

BEMBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENT

FOREWORD

The Bembridge Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was formed on 28 February 2012 and comprised members of the local community drawn from local businesses and societies, parish councillors and interested residents.

Regular meetings of the Working Group have since taken place. These meetings have been open to the public and members of the community have attended on different occasions.

On 22 March 2012 formal was served on the IW Council to register the Parish of Bembridge as the designated Neighbourhood Area. This was confirmed on 28 May 2012.

The Working Group commenced work on compiling the evidence base and planning its consultation. As much information as possible about the Neighbourhood Plan Process was obtained from various sources, including the DCLG, Front Runner Councils (including a presentation by four front runners held on the Isle of Wight) and the Isle of Wight Council.

BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

The following steps were taken by the Working Group:

- A review of existing evidence
- Identification of gaps in the evidence
- Compilation of new evidence
- Analysis of the accumulated evidence

EXISTING EVIDENCE

The Working Group established its evidence base documents were as follows:

- *National Planning Policy Framework* (published by the Government in 2012)
- *Island Plan Core Strategy* (published by the Isle of Wight in March 2012)
- *Bembridge Village Design Statement*
- *Viewpoint Bembridge: A Plan for the Future Bembridge*
- *Conservation Area Plan and Appraisal* (produced by the Isle of Wight Council and adopted in May 2011)
- *The AONB Management Plan 2009-2014* (published by the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership in 2009)

- *Isle of Wight Tourism Development Plan*
- *Isle of Wight Transport Plan*
- *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment*
- *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*
- *Bembridge Housing Needs Survey Report 2006*
- *The Historic Environment Register*
- *The Isle of Wight Shoreline Management Plan 2 (December 2010)*
- *The 2001 Census (and 2011 when published)*
- *Isle of Wight Council Ratings Register*
- *Extant planning permissions for the Parish*

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS IN THE ABOVE EVIDENCE

Having regard to the basic conditions for a Neighbourhood Plan, it was clear at an early stage in the process that the Bembridge Neighbourhood Plan required a general conformity with the Island Plan Core Strategy and the Working Group regarded this document along with the NPPF as its key evidence documents.

An analysis of the planning applications relating to development proposals within Bembridge Parish from March 2009 (as listed on the Isle of Wight Council planning web-site) revealed that 47% related to the householder planning applications, 20% related to new housing and the remaining 33% related to miscellaneous schemes not falling into the above two categories.

Of the new housing proposals, these were confined, with the exception of one scheme, to sites within the settlement boundary either on previously developed land, development of garden land or replacement dwellings. The largest (and most locally controversial) scheme related to the redevelopment of the Staddlestones Garage Site with a proposal for 40 sheltered housing apartments.

Discussions with members of the Parish Council Planning Committee indicated a frustration that the detailed level of the policy content of the former Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan had not been carried through to the Island Plan Core Strategy policies, that the series of Supplementary Planning Guidance documents had been cancelled and the production and publication of the Supplementary Planning Documents envisaged by the Isle of Wight Council were some years away¹. The Working Group formed the view that the production of a Neighbourhood Plan would provide local policies which would make up this identified deficiency and thus provide clear policy guidance for future development proposals within the local community within a shorter space of time than the Local Planning Framework could deliver.

The Parish Council members of the Working Group indicated from their experience in dealing with planning applications the principal concern of local residents related to housing development and the lack of affordable housing within the village. This was

¹ The above view was later justified following the submission of a planning application to redevelop the Staddlestones Garage site with a scheme of 40 sheltered housing units. The scheme was highly controversial within the local community and consideration of the application by the Parish Council Planning Committee and participation in the subsequent appeal hearing, revealed frustration that the Island Plan Core Strategy policies provided insufficient policies to protect the village from losing a valuable local service (ie garage forecourt services) and the introduction of an unpopular development scheme.

borne out by the findings of the 2006 Bembridge Housing Needs Survey Report carried out by the Isle of Wight Rural Community Council's Rural Housing Enabler and which reported a local need for affordable housing and for local cost homes and suggested to the Working Group that its evidence base was deficient in the form of an up to date Housing Needs Survey.

Finally, the Working Group were mindful that as the reforms to the planning system aimed to give local communities more say in shaping development in the areas in which they live and this was to be achieved through the community-led initiative of Neighbourhood Plans, the views of the community needed to be sought in order to establish how residents of the parish wished future development of their neighbourhood to be shaped.

COMPILATION OF ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Flowing on from the above, the Working Group set about seeking the views of the local community. This was done through a series of public meetings and questionnaires. In addition it recommended to the Parish Council that a Housing Needs Survey report from an outside market expert be commissioned.

ANALYSIS OF ALL THE ACCUMULATED EVIDENCE

The public consultation exercise took the following form:

- 2 x public open days (Village Hall, Community Centre)
- Questionnaires to every household
- Questionnaires to Estate Agents
- Publicity in The Beacon
- Link to website
- 2 x public presentations at Village Hall
- Housing Needs survey questionnaires to every household

An analysis of all the feedback received as a result of the above was carried out by the Working Group and which was found to largely fall into six general categories. These categories were then assessed against the evidence base list to establish whether or not there are sufficient planning policies in place to adequately address and control the identified issues and, if not, how could this be rectified.

This is demonstrated in the following table:

Community Concerns/Desires	Do existing plans/policies provide sufficient control/protection/Guidance?	What is needed?	How can this be achieved?
Need to control and contain future housing development and direct it to what is	Island Plan Core Strategy provides location hierarchy and housing numbers spread across the IW	HNS to inform on need, numbers and types	HNS to be commissioned Policies to be

needed in order to maintain a healthy balance of age groups	but lacks any information on need, type or design Bembridge Village Design Statement out of date and non statutory	Policy to define "smaller scale" Updated design polices	formulated either through BNHP or updating VDS or both
Need to protect the existing character of village and the surrounding rural landscape	Island Plan policies have insufficient detail to control	More detailed policies Identification of green space	Policies to be formulated through BNHP Green Space Audit
Need to protect and/or improve existing levels of services	Island Plan policies have insufficient detail to control (where relevant to be controlled under T&CP Act)	More detailed policies (where appropriate) Shop and businesses audit	Policies to be formulated through BNHP (where appropriate)
Village needs a car park	No assistance from any established documents	Land to be identified (Staddlestones Garage site would have been ideal) and/or policy to support development of such a scheme within village centre should land become available Evidence of congestion around village centre	Designate land or formulate supporting policy through BNHP Parking assessment
Encourage tourism	In principle yes but lacking in detail	Additional detail would be helpful	Formulate policies in BNHP
Transport and infrastructure issues	Some identified issues not within control of T&CP Act Lack of parking	Policies to support cycle track/refuge path would be helpful Parking	Formulate policies in BNHP

	spaces guidance in Island Plan or any SPD or DPD	guidelines for new development	
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Table 1

The final column (ie “How can this be achieved?”) was further analysed to assess whether there was any other means of achieving the respective objectives other than by way of a neighbourhood plan.

Alternative means were identified as the following:

- 1 Preparing a Parish Plan
- 2 Updating the Bembridge Village Design Statement with a view to adoption by the Isle of Wight Council as a Supplementary Planning Document
- 3 Taking no further action and waiting for the Isle of Wight Council to prepare its own Development Planning Documents (DPDs) as part of the Local Development Framework.

Option 1 was discounted as a Parish Plan would have no statutory status and therefore its weight in determining planning applications would be limited.

Whilst Option 2 was acknowledged to have more status (on adoption as SPD), it was concluded that Design Policies in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan would carry greater weight in the planning process.

Option 3 was rejected as being too far ahead in the future and Staddlestones development proposal (see footnote No 1) clearly highlighted the need for the community’s wishes to shape development in their locality to be formalised in a Neighbourhood Plan in order to influence the outcome of future planning applications.

There was a clearly identified need for an up to date Housing Needs Survey and steps were taken to put this in hand.²

The Island Plan Core Strategy was assessed in relation to its policies for guiding development within Bembridge. Discussions with Members of the Planning Committee of the Parish Council indicated that in determining planning applications they found the Core Strategy particularly lacking in policies which provided guidance on design and appearance.

It was concluded that the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan was the best way forward to achieve the objectives of guiding future development within the Parish. In addition to this it was agreed there was merit in updating the Village Design Statement as a separate exercise.

NEXT STEPS

Flowing from the above process and the feedback received, it was clear the community is proud of its village identity and wishes to maintain this and protect it from

² Bembridge Housing Needs Survey – published August 2013

inappropriate development and loss of services. It also indicated a general acceptance that future development is inevitable to ensure the continued life and prosperity of the village but this should be in keeping with the existing and distinctive character of the parish as a whole.

Having regard to this, the following vision statement was formulated:

To maintain and enhance the unique self contained character of Bembridge Village whilst permitting small scale sustainable growth that is in line with the needs and wishes of the community.

The Working Group felt the best means of delivering this vision was by way of the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Reflecting the overall content of the community's aspirations, the outline of the plan was drafted to comprise the following sections:

- Strategic (subsequently amended to Overview and Location)
- Housing
- Working and Shopping
- Tourism
- Getting around
- Leisure and Wellbeing
- Environment and Heritage
- Design

An analysis of the community feedback informed the content of the Community Objectives in relation to each heading.

FORMULATING THE POLICIES OF THE BEMBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Having regard to column 4 of the analysis table (table 1 above) and the decision to move forward to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, column 5 updates table 1 by listing the policies and associated documents which were developed to deliver the Community objectives :

Community Concerns/Desires	Do existing plans/policies provide sufficient control/protection/Guidance?	What is needed?	How can this be achieved?	Addressed by Bembridge Neighbourhood Plan policies and/or other documents
Need to control and contain future housing development and direct it to what is needed in order to maintain a healthy balance of age groups	Island Plan Core Strategy provides location hierarchy and housing numbers spread across the IW but lacks any information on need, type or design Bembridge Village Design Statement out of date and non	HNS to inform on need, numbers and types Policy to define "smaller scale" Updated design polices	HNS to be commissioned Policies to be formulated either through BNHP or updating VDS or both	HNS published July 2013 and adopted by IWC as SPD "Smaller Scale" development defined by policy BNHP.OL.1 Design Policies BNHP.D1 to D5

	statutory			Incorporate character assessment areas information from VDS into new Bembridge Design Character Appraisal document Production of Neighbourhood Action Plan to be implemented
Need to protect the existing character of village and the surrounding rural landscape	Island Plan policies have insufficient detail to control	More detailed policies Identification of green space	Policies to be formulated through BNHP Green Space Audit	BNHP.OL2, H3, WS1 to 5 and WS7, LW1 Production of Green Space Audit put in hand
Need to protect and/or improve existing levels of services	Island Plan policies have insufficient detail to control (where relevant to be controlled under T&CP Act)	More detailed policies (where appropriate) Shops and businesses audit	Policies to be formulated through BNHP (where appropriate)	BNHP.WS1-7, LW2 & 3
Village needs a car park	No assistance from any established documents	Land to be identified (Staddlestones Garage site would have been ideal) and/or policy to support development of such a scheme within village centre should land become available Evidence of congestion around village centre	Designate land or formulate supporting policy through BNHP Parking assessment	BNHP.WS6 Production of a parking assessment put in hand to formalise existing evidence of congestion
Encourage tourism	In principle yes but lacking in detail	Additional detail would be helpful	Formulate policies in BNHP	BNHP.T1 & T2
Transport and infrastructure issues	Some identified issues not within control of T&CP Act	Policies to support cycle track/refuge path would be	Formulate policies in BNHP	BNHP.GA2

	Lack of parking spaces guidance in Island Plan or any SPD or DPD	helpful Parking guidelines for new development		BNHP.GA.1
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Table 2

LIST OF DOCUMENTS/INFORMATION WHICH INFORMED NEIGHBOURHOD PLAN POLICIES

Overview and Location

NNPF

Island Plan Core Strategy

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010

Village Design Statement (to be revised)

Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (as amended)

Neighbourhood Action Plan (to be initiated)

Housing

Island Plan Core Strategy

Housing Needs Survey (July 2013)

Isle of Wight Council Tax and Revenues records

2011 Census

Staddlestones Appeal Decision letter (APP/P2114/A/12/2185013)

Working and Shopping

Shops and Business Premises Audit (2013)

Parking Assessment (2013)

Staddlestones Appeal Decision letter (APP/P2114/A/12/2185013)

Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (as amended)

CPRE Dark Skies Map

Tourism

Isle of Wight Council Tax and Revenues records

2001 and 2011 Census

Sustrans Map of Isle of Wight Cycle Route

Static caravans at Sandhills Holiday Park and Park Resorts, Whitecliff Bay

Getting around

Southern Vectis bus route information

Definitive Footpath Map

Sustrans Map of Isle of Wight Cycle Route

Parking Assessment 2013

Former parking guidelines of IW Unitary Development Plan
Communities and Local Government Secretary Eric Pickles' statement (3 Jan 2011)
confirming confirmation of the scrapping of national policy restricting residential
parking spaces and giving communities the freedom to set their own number of spaces
for new development

Leisure and Wellbeing

IW Council Open Space Audit (2010)
Green Space Audit (2013)

Environment and Heritage

National designation maps
Flood zone map
IW Shoreline Management Plan 2 (2010)
AONB map
Conservation Area Plan and Appraisal
Statutory List of designated listed buildings
HER
Local List published by IWC
Tree Preservation Orders
Bembridge Design Character Appraisal 2013

Design

Bembridge Design Character Appraisal 2013
Conservation Area Appraisal
Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (as amended)