

Section 4: Environment



- 4.1** The importance to the Island of its historic and natural environment cannot be understated and in June 2019 the Island was granted Biosphere Reserve status by UNESCO (United Nations Environment, Science and Cultural Organisation), only the third location within the England to benefit from such a designation.
- 4.2** 'Biosphere' is the living surface of our planet, made from the land, the sea, the air we breathe and the energy from the Sun. UNESCO Biosphere Reserves are some of the best examples where communities have found ways to resolve the conservation of ecosystems with their ongoing sustainable use. There are over 700 UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in 120 countries including 20 transboundary sites.
- 4.3** In 2017, working with partner organisations across the Island, the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership led the bid to achieve UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status for the Isle of Wight. After being endorsed by the UK Government and following submission of a nomination to UNESCO in Paris in September 2018, UNESCO designated the Isle of Wight a Biosphere Reserve on 19 June 2019 (www.iwbiosphere.org).
- 4.4** The designation shows the world that the Isle of Wight is an important area for wildlife and that this is due, in part, to the continuing commitment the local community have to its conservation and enhancement. Since the designation, the Biosphere status is now referenced in multiple council documents and strategies together with nature and landscape conservation initiatives. It has helped to give the Isle of Wight a distinctive and unique identity with global recognition.
- 4.5** Land is increasingly at a premium to try and meet all of the needs of the island, whether they be additional housing, economic development, sustainable transport, climate change mitigation or food production. All these needs benefit from the conservation and enhancement of our natural assets and the ecosystem services they provide and implementation of the policies in the Island Planning Strategy will play a fundamental role in helping to maintain the Isle of Wight UNESCO Biosphere Reserve ethos and designation in the future.
- 4.6** The suite of policies in the Environment section are designed to recognise and support this designation, and to ensure that development proposals deal with environmental issues appropriately. 'Conserving and Enhancing Our Historic Environment' deals with the historic environment, and 'Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement'

provides the strategic policy context relating to ecological assets. This is followed with further, specific policies relating to 'Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy', 'Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates)', 'Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows', 'Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces' and 'Protecting Our Landscapes and Seascapes'.

- 4.7** The importance of settlement identity is recognised in the policy **Preserving settlement identity**, along with significance of the Island's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in **Isle of Wight AONB**. Linked to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and tranquillity is **Dark skies**.
- 4.8** The role of water and how it is managed is crucial to the Island. Therefore, there are a number of policies targeting the component parts of this issue: **Managing Our water resources, Managing flood risk in new development, Monkton Mead catchment area, Managing our coast, Facilitating relocation from Coastal change management areas, Improving resilience from coastal flooding, and Managing ground instability in new development.**

Conserving and enhancing our historic environment

EV1

Conserving and enhancing our historic environment

The council will support proposals that positively conserve and enhance the special character of the Island's historic environment and heritage assets. Development proposals will be expected to:

- a** relate to the continued use, maintenance, rescue/ refurbishment/ repair and re-use of heritage assets and historic places, especially where they are identified as being at risk or likely to become at risk;
- b** consider and balance the relationship between the quality of place, economic, social (including safety and antisocial behaviour), regeneration, cultural and environmental characteristics;
- c** demonstrate how they have been informed by sufficient evidence to reveal impacts upon the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings) and how these impacts can be mitigated;
- d** make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Substantial harm to, or loss of grade II listed buildings or grade II registered parks and gardens will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Substantial harm to, or loss of scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, grade I and II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens will only be permitted in wholly exceptional circumstances.

Development proposals that would result in substantial harm or total loss of significance will be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a** substantial public benefits would outweigh the substantial harm or total loss of significance – or all of the following:
- b** the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- c** no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term that will enable its conservation; and
- d** conservation through grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is not possible; and
- e** the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of bringing the site back into use.

Where a proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (including any contribution made by its setting) a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm, the significance of the heritage asset and the public benefits of the proposal.

Where a proposal would cause substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset (including any contribution made by its setting), a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm, the significance of the heritage asset and its contribution to the special character/local identity of an area and the public benefits of the proposal.

Where harm or loss to a heritage asset is unavoidable, the asset should be recorded in a manner proportionate to its importance and the impact and the record should be made publicly accessible. Copies of evidence should be deposited with the Historic Environment Record and local museum.

- 4.9** The policy is designed to afford an appropriate level of protection to heritage assets, whilst recognising that there may be some circumstances where the loss may be considered acceptable when balanced against the public benefits of a proposal.
- 4.10** The historic environment encompasses all aspects resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped with planted or managed flora. These surviving physical remains are referred to as heritage assets.
- 4.11** Heritage assets both within and outside of settlements are invariably important in their own right, but also form an important context which should be respected when new development is being considered. Designated heritage assets will be afforded the highest protection in line with the relevant legislation, national policy and guidance. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

4.12 The Island's historic environment provides a wealth of these distinctive features, that either individually or collectively help to define their surrounding area. It is these characteristics that create such a strong sense of place, which is valued by the council, communities and visitors alike. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of potential harm to its significance. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

4.13 The Isle of Wight benefits from:

- 1,956 listed building entries, of which 29 are grade I listed, 68 are grade II* listed and 1,859 are grade II listed;
- 122 scheduled monuments;
- nine historic parks and gardens;
- three protected wreck sites;
- 36 conservation areas;
- 175 locally listed buildings, structures and parks and gardens;
- 13,501 non-designated sites on the Historic Environment Record.

The location of these can be seen in greater detail on the policies map, except for the sites on the Historic Environment Record and the protected wreck sites.

4.14 4.14 Managing change to a heritage asset in a positive way can take many forms, for example securing the longevity of heritage assets that contribute positively to local character and provide places of interest for visitors to the Island, or the suitable re-use of heritage assets to provide tourism accommodation or workspace for employment uses. Historic parks and gardens are a fragile and finite resource: they can easily be damaged beyond repair or lost forever. These are part of the island's heritage assets and the impact of proposed development on the special character of the landscape must be considered.

4.15 Applications which affect or have the potential to affect heritage assets will be expected to prepare a Heritage Statement that will:

- a** describe the significance of the asset including any contribution from its setting, using appropriate expertise; at a level of detail proportionate to its significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal; using appropriate references such as conservation area appraisals and the historic environment record and, if necessary, original survey (including, for assets of archaeological interest, an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation); and
- b** to set out the impact of the development on the heritage assets and a suggested mitigation that is proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage asset, including where possible positive opportunities to conserve and enjoy heritage assets as well as recording loss and advancing knowledge.

- 4.16** Using this approach should result in proposals which emerge from a robust design process that requires an understanding of significance and local context. For designated and non-designated heritage assets this will also mean the submission of appropriately detailed information to help demonstrate the potential impact upon significance. The level of detail required will depend upon the nature of the asset and the proposal affecting the asset and will potentially reduce the number of conditions that could otherwise be required. The local list and conservation area appraisals will be subject to review and updated depending on the availability of resources.
- 4.17** In new development, it is important to retain historic reference points which create a sense of local identity and distinctiveness. This includes historic features such as ancient roads, green lanes and byways and settlement patterns. It is important to remember that it is not only the historic buildings and features that are important but also the spaces between and within these assets. Historic landscape characterisation is an important tool for managing the historic environment and conserving important landscapes. Proposals need to take account of these characteristics to ensure that they respect the context within which they sit, be it a historic monument, building, streetscape or landscape. The insensitive development of a heritage asset, or land surrounding it, can have negative consequences, such as loss of local identity and even, in extreme circumstances, the loss of the asset altogether.
- 4.18** The council welcomes pre-application discussions with applicants which can help identify opportunities as well as any constraints prior to submission of an application. Furthermore, the use of national guidance documents like the Government's planning practice guidance and Historic England's Good practice advice notes and Historic England advice notes will assist in the assessment and outcome of development proposals.
- 4.19** Heritage values are the framework for assessing an asset's importance on many levels and an understanding of the fabric, values and significance of the place determines what change is harmful, what can be mitigated and what is beneficial. This value approach goes beyond consideration of the level of statutory designation, so the fact that a place does not meet certain criteria for statutory designation does not negate the value that it may hold in its local community.
- 4.20** The council will monitor buildings or other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk through discussions with owners and willingness to consider positively development schemes that would ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers.

This is a key strategic policy and links to the following Island Planning Strategy (IPS) objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
 - The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.
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Ecological assets and opportunities for enhancement

EV2

Ecological assets and opportunities for enhancement

Development proposals will be expected to protect the integrity of habitats and species important to biodiversity or of geological value and enhance their features of interest wherever possible, making a positive contribution to the Island's status as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Development should be located away from the most sensitive locations in accordance with the following hierarchy of nature conservation designations (as shown on the policies map):

- International
- National
- Local

Development proposals will only be permitted if it can be clearly demonstrated that the integrity of the national site network will not be adversely affected, other than in exceptional circumstances relating to overriding public interest.

The loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats will not be permitted except in wholly exceptional cases and then only when a suitable compensation strategy is provided.

There are a number of habitats and features outside of designated sites that make a significant contribution to local biodiversity. Development proposals are expected to promote the maintenance and enhancement of the links between designated sites and to positively contribute to the aims and objectives of the biodiversity action plans.

Development proposals will only be permitted where any impacts on watercourses have been mitigated, including consideration of appropriate buffer zones in relation to the affected watercourse. Proposals should demonstrate how the enhancement and maintenance of river corridors, including any buffer zones, will be secured for the lifetime of development.

Development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered the ecological network on the Island (as shown on the policies map).

Applications for development should include adequate and proportionate information to enable a proper assessment of ecological considerations by:

- a** completing and submitting protected habitat and species surveys where required;
- b** submitting a biodiversity mitigation plan which sets out any avoidance, mitigation and any compensatory measures;
- c** using Defra's biodiversity metric calculator to demonstrate how a minimum net gain of 10 per cent for biodiversity will be achieved.

- 4.21** The aim of this policy is to conserve designated sites and protected species while ensuring a net gain for biodiversity is achieved. There are three elements to this policy; identifying environmental assets, the assessment of impacts on these and the measures to mitigate or compensate for any harm.
- 4.22** All designated sites form some of the Island's environmental assets and are shown individually on the Policies Map. These comprise of SPAs, SACs, Ramsar sites, SSSIs, National Nature Reserves, MCZs, LNRs, SINCs, RIGGs and ancient woodland. Development will be steered away from these locations to ensure the most environmentally sensitive areas are protected. The whole island has been recognised as part of UNESCO's worldwide network of biosphere reserves for its environmental significance and this policy will play a key role in maintaining and enhancing this biosphere reserve designation. Any plan or development which is considered to have a likely significant effect upon a European and/or Ramsar site will be subject to a habitats regulations assessment and may require avoidance, mitigation or compensatory measures.
- 4.23** Any plan or development which is considered to have a likely significant effect upon a European and/or Ramsar site will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment and may require avoidance, mitigation or compensatory measures.
- 4.24** There are a number of habitats and features outside of designated sites that make a significant contribution to local biodiversity, including for example, ancient and veteran trees. The Isle of Wight biodiversity action plan (IW BAP) (www.wildonwight.co.uk/haps.php) is made up of a suite of habitat and species action plans. These include features such as woodlands, lowland meadows, coasts, estuaries and other important local habitats. There are also species action plans for red squirrels and woodland bats. Development is expected to positively contribute to the aims and objectives of these plans which will be updated before the plan is adopted. There are many different organisations working in partnership in the conservation of the Island's biodiversity and the IW BAP is recognised as a key document.
- 4.25** Completion of the biodiversity checklist by a competent person will show how biodiversity has been taken into account at the initial stage, and this will indicate which sites require an ecological assessment. Appropriate levels of ecological surveys and assessment work should be submitted with each application. Any impacts should first be avoided, and if not possible mitigated for. Where this cannot be achieved compensatory measures will need to be agreed with the council. Defra's biodiversity metric calculator should be completed to demonstrate how a minimum net gain of 10 per cent for biodiversity will be achieved, in addition to any required mitigation/compensation.

- 4.26** Where protected species are identified developments will be expected to conserve and enhance these. Where it can clearly be demonstrated that there is an overriding need for the development that outweighs the significance of the nature conservation feature(s) the planning authority will impose conditions on the planning permission or require a planning obligation to:
- a** facilitate the survival of individual members of the species;
 - b** reduce disturbance to a minimum;
 - c** provide alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population of the species; and
 - d** take opportunities to enhance their habitat.
- 4.27** Where harm that cannot be mitigated has been identified, the application will be refused. The ecological network map can be used to help identify concentrations of good quality habitat as well as those which are isolated at a landscape scale. This can then be used to focus effort and target resources to restore areas and corridors where conservation will make the most difference. This means that off-site compensatory measures can be secured to provide a contribution to the enhancement of the network where appropriate.
- 4.28** Planning applications are required to clearly set out any impacts associated with the proposals and the mitigation or compensation measures that make the development acceptable. This could be set out within a separate biodiversity mitigation plan. A natural capital approach will be used to monitor the levels of protection and enhancement of environment.
- 4.29** River corridors also provide vital ecological functions for a variety of species. Even in urban areas, where watercourses have been modified, aquatic species will often use watercourses as a direct route or, for example, to disperse seed. Therefore it is important that proposals for new development consider any impacts. To ensure protection of these features the council would expect the following buffer zones around watercourses to be considered in the design of development:
- Eight metre wide buffers either side of main rivers (non-tidal).
 - 16 metre wide buffers either side of main rivers (tidal).
 - Eight metre wide buffers either side of ordinary watercourses for minor development.
 - 16 metre wide buffers either side of ordinary watercourses for major development.

4.30 Newly created individual curtilages (eg, private gardens for residential development) should not be located within watercourse buffers, however, where appropriate space within buffers can also serve an amenity function. All development proposals that have an area within one of the identified buffers will need to demonstrate how the following have been taken into account or mitigated in the design of a scheme:

- Identification of impacts associated with new development, either directly or indirectly, for example through loss of habitat, disturbance, or pollution.
- Where impacts are identified proposals should set out the measures to address these and should first seek to avoid any impacts, if this isn't possible mitigation is required and in some cases compensation will be sought. Proposals should demonstrate how the enhancement and maintenance of river corridors, including buffer zones, will be secured for the lifetime of development.
- The eight metre buffers should prioritise protection and enhancement of nature conservation assets.
- The 16 metre buffers should include provision for public access in addition to nature conservation where any catchment guidance deems this appropriate.
- The buffer should include a mix of open land and scrub at different ages for structural diversity; riverside lawns connected by denser cover, giving the river patchy and dappled light.
- For all riverine properties, including single dwellings, riverside lawns should be connected by denser cover at the water's edge.
- All hedgerows within a buffer should be retained and properly managed.
- Some tree and scrub removal may be permitted to allow for dappling of the water-course.
- Bank-sides and riverbeds should not be modified with piling, jetties or other structures. Where these modifications are already in-place, unless they are providing a flood protection, they should ideally be removed or adapted, and more natural features created that are sympathetic to river life. These include clean gravels and stones, sinuous channel-form, riffles, pools that provide varied flow for diverse river-life.
- Remove in-channel and bankside modifications and restore the river to natural flows where this is deemed appropriate by the Environment Agency or lead local flood authority.
- Non-native invasive species are to be eradicated in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidance.

4.31 The council have been working alongside the Newport Rivers Group and more widely with the Island Rivers Partnership, which includes the Environment Agency, to identify and produce guidance on a catchment scale approach.

- 4.32** Catchments that are particularly susceptible to development pressure include Gunville Stream, Lukely Brook in Newport, Monktonmead Brook in Ryde and Scotchells Brook in The Bay area. Future guidance will be developed to focus on these areas and applications will be required to demonstrate how they have taken the relevant guidance into account.
- 4.33** Housing allocation HA033 'Land west of Sylvan Drive' will be expected to include appropriate buffers to the Gunville Stream. The buffers and any features within should be designed in consultation with the Island Rivers Partnership and any ecological enhancements should be secured in perpetuity via a legal agreement.

EV3

Recreation Impact on the Solent European Sites

Development proposals located within 5.6km of the Solent SPAs that include a net gain of residential dwellings will be required to provide mitigation for the likely significant effects on the Solent European Sites. Mitigation can be provided through either:

- a** a financial contribution in accordance with the Solent recreation mitigation strategy (SRMS); or
- b** a developer-led mitigation scheme that achieves the requirements of the bird-aware Solent strategy; or
- c** a combination of the above.

If appropriate mitigation is not proposed the application will be refused.

- 4.34** The Solent is internationally important for its wildlife and has a number of European and international designations. Each winter, the Solent hosts over 90,000 waders and wildfowl including 10 to 30 per cent of the global population of Brent Geese. The three Solent special protection areas (SPAs) were designated by the Government predominantly to protect these over wintering geese and breeding tern.
- 4.35** An acknowledged issue for any new residential development within 5.6km of the Solent coast is the impact which disturbance, much of which is caused by recreation, can have on the protected species which use the Solent European Sites. This zone of influence includes the vast majority of the Isle of Wight and is shown on the policies map. Development can increase the human population near the coast and thus increase the level of recreation and disturbance. This means that birds are not able to feed as effectively and spend more energy avoiding the disturbances.

- 4.36** A mitigation framework across the Solent, including the Isle of Wight, has been in place since 2014. The Solent recreation mitigation strategy (SRMS) scheme is implemented through Bird Aware Solent and allows development to take place while fulfilling its statutory requirement to prevent a significant effect on the SPAs. Therefore, mitigation for new residential development can be provided by making financial contributions towards a strategic approach as set out in the SRMS. It is expected that the majority of schemes will provide mitigation packages in this way. The scale of the financial contribution is based on the number of net additional dwellings, varied by the number of bedrooms per dwelling. These figures will be increased on 1st April each year in line with the Retail Price Index. Further information is contained in the SRMS itself ([Solent_Recreation_Mitigation_Strategy.pdf – birdaware.org](#)). Alternatively, and often for larger development sites, mitigation can be provided through a bespoke package of measures agreed with Natural England. Such schemes should engage Natural England’s discretionary advice service (DAS) at the pre-application stage.
- 4.37** In addition, a conservation partnership project – **The Solent waders and Brent Goose Strategy** has been set up to conserve the internationally important Brent goose and wading bird populations within and around the SPAs and Ramsar wetlands of the Solent coast. The Strategy highlights the sites which are used by overwintering birds which lie outside the SPA.

EV4

Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates)

For all planning applications that involve a net increase of residential units (including tourist accommodation), it must be demonstrated that the development would not cause harm to the Solent European Sites as a result of drainage that would result in a net increase in nutrients. Development proposals should demonstrate how nutrient neutrality has been achieved by:

- a** confirming that the development will connect to the public sewer system and if so, gain written confirmation from Southern Water that it would drain to Sandown WwTW. If this is the case, then the council will impose a planning condition on any grant of planning permission that secures the drainage solution in perpetuity.
- b** if the proposed development would not drain to Sandown WwTW, providing details of the drainage solution for the development and an accompanying nitrogen budget, together with any required mitigation in agreement with Natural England.

The council has issued a position statement on this issue that will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

- 4.38** Natural England (NE) have raised the issue of a likely significant effect on several internationally designated sites (special protection areas [SPA], special areas of conservation [SAC] and Ramsar sites) due to the increase in wastewater from the new developments coming forward. The Solent has recognised problems from nitrate enrichment; high levels of nitrogen from human activity and agricultural sources in the catchment have caused excessive growth of green algae which is having a detrimental impact upon protected habitats and bird species.

- 4.39** NE's advice to all planning authorities within the Solent basin, including the council, is that achieving nutrient neutrality is one way to address the existing uncertainty surrounding the impact of new residential development on designated sites. As a result, development that results in a net increase in housing must demonstrate that it would not result in a net increase in nitrates within the Solent protected sites (ie, the development would be 'nitrogen neutral') and mitigation measures may be required to achieve this.
- 4.40** NE have also advised the council that the nutrient neutrality approach only applies to developments where treated effluent discharges into any Solent international sites (Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar, Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar), or any water body (surface or groundwater) that subsequently discharges into such a site.
- 4.41** Sandown wastewater treatment works (WwTW) outfalls into the English Channel and is therefore **excluded on that basis** and developments that will connect to Sandown WwTW do not have to demonstrate nutrient neutrality. This position will be kept under review and may be subject to change at which point the council will update the position statement ([2981-IWC-Position-Statement-Nitrates.pdf – iow.gov.uk](https://www.iow.gov.uk/2981-IWC-Position-Statement-Nitrates.pdf)) that has been prepared on this issue.
- 4.42** If the proposed development would not drain to Sandown WwTW, then the applicant will need to provide details of the drainage solution and provide a nitrogen budget (www.push.gov.uk/2020/06/11/natural-england-published-nutrient-calculator-and-updated-guidance-on-achieving-nutrient-neutral-housing-development) alongside any required mitigation in agreement with Natural England.
- 4.43** The council would recommend that Natural England are engaged through their discretionary advice service (DAS), a service offered to provide pre-application and post-consent advice in relation to development (www.gov.uk/guidance/developers-get-environmental-advice-on-your-planning-proposals) to help shape appropriate mitigation packages where the nutrient calculator demonstrates it is required.
- 4.44** Where development proposals include use of package treatment plants (PTP), or similar, they will need to include a nitrate budget calculation and include product specifications of the PTP used. Appropriate mitigation may need to be included and agreed with Natural England.
- 4.45** Developments where the only waste management option is to connect to existing or new cess pits will not need to demonstrate nutrient neutrality. Southern Water have confirmed that the Sandown treatment plant is the only site on the Island accepting this type of waste and therefore does not need to be subject to any Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

These are strategic policies and link to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.
- Businesses have the confidence to invest.

Trees, woodland and hedgerows

EV5

Trees, woodland and hedgerows

The council recognises the wider benefits of trees, woodlands and hedgerows and therefore development proposals will be supported where they:

- a retain trees, woodlands and hedges on site wherever possible, especially where they are of high amenity;
- b avoid direct and indirect harmful impacts on trees, woodlands and hedges, and where this is not possible mitigation should be provided;
- c provide a minimum 15 metre buffer between new development and ancient woodland (where relevant).

The council will:

- encourage development that proposes on or off-site tree planting, using the council's tree planting and management strategy as a guide to planting the right type of tree in the right place.

Development proposals that include the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees will be refused, other than in wholly exceptional circumstances and where a suitable compensation strategy is proposed. Where new or replacement planting is proposed, appropriate species should be used wherever possible that reflect or add to the setting of the surrounding area.

- 4.46** This policy seeks to protect the landscape character and amenity value afforded by trees, woodlands and hedges on the Island. Trees provide an important green infrastructure function and contribute significantly to the health of the environment and people.
- 4.47** In terms of trees, amenity is considered to be the wider benefits that a treed environment may give to an area. These benefits being the environmental, economic and social aspects a sylvan setting offers. Trees provide habitat connectivity through development areas and should be carefully considered in the overall development design layout. It is not necessary for the public to have access to the trees to benefit from them; the public benefit can also be realised if the trees can be viewed from a public place.

- 4.48** All trees that may be impacted by a development proposal should be considered and any adverse impacts ruled out. Development proposals should be supported, when necessary, with documentation that identifies the constraints trees might present and how the development will address these through design.
- 4.49** There is no 'one size fits all' with buffer design, each one should be designed to fulfil the specific requirements of its location and the type of proposed development. The council will expect that as a minimum, a buffer of at least 15 metres should be provided between new development and ancient woodland. It is also recognised that a larger buffer may be required for particularly significant engineering operations, or for after-uses that generate significant disturbance.
- 4.50** Where the benefit of development is considered to outweigh the benefit of preserving these features, development will be permitted subject to adequate compensatory provision being made. Where the loss of trees, woodlands and hedges is unavoidable, replacement provision should be of a commensurate value to that which is lost.
- 4.51** The council will expect applicants to follow the best practice detailed in BS 5837 (2012) 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction', and BS 8545:2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape' or the most up-to-date equivalent. Established inventories of ancient woodland and veteran trees should be consulted and arboricultural surveys undertaken where appropriate.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.

Protecting and providing green and open spaces

EV6

Protecting and providing green and open spaces

Development proposals are expected to protect and contribute to green and open space in line with the standards set out in the Isle of Wight Open Space Assessment.

Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they:

- a** avoid the loss of identified open space, as shown on the policies map;
- b** Ensure the deficiencies identified within the council's open space assessment are being addressed;
- c** where relevant, make provision for public green, open and recreational space through on site or off site provision (including SANGs), taking into account proposals within the Isle of Wight local nature recovery strategy (LNRS).

- 4.52** This policy recognises that open, green and recreational spaces make an important contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of communities and have been hugely important during lockdown. Parks and accessible greenspace provide opportunities for exercise such as walking and cycling. Community spaces can also be used for cultural engagement by providing a valuable resource for learning about local history and nature. Natural green spaces support the environmental capacity to counter effects of pollution and can improve sites for wildlife.
- 4.53** All of these spaces are important and as such the policy ensures that new development takes account of this and provides and/ or contributes to a variety of open, green, natural and recreational spaces where relevant.
- 4.54** The Government has set out policy aims and objectives for the protection and provision of open space and a strategy is required for the Island. The Isle of Wight open space assessment sets local standards based on assessment of local needs, demographics and audits of existing open spaces. It is the basis for addressing quantitative and qualitative deficiencies.
- 4.55** In addition to the open space assessment, The playing pitch strategy provides the evidence base and guides future provision and management of new sports pitches and outdoor sports facilities on the Island. The strategy focuses on facilities used by sports including football, cricket, rugby union, hockey, tennis, netball and bowls with the focus being on a need basis for sports. The open space assessment includes outdoor sports facilities from the perspective of meeting recreational needs.
- 4.56** Publicly accessible open spaces have been identified and mapped. The loss of these sites should be avoided, and sites of high usage and quality are afforded maximum protection. Proposals to modify identified spaces (either through loss or type) will need to consider the deficiencies and types in the context of the surrounding area. Where evidence shows no deficiency, an assessment of the open space's historical, cultural and ecological value should be undertaken to understand the full ramifications of its loss. The loss of outdoor recreation facilities including playing fields is only permitted in limited circumstances as set out in Policy C14. Additional open spaces will need realistic plans for implementing and resourcing maintenance agreements to provide the required quality. Playing fields should be protected through consultation with Sport England.
- 4.57** Open space typologies include parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural areas, green corridors, amenity green space, provision for children and young people, outdoor sports facilities, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards and civic spaces. The audit identified that the Island has predominantly high quality open spaces that have a high level of accessibility. However, there are some deficiencies in both the urban and rural areas and very few areas have a surplus of provision, particularly when undertaking a local area needs analysis not taking into account the larger Island-wide provision.

- 4.58** To ensure new development does not put pressure on existing assets the Audit sets out a metre² per person requirement for various open space types including parks and gardens, local amenity space, natural and semi-natural greenspace, provision for children and young people, outdoor sports facilities and allotments and community gardens. This should be followed for all new development.
- 4.59** As part of wider agendas on health and wellbeing and climate change mitigation and adaptation, development where possible should help deliver multiple functions. This could include recreation, green travel routes, noise absorption, habitat and connectivity for wildlife, heritage, carbon storage, water storage and water infiltration and interception.

Suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANGs) requirements

- 4.60** In partnership with Natural England and others it has been determined that development could have an in-combination likely significant effect on the nearby protected sites from recreational impacts (see policy EV3).
- 4.61** Mitigation for recreational impacts can take the form of access management within the European sites, or provision of alternative recreation locations to draw users away from the European sites. Alternative natural greenspaces can function as suitable substitutes to reduce visitor pressure on the Solent SPAs.
- 4.62** While financial contributions in line with the SRMS can provide mitigation, it may also be necessary for site specific mitigation to be provided, or even desired. This should ideally take the form of suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANGs) which provides recreational space. Onsite SANGs, tangible and integrated to the development will mean that residents have access to local provision away from the coast.
- 4.63** SANGs can be created by opening up existing green space that is currently inaccessible by the public, modifying existing green space to make it more attractive to potential visitors to the SPA or converting land that is not currently green space.
- 4.64** It is likely that developments of 75 dwellings or more will need to provide an onsite SANGs. This is due to the degree of pressure related to the number of people likely to be living within the development that may result in a likely significant effect on the protected European sites.
- 4.65** If development triggers the need for a SANG the council will look to review existing open space within the 5.6km of the Solent SPA to determine if it could be enhanced to meet the SANG criteria of being suitable, natural and accessible. A SANGs needs to serve its intended purpose by providing an alternative accessible area that is:
- coherent;
 - integrated within the development;
 - linked with existing facilities/public rights of ways.

- 4.66** The size of the SANGs will be dependent on the above factors. However, a SANG has a generally agreed minimum size of 2.2ha and a 2.3-2.5km circular walk across the country which is deemed as the minimum size to be functional. The council is not prescribing the size of SANGs per person or development preferring to take a site by site basis noting that smaller SANGs can still be appropriate providing they are of good quality and where possible incorporate the above principles.
- 4.67** Where SANGs cannot be provided onsite, an off-site contribution towards the upgrading or maintenance of a nearby existing provision may be acceptable. This should increase the capacity of the landscape by an equivalent amount to that of the expected development occupancy and will be no less than the expected undeliverable SANG.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- People take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

Local green spaces

EV7

Local green Spaces

Sites shown as local green space on the policies map are designated as such and development involving the loss of a local green space will not be permitted, other than in very special circumstances.

In line with national policy, the council will consider requests from communities to designate additional local green spaces.

- 4.68** The sites identified on the policies map as local green space have either already been designated through neighbourhood development plans or identified to the council through consultation responses from the public and representative bodies from other planning and community supplementary planning documents.
- 4.69** In line with national policy the council supports communities identifying local green spaces that are demonstrably special to them and holds a particular local significance. By designating such sites new development is ruled out, other than in very special circumstances.
- 4.70** The land designated as local green space must be:
- a** in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - b** demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
 - c** local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

- 4.71** Designating land as local green space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.
- 4.72** A local green space designation can be made through the Island Planning Strategy or neighbourhood development plans. The designation gives the same level of protection given in national policy to green belt land and therefore development will only be approved in very special circumstances, which are likely only to be where proposals result in a significant Island-wide economic benefit.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- Community needs are met by the best public services possible.
- The community feels safe and the Island is resilient.
- People take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

Protecting high grade agricultural land

EV8

Protecting high grade agricultural land

The best and most versatile agricultural land will be protected from development not associated with agriculture or forestry except where:

- a** it can be demonstrated to be necessary; and
- b** development is small scale; and
- c** the need for and the benefit of development in achieving the long term viability of a farm justifies the scale and nature of the loss.

Developments greater than five hectares, which are likely to affect the best and most versatile agricultural land, should produce an agricultural land classification survey to determine the quality, quantity and accurate location of agricultural land in grades 1, 2 and 3a. Planning permission for development affecting such land will only be granted if there is an overriding need for development and either:

- a** sufficient land of a lower grade is unavailable or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a statutory wildlife, historic landscape or archaeological designation and outweighs the agricultural considerations; or
- b** the benefits of the development justify the loss of high grade agricultural land

If the best and most versatile land needs to be developed and there is a choice between sites in different grades, land of the lowest grade must be used except where other sustainability considerations outweigh land quality issues. Proposals for development should demonstrate that soil resources have been protected and used sustainably in line with best practice.

- 4.73** The highest grades of agricultural land are a scarce resource on the island with most land classed as grade 3 which mostly supports pasture. However, light sandy soils in the southern part of the island provide some of the best arable land. Horticulture is largely concentrated in the eastern part of the island producing vegetables and flowers with a number of orchards. These are an important contributor to the Island's economy and food security.

Protecting our landscapes and seascapes

EV9

Protecting our landscapes and seascapes

The council will support proposals that conserve, enhance and promote the seascapes and landscapes of the Island. Development proposals will be expected to:

- a** ensure new development avoids both direct and indirect adverse effects or cumulative impacts upon the integrity of landscapes and seascapes;
- b** protect important vistas and character, from and to the land and sea;
- c** promote the maintenance and enhancement of the links between designated sites, especially through the provision of, and/ or enhancement to, green infrastructure and appropriate local designations;
- d** reflect the aims and objectives of the West Wight and East Wight landscape character assessments, historic landscape characterisation and any further relevant landscape assessment;
- e** positively contribute to meeting the aims and objectives of the Isle of Wight's local biodiversity action plan and local geodiversity action plan;
- f** minimise the threats and promote the opportunities arising from climate change on the Island's landscape, seascape, biodiversity and geology.

- 4.74** People value their local landscape and seascape. This landscape and seascape are vital not only for visual beauty, natural and historic character, but also for their contribution to the local economy including agriculture and tourism as well as its community value in terms of well-being and leisure. The planning process has an important role in ensuring that landscape quality and local distinctiveness are maintained and enhanced across the Island.
- 4.75** The Island is a coastal authority separated from the mainland by the Solent. It is unique in England as its entire authority boundary is coastline. This has had a profound influence on the Island, physically shaping it and how it is seen, providing a requirement for the consideration of seascape. Two areas of Heritage Coast have been defined on the Isle of Wight, covering half the Island's coastline including Hamstead and Tennyson.

- 4.76** Seascape as a concept should be thought of as “the coastal landscape and adjoining areas of open water, including views from land to sea, from sea to land and along the coastline and describes the effect on landscape at the confluence of sea and land. Therefore, for the purpose of this policy, seascape is defined as a discrete area within which there is shared inter-visibility between land and sea (a single visual envelope).
- 4.77** Every seascape therefore has three defined components:
- an area of sea (the visible seaward component);
 - a length of coastline (the visible coastline component, normally defined by prominent physical features such as headlands or other promontories); and
 - an area of land (the visible landward component, based on either or a combination of visibility from the above two points).
- 4.78** By contrast, landscape starts at the coastline, and includes all areas inland, even where there are no views or direct experience of the sea. In most situations, the landward component of a seascape will play a significant part in seascapes and it is largely the character of the land and coastline, rather than the sea itself, which defines the basic character of seascapes. Seascape is defined by using visibility analysis in conjunction with character assessment.
- 4.79** Seascape effects are the changes in the character and quality of the seascape as a result of development. Hence, seascape assessment is concerned with direct and indirect effects upon specific seascape elements and features; more subtle effects on seascape character; and effects upon acknowledged special interests such as designated landscapes, historic setting, wildness or tranquillity. Small changes from development can over time have a cumulative impact on seascape and landscape features, character and integrity and this should be carefully considered.
- 4.80** Frequently the value of a designated site is significantly increased when it is considered as part of a wider green infrastructure. Thus, importance lies in the spatial relationship between these wider, non-designated sites, either as ecological stepping stones, or sites connected by a network of green corridors. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to the green spaces in between designated sites, where they hold an ecological value, either as a link, or by having interesting features of significance themselves (for example brownfield sites often contain unusual or valuable species).
- 4.81** Within the West Wight landscape character assessment, the East Wight landscape character assessment and the Historic environment action plan areas, a range of landscapes and settlement patterns are identified. The council will use these assessments to identify how development is likely to impact on the landscape’s character and how this may be avoided or mitigated and how development could bring about improvements to the landscape. Consideration should be given to whether development proposals have an impact on the aims and objectives of the New Forest National Park if relevant.

- 4.82** The Isle of Wight's local biodiversity action plan and local geodiversity action plan have aims and objectives that are reviewed regularly. In some cases, the historic environment action plan may also be relevant. Relevant development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how these aims and objectives have been considered where appropriate and how the proposal will make positive contributions towards them.
- 4.83** The natural environment is one of constant change. However, it is now generally recognised that the rate of this change is increasing through the effects of climate change. As we benefit from the environment, it is recognised as the Island's key asset (both in social and economic terms, as well as environmental) and is the receptor of all our activities, we have a responsibility, as well as a vested interest, in safeguarding this natural asset and allowing natural adjustments to occur.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.

Preserving settlement identity

EV10

Preserving settlement identity

In order to maintain the separate identities of settlements and prevent their coalescence, the generally open and undeveloped nature of the following gaps, as identified on the policies map, will be protected:

- Cowes – Newport
- Cowes – Gurnard
- Cowes – Northwood
- East Cowes – Whippingham
- Ryde – settlements to the south
- Ryde – Nettlestone – Seaview
- Nettlestone – St Helens
- Brading – Sandown – Yaverland
- Sandown – Lake – Shanklin
- Freshwater – Norton Green – Norton
- Freshwater – Totland

Development in settlement gaps will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that there is no significant adverse impact on the physical or perceived separation between settlements, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development.

- 4.84** The council wishes to manage development in a way that delivers the growth that meets its requirements, but that also maintains the separate identities of communities by avoiding increasing settlement coalescence to unacceptable levels on the Island. Some settlement boundaries have been re-drawn on the Policies Map to include proposed housing and employment allocations.
- 4.85** Where development proposals are located within the areas identified in the policy, and shown on the policies map, the council will assess whether it would have a significant adverse impact by considering issues such as:
- the sense of openness or enclosure;
 - the pattern and complexity of settlements and the landscape;
 - the experience derived from a particular settlement and/ or landscape character;
 - the relationship to existing settlement edges and the cultural pattern;
 - the visual sensitivities and intervisibility of settlements and/ or the landscape.
- 4.86** This is not an exhaustive list, and the assessment of such impacts will be made in relation to the 'guidelines for maintenance' of the relevant gap, as set out in the Isle of Wight settlement coalescence study.
- 4.87** If it is relevant the council will assess the cumulative impacts in conjunction with existing and proposed development. While an individual impact may be considered acceptable, the cumulative impacts may be significantly adverse and therefore unacceptable.
- 4.88** The assessment undertaken by the council will be proportionate to the proposal, although it should be recognised that the impact is not necessarily directly commensurate to the scale of the proposal.
- 4.89** As the determination of relevant applications will include an assessment of impacts only development where there is no significant adverse impact will be permitted, unless material considerations influence the planning judgement.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.

Isle of Wight AONB

EV11

Isle of Wight AONB

The impact of individual proposals and their cumulative effect on Isle of Wight AONB will be carefully assessed. Development proposals should demonstrate how they:

- a** conserve and enhance the natural beauty and locally distinctive features of the AONB; and
- b** reinforce and respond to, rather than detracts from, the distinctive character and special qualities of the AONB; and
- c** would not, either individually or cumulatively, undermine the integrity or the predominantly open and undeveloped, special scenic and rural character of the AONB; and
- d** would be appropriate to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area or is desirable for the understanding and enjoyment of the area (where this is consistent with the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty); and
- e** contribute to the achieving the aims and delivery of the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan;
- f** consider the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Where in exceptional circumstances and for wider planning reasons, planning permission is approved without the above criteria being met, then compensation for remediation and improvement of damaged designated landscapes will be sought to the features that form the special character of the Isle of Wight AONB.

- 4.90** The Wight AONB covers approximately half of the Island (191 square km). AONBs are nationally designated landscapes and afforded the highest status of protection, with great weight given to the need to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty.
- 4.91** The Wight AONB is complex and comprises a range of landscape types, as defined by the West Wight and East Wight Landscape Character Assessments and the AONB Management Plan. The AONB includes undeveloped coastlines, chalk downs and hills, harbours and creeks, areas of woodland, dark sky areas and farmland along with a range of villages and other rural development. The AONB is a finite landscape resource and new developments of all types have the potential to detract from the special qualities of the designation.
- 4.92** The council expects all developments within the AONB to conserve and enhance its landscape and scenic beauty. Therefore, development proposals should be carefully designed to respond positively to the special qualities of the AONB landscape and the particular characteristics of the locality in which development is proposed. In particular, proposals should demonstrate how developments have been designed to take account of locally distinctive features such as building types, materials and landscape character.

- 4.93** Development proposals which lie outside the AONB but within its setting can also have an impact. For example, views out of the AONB from key visitor viewpoints into surrounding areas. This area does not have a defined geographical boundary, but is the area within which developments, by their nature, size, scale, siting, materials or design could be considered to have an impact, either positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB.
- 4.94** The AONB partnership has produced the Isle of Wight AONB management plan and this sets out their objectives for protecting, conserving and enhancing the special qualities and locally distinctive features of the AONB. The management plan is an important resource for all development proposals and should be used to inform their location, design, layout, scale and landscaping.
- 4.95** The council acknowledges that in some situations, development proposals that would fail to conserve and enhance the AONB may be granted planning permission, where there are exceptional circumstances that would outweigh identified harm to the landscape. In such situations the council will seek either on-site or off-site mitigation, which may include contributions towards projects to deliver improvements to the AONB landscape.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.
- Businesses have the confidence to invest.
- People have a place to call home and can live with independence

Dark skies

**EV12
Dark skies**

The council supports the creation of a dark skies park in the south west of the Island. Development proposals will be supported within the proposed dark skies park (as shown on the policies map) where they have demonstrated that all reasonable and proportionate opportunities to reduce light pollution have been explored and incorporated.

Development proposals that include roof glazing and large expanses of glazing will not be supported, unless through appropriate design the impacts can be mitigated.

If external lighting cannot be avoided the colour temperature of lighting should not exceed 2700K

- 4.96** The council wishes to see an International Dark Skies Association designation of a dark skies park on the Island, recognising the high quality of the night-time skies. It is anticipated that such a designation will also be beneficial to wildlife, provide improved amenity and tranquillity and enhance the Island's tourism offer.
- 4.97** To achieve the designation, it is important to have a clear planning policy approach in place to managing lighting in new developments. It is recognised that light itself and minor domestic light fittings are not subject to planning controls, however through planning policy good lighting practice will be encouraged and guidance given on how to achieve this. Approaches outside of the planning system will be required to encourage good lighting practice.
- 4.98** It is acknowledged that lighting is part of modern life and can be necessary for safety, security and farming operations. The requirements of this policy will be applied proportionately to all proposals which require planning permission within the dark skies park designation, as shown on the Policies Map. In order for the council to properly assess the likely impacts of proposals on the dark skies, it will consider the following questions to establish whether light pollution is likely to occur:
- Does a new development proposal, or a major change to an existing one, materially alter light levels outside the development and/or have the potential to adversely affect the use or enjoyment of nearby buildings or open spaces?
 - Does an existing lighting installation make the proposed location for a development unsuitable? For example, this might be because:
 - » the artificial light has a significant effect on the locality;
 - » users of the proposed development (e.g. a hospital) may be particularly sensitive to light intrusion from the existing light source.
 - Does a proposal have a significant impact on a protected site or species e.g. located on, or adjacent to, a designated European site or where there are designated European protected species that may be affected?
 - Is the development in or near a protected area of dark sky or an intrinsically dark landscape where it may be desirable to minimise new light sources?
 - Does the proposed development include smooth, reflective building materials, including large horizontal expanses of glass, particularly near water bodies (because it may change natural light, creating polarised light pollution that can affect wildlife behaviour)?
 - Are forms of artificial light with a potentially high impact on wildlife (e.g. white or ultraviolet light) being proposed close to sensitive wildlife receptors or areas, including where the light shines on water?

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.

Managing our water resources

EV13

Managing our water resources

Development must not adversely affect the quality, quantity and flow of ground and surface water. All development proposals should be able to demonstrate how they have considered the most sustainable options for the handling of water.

Development proposals will be expected to conserve and manage water resources by:

- a** implementing measures to restrict predicted internal potable water consumption to 100 litres per person per day;
- b** providing on-site recycling measures, where appropriate, to include, but not limited to, rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling and the use of flood mitigation measures such as attenuation to augment supply;
- c** ensuring no negative impact upon the Island's watercourses and providing environmental enhancements wherever relevant;
- d** ensuring no negative impact upon the Island's aquifers, including through the appropriate provision of sustainable drainage systems;
- e** ensuring no net increase in surface water run-off, compared with the pre-development rate and, where relevant, reduce run-off rates to below the greenfield run-off rates by at least 20 per cent;
- f** ensuring drainage systems meet the drainage needs of the development in full over the lifetime of the development and do not increase flood risk elsewhere;
- g** connecting to the sewer system, where relevant, is made at the nearest point of adequate capacity, as advised by the relevant statutory provider. Where sewers have limited capacity, site promoters need to work with Southern Water to ensure delivery of the network aligns with occupation of the development. A condition may be required;
- h** taking into account the existing sewerage infrastructure, to safeguard future access for maintenance and upsizing purposes.

- 4.99** Water is a precious resource, with the Island reliant on imports from the mainland to supplement supply. The Island will seek all reasonable measures to move towards a more self-sufficient status in the use of water. Due to the significance of water as an environmental resource on the Island, the council will support applications that manage water resources by the most sustainable methods possible.

- 4.100** The partnership for South Hampshire produced the South Hampshire integrated water management strategy. This provides a framework to guide local plans, although there remain uncertainties regarding the potential need for further mitigation of the impact of development after 2020 on water quality, water resources and to satisfy the habitats regulations. Therefore, the council has built in a further commitment for water efficiency from new development from this point in the lifetime of the plan onward. This will apply to all development providing additional residential accommodation.
- 4.101** Water efficiency standards can also help deliver objectives set out in river basin management plans (RBMP). The council has a duty to have regard to RBMP and seek to ensure that decisions do not compromise those objectives. The relevant South East river basin management plan approved by the DEFRA Secretary of State contains an action that requires local authorities to 'seek' the use of water efficiency standards that exceed building regulations, where local evidence supports that need.
- 4.102** The need to import water to the Island and the fact that the sources from which this supply originates is restricted due to the potential impacts on European nature conservation designations associated with the mainland watercourses is, sufficient evidence for the requirement for more efficient use of water. An increasing population, a warming climate and an already limited resource leave no sensible, responsible option other than to seek better use of this resource.
- 4.103** Efficiency is important not only from a water resource perspective, but also because of the link with water quality and disposal of foul water. There are real benefits in keeping down the capital cost of new water supply and waste water infrastructure, maintaining ecosystems and protecting landscapes. Reducing the amount of water entering waste water treatment works is also a key way of helping to mitigate issues around the capacity of the works and the receiving environment.
- 4.104** Water use in the home also has an impact on greenhouse gas emissions. Domestic water heating is responsible for five per cent of UK CO2 emissions and for 10 to 15 per cent of the household energy bill. Simple demand management measures, particularly those which reduce the amount of hot water in the home, have huge potential not only to promote water and energy efficiency, but also to reduce the carbon footprint.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The community feels safe and the island is resilient.

Managing flood risk in new development

EV14

Managing flood risk in new development

The council will expect development proposals to reduce on site and off site risk of flooding on the Island. Development proposals will be expected to:

- a** be safe from flooding and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- b** apply the sequential test and then, if necessary, the exception test when in flood zones 2 and/or 3;
- c** use opportunities provided by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding and manage residual risk;
- d** provide appropriate on-site sustainable drainage systems for major development for the disposal of surface water, in order to ensure there is no net loss of flood storage capacity or impact on water quality;
- e** where located within an area at risk from flooding or future risk of flooding, undertake a site-specific flood risk assessment and comply with national planning requirements;
- f** safeguard land required for current and future flood management.

4.105 All new development should be safe and, wherever possible, reduce the risk of flooding to others. This means that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by locating such vulnerable uses away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.106 Development will only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, taking into account the requirements of the policy, it can be demonstrated that:

- a** within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, applying a site-based sequential approach to the risk;
- b** the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient;
- c** it incorporates sustainable drainage systems (unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate);
- d** any residual risk can be safely managed; and
- e** safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of the flood warning and evacuation plan.

4.107 The Isle of Wight local flood risk management strategy provides a high-level overview of the potential flood hazard from all sources of flooding (tidal, river, surface water, sewer and groundwater), and identifies a co-ordinated approach to managing these hazards where the greatest impacts are likely to occur. The aim of the strategy is to better understand, communicate and manage the risk of flooding on the Island through viable, sustainable and co-ordinated approaches for the benefit of local communities, property, land and the environment, both now and in the future. It should be considered together with any relevant local flood investigation reports.

- 4.108** The council and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service have produced a guidance document to support developers and applicants who are required to produce and submit a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan as part of an application
- 4.109** Where an application comes forward for a site allocated in the IPS, applicants need not apply the sequential test. However, where an SFRA Level 2 factsheet has been prepared by the council, it should be followed to provide the council with an evidenced assessment on how the site can be safely developed within the requirements of this policy and the NPPF.
- 4.110** In terms of flood risk the council defines 'safe' as dry, with no residual risk and low risk of flooding as per the national planning policy guidance definition of Flood Zone 1 including mitigation of any residual risk to an acceptable level. Flood risk means all potential sources of flooding, including but not limited to tidal, fluvial, surface and groundwater. Mitigation measures (such as resistance and resilience) should not be applied prior to applying the sequential test.
- 4.111** When seeking to establish safe floor levels the Environment Agency and it's standing advice on flood risk should be consulted to understand the appropriate freeboard allowance to be applied. This should be done as early in the consideration of the proposal as possible as it may affect overall building heights, floor area and subsequently viability.
- 4.112** The assessment of flood risk should take into account the most up-to-date information on flooding available from the Environment Agency, together with the information in the council's current strategic flood risk assessment. Whichever source of flood risk information is the furthest predicted extent should be used for the assessment of risk. In some cases, development of flood risk management may require a marine licence.

This is a strategic policy and links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- Businesses have the confidence to invest.
- The community feels safe and the Island is resilient.
- People take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- Vulnerable people are supported and protected.

Monkton Mead catchment area

EV15

Monkton Mead catchment area

Development proposals within the Monkton Mead catchment area (as identified on the Policies Map) will be expected to demonstrate how:

- a** post-development runoff has been reduced by the greatest percentage rates and volumes that are possible in the context of cost, technical feasibility and viability, in relation to new dwellings, buildings and impermeable surfaces;
- b** large areas traditionally associated with runoff (including car parking and other impermeable surfaces associated with major applications such as roofs) have been disconnected from direct discharge into the catchment;
- c** watercourses are deculverted when it is practically possible;
- d** watercourses and drainage channels are maintained above ground;
- e** the SuDS management train has been applied, with justification for why the approach within the SuDS management hierarchy has been taken;
- f** the risk of sewer flooding has been reduced;
- g** wherever possible ensure priority habitat creation is integrated as part of the proposal;
- h** on sites greater than 1 hectare, on-site sustainable drainage systems will be provided except in areas subject to inundation from fluvial or tidal flood risk.

New developments that have an impact on flood risk within the catchment boundary may be required to make a financial contribution towards flood alleviation projects.

4.113 A preliminary flood risk assessment (PFRA) of the Island determined there was significant flood risk within the Ryde area, with a history of flooding from ordinary watercourses and overloaded combined drainage system. By managing development in certain ways within the whole catchment area, instances of flooding in developed parts of Ryde around Monkton Mead Brook can be minimised. The following are measures identified in the Ryde surface water management plan specific to spatial planning which could offer benefit to flood risk management in the longer term and are therefore supported by this policy:

- Restrict runoff from brownfield sites.
- Presumption against culverting.
- Raise awareness and enforcement of paving front gardens.
- Drainage of new developments/SuDS.

- 4.114** Objectives three and four of the Monkton Mead Ryde flood risk management plan, that this policy is also seeking to implement are:
- **objective three:** To ensure water framework directive outcomes and priority habitat creation and integrated; and
 - **objective four:** To assist in the reduction of sewer flooding to properties in Ryde.
- 4.115** Surface water runoff describes flooding from sewers, drains, groundwater, and runoff from land, small water courses and ditches that occurs as a result of heavy rainfall. Development proposals seeking to comply with this policy should be in line with sustainable drainage principles (SuDS) and follow the SuDS management train (prevention, source control, site control and regional control) to reduce pressure on the existing drainage regime and aim to improve the existing standard of protection. Culverting (enclosing) a watercourse is not advised unless there is no alternative. The resulting reduction in storage volume, flow capacity and habitat potential would be unacceptable. Culverted watercourses are also more difficult to maintain due to the limited accessibility.
- 4.116** Planning applications for new development should therefore demonstrate how post development runoff has been reduced and will be managed. This evidence should be set out in a drainage and/or flood risk statement, where the development is of less than one hectare. This statement should be proportionate in scale and detail to the planning application and should also demonstrate that the development does not have a negative effect on the watercourse, groundwater and/ or sewerage. Planning applications for development of one hectare or more and those in Flood Zones 2 and 3 should be supported by a flood risk assessment incorporating a drainage strategy, which should, in addition, demonstrate how the sustainable drainage system will operate on-site and will reduce the existing greenfield and brownfield runoff rates and volumes. Further details on the information required for an assessment of flood risk is contained in the government publication called technical guidance to the national planning policy framework (NPPF).
- 4.117** There are a range of design manuals to help ensure that designs are suitable and that the SuDS drainage principles are applied appropriately. The SuDS manual (CIRIA publication C697) provides a guide through the design process and may be referred to by the council when checking designs and calculations to ensure that sustainable drainage principles have been applied. Water as a resource on the Island is scarce and SuDS can make a significant contribution to addressing the water demands associated with a development. For example, implementing sustainable supply measures for external potable water consumption by providing a system to collect rain water for use in external irrigation/watering, will help reduce water demands.
- 4.118** When designing and delivering SuDS, consideration will need to be demonstrated on their long term management and maintenance so that no undue burden is placed on future users/occupants of the development, the council or the statutory wastewater undertaker. Land drainage consent must be sought from the lead local flood authority prior to starting any works (temporary or permanent) that affect the flow of water in the watercourse. Such works may include culverting, channel diversion and the installation of trash screens.

This policy links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- Businesses have the confidence to invest.
- The community feels safe and the Island is resilient.
- Vulnerable people are supported and protected

Managing our coast

EV16

Managing our coast

To enable the council to manage development in coastal areas affected by coastal change, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken a sustainable and practicable approach to coastal erosion and flood risk management.

To avoid inappropriate and/or vulnerable development within the Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs), as shown on the Policies Map, development proposals will be expected to be limited to:

- a** development directly linked to the coastal strip when within short-term risk areas;
- b** development more widely requiring a coastal location and providing substantial demonstrable economic and social benefits within medium and long-term risk areas;
- c** essential infrastructure, including Ministry of Defence installations.

All development proposals will be expected to undertake a coastal erosion vulnerability assessment to demonstrate that it will be safe over its planned lifetime and will not have an unacceptable impact.

Permissions granted within CCMAs will usually be time limited.

Proposals for new residential development will not be supported within CCMAs.

- 4.119** As a first principle, new development should be directed away from areas vulnerable to coastal change, to avoid putting people at risk. Where there is development close to the coast in areas where there is a risk, a sustainable and well-informed approach will be taken.
- 4.120** CCMAs are areas likely to be affected by coastal change over the next 100 years. For the purpose of this policy, coastal change means physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation and coastal accretion.

- 4.121** The CCMA is defined based on the policies and principles of the adopted Isle of Wight shoreline management plan 2011 and adopted West Wight coastal flood and erosion risk management strategy 2016 and the latest coastal studies into future coastal risks and defence requirements.
- 4.122** Ministry of Defence installations that require a coastal location can be permitted within a coastal change management area, provided there are clear plans to manage the impacts of coastal change. Where the installation will have a material impact on coastal processes, this must be managed to minimise adverse impacts on other parts of the coast.
- 4.123** In relation to points one and two of the policy, short-term risk areas are considered to be a 20 year time horizon from the time of development being permitted. The types of development that would be considered as being appropriate here include (but are not necessarily limited to) beach huts, cafes/tea rooms, car parks and sites used for holiday or short-let caravans and camping. Developers would have to refer to supporting evidence on future erosion rates for different epochs (see background evidence document).
- 4.124** Medium-term is considered to be a 20 to 50 year time horizon and long-term is up to 100 years from the time of the development being permitted. The types of development the council expects to see in these areas would be time-limited development, and could include uses such as hotels, shops, office or leisure activities requiring a coastal location and providing economic and social benefits to the community.
- 4.125** Other significant development, such as key community infrastructure, is unlikely to be appropriate unless it has to be sited within the coastal change management area to provide the intended benefit to the wider community and there are clear, costed plans to manage the impact of coastal change on it and the service it provides.
- 4.126** Proposals within the CCMA must be accompanied by a coastal erosion vulnerability assessment that assesses the degree of risk and the scale, nature and location of the development. The applicant will be expected to prepare this in advance in consultation with the council, the Environment Agency and any other relevant stakeholders. The assessment must demonstrate that the development:
- would not impair the ability of communities and the natural environment to adapt sustainably to the impacts of a changing climate;
 - will be safe through its planned lifetime, without increasing risk to life or property, or requiring new or improved coastal defences;
 - would not affect the natural balance and stability of the coastline or exacerbate the rate of shoreline change to the extent that changes to the coastline are increased nearby or elsewhere;
 - demonstrate how water can be discharged without exacerbating erosion and/or having an adverse effect upon the stability of nearby cliffs. This would typically preclude the use of soakaways;

- consider whether any essential infrastructure which will support the proposed development (including its access routes) is at risk from being lost to coastal change and demonstrate the proposal is sustainable over its planned lifetime;
- consider the management of the development at the end of its planned life, including proposals for the removal of the development before the site is immediately threatened by shoreline change.

This is a strategic policy and links to the following IPS objectives and key priorities:

- The environment and unique island characteristics are celebrated.
- The Isle of Wight is a leading UK visitor destination.
- Businesses have the confidence to invest.
- The community feels safe and the Island is resilient.
- People take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- People have a place to call home and can live with independence.
- Vulnerable people are supported and protected.

Facilitating relocation from coastal change management areas

EV17

Facilitating relocation from coastal change management areas (CCMAs)

Proposals to relocate existing development and infrastructure away from the CCMAs, where it is forecast to be affected by erosion or permanent inundation within twenty years, will be supported subject to it being:

- a** the same lawful use being proposed; and
- b** similar in scale and character to the development it is replacing; and
- c** located at an appropriate location inland from the CCMA and, where possible, remains close to the coastal community from which it was displaced.
- d** not having any significant adverse impacts that would be contrary to other policies of the plan

All proposals will need to ensure that the site from which the development is relocated is cleared and made safe.

- 4.127** Where properties within the CCMA are at risk from coastal erosion within the next 20 years, this policy allows for the relocation of residential, community and commercial properties to areas inland. This enables property owners to take a pro-active approach to relocate to an alternative location well before erosion becomes an imminent threat.
- 4.128** The policy facilitates the relocation and re-provision of structures at imminent risk of coastal erosion. An appropriate location inland is generally considered to be associated with the nearest community.
- 4.129** Changes of use from permanent residential to other strictly limited temporary uses (including change of use to agricultural or tourism), may be appropriate within the CCMA, where also in accordance with the short, medium and long term uses outlined in the managing our coast policy.

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Improving resilience from coastal flooding

EV18

Improving resilience from coastal flooding and coastal risks

Development and redevelopment will play an integral role in delivering sustainable longer term flood and coastal risk management to ensure the continued prosperity of the coastal towns and villages on the Island, including through the provision of new coastal defences which can be incorporated into future wider strategic defence schemes.

Development proposals located on waterfronts with a 'hold the line' policy in the shoreline management plan should provide and maintain on-site coastal defences or, where appropriate, land raising, to a height consistent with predicted sea level rise over the lifetime of the development.

Developer contributions will be required towards future coastal and flood risk reduction schemes, in areas benefitting directly or indirectly from existing coastal defences and/ or requiring future improvements in flood defences.

Pre-application discussions should ensure that such requirements are identified and considered at the earliest stages.

Proposals for new or replacement coastal defence schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the works are consistent with the management approach for the frontage presented in the most up to date Shoreline Management Plan and Coastal Strategy and Studies, and there will be no material adverse impact on the environment.

- 4.130** **The Isle of Wight shoreline management plan (SMP)** covers the coast around the Island and identifies shoreline management approaches and policies over the next 100 years and provides a strategic approach to the management of the coast.
- 4.131** The SMP is supported by more detailed coastal strategies and studies (including the **West Wight coastal flood and erosion risk management strategy** (2016), for the coast from East Cowes to Freshwater) which identify how future coastal defence improvements could be delivered, including areas where contributions are required to construct new defences, and priority areas.
- 4.132** Properties and development in areas currently benefitting from existing coastal defences should be aware of the potential for coastal change to occur in the future, and that any proposals for replacement and or improvement of existing ageing coastal defences (where funding permits) are expected to require financial contributions from those benefitting from the defences, including private contributions.

4.133 Where new coastal defences are needed to protect new development, developers will be expected to provide them. Where new development will benefit either directly or indirectly from existing coastal and flood risk management infrastructure (eg, seawalls and flood defences), the developer will be expected to contribute to the costs of maintaining and improving that infrastructure, and where practical, deliver any improvements. Pre-application discussions should ensure that such requirements are identified and considered at the earliest stages.

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Managing ground instability in new development

EV19

Managing ground instability in new development

To prevent unacceptable risks from land instability the council will ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. Where development proposals are located within areas identified as being at potential risk from future ground instability and landsliding (as shown on the Policies Map), they will be expected to demonstrate that:

- a** the site is suitable for its proposed use, taking account of the ground conditions and land instability, including from natural hazards;
- b** the use proposed is suitable for the ground conditions;
- c** measures have been taken to minimise the amount of water entering the ground;
- d** surface water run-off is accommodated within existing, fully-functioning piped water disposal systems.

4.134 The policy seeks to minimise the risks and effects of land instability on property, infrastructure and the public by helping to ensure that various types of development are not located in unstable locations, or without appropriate precautions.

- 4.135** While much of the Island can be considered stable in terms of land movement, there are localised areas that are susceptible to ground movement including landslides. This is due to a combination of the Island's geology, coastal processes, rainfall and human influence. The impacts of climate change are expected to increase these risks. Where a site is affected by land instability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner, and this policy approach provides clarity over what the council will expect to see.
- 4.136** Applications for development will generally need to be accompanied by a ground stability report prepared by a competent person. The detail required within the report will vary depending upon many factors, including type/scale of development and location of the development within a geotechnical context.
- 4.137** This policy will be applied in the specific areas identified on the policies map, which can be described as the Ventnor Undercliff (from Bonchurch to Blackgang) and parts of the Cowes to Gurnard coastal slopes. Further technical information on ground stability in these locations can be found on the council's website.
- 4.138** Installing SuDS is not appropriate in all geological conditions. Within known areas of potential ground instability and coastal landslide risk, use of SuDS is not appropriate, because groundwater has a significant influence on ground stability. This policy is intended to restrict use of new soakaway systems accompanying new development within the zones defined on the proposals map, and thereby contribute to reducing the impact of groundwater on potential ground movement.
- 4.139** The requirements of the policy are applicable to all development proposals located within areas at potential risk from future ground instability. However, it is recognised that the level of information required should be commensurate to the scale and location of the development proposed.
- 4.140** Properties and development in areas currently benefitting from existing coastal defences should be aware of the potential for coastal change to occur in the future, and that any proposals for replacement and or improvement of existing ageing coastal defences (where funding permits) are expected to require financial contributions from those benefitting from the defences, including private contributions.

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