

## 1 Introduction and Policy Context

- 1.1 This background paper sets out the high level policy context to the Island Planning Strategy (IPS) provided by the Corporate Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

### The Isle of Wight Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The policies within the IPS seek to support the aims in the **IWC Corporate Plan 2021-25**. The Corporate Plan sets out three key areas of action:

- Responding to Climate Change and Enhancing the Biosphere
- Provision of Affordable Housing for Island Residents
- Economic Recovery

- 1.3 It aims to achieve through the actions of the council for the Isle of Wight to be a place where everyone:

1. Can develop their skills and fulfil their potential.
2. Is part of the community and enjoys good health.
3. Enjoys the benefits of a green and thriving economy.
4. Understands the work of the council and the challenges it faces.

- 1.4 More detailed aims are outlined for each service delivered by the council. The most relevant of these in the context of the Island Planning Strategy are set out below. Their delivery will be supported by the implementation of the Plan policies.

#### **Community Safety, Housing and Digital Services**

- Support Island wide digital connectivity
- Housing that is created must be housing fit for purpose. We will prioritise truly affordable housing for island residents, meaning housing that is not just affordable to rent or buy but affordable to live in and maintain
- Wherever possible bring appropriate empty and derelict buildings back into use for affordable housing

#### **Planning and community engagement**

- Reduce the current proposed housing development numbers while ensuring we meet our local housing need
- Use the recent brownfield site data to identify housing opportunities
- Only develop greenfield sites when absolutely necessary

#### **Regeneration, business development and tourism**

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- Complete key regeneration projects to drive employment, skills and inward investment.
- Use available powers to deal with long term empty or derelict buildings that mar our seafront and town centre areas.
- Focus on regenerating our High Street and visitor economy to assist post COVID-19 recovery and growth.
- Promote people-oriented place planning for town centres

### **Environment, Heritage and Waste Management**

- Support and enhance our biosphere and AONB areas. Support the active management and development of biosphere status and secure dark sky status.
- Continue to develop successful waste management and increase recycling rates further.
- Commit to develop sustainable transport options with a focus on infrastructure to encourage active travel.
- Promote the increased use of renewable energy in all sectors
- Embed both biosphere and the climate change strategy into policy, including the Island Plan, advanced by appropriate action plans. All council decisions are to have regard to the biosphere and climate change strategy

### **Infrastructure and Transport**

- Finding a permanent working solution to the `floating bridge`
- Bringing forward a comprehensive Island wide parking strategy by 2024
- Ensuring compliance with Islands Roads contract and other external contracts
- Pursue a Government imposed public service obligation on cross-Solent services

### **Adult Social Care and Public Health**

- Placing the health and wellbeing of residents at the centre of all we do
- Promote the building of affordable supported social retirement housing to ensure residents maintain independence for as long as possible

### **Childrens Services, Education and Skills**

- Work with local communities to maintain and ensure appropriate local school provision

## National Planning Policy Framework

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023 (NPPF) seeks to achieve sustainable development. The NPPF explains that at a very high level the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Three overarching objectives (paragraph 8) set give clear direction over what is expected:

- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

1.6 These objectives are to be delivered through plan policies which “should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions”. In plan-making terms, achieving sustainable development means that Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. (paragraph 9).

1.7 Paragraph 11 seeks that plans apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means that:

“... (a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects ...

(b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed housing needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

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(i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or

(ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”.

- 1.8 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further guidance on how policies should be implemented, and relevant guidance is indicated in the individual chapter summaries.