



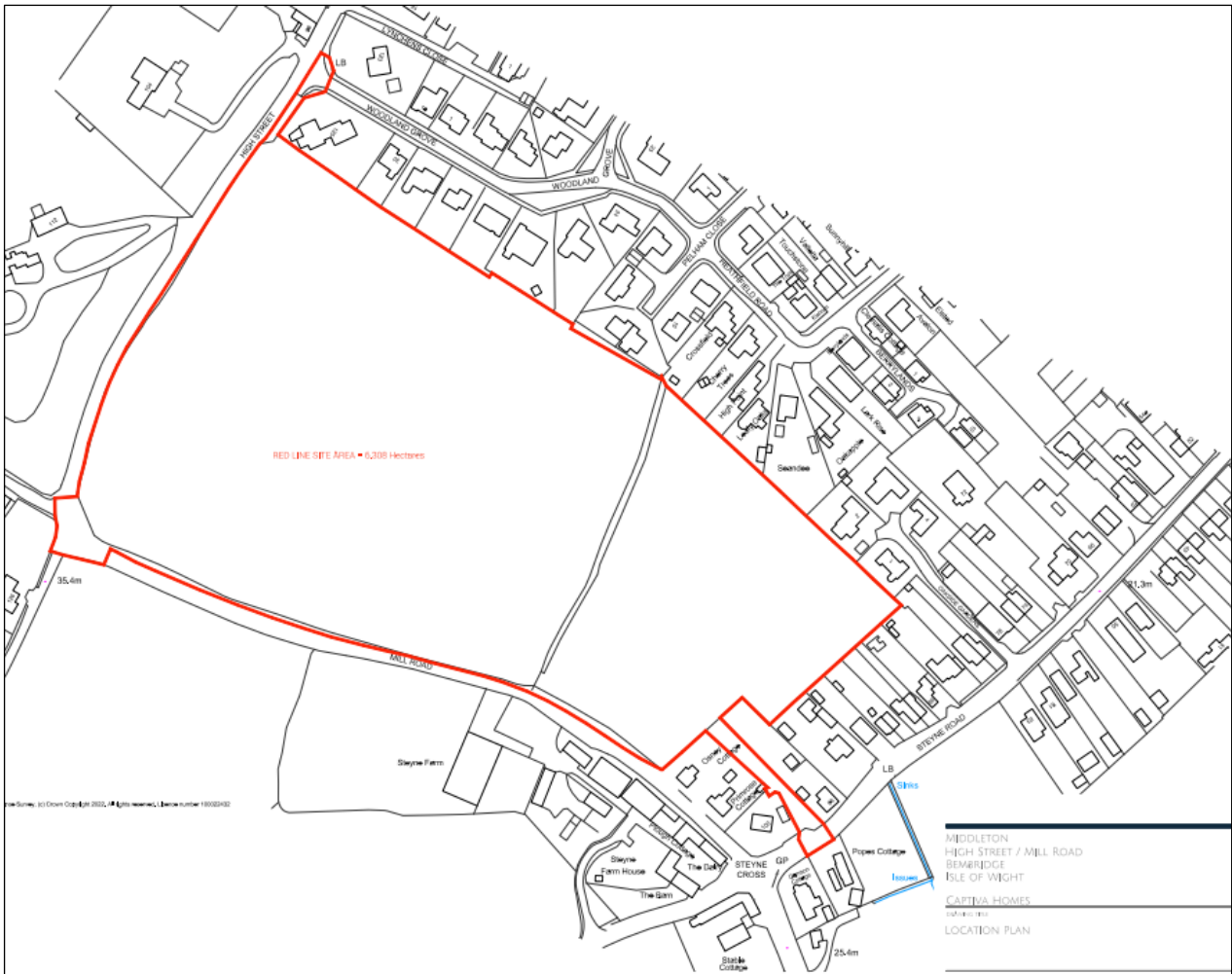
Purpose: For Decision

Planning Committee Report

Report of	STRATEGIC MANAGER FOR PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY
Date	30 July 2024
Application Reference	23/01920/FUL
Application type	Full
Application Description	Proposed residential development of 130 dwellings, means of access, ancillary garages and garage/studios, associated landscaping and ancillary infrastructure
Site address	Land north of Steyne Road, and land served off Mill Road and High Street, Bembridge
Parish	Bembridge
Ward Councillor	Cllr Joe Robertson
Applicant	Captiva Homes Limited
Planning Officer	Russell Chick

Reason for Planning Committee consideration	The application is considered to raise marginal and difficult policy issues, in balancing the need for additional housing with the policies within the Bembridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.
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Recommendation	Conditional permission subject to a Legal Agreement securing the provision of affordable housing, the marketing of affordable and open market housing, the provision of a management company for the management of open spaces, communal landscaping and ecology corridors at the site and the provision of on and off-site sustainable transport links within the locality.
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Main considerations

- Principle of the development
- Mix of housing and tenure
- Health infrastructure
- Loss of agricultural land
- Impact upon the character of the surrounding area
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Impact on heritage assets
- Ecology and trees
- Air Quality
- Highway considerations (including Rights of Way)
- Drainage and flood risk
- Other matters

1. Recommendation

1.1 Conditional permission subject to planning conditions covering the following matters:

- Compliance with submitted plans
- Timing of works

- Archaeological investigations
- Tree protection
- Surface water strategy and foul drainage connection
- Materials to be used
- Landscaping works
- Ecological mitigation and enhancement
- On-site parking provision
- Provision of a right of way through the site, linking Steyne Road to Hillway Road
- External lighting

The permission would also be subject to a planning obligation securing financial contributions towards the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy and health infrastructure, rights of way improvements, details of a route for construction vehicles to access the site, marketing of housing to local people, on-site affordable housing provision and details of the long-term maintenance and management of habitats, landscaping and communal areas (including ponds and wetland, meadow grassland, hedgerows, vegetated SuDS etc) via a habitat maintenance and management plan (HMMP) and management company.

2. Location and Site Characteristics

- 2.1** The application site is located on the south-western edge of Bembridge, forming two fields that are bounded by the High Street to the west and Mill Road to the south. The site and surrounding area are not the subject of ecological designations but includes several individually protected trees, a section of protected woodland and lies 400 metres north of the National Landscape (AONB). The southern section of the site is within a mineral safeguarding area (MSA)
- 2.2** The site is formed by two fields, all laid to pasture with a slight but consistent slope to the southeast. The site is enclosed by low hedgerows and there is a tall partially tree lined hedge that divides the two fields, which forms part of the protected woodland referred to above. The field is currently accessed via a field gate within the southern boundary and located approximately 120 metres east of the corner of the High Street and Mill Road. There is a further historic field gate opposite to Steyne Farm, but this is largely grown in. The northern section of the field is circa 1.25m above the carriageway of the High Street, with the boundary hedge occupying the bank. Moving further south towards the Windmill, the land level begins to gradually decline to become level with the highway. The site area extends to approximately 6.31 hectares.
- 2.3** The area surrounding the site has a generally rural character, with housing to the west being set within landscaped grounds that are surrounded by trees, hiding the presence of the large historic houses here. The Windmill is an obvious presence from Mill Road, with the upper section of its stone tower and sails visible at distance above hedgerows, in westerly views. Mill Cottage with its white painted elevations is within foreground views of the Windmill, occupying a plot close to the corner of the High Street and Mill Road. The landscape to the southwest of the site is robustly rural in character, with a pleasant attractive feel owing to the long-established hedgerows, small fields and the backdrop of

woodland and the Windmill. The access to the Windmill forms a scenic bridleway that splits close to the Windmill, allowing access to the marshes south of Bembridge Harbour, or to the south towards Steyne Wood. On the southern side of Mill Road is Steyne Farm, comprising a collection of Atcost style barns and older stone buildings. The farmhouse is at the eastern end of the farm group.

- 2.4** Relatively high-density housing is located to the north and east of the site. There are numerous properties within the estates to the north of the site, that back onto its northern boundary, and due to their relatively short rear gardens, overlook the site. There are also properties that face onto Steyne Road and the eastern end of Mill Road that back onto the south and eastern boundary of the site, giving views to the north and east a more mixed character of farmland, within a setting of modern housing.

3. Details of Application

- 3.1** Full planning permission is sought for the construction of 130 dwellings arranged as a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced housing on two fields along with garages, parking areas and access roads. The development would include 35% (46) policy compliant affordable houses. The plans show that the proposals include a variety of two, two and a half and three storey houses, which would comprise a mix of painted brick, bare brickwork and flint elevations and slate roofs.

- 3.2** The site is formed by two fields divided by a substantial hedge that contains landmark trees and these would be retained to result in two different sections for the development. For the remainder of this report, the two fields will be referred to as the eastern field and western field. The western field is the larger of the two and the plans show that the housing for this section of the site would be laid out in a relatively rigid manner, with lines of housing mainly arranged east to west and following the alignment of the proposed roads. A public square laid to grass would be provided within the centre of this field, with a wide tree lined avenue leading from the western edge of the square to a new vehicle and pedestrian access onto the High Street. The proposed housing would align either side of the avenue and all sides of the square, with cul-de-sacs of housing leading from each corner of the square.

- 3.3** The eastern field is a less regular shape and smaller, and therefore a different approach to the layout of housing has been proposed. The plans show that the housing within the northern half of the field would be laid out at off-set angles and at a slightly higher density to the western field. The housing within the southern half of the eastern field would be laid out in a more rigid manner. Access to the eastern field would be via a new vehicle access onto Mill Road, opposite to Steyne Farm.

- 3.4** The plans set out numerous house types, and these are listed below:

Type A1 - Two storey pair of one-bedroom houses x 6

Type A2 - Two storey pair of one-bedroom houses x 2

Type A3 – Two storey terrace of three one-bedroom houses x 3

Type B1 – Two storey detached four-bedroom houses x 2

Type B2 - Two storey detached four-bedroom house x 1
 Type B3 - Two storey detached four-bedroom houses x 2
 Type C1 - Two storey detached four-bedroom houses x 2
 Type D1 – Two storey terrace of four two-bedroom houses x 4
 Type E1 - Two storey pair of two bedroom houses x 4
 Type E2 - Two storey pair of two bedroom houses x 2
 Type H1 – Two storey detached five-bedroom houses x 2
 Type H2 – Two storey detached five-bedroom houses x 3
 Type J1 – Three storey detached four-bedroom houses x 2
 Type J3 – Three storey detached four-bedroom houses x 5
 Type J4 – Three storey detached four-bedroom house x 1
 Type O1 - Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 6
 Type O2 – Two storey detached three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type P1 – Two storey detached three-bedroom houses x 3
 Type P2 – Two storey detached three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type P3 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 8
 Type P4 – Two storey detached three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type P5 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P6 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type P7 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type P8 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type P9 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P10 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P11 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P12 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P13 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P14 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P15 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P21 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P22 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P23 – Two storey detached three-bedroom house x 1
 Type P24 – Two storey detached three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type PR1 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type PR2 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type PR3 – Two storey pair of three-bedroom houses x 2
 Type PRC1 – Two storey terrace of two three-bedroom houses and one first floor flat above garage and studio x 2
 Type PRC2 – Two storey terrace of two three-bedroom houses and one first floor flat above garage and studio x 2

 Type S1 – Two and a half storey detached four-bedroom house x 1
 Type S2 – Two and a half storey detached four-bedroom house x 1
 Type S3 – Two and a half storey terrace of three four-bedroom houses x 3
 Type S4 – Two and a half storey detached four-bedroom house x 1
 Type S5 – Three storey detached four-bedroom houses x 2
 Type S6 – Two and a half storey detached four-bedroom house x 1

3.5

The plans show that the proposed houses would have a traditional design but with a range of design approaches based on Victorian and Georgian era town houses, terraces and cottages that would comprise a mix of traditional and hipped gables or pyramidal roofs, with some containing dormer windows. The fenestration for properties would comprise a variety of casement and sash style

windows, French windows and traditional doors. The houses would contain a variety of design detailing such as stone window surrounds, brick window headers, quoin detailing, hooded and traditional porches, flint walls and chimneys. Councillors may find it helpful to view the applicant's [visualisation booklet](#) and the various coloured street scene plans alongside the house type plans, which together provide a useful impression of how the street scenes and house types would appear.

3.6 The plans show that the houses would benefit from rear gardens enclosed by fencing or walls, with some properties also benefitting from small front gardens enclosed by low walls or railings. In addition, each property would have on-site parking spaces, with a total of 343 parking spaces, of which would 62 would be set aside for visitors. Each property would also be provided with cycle parking. The planning statement advises that a commensurate level of parking would be provided for each house type, based on the following levels:

- 1-bedroom home – 1 parking space
- 2-bedroom home – 2 parking spaces
- 3-bedroom home – 2 parking spaces, with some of the properties provided with garage spaces
- 4+ bedroom home - 3 parking spaces, with some of the properties provided with garage spaces

3.7 The application sets out a landscaping strategy for the site, which would comprise a network of open spaces, wide verges, landscape and ecological buffer strips and hedgerows. These open spaces would comprise a mix of mown grass, natural grassland and wetland grassland planted with a range of native shrubs and trees. The existing hedgerows at the site would be retained, save for sections removed to form vehicle accesses. The south-western corner of the site is located north-east of Bembridge Windmill, and the housing has been set away from this corner, to form an additional area of open space.

3.8 The site would comprise two new simple priority junctions, one on to the High Street, the other onto Mill Road. These would open onto the network of estate roads, which would be aligned by pedestrian footpaths with informal crossing points provided. Vehicle users would not be able to drive between the eastern and western fields, and this is intentional to prevent the site from forming an alternative route between the High Street and Mill Road. The plans show that the site would include a network of footways to link open spaces and different sections of the site, as well as a wider mixed-use path that would align the outer southern and western boundaries of the site, providing an off-road link between the High Street and Steyne Road, as well as access to the north-western corner of the site, opposite to the bridleway that passes Bembridge Windmill. In addition, the plans show a network of traffic calming measures and new pavements within the High Street, to allow continuous pedestrian access between the site and the village centre.

4. Relevant History

4.1 The site has not been the subject of previous planning applications.

5. Development Plan Policy

National Planning Policy

- 5.1** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

- 5.2** The following sections of the NPPF are considered to be most directly relevant to this planning application:

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Section 11 – Making effective use of land
Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Local Planning Policy

- 5.3** The Island Plan Core Strategy defines the application site as being immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary. The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

- SP1 Spatial Strategy
- SP2 Housing
- SP3 Economy
- SP5 Environment
- SP7 Travel
- DM2 Design Quality for New Development
- DM3 Balanced Mix of Housing
- DM4 Locally Affordable Housing
- DM11 Historic and Built Environment
- DM12 Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- DM13 Green Infrastructure
- DM14 Flood Risk
- DM17 Sustainable Travel
- DM22 Developer Contributions

Neighbourhood Planning Policy

- 5.4** The Bembridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.
The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:
- BNDP.OL.1 Scale of Development
 - BNDP.H.1 New Housing Development
 - BNDP.H.3 Safeguarding for Development to Meet Local Need

- BNDP.GA.1 Car Parking Provision for New Development
- BNDP.GA.2 Public Rights of Way
- BNDP.EH.1 Built Environment
- BNDP.EH.4 Woodland, Trees and Hedgerows
- BNDP.D.1 Design Criteria

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other planning guidance

- 5.5 The Affordable Housing Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.6 The Guidelines for Parking Provision as Part of New Developments Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.7 The Guidelines for Recycling and Refuse Storage in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.8 Health Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.9 Sustainable Drainage Systems Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.10 The LPA's Position Statement on Nitrogen neutral housing development.
- 5.11 The Isle of Wight Council Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025.
- 5.12 Bembridge Housing Needs Survey 2018.
- 5.13 Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Bembridge, Brading and St Helens 2022.
- 5.14 The Isle of Wight Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2016.
- 5.15 Bembridge Section 19 Flood Investigation, May 2022.

6. Consultee and Third Party Comments

Internal Consultees

- 6.1 The Planning Authority's Tree Officer has advised that the design and layout of the development would limit impacts to trees to an acceptable level and has therefore recommended a condition to ensure their protection during construction. The Tree Officer has noted the importance of hedges at the site and has stated that they should be assessed in accordance with the Hedgerow Regulations.
- 6.2 The Council's Planning Ecology Officer has noted the presence of hedgerows at the site, and advised that while some sections would be removed, suitable mitigation and enhancement planting has been proposed within the landscape planting plan, which would need to be secured by condition. The officer has commented that suitable compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures to ensure protected species are not adversely impacted by the development have been proposed within the Ecological Impact Assessment, which would need to be secured by condition. The officer has listed a range of matters to be controlled by condition.

- 6.3** The Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection in respect of the air quality impacts of the construction and operational stages of the development, subject to conditions being imposed.
- 6.4** The Council's Archaeological Officer has noted the absence of previous recorded features at the site and the lack of previous research for the site. The officer has advised conditions to secure pre-commencement trial trench evaluation, the results of which to be used to inform further mitigation that may be required.
- 6.5** The Council's Rights of Way Manager welcomed the proposed shared use route around the perimeter of the site given that the local highway network lacks adopted footways. The manager also commented that the development would increase the use of local footpaths and therefore requested a financial contribution.

External Consultees

- 6.6** Southern Water have provided their standard advice for developments that may be located in close proximity to existing water mains and public sewers. Southern Water have advised that based on their initial assessment the additional flows of foul water from the development may lead to an increased risk of foul flooding from the sewer network but, advised that network reinforcement that is deemed necessary to mitigate this will be provided by Southern Water.
- 6.7** The Island Roads have raised no objection to the development, confirming that on and off-site access arrangements would comply with design standards, and that the level of traffic generated by the development would not compromise the local highway network. Island Roads have advised conditions.
- 6.8** Natural England commented that the Planning Authority should undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to determine whether the proposal would be likely to result in significant effects on designated sites, in particular referring to the impact of nutrients and recreational disturbance. Natural England have confirmed that the development would not pose a significant effect on adjacent land to the south of the site, that is considered to be a candidate site for protected species of wading birds and brent geese.
- 6.9** The Hampshire and Isle of Wight District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) has advised that the site falls into an area where there is moderate habitat and a low likelihood of great crested newt being present. The officer has advised that as the habitat onsite is sub-optimal for great crested newts and the nearest waterbody is located approximately 250m away, it is unlikely that great crested newts are present, and the development of this site poses a low risk to them.
- 6.10** Historic England have objected to the proposed development, raising concerns that the housing would harm the setting of grade I listed Bembridge Windmill and several other grade II listed buildings. Historic England have reasoned that the windmill's isolated location amongst open arable fields helps to explain how it would have functioned historically, while commenting that its placement high on

a coastal ridge gives the windmill visual prominence in views across the surrounding area. Historic England have concluded that the development would diminish the open and unspoilt character of the historic landscape, which is crucial for understanding the connection between mill and surrounding agricultural land that once supported its historic use advising that the harm caused by the current proposals would be in the middle of the range of less than substantial.

- 6.11** Hampshire and Isle of Wight NHS have advised that a financial contribution would be required to support the expansion of local doctor's practices.

Parish/Town Council Comments

- 6.12** Bembridge Parish Council have objected to the proposals, for the following summarised reasons:

- Contrary to policy BNDP policy EH1 as the scheme will have unavoidable adverse effects on that environment, so it does not respond positively or demonstrate an understanding of the quality which make up this unique environment
- The development of 130 houses is a 30% overdevelopment from the SHLAA allocation of 80/100 houses represents an adverse impact on the environment of the area & without sufficient provision of open space or even allocation of land for allotments to have a positive effect on the environment
- The adverse impact on the environment of the proposal on, particularly the adjacent listed building and heritage asset, Bembridge Windmill (Grade 1), Bembridge Lodge (Grade 2), and the neighbouring Brading Marshes, is sufficient for this application to be refused
- If the application is approved the impact on the surrounding area from the noise, dust & construction traffic movements on this area will be severe and unable to be mitigated for by even the most rigorous Construction Management Plan
- The application site is currently greenfield land, and so the developer is required to demonstrate how the scheme would enhance the character of the area in order to comply with Island Plan strategic policy SP1
- The new housing would have a significant negative impact when viewed from key vantage points, including from the open fields around the windmill and from public bridleway BB36
- There has been no evidence submitted suggesting enhancement of local character. This means the application does not accord with local plan policy SP1, or policy DM12
- The proposed development would be permanent, prominent and would feature extensive hard surfaced areas, including new roads and 343 new vehicle parking spaces, according to the planning application form submitted
- The proposed housing estate does not reflect the existing character of the locality and therefore does not comply with Neighbourhood Plan policy BNDP.D.1
- The current scheme squeezes in 130 units, a significant proportion of 30% to 62.5% overdevelopment, which would not be in keeping with the

- density of built form in the surrounding area
- Over-development is demonstrated in the layout of the proposed housing estate, with the landscaping pushed to the margins of the site, resulting in a scheme that is heavily urbanised
 - The Parish Council raises concerns about the proposed three-storey units, which would be more suitable in a large town than a village like Bembridge
 - The applicant has not adequately explained why they propose that 33% of the units on the site would have 4-5 bedrooms, greatly in excess of the housing mix proportion specified by the local planning authority for large and therefore less affordable dwellings
 - The current highway network at the proposed location for the new housing estate has no street lights or pavements, and would not provide a safe route for pedestrians
 - The crossing point within Steyne Road would not be in compliance with design standards
 - The scheme as submitted shows a significant amount of hardstanding, with very little soft landscaping, and there are queries raised about whether the proposed pond and tanks on the site could take the overflow of water during or after extreme weather events
 - The proposed drainage scheme could result in more water on the highway network, and greater flooding for the properties of nearby residents
 - As the current proposal is for 130 units, the application represents a risk to the aquatic ecosystem even if designed to connect to a suitable sewage treatment plant
 - The scheme does not comply with Island Plan policy DM2 as the drainage scheme proposed does not appear sufficient for the impacts created by a large housing estate of new residential units and associated hard surfacing

Third Party Representations

- 6.13** A total of 342 representations objecting to the proposal have been received during the two consultation periods for this application, and raised the following summarised comments/concerns:

Policy issues

- The site is outside of the settlement boundary
- There is no need for the housing
- Contrary to the Bembridge Neighbourhood Development Plan/ failure to follow it
- Contrary to the Island Plan
- The housing will only be for wealthier people
- The housing will be second homes or holiday homes/ no need for more second homes
- Inappropriate mix of housing
- There are already too many holiday homes in the village
- There is a need for genuinely affordable homes

- We need a rethink on what type of homes are needed
- The housing will be unaffordable particularly for young working families
- No requirement for retirement homes
- Housing should be small scale and tailored for local people
- No rationale provided for the different sizes of houses
- No 1-bed housing would be provided
- There is no work in the area and who will be able to afford them?
- Not enough jobs on the Island for so many homes
- The SHLAA process identified the site as being suitable for 80 houses
- Loss of farmland used to graze cattle and previously to grow cereals
- Loss of grazing land for the farmer
- Contrary to the principles of sustainable development
- Government is removing mandatory housing targets
- Not compatible with sustainable development as outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Bembridge has delivered its quota of housing in recent years
- Is the housing for a local need, or an Island-wide need
- Bembridge is remote, located on a peninsula with only two roads in and out
- There are currently (December 2023) 86 homes for sale in Bembridge and 125 when taking into account St Helens and these would address local needs
- Recent changes to the power of exceptional circumstances gifts the Island the power to make its decisions on housing development specifically for the Island and not having to rely on national targets – **Officer comment** – the changes relate to locally determined housing figures when compiling a development plan, rather than determining specific planning applications
- The Council failed when it prepared the draft Island Planning Strategy to apply a number of strategic policies within the NPPF
- Other areas such as Sandown are crying out for redevelopment
- Not enough starter homes or affordable housing
- Impact on community spirit
- A housing needs survey, carried out just a few years ago, did not identify any need for such a large scale development
- Use brownfield sites
- If greenfield sites such as the proposed development are to be developed they should be used for employment generating development

Character issues

- Impact on the rural character of the area
- The field is one of the highest, if not the highest, in the village and will if developed as proposed dominate the village landscape, and views of the village from afar
- The site is green agricultural land and should remain as such
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Excessive density and would appear cramped due to height of buildings which would be deleterious to the mental health of those that live there
- The development would be a higher density than nearby Woodland Grove

- Large scale major building programme creating an estate that would overdevelop the village
- It would set a precedent for sprawl and impact on Bembridge's important visual aesthetic
- No evidence of positive effects on the character of the area
- This proposal is not commensurate with the existing settlement of Bembridge, and will significantly change the size, scale, design and character of the village
- The appearance of the proposed development is faux heritage, creating an anomalous and fake interpretation of historical architecture
- The Applicant has failed to provide sufficient robust evidence that their proposal would provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable built environment with a sense of place
- Loss of visual amenity
- Housing would be in the shade of trees
- Destruction of the Island's rural landscape
- Faux Georgian houses will look out of keeping with the rest of the village
- The amount of space allocated to parking/ garaging and roads would be over 50 per cent of the overall development
- Some of the houses would have two garages and hard standing for a further three vehicles
- The site is a field and should remain so
- Loss of greenspace
- Harm to tranquil character of the village
- Harm to listed buildings
- The most beautiful village on the Island would be ruined by the development
- The development would destroy the character of the village
- The development would alter the street scene in the village completely
- There has been much infill development in Bembridge over the years
- The development would permanently damage the character of the village
- The site is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – **Officer comment** – The site is not within the National Landscape (formerly AONB)
- Out of keeping with the AONB
- There are sites across the Island more suited to the development
- The peace and tranquillity of Steyne Woods and Bembridge Windmill areas will be destroyed by this development
- Loss of hedgerows
- Impact on Bembridge Windmill
- Impact on tourism economy of the Island
- Each house is shown to have a chimney, but no evidence of fire places
- No solar panels shown on the houses

Impact on properties

- The housing would be too close to existing houses – plot 13 would be just 4m from an existing bungalow
- Proper consideration has not been given to the nuisance of the development to local residents over the 3.25 years anticipated construction period

- There is no evidence that due consideration has been given to the increase in noise and vibration, additional construction traffic along High Street, Mill Road and Steyne Road and the associated air quality impacts of a construction duration of this length
- The development would dominate nearby properties, with ground floor levels 1 to 2.5m higher than existing properties
- Harm to homeowners in nearby Woodland Grove and Heathfield Road

Infrastructure

- Infrastructure for Bembridge cannot support a development of this size
- The housing needs to be built where the infrastructure is there to support people
- There needs to be an overhaul of village services including roads, parking and an upgrade of the drainage system
- Bembridge suffers from power outages
- Lack of public transport
- Lack of employment in the area
- There is no bank in Bembridge
- No petrol station
- Impact on local doctors' and dentist's surgeries
- Impact on the hospital
- There aren't the basic services to accommodate more people
- Impact on the local school/ not space for all new children
- More teachers will be needed
- The village has no dedicate fire or police cover
- Loss of prime agricultural land
- The development will impact on already over-stretched resources
- Services such as gas and water are unreliable
- There would be no benefits to Bembridge
- Additional burden on Social Services

Traffic/ highways

- Traffic flow and parking is very poor
- Bembridge suffers from excess traffic congestion
- There are only two routes into and out of Bembridge
- Parking delays emergency vehicles and buses
- Impact of heavy vehicles on the local highway network
- The development would result in extra traffic
- The High Street and Mill Road are both narrow and lack pavements
- Danger to pedestrians, children and runners
- Pedestrian access in Bembridge is hazardous
- The access would not be safe for motorists or pedestrians
- There is no pavement in the High Street
- Embankment Road could be closed for repairs due to instability
- The Steyne Road crossing will become very dangerous
- The parking areas would not be disabled friendly
- Not good sense for security or access to electric parking to be away from a home

- The impact of building close to 200 houses would result in a catastrophic level of chaos during the development
- Together with the Hillway development, there would be in excess of 1000 vehicle movements per day
- Having a no right turn out of the development is acknowledging that there is an existing traffic issue in Bembridge
- The right turn lane would need to be policed 24/7
- Steyne Road is already reduced to one lane with no yellow lines and very little off road parking
- What is the difference between primary, secondary roads and lanes
- Who will pay to maintain the highways
- Island Roads have objected to the development – **Officer comment** – Island Roads no longer object to the development
- There are no footpaths or street lighting for the entire exit traffic route from the proposed site plan
- The applicant has failed to provide robust evidence that their proposal would provide and improve accessibility or travel choice

Flooding, drainage and nature

- Impact of flooding on the local area
- Climate change is causing more severe weather events and flooding
- Poor drainage in the area/ further impact on sewage issues
- The site is waterlogged, what will the developers do with the water?
- Lack of capacity in public sewers
- The site floods
- Additional of hard surfaces will increase flooding
- Impact of the housing on the sewerage system
- Is the data within the applicant's FRA and Drainage Strategy valid in 2024
- The site is not suitable for infiltration drainage
- There are no records of a ditch system at the site
- Connection to the highway drainage system would not be allowed
- Impact of storm overflows on the SPA
- Southern Water have no plans to improve infrastructure/ need to improve infrastructure
- Impact on the Marine Conservation Area
- Bembridge has many springs and coastal erosion
- Southern Water responsible for sewage dumps into the Solent and cannot manage the volume of Bembridge's sewage and foul water and need to invest in new infrastructure
- The proposed drainage system would be inadequate
- Impact on habitats/ wildlife/ insects and creatures that inhabit the site
- Impact of raw sewage being discharged to the marine environment/ health risk to people using the sea
- Egrets have had to use this site due to the development of the Steyne Road housing
- No information to show how BNG would be achieved/ the development would not achieve 10% Net Gain – **Officer comment** – The application was submitted prior to the requirements for BNG becoming effective
- Impact on Brading Marshes habitat

- Loss of hedgerows and trees/ site contains ancient hedgerows
- Impact on protected trees
- At odds with the UNESCO biosphere status
- Environmental impact has not been considered
- Concerns over the potential for Embankment Road to fail and cause flooding
- Proximity to RSPB land/ Impact on Brading Marshes
- Impact on the SPA
- Any development on the proposed site should be accompanied by a funded surface water management plan for the village and implementation of a property flood-resilience scheme
- Irreversible impacts on the natural environment
- The appeal of the site to residents and visitors is considerable
- A Habitats Regulation Assessment and Appropriate Assessment will be required
- Light pollution/ impact on dark skies
- No lighting strategy has been provided

Process issues

- Lack of consultation with residents
- To date 3.1.2024 there have been no site notices on site from the IOW Council advertising the planning application
- Poor timing of public consultation period over Christmas
- There are no Environmental Studies or ecological studies – **Officer comment** – the application is supported by the required ecological information
- The application should be considered alongside the Steyne Road planning application – **Officer comment** – the two applications are not linked, although the information that supports this application does note the potential for combined impacts
- The application is incomplete and misleading and lacks detail in relation to highways and transport, drainage, flooding and affordability
- Comments from consultees appear to be missing – **Officer comment** – Consultee comments are displayed on the Planning Register

6.14 Thirteen letters of support/ no objection were received, and raising the following summarised comments:

- The proposal to build 130 new affordable A-rated homes is not just a matter of expansion but a vital step towards fostering a sustainable and inclusive environment for generations to come
- The homes would meet a pressing need for affordable housing
- The homes would demonstrate a commitment to environmental responsibility
- New homes inject vitality in our local community
- The school will soon be struggling to fill places
- We cannot staff the fire station or RNLI station because young people are not moving here
- More supply will bring down prices and boost the local economy

- The developer is looking to reduce impacts on the high street
- Never had a problem getting in or out of the village
- More trees will be planted
- The homes open doors for young families
- The homes could be a step on the ladder for families who might otherwise struggle to find affordable housing in the current market
- I've never found traffic to be a problem other than on bin day
- My grandchildren buying the houses would not lead to extra traffic as they already live here with their parents
- The applicants have considered improving footpaths and ensuring water does not cause problems
- New residents, especially younger ones, keeps our village alive
- The designs of the houses fits in with the village
- Superb development in keeping with the village
- Unlike other new build homes this development seems to be in keeping with the general aesthetic of the village
- It is tough when you are priced out of the market in the community we love
- The development would encourage people to walk into the village
- Great for the local economy
- Soaring house prices caused by limited supply of housing
- Intense competition for housing/ high prices due to lack of housing
- Many hard working families cant afford to live where they grew up
- It's frustrating to hear the same old argument of "infrastructure" concerns
- Bembridge already has a really good set of facilities (that's what makes it so nice) and amenities compared to many places
- Myself and my brother already have a car each and are registered with the local GP and dentist so would not be adding to any supposed pressure
- It's not about radically altering the landscape; it's about creating opportunities for families who genuinely want to be a part of this community
- The reason people claim there's no housing need in Bembridge in their survey... is because everyone is already pushed out
- This development could be a lifeline for many residents, young families, and essential service workers who want to contribute to the village they love
- Finding suitable housing has been a significant challenge
- This project promises homes that are affordable and sustainable, addressing the urgent needs of young families like mine who are struggling with the high cost of living and exorbitant mortgage rates
- This development will invigorate local businesses, many of which are run by young families and rely on the patronage of local residents to thrive year-round
- The applicants have shown a deep understanding and respect for our concerns, including drainage and wildlife conservation, which reflects their roots and dedication to our village
- In a time when so many young families are fighting to stay in their hometown, it is crucial to support developments that offer a lifeline

- I would love to be able to purchase a house here myself and move out of my parents' home
- I and my partner commute into Bembridge to work every day
- Evident that these new homes are not just providing well needed housing but are actually a solution to improve some of the village's infrastructure, particularly in terms of drainage
- The Isle of Wight Council's own report states that the development will help improve surface water issues
- It is clear to anyone that surface water is always running off local fields particularly on Stein Road not off of developed areas
- Opposition to young families and people from other island towns risks stagnating the village
- By welcoming new homes that cater to various needs and demographics, you would ensure the village's vitality and resilience
- I live in a 1970s house that used to be a field. So it's not a good argument any more

6.15 The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) have objected to the development, raising the following concerns:

- Loss of greenfield
- The applicant has not submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (**Officer comment** – a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been submitted) and so not demonstrated that the development would enhance the character of the area
- The proposed square would appear incongruous as they would normally be seen in a town
- The open spaces would become unused by residents and likely be used for anti-social behaviour
- Cannot understand how the green spaces would relate to Bembridge
- The three storey housing would be incongruous
- Objection from Island Roads
- No evidence of positive effects on the character of the area
- Over-development of the site
- Housing in the shade of trees/landscaping plan
- Inappropriate housing mix
- Adverse impact on the Grade I listed building
- Drainage and flooding

6.16 The National Trust have objected to the development, raising the following concerns:

- The proposed development would significantly encroach on the setting of Bembridge Windmill
- Development of the site at anywhere near the indicated level would see the substantial loss of the gap between the windmill and the existing settlement
- The windmill has associative links with nearby open agricultural land

- The open, quiet and pastoral character of the site would be undermined through increased noise and activity on site as well as the physical appearance of the development

6.17 CycleWight have provided the following summarised comments on the application:

- CycleWight are pleased to see that the officers observe that the development is compliant with LTN 1/20
- Measures should be taken to prevent parking on the roads to ensure a safe environment for people who choose to cycle
- At the main exit to the site the joint use path deviates from the straight line. It would be hoped that the design is such that it allows continuity for users of the path as prescribed in LTN1/20. This would include to give priority to vulnerable users
- The mitigation outside the site causes some concern, as there are five recorded incidents with vulnerable road users. The area is a very busy one for cyclists especially during the summer when scores of cyclists use this area as part of the Round the Island Cycle route. The proposed measure to slow down traffic appear to be based on hope rather than fact
- The Council's policy to increase Active Travel methods needs encouragement
- There appears to be little recognition that this is the second development in the area and so the increase of motorised traffic using the Steyne Road and Mill Road mini roundabout does not appear to have been fully taken into consideration
- The speeds mentioned in the report are well above the 30 mph speed limit. Both roads are heavily used
- We would wish to see further measures taken on all roads to slow traffic. This could be done by further engineering or speed reduction

7. Evaluation

Principle of the development

7.1 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF states that it is a Government objective to significantly boost the supply of housing. In addition, paragraph 70 of the NPPF reasons that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, because these are often built-out relatively quickly. The paragraph goes on to confirm that planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions. Paragraphs 82 and 83 of the NPPF explain that planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs and to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It adds that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

7.2 Policy SP1 of the Island Plan outlines that unless a specific local need is identified, development proposals outside of, or not immediately adjacent to the

Key Regeneration Areas, Smaller Regeneration Areas or Rural Service Centres will not be supported. The Island Plan defines the application site as being outside of, but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary for Bembridge, which is a Rural Service Centre. For new housing development within or adjacent to Rural Service Centres, policy SP1 confirms that a local need for the housing should be demonstrated. Policy SP2 of the Island Plan sets out an average need for 520 houses per year between 2011 to 2027, advising that 980 dwellings would be required through smaller-scale development at the Rural Service Centres and wider rural area over this period. Policy SP1 states that in relation to the Rural Service Centres and the Wider Rural Area, the Council expects to see smaller-scale development occur in sustainable locations, where a local need is identified.

7.3 Bembridge Parish Council adopted a Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Neighbourhood Plan) in 2014 and this contains policies relating to housing development within the Parish. The strategic overview policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan generally reflect those within the Island Plan and set out where new development should take place within the Bembridge Parish as well as the scale of development. Policy BNDP.OL.1 (Scale of Development) states that new development will be confined to small scale proposals which fall within any of the following categories and will be supported in principle:

- a) Housing development schemes of 1 to 9 units and not exceeding 0.5 hectares
- b) Non-residential development not exceeding 1000 square metres floor space and site area not exceeding 1 hectare.

7.4 Policy H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan is an extension of policy OL1 and states that new housing development within the Bembridge settlement boundary or immediately adjacent will be supported in principle provided it meets the criteria as set out in policy BNDP.OL.1 and is able to demonstrate it meets a local need, primarily as identified in the Bembridge Housing Needs Survey.

Housing delivery and need

7.5 Regarding proposed housing, the policy position set out within policies SP1 and SP2 of the Island Plan and policies BNDP.OL.1 and H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan should be taken in the context of the most recent housing needs assessment, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Council's Five-Year Land Supply Update. Paragraph 226 of the NPPF sets out that LPA's whose emerging local plan includes proposed housing allocations and has been, as a minimum, published for public consultation in accordance with regulation 18 (of The Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations (as amended) need only demonstrate a 4-year housing land supply. The draft Island Planning Strategy meets this threshold and therefore the Council's requirement is now to demonstrate a 4-year housing land supply (plus a buffer of 20% due to our under-delivery against the government's housing delivery test). As of 1st April 2024, using emerging monitoring data from 2023/24, the Council's indicative position is that it can only demonstrate 3.6 years of housing land supply against the 4 year requirement. In the Council's 2021 Housing Supply Update, which was the last published position, the Council could demonstrate a 4-year housing supply against a required 5 year supply.

7.6 The latest Housing Delivery Test (published December 2023) shows that 66% of the housing need (when using the Government's Standard Method calculation) has been delivered on the Isle of Wight over a three-year period.

7.7 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF outlines that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision-taking means:

“(c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

(d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

The importance of the above paragraph relates to the footnote attributed to ‘out-of-date’ associated with section (d) which confirms that policies are out of date for applications involving the provision of housing where “(a) the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply (or a four year supply, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 226) of deliverable housing sites (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) and does not benefit from the provisions of paragraph 76; or (b) where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.”

7.8 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that ‘In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply: a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement (see paragraphs 67-68).’ It should be noted that the neighbourhood Plan does not include allocations and it is more than five years since it was adopted. The Council's annual monitoring reports and the Housing Delivery Test undertaken by the Department for Levelling Up and Housing and Communities (DLUHC) demonstrate that delivery over the last three years has been 66% and therefore as the Council cannot demonstrate the required land supply position, nor does it have a Housing Delivery Test score above 75%, the presumption in favour of sustainable development remains applicable.

7.9 Under the current NPPF, to remove the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the Council must deliver a greater level of housing (above 75% of the required housing number using the Government Standard method) and/ or

adopt an up-to-date development plan and still deliver 75% of any new yearly target within that adopted plan. The NPPF provides guidance on the stage at which emerging policies can be attributed weight in decision making. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:

a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and

b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

7.10 Third party comments have suggested that determining the application in advance of the Island Planning Strategy would be premature. Paragraph 50 of the NPPF confirms that ‘refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination.’ Considering criteria a) above, it should be noted that the application site is currently included within the housing allocations in the draft IPS and therefore officers consider that if approved, it would not undermine the plan-making process. Moreover, considering criteria b) and the advice contained within paragraph 50, councillors will note that whilst Full Council has agreed to publish the IPS for the regulation 19 period for representation (and that this period is currently underway), the plan has yet to be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF also sets out the circumstances under which LPAs may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans:

‘48. Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

(a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

(b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and

(c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).’

Whilst the council has published what it considers to be a sound plan, as noted above it has not yet been submitted, whilst the spatial strategy and housing allocation policies within the plan have attracted significant levels of unresolved objections through the plan-making process to date.

7.11 Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude at this stage that only minimal weight could be attributed to the housing policies in the emerging IPS and officers would advise that the policy context for determining the application is the Island Plan Core Strategy and the Bembridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.

- 7.12** Officer’s advice is that the lack of housing delivery means that the merits of housing development taking place in Rural Service Centres should be considered in terms of the sustainability of the particular site, with the acceptability of the scale of the development then based on an assessment of its impacts. In the case of this development, balancing the key considerations outlined within this report. Officers also consider that due to the housing delivery rates explained above, that the requirements of policy BNDP.OL.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan in terms of limiting housing proposals to 1 to 9 units and not exceeding 0.5 hectares, would undermine the Island’s ability to deliver much needed housing (particularly affordable housing) within a village that is a sustainable location for housing development.
- 7.13** The lack of housing delivery on the Island does not simply result in statistical issues for the Council. This also impacts on the ability for local people to purchase or rent the home of their choice. The Council’s Housing Strategy advises that ‘housing affordability and housing supply are and are set to remain the most challenging issues that the Island needs to address during the lifetime of this strategy and beyond’. The Strategy also advises that ‘We know there is a particular need to recruit and retain skilled people to work in essential public services and local industries including construction for the longer-term recovery and economic sustainability of the Island. The lack of suitable housing to meet this aspiration has long been identified as a barrier to this and needs to be addressed urgently.’
- 7.14** The lack of housing delivery can, to an extent, be evidenced by the Council’s Housing Register. The Register, as of April 2024, included 2601 households Island-wide. The Register is divided into five bands, with those in the most urgent need falling into band 1, and those at the least level of need falling into band 5. There are 7 households falling into band 1, 296 within band 2, 1398 falling within band 3, 682 within band 4 and 218 within band 5.
- 7.15** The Housing Register also provides statistics for specific areas of the Island. There are currently 665 households on the Register for Bembridge. The table below splits the number between the relevant bands, but also house sizes.

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed	Total
Band 1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Band 2	48	10	7	9	4	1	79
Band 3	169	102	66	18	0	0	355
Band 4	63	56	42	10	0	0	171
Band 5	35	14	10	0	0	0	59
Total	315	183	125	37	4	1	665

It should be noted that the Planning Committee has resolved approval for a housing site located to the south of Steyne Road, which would provide 56 dwellings ([21/01884/FUL](#)). This would cater for a proportion of the housing needed within the Bembridge Parish and wider East Wight area but clearly, not

meet the total need for housing identified by the Council's Local Housing Needs Assessment, the Core Strategy or the Housing Register. Officers therefore consider that the information contained within the Housing Register shows that there is a strong need for additional housing within the village, and that this combines with the existing requirement for housing.

- 7.16** As outlined above policy BNDP.OL.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan limits housing proposals to 1 to 9 units and not exceeding 0.5 hectares. However, on site delivery of affordable housing is not triggered until a scheme includes a minimum of 10 units. Therefore, if developments in the village were all limited to 9 or below there would be no on-site delivery or provision of affordable housing in the parish to meet this identified need, unless funded by planning contributions with a willing landowner. The housing to the front of the site was limited to 9 and therefore the developer would have continued to bring smaller parcels of land forward of 9 units to comply with this policy, but in doing so the benefit through on site, bricks and mortar, contributions to be secured by the legal agreement and the delivery of affordable housing would not be achieved. Rather, smaller financial contributions would be sought from such sized schemes that the Council would then put towards affordable housing in the area.
- 7.17** In addition, Bembridge Parish Council undertook a Housing Needs Survey (the Bembridge HNS) in 2018, having been commissioned to understand residents' current housing circumstances and their future housing aspirations for the period 2018 to 2023. The Bembridge HNS was informed by questionnaires delivered to all houses within the Parish, as well as other data, including the 2011 Census. The Bembridge HNS confirms that the advised outputs within it are minimum estimates, due to the response rate of the questionnaires, which was 11.6% (249 households out of 2139 surveyed).
- 7.18** This rate of response is considered to be very low and much lower than that for the Parish's 2013 HNS, which garnered 449 replies and found a higher requirement for housing. The 2018 Bembridge HNS indicated that there would be a net requirement for 37 open market dwellings within the Parish between 2018 and 2023. In the period 2018/19 to 23/24, permission was granted for 31 new dwellings (on small sites) and 23 new homes were completed. This indicates a shortfall of 6 market dwellings in that period against the identified figure.
- 7.19** The 2018 Bembridge HNS did not identify a need figure for market or affordable dwellings beyond 2023, and it is noted that the figures within the HNS were based on a relatively small response rate and, would not have included people who live outside of the Parish, but who may have a need to live within Bembridge. Regardless of this point, paragraph 5.36 of the Core Strategy states 'The Council considers that meeting the annual provision of 520 dwellings or housing trajectory number will not in itself be a reason for rejecting a planning application. Decisions will be taken on their merit and local circumstances, including longer term housing needs and affordability in an area'. This approach is also true of meeting any locally identified need figure.
- 7.20** The Council's Housing Need Assessment (HNA) was undertaken in 2018 and placed Bembridge within the Ryde sub-market area. The HNA found a need for 61 affordable houses per annum within the Ryde sub-market area (and 222 for

the Island as a whole) with 152 open market dwellings required per annum within the sub-market (see tables 7 and 36 of the Council's HNA). The applicant's Design and Access Statement sets out their opinion relating to the local need for the development and refers to the information set out within the Council's 2018 HNA, and the annual figure of 641 dwellings that this identifies for the Island, between 2016 to 2034. The applicant's information also refers to the housing delivery issues that the Island has faced in recent years, noting the findings of the Housing Delivery Test (see para 7.7 above) and the need to focus housing within sustainable locations.

- 7.21** Officers consider that local need referred to within the Island Plan should be seen as being Island-wide, due to the scale of the under delivery across the Island over a sustained period. However, the Bembridge HNS combines with the information contained within the Council's Housing Register and the HNA to demonstrate a local need for the housing proposed, both in terms of the Island as a whole, but also for Bembridge in its role as a Rural Service Centre, taking into account the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Locational requirements

- 7.22** While policy SP1 is a strategic policy in terms of housing, it does give important locational guidance in terms of focussing housing in the most sustainable areas and settlements as identified by the Key Regeneration Areas, Small Regeneration Areas and the Rural Services Centres, the use of brownfield land and economic led regeneration. The overall approach advocated within policy SP1 in terms of focussing development in the most sustainable locations is considered to be relevant in terms of the NPPF and its requirement to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 7.23** Bembridge is a Rural Service Centre and therefore for the purposes of planning policy guidance, is a sustainable location for its community and housing provision. The village contains two shopping areas, with the main concentration of services and facilities being within the village centre and more limited range of services within Lane End Road, in the south-eastern area of the village. Between them, these two areas contain convenience stores, a butcher's, a fishmonger, a greengrocer's, a bakery, a florist, a hairdresser's, a library, a dental surgery, a doctor's surgery, public houses, restaurants and cafes, hot food takeaways, estate agencies, gift shops, a post office, a primary school, a community hall and churches. The village is therefore well served by the services and facilities required by the local community.
- 7.24** The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) publication 'Planning for Walking' published April 2015 identifies at paragraph 6.3 'Land use planning for pedestrians' that 'Most people will only walk if their destination is less than a mile away.' It continues to explain that 'Walking neighbourhoods are typically characterised as having a range of facilities within ten minutes' walking distance (around 800 metres).' And that 'The power of a destination determines how far people will walk to get to it. For bus stops in residential areas, 400 metres has traditionally been regarded as a cut-off point and in town centres, 200 metres. People will walk up to 800 metres to get to a railway station, which reflects the greater perceived quality or importance of rail services.'

- 7.25** The application site is located approximately 430 metres from the southern edge of the village centre, reached via the High Street, and therefore within a walkable distance. The High Street comprises a pavement on its eastern side that begins 24 metres north of the application site at Woodland Grove. However, this pavement is not continuous and runs for approximately 320 metres, where it tapers adjacent to 95 High Street, beyond which there is no pavement for a 77m section of the highway. A pavement then begins on the western side of the highway, leading through to Church Road and the remainder of the village centre. However, the submitted information shows that works would be undertaken within the highway to provide a continuous pavement between the application site and village centre, and this will be explained and assessed in detail within the highway section of this report.
- 7.26** The plans show that a mixed-use path would be provided between the proposed access onto High Street and Woodland Grove, connecting to the existing pavement. New uncontrolled tactile crossing points would be installed on the estate road junctions between the site and the village centre, and a new build out would be provided on the western side of the highway, adjacent to number 95 High Street, to create a 1.5m wide footway, that would connect to the existing footway to the north. This would establish a continuous pedestrian link between the site and the services and facilities within the village centre.
- 7.27** The Southern Vectis bus route does not pass through Mill Road or the High Street, but instead accesses the village via Hillway Road and Steyne Road, to the south. The submitted plans show that the proposed mixed-use path would run along the external boundaries of the site, and then pass through a new link onto Steyne Road. The site would also include various internal pedestrian links and lanes that would connect to the mixed-use path, allowing permeability for those on foot or bike. There are bus stops located immediately south-west of the site within Hillway Road and another pair of bus stops 230 metres east of the proposed multi-use link within Steyne Road. These connect to the village centre, as well as St Helens (where there is an alternative school and doctor's surgery), as well as the towns of Sandown and Ryde. This route currently offers an hourly service between 06.30 to 23.30 hours on a daily basis. In line with policy DM17 of the Island Plan, the development would be served by alternative means of transport to the car and therefore, providing increased travel choice.
- 7.28** Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that 'To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.' Bembridge is identified within the Island Plan as a Rural Service Centre, owing to its strong mix of services and facilities and is therefore considered to be a sustainable location for additional housing. It is considered that the proposed development would provide benefits to the village, by providing additional residents, which would combine with the existing community to sustain local services and facilities. Moreover, the provision of affordable housing would be likely to provide a proportion of family housing, which could support the local school and other groups, such as sports teams, and the use of the local park, which is adjacent to the site.

7.29 In summary, the proposed housing development would be contrary to the guidance contained within BNDP.OL.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, given the limits on the scale of housing development that this policy includes. Officers consider that there is an overriding need for housing across the Island, given the lack of housing delivery over recent years, and that there is a need for housing within Bembridge, as evidenced by the Parish Council's HNS, the Council's HNA and Housing Register, that combine to outweigh the policy approach set out in BNDP.OL.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. Officers consider that these material considerations and the benefits of new housing outweigh the proposal not meeting the requirements of this single policy.

Brownfield land

7.30 It should be noted that there are not considered to be sufficient available and deliverable brownfield sites available to accommodate the level of development required to deliver the housing needs for the Island and therefore, in many cases new housing development will by necessity take place on undeveloped land. Regarding the potential for housing to be located on previously developed land (brownfield land) within the settlement boundary, the Council's Brownfield Register includes two sites within Bembridge. The first is the former Bembridge C of E School, however this site was redeveloped several years ago, providing 13 houses. The second relates to Raffles, a large building within Steyne Road that has been used as accommodation for staff at a nearby holiday park. That site received planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a block of 9 flats in the summer of 2023.

7.31 There is a concentration of business units along Embankment Road, opposite to Bembridge Harbour. These are generally related to the function of the harbour as a marina, and include uses such as chandleries, boat storage areas, boat sales outlets and marine repair uses. These existing uses are important to the use of the harbour and are a source of local employment. The land they occupy is limited in extent, and therefore unlikely to be suitable for a comprehensive housing development. These sites are also outside of the settlement boundary, detached from the residential core of Bembridge and adjacent to designated sites and therefore are not considered to be preferable to the application site. There is a plot of land located to the southwest of these uses, but this has previously been proposed for development, but withdrawn due to overriding ecology issues.

7.32 There is a small builder's/ haulage yard located to the east of Bembridge High Street, and while the principle of housing is likely to be acceptable, the site is likely to be constrained by the site access, which is narrow with buildings adjacent to the access being hard against the highway. There is also a further builder's yard in Lane End Road, however this has already gained planning permission for the conversion of various buildings to a mix of six flats and two residential units. Officers are not aware of any further previously developed land available within the settlement boundary for the development.

Conclusion on principle

7.33 In conclusion, while the proposals would be contrary to policies BNDP.OL.1 and H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, officers consider that when taking account of the lack of housing delivery over a number of years and the presumption in favour of

sustainable development, there is an overriding need for housing across the Island and that when also considering the data contained within the Council's Housing Register, there is a clear need for open market and affordable housing within Bembridge. The applicant has provided information relating to the need for proposed housing, which reflects the opinion of officers. The application site is located immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary for Bembridge, a Rural Service Centre, and adjoins significant areas of existing housing. The site would benefit from a choice of transport links to the many services and facilities within Bembridge.

- 7.34** The application is proposing 130 dwellings, and it is considered that this number of houses would make a significant contribution towards housing within the East Wight, which would weigh substantially in favour of the application. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the advice contained within policy SP1 of the Island Plan when considering the advice contained within the NPPF. It does not follow however, that planning permission will automatically be granted for such applications as the balance between the benefits and harm of any proposal will still need to be given careful consideration when the decision-maker arrives at their decision.

Mix of housing and tenure

- 7.35** Policy DM3 of the Island Plan states that the Council will support proposals that deliver an appropriate mix of housing types and size. The policy requires proposals to accord with the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (or Local Housing Needs Assessment). This requirement is reflected by policy BNDP.H.1 (New Housing Development) of the Neighbourhood Plan, which requires housing developments to demonstrate that they meet a local need, primarily as identified in the current Bembridge Housing Needs Survey. Policy DM4 (Locally Affordable Housing) of the Island Plan requires major housing schemes to provide a minimum of 35% on site affordable housing.

- 7.36** The 2018 Bembridge HNS found that of the 37 open market dwellings required within the Parish between 2018 and 2023, the following sizes of accommodation would be needed:

1 bedroom – 5
2 bedrooms - 21
3 bedrooms - 5
4 bedrooms – 2
5 bedrooms – 3
6 bedrooms – 1

The survey also showed that of the 37 dwellings required, 16 would need to be ground floor accommodation. The survey also showed a need for an additional 10 affordable rental houses.

- 7.37** The Council's HNA advises that the following mix of sizes would be required for the Ryde sub-market, for open market housing:
- One bedroom – 5%
Two bedrooms – 37%
Three bedrooms – 40%

Four+ bedrooms – 18%

The following mix of sizes would be required for affordable home ownership:

One bedroom – 23%
Two bedrooms – 45%
Three bedrooms – 25%
Four+ bedrooms – 7%

The following mix of sizes would be required for affordable home rented:

One bedroom – 41%
Two bedrooms – 39%
Three bedrooms – 19%
Four+ bedrooms – 2%

7.38 The Council has also undertaken an updated HNA, published in 2022. This, however, applies to the whole Island, rather than investigating sub-market areas and does not supersede the 2018 figures above, which remain appropriate for this planning application. The 2022 HNA found that the mix of housing, set out within table 5 below, would be appropriate for the Island as a whole. These figures generally correlate with those for the Ryde sub-market area, for all types of tenure.

Table 5: Suggested mix of housing by size and tenure

	1-bedroom	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market	5%	35%	40%	20%
Affordable home ownership	20%	40%	30%	10%
Affordable housing (rented)	40%	30%	25%	5%

7.39 The proposed development would comprise 130 dwellings, with 84 to be open market housing, and the remaining 46 to be affordable housing, meeting the policy compliant level of 35% on-site affordable housing provision. The open market housing would include the following mix of dwelling sizes:

One bedroom x 0 = 0%
Two bedrooms x 11 = 13%
Three bedrooms x 46 = 55%
Four+ bedrooms x 27 = 32%

The affordable housing would include the following mix of dwelling sizes:

One bedroom x 11 = 24%
Two bedrooms x 29 = 62%
Three bedrooms x 6 = 13%
Four+ bedrooms x 0 = 0%

7.40 The proposals for the open market housing would deliver a slightly lower proportion of two-bedroom houses set out within the HNA and a slightly higher level of three-bedroom houses. However, officers are aware of the need for family sized houses across the Island and consider that the overall mix is acceptable. The proposed mix of affordable housing is broadly comparable to that set out within the HNA and therefore, the mix of housing for the site is considered to be acceptable.

- 7.41** Policy BNDP.H.3 – Safeguarding of Development Delivered to Meet Local Need – of the Neighbourhood Plan states that development approved as meeting a local need will be subject to planning conditions and/or planning obligations to require the first occupants to be existing residents of the Isle of Wight with a Bembridge connection meeting one of the following categories:
- (a) a person who currently lives in the Parish and wishing to move to a smaller property in order to release larger accommodation
 - (b) a person who currently lives in the Parish and has an appropriate housing need because their family size has increased
 - (c) a person who currently lives in the Parish and wishes to transfer to a similar sized property
 - (d) a person from the Parish who is subject to a planned management transfer based on medical grounds
 - (e) a person who has previously lived in the Parish for 5 or more years up to the age of 16
 - (f) a person who has for 5 years prior to such acquisition or occupation been in continuous full or part-time employment (excluding seasonal employment) in the Parish or has accepted an unconditional offer of employment in the Parish.

7.42 The first period of occupancy in accordance with the above criteria to be for a minimum of three months thereafter occupation (subject to the same criteria) may be extended to the neighbouring parishes of Brading or St Helens for a further three months. Thereafter, the property may be offered on the open market. As all of the properties are applied for on the basis of a local need, these requirements would apply to both the open market and affordable housing.

7.43 Officers consider that the requirements set out within policy BNDP.H.3 in respect of marketing housing for local people would remain reasonable, particularly given the statistics relating to the Council's Housing Register. As the policy outlines, any remaining housing after the focussed period of marketing would be sold via the open market. The proposed affordable housing would also need to be marketed on Island Homefinder to ensure that it is made available to those on the housing register. Therefore, Officers recommend that the above marketing approach should be secured via a legal agreement, should the application gain planning permission. It is considered that this development would therefore comply with the policy guidance contained within policies DM3 and DM4 of the Island Plan and policy BNDP.H.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan and contribute to the substantial benefits outlined within the principal section of this report through delivering a mix of affordable housing and housing for local people.

Health infrastructure

7.44 The Council and the NHS have developed the Health Contributions SPD in order to integrate planning and health across the island and to help plan efficiently for health infrastructure. NHS England and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) hold data on the locations of catchment areas and the capacity of and current patient list sizes of GP surgeries across the Isle of Wight. The SPD sets out a method for calculating appropriate financial contributions towards health infrastructure, where they are necessary, based on expected increases in population generated by development, taking into account average occupancy rates based

on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Household Projections data. The SPD sets out a robust, evidence-based methodology for deciding what the required health infrastructure improvements may be in a particular area of the island and then identifies how developer contributions would be used. The level of contribution is based on size and space standards for appropriately sized GP surgeries and the likely cost of any improvements, based on industry standard guidance.

- 7.45** The NHS have commented on this planning application and advised that there are two GP surgeries in the area, at St Helens and Forelands Road Bembridge. They have advised that the majority of residents from the proposed development would register as patients with these practices. The NHS have consulted with the practices and identified a potential project to increase patient infrastructure, this being to convert an existing administration room at the St Helens practice into two consulting rooms in order to increase consultation capacity. To allow this, an existing reception office would need to be converted into two rooms to relocate administration staff.
- 7.46** The NHS have calculated the costs of the project, and advised officers that the development should pay a financial contribution of £598 per dwelling and requested that the contribution should be ringfenced for a future expansion project relating to north and east Isle of Wight practices. The applicant has agreed to pay the financial contribution and therefore, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of the Council's Health Contributions SPD.

Loss of agricultural land

- 7.47** National guidance in respect of the classification of agricultural land and its protection is contained within the Natural England Technical Guidance Note (Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land) and within the NPPF. The Technical Guidance Note makes it clear that decisions with respect to the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land rest with Local Planning Authorities and Government Guidance. To guide decision making, agricultural land is classified into five grades, which are as follows:
- | | |
|---------|------------------|
| Grade 1 | Excellent |
| Grade 2 | Very good |
| Grade 3 | Good to Moderate |
| Grade 4 | Poor |
| Grade 5 | Very poor |

According to Natural England and the glossary to the NPPF the best and most versatile agricultural land are those areas that fall within grades 1 to 3a. Such land is considered by Natural England to be most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and can best deliver future crops for food and no food uses.

- 7.48** Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should recognise the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. The footnote to this section of the NPPF states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary,

local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality. DEFRA land classification maps confirm that the land in this area is grade 3 and therefore, has the potential to fall into Grade 3a which is considered to be good quality agricultural land.

7.49 The application has been supported by a Drainage Strategy that confirms that an analysis of British Geological Survey (BGS) records has been undertaken. This showed that the site is underlain by the Bembridge Marls Member, with nearby borehole results showing blue clays, mudstone and shell fragments. Councillors will recall that planning permission has been sought for a development of 56 houses on land south of Steyne Road, for which soil surveys were undertaken of the site, and these showed that the land comprised a thin layer of topsoil, underlain by silty clay and soils with very poor infiltration characteristics. Officers have checked the BGS records, and these confirm that the application site is located within a similar belt of geology as the land south of Steyne Road, albeit with some areas offering better natural infiltration. Officers have also undertaken visits for both sites, which at the time of the visit showed the same claggy, water laden characteristics on some parts of the site, and other areas better drained, with areas of exposed soils even though both are laid to well established pasture.

7.50 It should be noted that land with only thin layers of topsoil lack nutrients and that poorly drained soils are not generally considered to be conducive for high yield crops, such as cereals. This is evidenced on the ground, by virtue of the majority of the fields in the area being used for pasture. As a result, officers consider that the land would be akin to Grade 3b farmland, which is categorised as 'Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.' Therefore, the land is not considered to be subject to protective policies and there is no objection to the proposed development in relation to agricultural land classification.

Impact upon the character of the surrounding area

7.51 Policy SP5 (Environment) of the Island Plan Core Strategy states that the Council will support proposals that protect, conserve and/or enhance the Island's natural and historic environments. All development proposals will be expected to take account of the environmental capacity of an area to accommodate new development and, where appropriate and practicable, to contribute to environmental conservation and enhancement. Policies DM2 and DM12 of the Island Plan require development proposals to be of a high quality of design, to compliment the character of the surrounding area, and to conserve, enhance and promote the Island's landscape.

Landscape and visual impacts

7.52 The application site comprises two agricultural fields, with a slight slope to the southeast, sharing a similar land level to the existing housing to the north and east. The landscape to the south and west of the site is rural in character and scenic, with wide ranging views towards Brading and Bembridge Harbour. Bembridge Windmill is present within views from Mill Road, as well as parts of

the bridleways that are accessed at the western end of the High Street. Edging the north-western side of the High Street are large properties set within significant grounds, enclosed by wooded gardens.

- 7.53** The application has been supported by a landscape and visual impact appraisal, in order to assess the characteristics of the local area, nearby viewpoints of the site and the overall impact of the development on surrounding landscape and visual receptors. The Appraisal methodology is brief and does not describe the levels of effect used to assess the impact of the development. Overall, officers consider that the appraisal is in accordance with best practise guidance, but that the methodology should have been more detailed. The impact section of the document refers to effects ranging between no effect, negligible, slight adverse and moderate adverse. Officers have adopted those terms in this report but added the higher significant level of effect. The appraisal sets out a Zone of Theoretical Visibility to establish locations from where the development could be seen. This is limited to an area 3km from the application site, which officers consider to be a reasonable study area. Nineteen viewpoints have been chosen within the study area, which officers considered to be suitable, although officers have added a further viewpoint from the higher land to the north of Carpenters Road, St Helens.
- 7.54** The appraisal outlines that Bembridge is located on a gently sloping plateau that is raised above low level Brading Marshes and seascape but below the downs to the south. The appraisal refers to Bembridge as being largely concealed due to changing topography and surrounding woodland. The appraisal concludes that the effect of the development on distant landscape and visual receptors would be negligible or no effect. The appraisal concludes that the site is not a valued landscape as defined by the NPPF and that the development would have a slight adverse effect once landscaping had established after 15 years, with the same level of effect from close views from the south-west and adjacent to Bembridge Windmill and a moderate adverse effect for visual receptors immediately alongside the site, such as adjacent roads and houses. The appraisal avers that from such views, the housing would be experienced as an extremely localised view predominantly for passing motorists. The appraisal concludes that the development would result in negligible/ no effect on distant landscape and visual receptors.
- 7.55** The site is readily visible from both Mill Road and the southern extent of Bembridge High Street, edging the side of both highways and separated by a hedge that is cut regularly to a relatively low level. As a result, there are open views across the site, particularly from Mill Road, across the farmland. From Mill Road these views are towards the housing within the estates that form the southern edge of Bembridge which is set well back, and from the High Street, the housing is a peripheral presence, with views towards the countryside to the south-east being more prominent. The boundary hedge that is adjacent to Mill Road includes some landmark trees, but while large and impressive trees they offer minor boundary screening.
- 7.56** The plans show that the site would be redeveloped to provide housing and associated access roads, parking areas and garages. All dwellings alongside the outer edges of the development would be two-storey in height, apart from two adjacent to High Street that would three storeys and as a result, would be readily

visible, with the dwellings to be located within the internal areas of the site being appreciable in views across it. This would clearly change the character of the site from farmland to housing development, and thus diminish the openness that the site contributes to the rural character of the area.

- 7.57** The plans show that the housing within the south-western corner of the site, opposite to the Windmill, would be set back and this would retain an area of open space that would be seen across the corner of High Street and Mill Road. The plans show that much of the hedgerow alongside High Street would be removed to allow for suitable visibility splays for the vehicle access to the western field. The housing here would be slightly set back from the highway, with an area of landscaping provided in between. However, the housing would be at a slightly higher level than High Street, with a pair of three storey houses either side of the proposed access road, and two storey housing overlooking the remainder of the High Street. When in the High Street, there would be views into the central access boulevard, within housing either side. The houses, along with access roads, boundary treatments and parking areas would alter the current character of High Street in a harmful manner. This would be partially mitigated by the proposed landscaping but would not alter the fact that the rural character of the southern end of High Street would be fundamentally altered, with the openness currently provided by the application site being removed.
- 7.58** This change to the character of the area would be similar within Mill Road, with the proposed housing being situated close to the highway, although here the boundary hedge would be retained, apart from a narrow section removed to form the new access into the eastern field, opposite to Steyne Farm. The houses would be set back from the hedgerow in order to provide space for the proposed multi-use track with additional tree planting to be provided that would offer some screening once established. Nonetheless, the proposed housing would be readily visible when travelling along Mill Road and there would be a sense of depth to the development, due to the rows of houses within the site.
- 7.59** The submitted landscape and visual appraisal avers that the impact of the housing would be experienced as an extremely local view, and mainly confined to motorists. However, people travelling between the High Street and Mill Road over approximately 500 metres would experience the housing and so while confined to the local highway network, from here the development would be a conspicuous presence. The development, in views from Mill Road and High Street, would cause significant change to the landscape character of the immediate area surrounding the highway network. This would be moderately mitigated by the proposed landscaping and the retention of boundary hedgerows adjacent to Mill Road. Nonetheless, the development would be sizeable and in officer's opinion, result in moderate to significant harm when seen from the highway and to the area of landscape immediately adjacent to the site.
- 7.60** The landscape to the south and west of the site is rural in nature and includes moderately size fields enclosed by hedgerows and in places, edged by areas of woodland. Land levels begin to slope away to the south and west, dropping towards the marshland around the Eastern Yar. The East Wight Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) defines this landscape area as falling within the Pasture Land landscape character area, which is said to be characterised by often open larger fields with well maintained hedgerows, few hedgerow trees

and strongly rural in character.

- 7.61** The application site and the close proximity farmland opposite share a similar land level, as does approximately the first 100 metres of the bridleway that allows access to Bembridge Windmill. The hedgerows that align the bridleway are relatively tall and therefore, when within much of the bridleway, views of the application site would be restricted. However, when nearer to Mill Road, the housing to be located within the south-western side of the site would be visible and change the perception of the landscape from one that is rural, with sporadic development, to an edge of settlement where residential development was obvious, an experience that would also be perceived from the upper windows of nearby Mill Cottage.
- 7.62** Opposite to the Windmill is a small field gate from which there are north easterly views towards the application site. From here, views are of open countryside with only narrow glimpses of existing housing within Woodland Grove can be seen. There are hedges and trees within the foreground vistas towards the site, and these offer good screening. This area shares similar land levels with the application site and so the proposed housing adjacent to Mill Road would be visible, bringing the presence of the village edge closer. It is likely that the upper elevations and roofs of the housing would be visible. Officers consider that this would change the rural character of this section of the landscape and the notion of being within relatively undeveloped countryside, to an area close to urban development.
- 7.63** The set back of the housing, intervening distance, existing hedgerows and trees, and proposed tree planting would slightly mitigate the impact of the development. However, the proposed development would result in a moderately harmful impact to the landscape and visual receptors within moderate distance and to the south-west of the site.
- 7.64** When further west, and beyond the Windmill, land levels begin to fall noticeably. In this area of landscape at distances of between 100 to 500 metres from the site, the trees and hedgerows west of Mill Road screen views towards the application site. Their presence is heightened by the change in land levels and as a result, the proposed development would not be visible from these locations, resulting in a minimal level of change to this portion of landscape and the receptors within it.
- 7.65** Bembridge Windmill and its grounds are located approximately 120 metres south of the application site. The National Trust manage the Windmill and maintain a publicly accessible field south and west of the Windmill, that is partially planted as an orchard and meadow. When within the field and grounds of the Windmill, views of the application site are screened by the hedgerows surrounding the adjacent bridleway. When within the Windmill there are small windows that face north, one at height and that would allow narrow vistas towards the application site. From this very specific vista, the housing would be visible and result in a change to the perception of the rural landscape, but it would be a fleeting glimpse, when the shutters are open.
- 7.66** The landscape further south (at distances of between 100 to 350 metres) and beyond the Windmill falls steadily away, with the bridleway still enclosed by tall

hedgerows, which begin to enclose the route more heavily. Attractive, scenic views of the countryside remain available from the right of way, but due to the progressive fall of land levels, views of the application site are blocked by hedgerows, trees and the intervening higher farmland. As a result, the development would not impact on the rural character of this section of the landscape or receptors within it.

- 7.67** The landscape to the south-west and south-east of the site includes the countryside south of Sandown Road and Hillway Road and the housing around Steyne Road. This area forms the south-western edges of the village and is characterised by a mix of existing housing, private parkland and dense woodland. Further south of Sandown Road are the large holiday sites at Whitecliff Bay. This more distant area therefore has a mixed rural and urban feel, that becomes more rural as one travels further south and west. Receptors within this area include the housing within and close to Steyne Road and Hillway Road and the various highways and rights of way.
- 7.68** The officer site visits showed that views towards the application site are minimal from this section of landscape, which ranges between 70 to 600 metres from the site. Closer potential vantage points would be from the local highway network, and rear gardens of properties within Steyne Road that back onto the application site. From Sandown Road, views of the site are screened by the woodland that encloses the highway, resulting in a tunnelled affect. From much of the road, views to the site are not possible. When approaching the Steyne Road/ Hillway Road roundabout, views towards the site are blocked by the stone buildings within Steyne Farm, which are located hard onto the carriageway.
- 7.69** Hillway Road passes east-west between the Whitecliff holiday resort before turning north towards Bembridge. Much of Hillway Road is enclosed by trees, blocking views towards the application site. However, when approaching the Steyne Road/ Hillway Road roundabout, views towards the application site are available. The presence of existing housing is a dominant factor in this location, and views would include a small portion of the site in the backdrop of the housing that faces this junction. Moreover, the submitted plans show that the nearest of the proposed housing would be set well back from the south-eastern corner of the application site. As result, from the northern end of Hillway Road, parts of the upper elevations of the proposed houses within the south-eastern section of the site would be visible, but at distance from an area that has a developed feel. It is considered that the impact on the development from this vantage point would be minor.
- 7.70** The Planning Authority is in the process of determining a planning application for 56 houses on land to the east of Hillway Road ([21/01884/FUL](#)). The application has been resolved for planning permission by the Planning Committee, subject to the finalisation of a legal agreement. Once built, the housing east of Hillway Road would be visible for those walking or driving along its northern section. When close to the roundabout, the housing within the south-eastern corner of the application site would also be visible, although as noted above, at distance and as a small portion of the overall site. Therefore, the two developments would result in a minor level of combined impact from this limited section of Hillway Road.

- 7.71** Steyne Road is a residential area, with the road aligned by housing in a relatively close-knit fashion, with the majority being two-storey in height. The gaps between properties are largely screened by garden trees. Minor glimpses of the proposed housing would be apparent through the gaps between houses at the south-western end of the road, and the views of the site would be apparent via the multi-use path link, although this would be relatively narrow and flanked by existing housing. The proposed houses visible through the link would be set back from the site boundary with landscaping between. Therefore, the views from the south-western end of Steyne Road would be altered, but given existing housing development within these vistas, and the screened nature of views it is considered that the impact on this area would be minor. From more distant areas to the south and south-east around Steyne Road and beyond, the development would be screened by existing housing and have no discernible impact.
- 7.72** To the north-east of the site are the various residential estates that form the western edge of the village. These estates are densely laid out and comprise a mix of bungalows and houses fronting onto open plan areas. From the estate roads that are immediately east and parallel to the application site boundary, there would be vistas of the housing through gaps between properties. The boundary between the eastern field and the existing housing to the north-east is formed by a tall hedge and numerous trees and therefore, the countryside is not readily visible from this area. Therefore, the proposed housing within the eastern field would be largely screened from the area of the village to the north-east, and where visible, views would be of upper elevations resulting in a minor-moderate level of change. From greater distances to the east, the development would not be visible due to the existing built form of the village.
- 7.73** The north-eastern boundary within the western field is formed by a hedge that in places is tall but decreases in height towards the High Street end, adjacent to Woodland Close. From Woodland Close the field is not a dominant feature, owing to the presence of existing housing and intervening landscaping, which prevents open views towards the countryside when within the estate road, but nonetheless, there are no buildings present in south westerly views, giving the feeling of space. Once developed, the upper elevations of the proposed housing would be visible at close proximity through gaps between houses albeit screened in places by the hedgerow. Officers consider that the proposed development would result in a slight to moderate adverse impact when seen from the estate roads immediately north-east of the site, but beyond those, the site would not be visible from the village due to the screening effects of existing housing.
- 7.74** The existing houses located adjacent to the north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the site have vistas across the farmland, either from their gardens or rear elevation windows. In places, these views are screened by hedges, trees or fences but these views lack any buildings, providing a sense of space owing to the open countryside beyond. Some dwellings have uninterrupted views over the application site, from where there are far ranging views across open countryside.
- 7.75** In relation to these properties, the proposed development would change the current situation from open views of a rural landscape to a relatively densely laid

out housing development. The plans show that an ecological buffer would be provided between the site and housing to the east and the landscaping strategy shows that additional trees would also be planted. However, these elements would themselves in places enclose current open vistas, as would proposed boundary fencing shown to align the proposed ecological buffer. As a result, views would change from a feeling of open countryside to shorter distance vistas of housing, formalised open spaces, fencing and landscaping. Officers consider that this level of visual impact would be moderate to significant and result in harm to the landscape and visual character of the area, when viewed from adjoining properties.

- 7.76** Properties to the west of the site are set within spacious landscaped grounds, with thick boundary planting set behind boundary walls and fences that edge the High Street. Much of the landscaping is evergreen, with laurel infilling areas below tree canopies. Even when stood in front of the boundary treatments, views of the housing behind them are heavily screened. The plans show that the housing to be located opposite would be set back, above a low bank. The hedgerow that forms the north-western boundary of the site would be removed, but even taking that into account, the housing would not be readily apparent from the houses to the north, or their gardens. As a result, it is considered that the visual impact of the scheme from these houses would be negligible.
- 7.77** From greater distances Bembridge is not a prominent settlement, occupying a relatively level area of landscape. The landscape to the west of the village forms a wide floodplain, the extends from Bembridge Harbour, towards Brading and between St Helens and the edge of Bembridge Down. This is a low area of marshland that forms part of the Harbours and Creeks character defined by the East Wight Landscape Character Assessment (the LCA). From here views to the east towards Bembridge are edged by a network of woodlands and wooded corridors, which screen the village. Thus, the development would not be seen from more distant locations in this landscape area.
- 7.78** The landscape to the north and that runs between St Helens towards Brading begins to rise so that much of this area occupies a slightly higher land level than Bembridge and the application site. This area is defined as being within the Traditional Enclosed Pastureland character area, by the LCA. From higher ground in this area, there are views towards Bembridge and parts of the roofscape of the village centre can be seen but at significant distances of between 1.7 to 2.5km. However, the application site and its surroundings are not visible from these areas, due to the wooded northern edge of the village. The development would not be perceivable from the landscape to the north and therefore, have no effect on it.
- 7.79** The landscape further south-west of Bembridge (beyond Hillway Road and towards Culver Down) is within the National Landscape and dominated by the chalk downland that reaches 100m above sea level at its highest point. The western edges of Bembridge are visible from the northern slopes of the down but in a similar manner to the lowland landscape to the west of the village, the belt of woodland that surrounds the western edge of the village screens existing housing and the application site. Instead, views towards the village are dominated by the caravan sites around Hillway, which are a significant presence in the panoramic vistas north of the down. Because the application site cannot

be seen from the distant landscape to the southwest, it results in no landscape or visual effect.

7.80 Officers consider that the proposal would not result in material landscape or visual impacts from moderate or greater distances given the well screened nature of Bembridge. In terms of closer vantage points, the site occupies an area of landscape that is level with much of the existing village and the proposed housing would be screened from locations to the north, south and east by existing development, and the mature hedgerows and trees that align site boundaries. However, the development would be visible from Bembridge High Street, Mill Road and housing that is immediately adjacent to the site boundaries, from where the housing would cause a moderate to significant level of landscape and visual harm.

7.81 It should be noted that policy SP1 of the Island Plan states that in all cases development on non-previously developed land will need to clearly demonstrate how it will enhance the character and context of the local area. However, a Planning Inspectorate decision at Place Road in Cowes discussed the issue of developing on Greenfield land and the landscape impact of this. Within the decision the Inspector made the following comments:

“The second implication in Policy SP1 is that all development on non-previously developed land should demonstrate how it will enhance the character and context of the local area. However, whether or not enhancement would take place should be viewed against the aim of the policy which is generally encouraging of development on the periphery of certain towns. To resist development failing to enhance simply because it would be on ‘greenfield’ land would be self-defeating.”

Design and layout

7.82 Policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) states that the Council will support proposals for high quality and inclusive design to protect, conserve and enhance the Island's existing environment while allowing change to take place. The policy states that development proposals will be expected to provide an attractive built environment and be appropriately landscaped.

7.83 Policy BNDP.EH.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires development to respond positively to the local character of its environment, demonstrate a high quality of design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of the land and buildings. This advice is reflected by policy BNDP.D.1 which states that development proposals will be expected to be of a design that:

- (a) complements and enhances where appropriate the prevailing size, height, scale and mass, materials, layout, density and access of the existing surrounding development.
- (b) demonstrates that the development reflects the existing character of the locality as defined in the Bembridge Design Character Appraisal document.
- (c) demonstrates that the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers will not be adversely affected through overlooking, loss of light or outlook, over-dominance or disturbance.
- (d) provides an appropriate level of landscaping which complements and enhances the character of the local area.

- 7.84** The plans show that the site would contain areas of both high and moderate density housing. The housing within the western field would be laid out in a series of blocks, with the housing arranged in terraces, pairs and detached houses around a large square that would occupy the centre of the field. The square would be laid to grass, include rows of trees and be edged by housing that would form a wide quadrant. The eastern field would be laid out in a denser fashion, and the plans show that in this section of the site, houses would be smaller and comprise a selection of pairs, detached and terraces of cottages arranged around lanes and courtyards.
- 7.85** Bembridge is a relatively densely laid out village, that has grown over time and therefore existing housing dates from a range of eras. The centre of the village has historic feel, with older properties arranged around the High Street and close to the Parish Church. The village grew in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, with a network of densely laid out cottages around Dennett Road, Manna Road and the northern end of Mitten Road situated close to the village centre. These roads are narrow, and the houses are set close to the highway, giving a feeling of high density. Edwardian era properties extend to the south and east of the village around Forelands Road, Lane End Road and Swains Road, set at a lower density. These areas are characterised by larger houses set in spacious landscaped grounds, with the majority of the housing designed in the arts and crafts style and set back from roads. There is an attractive semi-rural/ coastal feel in these areas.
- 7.86** In more recent times, estates and closes built between the 1960s and 1990s have infilled areas of Bembridge and extended to form its current southern and eastern edges with a mix of late twentieth century bungalows and detached houses arranged around snaking estate roads, often with open plan front gardens. The estates to the north of the application site are located between the site and Dennett Road, laid out in a moderate density. Most houses are detached and edge open plan areas, giving a sense of space. As a result, Bembridge is not characterised by an overriding urban layout or design approach, although there are pockets of housing that predominantly date from similar periods and densities, with each area having its own predominant materials, sense of scale, density and design approach.
- 7.87** The proposed development would establish its own sense of place, with housing designed to reflect Georgian and Victorian era cottages and town houses. However, the overall scale of development would be in keeping with the existing village, with the majority of housing to be two storey and laid out in a similar manner to adjoining residential areas. The density of the development would be greater than the estates to the north and north-east, but this would be due to the presence of terraces and pairs of houses set closer to access roads, as opposed to the generally detached housing within the estate immediately to the north of the site. The approach adopted for the development would ensure a more efficient use of land. Nonetheless, housing within the centre of the village is set at a higher density, where in a similar fashion to the proposed development, there are pairs of cottages and terraces.
- 7.88** While the proposed housing would be laid out at a greater density than housing immediately to the north east, the plans show that a network of open spaces and landscaping would be used to provide a feeling of space, and a hierarchy of

housing density that would see the central and southern and western areas, that are adjacent to the countryside laid out at lower density, but with internal and better screened areas of the site becoming gradually denser in nature.

- 7.89** The application has been submitted with a landscaping strategy that advises that the site would be landscaped to respond to the surrounding natural landscape character to ensure the proposed development assimilates into its wider setting and create an attractive and pleasant place to live which improves the quality of life of new and existing residents. The strategy advises that new planting would use native species, predominantly oak and that existing hedgerows and trees would be retained. The strategy and the proposed plans show that along with a network of open spaces, would be native tree and shrub buffers, a wetland feature with aquatic planting in the south-eastern corner of the site along with rain gardens to road margins and parking courtyards, and further soft landscaped areas. Areas of natural grassland would also be provided at the edges of the site, as well as the large open space shown within the southern western corner of the site. In addition, houses would be provided with front gardens, with parking areas located to the rear of properties within overlooked courtyards, to reduce the influence of cars to the front of properties.
- 7.90** The western field would comprise a large central square of landscaped open space, with landscaped verges provided alongside dwellings to occupy corner plots. In addition, a relatively wide access lane set at a south-western alignment would lead from the square towards the south-western corner of the site, where the second large area of open space would be provided. This would allow a wide vista towards Bembridge Windmill, but also connect to the wide landscaped buffers shown to align the south and western site boundaries. These would combine with tree planting and natural grassland areas to blend with the countryside beyond and allow the site to have a more rural feel, akin to the existing village. Further east within the western field, would be a large retained oak tree, that is currently set inside of the main boundary hedge. A further pocket of open space, to be left as natural grass (unmown) would be provided around this tree.
- 7.91** The plans show that the current wide hedge that separates the eastern and western fields would be largely retained, with the current large trees at its northern end also shown to remain. Wide areas of unmown grass would be provided alongside the hedge, widening at its northern point, where the existing trees provide a small copse. This area of green space and natural landscaping would connect to the various green verges alongside the proposed access roads and planting adjacent to the perimeter multi-use path to establish a network of open spaces and planting throughout the site. This would continue to the south-eastern end of the development, where a large pond would be surrounded by planting and natural grassland, which would have the benefit of separating the proposed terraces of housing in this area of the site.
- 7.92** It is considered that the landscaping strategy would result in near continuous high-quality corridor of green spaces and landscaping throughout the site. The network of larger open spaces would reduce the feeling of density, with the wide vistas between the open spaces allowing connection with the countryside beyond. Smaller areas of landscaping in and around the proposed housing would build upon the larger areas of open space to allow a more rural feel for the

development. Parking areas would be tucked away to the rear of frontal areas, but these would themselves include subtle areas of landscaping and tree planting to link with the more obvious areas of retained and new trees, hedgerows and open spaces.

- 7.93** The plans show that the central area of housing within the western field would surround the proposed landscaped square. These houses have been designed with Georgian and Victorian influences and comprise well-arranged sash windows, and enlivenments that would include arched entrance doors, parapet detailing, a mix of hipped and gabled roofs and chimneys (types J3, O1, P7, S3, S6 & PR2). The arrangement of the square would give it a spacious and attractive feel, with rows of attractively designed two-storey housing providing a high-quality backdrop with three storey houses at corners of the square to provide focal points.
- 7.94** The main access road to the western field would lead from the High Street towards the square and this would be arranged as a broad avenue, with the carriageway lanes divided by a central landscaped pedestrian route, edged by trees. Either side of the avenue would be pairs and terraces of two-storey Georgian style houses (types P3 & E1), with attractive elevations and front gardens enclosed by low railings. At either end of the avenue, would be three-storey town houses, also reflecting the design detailing listed above (types S5 & J1). The plans and visualisations show that the avenue and square would combine to provide a high-quality streetscape, with well-designed and appropriately scaled housing amongst attractive landscaping. The wide spaces between housing and the setting of the broad avenue and square, would provide a legible focal point and the feeling of a busier main street. Vistas would be a landscaped, spacious streetscape enclosed by high quality housing giving a sense of place. The central square would provide an area for people to enjoy, with the vista provided to the southwest, allowing views of countryside beyond and Bembridge Windmill.
- 7.95** The front elevations of the housing that would edge Mill Road and the High Street would face onto these roads. This approach would increase the visual impact of the housing because it would be closer to existing highways but would have the benefit of providing a more attractive frontage to the highways than the more standard approach of setting the housing beyond fenced back gardens, which can appear unsightly where they back onto a road. In addition, siting the housing in this manner would allow natural overlooking of the proposed mixed-use path and landscape buffers, that would encircle the outer edges of the site. This is a slightly bold approach which balances the efficient use of the site for housing, the manner in which the development would impact on its surrounding landscape while providing a vista of well-designed housing within well landscaped grounds. Greater separation distances would be provided between the housing, and this would prevent the development from appearing an excessive density when seen from the existing highway network.
- 7.96** The areas of housing to be located behind the central square and within the northern section of the eastern field would be laid out around courtyards that would provide access to the rear of some properties and parking areas. The submitted information pays regard to a similar development at Poundbury in Dorset, which is an exemplar development for a site with a rural setting. Rather

than provide rigid road layouts for housing to align, the access roads and courtyards would provide shared spaces arranged as informal lanes. The plans show that the housing would be narrowly spaced, with some of the houses arranged to overlook access routes but to also provide a vista point at the end of a lane. This would give these sections of the site an intimate feel, characteristic of a historic village where the layout and pattern of development has evolved in a more natural manner. Again, areas of smaller open spaces, tree planting and green verges have been used to reflect the less dense areas of the site, and to prevent a feeling of overdevelopment, but allow for smaller units to be provided without appearing out of character in an area of larger scale units.

- 7.97** The landscaping strategy shows that different hard surfaces would be used within the differing character areas. Main streets would be finished with asphalt, whereas the smaller lanes would be surfaced with permeable surfaces, likely to have a buff finish, with parking spaces to be laid with gravel set within geogrids. This range of approaches would allow the hard surfacing to reflect the hierarchy of different areas of the site, blending with landscaping to give a more natural feel.
- 7.98** In addition, the housing types used in these less formalised areas would be less imposing than that surrounding the square and other areas of the western field. The plans show that the terraces, detached and semi-detached houses would be smaller and designed as cottages, rather than town houses. The plans show a mix of four-pane casement or sliding sash windows to give a more rustic feel to the housing in these locations, but with detailing such as coursing between ground and first floors, detailing above windows and doors, cottage style doors and flint elevations set within brick quoins to provide a more rustic appearance to the housing, that would combine with its smaller scale to give a village style charm to these areas. The design approach would align with the proposed juxtaposition of the housing and lanes, courtyards and intricate areas of landscaping to establish a hierarchy of density and formality through the site.
- 7.99** In summary, officers consider that the combination of landscaping, carefully considered density and design of houses would result in a high quality development that would appear suitable within the context of the existing village. The proposed housing would be an appropriate scale while the styling, appearance and materials of housing would be an acceptable compliment to the hierarchy of density across the site, while blending well with existing development in the locality. There is not a prevalent architectural approach for Bembridge, however there are pockets of character areas that are differentiated by the scale, density and design of dwellings and it is considered that the proposed development would, on a smaller scale, replicate this rhythm.
Conclusion on impact upon the character of the surrounding area
- 7.100** Officers consider that the design, layout and density of the development would be acceptable. The proposed network of open spaces, buffers and landscaping would establish a coherent approach for the site, building on the retention of existing hedgerows and trees to provide an attractive backdrop for the proposed housing. The housing would be of a high quality design and a scale that would be suitable when compared to the section of Bembridge to the north.

- 7.101** Officers consider that the development would not be readily visible from distant vantage points due to the screening effects of woodland that edges Bembridge, and the topography of the landscape. The development would be most visible from close proximity and in particular from the High Street and Mill Road, which align the north-eastern and southern boundaries of the site. From these locations, the current landscape of attractive farmland would be changed to an urban area, with rows of houses arranged around estate roads and gardens, with a sense of depth. This would remove the sense of openness that is experienced when travelling along these roads and nearby rights of way, as well as resulting in a similar effect from the housing that adjoins the north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the site.
- 7.102** The landscape and visual impact of the development would be mitigated to a slight extent by the retention of hedgerows along Mill Road and other site boundaries (not within the High Street) and by retained trees. However, the positioning of dwellings would mean that two storey housing would be set close to the boundaries making it readily noticeable and substantially alter the current views of countryside to one of development from adjacent highways and dwellings, resulting in moderate to significant harm, from close proximity. The impact of the development would reduce over distance, with the site not being prominent in longer range vistas, or in relation to other areas of landscape. Therefore, from adjoining farmland at moderate distances to the south and west, the development would result in a moderately harmful landscape and visual impact.
- 7.103** From estate roads to the north and north-east of the site, the development would result in a slight to moderate visual impact. Officers consider that the development would result in a minor combined level of impact when seen from Hillway Road, when seen in combination with an approved development adjacent to this highway. In officer's opinion, overall, the development would appear high quality in respect of design and layout but result in a moderate to significant landscape and visual level of harm. It is considered that this harm would materially weigh against the proposed development.

Impact on neighbouring properties

Impact on properties

- 7.104** The north and eastern boundaries of the application site are bounded by existing housing development. North of the site is a network of residential estates, accessed from Woodland Grove. The houses here back onto the site and comprise short rear gardens and therefore, rear windows aspect towards the application site and the hedge and trees that form the boundary. Houses within Woodland Grove are generally two storeys, although further east along this road, and beyond within Pelham Close and Heathfield Gardens, properties are bungalows.
- 7.105** Number 125 High Street occupies the corner of High Street and Woodland Grove, being a two-storey house with a single storey annex joined to its south-western elevation. The property faces southeast, with its rear elevation positioned at an acute angle to the application site. The rear windows within this property and the annex are close to the boundary shared with the application

site. However, the plans show that the property proposed to be closest to the house (unit 13) would be sited well away from the boundary, with its windows facing southeast and so away from the rear windows of number 125, with a detached garage between that would offer screening. The northern (side) elevation of this house would include a faux window at first floor level, preventing overlooking. Officers are satisfied that the relationship between unit 13 and 125 High Street would be acceptable, subject to permitted development rights being removed for additional first floor or dormer windows within the north or south-eastern elevations of unit 13.

- 7.106** The proposed plans show that all houses located south of the existing properties within Woodland Grove would be two-storey, but these have been sited to ensure that there would be suitable space between existing dwellings. The existing houses within Woodland Grove all face south. The plans show that a wide ecology buffer strip would be provided between the existing houses and those proposed, with boundary fencing to be provided. Officers are satisfied that the level of space provided, along with intervening fencing and landscaping would prevent adverse levels of overlooking, loss of outlook or natural light and prevent the new properties from appearing an excessive scale or dominating.
- 7.107** Numbers 11 and 12 Pelham Close form a pair of semi-detached chalet bungalows located east of Woodland Grove. These properties are sited within very close proximity to the boundary shared with the application site and there is currently no hedge between the two, allowing open views of rear windows. To overcome adverse levels of overlooking, loss of light or outlook the land south of these properties would be left undeveloped and reserved as an area of open space. A boundary fence would be provided opposite to numbers 11 and 12 Pelham Close, with a wide ecology buffer between to ensure a suitable outlook from these properties.
- 7.108** Units 23 and 24 would be located to the west of these properties, but they would be set adequately back and away from the site boundary to cause a loss of amenity. In particular, the rear elevations of these properties have been designed to include only two first floor windows, with no window shown for the eastern side of this elevation, therefore preventing direct overlooking. The principal elevation of unit 24 would face east over the open space, but the windows would allow only oblique views of the neighbouring rear gardens and windows, preventing a loss of amenity. Officers recommend that permitted development rights are removed for additional first floor or dormer windows within the northern elevation of these units to prevent overlooking of the nearby properties.
- 7.109** Heathfield Road is further east of Pelham Close, and again, the rear elevations of bungalows within it aspect towards the northern boundary of the application site. These properties are set further away from the site boundary and there is a tall hedge and landmark trees that provide significant screening. These would be retained along with the proposed ecology buffer strip and when combined with the separation distances to the proposed houses (units 95 to 99) would prevent a loss of amenity.
- 7.110** Further east are two houses located within Oakside Gardens, which is a small back land close accessed from Steyne Road. The plans show that three pairs of

semi-detached cottages (units 100 to 105) would be located south of these properties. 4 Oakside Gardens is a detached bungalow, and its front and rear elevations face east and west so away from the application site. However, 1 Oakside Gardens is a two-storey house, with its rear elevation facing south, towards the application site. The boundary hedge here is tall and thick, preventing any overlooking of ground floor windows or gardens, meaning that impacts on number 4 would be minimal. In addition, the plans show that the land south of number 1 would be used as a parking courtyard, thus preventing the proposed cottages from impacting on the outlook, privacy or natural light of the first-floor windows within number 1 Oakside Gardens. While units 104 and 105 would be sited close to this property, they would be separated adequately to prevent a loss of amenity.

- 7.111** The houses within Steyne Road benefit from long rear gardens, which would prevent the houses proposed to be located to the west of them (units 106 to 109) from unacceptably overlooking their rear windows. The gardens of some of these properties lack boundary hedges, allowing an open vista of the application site. However, the plans show that here, the ecology buffer would be widened further with a boundary fence to be provided west of the buffer. These would protect the privacy of the gardens of these properties, while establishing an outlook onto natural planting.
- 7.112** Numbers 98 and 100 Steyne Road are detached houses located south-east of the application site. These properties are situated a substantial distance from the proposed houses to be located within the south-eastern corner of the application site and therefore, would not be impacted upon by them. The proposed mixed-use path would pass between numbers 98 and 100 Steyne Road and to the rear of Primrose Cottage and Osney Cottage, utilising a current gravel track that leads to amenity land to the rear of these properties. This track is already aligned by tall fences, which prevent overlooking of the gardens or windows within the existing houses. While the path would introduce passing pedestrians of cyclists, it would be a relatively wide feature that would not be used by vehicular traffic. The existing properties already overlook public highways, and it is considered that the noise associated with pedestrians and cyclists using the track would not cause harm to residential amenity.
- 7.113** Osney Cottage is located adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the eastern field. This property is surrounded by a tall thick hedge, which already screens the garden and much of the house. The submitted plans show that an area of open space would be located north of Osney Cottage, resulting in significant distances between it and houses proposed within the nearest sections of the application site. Thus, while the houses proposed for this section of the site (units 86 to 89) would aspect onto the open space and face towards Osney Cottage, they would be a substantial distance from the property, and this would prevent a loss of amenity. The open space would be occupied by a pond and therefore, not result in adverse levels of noise from would be users of the area. Primrose Cottage is situated south of Osney Cottage and would be screened from the development by the neighbouring property and the vegetation surrounding it.
- 7.114** Steyne Farm is located to the south of the site, at the southern end of Mill Road. The farm includes modern farm buildings at its northern end, which are opposite

to the application site. The southern eastern end of the farm includes the farmhouse, but this faces south with the modern barns and older stone barns between it and the application site. The two older former stone barns north of the farmhouse have been converted into two houses, Plough Cottage and The Dairy. Again, their main windows face south and so away from the proposed development, with solid stone walls hard against the highway. Plough Cottage contains two first floor windows that face north-west and that allow views over the south eastern section of the application site. However, there would be a significant distance between these windows and the nearest proposed dwellings (units 86 and 87) with Osney Cottage and the proposed open space and pond between. It is considered that impacts on the properties within Steyne Farm would be minimal.

7.115 Mill Cottage is located to the west of the application site, and adjacent to the corner of Mill Road and the High Street. The property is two and half storeys and set back from the highway by circa 30 metres, with a boundary hedge screening its ground floor windows. The cottage comprises two dormer and one gable window at first floor level, that face southeast, and these would allow parallel views of the housing proposed within the southern section of the application site. However, the closest housing would be approximately 85 metres away, and this level of separation would prevent harm to residential amenity. The plans show that there would be open space and a public right of way that would allow pedestrians to cross the highway and access the bridleway that serves Bembridge Windmill. The bridleway passes to the front of Mill Cottage. However, this is an existing situation, with the public parking areas for visitors to the Windmill and those using the rights of way network passing to the front of the property. It is considered that the increased use of this bridleway would be minor and not result in a loss of amenity to Mill Cottage.

7.116 The properties to the northwest of the site are located on the opposite side of the High Street. The plans show that the main entrance to the site would be located here, with much of the boundary hedge removed and six houses to be located adjacent to the highway but set back above a low bank with tree planting to be provided. The existing houses here are all set within substantial grounds and divided from the road by a mixture of brick walls, fences and dense undergrowth. The houses are set back from the highway and the intervening boundary treatments and landscaping would prevent all but minor views of the proposed development, resulting in a minor impact on residential amenity.

Construction impacts

7.117 Larger developments can give rise to a temporary loss of amenity as a result of construction activities. Therefore, noise and dust emissions could impact on the properties closest to the site. The submitted Transport Assessment (TA) advises that the development could take two years to be completed, although this does seem ambitious for Island rates of development and therefore, officers consider that the development could take between two to four years. The TA sets out a likely programme of works, advising that this is not at the detailed stage and should be controlled by condition. The TA advises that a site specific speed limit would apply and that the construction routes would be set up to minimise the need for reversing. Moreover, areas would be set up for site compounds, parking and delivery areas to minimise impacts to the local highway

network. In addition, the TA advises that construction processes would be limited to 08.00 to 18.00 hours on weekdays, 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturdays and no work to be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

- 7.118** It is a standard approach to impose a planning condition to control associated impacts, allowing the Planning Authority to control delivery and working times, the location of site compounds and to secure phasing of the development. These controls would limit impacts to an acceptable level. Therefore, an appropriate condition has been recommended.
- 7.119** The proposed means of access via Mill Road and the High Street would be located away from existing properties. The access to the High Street would be opposite to 112 and 114 High Street, but as noted above, these properties are set back from the highway and within landscaped grounds. The Mill Road access would be opposite to agricultural buildings. While the development would generate further traffic onto the local highway network, it is considered that the impact of traffic related noise on existing dwellings would be minor, from this proposed development and the combined traffic associated within the 56 dwellings resolved for approval within Steyne Road, would be minor compared to the existing situation.
- 7.120** In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development would not compromise the amenity of nearby existing properties, because of the layout and scale of the development, the construction phase or as a result of traffic, subject to conditions being imposed to control operational development. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to comply with the requirements of policy DM2 of the Island Plan.

Impact on heritage assets

- 7.121** Policies DM2 and DM11 of the Core Strategy state that the Council will support proposals that positively conserve and enhance the special character of the Island's historic and built environment and which preserve or enhance heritage assets and their settings. Furthermore, sections 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) places duties on the Council in the exercise of its planning functions to pay special regard/attention to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting, or any features of special architectural and historic interest which it possesses.
- 7.122** Heritage assets include conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments and locally listed buildings. The application site is not the subject of these designations and is located within an area of countryside adjacent to residential development. However, Bembridge Windmill is a grade I listed building and located to the west of the site, and Steyne House, Bembridge Lodge, the Mill House and the Barn & Stabling to the south-west of the Mill House are grade II listed.
- 7.123** The submitted Heritage Statement concludes the development would not change the setting of the four grade II listed buildings, noting Steyne House and Mill Farm (House and Barn) are too remote from the site to be impacted by the development and Bembridge Lodge would be protected from the development by a mature screen of trees, with the focus of the Lodge looking north-west

overlooking the lawns and sea. The assessment concludes from this, and because the contribution the setting makes to the significance of these buildings is negligible, the magnitude of change from the development upon the significance of the buildings would be negligible i.e. the impact from the proposal would be very small, not noticeable. Officers agree with this assessment, specifically noting the extent of vegetative screening between the site and these listed buildings, and thereby agree there would not be a harmful impact upon the significance of the listed buildings or associated curtilage buildings from the development proposed.

- 7.124** Regarding Bembridge Windmill, the contribution of setting to its heritage significance is higher and the assessment recognises this but still concludes the proposed development would not result in a discernible or demonstrable change to affect the significance of the Windmill. It suggests the (visual) impact would represent a minor (not significant) alteration to the baseline conditions which would not act to preclude the proposal from being granted consent. Officers have considered this assessment and noted the comments made regarding the potential harmful impact upon the setting of the Windmill, from the proposed development.
- 7.125** The significance of the windmill is contributed positively by its landscape setting, appearing as a relatively isolated structure when viewed from within the valley, settled amongst treed vegetation with notable views from the south/south-west, across Brading Haven, where the windmill has a prominent elevated location. Views from higher ground from the south/south-west are also notable although they also encapsulate aspects of the built environment of Bembridge in the background and most notably the airfield and holiday park in the foreground. Views of the windmill towards the south/south-west, out across Brading Haven, reflecting the view encapsulated in JMW Turner's watercolour, would not be affected by the development proposed.
- 7.126** The impact upon setting and how a listed building is experienced not only relates to views towards the building, but also views out from the building and even the tranquillity of a place. Officers have considered these, noting the views from the windmill are only likely to change when looking out of the north facing windows and whilst the proposed development would be notable, this is unlikely to be harmful to the significance of the building given the windows were not designed to provide views, only light within the building and so are small. Regarding the tranquillity of the site, this is likely to be affected because of the quantum of development and proximity to the site. The landscape setting of the windmill is very different from the north when viewed from the village and proposed site. In these views Mill Road and the adjacent residential dwelling are notable although they do not preclude views through towards the windmill, (predominantly the sails and top of the tower). These views are less important than those mentioned above which were noted as having a picturesque quality, encapsulating the structure in its elevated position nestled amongst the trees providing a visual and tangible link to the past.
- 7.127** Concerns have been raised over the number of dwellings proposed and the scale of the two and a half and three storey dwellings at the western side of the site which are suggested would cause most impact, being nearest the Windmill. The submitted details illustrate the two and a half and three storey dwellings

would be generally positioned to highlight the entrance to the site and around the Square, but most of the development proposed at the western side of the site and along the southern side of the site is shown to be two storeys, reflecting the scale of the nearby existing housing. The submitted details illustrate there would be a visual impact from the development upon the setting of the Windmill, but the impact upon the views from the higher locations from the south/south-west which contribute positively to the significance of the Windmill, would be greatly reduced after fifteen years had passed and the proposed landscape mitigation had established.

- 7.128** Comments from Historic England refer to the group value of the Windmill and Mill Farm (House and Barn). The historic relationship of these buildings is noted but the intervening vegetation means there is no intervisibility of Mill Farm with the site, so this relationship would not be affected by the proposal. Regarding the tranquillity of the site, this is likely to be affected because of the quantum of development and proximity to the site, but the extent of impact must be considered in light of the existing noise from Mill Road. In light of this, the viability of the windmill (as a tourism site) is unlikely to be affected by the proposal.
- 7.129** The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty upon the Local Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, meaning considerable importance and weight must be given to these heritage issues when striking the planning balance. The Island Plan Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework are clear that great weight should be given to conserving designated heritage assets irrespective of the level of harm and if there is substantial harm to, or total loss of the significance of a designated asset, then permission should be refused “unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss” or the applicant can meet a series of tests designed to show the building has no other viable use. Where there would be less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the proposal’s public benefits, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.130** Taking into consideration the great weight that should be given to conserving designated heritage assets and their settings, officers consider the proposal would have a negative impact upon the significance of the Windmill, because of the visibility of the development when viewed from the south/south-west. The degree of harm would be a very low level and less than substantial, resulting from the short-term visual impact and audible impact from the development. However, the former would be mostly alleviated when the proposed landscape mitigation became established and the latter must be considered in context of the existing situation, with the presence of Mill Road and the other nearby residential dwellings. Furthermore, consideration must also be given to the public benefits that would arise from the proposal such as housing provision and employment, which is balanced below.

Archaeology

- 7.131** The Council’s Archaeological Officer has advised that the application site is of unknown potential for below ground archaeological deposits. A Desk Based

Assessment (DBA) relating to archaeology has been submitted with the application and it has concluded that remains of any period might survive as buried archaeology within the site. No artefacts or features have been previously recorded on the site, and few archaeological interventions have been carried out in the vicinity to better understand likely potential. The DBA also notes the potential for the Bembridge Raised Beach deposits to be present within the site, as shown on the BGS mapping.

- 7.132** The Archaeology Officer has recommended that if the application was approved, a staged programme of archaeological works should be carried out during the development and that this should include a pre-commencement trial trench evaluation (and include geoarchaeological investigation), the results of which would inform any further mitigation which may be required. The Officer has also stated that geophysical surveys could also be considered as a means of further assessment of the archaeological potential as this can help inform the evaluation. As a result, the Officer has recommended conditions to secure trial pit evaluations, the submission and agreement of a Written Scheme of Investigation and notification of commencement.

Public benefits/ conclusion on heritage assets

- 7.133** Having regard to the above, the proposal would not impact on the setting of the four grade II listed buildings or associated curtilage buildings within proximity of the application site, Steyne House, Bembridge Lodge, the Mill House and the Barn & Stabling to the south-west of the Mill House. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance/setting of Bembridge Windmill, a Grade I listed building. This level of impact must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development, with great weight afforded to the conservation of these assets and their settings within this balancing exercise.
- 7.134** The proposed development would make use of land to provide housing that would socially benefit the community in terms of meeting the Island's identified housing delivery shortfall and local housing needs, including for affordable homes. There would also be economic benefits during construction phases and environmentally in terms of the provision of a network of open spaces and landscaping within the site and offsite highway and rights of way improvements, delivered directly through the proposed development. Officers are mindful of the impacts referred to above, have given this due consideration, and conclude that the public benefits of the scheme combined would outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance/setting of Bembridge Windmill. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the requirements of policies DM2 and DM11 of the Island Plan and the relevant guidance with the NPPF. In terms of the overall balance of consideration for this development, this matter is considered to be a negative factor, weighing against the proposal.

Ecology and trees

Ecology

- 7.135** The application site is not the subject of ecological designations, and its current use is as improved pastureland. The nearest site designated for ecological

reasons is Steyne Wood Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), which is 270 metres to the south. There is an agricultural field located directly south-east of the site, which has been categorised as a candidate site for protected species of Brent geese and wading birds (SWBGS), and which is therefore considered to be functionally linked to the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA). The application site includes mature hedgerows with protected trees located within the southern and north-eastern boundaries and two pockets of protected woodland at the mid-point of the north-eastern boundary. Natural England have confirmed that the development would not pose a significant effect to the adjacent SWBGS candidate site. In addition, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) has advised that as the habitat onsite is sub-optimal for great crested newts and the nearest waterbody is located approximately 250m away, it is unlikely that great crested newts are present, and that development would pose a low risk to them.

- 7.136** The applicant has undertaken an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), that includes the results of a site visit undertaken by qualified ecologists in April 2021, species surveys undertaken over the 2021 season, which identified potential habitat for dormice and bats, as well nesting and foraging habitat for birds with field boundaries and trees, but limited habitat for reptiles. Updated site visits and species surveys were undertaken in May 2023. In addition to the onsite surveys, the EclA includes a desk top study of designated sites and species records. These showed that there are five SINC's and several statutory sites within 1 kilometre of the site, but that none have ecological connectivity to it.
- 7.137** The EclA advises that some sections of the hedgerows at the site would be removed to allow the formation of the proposed vehicular accesses, but that within visibility splays hedgerows would be laid rather than removed. However, it is noted that much of the hedgerow adjacent to the High Street would be removed. The EclA advises that native hedgerow species would be used to infill any existing gaps within the hedgerows and to provide a widened hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site to compensate for habitat loss. In addition, hedgerow buffers comprising swards of grass and wildflowers would be provided, as detailed within the landscaping strategy.
- 7.138** The EclA advises that additional native tree planting would be undertaken to provide compensation for the loss of nesting, sheltering and foraging habitat and to create linear features across the site. The EclA notes that the development would result in the loss of improved grassland, however it advises that the current sward is species poor with 96 per cent of cover being dominated by grasses, with only two wildflower species present, lesser hop trefoil and common vetch. The document advises that the development would include areas of natural grassland within the proposed greenspace in the south-western corner of the site along with the southern, eastern and northern boundaries and either side of the retained central hedgerow.
- 7.139** Regarding protected species, the EclA explains that the wide hedgerow that divides the site was highlighted as being suitable to support hazel dormice.

Surveys were undertaken to establish the presence of this protected species, however these showed that they were not present, with the EclA reflecting that the site's lack of connectivity to wider landscape being an explanatory factor. The information advises that planting native hedgerow species to increase the amount of food available, would increase the site's value for dormice.

- 7.140** The information advises that bat species have been recorded within 1 kilometre of the site. These include Bechstein's, Daubenton's, noctule, common pipistrelle, Nathusius' pipistrelle and grey long eared bats. The EclA advises that the absence of woodland at the site would mean that Bechstein's bats would be unlikely to be encountered at the site. Furthermore, the information concludes that Daubenton's bats favour wetlands, and therefore are unlikely to be encountered at the site. For a similar reason, Nathusius' bats are considered unlikely to be present at the site. However, the information advises that the site includes suitable habitat for pipistrelle and grey long eared bats.
- 7.141** The applicant's ecologists carried out three seasonal transect surveys and further static surveys between May and October 2021, which showed low levels of bat activity at the site, with pipistrelle and noctule bats recorded as being present, and found to be foraging and commuting within the site's trees and along the eastern boundary of the site. The EclA advises that the habitats being used by bats would be retained as part of the development, that bat boxes would be installed and that means of external lighting would need to be carefully considered. The information advises that while open foraging habitat would be lost, low numbers of species of bat using such areas were recorded on site, noting that suitable open foraging habitat would remain in the wider landscape. In addition, the information advises that the provision of new ponds within the site would benefit Daubenton's and Nathusius' bats.
- 7.142** The habitat surveys showed that the site does not include suitable habitat for adder, slow worm, grass snake or common lizard due to the land being grazed regularly, and the lack of diverse habitat. However, the EclA advises that the proposed natural grassland areas, ponds and the provision of log piles would provide areas for reptiles to bask and shelter.
- 7.143** The EclA advises that the existing trees and hedgerows on site are important habitat for nesting and foraging birds, with all trees to be retained other than a dead sycamore. The assessment advises that mitigation measures such as undertaking any hedgerow removal outside of bird nesting season would be undertaken. In addition, native hedgerow planting to increase the variety of hedgerow species is recommended by the EclA in order to increase the availability of various foods throughout the year, along with sympathetic hedgerow management to increase the integrity of the site's retained hedgerows by promoting dense, bushy growth to provide dense shelter from predators.
- 7.144** The site does not currently include any water bodies and site surveys returned no evidence of amphibian species. As outlined above the Hampshire and Isle of Wight District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) has advised that as the habitat onsite is sub-optimal for great crested newts and the nearest waterbody is located approximately 250m away, it is unlikely that great crested newts are present, and this site poses a low risk to them. Nonetheless, the EclA advises that grassland at the site may provide suitable terrestrial habitat and that

hedgerows may provide commuting habitat for amphibians. For this reason, the information advises that precautionary measures should be undertaken during vegetation removal, with the proposed ponds able to provide suitable habitat for amphibians.

- 7.145** The EclA advises that a native wildflower mix should be used for ecology buffers around the site, in order to promote botanical diversity and increase foraging, sheltering, and breeding opportunities for invertebrates including pollinating insects.
- 7.146** The EclA advises that no evidence of badgers was found during site surveys undertaken in 2021 and 2023. The information recommends that as a precautionary measure any fencing around the perimeter of the site should be post-and-rail as this would allow access to and from the site for badgers. The EclA advises that other protected species that could be present on site include red squirrel and hedgehog. To prevent connectivity from being affected, the information advises that holes should be left in fences and walls to allow wildlife to pass through the site to other existing hedgerows and gardens.
- 7.147** The Council's Ecology Officer has raised no objection to the proposed development and advised that suitable compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures have been proposed which would need to be secured to ensure protected species are not adversely impacted by the development. The Ecology Officer has advised that the following matters should be secured by condition:
- Details of boundary treatments.
 - Details of planting within the SuDS features detailed within the Flood and Drainage strategy and Landscape Strategy. The officer has advised that plant species should be beneficial to pollinators, non-invasive and preferably native.
 - A wildlife sensitive external lighting scheme along with locations of bat boxes.
 - Details of bird boxes and swift bricks into the buildings as enhancement.
 - A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure important species and habitats are protected during the construction phase of the development.
 - Details of the long-term maintenance and management of habitats and planting (pond and wetland, meadow grassland, hedgerows, vegetated SuDS etc) via a habitat maintenance and management plan (HMMP).

These matters would be secured by conditions, with the future management and maintenance of habitats and open spaces to be secured via a legal agreement. Subject to compliance with the recommended conditions, it is considered that the development would not result in harm to protected species or habitats and deliver suitable ecological enhancement in accordance with policy DM12 of the Island Plan.

Impacts to International sites

- 7.148** The site is not within Solent Designated Sites (Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar, Solent & Dorset Coast SPA, and Solent Maritime SAC), but falls

within the Solent Special Protection Area (SPA) Buffer Zone where proposals that would result in a net increase in overnight residential accommodation are expected to contribute towards the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (SRMS) to mitigate for potential increased recreational pressure on protected species of birds with the SPA as a result of the development and other residential development within the buffer zone. The applicant has agreed to enter into a planning obligation to secure this contribution in accordance with the SRMS, thus mitigating impacts.

- 7.149** Natural England advise that uncertainty around whether new development associated with over-night accommodation will further deteriorate the condition of the marine designated sites. There are high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus input to this water environment with sound evidence that these nutrients are causing eutrophication at the marine designated sites. These nutrient inputs currently mostly come either from agricultural sources or from wastewater from existing and new housing as well as other development. Natural England has advised that any new development proposed that uses WwTW that discharge into the Solent European Sites and/or waterbodies that subsequently discharge into these designated sites will need to demonstrate no adverse effects on integrity by achieving nutrient neutrality.
- 7.150** To address the uncertainty Natural England have set out a methodology and approach for mitigation to ensure new development achieves nutrient neutrality. The wastewater for this development would be directed to the public sewer network, which Southern Water have confirmed directs foul water to the Sandown WwTW, which Natural England have confirmed, via the Council's Position Statement, would avoid impacts to Solent European Sites. This is because water treated by the WwTW at Sandown is discharged into the English Channel, rather than the Solent. As a result, the proposed development would not need to demonstrate nutrient neutrality, as it would not impact on the relevant designated site as a result of wastewater. In addition, Natural England have confirmed to the LPA that Bembridge is not within the 'nitrate catchment' for the Solent and therefore, not subject of assessment in relation to nutrients issues. Officers have carried out a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that includes an Appropriate Assessment of the impact of the development on relevant international designations, which concludes that there would not be a significant effect to the environment. Natural England have ratified the conclusions of the HRA.

Trees

- 7.151** Policy BNDP.EH.4 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that new development that will cause the loss of or damage to trees, woodland or hedgerows (including hedgerows of importance) that contribute positively to the character and amenity of the area, must demonstrate there is an overriding need for the development proposed.
- 7.152** As noted above, the majority of existing hedgerows at the site would be retained, with a section to be removed alongside the High Street to allow the main access into the western field. A section of hedgerow would be laid alongside Mill Road to allow the proposed access to the eastern field to be constructed. All trees within the site would be retained, apart from a dead tree in the western field and

a single sycamore within the hedgerow adjacent to Mill Road.

- 7.153** The Planning Authority's Tree Officer has noted the presence of many large mature trees that are important to landscape character, and which are formally protected. The officer has advised that the design and layout of the development would limit impacts to trees to an acceptable level and has therefore recommended a condition to ensure their protection during construction. The Tree Officer has noted the importance of hedges at the site and has stated that they should be assessed in accordance with the Hedgerow Regulations, however an assessment has since been undertaken and none of the hedgerows to be removed were found to meet the ecological criteria laid out by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 to qualify as important. The Tree Officer has advised that a condition should be imposed to secure an Arboricultural Method Statement. Subject to compliance with that condition being complied with, it is considered that the development would not prejudice high amenity trees and hedgerows and therefore comply with the requirements of policy DM12 of the Island Plan.

Conclusion on ecology and trees

- 7.154** On the basis that the site landscaping and ecological mitigation measures can be modified and controlled through conditions and that Solent SPA mitigation would be secured by planning obligation, the proposal would protect, conserve and enhance ecology and biodiversity, and would not have adverse implications for the biodiversity at or adjacent to the site, or the Solent Designated Sites (Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar, Solent & Dorset Coast SPA, and Solent Maritime SAC) in accordance with the aims of policy DM12 of the Island Plan, the NPPF and the requirements of section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. It is considered that in relation to the planning balance for this application, the proposed ecological benefits of the scheme, through the provision of ecological corridors and habitat creation would weight in favour of the scheme in a minor fashion, with impacts on trees being a neutral factor that would neither weigh for or against the scheme.

Air Quality

- 7.155** An Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQA) is generally required for proposed developments that would generate an increase in annual average daily traffic flows of more 500. In this case, the development would generate more than 500 vehicle movements per day and therefore, the applicant has provided an Assessment to address the air pollution emissions from road traffic, taking into adjacent roads and the way that they impact the site and surrounding area. The AQA advises that local development has been taken into account, as well as construction traffic for the proposed development. The AQA takes into account air quality measurements undertaken on the Island and the predicted air pollutant concentrations adjacent to the site. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has advised that the assessment criteria within the AQA has used acceptable methodology and software and that the assessment of impact has been carried out in accordance with the Institute of Air Quality Management: 'The used Land-Use Planning & Development Control'.

- 7.156** Regarding the construction phase, AQA predicts a medium risk of annoyance from dust associated with earth works, construction and track-out. It predicts a low risk over health impacts from PM10 associated with those works. The report outlines measures which can be taken to control dust during the construction phase. The Council's Environmental Health Officer notes that no Construction Dust Management Plan has been provided with the application and advised that would need to be provided and approved by the LPA prior to development commencing. The Officer has reasoned that main concerns would be use of the High Street for access to and from the site and dust causing annoyance to occupants of properties in that area from material from the site on vehicles (e.g. on wheels/side of vehicles and spillages from the tailgates. However, as noted within the Highway section of this report, construction traffic for the development would not use Bembridge High Street or other streets within the village, but instead use Sandown Road.
- 7.157** The Environmental Health Officer has advised that a condition should be imposed to secure a construction method statement. As noted elsewhere within this report, if recommended for approval, a condition would be imposed to secure a construction management plan, which would cover the issues listed by the Officer.
- 7.158** The operational phase of the development would generate in excess of 500 vehicle movements per day and the Environmental Health Officer has advised that the main concern in respect of air quality would be traffic entering the proposed site along the High Street from the Church Road junction. The traffic Management report, the data of which was used for the air quality assessment, shows an increase in 200 cars entering the proposed site from the direction of the village centre. The AQA has predicted an 'Imperceptible' or 'No change Impact' as a result of the traffic associated with the development.
- 7.159** There are no details in the AQA over the input data used in the software ADMS Roads for this section of road during the operational phase. The Environmental Health Officer has commented that without any measures in place to improve traffic flows with the High Street the traffic would predominantly be start/stop and not free flowing which would increase emissions. In addition, there would be certain parts of this section of road which could provide a 'Canyon' effect, where the dispersion of emissions from vehicles would be more restricted by narrow roads with buildings/trees either side.
- 7.160** The Environmental Health Officer has advised that confirmation data has been inputted into the air quality modelling software should be provided or a further assessment submitted. However, the Officer has that stated that they would not expect there to be more than a 5% increase in concentration relative the Air Quality Assessment Level. With that level of change and with the current predicted pollution levels in that area being well below 75% of the Air Quality objectives, the Officer advises that IAQM guidance suggests mitigation measures need not be required of developers.
- 7.161** The Officer advises that in any case, the application includes plans showing improvements to traffic flows along this section of Bembridge High Street, with formalised roadside vehicle parking and various measures enabling priority to traffic coming from the town centre. The Officer has advised that Environmental

Health supports these measures and would request restrictions on HGVs over 7.5 tonnes using that route other than accessing the properties along the High Street in that area. However, the route for construction vehicles would be controlled by a legal agreement, should the development be approved, with no HGVs proposed to use the High Street. This condition is therefore not necessary.

- 7.162** The Officer has commented that there is no assessment made of the Forelands Road junction with the High Street but has concluded that there would not be a significant increase in pollution as a result of an additional 400 cars due to the development. As a result, the Officer has confirmed no objection on the basis of air quality pollution for the construction or operational phases of the development.

Highway Considerations (including Rights of Way)

- 7.163** The proposed development would require the formation of new vehicular accesses onto Mill Road and the High Street, while also providing a new cycleway footpath between the High Street and Steyne Road, new pedestrian crossings and off-site highway improvements. Therefore, the impact of the development on the capacity of the wider transport network must be considered, as should the highway safety implications of new access arrangements and matters that relate to on-site access and parking arrangements. These matters are considered in turn below.

Highway network capacity

- 7.164** Due to the number of proposed dwellings, the applicant has provided a Transport Assessment (TA) to support the proposals. The TA includes data regarding the existing traffic levels for the area surrounding the site, including the highway junctions at nearby Hillway Road/ Mill Road mini roundabout, the Lane End Road priority junction and High Street junction. To provide a realistic picture of traffic levels within the existing network, traffic counts were undertaken in 2022 within the local highway network. This data allows an understanding of current traffic levels, the capacity of existing junctions and also the distribution of traffic within the local network. The findings of the surveys have been adjusted to take into account future traffic growth, and the housing development that has been resolved for approval on land to the south of Steyne Road (21/01884/FUL). The assessment of the impact of the proposed development is therefore based on future traffic levels at 2028.

- 7.165** The submitted information has also assessed the predicted traffic numbers associated with the proposed development, based on the nationally recognised TRICs database. This approach has been ratified by the Island Roads Highway Engineer. The TA uses this combined data, to predict how the development would impact on the capacity of the local highway network, in this case analysing the capacity of each arm of the nearby highway junctions listed above, and the junctions to serve the proposed development, during peak hours (am and pm peak periods of 08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00 respectively).

- 7.166** The approach to assessing junction capacity is based on ratios of flow to capacity (RFC) on each arm of a junction. Where the RFC of a junction is 1.00, it is considered that the junction is operating at capacity. However, due to the

variability of traffic flows on a daily basis, an RFC of 0.85 is considered to be the threshold above which, a junction is considered to be approaching its operational capacity. In this case, the TA found that the junctions of all arms of the existing assessed junctions, were operating well within capacity and that they would continue to do so in 2028, taking into account growth and committed development (see pages 37 to 39 of the TA).

7.167 The TA predicts that when using TRICS the proposed 130 houses would generate the following traffic movements during peak times:

	Trip Rates			Potential Trip Generation 130 dwellings		
	Arrivals	Departures	Two-Way	Arrivals	Departures	Two-Way
AM Peak	0.143	0.369	0.512	19	48	67
08:00-09:00						
PM Peak	0.335	0.157	0.492	44	20	64
17:00-18:00						

These figures are based on all of the housing being open market, privately owned housing, rather than considering the proposed affordable housing, in order to predict a worst-case scenario (the National Transport Survey 2021 found that car ownership of at least one car is lower among lower income households at 45 per cent compared with higher income households, at 41 per cent). These traffic movements are then distributed to the assessed junctions, based on the traffic distribution established by the traffic surveys, to establish whether the development would impact on traffic capacity during the am and pm peak hours, in the 2028 scenario.

7.168 The TA predicts that even with the proposed housing, committed development and growth factors taken into account, the arms of each of the assessed junctions would remain within capacity during am and pm peak hours. For the Hillway Road/ Mill Road mini roundabout, the highest RFC level would be experienced on the B3395 Sandown Road arm, but this would be 0.26 during the am peak hour, and 0.25 during the pm peak hour, with the remaining arms below this level. The Lane End Road arm of the Lane End junction would operate at an RFC level of 0.32 during the am peak hour and 0.22 during the pm peak hour, while the High Street junction would operate at an RFC level of 0.28 during the am peak hour and 0.20 during the pm peak hour. As a result, it is apparent that when taking into account the proposed development, local junctions would operate well within capacity and as result, the Island Roads Highway Engineer has advised that the development would not have a negative impact on the operation and safety of the surrounding highway network.

7.169 The TA has also assessed the operating capacity of the proposed junctions to serve the proposed development. Again, the TA predicts that these would operate with spare capacity during the am and pm peak hours.

7.170 The Highway Engineer has advised that there have been six traffic incidents related to the junctions close to the site. The Engineer has noted that four of the recorded collisions occurred at the existing Hillway Road/ Mill Road mini-

roundabout and that the proposed development would increase traffic flows at this junction. However, the Highway Engineer has advised that the proposed works on Steyne Road (road narrowing) would reduce approach speeds from Steyne Road and that this would be likely to result in a highway safety benefit. In addition, the Engineer has noted that an off-road shared use path is proposed within the development (between Steyne Road and the High Street) and advised that this would provide an alternative route for cyclists. Given the comments provided by Island Roads, it is considered that the proposed development would not compromise the capacity of the highway network.

Accessibility / Rights of Way

- 7.171** Policy BNDP.GA.2 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that improvement to the existing network of public rights of way will be supported by the creation of appropriate links. No rights of way pass through the site, however, there is a popular right of way located to the south-west of the site, that leads to Bembridge Windmill and that splits to allow walkers to continue on to Steyne Wood, or Brading Marshes. Access to the village centre is via the High Street, which at its southern end includes pavements, but these taper out in places, meaning that pedestrians must currently walk within the highway in places.
- 7.172** The submitted TA sets out a range of actions to promote accessibility, including a Framework Travel Plan (FTP) that aims to encourage and incentivise sustainable modes of travel, thus reducing reliance on the motor car. The TA advises that the site road layout has been designed to place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists above those of cars, allowing permeability between the site, and the local highway network. The road network has been designed to reduce vehicle speeds and allow space for pedestrians and cyclists to pass through the site safely. The development would also include a 3 metre wide cycleway footpath that would allow those on foot or bike to travel between the High Street and Steyne Road, without needing to use the highway network. In addition, a footpath link would be provided to allow access between the site and the local rights of way network around Bembridge Windmill. This would result in pedestrians having to walk between the Windmill, the village centre or Steyne Road without walking within the live carriageway, which is the existing situation.
- 7.173** The Council has recently adopted a Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Bembridge, Brading and St Helens, which aims to create high quality walking and cycling routes, and improve those that already exist, in order to encourage more people to embrace active travel modes. The LCWIP advises that evidence shows that many people would like to make walking and cycling a more regular part of their lives and the projects outlined within the document stem from extensive public engagement with local communities. The LCWIP for this area, identifies the provision of a range of walking and cycling projects, which are shown below (the site is marked with a red dot):

7.174



Figure 15 - Main suggested improvements EWW10

7.175 The submitted plans show that the works proposed within the High Street would generally reflect those sought through the LCWIP. New 1.5 metre wide footways would be provided between the site and the existing footways at the northern end of the High Street. These would establish a single footway, with the initial sections between the site and the mid-point of the High Street being on the eastern side of the highway, then crossing to the western side. To allow safe crossing, a new pinch point would be installed, adjacent to 93 High Street. This would reduce the width of the carriageway to 3.7 metres and allow priority for north bound vehicles, while including a dropped kerb, tactile crossing point for pedestrians. This would provide a new traffic calming feature, to slow vehicle speeds and allow people to cross safely. The Island Roads Highway Engineer has noted that parts of the footways would be narrow and so not suitable for all users but has noted the constraints of the High Street and advised that the improvements would offer enhanced facilities for vulnerable road users, being the best that can be achieved.

7.176 In addition, new tactile crossing points would be provided either side of the existing priority junction that serves Woodland Grove, adjacent to the application site. The southern side of the crossing would tie into a new 3 metre wide path, that would lead to the proposed High Street site access, continuing into the site, or onto a new crossing point to connect the right of way that leads to Bembridge Windmill, to the cycleway footpath within the application site. The northern section of this crossing would be finished with tactile paving while the opposite crossing point would be fenced to provide protection for pedestrians (the current junction here is wide) and so separate people and cars using this junction. In addition, a block paved strip would be provided between the Windmill Lane access and the highway, to raise awareness of the subdivision between the highway and crossing point.

- 7.177** The plans show that the on-site cycleway footpath would exit onto the northern side of Steyne Road, where a new crossing point would be installed. This would reflect the design of the High Street pinch point described above, therefore slowing vehicle speeds and providing priority to eastbound vehicles. A tactile crossing point would be provided for pedestrians and cyclists, allowing them to cross safely to the existing pavement that aligns the southern side of Steyne Road. This would provide connection to the proposed new cycleway footpath link that would pass through the Steyne Road housing site and allow pedestrians to pass between the southern end of Hillway Road, Steyne Road, the village centre or Bembridge Windmill without walking or cycling within the highway, which is the current situation. The Highway Engineer has advised that the proposed works have been assessed via a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, with no concerns raised. These improvements would provide significant accessibility improvements for walkers and cyclists within Bembridge, and reflect the key aims of the LCWIP.
- 7.178** The Council's Rights of Way Manager has welcomed the proposed cycleway footpath around the perimeter of the site given that the local highway network lacks adopted footways. The Manager also commented that the development would increase the use of local footpaths and therefore requested a financial contribution. However, it is noted that the proposed off-site highway works within the High Street would deliver a significant section of the improvements outlined within the LCWIP. The LCWIP, issued in 2021, costed those works to be in the region of £222,900 a figure that is likely to have risen due to the increased cost of construction materials. Moreover, the scheme would deliver a crossing point within Steyne Road and allow connectivity throughout the western edge of Bembridge. Given the extent of the highway improvements proposed by this development, it is considered by Planning Officers that a requirement for a further financial contribution would be unreasonable.
- 7.179** Census data from 2021 relating to methods of journeys to work showed 12 per cent of people in Bembridge walked to work, but that 74 per cent of people drive a car or van to work (the average for the Island was 66 per cent and nationally, 65 per cent. The FTP (appendix B of the TA), aims to build on the proposed on and off-site design measures to promote sustainable transport options. The aim of the FTP would be to:
- Raise awareness of the alternative sustainable travel options available
 - To minimise the need to travel by car, by promoting local facilities within walking/cycle distance
 - Provide each household with a Residents Travel Information Pack
 - Maintaining a line of communication with residents to ensure they have access to relevant travel information
- 7.180** The TA advises that the final Travel Plan would typically include the following measures:
- Distribution of Residents Travel Packs to the first occupant of each dwelling, providing details of public transport services (timetables & route maps), walking/cycling routes and services/facilities available
 - Provision of subsidised travel vouchers for public transport services (bus & rail) and/or cycle purchase
 - Completion of Personalised Travel Planning to each household

- Preparation of sustainable & Active Travel modes
- Preparation of a community website to provide details of the various travel options available
- Ongoing promotion of sustainable travel modes
- Completion of Residents Travel Surveys to establish travel patterns and behaviour
- Completion of Annual Monitoring Reports to record the success of the Travel Plan and modal shift to sustainable modes
- Liaison with residents, local stakeholders, bus operators in relation to the various sustainable travel options available.

The FTP reasons that the Travel Plan could be reviewed after each monitoring report had been undertaken, to ensure that the measures contained within it were effective. Officers consider that the Travel Plan would add to the proposed on-site and off-site works to increase the accessibility of the site and promote sustainable forms of travel.

Highway Safety

- 7.181** Policy DM2 of the Island Plan requires developments be accessible and safe. The proposed development would be served by two new vehicle accesses, one onto Bembridge High Street, the other onto Mill Road. The Mill Road access would involve the modification of an existing field gate access into the site, which is situated approximately 150m northwest of the Mill Road/ Hillway Road mini roundabout. This access would be upgraded to form a single priority T-junction access. The access into the High Street would comprise a bell-mouth junction, with a central build out that would require vehicles leaving the site to turn left, in order to limit traffic within the High Street. Two additional minor accesses would also be provided at the north-west corner of the site to serve two dwellings (units 12 and 13). As noted within the above paragraphs, a new pedestrian crossing point would be provided to allow access to Bembridge Windmill, and new pedestrian/ cycle access would be provided at the southern point of site, via Steyne Road.
- 7.182** The Island Roads Highway Engineer has advised that both highways are restricted to 30 mph speed limits, at the point of the proposed junctions. However, speed surveys undertaken by the applicant have shown that the average speeds within Mill Road are 34.8mph eastbound and 32.7mph westbound. Within Bembridge High Street, average vehicle speeds were found to be 32.5mph northbound and 35.5mph southbound. As a result, the proposed access within Mill Road would require visibility splays measuring 53.1 metres to the west and 48.5 metres to the east. The proposed access within the High Street would require visibility splays measuring 55.9 metres to the south and 49 metres to the north. The Highway Engineer has advised that subject to the works set out within the proposed plans being undertaken and to conditions being imposed to restrict the height of hedgerows to 0.6 metres, that the junctions would meet these visibility requirements and highway design standards.
- 7.183** The proposed plans show that the Steyne Road cycleway footpath access would comprise visibility splays measuring 2.4 x 47 metres. While speed surveys were not conducted for this section of the highway network, the Island Roads Highway

Engineer has advised that Department for Transport information shows that average speeds within a 30mph environment are likely to be 37 mph, leading to a requirement for visibility splays measuring 59 metres. The Engineer has advised that this distance can be achieved when measured from a point 1.5 metres back from the edge of the proposed build out, except for the south-western build out to the north-east (57m rather than 59m). However, the Engineer has reasoned that this splay would relate to traffic approaching from the north-east which would be required to give way at the crossing point/build out and that a slight relaxation would not be detrimental to highway safety.

- 7.184** The Highway Engineer has advised that the proposed crossing point related to Bembridge Windmill would require visibility splays measuring 1.5 by 49 metres to the north and 48.5 metres to the east, in order to deliver a safe crossing point. The Engineer has advised that sections of the site boundary hedgerows would need to be cut back or lowered so that its height would not exceed 0.6 metres in height. Officers consider that a hedgerow this low would appear unusual and therefore consider that setting back the hedge would be a more favourable option. This section of the site is proposed to form a wide area of open space, and it is considered that sufficient space would exist to provide a suitable replacement hedgerow, and thus strike a balance between the rural character of the area and the need for visibility splays. Subject to conditions being imposed to secure the final design of proposed means of access to the site, it is considered that the development would comply with the requirements of policy DM2 of the Island Plan.

Onsite layout

- 7.185** The TA advises that the onsite highway layout has been designed to create a hierarchy that would serve the needs of residents and place pedestrians and cyclists before cars. This approach to highway layout is based on the design principles of the Poundbury Development in Dorchester, Dorset. The road layout has been designed as a hierarchy comprising three tiers of road types. The main access routes, termed as secondary streets for the purposes of the National Design Code, would be subject of a 20mph speed limit, with the main entrance boulevard from High Street containing a central pathway that would separate inbound and outbound traffic. The next tier, local streets, would be narrower but connect to the secondary streets. Their primary purpose would be to provide access to properties and parking areas.
- 7.186** The final tier, tertiary streets, have been termed 'the lanes' for this development. The lanes would prioritise pedestrian and cycle connectivity and have been designed to have angled road alignment to slow speeds and provide a safe environment for all road users. The Island Roads Highway Engineer has confirmed that the proposed street hierarchy would comply with the requirements of the NPPF and relevant highway design guidance. In addition, the Highway Engineer has confirmed that all parking spaces should measure 2.4 by 4.8 metres or 3 by 6 metres where parallel to the highway and commented that this should be conditioned. Subject to the conditions recommended by the Highway Engineer, it is considered that the proposed onsite highway layout would comply with policy DM2 of the Island Plan and relevant highway design guidance.

Park provision

- 7.187** The Council's Guidelines for Parking Provision as Part of New Developments SPD defines the application site as being within Zone 2 for parking measures. As a result, the following guidelines should be met:
- 1 car space per 1 – 2-bedroom unit
 - 2 car spaces per 3 – 4-bedroom unit
 - 3 car spaces per 5 bedroom or greater unit
 - 1 covered cycle space per unit

In addition, policy BNDP.GA.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires housing development to provide a minimum of one off road parking space for units with 1 to 2 bedrooms and a minimum of two off road parking spaces for units with 3 or more bedrooms.

- 7.188** The submitted plans show that the proposed housing would include slightly in excess of the requisite number of parking spaces, which officers consider to be acceptable and would limit the risk of on road parking by visitors. In addition, the Highway Engineer has noted that the submitted plans currently show no cycle parking provision. However, the TA advises that cycle parking would be provided within rear gardens of each dwelling in the form of secure storage units or cycle sheds, with all dwellings to have space for at least two bicycles. The Highway Engineer has reasoned that the site would comprise sufficient space to accommodate cycle parking and bin stores. It is considered that the required cycle spaces and bin stores could be secured by planning condition.

Construction traffic

- 7.189** The TA advises that a detailed construction management plan would be prepared via a planning condition but advises that a restriction of 100 vehicle movements per day would cater for peak construction periods. In addition, the TA advises that a routing strategy would be adopted to ensure that all delivery vehicles used an approved route to and from the site. The TA anticipates that traffic would access the village via Sandown Road, to avoid impacts to the High Street and other sensitive routes. In addition, the TA advises that within the site, a speed limit would apply, and designated areas would be set up for a delivery compound and parking for contractors. The TA reasons that the site would be laid out so as to minimise the need for reversing of construction vehicles and provision would be made so that delivery vehicles can park and wait off the public highway to reduce impacts on local roads. In addition, separate compounds would be provided for cabins and storage of materials.
- 7.190** The submitted information states that the site could take up to two years to construct, although given the number of houses officers consider that this could be up to four years. The information advises that a phased approach would be adopted to allow site set up and to develop various sections of the site. Over these periods, the information advises that the site would be operational between 08:00 and 18:00 hours, Monday to Friday, and 08:00 to 13:00 hours on Saturdays. No work will be carried out on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays. These are considered to be reasonable hours of working. Officers consider that the fine detail relating to the management of the construction site, vehicle routing and issues such as prevent material from escaping onto the highway could be

secured through pre-commencement conditions.

Conclusion on highway considerations

- 7.191** Having regard to the above, it is concluded that, subject to securing the proposed access and highway works by condition, the proposed development would provide safe and suitable access, would promote sustainable travel options, reduce car reliance, and while it would result in an overprovision of parking, compared to the standards within the Council's Parking Guidelines, officers do not consider that this would weight against the proposals. Therefore, the proposed development would not negatively impact on the highway network in accordance with the aims of policies SP7 and DM17 of the Island Plan and the NPPF. In addition, the development would assist in delivering the sustainable transport improvements set out within the LCWIP, allowing pedestrians to walk, and in places cycle, between the site to the village, and onto Bembridge Windmill and the surrounding local highway network and reducing the distance require to walk or cycle within the highway. In terms of the overall balance of consideration for this development, highway related matters are considered to be a neutral factor, neither weighing for or against the proposal. However, the provision of the on and offsite sustainable transport improvements are considered to be moderately beneficial and weigh in favour of the scheme.

Drainage and flood risk

- 7.192** Planning policy guidance aims to steer development away from areas at the highest risk of flooding. The site is located within flood zone 1 and at the least risk of flooding, and as a result the requirement for a Sequential Test and Exceptions Test as set out within the NPPF are not engaged. In addition, the Environment Agency's Surface Water Flood Map shows that much of the site has a very low risk of surface water flooding, with the remainder being at low risk. The site is therefore, considered to be strategically acceptable in terms of flood risk. However, the development should be designed to prevent it from causing localised flood events.
- 7.193** The Council's Sustainable Drainage SPD advises that the Council expects all developments to include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), with the document outlining that SuDS scheme should manage surface water flood risk, be appropriate to the Island, its geology and hydrology, deliver social, environmental and financial benefits, aim to meet a range of sustainability and place-making objectives, be clearly presented and have clear responsibilities for future maintenance and management. The ultimate aim of the SPD is for the quantity and quality of surface water to be managed during flood events and also naturally filter pollution, preventing it from entering rivers and the sea.
- 7.194** In addition, the Council undertook a Flood Investigation in relation to flood events within Bembridge (Bembridge Section 19 Flood Investigation, May 2022) and this found that there were flood events reported in Bembridge on eight separate occasions in 2021. Appendix L (Bembridge) of the Isle of Wight Local Flood Risk Management Strategy explains that modelled surface water flood risk tends to follow the highways in Bembridge as there are no formal watercourses of significance, with those most likely to be subject to overland flow including

Steyne Road, with surface water flooding generally contained by the highway.

- 7.195** The Section 19 Investigation showed that flooding events took place at the Steyne Road roundabout, where flows converged to cause ponding here (see section 4.2.2 of document) with some ponding further east, within Steyne Road and within Mill Road. These events were caused by exceptionally high rainfall events that the Environment Agency has predicted to have an approximate 2 to 5% probability of occurring annually.
- 7.196** The Investigation advises that there is no single source of flooding, and instead various issues such as gravel run off to combined sewers from unsurfaced roads contribute to flooding. The Flood Investigation proposes potential strategic solutions to flood issues within Bembridge. These include the use of modelling for the drainage system for the whole village, to allow a surface water management plan to be adopted that would seek to address the issues causing flooding, a property flood resilience scheme, upstream flood attenuation and improvements to the management of gullies, ditches and other drainage assets. The Investigation advises that 'Development offers one way of mitigating current surface water flood risk through on-site measures that would otherwise be unlikely to be economically viable on their own or delivered.' In addition, the Investigation stated that 'increasing the ditch capacity and the efficiency of water entering the ditch system on Mill Lane could reduce the volume of surface water flowing along the surface of Mill Road and therefore reduce flooding on roundabout at the top of Steyne Road, where flows from four roads (including Mill Road) converge.'
- 7.197** The application has been supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The Island Roads Highway Engineer has queried the Drainage Strategy, stating that it is only a desk top report, with no infiltration testing undertaken and noting that historically, the area has been found to be unsuitable for infiltration drainage. The Highways Engineer has stated that drainage would therefore need to be attenuated on site and slow released to a positive drainage system. The Engineer has also stated that no ditches at the site are connected to the highway drainage system, and that as a result, surface water drainage could not be connected to the highway system.
- 7.198** The Drainage Strategy notes that the site does not currently include any formal drainage infrastructure, but that there is a ditch network that aligns the southern boundary of the site, as well as a ditch on the south-eastern boundary that connects to highway drains in Steyne Road, with CCTV surveys undertaken to confirm this. The Strategy advises that the site is likely to be underlain partially by the Bembridge Marls Member, which comprises thin sands, clays, silts, mudstone and limestone and the Bembridge Raised Beach Member, which comprises sands, muds, clays and gravels. British Geological Survey (BGS) Maps show that these two geological types cross the site. Due to the presence of sand and gravel, the site may be suitable for natural infiltration of surface water, with the Strategy reasoning that there would be some infiltration of the site, at a high level. Therefore, the Strategy concludes that soakaways would be achievable, but with conservative run-off rates applied in order to calculate the extent of the storage measures required on site.

- 7.199** The Strategy advises that the proposed surface water drainage system has been designed to account for the standard 1 in 100 year flood event, thus building in capacity for climate change. Rather than directing surface water drainage to the highway drainage system, the Drainage Strategy states that it would be managed on site. Permeable blocks would be used for parking spaces and driveways and the shared courtyard and smaller roads would be finished in angular crushed stone to generate a 30 per cent void space which has been designed to cater for a 1 in 100 year flood event, with the standard 40 per cent addition to account for climate change. This would allow rainwater to fill the void space during rainfall, and to then infiltrate direct to the ground.
- 7.200** The main access roads would be finished with standard hard surfaces, and these would not allow surface water to be infiltrated direct to the ground. In the western field, surface water would be collected by roadside gullies and be piped to two underground storage tanks, which would store water and then allow it to drain away naturally. The eastern field would comprise a similar system, with surface water to be directed by pipework to two ponds, one directly to the east of the Mill Road access and another within the south-eastern corner of the site. These would store collected water and then allow it to infiltrate to the ground. It is noted that the majority of the access roads, parking areas and parking spaces in the eastern field would be permeable meaning that in these areas, a smaller area of impermeable surfaces would be treated.
- 7.201** The concerns of the Highway Engineer are noted; however, the information shows that the site would allow some infiltration, with most areas to be constructed to be permeable, with sizeable storage areas provide for those areas that would be impermeable. At this stage, officers consider that the information sets out a high-level solution for surface water drainage that demonstrates that surface water could be dealt with on site. It is considered that the final detailed design, location and size of storage tanks could be secured by condition and be informed by further infiltration tests on site. In addition, details of the necessary hydrocarbon filters, silt traps and a management regime for the drainage system could be agreed by condition.
- 7.202** As outlined within the ecology section of this report, foul water from the development would be directed to the public sewer. Southern Water have advised that based on their initial assessment, the additional flows of foul water from the development may lead to an increased risk of foul flooding from the sewer network but advised that network reinforcement that is deemed necessary to mitigate this would be provided by Southern Water. Off-site upgrades to cater for new developments are covered by the Drainage Act and are therefore agreement for upgrades are separate to the planning process. As a result, on the basis of the Drainage Strategy, officers are satisfied that the development could deliver a suitable on site surface water drainage strategy. The development is considered to comply with the requirements of policy DM14 of the Island Plan with the flood alleviation measures provided to be moderately beneficial benefits that weigh in favour of the scheme.

Other matters

Renewable energy

- 7.203** The submitted Energy Statement states that homes at the site would be energy efficient and 'A' rated, advising that the development would offer resilience to climate change and where possible, avoid the need for future retrofitting, via the inclusion of appropriate low carbon heating whilst also considering the best cost/performance balance at the time the site is delivered. The Statement sets out a process based on reducing energy demand and improving efficiency. To reduce energy demand, housing would be orientated on an east-west axis, with high ceilings and larger windows to optimise daylight. In addition, the fabric of the buildings would be insulated to reduce heat losses, with materials chosen to have a high thermal mass in order to absorb and store heat. In addition, all lighting would be based on high efficiency LED systems and sanitary ware would be fitted with low flow systems to reduce water use. To improve energy efficiency, the heating and hot water systems for housing would be provided via air source heat pumps. Moreover, the Energy Resource Plan for the site shows houses fitted with solar panels and air source heat pumps. Electric charging points would be provided for vehicles, within the parking areas adjacent to properties. A member of the public has raised concern that the charging points would be away from properties, but the plans show that these would be close to houses, in sensible areas.

Minerals Safeguarding Area

- 7.204** The Council's maps show that the site includes a moderate area of minerals deposits, which cover approximately half of the western field. DM20 (Minerals) seeks to protect Minerals Safeguarding Areas unless it can be shown that the deposit is no longer of any value, the minerals could be extracted prior to the development taking place, or there is an overriding need for the development. In this case, the deposit is a relatively moderate area of an area of geology to the south and west, that to date has not been extracted. Much of the remainder of this deposit is within TPO woodland, a candidate site for protected species of Brent geese and wading birds (SWBGS) or is located directly adjacent to Bembridge Windmill, which are likely to be under different ownership. As a result, it is considered that the deposit is unlikely to come forward and that development in the absence of extraction would not be contrary to policy DM20.
- UNESCO Biosphere*

- 7.205** Comments have been received suggesting that the proposed development would conflict with the Isle of Wight UNESCO Biosphere designation. The Isle of Wight was designated as an UNESCO Biosphere reserve in 2019. The UNESCO website outlines that:
- "Biosphere reserves are 'learning places for sustainable development'. They are sites for testing interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and managing changes and interactions between social and ecological systems, including conflict prevention and management of biodiversity."
- It is noted that the submission to secure Biosphere status included the Council's planning policies and its approach to development. As such, it is considered that the status, which is not a planning designation, would not be negatively impacted by the Council permitting sustainable development.

- 7.206** The designation identifies the ecological characteristics of the IOW represents a unique assemblage of species highlighting the nexus between the northern most point for some species and the southernmost point for others. It also highlights the uniqueness of the Island's woodlands for the co-existence of stable populations of red squirrels, hazel dormouse, Bechstein bat and barbastelle bat.
- 7.207** The socio-economic characteristics are referred to as being a "strong, modern manufacturing sector in comparison with southeast England, as a result of companies and local supply chains in marine industries, aerospace, and composite material production; plus a healthy level of self-employment and micro-businesses, many of which are attracted by the quality of place offered by the Island. These, allied to the visitor economy and the offer to tourists, provide the opportunity for sustainable growth." (Isle of Wight Biosphere Reserve, United Kingdom (unesco.org)). The importance of tourism to the Islands economy is also highlighted, although the changes to holidaying over the last 30 years is acknowledged, which has resulting in a gradual decline.
- 7.208** As set out above, the proposed development is not considered to have an unacceptable impact on trees or protected species and would result in socio-economic benefits and as such, officers consider that the proposed development would not compromise the designation, which is focused on allowing sustainable development to take place.

Community consultation

- 7.209** Third party comments have raised concerns that the applicant has not carried out adequate consultation with the community. Public consultation for major developments is considered to be good practise, although there is not a legal or policy requirement for it to be carried out. However, the application is supported by a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out the community involvement process undertaken prior to the planning application being submitted. The SCI confirms that one to one meetings were held with the Parish Council, Build a Better Bembridge (a local interest group) and the ward Councillor. In addition, focus group meetings were held with representatives from the local Primary School, sports and social clubs and campaign groups. In addition, a newsletter was sent to residents of properties that adjoin the application site and a public exhibition was also held at Bembridge Primary School, where comment cards were provided for feedback on the proposals. The SCI confirms that lengthy dialogue was undertaken with stakeholders and the public prior to the application being submitted.

Publication of the planning application

- 7.210** Members of the public have raised concerns regarding the publication of the planning application. One comment states that as of 3rd January 2024 there were no planning site notices advertising the planning application. Site notices were placed at the site on three occasions in December 2023, April and June 2024. The site notices were placed on the corner of Woodland Grove and Bembridge High Street and adjacent to the proposed crossing point at Steyne Road. When new site notices were erected, they were placed over the original notices, showing that the original notices were erected.

7.211 Public comments have also referred to poor timing of the initial public consultation period over Christmas 2023. The first public consultation took place from 8th December 2023, finishing on 3rd January 2024. The planning regulations take account of holiday periods, and therefore additional days are added to the standard 21-day consultation period, for each Bank Holiday that the period covers resulting in a 25 day consultation period. In addition, there have been two additional consultation periods for this planning application, the first beginning on 3rd May and ending on 28th May 2023 (this covered Bank Holidays and therefore additional days were added) and the final consultation running between 21st June and 12th July 2023. As a result, the required statutory consultation periods have been undertaken in relation to this planning application.

8. Planning balance and conclusions

8.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system is planned and that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development. In the same way, planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The role of the planning system is to balance issues, particularly where they compete and compare the benefits of a proposed development with any identified harm. In this context, the NPPF advises that the planning system has three overarching objectives, these being economic, social and environmental objectives. These issues are balanced below:

Economic

8.2 The NPPF states that the economic objective is to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth. The application would result in the creation of a moderate number of jobs both directly through the construction process, but also indirectly through local suppliers. Together with the economic benefits associated with job creation the scheme would also result in benefits through council tax, business rates, the new homes bonus and additional footfall for the various shops and businesses within the nearby village centre. The proposed use of the land for residential purposes would result in the loss of a moderate area of lower quality farmland however, the proposal is considered to result in greater economic benefits to outweigh this loss. Officers consider that the development would provide minor economic benefits that would weigh in favour of the scheme.

Social

8.3 The NPPF states that the social objective is to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, referring to supporting the community's health, social and cultural well-being. The proposed development would deliver 130 additional residential units, of which 46 (35 per cent) would be affordable housing, contributing significantly towards meeting the locally identified housing need (both in terms of a shortfall over the last five years and looking forward), which in turn would help meet the Island's significant housing need. The provision of new homes would also positively contribute to alleviating local affordability issues, and by providing family-sized accommodation and assist local home ownership

that can help sustain the local school, shops and facilities. Together with the high quality design of the housing, the scheme would also provide a network of open spaces, ranging from the larger square within the centre of the western field and green to be located within the south western corner of the site, to smaller open spaces in the centre of the site, establishing a network of open spaces for residents to use.

- 8.4** The proposals would also enhance sustainable access to the wider area by providing comprehensive improvements to the High Street for pedestrians, therefore contributing to the delivery of proposed LCWIP. These improvements would benefit both residents of the proposed development and existing residents wishing to walk between the residential areas that adjoin the High Street and the village centre. The development would also provide onward pedestrian links to the public footpath network surrounding Bembridge Windmill, allowing walkers to access these areas without needing to walk within the live carriageway. Moreover, the proposed cycleway footpath path through the site would allow walkers and cyclists to travel between the High Street to Steyne Road off of the highway, while linking with the links proposed for land south of Steyne Road, which leads to the coastal footpath to the south of the village. Officers consider that the development would not result in substantial harm to heritage assets, nor would it compromise the amenity of occupants of nearby properties or highway safety, while providing a suitable means of access for all users.
- 8.5** Paragraph 60 of the NPPF states that it is a Government objective to significantly boost the supply of housing. In addition, paragraph 70 of the NPPF reasons that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, because these are often built out relatively quickly. Bearing this in mind and the contents of the principle section of this report, it is considered that the additional housing combined with other social benefits provided by this development would weigh substantially in favour of this scheme.

Environmental

- 8.6** The NPPF states that the environmental objective is to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 8.7** The proposed development would not compromise designated sites, and confirmation has been provided that wastewater from the development would be directed to the WwTW in Sandown and therefore avoid impacts to the Solent SPAs/ Ramsar site. In addition, surface water would be dealt with on site, with the SuDS ponds combining the create new habitat on site. The applicant has also committed to providing financial contributions in line with the Bird Aware Solent Mitigation Strategy, therefore mitigating the recreational effects of the development on protected species of over-wintering wildfowl. The proposed development would not compromise protected species or habitats on site and deliver biodiversity improvements.

- 8.8** The development would retain protected and non-protected trees and while the majority of the hedgerow that divides the site would be retained. The existing external boundary hedgerows would largely be retained, apart from sections removed to form means of access to the site. This would be partially mitigated by proposed landscape planting, which would result in a network of landscaping to provide connectivity.
- 8.9** The proposed development would be visually contained from distant viewpoints and would have a limited visual impact when seen from much of the adjoining village. However, the development would be readily visible from the landscape and visual receptors immediately to the south and south-west, and particularly so from the southern end of Bembridge High Street and Mill Road, from where the development would materially alter the rural feel of the area, resulting in a moderate to significantly harmful impact on the current rural and open character of the immediate area. The development would also result in moderate to significantly harmful visual impacts when seen from the residential properties that align the north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the site. Officers consider that the level of landscape and visual change would materially weigh against this development.

Conclusion

- 8.10** The lack of housing delivery on the Island represents a significant shortfall of housing, which has resulted in the presumption in favour of sustainable development being applied to the Council. On a parish level the lack of delivery of market and affordable homes has meant that the need identified in both the parish HNS and the Council's HNA has not been met.
- 8.11** The proposal seeks to provide 130 new homes in Bembridge, and officers consider that the development would result in minor economic benefits, with moderate to significantly adverse environmental impacts. The environmental and social factors of this assessment are considered to be finely balanced, and officers consider that the environmental harm caused by this development, as a result of the landscape and visual impacts of the scheme, would be outweighed by the substantial social benefits brought through the delivery of housing within a sustainable location. As a result, having given due regard and appropriate weight to all relevant planning policies and material considerations the application is considered, on balance, to be acceptable, subject to appropriate mitigation, which can be secured by conditions and a Section 106 Agreement.

9. Statement of Proactive Working

9.1 ARTICLE 31 - WORKING WITH THE APPLICANT

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF, the Isle of Wight Council takes a positive approach to development proposals focused on solutions to secure sustainable developments that improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area. Where development proposals are considered to be sustainable, the Council aims to work proactively with applicants in the following ways:

- By offering a pre-application advice service; and
- Updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and, where there is not a principle objection to the proposed development, suggest solutions where possible.

The application has been subject to negotiations and additional information has been submitted through the course of the application which has overcome the Council's concerns.

10. Conditions/Reasons

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbered below, unless subject to agreement of details via the conditions within this decision notice:

Location plan

DWC-SP01-00-DR-A-0010 Rev C

Site plans

DWC-SP02-01-DR-A-0010 Rev E

DWC-SP02-02-DR-A-0010 Rev E

DWC-SP03-01-DR-A-0010 Rev B

DWC-SP03-02-DR-A-0010 Rev B

DWC-SP03-03-DR-A-0010 Rev A

DWC-SP04-00-DR-A-0010 Rev F

DWC-SP05-01-DR-A-0010 Rev E

DWC-SP05-02-DR-A-0010 Rev E

DWC-SP06-01-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP06-02-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP07-02-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP07-02-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP08-01-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP08-02-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP09-01-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP09-01-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP10-01-DR-A-0010 Rev D
DWC-SP10-02-DR-A-0010 Rev D

DWC-SP11-01-DR-A-0010 Rev E
DWC-SP11-02-DR-A-0010 Rev E

DWC-SP12-01-DR-A-0010
DWC-SP12-02-DR-A-0010

DWC-SP14-01-DR-A-0010 Rev C
DWC-SP14-02-DR-A-0010 Rev C

DWC-SP15-01-DR-A-0010 Rev B
DWC-SP15-02-DR-A-0010 Rev B

o30_155_001i
o30_155_201G
o30_155_202G

BEM1-DWC-ABX-01-DR-A-0050-A
BEM1-DWC-ABX-01-DR-A-0051-A
BEM1-DWC-ABX-01-DR-A-0052-A
BEM1-DWC-ABX-01-DR-A-0053-A

Highway plans

6843.001 Rev G
6843.003 Rev E
6843.015 Rev M

Housing types & buildings

DWC-SP14-01-DR-A-0010 Rev C
DWC-SP14-02-DR-A-0010 Rev C

BEM1-DWC-A1X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE A1
BEM1-DWC-A2X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE A2
BEM1-DWC-A3X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE A3
BEM1-DWC-B1X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE B1
BEM1-DWC-B2X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE B2
BEM1-DWC-B3X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE B3
BEM1-DWC-C1X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE C1
BEM1-DWC-C1X-02-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE C1
BEM1-DWC-DXX-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE D
BEM1-DWC-E1X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE E1
BEM1-DWC-E2X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE E2
BEM1-DWC-H1X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE H1
BEM1-DWC-H1X-02-DR-A-0051-C - HOUSE TYPE H1
BEM1-DWC-H2X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE H2
BEM1-DWC-J1X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE J1
BEM1-DWC-J1X-02-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE J1

BEM1-DWC-J3X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE J3
BEM1-DWC-J3X-02-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE J3
BEM1-DWC-J4X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE J4
BEM1-DWC-O1X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE O1
BEM1-DWC-O2X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE O2
BEM1-DWC-P1X-00-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P1
BEM1-DWC-P2X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P2
BEM1-DWC-P3X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P3
BEM1-DWC-P4X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P4
BEM1-DWC-P5X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE P5
BEM1-DWC-P6X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE P6
BEM1-DWC-P7X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P7
BEM1-DWC-P8X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P8
BEM1-DWC-P9X-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE P9
BEM1-DWC-P10-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P10
BEM1-DWC-P11-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P11
BEM1-DWC-P12-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P12
BEM1-DWC-P13-01-DR-A-0050-B - HOUSE TYPE P13
BEM1-DWC-P14-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P14
BEM1-DWC-P15-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P15
BEM1-DWC-P21-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P21
BEM1-DWC-P22-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P22
BEM1-DWC-P23-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE P23
BEM1-DWC-S1X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S1
BEM1-DWC-S2X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S2
BEM1-DWC-S3X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S3
BEM1-DWC-S4X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S4
BEM1-DWC-S5X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S5
BEM1-DWC-S5X-02-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S5
BEM1-DWC-S6X-01-DR-A-0050-A - HOUSE TYPE S6

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the development in accordance with the aims of policy DM2 Design Quality for New Development of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

3. The construction of the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with a phasing plan, that has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. Each phase of development shall be completed with associated drainage and highway infrastructure, landscaping and other matters as approved by the other conditions for this planning permission, unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area and highway safety and to avoid impacts to protected species and habitats and to comply with policies DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre-commencement condition, given the early stage in the development process that a phasing plan would be required.

4. No development shall take place until the results of a pre-commencement archaeological trial trench evaluation (including geoarchaeological investigation) have been submitted. The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been agreed in writing by the County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service and approved by the planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that an appropriate scheme can be implemented to mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Isle of Wight Council Island Plan Core Strategy.

5. No development shall take place until: a) the applicant or their agent has secured the implementation of an appropriate programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been agreed in writing by the County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service and approved by the planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details. OR b) the County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service has agreed that no further archaeological mitigation is required.

Reason: To mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets and to ensure that information regarding these heritage assets is preserved by record in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Isle of Wight Council Island Plan Core Strategy.

6. To facilitate monitoring of the on-site archaeological works, notification of the start date and appointed archaeological contractor should be given in writing to the address below not less than 14 days before commencement of any archaeological works:- Isle of Wight County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service Westridge Centre Brading Road Ryde Isle of Wight PO33 1QS.

Reason: To mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets and to ensure that information regarding these heritage assets is preserved by record in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Isle of Wight Council Island Plan Core Strategy.

7. No development shall take place until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in respect of:
 - Steps to prevent material being deposited on the highway as a result of any operations on the site in connection with the approved development. Such steps shall include the installation and use of wheel cleaning facilities for vehicles connected to the construction of the development. Any deposit of material from the site on the highway shall be removed as soon as practicable by the site operator
 - Areas on site for the parking, loading, unloading, circulation and turning off all construction vehicles to include for operative vehicles within the confines of the site throughout the build process
 - Measures to prevent impacts on nearby properties, including hours of

working and delivery times, the loading and unloading of plant and materials, storage areas for plant and machinery and parking and access arrangements for construction vehicles to enter and leave the site

- Measures to control the emission of dust, noise and dirt resulting from the site preparation, groundwork and construction phases of the development
- A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from construction works

- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate

The agreed facilities/ operational measures shall be installed prior to the commencement of development and shall be retained in accordance with the approved details during the construction phase of the development.

Reason: In the interests of protecting neighbouring amenity, highway safety and to prevent mud and dust from getting on the highway and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre-commencement due to the requirement for on-site working methods to be in place during the site preparation and construction processes.

8. No development shall take place until an Ecological Management Plan (EMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The EMP shall set out measures to protect wildlife during both construction and operational phases of the development, based on the principles of the submitted ecological information. The EMP shall include the following additional information:

- The methods of construction and works for clearing vegetation on a precautionary basis (by hand or using light machinery to be agreed as part of this condition) to prevent harm to protected species
- Measures to prevent open trenches from infilling with water, to prevent trapping of wildlife
- Details of working methods to prevent harm to wildlife and habitats at the site
- Details of the location and number of bird and bat boxes and swift bricks to be installed at the site
- Methods of ensuring wildlife connectivity throughout the site
- Details of additional planting and habitat creation, including the areas surrounding the proposed SuDS features

If during any stage of development of the site protected species are identified that would be impacted by the approved works, an ecologist should be contacted to ensure compliance with wildlife regulations, including periods when works should cease due to nesting and hibernation seasons.

Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid impacts to, and to ensure the favourable conservation status of protected species and habitats, in the interests of the ecological value and

visual amenity of the area and to comply with the requirements of policies SP5 (Environment), DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre commencement condition due to the requirement to protect ecology at all stages of site works.

9. Prior to the construction of any above ground works to any dwelling hereby permitted a scheme of soft landscaping in accordance with the principles shown on the approved plans and supporting landscape strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Soft landscape works shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities. Plant species should be beneficial to pollinators, non-invasive and preferably native. All planting in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the phasing plan required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition 3. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the implementation of the landscaping within each phase die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory, to provide suitable habitat buffers and to comply with the requirements of policies SP5 (Environment), DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

10. No development shall take place until a scheme for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water from the development hereby permitted, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, based on the principles of the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy submitted in support of this planning application. Details shall include a management regime for drainage and flood risk alleviation measures to be incorporated as part of the development. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme, which shall be completed in accordance with the phasing plan required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition 3.

The development shall be connected to the public sewer system for the disposal of foul water, which shall be directed to the Southern Water Wastewater Treatment Works at Sandown for treatment.

Reason: To ensure that the site is suitably drained, to prevent issues of local flooding and to comply with policies SP5 (Environment), DM2 (Design Quality for New Development), DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and DM14 (Flood Risk) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is

pre-commencement condition, given the early stage at which drainage infrastructure would be installed.

11. No development shall take place until an Arboreal Method Statement has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority detailing how the potential impact to the trees will be minimised during construction works, including details of protective tree fencing to be installed for the duration of construction works. The agreed method statement will then be adhered to throughout the development of the site.

Reason: This condition is a pre-commencement condition to prevent damage to trees during construction and to ensure that the high amenity tree(s) to be retained is adequately protected from damage to health and stability throughout the construction period in the interests of the amenity in compliance with Policy DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

12. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until engineering details of the junctions between the proposed service roads and the highway (Steyne Road, High Street and Mill Road) have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied, until the junction for the relevant phase has been constructed in accordance with the agreed details, in accordance with the phasing plans to be agreed via condition 3.

Reason: To ensure that a safe and suitable highway environment is provided and maintained for all users in the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre commencement condition due to the stage in the development for which these works would be implemented.

13. Development of each phase of the development hereby permitted, shall not begin until details of the design, surfacing and construction of any new roads, footways, multi-use paths, accesses and car parking areas for that phase, together with details of the means of disposal of surface water drainage there from, have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The roads, footways, multi-use paths, accesses and car parking areas shall be constructed for each phase of the development in accordance with the agreed details, supplied in the phasing plan submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition 3.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre commencement condition due to the stage in the development for which these works would be implemented.

14. Development of each phase of the development hereby permitted shall not begin until details of the sight lines to be provided at the junctions for each phase and between the vehicular and pedestrian accesses of the development site and High Street, Mill Road and Steyne Road have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No dwelling within the phase which the relevant access serves shall be occupied until those sight lines have been

provided in accordance with the approved details. Nothing that may cause an obstruction to visibility shall at any time be placed or be permitted to remain within the visibility splay shown in the approved sight lines.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre commencement condition due to the stage in the development for which these works would be implemented.

15. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until car parking spaces and related turning areas serving that dwelling has been provided as detailed on the approved plans. The spaces shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than that approved in accordance with this condition.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policies DM17 (Sustainable Transport) and policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

16. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points at the intersection of the proposed cycleway footpath and Steyne Road and at the junction of the access serving Bembridge Windmill and Mill Road and the highway works within the High Street shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved works shall be completed in accordance with details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in the phasing plan required by condition 3.

Reason: To ensure that a safe and suitable highway environment is provided and maintained for all users in the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy. This is a pre commencement condition due to the stage in the development for which these works would be implemented.

17. No boundary treatments, bike or bin stores shall be installed until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment, bike and bin stores to be erected. The boundary treatments, bike and bin stores shall be completed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in the phasing plan required by condition 3. The details shall set out measures to allow free movement of mammals. Development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of maintaining the amenity value of the area and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

18. No external lighting shall be installed until details of means of external lighting for the development have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include measures to minimise light pollution and to prevent glare. The external lighting should be wildlife sensitive and shall follow the recommendations within Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night – Guidance Note

08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust).
Development shall be carried and maintained out in accordance with the agreed details and be retained thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby residential properties, to prevent light pollution from harming the character of the surrounding area and species of wildlife and to comply with the requirements of policies DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

19. No development shall take place above foundation level until details of the materials and finishes, including mortar colour, bargeboards, cladding, window and door specifications and rainwater goods to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to comply with policy DM2 Design Quality for New Development of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

20. No external hard surfaces shall be installed until details of the materials to be used to form the hard surface areas within the development site including any pathways, vehicle access and turning areas shall be submitted in writing and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to comply with policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

21. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no means of enclosure (other than those shown on the approved plans) shall be erected forward of the principal elevation or an elevation facing onto a highway of any dwelling hereby permitted unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the development and to comply with the requirements of policies SP5 (Environment), DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

22. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within Class F of Part 1 and Class B of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to that Order shall be carried out other than that expressly authorised by this permission.

Reason: To protect the appearance of the site and surrounding area, to prevent excessive surface run-off from hard standings and driveways and to comply with the requirements of policies SP5 (Environment), DM2 (Design Quality for New Development), DM11 (Historic and Built Environment) and DM14 (Flood Risk) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

23. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no additional first floor or dormer windows shall be constructed within the northern elevations or roof slopes of units 23 and 24 or the northern and southern eastern elevations of unit 13.

Reason: To protect the privacy of the residents of nearby properties and to comply with the requirements of policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

11 Informatives

- 1 Southern Water requires a formal application for a connection to the water supply to be made by the applicant or developer.
To make an application visit Southern Water's Get Connected service: developerservices.southernwater.co.uk and please read our New Connections Charging Arrangements documents which are available on our website via the following link:
southernwater.co.uk/developing-building/connection-charging-arrangements