

# Isle of Wight Council: Draft Island Strategy: Matter 4 Statement

Prepared by Fisher German  
on behalf Jacton Properties



### Project Title

Land at New Fairlee Farm, Newport, Isle of Wight

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# 01 Introduction

- 1.1 This Matter Statement has been prepared on behalf of the on behalf of Jacton Properties Ltd. in respect of their land interests at New Fairlee Farm, Newport, as illustrated at Figure 1 below. The land above forms part of a site known as ‘Land at and adjacent to New Fairlee Farm’ (Ref: HA040), which was previously identified in the November 2018 Draft Island Planning Strategy as a proposed allocation site.
- 1.2 The below site was included within the 2018 Draft Plan as a proposed allocation for a residential led mixed-use development. It was identified as being capable of accommodating at least 880 dwellings, a mix of green, open and recreational space, a range of small-scale community uses (which could include a multi-purpose community building and a convenience shop) and an improved road network including a park and ride hub. Representations were made that that time to support the proposed allocation of the site. The allocation was however removed in a subsequent Regulation 18 Consultation (July 2021). Representations were submitted on behalf of our client requesting the sites re-inclusion and objecting to the approach adopted in respect of housing growth on the island.

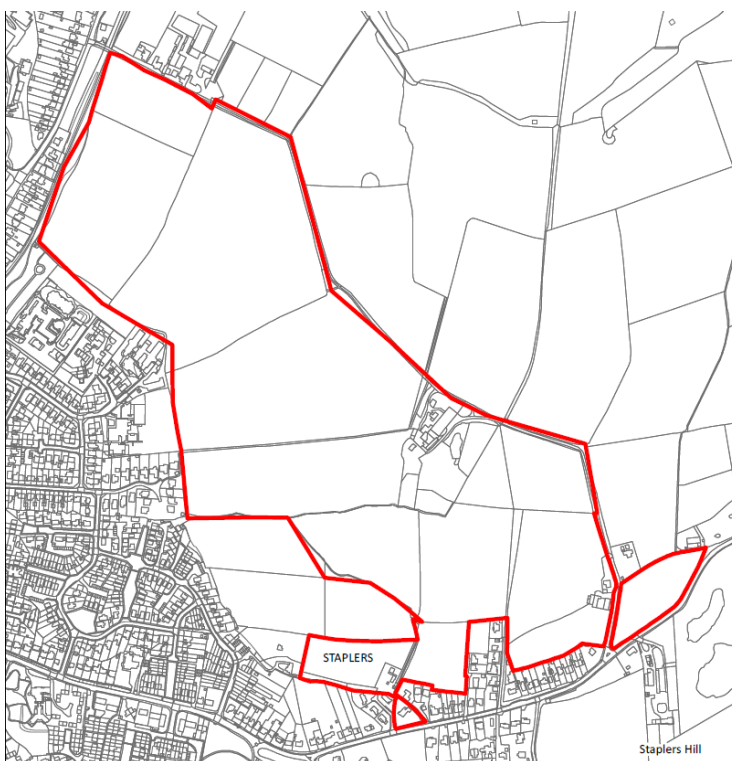


Figure 1: Land at and adjacent to New Fairlee Farm (HA040) (Source: IoW Council)

## 02 Matter 4 – Policies for the Environment

### Issue 1: Whether the approach to environmental protection is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Is Policy EV10 effective and justified in addition to Policy EV9, particularly in terms of restricting development within the gaps identified on the policies map, especially the larger, more substantial gaps – e.g. between Newport and Cowes and those around Ryde? Is the approach to the settlement gaps supported by the evidence in the Settlement Coalescence Study 2018 [Examination Document EN11]?

- 1.1 No, it is neither effective nor justified. As set out in Regulation 19 representations, notwithstanding that the policy does include provision for when development may be accepted, the identification of land with the statement “*the generally open and undeveloped nature of the ...[identified gaps].. will be protected*”, creates an immediate presumption against development (above that simply that exists through being located outside settlement boundaries), which must be justified in evidence. Our view is that in respect of the Newport to Cowes gap, this position is not justified nor effective.
- 1.2 Firstly, the evidence which underpins the policy does not as an inherent part of its methodology align with the aim of the policy. The policy provides a recommended approach for each gap, not the ‘one size fits all’ approach as clearly envisaged by Policy. The Isle of Wight Settlement Coalescence Study (April 2018) (EN11) contains site specific guidelines for development within the various identified gaps. These are more precise and detailed than the more protective and simplistic approach advocated in the Policy. Given the evidence document was not created in the context of such a policy, nor advises such a policy, we do not see how the Policy can be considered justified.
- 1.3 Paragraph 2.4 if the underpinning evidence states that the approach adopted by the evidence was not to “*attempt to define zones within which development should be deemed unacceptable, was to identify broader areas between the settlements where the impact of development on settlement separation or identity should be a consideration*”. The Policy does not state this, instead it states that the open and undeveloped nature of the gap will be protected. Whilst the caveat provided at the end of the Policy could be argued to bring such considerations, our view is the first sentence of the paragraph creates

a presumption against development not in keeping with the aim or spirit of the underlining evidence base, or the NPPF.

- 1.4 When considering the Newport-Cowes gap in particular, it is noted by its significant size that it is not considered that development within the gap, unless highly strategic in nature, would have an unacceptable impact on settlement identity or a perception of coalescence. Settlement coalescence policies with wording similar to that as provided in draft Policy EV10 should be used where the threat of coalescence from development is reasonably likely. The identification of the vast swathe of land north of Newport is however not necessary because there is limited threat of coalescence, in actual or particularly perceptual terms.
- 1.5 If it was however considered necessary to provide a gap between Newport and Cowes, under the policy wording provided, the area would need to be refined. It is not logical to us to include land south of existing Newport related development which would be clearly read as part of Newport, as any development to the south of this simply logically would not be read as being part of the gap between Newport and Cowes. In particular any land to the south of the Medina College campus and the existing ribbon development on the A3054.
- 1.6 Whilst the evidence submitted demonstrates that development on New Fairlee farm would not adversely significantly impact medium and long distance views, even if there was to be any impact, this would be a landscape issue for consideration under EV9, not a settlement separation issue for consideration under EV10. However, in either case due to landform, existing built form, and the potential for mitigation through planting (which is recognised in the Isle of Wight Settlement Coalescence Study as being appropriate within the Newport – Cowes gap), there will be no harm to settlement separation and identity or unacceptable landscape impact.
- 1.7 As such, we do not believe the Newport – Cowes gap is justified or effective. The policy as proposed does not reflect the aim and remit of the underpinning evidence. The land identified as a gap, particularly that to the east of the Medina, and even more so south of the significant existing development at the Medina college and existing development on the A3054, clearly performs no function in actual or perceptual separation, and as such should be removed.
- 1.8 Finally, the Reasoned Justification explains that the settlement gap policy is not exhaustive, but that is not clear within the Policy. If there is to be a more extensive reading and application of Policy EV10,

that statement should be explicit within the Policy. As set out in our substantive Regulation 19 response on this matter, we believe if a version of this policy is to be retained, a more justified policy would be as follows:

Policy EV10: Preserving settlement identity

For proposals within the following settlement gaps, consideration will be given to the function of the land and the impacts of the development on actual or perceived coalescence. Regard will also be had for the associated guidelines as contained within the Isle of Wight Settlement Coalescence Study (or any successor document);

- 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

1.9 Significant revision is therefore required for soundness, which if it is to keep all gaps would need to be similar to the above, or a reduction in settlement gaps identified (either gaps fully deleted or areas reduced) so that the restrictive wording of the policy is better justified and effective in its proposed role.

**4.17 Is Policy EV10 effective in terms of its relationship with sites intending to be allocated (e.g. HA005, HA006, HA040)?**

1.10 HA040 is an omission site within the Plan. However, for the reasons articulated with our submitted Regulation 19 response and in relation to Matters 2,3,4 and 6, it should be re-allocated as per the previous Regulation 18 Draft allocation.

1.11 If the site was to be reallocated, then there would be a potential conflict with the Policy as drafted (which seeks to maintain undeveloped area designated), however, as set out above the site makes no contribution to the separation of Newport and Cowes, so under the Policy it would be arguable that

the site could come forward for development (this does not change our view that the Policy presents an unjustifiable presumption against development having regard for the underpinning evidence). However, subject to amendment to Policy EV10 to exclude the area of HA040 (which performs no function in separation) or amendment to the policy wording as set out above, there would be no conflict with the policy and the allocation of HA040.