

## 1 Introduction and Policy Context

- 1.1 This background paper supports the `Community` policies in the Island Planning Strategy (IPS). It sets out the specific policy context provided by the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 (NPPF) and provides a summary of each of the draft plan policies. An outline is included of the key points made in the Island Planning Strategy (IPS) Regulation 18 consultation and significant changes made.

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.2 Chapter 8 in the NPPF “Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities is particularly relevant in this context seeking policies which achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places providing the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs (paragraphs 96 and 97). Paragraph 99-100)96 highlights the importance of a sufficient choice of school places and the faster delivery of further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation. Paragraph 101 promotes public safety. Paragraphs 102 and 103 support the provision of open space, sports and recreation uses and their protection from development. The provision of land as Local Green Space is supported by paragraphs 105-107.
- 1.3 There are two further relevant chapters in the NPPF – Chapter 12. Achieving Well Designed and Beautiful Places and Chapter 14 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change.
- 1.4 Planning Practice Guidance sets out detailed guidance for community provision in:
- Healthy and Safe Communities*
  - Neighbourhood Planning*
  - Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way and Local Green Space*
  - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy*

## 2. Island Planning Strategy Policies

- 2.1 The overall vision for the Island Planning Strategy seeks to ensure that the Isle of Wight is
- “an inspiring place in which to grow up, work, live and visit”.*
- 2.2 The Island has a distinctive character, with individual settlements containing historic design features and special qualities which are of vital importance to this character and what makes the Island an attractive place to live, work and visit. These features are important to a sense of place. It is essential that new development does not dilute or impact upon this character and high quality and appropriate design is a mechanism for achieving this. The community policies in Section 5 of the Plan support this vision and are consistent with national planning policy and supporting Planning Practice Guidance.

2.3 The Community policies are wide ranging covering for example, renewable energy, health and wellbeing, independent living and education. Additional evidence work has been undertaken and includes: -

- Isle of Wight Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update
- Local Greenspace
- Open Space Assessment
- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Isle of Wight Healthy Lifestyles Plan
- School Places Plan
- Net Zero Homes report

2.4 A brief overview of each of the `Community` policies is set out below.

**C1 High Quality Design for New Development** - The policy sets out criteria to protect the character of an area from inappropriate design and significant erosion of the landscape and distinctive character of the Island's settlements and countryside. Developments of poor design will be refused where they miss opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area. Incorporating green infrastructure and greenspace to encourage healthy active lifestyles and provide wildlife corridors is highlighted.

**C2 Improving our Public Realm** – The policy requires that development proposals must demonstrate how they will integrate existing and new public realm into development design, provide pedestrian and cycle connections and take account of their surroundings.

**C3 Improving Our Health and Wellbeing** – the policy requires that major developments provide a Health Impact Assessment to demonstrate its contribution to the health and wellbeing of island residents.

**C4 Health Hub at St Mary's Hospital** – The policy allocates a site to support future NHS health services together with an element of residential development to include key worker, open market and affordable housing.

**C5 Facilitating Independent Living** – Criteria are set out to support the provision of accommodation to enable people to live as independently as possible. The policy includes a requirement for at least 20% of private market dwellings to meet Part M4(2) to ensure suitability for older people or those with mobility issues.

**C6 Providing Annexe Accommodation** – The policy sets out criteria to guide the provision of domestic annexes for dependent relatives.

**C7 Delivering Locality Hubs** – The principle is established for two locality hubs on the island bringing together health and wellbeing services in Newport and Sandown.

**C8 Facilitating a Blue Light Hub** – Policy supports the principle of the provision of a shared blue light hub in the Newport area.

**C9 Education Provision** – Criteria are set to support new, replacement or extended education facilities.

**C10 Supporting Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies** – The policy sets out criteria to be met by new proposals for renewable and low carbon technology protect sensitive landscapes and townscapes, the visual character of an area and to ensure consistency with nature conservation and heritage objectives.

**C11 Net Zero Carbon and Lowering Energy Consumption in New Development** –The policy requires all new residential homes to be net zero carbon and sets out thresholds for space heating and energy use intensity. Renewable energy is expected to be generated on site and an embodied carbon target of less than 300kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> is set. The supporting text sets out that it is expected that major developments are to be accompanied by an energy statement and guidance is provided on what this should contain.

**C12 Utility Infrastructure Requirements for New Development** – the policy supports improvements in the utility infrastructure and sets out where financial contributions and the assessment of utility infrastructure needs arising from the development are required.

**C13 Maintaining Key Utility Infrastructure** – Development proposals are expected to maintain or improve key infrastructure listed in the policy including waste water treatment, water supply, electricity and gas connection facilities.

**C14 Providing Social and Community Infrastructure** – The provision or improvement of cultural, educational and community facilities is supported. Criteria are set that development proposals are expected to meet. The loss of such facilities will only be permitted in limited cases and a link is made to provision of facilities identified by Neighbourhood Plans or Orders.

**C15 Community led planning** – Guidance is set out on local issues which could be included by Neighbourhood Plans including second home and/or short term holiday let ownership of new build properties and allocation of previously developed land for residential, commercial or social purposes. Major development is required to demonstrate how proposals have been shaped by local community views.

### **3. Key Issues Arising from the Plan Consultation**

- 3.1 Key community issues arising from the consultation on the draft Island Planning Strategy are briefly summarised below, together with a description of changes made in the Regulation 19 version of the IPS.

- Revise the policy wording to add reference to the prevention of crime and disorder. Local design should be better reflected in policy to celebrate the historic sense of place, pattern of design and local elements of design. A design SPD could be referenced in the policy. Many comments sought to add different design elements. The wording in **Policy C1** has been strengthened to reduce opportunities for crime and disorder through the design and layout of development. A new paragraph has been added to the supporting text on the proposed preparation of an SPD on an IOW Model Design Code to guide new development.
- Amend policy to require Health Impact Assessments for all major developments. **Policy C3** has been amended to clarify that the Health Impact Assessment should be proportionate to the scale of the development and apply to major development.
- Add a criterion to require provision for safe storage and charging for mobility aids. **Policy C5** has been amended to add a criterion on making provision for safe storage and charging of mobility aids and to require at least 20% of private market houses to meet Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations.
- Add reference to the council's proposed zero carbon strategy. New housing should use renewable energy. **Policy C10** has been amended to include reference to the IOW Climate and Environment Strategy and amendment of the criteria in the policy for renewable energy schemes to support major development of renewable energy schemes. **Policy C11** has been revised to require all new build development to meet net zero standards through energy use, efficiency and renewable energy generation.
- New housing should not be built without sufficient infrastructure to meet its needs. **Policy C12** is amended to clarify what financial contributions are required for infrastructure including the assessment of any cumulative effects from other allocated sites, supporting new strategic policy INF1 in Section 3 of the IPS.
- A reference to community engagement should be added. Development proposals should demonstrate how they contribute to achieving community led planning. **Policy C15** and the supporting text have been amended to provide more guidance on the issues where Neighbourhood Plans could provide more localised policy and to require major developments to demonstrate how the proposal has been shaped by local community views.

#### 4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Together, the `Community` policies seek to achieve the aspirations linked to promoting high quality design, renewable energy and health and wellbeing on the island.

## Frequently Asked Questions – Community

**1. What is the role of Neighbourhood Plans in planning for community needs?**

Guidance on the content of Neighbourhood Plans is set by national policy guidance. Neighbourhood Plans give communities the power to develop a local vision for their area and shape the location of sustainable development. The IPS promotes the use of Neighbourhood Plans through policy C15 to address certain issues, and also notes that other types of community led plan (e.g. a Place Plan) can be prepared and adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which can then be used in day to day planning decision making.

**2. How are infrastructure needs assessed for new development?**

The provision of infrastructure results from the involvement of many different organisations and is determined by the level and types of development being planned for. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies strategic infrastructure needed to underpin the level of development in the IPS. Wherever possible, it identifies the types and location of infrastructure needed, its cost and the sources of funding and is a live document that will be regularly reviewed and updated. Local infrastructure needs associated with individual sites result from existing plan policies and policy documents and liaison with statutory consultees such as the Highways authority.

**3. Why can't all new housing be powered by renewable energy?**

Plan policies must be consistent with the NPPF which seeks to support the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat. The Plan supports major development of renewable energy schemes and provides a framework for appropriate renewable energy and low carbon technologies to achieve the ambition of the island becoming self-sufficient in renewable energy production.

**4. All new development should reflect the design already established on the island. Why doesn't new development take account of 'island' design and characteristics?**

The council recognises the importance of high quality design and includes two policies to achieve this objective. Policy C1 has been strengthened to require development proposals to meet the criteria set out in the policy and an Isle of Wight Model Design Code will be prepared by the council as a Supplementary Planning Document.

**5. Why is it not possible to refuse development because there are not enough health facilities for the existing population?**

Health providers are consulted with during the process of preparing the Plan and discussions are held on the quantity of development proposed. Health providers are therefore able to forward plan for the expected changes in population and identify if the Plan needs to make any land allocations to accommodate this.

- 6, How is the IPS helping to tackle the issues relating to overloaded sewerage infrastructure on the island?

Water supply and waste water disposal are the responsibility of Southern Water. They also have a statutory duty to connect all new development to the water and waste water network. Southern Water have a statutory role in planning for future development and are consulted with on the planned level of growth on the island. Over the period between 2020 and 2025, Southern Water plan to invest £56m on the water and wastewater network on the island to improve capacity and to address current issues. The issue of flooding of the sewerage system mainly relate to the overloading of the joint system by rainwater. Partnership working between Southern Water, the council and the Environment Agency seeks to reduce surface water run-off flowing into the sewerage network which will increase capacity.