

## 7.9 Recommendations

<b>A Newport</b>	
<b>1</b>	<p>The Isle of Wight Council should undertake a strategic review of traffic movement and car parking in and around Newport with the intention of identifying:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the amounts of traffic in and around the town centre might be reduced and pedestrians given greater priority.</li> <li>• Potential opportunities for increasing pedestrianisation (especially the St James's Square and the short section of the High Street between there and the Guildhall)</li> <li>• Opportunities to reduce the amounts of on-street parking including limiting some areas to disabled parking only.</li> <li>• Areas of existing surface car parking which could be removed and the sites redeveloped</li> <li>• The most appropriate location for any new replacement multi-storey car park for the town</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>The Isle of Wight Council should submit an expression of interest in the High Streets HAZ fund, focussing on:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building repairs, reinstatement of shop fronts and addressing inappropriate signage</li> <li>• Encouraging the reuse of vacant commercial units, and where necessary using statutory intervention.</li> <li>• Public Realm improvements, including the development of a revised Public Realm Strategy for the town centre</li> <li>• Enabling the reuse and adaptation of vacant or underused upper floors to residential use, including funding work to demonstrate viability with the potential for exemplar projects.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p>The Isle of Wight Council should produce a Public Realm Strategy for the town centre and set out a programme for implementing improvements to the streetscape. Priority should be given to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Thomas' Square</li> <li>• St James' Square</li> <li>• Quay Street outside the Guildhall</li> </ul>

<b>4</b>	<p><b>The Isle of Wight Council should develop a landscape-led Masterplan for the Harbour area. This should:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Set out a clear vision of what it is hoped to see developed here and the quality of development that is expected</b></li> <li>• <b>Be based around the principle of the buildings being set around a green spine which runs through the heart of development, beneath the Medina Way viaduct and connects to the former warehouses at the head of the Medina estuary</b></li> <li>• <b>Be based upon an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.</b></li> <li>• <b>Address green and blue infrastructure (and how it can be used to gain access to nature and routes to the open countryside).</b></li> </ul>
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<b>B East Cowes</b>	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>East Cowes should continue in its role as the hub of the Medina Valley in terms of economic growth, and should remain a focus for marine engineering and composite technologies. Whatever goes on in East Cowes cannot prejudice the marine and ferry industries which are a key part of the functionality of this place and the Island as a whole.</b></p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>The Isle of Wight Council should ensure that the Columbine Hangar is retained as a landmark building on the riverside either by removing Permitted Development Rights for its demolition through an Article 4 Direction and/or by including it on its Local List and then including it within a revised East Ryde Esplanade Conservation Area</b></p> <p><b>The Island Planning Strategy needs to include a Policy which will safeguard the future of the Columbine Building for future marine-engineering uses.</b></p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>The Isle of Wight Council should develop a Masterplan for the area to the east of the Esplanade. This should:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Retain the open character of this part of East Cowes</b></li> <li>• <b>Consider ways to address the issues caused by the landslip.</b></li> <li>• <b>Ensure that tall buildings do not harm the setting or views towards the Old Barracks and coastguard cottages</b></li> <li>• <b>Set out the design principles for how the buildings should relate to the waterfront</b></li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>The Classic Boat Museum should give consideration to working more closely with the existing marine and boat-building businesses in the area, making greater use of their considerable skill-base and providing hands-on opportunities for apprentices.</b></p>

<b>5</b>	<b>The proposal by the East Cowes Arts and Culture Group to initiate a conversation with the V&amp;A Museum for an arts/cultural hub in East Cowes should be supported in principle, although alternative locations to the Columbine Building should be explored. The Columbine Building should only be considered for arts and cultural uses if there is no hope of its continuing in maritime industrial use.</b>
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<b>C Ryde</b>	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>The Isle of Wight Council should undertake a strategic review of traffic movement and car parking in and around Ryde with the intention of identifying:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How the amounts of traffic in and around the town centre and along the Esplanade might be reduced, with the Lind Street/Union Street junction as a focus.</b></li> <li>• <b>Potential opportunities for increasing pedestrianisation along High Street/Union Street</b></li> <li>• <b>Opportunities to reduce the amounts of on-street parking</b></li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>The Isle of Wight Council should submit a bid for funding from the High Streets HAZ fund focussing on:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Building repairs, reinstatement of shopfronts and addressing inappropriate signage</b></li> <li>• <b>Encouraging the reuse of vacant commercial units, including diversification.</b></li> <li>• <b>Public Realm improvements, including the development of a revised Public Realm Strategy for the town centre</b></li> <li>• <b>Enabling the reuse and adaptation of vacant or underused upper floors to residential use</b></li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>The Isle of Wight Council should produce a Public Realm Strategy for the town centre and set out a programme for implementing improvements to the streetscape. Priority should be given to creating attractive well-designed public spaces (incorporating new tree planting) which enable pedestrians to take in the views over the town towards the Solent</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>The Isle of Wight Council should make more effective use of its powers under the Planning Acts (such as Enforcement, Urgent Works, Repairs and and S215 Notices) to address problem buildings</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>The Isle of Wight Council needs urgently to develop a strategy that specifically targets the high-profile problem buildings within town centre – the Roman Catholic Church of St Mary (with its derelict convent), the Royal York Hotel and the Town Hall. Of the three, top priority should be given to finding a solution for the Town Hall</b>

6	<p>The Isle of Wight Council should continue its dialogue with the other landowners of the Esplanade and produce a masterplan for it to guide the long-term strategy for this area. This should:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek, as its primary objective, to improve visitor's first experience of the Island.</li> <li>• Reduce the amount and numbers of traffic movements along the Esplanade to create a pedestrian-friendly environment</li> <li>• Reduce the severance caused by the rail and highway infrastructure to better-connect the seafront to the town centre</li> <li>• Examine the possibility of relocating the bus interchange away from the seafront to a new site elsewhere in the town.</li> <li>• Explore the possibility of creating an at-grade, wide, pedestrian route across the railway line to the hovercraft terminal and the other parts of the Esplanade</li> <li>• Promote walking and cycling</li> </ul>
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<b>D Wider Issues</b>	
1	<p>The Isle of Wight Council should engage with the local community initiatives in each of the three towns to broker initiatives which are complimentary with (as opposed to competition with) the other settlements.</p> <p>To this end consideration should be given to engaging a high-level facilitator to help the Island Councillors to work more closely together and have higher ambitions for the Island as a whole.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to developing strategies in terms of river catchments as well as looking at the overall vision for the island and the role each major settlement will play in achieving that vision.</p>
2	<p>The Isle of Wight Regeneration Action Plan needs to better-articulate the dynamics of change on the island and to set out a clear hierarchy of priorities and actions.</p> <p>The Island's designation as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve ought to be a key theme.</p>

3	<p><b>The Council, in conjunction with the local communities, needs to define the Island's character and that of its individual settlements.</b></p> <p><b>The Isle of Wight Council should develop design guides for its towns and specific design standards for future infill developments.</b></p> <p><b>A Design Review Panel should be established to support the Council in its push for higher design standards, perhaps composed of 50% Islanders and 50% external experts from the mainland.</b></p>
4	<p><b>Archaeology and the potential role it can play in engaging local communities needs to be integrated into future regeneration schemes.</b></p>
5	<p><b>The Island needs to rethink its relationship with the car and consider championing greater use of electric vehicles and bicycles.</b></p>
6	<p><b>The Island should consider ways in which it could become more self-sufficient in energy production, by increasing the amount of renewable energy generated.</b></p>

## **Appendix A – Possible alternative sources of funding**

### **From Historic England:-**

#### Capacity Building Grants

These can help Councils and community groups prepare documentation, management plans, feasibility studies and other 'paperwork' to support preparation of later studies. Funding limits are not specified but grants are expected to be large enough to be worthwhile in terms of investment £20K - £50K and match-fund requirements are generally expected to show the applicant's commitment but can be negligible or disregarded entirely where they are for charities and 3rd sector organisations.

#### The Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSICA).

These are normally focused on conservation areas on the At Risk register and have an upper limit of £300K as annual installments of £100K which may be spent on repair of historic buildings, enabling works to bring vacant space into use and reinstatement of lost architectural detail, as well as public realm works and necessary studies or educational or outreach materials that contribute to addressing the area's at risk status. Public realm works are capped at 30% of the total grant budget. A match fund of 50% from the LPA is expected, although we have been flexible in recent years due to the lack of availability of local government funding.

### **From the Architectural Heritage Fund:-**

AHF have a parallel fund to the Historic England High Streets Heritage Action Zones, which is focussed on understanding the potential and feasibility of reusing individual historic buildings. This might be appropriate for targeting individual buildings that are key sites but outside a wider HAZ project such as the Ryde Town Hall or East Cowes Barracks.

### **From The National Lottery Heritage Fund:-**

The NLHF remain an important source of funding for projects that bring together, people, places and the past, although they are now generally focused on delivering smaller grant aid projects. Nevertheless the Heritage Enterprise Grant, which supports larger projects that generate employment through repair and reuse of historic buildings could provide a significant opportunity particularly for larger buildings, such as Ryde Town Hall.

The Historic Places Panel – previously known as the Urban Panel - provides a broad spectrum of independent expertise to help local authorities and others engage in the regeneration and revitalisation of historic places. The Members who attended the visit to the Isle of Wight on 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 were:-

**Peter Studdert (Chair)**

**Sophia de Sousa**

**Johanna Gibbons**

**Julian Hill**

**John Lord**

They were assisted by the following Members of the Historic England Advisory Committee and the London Advisory Committee:-

**David Adshead (HEAC)**

**Nicole Crockett (LAC)**

**Amir Ramezani (LAC)**

Copies of previous Panel Reports can be found at:-

<https://historicengland.org.uk/about/who-we-are/committees-and-panels/urban-panel/review-papers/>