



Committee report

Committee	CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date	6 SEPTEMBER 2022
Title	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INFORMAL MEETING RELATING TO THE DRAFT ISLAND PLAN STRATEGY
Report of	CHAIRMAN OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY

1. To formally consider the outcome and recommendations arising from the informal meeting of the Committee held on 10 August 2022.

BACKGROUND

2. At the last meeting on 12 July 2022, it was agreed “THAT the committee would meet in August to review the draft Island Planning Strategy and would formalise its comments at its next meeting on 6 September 2022; ahead of its adoption by Cabinet on 8 September 2022 and the Full Council on 21 September 2022.”
3. The informal meeting took place on 10 August 2022. This was attended by Cllrs Quigley (Chairman), Adams, Lever, Lilley, Medland, Quirk, Robertson, Spink and Palin (IWALC)
4. The committee discussed written comments submitted by Councillors Drew, Quirk, Spink and Robertson. It was highlighted that whilst the report and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were supported by the Committee at its meeting on 15 December 2021 these were not all incorporated in the draft Plan. The Committee is also concerned as to the delay in progressing the finalisation of the draft plan which has enabled the “tilted balance” situation to continue.
5. Rather than repeating the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, the Committee believed that it was more beneficial to modify a number of the recommendations to assist in progressing the passage of the draft plan through Cabinet and full Council later this month.
6. The overall view was the draft Island Plan Strategy should be greener, more aspirational, and more suited to the specific needs of the Island and its residents. The proposed recommendations that were discussed in detail were as follows.
7. **Recommendation 1: Sustainable Development on Brownfield, in areas where it is most needed by Islanders.**
 - 7.1 The option of priority being given to allocating additional homes for the two key priority brownfield sites as defined in the 2021 draft, namely Camp Hill and

Newport Harbour, and by creating a new third key priority site – Newport Riverside was discussed. It was noted that the additional land is currently in public ownership of several organisations including the Isle of Wight Council and Hampshire Constabulary.

- 7.2 There would be a need however to ascertain the expected yield of housing units if the Newport Riverside site was to be included as a proposed allocation. A quick exercise could possibly be achieved within 3 to 4 months, however it could take longer to fully ascertain the potential of the land and most appropriate route to delivery.
- 7.3 The recommended changes to the Draft IPS arising from the discussion on this matter are set out in Appendix 1 to this report as track changed versions of Policy KPS2 and Section 10.
- 7.4 A separate recommendation is that Cabinet are requested to immediately commence the scoping and commissioning of feasibility and technical work to understand the potential of the mixed-use development site on public sector land in Newport Town Centre.

8. **Recommendations 2a & 2b: Protecting the Environment unless Development on Greenfield is “Absolutely Necessary” (as stated in the Council’s Corporate Plan)**

- 7.1 **Recommendation 2a:** The 2012 Plan protected rural areas unless development was necessary to satisfy a ‘local need’ (Core Strategy SP1). Councillors believed that the DIPS was likely to give less protection for greenfield by supporting development without evidence of a local need. This is considered by councillors to be contrary to national policy (i.e. S.78 NPPF) and the Council’s Corporate Plan.
- 7.2 It was felt that the draft should contain clear unambiguous provisions that prevent development outside of settlement boundaries unless there is clear evidence of a local community need that has been identified. This will benefit the environment, biodiversity, and the Island’s tourist economy and accords with the general wishes expressed by many Islanders during the consultation.
- 7.3 The recommended changes to the Draft IPS arising from this discussion (Recommendation 2a) are set out in Appendix 1 to this report as track changed versions of policies G2, H4, H7 and H10 and the IPS Glossary.
- 7.4 **Recommendation 2b:** Councillors were aware that the DIPS proposes just over 300 dwellings to be built on greenfield sites by extending the current settlement boundaries of Bembridge and Freshwater. They believed that there is no evidence of a local need for this housing and the ‘affordable’ housing will not be affordable by locals in need (i.e. 20% reduction of market value). The settlement boundaries of these villages should not be extended to enable this unnecessary development to the detriment of the environment. The housing proposed for these villages would be subsumed by the proposals set out in 1 above.
- 7.5 There was discussion on the options of removing one site in Freshwater and one in Bembridge which were not currently subject to any planning application and the removal of all four sites, which was the preferred option for the committee

members. Reference was made to consideration having to be given to replacing the units lost on these sites with units on other sites. It was believed that an increase to the number at Camp Hill, together with the recently approved Puckpool Hill application and looking at delivery trajectories on other large sites with planning permission towards the end of the plan period could overcome this issue.

7.6 The recommended changes to the Draft IPS arising from the discussion on this matter (Recommendation 2b) are set out in Appendix 1 to this report as track changed versions of policy H1, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

9. **Recommendation 3: Second/Holiday Homes**

7.7 Reference was made to the fact that many residents were against new homes being purchased as second or holiday homes. The Best Practice examples from the peer challenge team include conditions to 'ensure' that this does not occur although the position in the Isles of Scilly were different to here..

7.8 An outline was given of what was currently included and the important role that Neighbourhood Plans, by town and parish councils, could play in restricting the use of new builds as second homes. Place plans and position statements were also important tools in planning policies at a local community level.

7.9 With regard to holiday homes the Government was undertaking a review of short-term holiday rentals and the impact that this was having on popular tourist areas. This might influence future national guidance.

7.10 The recommended change to the Draft IPS arising from the discussion on this matter is set out in Appendix 1 to this report as a track changed version of policy C15.

10. **Recommendation 4: Environment and Commitment to Carbon Net Zero**

7.11 There was discussion on the core message and objectives of the 'Mission Zero Strategy' which should not be confused with the Biosphere Reserve Status. It was noted that there would be increased emphasis on the Council's Climate Change strategy which referenced the Biosphere status.

7.12 Corporate Scrutiny Committee are content that strategic policy BIO1 in Section 3 (as drafted in April 2022 version) has already been renamed to CC1 Climate Change (in July 2022 version) and also reworded to reflect the Corporate Plan and Climate & Environment Strategy Net Zero ambitions and targets which would support and help maintain Biosphere designation. Policy CC1 is reproduced in Appendix 1 to this report for clarity. The Net Zero standard policy for all new residential development is already in the Draft IPS (Policy C11).

11. **Recommendation 5: Freeport Strategy**

7.13 Being part of a Freeport should attract considerable investment, and analysis suggested Freeport status could draw an estimated £1 billion of extra investment into the Solent area. It is suggested that the Freeport will create over 16,000 new jobs in the Solent area and we should seek to ensure that a fair proportion of those jobs are on the Island. There was discussion on greater reference being

made to the Freeport and whether there should be a new dedicated Freeport policy. The employment land allocation in the 2021 draft at Kingston Marine Park was a good example of an area that could benefit.

7.14 The Island was not within the areas of principal activity allocated within the Freeport status. It has been confirmed there are no Freeport tax or customs sites on the Isle of Wight where permissive planning tools such as a Local Development Order might be of assistance. Also there was insufficient detail available as to the actual impact that the status would have for the island. Reference was already included within the draft plan within the economic development section.

7.15 Corporate Scrutiny Committee are content that stand alone Policy E12 Solent Freeport has already been added with as much detail as is known about the Freeport and the potential benefits for the island, providing in principle support for development that facilitates investment/innovation linked to the Solent Freeport. Policy E12 is reproduced in Appendix 1 to this report for clarity.

12. Risks

7.16 Councillors were of the opinion that there should be a comprehensive overview of the risks attached to the process for finalising the draft Island Plan Strategy taking into account the various options for inclusion, deletion and amendment available and these risks should form part of the reports to Cabinet and Full Council.

13. The draft report and associated recommendations were circulated to all councillors on the committee for final comment before publication. Councillors Lilley and Adams raised some local issues as the result of the informal meeting which were being addressed separately by planning officers.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee approves the proposed recommendations arising from the informal meeting and pass these onto Cabinet for consideration and adoption within the draft plan for final debate by full Council.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

14. Appendix 1 - Showing the proposed amendments within the draft Plan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

15. Agenda and minutes of Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 15 December 2021 and 12 July 2022
<https://iow.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=171&Year=0>

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