

Rural Sustainability Matrix Review

April 2022

Introduction

A sustainability matrix has been developed to help create a hierarchy of settlements across the Island based upon their access to facilities and services including for example, local shops, transport networks, schools, employment and health provision. This provides a way to identify settlements which have the ability to accommodate sustainable growth and where that settlement fits within the 'settlement hierarchy' across the island. The settlements assessed in this study are predominantly those in rural areas and do not include the current primary and secondary settlements (as defined in the Core Strategy) in the regeneration areas of Newport, Cowes, East Cowes, Ryde, the Bay, Ventnor or West Wight (including Totland and Freshwater). The sustainability matrix gives a total score for each settlement based on the availability of its services and facilities. Some of the smaller settlements (but not exclusively) tend to have fewer facilities and services in place and therefore not score as highly.

The sustainability matrix was originally developed in 2008 to support the Core Strategy that was adopted in 2012. This has now been updated to take account of any changes to facilities and services in each of the settlements and an additional criterion has been added on local employment. The purpose of the matrix is to help support draft IPS policy G2 when considering priority locations for growth and where settlements fit within the settlement hierarchy. High scoring settlements may move up in the hierarchy and low scoring settlements may move down. For information, Bembridge and Wootton were not included in the version of the matrix supporting the Core Strategy as they had a population of over 3,000, however they have been included in this version to ascertain how they score against some of the other settlements.

Methodology

Each of the settlements have been given a weighted score based upon the services and facilities within them. Some facilities are given a higher weighting as they are essential to daily living needs e.g., primary school, GP surgery and provision of an hourly bus service. Settlements with a higher population have also been given a greater weighting. This is because higher populations are likely to be able to support and sustain more services and facilities, even if they are not currently present, and may be more attractive to investment in that regard.

Since the 2008 study was undertaken, an additional criterion has been added on local employment. The availability of local employment is considered important to a settlement's viability and suitability for further growth. To score on this criterion, the definition of employment is limited to activities arising from office, industrial or warehousing use. It is recognised that employment can be generated from many other activities including shops, car showrooms, and leisure uses. However, these activities have already been considered by the other existing criteria. However, employment opportunities arising from offices, industrial or warehousing activities have not been included up to this point. This new criterion gives settlements with 3 or more employment units 2 points and those with 1 or 2 units 1 point.

Any settlement scoring 24 points or more is identified as a suitable location for additional growth. The level of growth within the IPS is dependent on other factors including for example, the availability of suitable sites and the overall spatial strategy for the island. Settlements scoring 23 points or fewer are not identified for further growth.

Results from the Sustainability Matrix analysis

The settlements covered by the Sustainability Matrix and a general overview of their position are summarised below. This reflects the analysis of their facilities and services set out in *Table 1 Settlement Population and facilities* and *Table 2 Settlement Facilities and Services and overall score*.

Settlement analysis

Arreton has one of the smaller village populations but scores very well overall in terms of its services and facilities. These include shops, a post office, primary school, village hall and the village has good transport links. It is therefore a sustainable location and could therefore accommodate some further growth.

Bembridge has the highest population of settlements outside of the key regeneration areas. It has good access to facilities including shops, a post office, primary school, a GP surgery and a village hall along with good public transport access, including an hourly bus service. Overall, it has the highest score of all the settlements in the study (one of only 4 scoring over 30 points) and could accommodate further growth. Consideration to move from Rural Service Centre to Secondary Settlement.

Brading - good access to a local shop and other facilities including a post office, primary school and public house along with good public transport access which includes an hourly bus service and a railway station with links to Ryde and the Bay area. Overall it scores highly and as a result could accommodate growth.

Brighstone has a mid-sized population of the settlements in the study. It has the facilities of some of the larger settlements including shops, a primary school and a GP surgery. Residents also have access to a permanent library. Its drawback is poor public transport services and relative isolation from urban centres. However, overall, it scores highly (over 30 points) and could accommodate some growth.

Calbourne has a small population and a much more limited range of services and facilities but it has good public transport links. It has a village shop; however, it does not have a post office or a local primary school and so does not score as highly as some of the other settlements and is therefore not likely to be able to accommodate further growth.

Chale has more limited access to services and facilities with only access to a village shop, post office (at Chale Green) and a village hall but it has good public transport links. It is however 7 miles away from Newport. It is unlikely to be a suitable location for planned growth.

Fishbourne has a small population. It has a regular bus service but does not have access to any local shops or post office and does not have a local primary school or health services. Overall, it has a low score and is unsuitable to accommodate planned growth.

Chillerton and Gatcombe have the smallest population of the settlements in the study. Facilities include a primary school and a village hall. However, it lacks other services and facilities including a local shop and post office and as a result is not likely to be able to accommodate planned growth.

Godshill scores highly overall with access to a number of local shops, a post office, primary school and a public house. It also has good public transport links and a GP surgery and therefore is a sustainable location and could accommodate planned growth.

Gurnard scores highly overall. It has good access to a range of services and facilities, including a primary school, has good public transport links and lies adjacent to Cowes. It therefore could support planned growth.

Havenstreet & Ashe have a combined population of over 700. Public transport access to both settlements is poor. However, Havenstreet does have a steam rail station. Havenstreet does have access to more service and facilities than Ashe, but neither settlement has access to a village shop, post office or local primary school so do not score highly overall and are unlikely to be able to accommodate further growth.

Together, **Nettlestone and Seaview** have a population around 2,700. Most of the facilities and services are concentrated in Seaview and include a shop, post office, primary school and village hall. However, there is no GP surgery in either village. There is good access to public transport and potentially some further growth could be accommodated.

Newchurch, like Brading, has one of the higher populations and a reasonable range of facilities and services including a primary school, village hall and post office. However, it lacks a local convenience store and a GP surgery and has limited public transport services. It is not likely to accommodate further growth.

Niton and Whitwell combined have a population of 2,178 and score over 30 points. They both have good access to a range of services and facilities along with good public transport access. Niton has a primary school, GP Clinic and a permanent library. Overall, Niton has more facilities and services and is better placed to accommodate limited growth.

Northwood has a sizeable population with good access to a range of facilities and services, including a shop and primary school. It has good public transport links and lies adjacent to Cowes. Though it does not have its own GP surgery, it does lie within easy distance of Cowes Medical Centre. The settlement scores well and it is considered that could accommodate some planned growth.

Rookley has one of the smallest populations of any of the rural settlements included in the study. It has good access to local facilities and services with a local shop, a post office, village hall and good public transport links. However, it has no primary school or GP surgery. Overall, it has a medium score and based on the facilities and services available it is considered that it could accommodate some limited growth.

St Helens has a mid-range population and access to a very good range of facilities and services including a primary school and GP surgery as well as having good public transport access. It therefore could accommodate some planned growth.

Together, **Shalfleet and Newbridge** have a population of over 1,500 people. Shalfleet has greater access to a range of services and facilities and therefore scores higher overall. Both settlements have good public transport access but are over 5 miles from the nearest urban centre. Although together their scores are high, individually their scores are low and so would only be able to accommodate limited growth.

Shorwell is a small settlement and although it has access to a village shop, a local post office, a village hall and open space it does not have a local primary school or a GP surgery and is over 5 miles from Newport. As a result, it is unsuitable for further growth.

Whippingham has reasonable access to facilities and services, including a primary school, has good public transport links and adjoins East Cowes. It lacks a local shop and GP surgery. It is not considered that it could accommodate further planned growth.

Wootton has one of the highest populations outside of the named key regeneration areas. It has good access to shops and facilities including shops, a primary school, GP surgery and village hall along with a bus service every 10 minutes and is in close proximity to both Newport and Ryde. Overall, it scores highly (over 30 points) and as a result could accommodate further growth. Consideration to move from Rural Service Centre to Secondary Settlement.

Wroxall has a good range of facilities and services located in the settlement including a shop, post office, primary school and a village hall. It has good public transport links and is just over 2 miles from Ventnor. It therefore could accommodate some further growth.

Yarmouth has a small population, but it has good access to a range of facilities and services including a village shop, post office, primary school and village hall. It has good public transport links and is only 2 miles from Freshwater and Totland. It could therefore accommodate some limited growth.

Table 1 Settlement Population and facilities (Points in this table are carried forward to Table 2 where total points are calculated)												
Parish	Population		Village shop	Post office	Primary school	Village hall	Public house	Bus service	Rail service	Distance from nearest urban centre	Points	Sub-total points
	Under 300 300-599 600-899 900-1199 1200-1499 1500-3000+ *ONS population estimate 2020	0 1 2 3 4 5	2 points	2 points	3 points	2 points	1 point	Hourly – 3 point Less than hourly – 1 point	1 point	10 miles or more = 0 points 5-10 miles = 1 <5 miles = 3		
Arreton	1,056	3	2	2	3	2	1	3		4	3	19
Bembridge	3,646	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		6.6	1	19
Brading	2,126	5	2	2	3	2	1	3	1	4.1	3	22
Brighstone	1,594	5	2	2	3	2	1	1		5.6	1	17
Calbourne	844	2	2				1	3		4.8	3	11
Chale	632	2	2	2		2	1	3		7	1	13
Fishbourne	736	2					1	3		2.7	3	9
Chillerton and Gatcombe	421	1			3	2		1		2.9	3	8
Godshill	1,490	4	2	2	3		1	3		3.8	3	18
Gurnard	1,923	5	2		3	2	1	3		1.8	3	19
Havenstreet and Ashe	767	2				2	1		1	3.8	3	9
Nettlestone and Seaview	2,688	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		3.3	3	21
Newchurch	2,537	5		2	3	2	1	1		3.6	3	17
Niton and Whitwell	2,178	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		4	3	21
Northwood	2,345	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		1.7	3	21
Rookley	611	2	2	2		2	1	3		3.4	3	15
St Helens	1,207	4	2	2	3		1	3		4	3	18
Shalfleet and Newbridge	1,591	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		6	1	19

IPS evidence paper: Rural Sustainability Matrix

Shorwell	712	2	2	2		2	1	1		5	1	11
Whippingham	906	3		2	3	2	1	3		1.7	3	17
Wootton	3,517	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		3.7	3	21
Wroxall	1,724	5	2	2	3	2	1	3		2.6	3	21
Yarmouth	791	2	2	2	3	2	1	3		2	3	18

Table 2 Settlement facilities, services and overall score											
Parish	Other shops/facilities	Recreation facilities	Organisations and clubs	Recycling facilities	Public open space	Church or chapel	Library	GP clinic	Employment	Points	Total points
	2 points	1 point	1 point	1 point	1 point	1 point	Mobile – 1 point Permanent – 3 points	3 points	Industrial estate of 3 units or more 2 points Under 3 units 1 point		
Arreton	2	1	1		1	1	1		1(glass blowing workshop)	7	27
Bembridge	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	13	34
Brading	2	1	1		1	1	1			10	29
Brighstone	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	1(county fencing)	13	31
Calbourne		1			1	1	1			4	15
Chale	2	1	1			1	1			6	19
Fishbourne	2		1				1			5	14
Chillerton and Gatcombe	2	1	1			1	1			6	14
Godshill	2	1			1	1	1	3		9	27
Gurnard	2	1	1		1	1	1			7	26
Havenstreet and Ashe	2					1	1			4	13
Nettlestone and Seaview	2	1	1		1	1	1			7	28
Newchurch	2					1	1			4	21
Niton and Whitwell	2	1	1		1	1	3	3		12	33
Northwood	2	1	1		1		1			6	27
Rookley	2	1	1	1*	1		1		2	7	24

IPS evidence paper: Rural Sustainability Matrix

St Helens	2	1	1		1	1	1	3		10	28
Shalfleet and Newbridge	2	1	1		1	1	1			7	26
Shorwell		1	1		1	1	1			5	16
Whippingham		1	1			1	1		1	4	22
Wootton	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	12	33
Wroxall	2	1		1	1	1	1			7	28
Yarmouth	2	1	1		1	1	1			7	25

*Limited to clothing recycling at the Co-op convenience store