



Committee report

Committee	CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date	12 APRIL 2022
Title	RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DRAFT ISLAND PLANNING STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SUMMARY

1. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15 December 2021 considered the report of its task and finish group looking at the draft Island Planning Strategy.
2. The scope of the task and finish group was:
 - To provide an assurance that the content of the draft Island Planning Strategy is based upon current evidenced data and takes into account views made during the previous consultation exercise;
 - The assumptions made in terms of delivery within the draft strategy are realistic in meeting the evidenced needs of the island's community; and
 - There are satisfactory arrangements in place for the consideration of any comments made during the consultation period and that reasons will be provided for the inclusion or exclusion of these.
3. A number of recommendations were made by the task and finish group and supported by the Committee. This report provides the formal response to these.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DRAFT ISLAND PLANNING STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP, AND RESPONSES

4. **Recommendation 1**
We find that a very extensive process was/is in place for recording the responses to the 2019 and 2021 Consultations. We also find that the responses were considered and reasons provided for the inclusion/exclusion of these in the Draft Island Planning Strategy (DIPS) and that measures are in place for this to be repeated.
5. **Response**
Noted.

6. **Recommendation 2**

We find that the summary of the DIPS prepared for the Consultation ending on the 1 October 2020 did not represent a clear and balanced precis of the contents of the DIPS and was not sufficiently informative. The summary fails to inform the reader that of the 75 sites removed from the DIPS, 51 are expected to return, or that the figure of 486 new homes per annum is a minimum figure. We are of the opinion, therefore, that the weight that can be attached to the responses is substantially reduced.

7. **Response**

The consultation exceeded the minimum requirements set out in the relevant planning legislation and was a wholly valid exercise. All information and background evidence was available to view to the public throughout the consultation period of 9 weeks. The summary document was prepared to provide an overview of the draft IPS, not replace it, and covered all sections of the plan rather than focusing on just housing / growth. Comments were not sought on the summary document, but the draft IPS itself and associated background evidence.

8. **Recommendation 3**

A case of exceptional circumstances, paragraph 61 NPPF, should not be ruled out as an alternative future course of the DIPS.

9. **Response**

The draft IPS has, and will continue to, present the unique situation faced by the island as a justifiable and robust reason to plan for a lower housing requirement within the IPS (currently 486dpa) from that which the government's standard methodology expects us to plan for (currently 668dpa). Following ongoing discussion with our planning QC, advice is that no evidence was provided during the recent public consultation that would represent 'exceptional circumstances' capable of withstanding scrutiny at public examination.

10. **Recommendation 4**

Consultees opposition to the 2 Garden Villages have been taken into account and removed from the DIPS.

11. **Response**

Noted.

12. **Recommendation 5**

The minimum number of houses to be built should be reduced to 300 or less, which is deliverable and aspirational within the meaning of the NPPF.

13. **Response**

The housing figure within the plan has to be evidence based – for example in 2020/21 445 units were completed. A figure at '300 or less' would be below the average of the last 10 years so would not stand up to scrutiny at examination. With plan periods set at a minimum of 15 years, if we use delivery evidence of any less of a period than that, again, the council would be open to significant risk and exposure at examination of not being realistic given the time periods at play. Advice from our QC is that the method chosen to calculate the housing requirement in the draft IPS is coherent, captures all economic cycles, doesn't introduce any overt weighting that would be open to criticism and generates a stretching requirement over plan periods that is challenging but realistic in the face of the evidence provided.

14. **Recommendation 6**
Further research into imposing conditions that prevent new developments being rented/sold to second homers and inward retirees; 'local connection condition' should be imposed re the affordable element of all private developments and social housing and strictly enforced. The definition of 'local connection' should be specified in the glossary of the DIPS and should include key workers moving to the Island for employment.
15. **Response**
Draft IPS Evidence Paper - Second Homes ([2981-8-Draft-IPS-evidence-paper-Second-Homes.pdf \(iow.gov.uk\)](#)) addresses a number of these issues, including analysis of other localised areas where such restrictions have been put in place and some of the unintended consequences on affordability of existing stock. This topic will be continually reviewed as the IPS progresses to the next stage.
16. **Recommendation 7**
Affordable housing must be affordable by Islanders on or below the average Island income.
17. **Response**
Noted and agreed – the IPS is looking at resetting the definition of 'affordable housing' for island purposes.
18. **Recommendation 8**
Rural and First Home Exception Sites (H7) should be amended to ensure that they are small sites that reflect a 'local need'.
19. **Response**
Rural & First Homes Exception sites are defined in the NPPF and the IPS policy will align with national policy in this regard.
20. **Recommendation 9**
H4 Infill Opportunities outside settlement boundaries should be amended to reflect a local need.
21. **Response**
This policy facilitates the small-scale (1-3 units), proportional development of new homes in certain 'infill' locations that are likely to represent a key part of our 'windfall allowance' as set out within the housing requirement of the IPS. Given the island wide need for housing, placing a local need restriction on such small scale infills would likely have an adverse impact on viability and therefore delivery, further hampering our ability to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply or achieve Housing Delivery Test scores above 75%.
22. **Recommendation 10**
The DIPS should contain greater reference to the Island's Designation as a UNESCO Biosphere, and in particular the relationship between the DIPS and the biosphere. The Council should apply for UK Biospheres to be added to the designated sites protected by the NPPF.
23. **Response**
Noted and agreed as a key priority for the next version of the IPS – additional new Biosphere policy being drafted.

24. **Recommendation 11**
The DIPS should place greater emphasis on ensuring that infrastructure (particularly the public sewage system) is in place before development commences/is occupied.
25. **Response**
Noted and ongoing discussions with Southern Water, and other infrastructure providers, will continue to inform the next version of the IPS – additional new Infrastructure policy being drafted.
26. **Recommendation 12**
Southern Water should be consulted on all major developments (i.e. 10 or more units) and a requirement to that effect should be included in the DIPS.
27. **Response**
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
28. **Recommendation 13**
Consideration should be given to reducing the reliance in Section 4 Environment on mitigation/compensation and higher priority given to avoidance.
29. **Response**
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
30. **Recommendation 14**
NPPF paragraph 180 a) should be added to EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement.
31. **Response**
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
32. **Recommendation 15**
Subparagraphs b) and c) of EV3 should be deleted.
33. **Response**
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
34. **Recommendation 16**
EV4: Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates). The provision whereby new developments that connect to the Sandown Waste-Water Treatment Plant do not have to demonstrate Nitrate Neutrality should be given further consideration.

35. Response
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
36. **Recommendation 17**
EV11 AONB should be amended to include paragraph 177 NPPF.
37. Response
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
38. **Recommendation 18**
Consideration to be given to extending the area of the Dark Skies Park: EV11
39. Response
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.
40. **Recommendation 19**
EV14 Managing Flood Risk in New Development should be amended to include para 161 b) NPPF.
41. Response
It is considered that this recommendation falls outside the scope of the T&FG work and instead represents policy and paragraph specific comments on the DIPS by the relevant author(s). Officers have therefore included these comments as part of the Regulation 18 consultation and subsequent ongoing work on the IPS.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

42. Agenda and minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 15 December 2021: <https://iow.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=171&Year=0>

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