and New Forest District Council are striving to maintain a balance between the need for additional housing and retaining the character of the Town.

Development pressures have changed, and continue to change, the character of the Town and this warrants detailed guidance being drafted to help ensure its protection and enhancement.

¹ A small part of the Parish (Bashley) is within the National Park, where New Forest National Park Authority is the local planning authority.
The broad principles for this are set out in the Local Plan and in the emerging Local Development Framework (Core Strategy).

It would be unrealistic and not in the best interest of the local community to expect New Milton to remain unchanged and every effort should be made to ensure that the community continues to thrive while protecting those aspects of the town considered to be worthy of retention.

This Town Design Statement is intended to assist with the management of such change through the use of design guidance, which aims to ensure that new development is compatible with and beneficial to the local environment.

Prepared by the New Milton Town Partnership, taking into consideration the views expressed by local people in response to questionnaires circulated by the Town Project Partnership and with advice from New Forest District Council, the Statement aims to set out briefly:

- The distinctive character of the Town, by area.
- What people appreciate or would like to see improved in the local environment to meet community needs.
- Guidelines, to be endorsed by New Forest District Council
- Recommendations (which are not to be endorsed by New Forest District Council) which the Partnership and New Milton Town Council would like to be taken into account in future decision-making by other bodies, including NFDC.
- How the Town Design Statement will be of use to the Town Council, working in partnership with residents, developers and the New Forest District Council.

Figure 1 - Market day on Station Road
1.0 The History of New Milton and its Parishes

New Milton is situated on the south coast of England almost equidistant between Bournemouth and Southampton. To the north New Milton is bounded by the New Forest National Park which provides an additional buffer against development on the perimeter of the Forest. The western boundary of New Milton is the county boundary between Hampshire and Dorset.

Milton and the seven other manors within the parish boundaries were first detailed in Domesday (1086). “Middletune” (meaning “middle farm” of other-tons) and the other six manors were outside the Forest although their woods were under Forest Law. Barton, one of the other six, is world-famous, as a result of the fossils in the coastal cliffs being the subject of the first book on British fossils, published in 1766. Hundreds of Stone Age hand axes have also been found near the coast since the mid-19th century.

The area is amazingly rich in medieval documents, Bashley having been owned by Christchurch Priory and most land to the south by Winchester College. In this area, the medieval Church, except for the Stuart Tower, was pulled down in 1832 and rebuilt and now forms part of the Conservation Area which also includes the church rectory and gardens and other buildings around Old Milton Green, including the Green itself.

Parish records begin in 1654, a Poor House being established in the 1790s and in 1836 a National (C of E) School was erected just east of "The George" at Old Milton Green. The first Secondary School was at Ashley (1939), which amalgamated with Gore Secondary in 1970 to form Arnewood Comprehensive.

Milton changed dramatically after the railway station was built in 1886 (the railway line opening in March 1888) when the lands belonging to Winchester College and the Barton Court Estate were sold for housing and the beach was opened to the public.

A sub-post office was opened close to the railway station in 1895 and the Post Office and the Civil Parish agreed to the sub-post office’s name, New Milton, becoming the name of the town. The railway company re-named the station “New Milton” in April 1897.
The Water Tower, a well-known listed local landmark, was built in 1900, the year when England's first reinforced concrete bridge was also built at Chewton on the boundary between New Milton and Highcliffe (which is also the county boundary between Hampshire and Dorset).

From 1926 to 1932 New Milton was an Urban District Council becoming part of the Borough of Lymington between 1932 and 1974. In April 1974 the Borough of Lymington ceased to exist and New Milton became part of the newly created New Forest District Council when a Neighbourhood Council was set up. In 1979 as a result of the reorganisation of Local Government New Milton Town Council was formed.

The present population of the parishes of New Milton and Barton-on-Sea is 23,753 (18,697 excluding Barton), of which 95.8% comprises an urban population. (The total population of the New Forest is 172,735). This total is made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<tr>
<td>Barton</td>
<td>5,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashley</td>
<td>2,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becton</td>
<td>4,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernhill</td>
<td>5,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>5,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,753</strong></td>
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Population figures from the 2001 census

The town’s population has been increasing by between 1.5% and 2% per year for the last 10 years and has grown by approximately 4000.

The town’s population has a high proportion of older people compared to the national and district average; the percentage of the population of retirement age (over age 60) in New Milton is 39%, which is higher than the average for the New Forest which is 27.2% and significantly higher than the national average. This contrasts sharply with the population of New Milton.
below the age of 16 which represents just over 13.5% of the total population in the town. This figure is below the average for both the New Forest and the national average.

The town is a mixture of rural and urban environments with the villages of Milton, Ashley and Barton having expanded, over the years, to create the town of New Milton. Bashley village situated on the town's northern boundary and within the New Forest Heritage Area has escaped many of the development pressures that have affected other parts of the town and still remains a relatively quiet rural village. Ashley has been combined with eastern Barton to produce the political ward of Becton.

Figure 4 - Map showing town and ward boundaries.
2.0 The Character of New Milton

2.1 The Town Centre

The town centre is built around the axis of Station Road and Old Milton Road. It is linear in lay out and has wide roads and pavements (almost boulevard-like). It is quite different to more “traditional” shopping centres such as Lymington and Christchurch.

There are two distinctive parts to the Town Centre: Station Road with key high street stores, banks etc; and Old Milton Road with a more eclectic mix of shops, takeaways and specialist outlets.

One key feature is the number of independently run retail businesses. New Milton has not yet become dominated by chain stores and ‘typical town centre’ outlets.

Appearance
90% of people in our survey said that the Town Centre needed to be made a more attractive environment.

There is currently no cohesive appearance to development in the Town Centre. The eastern side of Station Road is characterised by 1970s flat roofed 3 - 4 storey buildings with retailing on the ground floor with a mixture of commercial or residential units above. The western side is characterised by older 2 – 3 storey pitched roofed buildings with retailing on the ground floor with a mixture of commercial or residential units above. Buildings display a variety of styles and design appearance, with possibly the only cohesive development of note being at the lower or southern end. In addition there are examples of ad hoc design styles, with, for example, a recent high street development featuring wrought iron Victorian balustrade.

The general impression of New Milton town centre was that it is rather tired with few features of any great interest and in need of some major investment and refurbishment with a substantial injection of civic pride. The new pavements and street fittings have gone some way towards improving the appearance, but overall the town centre would still benefit from refurbishment / renovation / improvement of the buildings and additional features to improve the environment.

Figure 5 - The weekly Market at the south end of Station Road
The Town Action Plan, produced by a working group representing the Town, District and County Councils, the Town Partnership and various consultants, identified the need for a streetscape design plan, taking a long-term view of the redevelopment of the Town Centre, providing a blueprint which all landowners and developers can work to and avoid the current hotchpotch of styles. As a result the work to upgrade the footpaths and street furniture was carried out utilizing SEEDA grant aid raised by the Town Partnership as well as monies provided by the local District and County Councils.

Of the built landscape, the eastern side of the southern end of Station Road is the least cohesive in appearance of the whole street and could benefit from redevelopment, perhaps as a shopping mall extending over the car park behind, but with roof top parking.

The streetscape north of the railway bridge is much less attractive than Station Road and it too could benefit from a major redevelopment. Currently a mix of garages and small shops in a variety of building styles the area has poor parking facilities, a problem which is compounded by the new health practise buildings opposite which attracts a heavy throughput of patients looking for parking space.

See guideline 2.1.1 concerning streetscape development

Shops and Amenities
It is generally understood that in a small market town it is desirable to ensure a diverse mix of shops and amenities and it is therefore appropriate to limit the number of any same type of business locating in close proximity.

64% of people in our survey did most of their shopping in New Milton but only 45% thought there was a wide range of shops in town. One of the most common comments made in the major issues section of the survey was ‘there are too many charity shops and estate agents in New Milton’. Additional public toilets to the southern end of the Town Centre were also mentioned by some residents.

It was felt by many that the town centre lacked vibrancy or a unique identity, perhaps something also reflected by the difficulty in establishing a Chamber of Commerce of any duration. Anecdotal evidence suggests that rents are unrealistically high and unduly long (some up to 25 years) for local or small businesses. Another deficiency is considered to be the lack of places to eat in the evenings and later.

Parking is felt to be an issue by some residents and little increase in parking has been made available since the 1950’s. In fact recent developments have been calculated to have removed some 75 places from the town centre as a whole. At present it seems that the only possibility of increasing parking places is by developing the existing car parks.
There are some Town Centre buildings which provide a substantial number of amenity activities for the residents of the town. Adjacent to the Recreation Ground is the Memorial Hall and indoor and outdoor bowls clubs, each with a substantial number of members. The popular Community Association is sited on Osborne Road.

Our survey identified the need for a Community Centre open to all groups. In particular there was a need identified for more facilities for young people and improved access to key services such as job centre web-sites as more offices are being subjected to closure and not everyone has access to a computer yet.

There are limited sites in the Town Centre which could house these assets although the Old Post Office, an existing prominent building holds out some prospect for future community use and should be protected from unsympathetic reuse.
Recommendations

Potential sites for community use, such as the Old Post Office, Telephone exchange, Water Tower and associated car park, areas adjacent to the recreation ground etc. and development of these should ensure that such community use is included as a primary redevelopment option.

The proportion of absentee landlords should be reduced whenever the opportunity arises.

The opportunity should be taken to provide additional public amenities, such as toilets and car parks whenever possible.

Town Centre Transportation

A Traffic management study was carried out in 1996 looking at vehicle movement around the Town Centre.

Currently traffic is directed through the town and detracts from the visitor and shopper experience. The central traffic lights pose a particular delay for both pedestrians and drivers having been introduced as part of an overall plan, the rest of which has not been implemented.

The lay out of the town could lend itself to a one-way traffic flow system. As traffic increases and current intersections struggle to cope with the amount of traffic, serious consideration needs to be given to introducing a one-way system.

In conjunction with traffic flow, pedestrian movements in town could be improved. In the Town Partnership survey 57% of people were in favour of pedestrianising the southern part of Station Road.

The introduction of the weekly street market has demonstrated that partial closure seems to have few negative affects on the traffic circulation.

Recommendation

Any development that prevented the possible future introduction of a one-way traffic flow and pedestrianisation scheme for Station Road south should be refused, unless the benefits of acceptance are overwhelmingly favourable.
2.2 MILTON

This area generally covers the centre of the town, from south of the Bashley Cross Road / Sway Road to north of Lymington Road / Christchurch Road, the boundary with Barton, and from Caird Avenue in the east to the County boundary in the west.

It includes the main town shopping centre and the out-of-centre superstore, the railway station, the Recreation Ground and part of the Conservation Area around Old Milton Green, the Arnewood School, an 11 to 18 technology college and the town’s main secondary school, the NFDC run New Milton Health and Leisure Centre and small industrial estates along Gore Road. It also includes two of the town’s three doctors’ practises, the other being in Barton, and the majority of the private and national health dentists’ practises.

To the south side of Gore Road, past the Arnewood School, is to be found a mixture of council built housing stock, an area of green belt and a large green house complex, all bordering on the sports facilities to their south at Fawcetts Field.
The housing stock in this area is very varied, consisting of houses, bungalows and flats ranging in age from early last century to new build, some so new that they are still awaiting occupation. The vast majority of the dwellings in this area are privately owned, a small number are for rent, both privately and through housing associations and the District Council.

The buildings of significant architectural value in the area include the Water Tower, a listed building, and St Mary Magdalene Church, in the Conservation Area.

Although well protected by its Conservation Area designation, the area around St Mary Magdalene illustrates well both good and bad planning decisions. The Almansa development diagonally opposite the church to the south east fits in well with the character of the area, whilst the sixties-style concrete and brick shopping parade to the south is completely at odds with its surroundings. The planning constraints of the conservation area should be extended over time to contiguous areas and more sympathetic development encouraged in this general area. In recent times government policy has encouraged denser housing development which on completion can be seen to be at odds with the original streetscape of the area. Whilst it is not possible to undo that development further spread will result in the total loss of the remaining character of the centre.

See guideline 2.2.1 & 2.4.1 on development restrictions and parking provision
2.3 FERNHILL

Fernhill covers the area from Manor Road in the south to Sway Road in the north, Fernhill Lane in the west to Oakwood Avenue / Brockhills Lane in the east.

The area to the north of the railway line includes the Ballard Lake water meadows and Ballard School, a private school for 5 to 16 year olds. Further north is the newly completed Fernhill Sports Ground, home of the New Milton Cricket Club.

The whole area is covered by owner-occupied dwellings of varying size and age, mainly laid out in generous tree-lined roads with grass verges, giving the appearance of prosperity. There are roads of large executive houses with expansive gardens along Brook Avenue, Fernhill Lane, Barrs Avenue and Sway Road. Estates of bungalows were built in the 1940’s in Oakwood Avenue and Brook Avenue North with private front and rear gardens.

Terrace houses and more modern family homes built in the 1960’s with open-plan front gardens have in-filled the spaces between the older developments. In addition there is a regrettable current trend to attempt higher density development whenever a large garden plot becomes available. This has had the effect of nullifying the general open nature of the area.

See guideline 2.3.1 on in fill development
There is a parade of shops in Ferndale Road with flats above them. The shops consist of a Mace convenience shop, which also houses a post office, and a hairdresser. On the Sway Road to the north of the area there is a farm shop.

The Hollands Wood Estate at the north of the area was built in the 1970’s and consists of comfortable family houses and bungalows, with an open-grass play area. A new estate of 2 and 4 bedroom houses has recently been built at Forest Oak Drive. There are few flats in the Fernhill area – “The Lakes” on the corner of Barrs Avenue and Fernhill Lane and “Forest Pines” off Violet Lane. The Fernmount Centre – a day centre for adults with learning disabilities is also situated off Violet Lane.

The lack of amenities in the Fernhill area mean that everyone has to travel to New Milton or beyond for all their needs.

There is a bus service along Manor Road (121, 122 Lymington to Bournemouth) and (118 Lymington to Ringwood) along Fernhill Lane.

See guidelines 2.2.1 and 2.3.2 on local development

2.4 NORTH MILTON

North Milton is that part of New Milton bounded by the railway line to the South and Fernhill Lane to the East, sometimes referred to locally as “the other side of the railway”. It is bounded to the West and North by Stem Lane and the green belt.

It is a more modern residential part of the town so far as the majority of the property is concerned, with the exception of the original properties in the South East quadrant. Two main estates were built in the early 1980’s, Chatsworth Park and North Milton Estate. The first stage of Chatsworth, known as Stevenscroft, consisted of 2 and 3 bedroom bungalows and 3 and 4 bedroom houses for owner occupiers. Unfortunately the estate was built with no public or amenity buildings whatsoever. The second stage was given over to smaller town houses, one, two or three bedrooms, as well as small blocks of flats. Despite the lack of amenity buildings, the whole area was well laid out with many open green spaces.

The North Milton Estate on the other hand, was built as a council estate, with rows of terraced houses and several blocks of flats. Latterly a number of the houses have been sold to their residents, the unsold houses and flats being transferred to a Housing Association. The estate contains the only public building in this area, the Nedderman Centre, named after Mrs Iris Nedderman, a local councillor, and used for various groups including mothers and toddlers. Unfortunately this immediate area figures highly as one of the most deprived areas within the NFDC’s statistical coverage and will need the attention of all local authorities to improve its status.
There are no services available in the area; residents have to make the journey to New Milton centre for Doctors, Dentists and schools. There is however, a general store and post office on Beechwood Road. Recent research by the District Council has highlighted the lack of facilities in the area and the poor bus service and high fares make it difficult for many to get to the shops, especially Tesco which is on the opposite side of Town.

The whole area is within reasonable walking distance of the town centre, a bus serves Chatsworth Park on a purely local service to the town.

To the North, further along Stem lane lies the latest residential development, a modern estate built during the late 1990’s consisting exclusively of so-called executive houses in a range of sizes, in a relatively high-density layout, with only a small children’s play area as amenity space. This whole area has no space left for further development, save the green belt, which will come under increasing pressure as the impact of the National Park status for the New Forest makes itself felt.

See guideline 2.4.1 on local development and recreational provision

In an area bounded in the South by Gore Road and in the North by the Chatsworth estate lies the bulk of New Milton’s industrial space. Several nationally-known firms had their start in life in these estates, companies like McCarthy and Stone and Parker Baths. Until relatively recently there were also some internationally-known firms represented, but with the departure of Johnson & Johnson artificial hip manufacture the best known have gone.
The various industrial estates in this area house the usual mix of wholesalers, small businesses and retail outlets that generally seem in demand, with little in the way of empty buildings available for newcomers. Recent development has been limited to an extension into the green belt south of Gore Road and the greenhouses that have been established in this area for a number of years. It is of interest to note that each expansion is several times greater than its predecessor, but produces fewer jobs per hectare as automation improves.

The estates have little to commend them aesthetically, being of the generic frame and cladding or redbrick, depending on age, so often found in such areas. Nonetheless they provide employment for the Town, which despite its demographic bias to the retired has a significant younger population in need of work.

See guideline 2.4.2 on future industrial and commercial development

Recommendation
It is important that the green belt is retained as the last remaining buffer between the Town and any future development in Dorset.
2.5 BARTON

Barton-on-Sea lies to the south of the Christchurch and Lymington Roads, and from Chewton Bunny in the west (the County Boundary) to Taddiford Gap in the east.

This area consists mainly of housing, bounded at the west end by one of the Hoburne caravan and holiday home sites, Naish Holiday Village, and at the east end by green belt. Other than the seafront and the associated cliffs, which have been identified as a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) due to the many fossils and Bronze Age artefacts discovered there, there are few amenities for residents or visitors in comparison with other parts of the town.

Barton Common, Long Meadow and Barton Golf Club form a large open space to the east of Barton (although forming part of the Becton ward, see section 2.6) where it is possible to walk, via public footpaths, along the entire length of the cliff top from Milford-on-Sea in the east to Highcliffe in the west. The Durlston Court School, the other private school in New Milton, is located close to Becton Lane and provides some green area, although this has diminished of late as the school has found it necessary to sell off some of its land to developers.

Barton Common Road, which links Barton sea front and the common to Ashley, is a road of substantial houses which, although in a variety of styles, share similar spacious surroundings enabling them to form a homogeneous whole and is protected in the Local Plan as an Area of Special Character.
Housing stock is quite varied in nature, but tends to be in distinctive groupings. For example, a large part of Barton is given over to mainly pre-war and immediately post war bungalows, giving a very distinctive feel to their surroundings. Other areas are populated by large family homes in large, often wooded gardens, giving another distinctive area its own feel. Both these areas are in danger of losing this distinctive character as higher density developments take over the larger gardens and bungalows are altered into houses.

Nearer the coast the housing consists mainly of detached houses and bungalows, the majority having been built fairly recently, with a substantial number of flats and apartments throughout the area, a significant number of these being on or near the cliff top.

Recent developments have reduced the number of shops and social amenities available to the residents of Barton as public houses and shops have been turned into flats or rest homes. This loss is likely to cause severe problems to the elderly who are still being encouraged to move into the area by developers.
Further towards the cliff top, Barton has some areas of character housing, along such places as Dilly Lane and around the north side of the common. Several of these dwellings can be traced back to the original village cottages, some thatched, or coastguard cottages that give considerable character to the area.

See guideline 2.5.1 on local character buildings

The cliff face at the west end of Barton, in front of the Naish Holiday Village which contains a significant number of residential caravans and log cabins, has been left unprotected under a policy of managed retreat, as this is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of the fossils and has to be open for examination and inspection.

There have been several instances of cliff erosion along the front and from time to time substantial sections have succumbed. Most of the seafront has now been protected by the installation of groynes or large rocks to try and delay further erosion. However there are some parts of the cliff face and cliff top both built on and open space, which are particularly vulnerable.
There are a considerable number of multiple occupancy buildings along the cliff top itself, some of which are greater than three storeys. Current policy prevents any new development greater than two storeys, excluding appropriately designed accommodation in the roof space, except where an existing development is being replaced.

**See guideline 2.5.2 on protection of the cliff top**

**Recommendation**

The value to the population as a whole of the green spaces derived from some of the larger gardens should be recognised.
The political ward of Becton joins the eastern part of Barton with the original village of Ashley. The Barton end has been retained within that section (2.5 above) to give a more complete picture of the sea front area.

On the northern edge of Barton, effectively the boundary between the original settlements of Barton and Ashley, lies Ashley Manor Farm, a large area of green belt that borders on the grounds of the golf club to the south and the gravel extraction plant north of the A337. At its north western corner is the new town cemetery with its combination of traditional and woodland burials. This whole area is a valuable green lung for the town against whose use for anything else has so far been successfully defended by the townsfolk.

North of the gravel extraction plant is the major supermarket in New Milton with its own large parking area. Bordering this to the north is Ashley proper.

Around Ashley crossroads, one can still find some secluded groups of older houses, one or two thatched cottages surviving at the extremities of the original village. The area is bounded by Milton in the West, the railway line to the North and by natural boundaries of valleys to the East and South.

Heading in a North Easterly direction from the crossroads, this part of Ashley is mainly modern estates, a mix of social housing and owner-occupied dwellings. There are properties ranging from retirement bungalows to flats, executive houses to housing association properties, with some distinctive dwellings around the margins.
The South East quadrant probably contains the majority of the oldest and most character buildings. However, it too has been developed with two social housing estates and some smaller private estates. It is also the home of Ashley Infant School and a large and thriving Baptist Church. Like the NE quadrant, it is bounded by valleys and intermittent natural woodland.

The Western quadrants merge into New Milton proper, although the boundary of the Southern part is a stream and woodland. The hinterland of this part of Ashley is almost totally given over to private housing spread around the open spaces of the Junior School and the Town’s Rugby Ground.

A small shopping centre is to be found immediately to the West of the crossroads, with a range of shops that can supply the immediate needs of the local population. It also includes the popular and imposing Ashley Hotel one of very few such establishments in the town as a whole. The area also includes three of the Town Council’s five allotment sites, which are very popular with a long waiting list of prospective gardeners. New sites in this area are currently being considered.

In common with the rest of the town, Ashley feels the pressure of the developer. Much of the Infant School’s original grounds have, at various stages in the past, been lost to housing and areas of marginally suitable land have been stabilised and then built on. The Infant School has recently received new classrooms to cope with the latest development.

Ashley is without many basic services such as a doctor or dentist. Its one pharmacy seems to suffer from being some distance from the surgeries. It is moderately well served with shops but has recently lost its own Post Office. It has few other community facilities. Such community facilities as exist are mainly school halls available only after school hours.

See guidelines 2.2.1 and 2.6.1 on local development

Recommendation

It is important that the green belt is retained as the last remaining buffer between the Town and any future development in Hordle.
To the north of the Town beyond Bashley Cross Road is the village of Bashley, a small rural community stretching from the County boundary in the west to the Parish boundary with Hordle in the east, on the edge of the New Forest and, for the most part, included in the National Park.

Bashley stretches from Sway Road and Bashley Cross Road, northwards to the New Forest boundary, to Tiptoe in the east, and to Beckley in the west. The area is rural in nature, being generally quite sparsely populated, although there is Bashley Park holiday village and caravan park on the western boundary. Bashley contains 6 of the New Milton’s 12 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, emphasising its rural nature.

The B3058 road runs through the middle of the village, giving it very much a “strip development” feel, whilst narrow-hedged lanes run off to the sides. The housing varies from old small cottages to modern executive homes, together with the mobile homes mentioned above. The village also incorporates the extensive Ossemsley Estate, with its fine old manor house.
The village centre revolves round the Post Office and local garage in Bashley Common Road. Close to these is the village Recreation Ground, which is leased to the Bashley Football Club as its home ground, the Village Hall and across the road the local Bashley Cricket Club grounds.

Community facilities include the Church, the Village Hall and Bashley Cricket Club. At the northern end of the village are the local pub, the Rising Sun, and the Bashley House Hotel. Along the Sway Road / Bashley Cross Road southern border lie two farm shops and Sammy Miller’s Motorcycle Museum – an internationally famous collection, and in the opposite direction Hoburne Bashley Park holiday village and caravan park, one of the major tourist destinations within the town.

Close to the village centre is an equestrian establishment, Burley Villa Riding School, which has developed into a substantial activity with a significant number of horses and riders progressing along the road through the village to get to the Forest.

Unfortunately this road is also the main route into New Milton from the A35 and the Forest carrying a substantial volume of traffic which is sometimes in conflict with the riders and horses.

See guideline 2.7.1 on the National Park’s planning guidelines.

Figure 22 - St John’s Church, Bashley
3.0 General Notes

3.1 Public Amenity Spaces

There are a substantial number of amenity areas in the town although they are not evenly distributed throughout the town. They can be classified into one of two categories:

- Public Open Space
- Sports Areas

Public Open Space

Five large areas fall into this category: The Recreation Ground, Barton Cliff Top, Barton Common, Long Meadow and Ballard Water Meadows. They all have open access, general amenity use and all are owned or managed by the Town or District Council.

See guideline 3.1.1 on biodiversity obligations

Recommendations

Public Open Spaces should form an integral part of the town and not be boxed in or hidden away. Any new developments should seek to retain views onto Public Open Spaces. In some cases physical environmental improvement schemes are needed to enhance the areas and improve access like the linking footpath between the Recreation Ground and Station Road.

Every opportunity should be taken to improve the local information and signage.

The Recreation Ground

The War Memorial Recreation Ground, in the town centre, was bought in 1920 by public subscription with the rough land to the north, donated by a local benefactor, being used to create Bowling Greens and Tennis Courts. It now has additional facilities for younger residents which include a play area, skate-park and basketball area.

Figure 23 - The Skate Board Park within the Recreation Ground.
Barton Common and Long Meadow

Long Meadow is mainly grassland with a small wooded area to the north. A stream runs from west to east, with a footbridge at each end of the meadow. There is a small car park with approx. 6 spaces. There are access points on all four sides, as well as dog bins and litter bins. To the north east, alongside the car park, there is Barton Sea Scout’s hut and a temporary building housing the Friendly Dog Club. It is a popular area for the local public, not just for dog walking.

![Figure 24 - Barton Cliffs looking west.](image)

Barton Common, stretching roughly from Barton Common Road to the cliff tops, was purchased by the Borough of Lymington in 1935 in order to retain it as an open space for air and recreation. It is currently managed by New Milton Town Council in conjunction with the Hampshire Heathland project. The area is alive with wildlife. There is a wide range of habitats, from heathland to farmland, from cliff-top to sandy beaches, and these support a variety of plants and animals. As noted above, the cliffs themselves are a significant feature, having been designated a ‘Site of Special Scientific Interest’.

Barton Golf Club occupies a large stretch of land adjacent to the common and provides a similar large expanse of open space.

See guideline 3.1.3 on local protection
Barton Cliff Top

Barton cliff top is an area of open space which is protected from development by the unstable nature of the cliffs themselves. The NFDC has established a danger area from the cliff edge back to 60 feet inland in which no development is permitted.

Due to the underlying geology (inter-bedded sand and clay overlaid by gravel) Barton-on-Sea is subjected to erosion. Over the years, extensive coastal protection work has been carried out, including new revetment, rock groynes and cliff drainage work. This coastline forms part of a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) currently being reviewed.

Recommendations

Any development inland from the cliffs must take into account the internal water flows toward the cliffs. Experience has shown that major interference with the local aquifers can result in locally increased water flows that can seriously damage the cliffs. Developments that can be predicted to increase local flows must therefore be avoided.
A site for a properly staffed visitor centre should be found in any major nearby development to enhance the understanding of the importance of the Barton Levels.

**Ballard Water Meadows**

Ballard Water Meadow is positioned to the North of New Milton, its boundary being Lake Grove Road to the South and Kennard Road to the West. It is an L-shaped tract of land stretching towards Ballard Lake at the southern part bordering the grounds of Ballard School and merging into Great Woar Copse at the northern boundary. It is a significant proportion of the small amount of water meadow left within Hampshire (7%).

![Figure 26 - Ballard Lake](image)

An ancient, small woodland on the western side of the meadow which has two ditches, one running north/south and the other running parallel to Lake Grove Road. A small stream divides Ballard School from the meadow and this eventually feeds Ballard Lake. The land is unimproved natural grassland with some boggy areas, and a survey conducted in June 1968 undertaken by Hampshire County Council concluded that the site should be a site of importance to nature conservation (SINC) which it now is.

There is a management plan in place and volunteers are working to ensure that the meadow and woodland is preserved for nature whilst providing an important amenity area for the Town.

*See guideline 3.1.4 on bio diversity*
Recommendation

Great Woar Copse naturally adjoins this area and is also important to nature and if the opportunity arises should also be taken into the stewardship of the Town.

Sports and Play Areas

There is a large sports ground on the east side of the town at Ashley (primarily used for rugby), another on the west side at Fawcetts Field (football) and one on the north side at Fernhill (cricket).

New Milton Health & Leisure Centre are centrally located, and offer a wide range of leisure activities for all age groups, and services include a creche and school holiday activities.

The Parish has very few designated play areas, and over the years play areas have been reduced from six to just two;

See guideline 3.1.5 on sports and play areas

Recommendation

Additional facilities are to be encouraged, with particular emphasis on all-weather facilities to attract back to the town those teams, in particular hockey, who have had to relocate outside of the town. Sports teams using indoor facilities, such as table-tennis, should also be encouraged to return to the town.

Public Allotments

There are five areas given over to allotments and there is a considerable waiting list. The provision of more space for public allotments is urgently needed.

Figure 27 - Typical allotments

Recommendation

Further space for allotments should be obtained whenever it becomes available.
3.2 Housing

As has been described above, there is a range of housing types across the town, which under normal circumstances would be sufficient to satisfy the population. However, New Milton is put under great pressure from its very desirability and up to 400 houses, particularly in Barton, are in fact second homes (2002 figures). In addition to this, the rail links with London attract a large commuting population who can afford to pay for “executive” style housing, a major driving factor in the minds of local developers.

Thus the town frequently sees developments which turn large garden plots into 14 or so “executive” homes. Developments rarely exceed this figure, ensuring that the policy to provide affordable housing never comes into play. This has the inevitable result that the town has a severe shortage of first time and affordable housing stock with new developments almost universally beyond the reach of the first time buyer.

Recommendation

Any additional housing should be matched with increases in the local social and service infrastructures to provide adequately for the population. In particular doctors, dentists and schools can be seen to be under some pressure to keep up with the growing needs of the community. Other less obvious services are, however, under equal pressure, with water and sewage systems in particular reaching the limits of the current installed infrastructure.

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4.0 Guidelines

Note: The following guidelines are numbered to correspond with the appropriate section which should be consulted for amplification.

Guidance 2.1.1

It is essential that any future development does not compromise the best of the streetscene design.

Any development should take in the streetscene as a whole and further piece-meal development is to be discouraged in line with current local plan policies.

Guidance 2.1.2

The Town should continue to maintain as wide a range of vibrant shops as possible within the Town Centre and should endeavour to develop a brand image for the town.

Late night opening should not be discouraged purely as the result of previous planning decisions to allow retirement flats to be built on the main street.

Guidance 2.2.1

New developments should be of a density which is in keeping with the character of the area.

Guidance 2.3.1

Backland development and infill schemes should only be allowed where it will not have a detrimental effect on local character and amenity to help retain the overall green and open nature of this area. (Refers to Fernhill ward).

Guidance 2.3.2

Any development proposed must match in spirit and realisation the green and open nature of the majority of this area. (Refers to Fernhill ward)

Guidance 2.4.1

Any further residential development should be limited in its extent in this already intensively developed area. (Refers to North Milton area)

All new development should be provided with adequate parking, as defined in the District Councils Supplementary Planning Document ‘The provision of car parking space in residential development’ and should realistically reflect the current facts, not some future aspiration.
It is important that the green belt is retained as the last remaining buffer between the Town and any future development in Dorset.

Further recreational areas should be provided as the opportunity arises.

Guidance 2.4.2

This area is important for the Town’s economic and employment prospects and should not be developed for housing. (Refers to industrial area in Milton ward)

Future developments should be encouraged to include aesthetic improvements including for example landscaping proposals.

Guidance 2.5.1

Wherever possible, notwithstanding any recent developments, the remaining character buildings such as thatched or cob cottages should be protected from development which is not in keeping with surrounding properties.

Guidance 2.5.2

The protection of the cliff top from uncharacteristically high buildings should be continued and strictly applied.

Guidance 2.6.1

Any further residential development should be in keeping with its immediate neighbourhood.

Guidance 2.7.1

This area is covered by the National Park’s planning guidelines. (refers to Bashley ward)

Guidance 3.1.1

The Town Council should receive all the support necessary to meet its obligation under the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 current biodiversity guidelines within these open spaces as summarised by DEFRA in their document
“Guidance for Local Authorities on Implementing the Biodiversity Duty”

Guidance 3.1.2

This area is governed by the original deed of covenant which limits its use to that of a public open space. It should be protected from further encroachment of development which might adversely affect the openness of the space. (Refers to New Milton Recreation Ground).

Guidance 3.1.3

These areas should be protected from the encroachment of development which might adversely affect their openness. (Refers to Barton Common and Long Meadow).

Guidance 3.1.4

The natural diversity of this area should be preserved and encouraged. (Refers to Ballard Water Meadows)

Guidance 3.1.5

All existing sports and play areas must be protected from developments that are likely to deprive the town of these facilities, or discourage their introduction. Access to these areas must be taken into account when considering any contiguous development proposal.

Additional play areas are to be incorporated into any future major housing developments.
5.0 Design Guidance

5.1 General principles and their application within the Town

The foregoing commentary on the character of the Town, the views of residents, the policy context set by planning documents and the programme of projects are an essential introduction to the design guidance and a means of providing ideas on new projects in this Statement.

The design guidance takes account of these and is built up from studies of individual parts of the Town undertaken by the various parties who have participated in the creation of the Design Statement. However, the general principles relating to the scale, form, detailing, materials and colour which might help new buildings or modernise old ones to fit in satisfactorily throughout the area are important elements in achieving a cohesive environment.

5.2 Scale

The first consideration is the scale of a building. The scale, massing and height of proposed development should be considered in relation to that of adjoining buildings; the topography; the general pattern of heights in an area; and views, vistas and landmarks. For instance, in a large development of traditional bungalows dwellings should be of a similar size. A house would look completely at odds with the surrounding properties, as would a large block of flats amongst a row of conventional houses.

Barton Common Road is a road of substantial houses which, although in a variety of styles, share similar spacious surroundings enabling them to form a homogeneous whole. It would be incongruous to demolish one of these large properties and replace it with a dense development of terraced starter homes or a large block of flats (and extremely unlikely as this area is protected in the Local Plan, quite rightly, as an Area of Special Character).

Across New Milton and Barton there are a wide variety of styles and sizes of property and scale is as equally important whether buildings are large or small, widely or densely spaced.

Scale is also relevant to extensions to buildings as it would be inappropriate if the original building was dwarfed by the new extension.

5.3 Form

The form of a new building is essentially to do with its shape and is closely related to its mass. Certain areas have buildings of similar form; narrow or wide frontages, flat fronts or bay windows, steep or shallow pitched roofs, tall or ornamental chimneys, etc. If a new building or extension echoes these forms, even if the design is modern, the building can be in harmony with its neighbours. This is particularly important where houses are close together or terraced; for example, a flat roofed extension will look out of place in an area of pitched roofs.
5.4 Detailing

Detailing is as important as form with the style and proportion of windows, the relationship of their height to width and the size and shape of the panes giving scale to a building. Details are particularly important when modernising an old building and while not wishing to live in a cold, draughty house with inadequate facilities it is important, whenever possible, to preserve the existing features of a building in order to retain its character.

Inappropriate additions and alterations, especially to the front of a building, detract from its appearance. Original brickwork, decorative panels, porches, front doors and windows (including window glass) are part of the patina of age. This does not mean that windows and doors cannot be overhauled and proper draught-proofing incorporated. A matching window or door can be made for one found to be beyond repair and a porch can be enclosed with windows and a door to match the existing.

5.5 Materials and colours

Materials and colours for a new building or an extension must also be taken into consideration as part of the overall scheme and if the form and colours harmonise with adjoining buildings, modern materials should be acceptable. The materials used in an extension should normally match the original; bricks or rendering of the same colour or texture, slated roofs of the same profile or pitch, windows and doors of the same profile and sizes. When choosing a new exterior colour, or redecorating an existing building, the colours of the other properties in the vicinity need to be considered. Replacement windows, particularly in PVCu may not always be an automatic choice as they may not complement the original appearance or construction.

5.6 Landscape

Sensitive landscape design and its maintenance are essential; the retention of natural features can give context to a site. A new development that is reasonably satisfactory in terms of the guidance set out above can all too easily be spoilt by unsuitable boundary fencing or gates, by harsh alignment, levels and surface treatment of driveways or a fussy garden layout. Previous developments have often been too close to trees, with consequent demands for felling.

5.7 Density

Apart from its adverse effect on scale and setting, increased density can create traffic problems on existing roads and put pressure on existing services and infrastructure. While accepting that, where possible, the best use of land should be encouraged and higher densities can be justified near to town centres if there are good public transport links, this should not be the sole justification for allowing high density development to take place.

The character of the surrounding area and the impact of any such development should also be taken into consideration and should be considered sympathetically.
6.0 References

• New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration, February 2005
• NFDC Housing Design, Density and Character, April 2006
• New Forest District Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, Preferred Options, October 2007
• Hampshire Minerals Plan – Regulation 26 Consultation
• New Forest District – Supplementary Planning Document – The provision of car parking space in residential development, February 2008
• Guidance for Local Authorities on Implementing the Biodiversity Duty - PB12584 May 2007. Published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Our thanks go to David Poole Photography for use of the following photographs for this publication – Figures 2, 16, 17, 22 and 26.
Appendix 1

Town Design Statement Consultation 2001 – 2004

The consultation and preparation of the ‘New Milton Town Design Statement’ has taken over three years to produce. During that time, there was extensive consultation with residents, local retailers, shopkeepers, other traders and groups and associations in the town. All were invited to participate in the production of the information and data.

Questionnaires

During the period March – December 2002, the Town Project Group carried out a Healthcheck of New Milton which brought together information on the Economy, Environment, Transport and Social & Community issues in the town.

The questionnaire was entitled “Your Town, Your Say” and over 900 people responded to the survey providing a cross section of age groups. The combined responses provided a snapshot of their likes and dislikes about New Milton.

The majority of respondents lived in New Milton, as the following diagram illustrates.
Additional press and publicity
A considerable amount of publicity was given to the project through the local press and roadshow events, with additional publicity posters and questionnaires placed in strategic places, such as Safeways, throughout the town.

The questionnaire was also promoted via the web site with an email option through which we had 22 (3%) responses.

Appendix 2

Statement of Community Involvement

The consultation process started in 2001 with residents and various local organisations, followed by a ‘Healthcheck’ in 2002 which promoted 900 responses. Details of this can be found on Appendix 1 of the Design Statement.

Following extensive discussion with NFDC Policy Officers, a final draft was formed and was subjected to a six week public consultation process, which started at the New Milton Town Partnerships’ Annual General Meeting on 20th May 2009. An advertisement was placed in the local press, and copies of the document sent to the following organisations – New Milton, Barton on Sea and District Residents Association, local development companies Parkcrest and Pennyfarthing, the newly formed New Milton Chamber of Trade and New Forest National Park Authority.

It was also available to members of the public through the information desk at New Milton Town Hall, having further highlighted the documents availability through the Planning Committee minutes of 7 May 2009.

Several responses were received, and the main issues raised along with subsequent response, are shown overleaf.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue raised</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late night town centre opening should be discouraged due to residential units being nearby and the associated problems with noise, litter etc.</td>
<td>The vitality of the town centre could be increased with select premises having late night opening, which would benefit both residents and visitors to the town. Those premises would be expected to adhere to Environmental Health restrictions on external noise etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The document does not reflect National, Regional or Development Plan policies.</td>
<td>The document has been prepared in line with comments made by Planning Policy Officers at New Forest District Council.(referring to Planning Policy Statement 3 paras.16-18 in particular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable and low cost market family housing provision is not addressed</td>
<td>This issue was within an earlier draft, but was removed as requested by the District Council, as policies regarding new affordable housing thresholds were being proposed within the District Councils’ Core Strategy document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The document does not deal with issues surrounding the proportion of Older People in the area, such as housing under-occupation and access to facilities.</td>
<td>This has been addressed within the District Councils’ Sustainable Community Strategy which feeds into the Core Strategy document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various suggestions for textual changes</td>
<td>After consideration, some have been added as suggested.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>