MEETING NOTE

Meeting: Winchester City Council and Natural England

Attendees: Bethany Edwards (WCC); Angela Simmons and Victoria Huth (Natural England)

Date: 1 October 2026

Time: 2:00pm - 2:30pm

Purpose of Meeting

To provide an overview of the Winchester District Local Plan 2044 Scoping Consultation to assist the statutory consultee with responding to the consultation and understanding the matters most relevant to their organisation.

Key Discussion Points

- WCC provided an overview of the Local Plan 2044 Scoping Consultation, including the key themes and consultation questions.
- The consultation has been structured around the chapters and themes set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- Discussion focused on matters relating to the natural environment, biodiversity, designated sites and opportunities to support nature recovery through the Local Plan.
- Natural England advised that there had been organisational changes and that Angela Simmons and Victoria Huth would now be the points of contact regarding the Winchester District Local Plan
- Both WCC and NE agreed to maintain engagement as the Local Plan evidence base and policy approach continue to develop.
- WCC explained that responses did not need to address every consultation question and that the questionnaire had been designed to enable proportionate and targeted engagement.

Areas of Potential Interest to Natural England

- Question 1: Preferred methods for engagement during the preparation of the Local Plan 2044.
- Question 2: The stages of Local Plan preparation at which updates should be provided.

- Question 6: Whether tackling climate change should continue to be a key focus throughout the Local Plan 2044.
- Question 7: Whether the water efficiency standard of 100 litres per person per day should be carried forward into the Local Plan 2044.
- Question 16: The types of renewable energy the Local Plan 2044 should prioritise and the most appropriate locations for them.
- Question 26: Locations within the Plan area that experience flooding from sources such as heavy rain, rivers or groundwater.
- Question 27: Locations where new development or green infrastructure could help reduce flooding through natural flood management.
- Question 28: The actions the Local Plan 2044 should prioritise to support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Outcome and Next Steps

- WCC agreed to send Natural England a highlighted copy of the Scoping Consultation document, identifying the questions most relevant to their responsibilities and areas of interest.
- Natural England agreed to review the Scoping Consultation and submitting comments on the areas most relevant to its responsibilities.
- Natural England noted that, given the consultation timescale, a proportionate response focused on key matters would be the most practical approach.