Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Planning contributes to the achievement of sustainable development through its economic, social and environmental roles:

- **A social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

- **An environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment (the island is designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve); and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

- **An economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

1.2 On the Isle of Wight balancing these three roles is often challenging due to the unique set of circumstances within England that the Island experiences. The Isle of Wight Council will set out a clear vision for the future of the Island through a revised Corporate Plan together with the existing Regeneration Strategy (Regeneration Strategy 2019 by Isle of Wight Council - issuu), and the Island Planning Strategy will be the document that sets out in land use terms how the council will achieve its vision.

The local plan

1.3 The planning system in the UK is plan led, with policies taking account of Government guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance. All development proposals are expected to comply with local plan policies.

1.4 To ensure that its planning policies are up to date, the council is reviewing the Island Plan core strategy, 2012 together with the work undertaken on draft area action plans (for the Medina Valley, Ryde and The Bay). The first draft of the Island Planning Strategy (IPS) was published for public consultation in December 2018 but has now been superseded by this document which forms the 'regulation 18' version of the local plan – this means it is still a draft plan and not the final version of the plan that will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, which will also be subject to public consultation.

1.5 The IPS provides a strategic policy framework to guide the development of neighbourhood plans. These plans play an important role in shaping a local area and take precedence over non-strategic local plan policies once they are made.

1.6 The local plan for the Isle of Wight will be made up of the following documents:

- **The Island Planning Strategy** – sets the overall strategic direction for the local plan and includes strategic policies, allocations for a range of land uses and development management policies.
- **Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling showpeople allocations** – in line with national policy this will allocate specific sites to meet the evidenced requirements of the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople communities.
- **The Island Planning Strategy waste and minerals** – will deal with waste and minerals issues on the Island. Following the adoption of the IPS, the plan's core strategy policies relating to waste and minerals will be saved until they are replaced by the IPS waste and minerals document.

1.7 The local plan, along with relevant neighbourhood plans, form a collection of plans and policies that are collectively known as the `development plan`. All planning applications will be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. As well as neighbourhood plans, local communities can still produce other types of community led plans, eg, place plans, parish plans and village design statements (VDSs) which reflect local character and identity. While not being a 'statutory' part of the development plan, the Isle of Wight Council is committed to the concept of locally appropriate development which enhances local character and distinctiveness and is keen to work with local people in the production of these documents, primarily through our Regeneration team.

Integrated sustainability appraisal and habitats regulation assessment

1.8 The draft IPS has been assessed by an integrated sustainability appraisal (ISA), which combines the sustainability appraisal (SA) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA). The ISA is an effective way to ensure that sustainable development principles are considered during the plan making process. By assessing plan policies against a broad range of SA objectives, the appraisal process exposes strengths and weaknesses of a policy, which can help to develop recommendations for its improvement. As well as helping to enhance the policy, the appraisal process also provides a basis for discussion between stakeholders around a shared set of objectives. The outcomes of this ISA will be assessed following this consultation period.

1.9 A habitats regulation assessment (HRA) has reviewed the draft policies of the IPS to see if they are likely to have significant effects upon European sites of nature conservation interest. The UK is obliged to continue to screen effects on the European sites of nature conservation until changes are made to UK law. The outcomes of the HRA will be assessed following the consultation period to see whether any policies were identified as requiring appropriate assessment, primarily due to potential in-combination impacts, and if so what mitigation measures may be required.

Background documents and other plans and strategies

1.10 The draft IPS is accompanied by a draft policies map and a collection of background evidence base documents that inform, support and explain the background to the content of the IPS. The draft IPS has been prepared to positively shape development and to give a clear policy framework that provides clarity and certainty for all.

1.11 The draft IPS has considered other relevant strategies and plans, and will contribute to achieving them, particularly:

- 'Inspiration Island' – Isle of Wight Regeneration Strategy (June 2019, Isle of Wight Council);
- a vision to increase Economic and Social Wellbeing of the Isle of Wight (2018, Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce, supported by the Isle of Wight Council);
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- Local Care Plan;
- Delivering Better Education action plan;
- Housing Strategy (2020, Isle of Wight Council);
- Island Independent Living Strategy (2017, Isle of Wight Council);
- Economic Development Action Plan 2015-2018 (2015, Isle of Wight Council);
- Island Transport Plan (2011-38);
- Emerging Local Transport Plan 4;
- Climate Change and Environment Strategy;
- The South Marine Plan;
- Place Plans, Parish Plans and Village Design Statements.

Section 2: The Isle of Wight and the issues we face

The Isle of Wight

2.1 The Isle of Wight (known locally as the Island) covers an area of 147 square miles, with a coastline that runs for 57 miles. The Island is separated from the mainland by the Solent, but is connected to the ports of Lymington, Southampton and Portsmouth by passenger and vehicle ferries. Although physically separated from the mainland, the Island influences and is influenced by the wider sub-regional, regional, national, and international context.

2.2 The Island features a wide variety of natural, rural and urban landscapes. Over 50 per cent of the Island is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and 28 miles of coastline is designated as Heritage Coast. In addition, the Island also includes three estuaries, the Western Yar, the Medina and the Eastern Yar and a high number of internationally, nationally and locally important nature conservation sites.

2.3 The Island is also home to a rich variety of important habitats and species, some of which are unique to the Island or are thriving due to the protection given to them by the Solent. The Island's biodiversity is very special, with key species, such as: Red Squirrels; Dormice; bats; Glanville Fritillary butterfly; Field Cow Wheat; Early Gentian; and Wood Calamint flourishing. All of the above landscape features and species contribute to the designation of the Island as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

2.4 Even though 84 per cent of the Island is rural, there are a wide range of settlements across the island, most of which have their own design and character. Many of the settlements have historic cores and there are currently 36 designated conservation areas and just over 2,500 listed buildings.

2.5 Over 60 per cent of the Island's residents live in Newport, Cowes, East Cowes, Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin. Freshwater, Totland and Yarmouth are the main settlements to the west of the Island and Ventnor is the largest town on the south coast. Outside of these main settlements there are around 30 villages and hamlets. Some of the larger villages provide services and facilities to surrounding villages and hamlets. Newport is the county town of the Island and is the main employment centre, with the majority of public sector employers based there (Isle of Wight Council, HM Prison and the NHS Primary Care Trust).

2.6 The Island is a centre for both the arts and the sciences, with a long list of residents and visitors being inspired here. Robert Hooke, Alfred Lord Tennyson, John Nash, Guglielmo Marconi, Sir Christopher Cockerell, Anthony Minghella, Alfred Noyes, Julia Margaret Cameron, and John Keats to name but a few. The Island has also seen the development and testing of Britain's space rockets, the world's first hovercraft and the world's first radio station.

2.7 The Island's visitor economy is strong with 2.34 million visitors in the 12 months to March 2019, spending over £300 million (Isle of Wight Visitor Monitor 2019). The Island hosts a range of festivals and events, including the world-renowned Cowes Week, which is the longest running sailing regatta in the world and the Isle of Wight Festival, revived after the 'last great event' of 1970, which attract many thousands of people to the Island.

The issues we face

2.8 One of the key benefits of the previous consultation on the Island Planning Strategy (IPS) was that it enabled the Isle of Wight Council to collect a great deal of information on the issues that Island residents feel most affected by. While the IPS cannot solve all of the issues on the Island, it is important that the policies within it are shaped by a strong sense of helping to address the problems and maximise the opportunities that Island residents have told us about.

2.9 There are some fundamental issues that the IPS has to address and these include protecting our precious environment and landscape, ensuring the health and wellbeing needs of the community are provided for in the design of new buildings and spaces, making sure enough land is set aside to build the houses that we need and providing sufficient sites to allow new jobs to be created.

2.10 We have split the draft IPS into six main topic areas and will now set out some of the key characteristics, issues and questions within each, before Section 3 of the plan provides an overview of what the policies in the draft IPS are aiming to do to address some of these issues.

Environment

2.11 The Isle of Wight has a distinct environment with a wide variety of natural, rural, built and historic landscapes and features. The whole island has been designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve for its environmental significance. The Island has a range of nationally and locally important heritage assets. There are sites of internationally important geology and the Island is home to a rich variety of important habitats and species, with 70 per cent of the Island protected by UK or European designations. The Island includes countryside and coastline with significant nature conservation interest. The chalk grasslands, maritime cliff slopes and estuaries are particularly important, not only in a local context, but also on a regional, national and international scale. .

2.12 These designations and the quality environment they protect limit the locations that can be considered for new development and therefore shapes settlement growth patterns and character. It means that proposals for new development need to pay particular attention to the requirement for protecting the integrity of European designated sites and maintaining the biosphere reserve status.

2.13 The Island is a special place and is valued by those who live and visit here. The quality and attractiveness of its natural and built environment, and the historic nature of these, is a major factor when considering why people choose to live here. It is also one of the prime reasons why people visit the Island, thereby directly contributing to the local economy and employment. The physical setting of the Island, with its constantly evolving coastline and changes being experienced as a result of climate change, present a combination of risks that are being addressed, from a land-use planning perspective, through the IPS.

2.14 While much of the Island can be considered stable in terms of land movement, there are localised areas, extensively along the south coast of the Island, that are susceptible to ground movement. This is due to a combination of the Island's geology, coastal processes, rainfall and human influence. Similarly, the majority of the Island is free from flood risk associated with the sea or watercourses, but again due to a combination of geomorphology, geology and weather events, there are areas at increased risk of flooding from these sources.

2.15 Parts of the Island have a long history of flooding and coastal erosion, pre-dating human influence. Many settlements on the Island have evolved from small-scale beginnings on sites located in areas vulnerable to flooding and erosion, such as by the coast or an estuary. This historic settlement pattern is now faced with the new challenges of rising sea levels and increased storm and rainfall events.

2.16 The balance between protecting the environment and allowing development that benefits the Island and its economy is a fundamental issue for the Island, as the two are intrinsically linked. Both the environment and the economy are sensitive to each other and changes in approach to one may have significant implications (both positive and negative) on the other.

Community

2.17 The Island's resident population over the fourteen years between 2005 and 2019 increased to 141,538 people, a net growth of 2.3 per cent since 2011. This was driven by an expansion in the number of residents aged 65 and over with those aged under 65 decreasing over the same period. The Island's current population (27.76 per cent residents aged 65 and over) is proportionally older than both the South East and England average (19.29 per cent and 18.18 per cent respectively). The average age on the Isle of Wight is 46 years, putting it in the oldest 20 per cent of local authority areas nationally and significantly older than the average age in local authority areas within the sub-region.

2.18 This pattern is projected to continue. Between 2020 and 2038, the population aged over 65 is forecast to increase by 45.2 per cent, equivalent to an additional 18,550 people. The increase in migration to the Island in the older age groups (65 to 79 in particular) is becoming more marked over time, with more than three times as many arriving on the Island in 2016 than in 2012. However, the working age population on the Island is forecast to continue to decline by a further 4,800 during the same period to 2038; with those aged 0 to 15 expected to also decline by 2,600 by 2038 (Statistics source: ONS 2018 based subnational population projections).

2.19 These patterns and the rate at which they are maintained or alter may place additional demand and costs on local public services, or alternatively could create opportunities. The age distribution of residents has positive implications for long-term economic activity rates and spending power (with a higher younger profile) or potentially negative impacts on current and future social care resourcing (with an older or aging population) and the sustainability of the Island community.

2.20 While the Island has long been one of the UK's most popular holiday destinations for people of all ages, those of working age are often in seasonal, low paid jobs. There is a 'brain-drain' of young educated people with a net outflow of 15 to 29 year olds as young people leave for higher education and others for employment and career opportunities, and a net inflow at age 30 and above as people return to raise their families or older people retire here.

2.21 The Isle of Wight is ranked 109 on the overall measure of multiple deprivation out of 326 local authorities where 1 is the most deprived. Ryde North East and Pan B (Newport) are within the 10 per cent most deprived areas in England. Locally, child poverty levels are in line with national figures with one in five (20.7 per cent) of all children on the Isle of Wight classed as being in relative poverty (21.2 per cent of under 16s). This is higher than the South East figure and is an increase of 585 children on 2013 numbers.

2.22 The population of the Island shows an ageing demographic profile with significant levels of chronic disease. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) identifies that 1.4 per cent of Island residents aged 65 years or over, has been diagnosed with dementia. The national average is 0.7 per cent. By 2030 4,232 individuals on the Isle of Wight are predicted to have dementia. This will equate to just under nine per cent of the population aged 65 years or over and 45.5 per cent of the population aged 85 years old and over.

2.23 The Isle of Wight Council permanently admitted 21.2 per cent more people aged 65 years or over into residential and nursing care compared to comparable authorities; and 11.3 per cent more than the national average. A lack of suitable alternative accommodation is felt to be one of the reasons behind these statistics.

2.24 Public Health report that 80 per cent of hospital bed days at St Mary's Hospital are used by patients over the age of 65; and 50 per cent of bed days are used by patients over 80 years old. Increasing the provision of Independent Island living, which could include the provision of housing with around the clock care and support will enable people to return to the comfort of their home to convalesce and live secure, fulfilled lives into their old age.

Growth/Housing

2.25 The delivery of new housing on the Island is one of the most challenging issues that the local plan has to address. Since the adoption of the Island Plan core strategy in March 2012, there has been a significant shortfall in the delivery of housing against the identified annual housing number in the core strategy, as shown in Figure 2.1. Monitoring indicates that there seems to be a 'ceiling' to the delivery of housing on the Island, as it has averaged around 365 dwellings per annum (dpa) since adoption of the core strategy, with a peak of 417dpa in 2015/16.

Figure 2.1 Housing completions on the Isle of Wight since core strategy adoption

Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Homes required	520	520	520	520	520	520	520	520	**4160**
Actual homes built	409	410	396	417	321	360	350	253	**2916**

Shortfall: -1244

2.26 Most significant is the acute decrease in the delivery of affordable housing, as defined by the NPPF (Annex 2: Glossary - National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - www.gov.uk). In 2019/20 just six affordable housing units were delivered. For 2018/19 none were delivered, in 2017/18 it was 18 units, 2016/17 it was 34 and 35 in the monitoring year 2015/16. There are now over 2,000 individual households on the housing register in the four most urgent categories of need. With around 300 re-lets per year, it is clear there is a greater need than is being met within the current housing stock.

2.27 This under delivery of housing has meant that since 2018, the council has been making planning decisions under the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which is the planning 'sanction' the Government apply to local planning authorities where insufficient housing is being delivered when measured against the Government housing number for the Island. Therefore the adoption of the IPS, with an Island realistic housing number, will enable the LPA to eventually move away from the presumption and regain more precise control over decision making in line with all of the policies in this plan.

2.28 This lack of supply has affected many groups within the local community and there is an increasing proportion of Island residents who find that they are unable to purchase a home for the first time, particularly working age islanders, where median annual average earnings are £26,165. Property prices, although cheaper than many areas of the South East remain unaffordable for many local households. The affordability ratio of average house prices to average earnings on the Island in 2020 is 8.05, based on an average house price of £245,938. This compares to affordability ratios in Portsmouth and Southampton of 7.91 and 7.01 respectively.

2.29 Rental levels are also challenging on the Island, based on the assumption that a household should spend no more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. This has seen the number of households in need of an 'affordable home' on the Island increase significantly. The lack of affordability also contributes to overcrowding, and across the Island three per cent of households are classified as overcrowded with the greatest number of such households being located in Ryde.

2.30 The council has investigated the reasons why delivery appears to be constrained and analysis of the evidence suggests that there is not one single overriding issue or limiting factor, instead it is a combination of factors acting at the same time, magnified by the physical severance of the Island from the mainland. Some of the current factors identified as contributing to this under delivery are:

- affordability of housing stock to Island residents;
- limited existing profitability of building at scale on the Island;
- lack of construction skills;
- extra cost of importing materials and skills;
- lower returns on investment and unrealistic land values;
- higher risk and inability to secure funding;
- limited appropriate land (over half the Island is designated AONB);
- limited island infrastructure;
- a small standalone housing market area that is very sensitive to changes in supply/demand.

2.31 Underpinning all the evidence is the simple fact that the Isle of Wight as a place operates in different circumstances to mainland UK and has a unique housing market that requires a bespoke approach to housing need and allocation. The Isle of Wight is recognised as a standalone housing market area by neighbouring authorities in the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH). There are no adjacent authorities sharing land boundaries where 'unmet need' could easily be distributed to, there are no strategic sites overlapping administrative boundaries and major national housebuilders do not see the Island as a consistently viable development or land promotion opportunity – The Solent that separates the Isle of Wight from the mainland has a fundamental and demonstrable impact on the level of housing that is delivered on the Island.

2.32 The council is positive about development, wants to see it happen on the Island in the most sustainable locations and sees the delivery of housing as essential in helping to tackle the lack of truly affordable dwellings. However, this approach requires an appreciation that development won't be at the scale that the government expect through the objectively assessed need derived from the standard methodology as it simply cannot be delivered. The national approach provides the starting point for determining the level of need for the area, and it is only after considering the constraints to achieving this, including the unique housing market faced by the Island, that the decision on how many homes should be planned for is made.

2.33 The IPS is therefore planning for less homes than the Government expect, which in simple terms would address one of the key themes raised by Island residents in the last consultation. However, we also know that many Island residents believe there is no need to build any more houses on greenfield land and that there is more than enough brownfield land to build houses on. The simple fact is that this is not the case.

2.34 On the Island, there are approximately 60 hectares of brownfield land currently on the brownfield register, with capacity for around 1,500 homes, and over 600 of these already have planning permission. This has to be viewed against the 2,000 individual households in most urgent need of an affordable home on the Island housing register.

2.35 The council recently undertook a brownfield sites capacity study to ask members of the public, town and parish councils, agents and landowners to tell us about any brownfield land they know of and think is available for development on the Island. Of the 84 sites submitted during the study, 25 were already on the brownfield register or known to the council through the previous IPS consultation, 45 were too small (under 10 units) or inappropriate for housing due to site specific constraints and of the remaining 14 that were investigated further, two sites with a yield of around 75 units have been included in the IPS. While there is a clear national and local preference to use brownfield land for development, and this is set out in policies in this document, some greenfield land is needed for development to help provide enough houses so that affordable housing issues can start to be addressed on the Island.

2.36 A good mix of market housing is also needed to meet the aspirations of all residents by providing a variety of sizes, types and locations supporting the provision of quality education and health services. Poor quality services deter higher income groups but delivering attractive housing may encourage professionals working in these sectors to move to and stay on the Island.

2.37 As the country starts to move on from the pandemic, working and living patterns may change. The Island has the potential to attract professionals and higher income groups choosing to live on the Island as working patterns become more flexible. Introducing their professional skills and spending power will support the provision of, and improvement to, services and improve the prosperity of the Island. However, in order to encourage residents to move to and stay on the Island we need to improve the supply of aspirational housing. This will not only involve providing sites for larger and/or higher specification dwellings but will also require enhancements to the environmental quality of the area and the provision of good quality services. Achieving this balance of addressing both acute affordable needs and aspirational needs within a housing market that has historic and consistent restricted delivery will be a challenge, while still addressing the environmental aims of the plan.

2.38 By reviewing its planning policies and position on housing, the council wishes to give the clearest possible direction to the prime focus of the local plan which is delivery of housing in the right places with the right level of infrastructure to best meet the Island's needs.

Economy

2.39 The Isle of Wight's economy has performed reasonably strongly in recent years, including growth in a number of specialist higher value sectors particularly where the Island benefits from the presence of leading international businesses. However, it faces challenges as productivity levels are generally below the mainland, with lower wage levels, lower educational attainment and skills levels. Many employment opportunities are seasonal and there is an over reliance on the public sector as a key supplier of job opportunities. As with the rest of the country, the Island needs to recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic.

2.40 The Island population is increasing, mainly amongst older age groups, with the working age population (16-64 years) accounting for 57 per cent of the Island's population and falling. This compares to the Great Britain average of 63 per cent. Economic activity and employment rates are lower than the Great Britain average. Overall, the Island labour market is relatively self-contained with most residents working locally and limited numbers of outbound and inbound commuters to and from the mainland.

2.41 Physical separation of the Island from the UK mainland is reported to have a negative effect on the Island's economy, not least through the 'Island premium' which represents the additional cost of conducting business on and with the Isle of Wight. This premium not only encapsulates higher transportation costs, but also the limited opportunities for optimal economies of scale, due to reduced competition and the size of the market.

2.42 In 2019 the largest sectors, by employment, were health & social work (17.6 per cent), wholesale and retail (15.7 per cent), food and accommodation (15.7 per cent), manufacturing (8.8 per cent), education (7.8 per cent) and administration (6.9 per cent). Agriculture is one of the smallest sectors (two per cent) and has been declining in employment. However, the Island has a particularly strong GVA output from the agriculture, utilities and hospitality sectors. The local economy is largely characterised by lower value undertakings, with higher-value sectors such as communication, information technology and financial services being less well represented.

2.43 The regeneration strategy sets out some key Island responses to some of the challenges faced, including increasing the average wage to £600 per week by 2027, providing access to full fibre gigabit connectivity across the Island and improving the range and quality of business premises making it a place that is attractive to invest in. The Island does have a number of opportunities which it can look to exploit in helping to improve its overall economy and meet these challenges.

2.44 It is home to some world class businesses such as Gurit, MHI Vestas, BAE Systems and GKN which have all contributed to the Island's reputation as a centre of excellence for composite technologies and advanced manufacturing, especially in the marine and maritime sectors. The opening of Centre of Excellence for Composites, Advanced Manufacturing and Marine (CECAMM) in September 2017 allows young Islanders to develop the relevant skills and educational qualifications to grow the skills base required by these world class organisations.

2.45 While the legacy of maritime engineering is strong, there are a number of other key sectors that support the economic engine of the Island. Tourism and all its associated industries account for 20 per cent of the GVA and with an ever-ageing population, the care industry is growing rapidly.

2.46 The Island benefits from an entrepreneurial culture with micro businesses (with five or fewer employees) accounting for 82 per cent of local business. Excellent quality of life, good broadband connectivity and easy access to London and the South East means more people are choosing to live on the Island and locate their enterprise here or commute back to the capital and surrounding areas, a pattern that appears more popular as working and social patterns change as a result of the pandemic.

2.47 The overall value of the local economy measured in £ per capita, is well below the Solent and UK averages, reflecting the lower proportion of working age residents and the value each job generates as suggested by qualifications, occupation and earnings data. GVA per capita on the Isle of Wight stands at £20,000 compared to nearly £25,000 in the Solent area. Average earnings for individuals working on the Island are at a level of 80% of those across the South East. Crossing the Solent is perceived as a barrier to the economic growth and regeneration of the Island.

2.48 The Island's employment base has grown over recent years, increasing at a similar rate to the Solent. Employment growth has been driven by a variety of sectors including those that the Island has traditionally been strong in (eg, accommodation and food services) and others which it is less known for (eg, real estate). Overall, workforce productivity is lower in comparison to the mainland and needs to be improved.

2.49 Forecasts from Oxford Economics (pre-pandemic) indicate that employment on the Isle of Wight is expected to increase by 4,600 jobs between 2015 and 2036, a growth rate of nearly eight per cent which is broadly similar to the LEP average. Most growth is anticipated in health and social care, admin and support services, construction and recreation, reflecting both the ageing population trend and tourism sectors. More traditional sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture are expected to decline in overall terms.

Transport

2.50 The Island is unique within the UK with all mainland links provided by private sector companies, with no public service obligation and/or no community-based service level agreement. The Island is linked to the mainland by six cross-Solent routes, three of which carry both vehicles and foot passengers and three operate only for foot passengers. In 2019, approximately four million passengers used ferry services to access the Island, generating an estimated £296m contribution to the local economy. 5.5 per cent of Island residents in employment rely on ferries for daily commuting to the mainland to jobs in London, Portsmouth, Southampton and the surrounds. Conversely only an estimated 3.7 per cent of Island jobs are filled by mainland residents who commute to the Island.

2.51 As an island, it benefits from not being driven through as part of a longer, onward journey. This means that there is no through traffic. Instead, the Island experiences seasonal variations due to tourism-related traffic, especially in the summer months.

2.52 The location of the major settlements – with Cowes to the north, Ryde to the north-east, Sandown/ Shanklin/ Ventnor to the south-east and Freshwater to the west – means the road network resembles the spokes on a wheel, with Newport at its 'hub' joined by spokes to each settlement and each settlement in turn linked to one another by the rim, – often a coastal road. The layout and location of the road network brings a range of challenges, particularly at Newport where all roads meet - and on the coast where some sections of road, such as the Military Road on the south-west coast, are under threat from land instability and increasingly from climate change and a resulting rise in sea level.

2.53 There are attractive travel routes for walkers and cyclists across the Island. The Island has 517 miles of public rights of way linking towns and other settlements giving access to the countryside and coast. There are over 200 miles of cycle routes with dedicated off-road cycle routes. This is recognised as part of the National Cycle Network with routes linking Cowes and Newport, Newport to Sandown, Ryde to Newport and Yarmouth to Freshwater. There are two small airports at Bembridge and Sandown though these are for light aircraft only.

2.54 The Island benefits from the Island Line railway, connecting Shanklin to Ryde Pier and mainland connections beyond. The line is currently in the process of being upgraded with a new passing loop and refurbished rolling stock, together with a number of station upgrades. The bus services on the Island are run by Southern Vectis, with regular services connecting the majority of the settlements and providing key interchanges between modes, for example at Ryde Interchange.

2.55 The IPS will work alongside the Local Transport Plan and Climate and Environment Strategy to ensure opportunities to provide a transport network that is linked to achieving greater sustainability and better movement are taken.

Section 3: Island Planning Strategy vision and objectives

3.1 Having provided an overview of the Island and set out the challenges we know the Island faces from talking to residents and gathering evidence, it is important to shape that into a logical and attainable vision. The Isle of Wight Council is in the process of revising its corporate priorities and objectives, together with an overall vision for the Island. To ensure consistency throughout the council's key plans and strategies, this corporate vision will be used across all Council documents, including the Island Planning Strategy (IPS).

3.2 The revised corporate objectives will constitute strategic priorities for the purpose of the Island Planning Strategy. As a local planning authority and a council, we cannot achieve these objectives on our own and will be developing new partnerships and relationships, nurturing existing ones and when we can't deliver something, enabling or facilitating others to do so.

3.3 To provide clarity on achieving these objectives, and in line with national policy, the council will identify which policies within the Island Planning Strategy are strategic and these are currently listed in Appendix 4.

3.4 This draft IPS sets out how, in spatial terms, and through the planning system, the council will use land-use planning to contribute to delivering as much of the regeneration strategy as possible.

What the Island Planning Strategy will do

3.5 Using the same issue headings from Section 2, we are able to highlight what the policies in the Island Planning Strategy will try to do in each of the six main sections of the plan to help address the issues the Island faces:

Environment
The Island is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and benefits from a high quality and attractive environment. IPS policies will protect, and wherever possible, seek to improve all the positive aspects including the AONB, trees, heritage assets and ecology as well as introducing a new dark skies park in the south west of the Island. The IPS will also require a biodiversity net gain of 10 per cent from all new development.

Community

As we continue to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, improving the wellbeing of our community is extremely important and IPS policies can help by making sure people have access to open space and community facilities, while allowing more health facilities to be built where they are needed. Well-designed new spaces and buildings that are occupied by a range of different ages and people also helps to build strong and healthy communities.

Growth

IPS policies have to plan for sustainable development and growth – the Island population is increasing and people are living longer, therefore growth is needed, however the additional homes, jobs, services and infrastructure that are required have to be in the right places meaning people are closer to what they need.

Housing

We need to build more houses on the Island for lots of reasons, but mainly to try and make sure people are able to live in a home that is affordable to them. IPS policies will enable different types of home to be built for the different needs of people. We want to make sure as many of the homes as possible are built in areas where people are able to access the services and facilities they need.

Economy

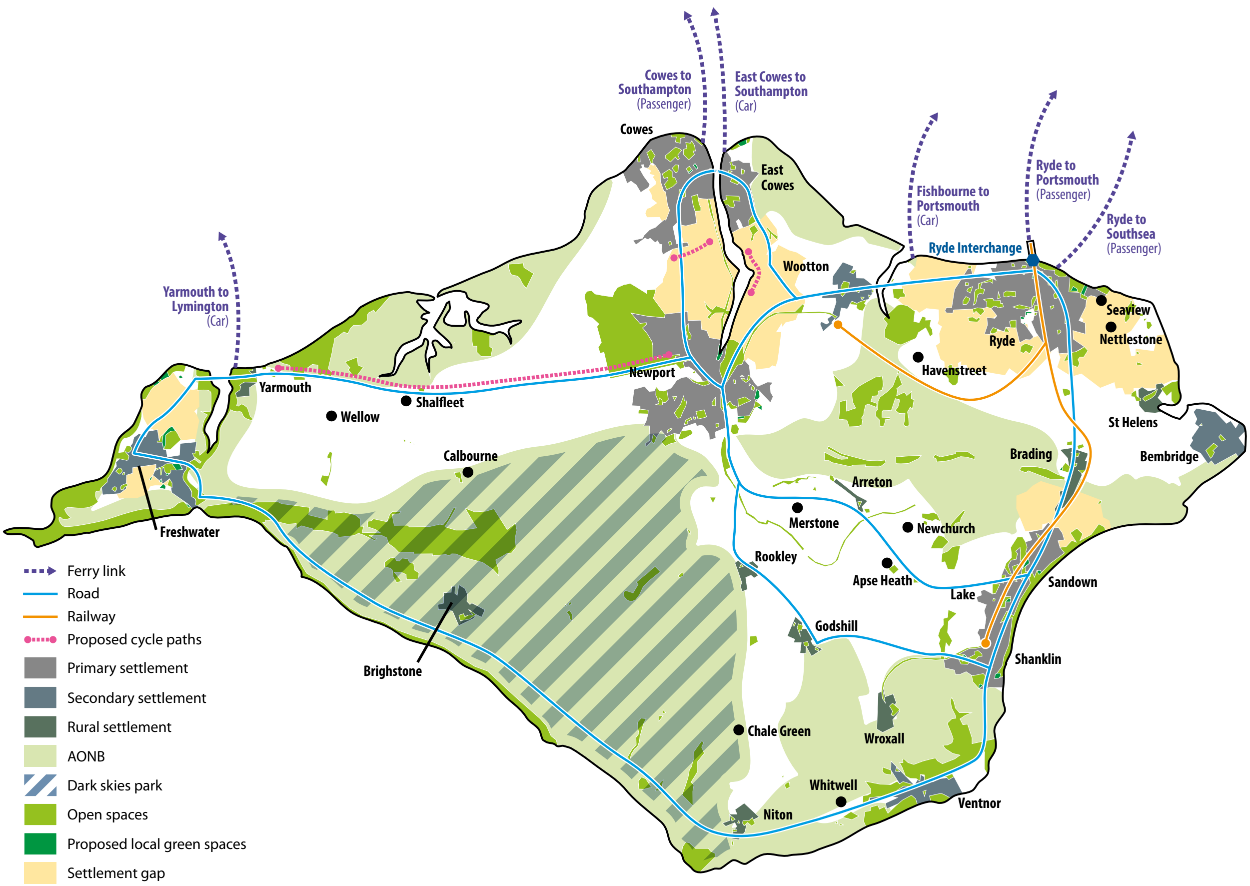
As well as houses, it is also important to make sure we protect as many existing jobs as possible and also make it easy for new jobs to be created. IPS policies make sure that land is secured and available for a range of businesses to maintain and increase the number of jobs. Our high streets continue to change, and IPS policies make sure that commercial property and businesses on our high streets can be as flexible as possible.

Transport

How people move around the Island is also an important issue - and this also has a big impact on climate change. By planning for our growth in locations that are close to services and facilities, we can encourage people to move around as much as possible without using a motor vehicle. IPS policies require new road, footpath and cycle path infrastructure where it is needed and wherever possible, any new development will have to help fund the cost of this.

3.6 Under the Environment and Community topics, the key diagram below demonstrates that a large proportion of the Island is protected as open space/settlement gap or within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). While these designations do not mean no development at all will happen in these areas, they do provide a clear steer as to the locations that higher levels of Growth should be directed away from.

Figure 3.1 – Key environment diagram



3.7 A key issue for the IPS under the **growth** and **housing** topics is to set out a framework for the location, mix and type of housing to be provided across the plan period of 15 years, taking into account these protections and designations. The number and size of sites put forward for allocation in this document is significantly less than in the previous version.

3.8 Using the consultation responses on the last version and the main themes of what the community told us, a set of guiding principles has been developed to help steer the approach to the allocation of housing sites and policy development within this document. These principles will also help to deliver the corporate vision for the Island:

a Improve the delivery and affordability of new homes to best meet Island needs, in the most sustainable locations with the right infrastructure (reducing the reliance on private transport).

b Prioritise the use of land within existing settlement boundaries, particularly where the land is brownfield and/or in public sector ownership.

c Reflect the importance of a high quality built and natural environment and the associated positive impacts on wellbeing and contribution to maintaining our UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status;.

d Create certainty through the adoption of a local plan over what is expected of development proposals and how places are likely to change as a result of the plan.

3.9 Using these principles, the IPS is planning to build the right homes in the right places and some of the key benefits of the plan are:

- **98 per cent** of the total homes allocated are within the adjusted settlement boundaries of primary and secondary settlements (87% are in primary settlements and 11 per cent within secondary settlements);
- **60 per cent** of the homes allocated are on brownfield land, including two Key Priority Sites at Camp Hill and Newport Harbour, both in public sector ownership. The plan also includes a new brownfield sites policy that supports and encourages development on previously developed land to come forward;
- **72 per cent** of the homes allocated on greenfield land are already in the planning application or pre-application process;
- **15 per cent** of the total homes needed until 2038 already have planning permission.

3.10 To help the community understand how the planned **growth** and **housing** will affect the area that they live in, this section will briefly highlight the type and scale of development together with any **economy** and **transport** infrastructure proposed within each area, as well as some of the key **community** and **environment** designations and protections in place. While the IPS has to plan at an Island level, providing more localised information can help to assist place making and growth aspirations within an area.

3.11 The Isle of Wight is a diverse Island, and it is often challenging to reflect its many differences. The regeneration strategy recognises this and identifies five areas with broadly similar populations and characteristics across the Island, and these are listed below. Further information about each area can be found in the regeneration strategy. The role of Newport as the Island's commercial, business and civic hub and the range of development opportunities in and around the county town affords it special attention as a distinct area overlaying the southern ends of both West and East Medina. Therefore, a sixth area is added for the purposes of this overview:

- **West Wight area** – mainly rural but with Freshwater and Yarmouth as the main settlements.

- **West Medina** – Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood and settlements in and to the West of Newport.

- **Newport** – the area broadly following the parish of Newport and Carisbrooke.

- **East Medina** – East Cowes and settlements in and to the East of Newport.

- **Ryde** – and its wider immediate area including villages such as Bembridge, St. Helens, Seaview and Brading.

- **The Bay** – Sandown, Shanklin, Lake, Ventnor and adjacent villages

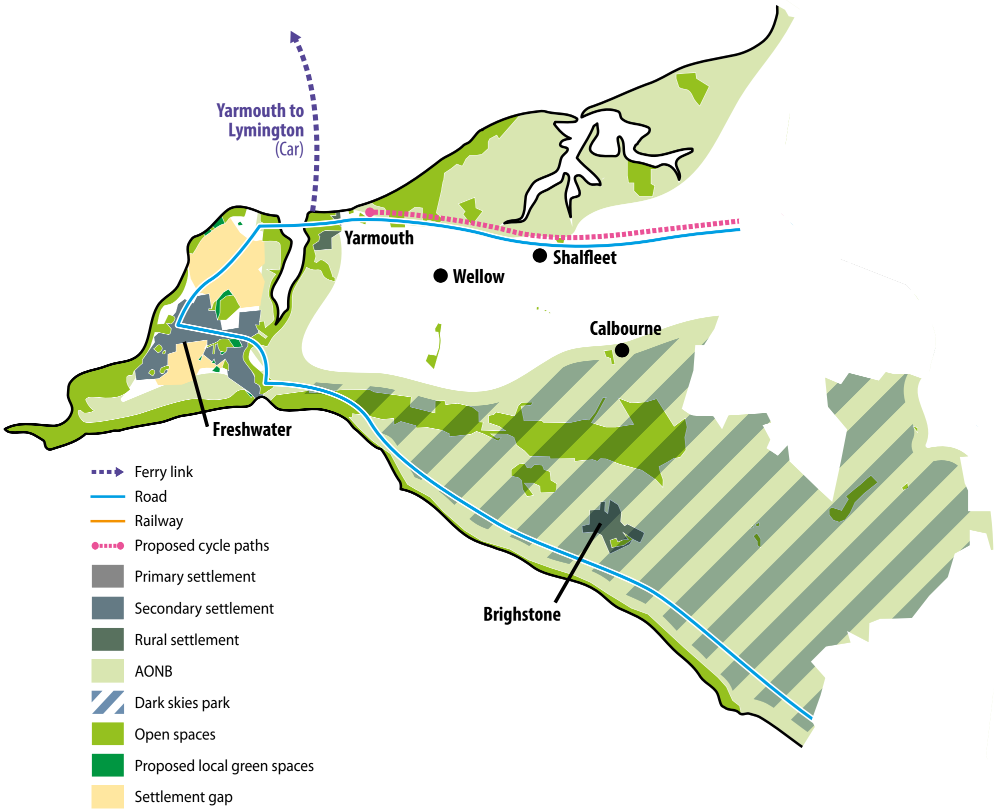
3.12 The following sections will list the settlements that are included in each of the areas and their place in the settlement hierarchy (as set out in policy G2), highlight some of the key planned growth on large sites (over 10 units) and provide a diagram of where this is likely to occur.

3.13 An important issue to many residents is when the planned growth will take place. The responsibility for submitting planning applications and building out planning permissions that are granted does not lie with the local planning authority, therefore it can be challenging to provide an accurate picture. However Table 7.1 and Appendix 5 of the Draft IPS provide indicative delivery trajectories which help demonstrate that the planned growth will be spread out across the plan period, rather than all happening at once. Policy G5 also seeks to ensure that planning permissions granted are built out in line with a delivery timetable secured as part of any permission.

3.14 There are also associated challenges on projecting when key infrastructure to support the housing will be delivered. The Island does not have a number of large strategic sites in excess of 1,000 units where infrastructure delivery can be planned more easily, however the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) supporting the IPS will be updated in consultation with key stakeholders such as utility providers, the NHS Trust and highway authority. These discussions, together with regular local plan reviews, will make sure that the homes built have the services and facilities that they need.

West Wight area

Figure 3.2 – West Wight key environment diagram



3.15 The West Wight area is made up of a variety of different settlements, predominantly smaller rural ones with Freshwater (including Totland and Colwell) acting as the main service centre, reflected in its status as a secondary settlement and role as the main convenience shopping offer in the West Wight. The level of planned growth within the West Wight area is set out below and shown on the settlement diagram for Freshwater on page 25.

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
Freshwater (including Totland and Colwell)	Secondary	no sites	six sites	255
Yarmouth	Rural service centre	no sites	no sites	0
Brighstone	Rural service centre	no sites	no sites	0
Wellow	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0
Shalfleet	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0
Calbourne	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0
Thorley	None	no sites	no sites	0

Environment

Significant areas of the West Wight area are protected through designation as AONB and being allocated as open space. A large section of the proposed dark skies park is within the area together with 13 designated local green spaces.

Growth

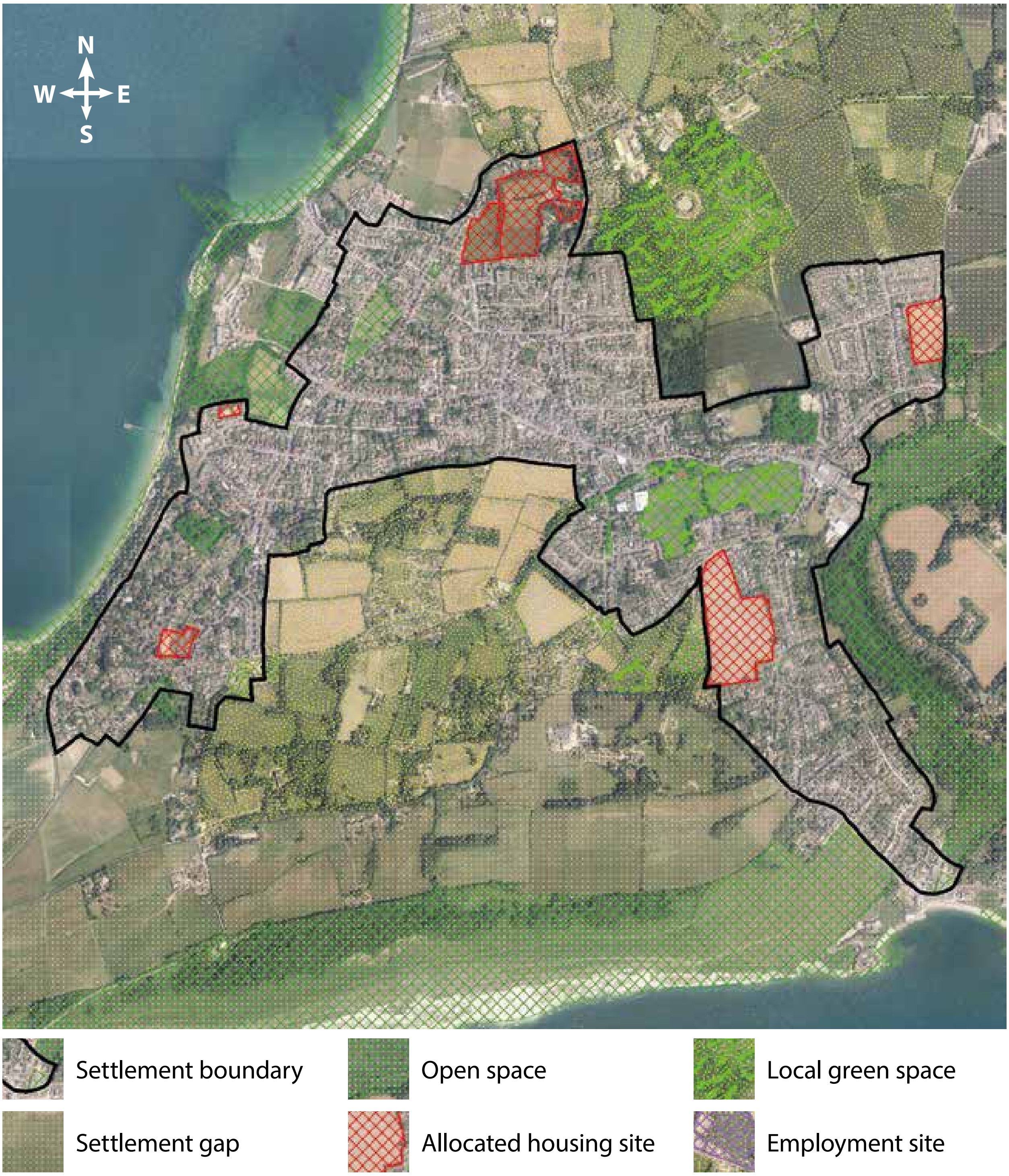
Housing

The only sites allocated for housing are within the revised settlement boundary of Freshwater (six sites in total – one brownfield, two mix and three greenfield) and represent 4.4 per cent of the housing within the IPS. These sites have the potential to provide **89 affordable homes**. Opportunities for the re-development of other existing brownfield sites (see policy H9) will be taken when they arise across the West Wight Area. Rural and first home exception sites that provide predominantly affordable housing that meets local needs may come forward in and near the smaller settlements (see policy H7).

Transport

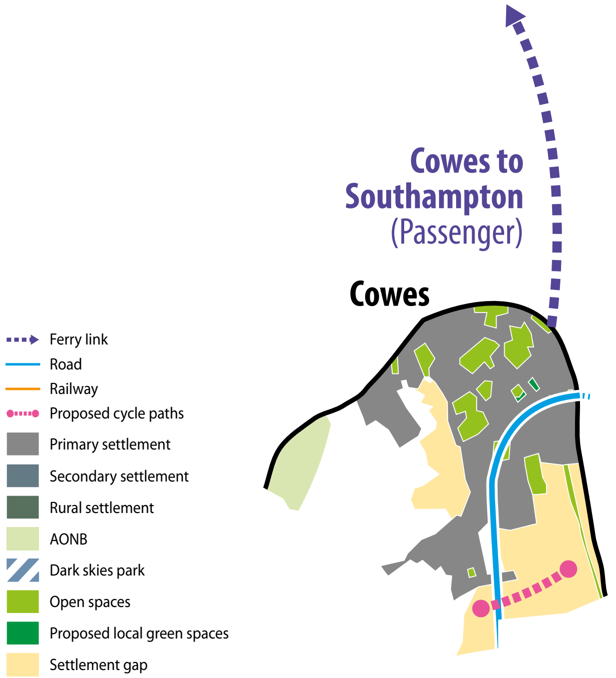
Sustainable transport links will be improved through completion of a shared pedestrian and cycle track linking the West Wight to Newport, which will provide a high quality, safe and sustainable commuter, leisure and tourism facility.

Figure 3.3 – Freshwater (including Totland and Colwell) settlement diagram



West Medina area

Figure 3.4 – West Medina key environment diagram



3.16 The West Medina area includes the settlement of Cowes which acts as a key gateway to the Island and as one of the primary settlements plays a significant role in being able to accommodate growth in a sustainable way (17 per cent of homes allocated in the plan). The village of Northwood is within the same settlement boundary, together with Gurnard. The level of planned growth within the West Medina area is set out in the table and shown on the settlement diagram for Cowes (page 28):

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
Cowes (including Gurnard and Northwood)	Primary	two sites	six sites	947

Environment

Within Gurnard the most sensitive parts of the Jordan Valley landscape are protected through the retention of the settlement gap, while within Cowes large areas of land are allocated as open space with six designated local green spaces.

Growth

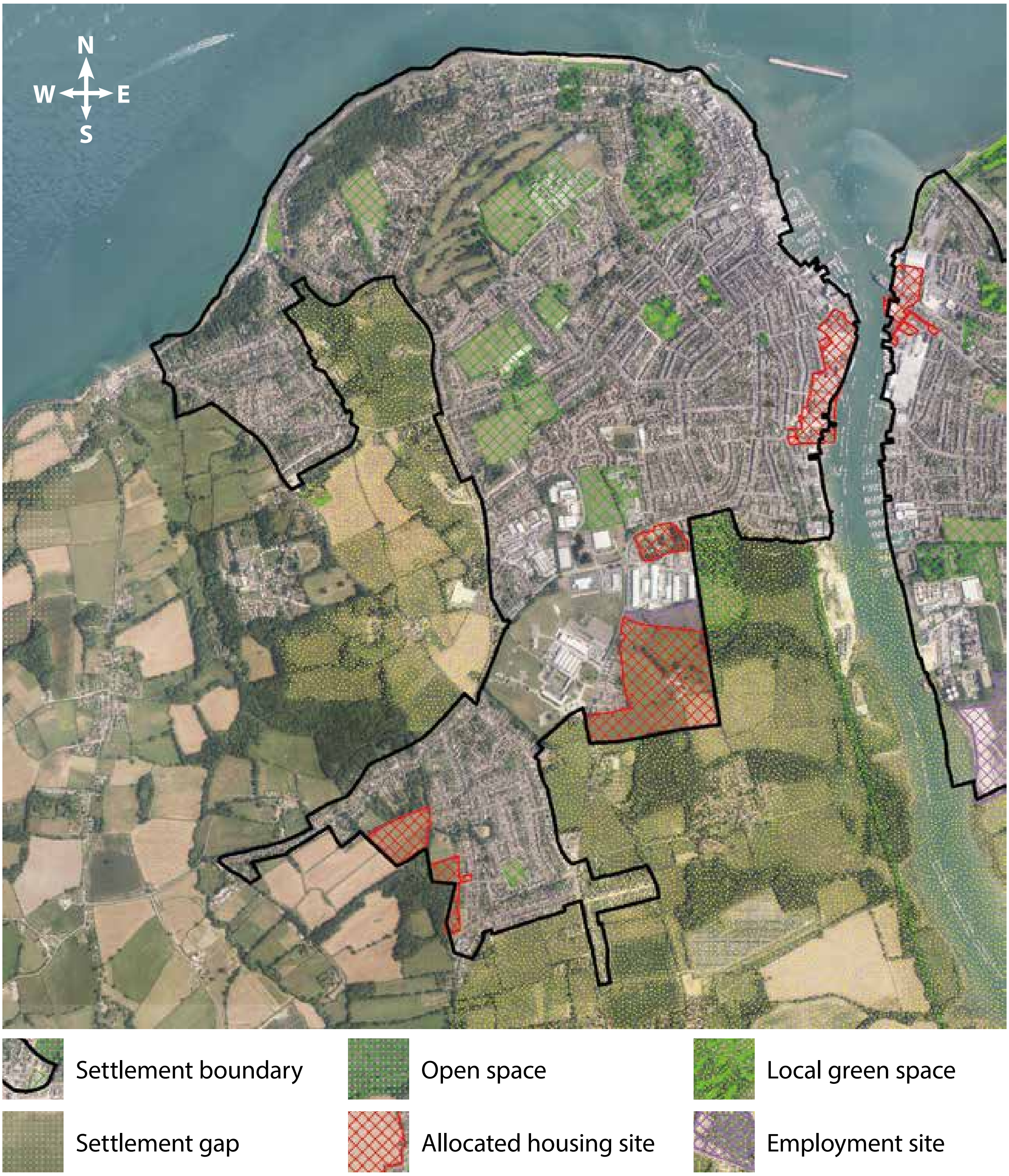
Housing

The sites allocated for housing are all within the revised settlement boundary of Cowes (six sites in total – three brownfield and three greenfield) and together with two sites already having planning permission, represent 16.4 per cent of the housing within the IPS. These sites have the potential to provide **332 affordable homes**. Opportunities for the re-development of other existing brownfield sites (see policy H9) will be taken when they arise across the West Medina area. First Homes exception sites that provide solely affordable housing may also come forward outside of the settlement boundary (see policy H7).

Economy

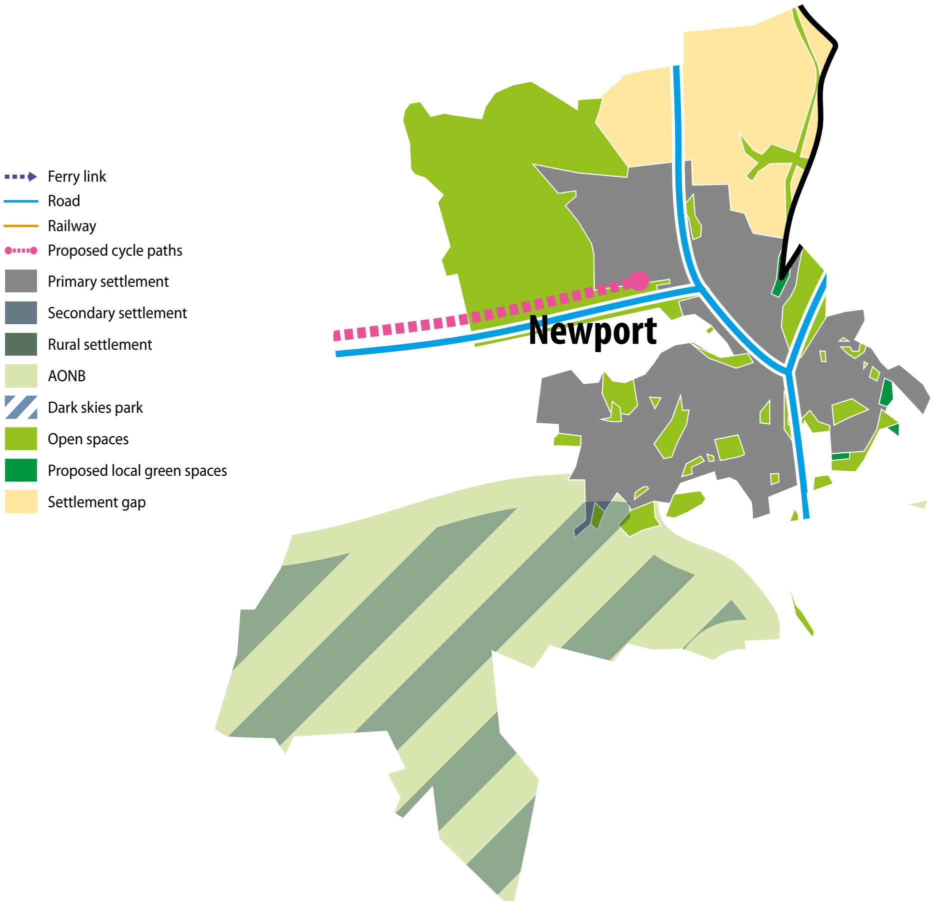
Around two hectares of new employment floorspace will also be provided through the mixed use allocation at Somerton Farm, improving the offer for existing and new businesses and also enhancing links through the site to the Cowes to Newport cycle track.

Figure 3.5 – Cowes (including Gurnard and Northwood) settlement diagram



Newport area

Figure 3.6 – Newport key environment diagram



3.17 Newport is the largest settlement on the Island and acts as the commercial, business and civic hub providing a range of development opportunities in and around the county town. As a primary settlement, Newport is a focus of planned growth within the IPS (48 per cent of homes allocated in the plan) and contains the two key priority sites at Camp Hill and Newport Harbour (see policies KPS1 and KPS2). The level of planned growth within the Newport area is set out below and shown on the diagram on page 31:

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
Newport	Primary	two sites	eleven sites	2,136

Environment

A small area of Newport to the south west is designated as AONB. Large areas of open space are allocated across the settlement. There are five designated local green spaces with a small section of the proposed dark skies park also within the settlement to the south west, overlapping the AONB.

Community

Land set aside for a health hub at St Mary's hospital that could include extra-care properties, assisted living, intermediate step-down care, healthcare employment and other clinical facilities. A locality hub bringing together health and wellbeing services is also highlighted for the Newport area, together with a potential new 'blue light' facility.

Growth

Housing

The sites allocated for housing are all within the revised settlement boundary of Newport (11 sites in total – three brownfield, two mix and six greenfield) and together with two sites already having planning permission represent 37 per cent of the total growth in the IPS. These sites have the potential to provide **748 affordable homes**. The two public sector owned; previously developed key priority sites have the potential to deliver over 1,450 units (60 per cent of the total growth within Newport). Opportunities for the re-development of other existing brownfield sites (see policy H9) will be taken when they arise within the settlement

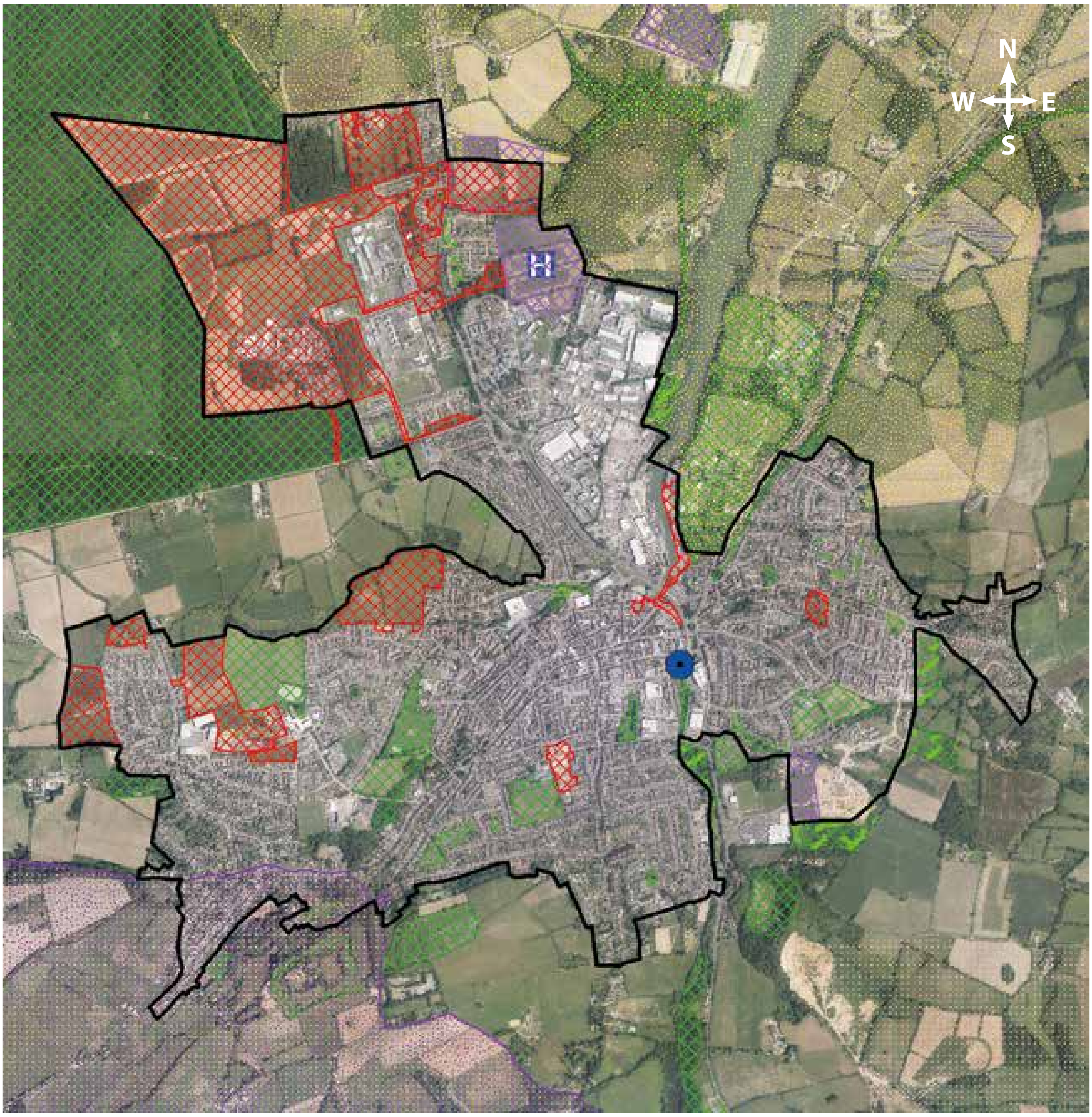
Economy

Almost three hectares of new employment floorspace will also be provided through the allocation at Pan Lane.

Transport

Given the level of growth being planned, it will be important that these developments are brought forward in a co-ordinated manner, with the council and the various landowners/ developers working together to ensure that the required infrastructure has been properly identified and brought forward in a timely fashion. The council have already implemented a significant highway improvement at the old St Mary's roundabout and are currently delivering further work at Coppins Bridge. Developer contributions will be collected for other highway improvements listed in policy T1.

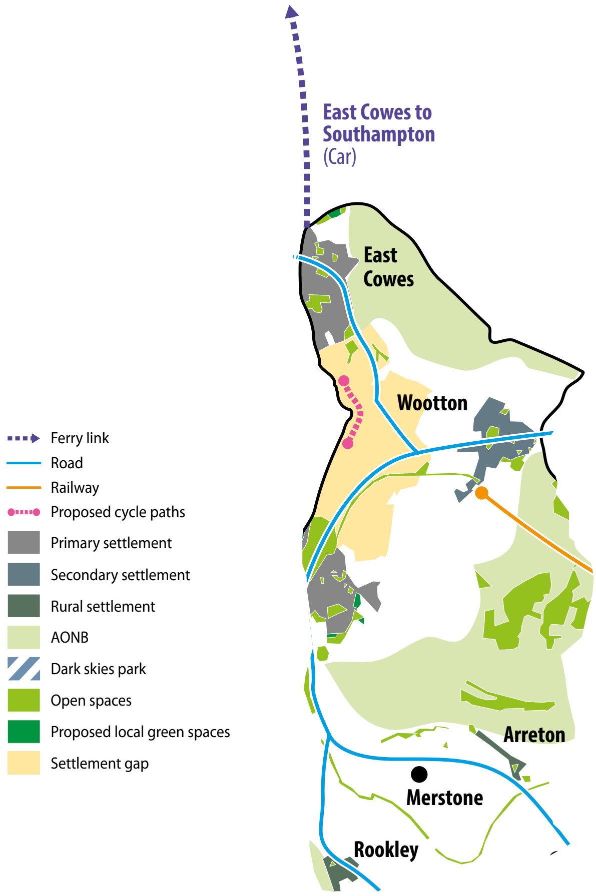
Figure 3.7 – Newport settlement diagram



Settlement boundary	Open space	Local green space
Settlement gap	Allocated housing site	Employment site
Dark skies park	St Mary's Hospital	Locality hub

East Medina area

Figure 3.8 – East Medina key environment diagram



3.18 The East Medina area includes the primary settlement of East Cowes (another of the key gateways to the Island) and Wootton, the latter now considered a 'secondary settlement' given the size of population and collection of services and facilities. Smaller rural settlements are also included and the level of planned growth within the East Medina Area is set out below and shown on the diagrams on pages 34 and 35:

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
East Cowes	Primary	two sites	two sites	308
Wootton	Secondary	no sites	two sites	90
Arreton	Rural service centre	one site	no sites	42
Rookley	Rural service centre	one site	no sites	21
Merstone	None	no sites	no sites	0

Environment

Large areas of the East Medina area to the east of East Cowes and to the south of Wootton are protected through designation as AONB.Significant areas of land are allocated as open space across the area and there are two designated local green spaces.

Growth

Housing

The sites allocated for housing are within the revised settlement boundaries of East Cowes and Wootton (four sites in total – one brownfield and three greenfield) and together with the 4 sites already having planning permission, represent nine per cent of the housing in the IPS. These sites have the potential to provide **176 affordable homes**. Opportunities for the re-development of other existing brownfield sites (see policy H9) will be taken when they arise across the East Medina area. Rural and first home exception sites that provide predominantly affordable housing that meets local needs may come forward in and near the smaller settlements (see policy H7).

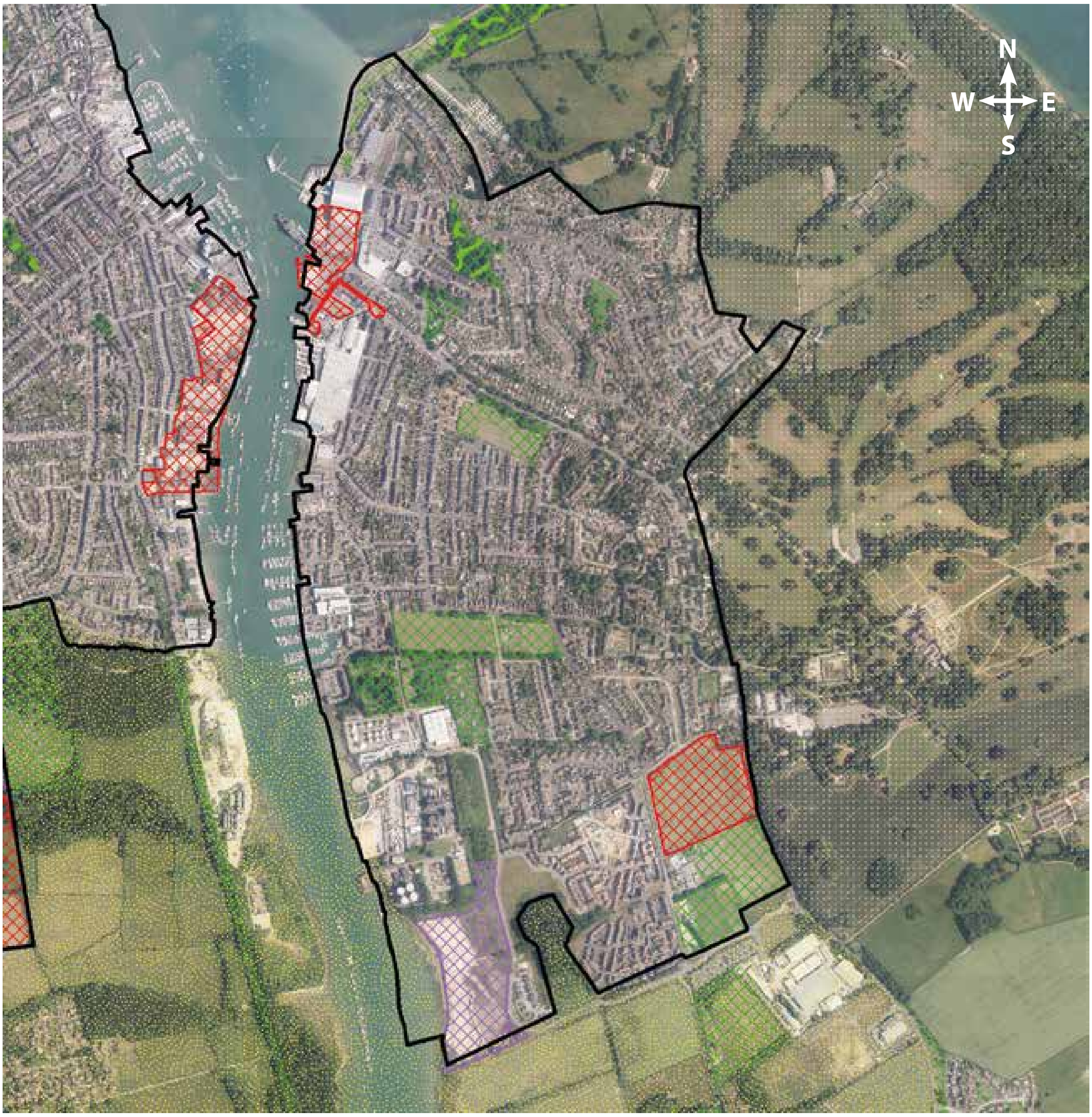
Economy

Over six hectares of new employment floorspace will also be provided through the allocation at Kingston Marine Park.

Transport

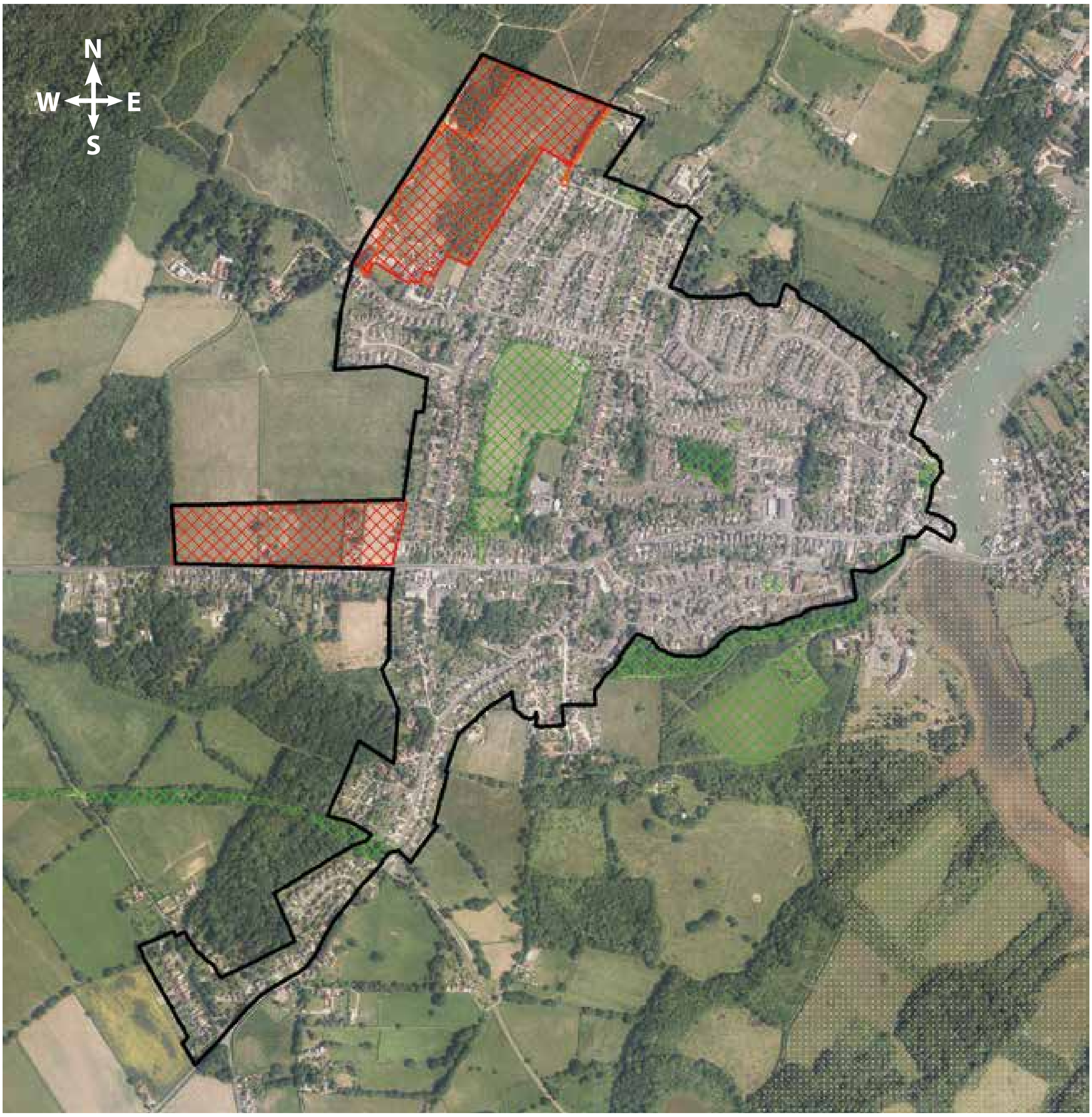
With East Cowes being one of the key gateways to the Island, the council will continue to work with Red Funnel to ensure already permitted improvements to the marshalling yard area, better traffic management within the town and wider public realm improvements are delivered. The cycle track between East Cowes and Newport will be completed, enabling people to move sustainably between the two towns.

Figure 3.9 – East Cowes settlement diagram



Settlement boundary
Open space
Local green space
Settlement gap
Allocated housing site
Employment site

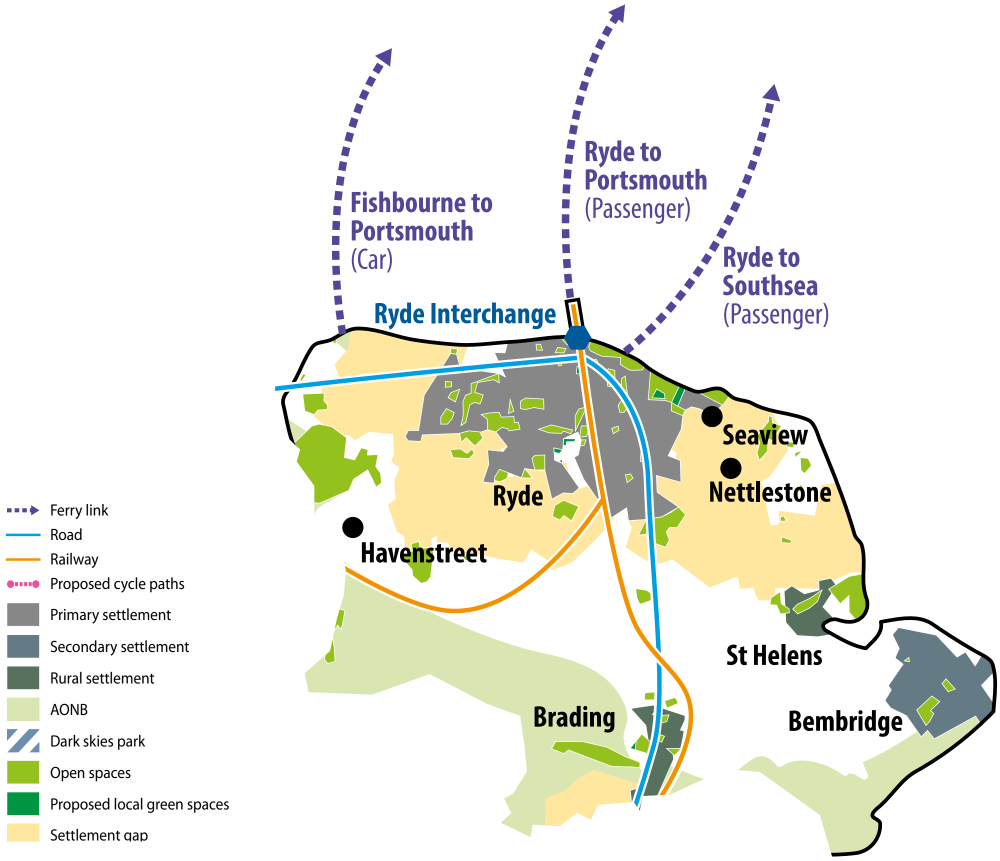
Figure 3.10 – Wootton settlement diagram



Settlement boundary	Open space	Local green space
Settlement gap	Allocated housing site	Employment site

Ryde area

Figure 3.11 – Ryde area key environment diagram



3.19 The Ryde area includes the primary settlement of Ryde, which acts as one of the key gateways to the island where ferries, hovercraft, rail, taxi and pedestrians all converge. There are a number of other settlements including Bembridge that is now a secondary settlement due to the collection of services and facilities available. As one of the primary settlements, Ryde plays a significant role in being able to accommodate growth in a sustainable way (13 per cent of homes allocated in the plan) which will enhance the already vibrant town centre where local independent retailers continue to have a very strong presence on the high street. The level of planned growth within the Ryde area is set out below and shown on the diagrams overleaf:

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
Ryde	Primary	three sites	five sites	1,373
Bembridge	Secondary	one site	two sites	193
Brading	Rural service centre	no sites	no sites	0
Seaview	Rural service centre	one site	no sites	17
St Helens	Rural service centre	no sites	no sites	0
Havenstreet	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0

Environment

Parts of the wider Ryde area are protected through designation as AONB while large areas of land are allocated as open space. There are also 10 designated local green spaces and large settlement gaps are maintained between Ryde and Seaview/ Nettlestone, Ryde and Wootton and Brading and Sandown.

Community

The Nicholson Road site includes the potential for a healthcare facility as part of the mixed use development.

Growth

Housing

The sites allocated for housing are all within the revised settlement boundaries of Ryde and Bembridge (seven sites in total – three brownfield and four greenfield) and together with the five sites already having planning permission, represent 27 per cent of the housing in the IPS. These homes have the potential to provide **554 affordable homes**. Opportunities for the re-development of other existing brownfield sites (see policy H9) will be taken when they arise across the Ryde Area. Rural and first home exception sites that provide predominantly affordable housing that meets local needs may come forward in and near the smaller settlements (see policy H7).

Economy

Over 14 hectares of employment land is allocated and has planning permission at Nicholson Road, providing increased employment opportunities and community uses close to residential areas, while also offering significant open space benefits and greater connections to existing green infrastructure.

Transport

Given the level of growth being planned, it will be important that these developments are brought forward in a co-ordinated manner, with the council and the various landowners/ developers working together to ensure that the required infrastructure has been properly identified and brought forward in a timely fashion. Developer contributions will be collected for the highway improvements shown on the diagram and listed in policy T1. A new integrated public transport interchange and public realm improvements in Ryde will improve the visitor experience and support wider improvements to the Esplanade.

Figure 3.12 – Ryde settlement diagram

Settlement boundary

Open space

Local green space

Settlement gap

Allocated housing site

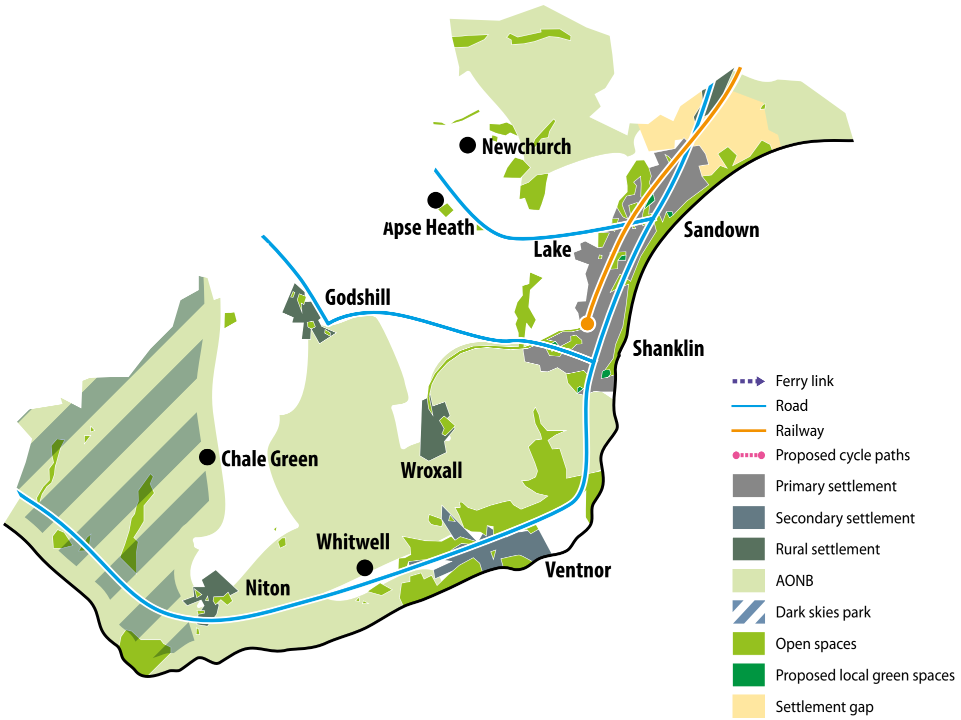
Employment site

Figure 3.13 – Bembridge settlement diagram

Settlement boundary
Open space
Local green space
Settlement gap
Allocated housing site
Employment site

The Bay area

Figure 3.14 – The Bay key environment diagram



3.20 The Bay area consists of the primary settlement of The Bay (consisting of Sandown, Shanklin and Lake) and a number of smaller, rural settlements. While The Bay is one of the primary settlements, it is limited by a series of constraints (eg, flood risk, topography, AONB, coastal issues) in the role it can play in accommodating growth in a sustainable way, which is why only four per cent of the homes allocated in the plan are located in the settlement. The level of planned growth within The Bay area is set out below and shown on the diagrams overleaf:

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
The Bay (Sandown, Shanklin and Lake)	Primary	three sites	six sites	243
Ventnor	Secondary	one site	no sites	10
Godshill	Rural service centre	no sites	one site	100
Niton	Rural service centre	no sites	no sites	0
Wroxall	Rural service centre	no sites	no sites	0
Chale Green	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0
Newchurch	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0
Whitwell	Sustainable rural settlement	no sites	no sites	0

Settlement	Settlement Status (G2)	Large sites with permission	Large sites allocated	Total new homes (2023-38)
Apse Heath	None	no sites	no sites	0
Winford	None	no sites	no sites	0

Environment

Large sections of The Bay area are protected through designation as AONB with significant areas of land also allocated as open space. There are also seven designated local green spaces and a settlement gap is maintained between Brading and Sandown. A large part of the proposed dark skies park covers the western part of The Bay area.

Community

A locality hub bringing together health and wellbeing services is also highlighted for The Bay area, expanding on the existing healthcare facilities at 1Leisure Heights.

Growth

The sites allocated for housing are all within the revised settlement boundaries of The Bay and Godshill (seven sites in total – six brownfield and one greenfield) and together with the four sites already having planning permission, represent six per cent of the total housing in the IPS. These sites have the potential to provide 124 affordable homes. The site in Godshill represents the only housing allocation outside of the primary and secondary settlements in the IPS, however the site is supported by the neighbourhood plan and parish council.

Housing

Opportunities for the re-development of other existing brownfield sites (see policy H9) will be taken when they arise across The Bay area. Rural and first home exception sites that provide predominantly affordable housing that meets local needs may come forward in and near the smaller settlements (see policy H7).

Economy

Over 3.5 hectares of employment land is allocated across two sites, one at Sandown Airport and one at Lowtherville in Ventnor, providing opportunities for existing businesses wishing to expand and new businesses entering the area.

Transport

A number of highway junctions are listed in Policy T1 and developer contributions will be collected for these schemes to ensure infrastructure is delivered to support the level of housing growth that is planned.

Figure 3.15 – The Bay settlement diagram

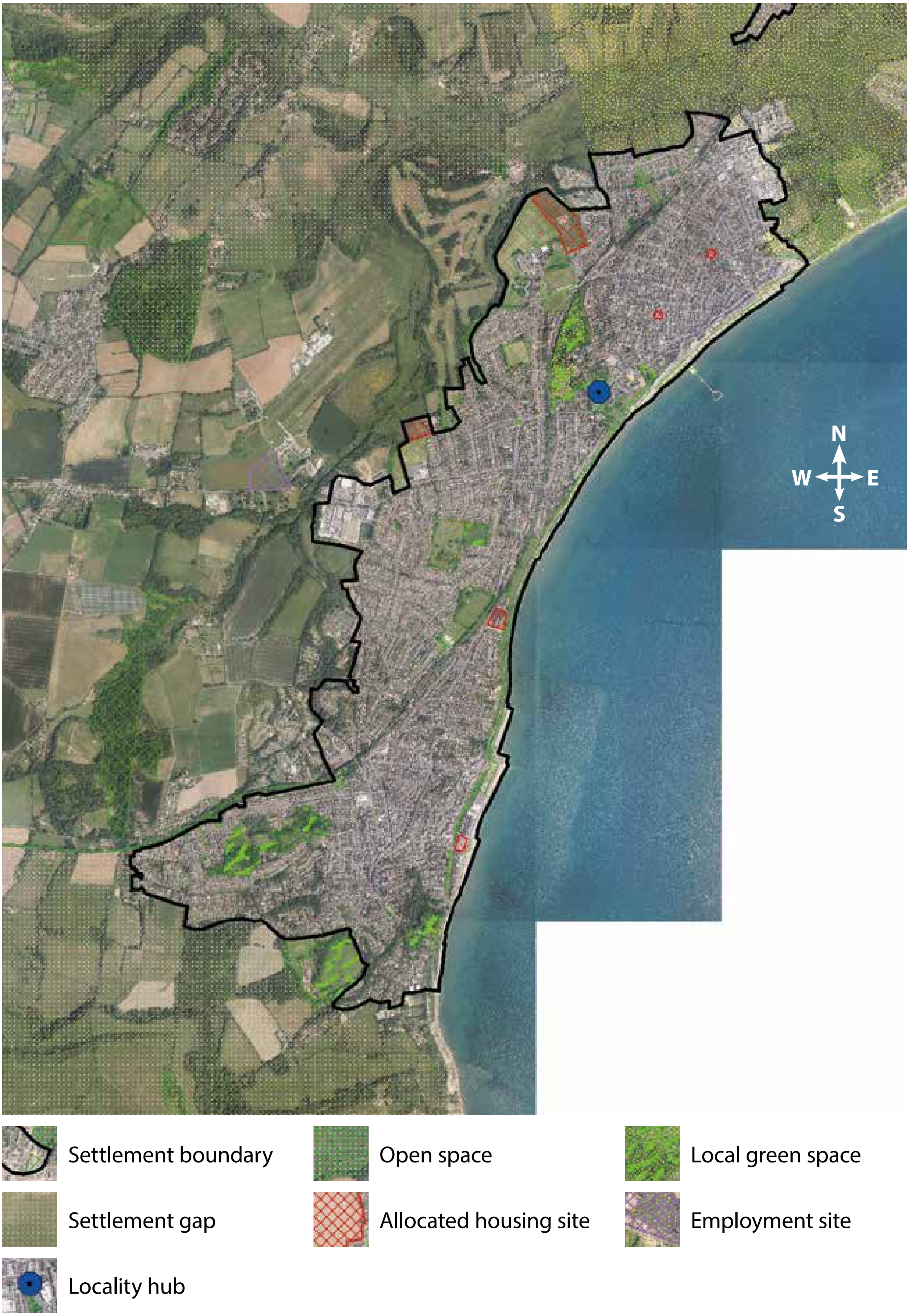
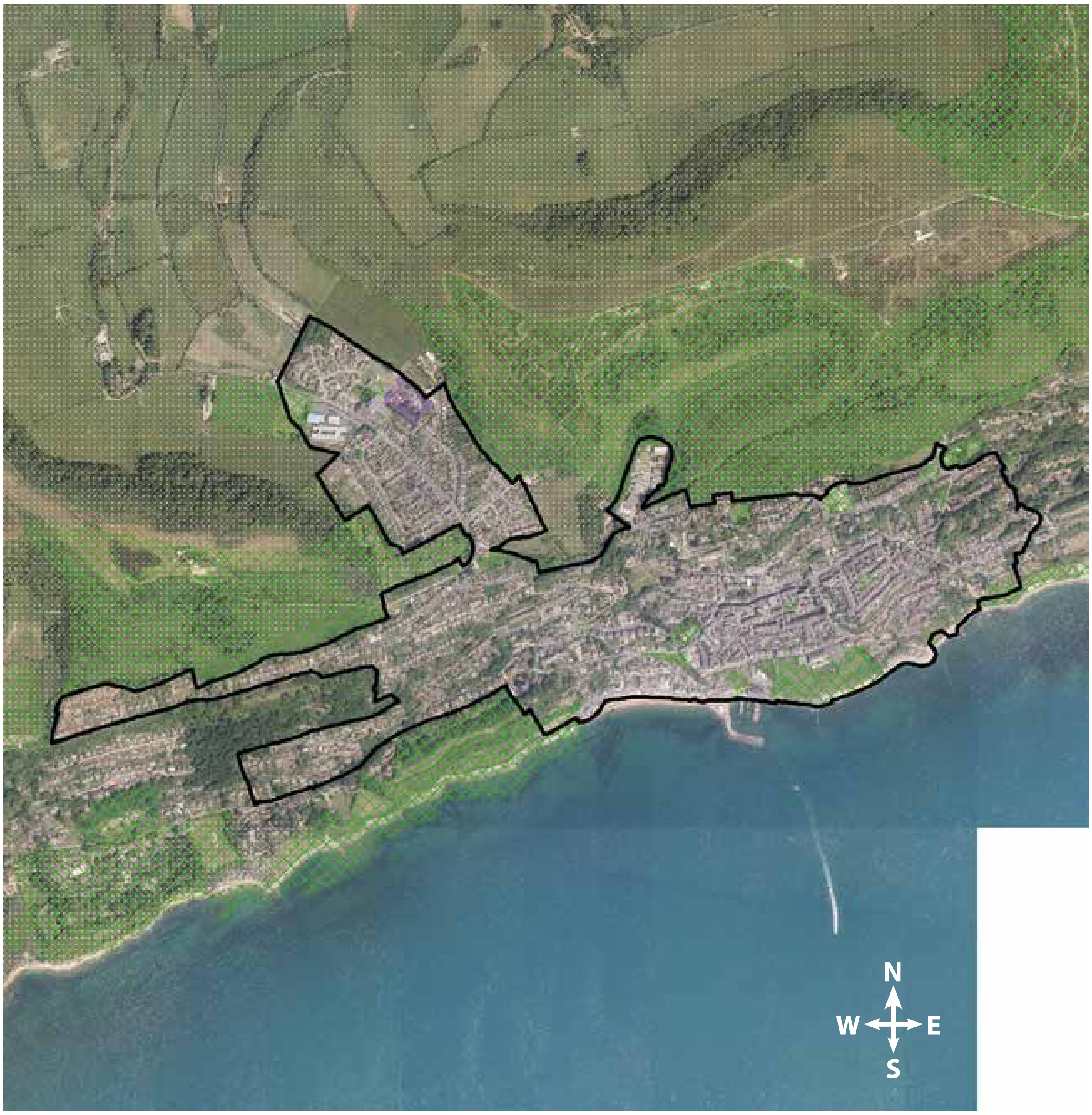


Figure 3.16 – Ventnor settlement diagram



Settlement boundary

Open space

Local green space

Settlement gap

Allocated housing site

Employment site

Figure 3.17 – Godshill settlement diagram

3.21 This section has briefly highlighted the key elements of planned growth in each of the areas of the Island. The remainder of the Island Planning Strategy contains the set of specific policies that will be used to help deliver the right homes in the right places, as well as provide the detailed framework from which we will determine planning applications that are submitted.