

ISLAND PLANNING STRATEGY COMMENTS

Godshill Parish Council considered the Planning Strategy Document of the Isle of Wight Council at a meeting on 21st February 2019 and it was agreed to submit the following comments on the Planning Strategy as presented –

ISLAND WIDE FACTORS –

1. The Isle of Wight does not have the infrastructure to support development on the proposed scale. This applies to all of the major public services, including the emergency services, which have all seen considerable reductions in resources over a period of years.
2. The Isle of Wight has to deal on an ongoing basis with the costs of its 'severance by sea' from the mainland. In particular it cannot rely to the same extent as mainland areas on the support of neighbouring communities in the event of major emergency service requirements.
3. Public Transport is also a major consideration with Highway Safety a major issue in many locations. Public Transport operates on a very low frequency in all but the major towns, an increased population and associated car volumes could only exacerbate existing highway safety problems.
4. The Isle of Wight is a tourism based economy with tourism providing a substantial source of employment for local residents. Large areas of the Island are designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Island has many conservation areas. Development on the proposed scale would have a negative impact on tourism and the rural ambience that the Island projects to both residents and visitors.
5. The Island currently has an estimated 800 properties which are identified as vacant but which could be used to support local housing need. The Parish Council would ask that bringing these premises into occupancy should be given a higher priority than new development.

6. The Island is a low wage economy and there is a significant need for affordable low cost housing in order to provide the opportunity for local people, and in particular young families, to have access to housing provision. The Parish Council would support such housing provision and the Planning Strategy should address more clearly how this need is to be met, in particular to ensure that new homes are occupied by local residents and key workers and do not become a source of more second home provision.

LOCAL SITES:

HA095: Land at Moor Farm Godshill.

HA096: Land adjoining Scotland Farm and Tresslewood Care Village, Scotland Corner, Godshill.

HA097: Land at Deacons Nursery, Moor View, Godshill.

7. All three of the above sites are currently green field sites and the development proposals exceed the number of dwellings which could be supported by the village infrastructure. The Planning Strategy wishes to protect and preserve green space and where development of green space is intended, it should be balanced in numbers and size to avoid undue stress on the local infrastructure and to better protect the local environment. It is critical that housing development is driven by local need and not driven by inappropriate national targets.

8. The village of Godshill has well documented problems with highway safety, speeding traffic, lack of footpaths, no pedestrian crossing etc. Speeding dangers were intended to be reduced by the introduction and monitoring of a 20mph limit throughout the High Street and School Road. The impact of the new speed limit is seen by many to be ineffective and in need of enforcement. Development of all three of the above sites would generate greater volumes using these already unsafe stretches of public highway.

The situation could be vastly improved for residents and visitors by creating a Relief Road to the North East of the village, a point made by many respondents. This, although sounding extreme, is perfectly feasible and warrants careful consideration as part of any proposals regarding HA097. There were, as a point of fact,

plans for a Relief Road in existence in the 1980s and traffic since then has increased dramatically so the need is even more apparent and urgent.

In 2015 Godshill Parish Council completed its Parish Plan and Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD was adopted by the Isle of Wight Council in 2015. These documents recognised that there was no local housing need but identified three sites that were of preference should housing development be required. HA096 and HA097 above were two of the preferred sites but HA095 was not recognised as such and this proposal is therefore contrary to the agreed and approved planning document.

The comments made in this submission are fully supported by IW Councillor Rodney Downer who represents the Godshill & Wroxall ward.

G Hughes
Parish Clerk
24th February 2019