

# RSPB Response to HMWP Partial Update Proposed Modifications Consultation



11<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Submitted online only to [hmwp.consult@hants.gov.uk](mailto:hmwp.consult@hants.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam,

The RSPB responded to previous consultations for the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan. We have used the template response form to structure our feedback below.

## **MM5**

*1. Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  Yes  
Sound (fit for purpose)  Yes

*2. If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

We welcome the additional wording in 4.10 regarding strategic coherent ecological networks and the duty to work with neighbouring authorities.

*3. Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.*

N/A

## **MM6**

*1. Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  Yes  
Sound (fit for purpose)  Yes

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2. *If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

We welcome the specific mention of consideration to Forest Plans in section 4.23, and the reference in section 4.25 to the mitigation hierarchy. The rewording in Policy 3 is also welcome, especially clarity that mitigation or compensation must be in place prior to any impacts from development.

3. *Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.*

N/A

## **MM7**

1. *Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  Yes

Sound (fit for purpose)  Yes

2. *If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

We welcome the inclusion of a definition of the Sandford Principle in section 4.36.

3. *Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.*

N/A

## **MM12**

1. *Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  Yes

Sound (fit for purpose)  Yes

2. *If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

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We welcome additional wording to clarify considerations regarding soils and heathland restoration.

3. Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.

N/A

### **MM13**

1. Do you consider this/these modification(s):

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  No  
Sound (fit for purpose)  No

2. If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:

We welcome the inclusion in section 4.105 of wording to highlight potential issues around multiple use sites.

Section 4.108 talks about habitat restoration and includes a new sentence regarding the difficulty of creating and managing heathland habitats. Whilst this recognition is useful, we consider that heathland should be regarded as an irreplaceable habitat. Section 4.116 outlines 'aftercare' guidance, stating that 'Long-term management is expected to be a minimum of 30 years.' This is insufficient for heathland restoration. Research by the RSPB has shown that 'management will need to continue indefinitely to avoid the habitat reverting to scrub and woodland'. See Fairhurst, K., Kemp, M., Lee, S and Ausden, M 2023. Restoring heathland and acid grassland following the felling of conifer plantation: a case study from Dunwich Forest. Conservation Land Management. Winter 2023 Vol 21 No 4 p 24- 29. On this basis, lowland heathland should be considered an irreplaceable habitat, according to the definition contained in the NPPF glossary.




3. Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.

Change to 'Long-term management is expected to be a minimum of 30 years to align with BNG requirements and will usually commence post aftercare. Where restoration to lowland heathland is proposed, management in perpetuity will be required.'

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## **MM23**

*1. Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  No  
Sound (fit for purpose)  No

*2. If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

We welcome additional wording in section 6.78 that highlights hydrological concerns at Purple Haze and the requirements to assess impacts on these features. However, we still regard the inclusion of this site within the plan as unsound, as the heathland should be considered irreplaceable habitat under the definitions contained within the NPPF, and because we believe the site should be considered SPA status due to the functional linkage with adjacent SPAs for nightjar in particular (see Rufford Colliery case as per previous responses). The continued inclusion of Purple Haze in the Plan will prevent restoration of the site to heathland and associated open habitats.

*3. Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.*

Remove Purple Haze as a site allocation in the Plan.

## **MM43**

*1. Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  No  
Sound (fit for purpose)  No

*2. If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

We welcome the recognition of existing land use as conifer over heathland, and the additional wording regarding restoration to heathland (and the removal of deciduous woodland) using site won materials. We also believe the development considerations are now clearer and stronger in line with environmental policy.

We are pleased to see the Development Considerations now include improved wording that states 'Ensure no significant adverse impact on the offsite roosting,

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foraging, and breeding areas of the qualifying bird species of nearby SPAs/Ramsars, and on their functional linkage.’ However, further clarification is needed to ensure compliance with legislation. The SPA regulations state ‘The conservation objectives for the SPAs require maintaining the structure, function, and supporting processes of the habitats used by the qualifying species, including off-site feeding and roosting areas.’ We believe this should be explicit, and as mentioned in our response to MM23, we do not believe it will be possible to achieve this with regard the Purple Haze site.

*3. Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.*

Replace Development Consideration 3 with ‘Ensure no significant adverse impact on the SPA by maintaining the structure, function, and supporting processes of the habitats used by the qualifying species, including off-site feeding and roosting areas.’

## **MM44**

*1. Do you consider this/these modification(s):*

Legally compliant (prepared in accordance with legislation)  Yes

Sound (fit for purpose)  Yes

*2. If you do or do not consider the above modification(s) to be legally compliant and/or sound, please explain your reasons for this:*

We welcome the reference to Forestry England’s Open Habitats Policy in Appendix C, Policy 2.

*3. Please set out the changes you think are needed to make this modification(s) legally compliant and sound, in respect to the issues you have raised in Q2.*

N/A

## **About You**

This response is on behalf of an organisation:

Organisation: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Address: Franchises Lodge, Telegraph Hill, Nr Redlynch, Wiltshire, SP5 2PX

Position: Conservation Officer – Purbeck to New Forest

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I wish to be informed of all future updates relating to the Plan.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

We hope you find our comments useful. The RSPB would also be willing to engage in further discussion or clarification if that would be helpful in resolving the issues raised above.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

RSPB Conservation Officer, Purbeck to New Forest

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