

## **PEAK DISTRICT LOCAL ACCESS FORUM- BRIEFING ON SHEFFIELD LOCAL PLAN**

### **Purpose**

- To inform the Local Access Forum of the anticipated impact of increased recreational pressure on the Peak District Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) as a result of the developing Sheffield Local Plan, and the likely process for confirming and delivering mitigation measures.
- To invite initial high-level comments on draft proposals to mitigate those impacts.

### **Background**

Sheffield's Local Plan, which is currently in the public examination stage, proposes the development of 38,012 new homes within the Sheffield City Council area over the next 15 years. Whilst a large proportion of the proposed development would be in the city centre and the eastern side of the city, this would result in a 16.4% population increase in the city, with consequent increases in recreational pressure to the Peak District Moors SPA and SAC. The most significant impacts (note that this only deals with impacts on the nature conservation interests of the SPA/SAC) have been identified by the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as:

- Increased fire risk
- Increased disturbance to nesting birds
- Increased path erosion, braiding and expansion

Following discussion between Sheffield City Council and the National Park Authority, the HRA has concluded that whilst there are likely to be significant impacts, these can be adequately mitigated. Sheffield City Council have therefore undertaken to lead on the production of a costed Mitigation Delivery Plan within 12 months of the Local Plan being finalised, in liaison with the National Park Authority, and have agreed to the principle of reasonable and proportionate developer contributions to help fund mitigation measures, subject to this not compromising the Local Plan's financial Viability Assessment. Work on producing the Mitigation Delivery Plan is likely to start in October 2025.

High-level mitigation measures have been identified (see table below). Other measures such as fencing bird nesting sites have also been considered and rejected as impractical and/or inappropriate. Comments are invited on these to help inform the Mitigation Delivery Plan including, for example, priority sites likely to require mitigation. It should be noted that, whilst measures may also enhance public access, the primary purpose of any measure must be to mitigate the impacts of increased recreation on wildlife. It should also be noted that, whilst developer contributions may help with existing issues such as footpath erosion insofar as that mitigates increased recreational pressure, they cannot be expected to fully fund mitigation of existing recreational pressure. There will doubtless need to be discussions about what such contributions can reasonably be expected to fund.

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Potential Mitigation Measures to Reduce Recreational Pressure on the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC and Peak District Dales SAC

| Mitigation Measure                        | Comments   | Potential Delivery                          | Priority |
|---|--|---|----------|
| Provision of alternative green space      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main Modification to Policy NC15 promoting the creation/enhancement of accessible natural greenspace that would help deflect visitors away from the SPA/SAC.</li> <li>SCC to identify and promote Green Spaces capable of providing both “short duration” and “day visit” that could deflect visitor pressure from the Peak District National Park</li> </ul>   | SCC   | H        |
| Moorland path restoration and maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moorland path restoration and maintenance</li> <li>Path condition assessment, impact appraisal, design and delivery required.</li> <li>Some known existing problem sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White Path Moss + Whitestones</li> <li>Burbage + Houndkirk</li> <li>Totley Moss + White Edge</li> <li>Clod Hall Moor</li> <li>Stanage Edge</li> <li>Bamford Edge + access paths</li> <li>Higger Tor + Carl Wark</li> <li>Higher Shelf Stones</li> </ul> </li> <li>Capital investment and ongoing maintenance.</li> <li>Restoration and maintenance should include reinstatement of damage from trampling and erosion to adjoining areas</li> </ul> | SMP<br>SCC<br>PDNPA<br>MftF                 | H        |
| Increased ranger presence on the ground   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer fire wardens but also a need for increased professional ranger presence to guarantee resource, manage volunteers and carry out work not suited to volunteers (e.g. engagement with a view to enforcement). Provides an effective means of preventing wildfire and controlling disturbance by dogs off leads.</li> </ul>   | SMP<br>SCC<br>PDNPA<br>National Trust/RSPB  | H        |
| Strategic Fire Management                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildfire prevention, mitigation and firefighting strategy.</li> </ul>   | PD<br>Moorland Group<br>PDNPA<br>MftF<br>NE | H        |
| Sustainable transport options             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main modification to Policy T1 proposed to highlight need to improve sustainable travel choices between urban Sheffield and the Peak District</li> </ul>  | SCC   | M        |

| Mitigation Measure  | Comments  | Potential Delivery                               | Priority |
|---|---|--|----------|
| Signage and information boards (including Fire Information Boards)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited evidence of the positive impact of signage. To ensure robust communication this is considered a necessary measure.</li> <li>Needs to avoid potential conflict with Natural Zone qualities.</li> <li>Implement in line with “Peak District Proud” messaging.</li> </ul>   | SCC<br>PDNPA<br>NT/RSPB<br>LAF                   | M        |
| Provision of off-site information   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordination of messaging.</li> <li>Opportunity to promote responsible visiting through “Outdoor City” branding</li> <li>Include managing social media</li> </ul>   | SCC<br>PDNPA<br>NT/RSPB<br>SMP                   | M        |
| Management of car parking   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review whether management of car parking provision/deterrence in different locations could help mitigate recreational impacts on the SPA/SAC.</li> </ul>   | SCC<br>PDNPA<br>NT/RSPB<br>SMP                   | M        |
| Allocated areas for BBQ including sand buckets/fire extinguishers (where appropriate) introduction of penalties for people using BBQs outside allocated areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the impact of BBQ site provision</li> <li>Potential conflicts with landscape objectives and existing planning policies, and largely outside Sheffield City Council’s control.</li> <li>Strategic assessment of risks and opportunities required- some evidence provision is counterproductive.</li> <li>Resourcing of infrastructure and personnel required.</li> </ul> | Peak District<br>Moorland<br>Group<br>FOG<br>SMP | M        |
| Monitoring plant disease and isolating contaminated areas   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potentially helpful but may have a minor impact.</li> </ul>  | Natural<br>England?<br>Landowners                | L        |
| Monitoring and controlling invasive species   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potentially helpful but likely to have a minor impact.</li> </ul>  | Natural<br>England?<br>Landowners                | L        |
| Provision of dog waste and litter bins  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential conflict with landscape.</li> <li>Adequate servicing unlikely.</li> <li>“Take home” messaging favoured via signage and off-site information.</li> </ul>  | N/A  | N/A      |