

## APPENDIX J

### Geographic Overview

This appendix provides a geographic overview of some of the proposals and ideas which have been examined in the formulation of this plan on an area by area basis. Some issues are specifically addressed by policies and proposals of the plan, while others indicate long-term opportunities or ideas which may be realised beyond the plan period. The following points are therefore intended for general information only to assist in the understanding of how policies pertaining to different topics, over different time periods of non-planning uses inter-relate and is not intended to be read as being specific proposals of the plan.

### Newport

#### Introduction

Newport is situated in the middle of the Island at the head of the River Medina and is the main administrative and retail centre of the Island. The town developed as a medieval market town and prospered due to its central and sheltered location. The plan foresees a safe and quiet fume free centre for the capital town of the Island where shopping can be carried out along traditional streets or in larger shops in a viable town centre with a wide range of attractions and activities. New retailing floor space should only be located within the town centre to reinforce the shopping pattern of the market town established over the centuries.

There will be a need to provide some additional capacity in the road network around central Newport to allow traffic calming and pedestrianisation proposals to proceed. A long term view of the road network is required to enable current development proposals to make a positive contribution to the future road pattern. Some proposals are outlined below.

#### Carisbrooke/Gurville Area

The plan addresses the problem of existing recent residential estate developments based on extensive cul-de-sacs. There remains a need, as originally planned, to provide a second access for Sylvan Drive and a third access for Wellington Road to spread traffic flows. The previous basis for development had been the eventual linking of Sylvan Drive and Mountbatten Drive and the provision of this road was a requirement before the occupation of an of the phase of development. Residents fear that this may create a rat run, although traffic calming could reduce this possibility.

#### Land off Worsley Road

Land to the south west of Worsley Road is allocated for housing development, with a substantial area of open space allocated alongside the stream to the south of the site. Vehicular access to the site will be from Forest Road, to the west of Kitbridge School. Vehicular access could also be provided from, but not to Sylvan Drive other than for emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cycle traffic. Adjoining land to the north is allocated for education purposes to serve Hunnyhill Primary School and an enlarged Kitbridge School.

#### To the South East of Pan Estate

Three areas of land totalling some 16.6ha are allocated for residential development as part of a comprehensive mixed development scheme. Council ownership will ensure that a higher than normal proportion of the development can be tailored to providing affordable housing to meet the needs of the area. Council ownership will also be able to ensure high standards of design and open space provision. Vehicular access to the sites shall initially be from Staplers Road and pedestrian and cycleway links to the existing estate shall be established as the development

progresses. The residential parts of the development shall eventually link to proposed employment and tourism, leisure and sports areas which shall be accessed off St Georges Way.

#### Pedestrian/Cycleway Network

The re-use of the former railway route between Cowes and Newport as a footpath and cycleway has proved a success. Opportunities to extend this network exist across the Island, but for the Newport area, those considered worth pursuing are:

1. On the east bank of the Medina Estuary to link Newport Town Centre via the Quay to Seaclose, the Mountbatten Centre and theatre facilities, High School and onward to the Folly and East Cowes.
2. A link to be created to the former railway line between Newport and Wootton to provide a safe cycle route from Wootton to Medina High School. This could conflict with proposals to extend the steam railway or create a light rail link, but would be easier to achieve.
3. The proposed cycleway at Shide to be extended towards the town centre alongside the River Medina to the B&Q car park. This area should continue to be protected from development as a green wedge river corridor.
4. A footpath bridge over the Medina between Safeway/M&S and B&Q should be promoted to link these town centre retail and car parking uses.

#### Newport Harbour

The harbour quays on the east bank are owned by the Council and both a major transport operator and waste contractor recently vacated a large land area on the northern part of the Quay. A planning brief has been prepared for the redevelopment of the quay for public and tourism related leisure and recreation uses in a traffic quiet environment on the east bank and water related business uses on the west bank. Tourism attractions could be boat/water related and provide for historic craft interest. The construction of a means to retain water in the harbour would enhance its attraction and increase its use. There is potential for providing pontoon mooring facilities which are not common and may be attractive to visiting yachtsmen. Pedestrian and cycle access from the Quay will link to Mountbatten Centre with its swimming pool and sports complex, theatre and outdoor sports facilities at Seaclose.

#### Quay Arts Centre

The former bonded warehouse building, housing the Arts Centre is owned by the Council and is currently being extended and linked into the adjoining refurbished Rope-store. Improved access is proposed by building a footbridge across the harbour close by the Medina Way Bridge. There is a related proposal to pedestrianise Little London and provide a new public entrance on this frontage. These proposals and other development opportunities would require the relocation of a notified hazardous site, Hurst's gas bottle storage.

#### Sea Street

Relocation of the gas bottle store would also enable Sea Street car park to be fully redeveloped for either residential or business uses and allow the realignment of Sea Street. Car parking provision could be replaced on the existing gas bottle storage site and the river frontage of Lukely Brook opened up as pedestrian route, linking to the route along-side Currys store and hence to Hunnyhill. The brewery owning the Railway Medina public house could become a partner in financing such a scheme to enable their premises/beer garden to be extended. The Sea-Street car parks between Quay Street and County Hall have some development value and in particular the site at the bottom of Quay Street is visually important and worthy of an attractive building to provide a focus of views from the town and lead to the redeveloped harbour quays.

#### Further Education

While the existing further education college continues to be supported and holds land for future expansion, it is considered important to try to attract a university facility to the Island. A possible site at Seaclose has now been rejected following public consultation and a site is currently identified to the north of the existing Medina High School, Fairlee, Newport.

## Ryde

### Introduction

From early beginnings as a fishing village on the north-east of the Island, Ryde grew with development based on tourism, starting with the arrival of the Victorians and the expansion of the railways to the south coast of England. Ryde was, and remains, one of the principal gateways to the Island with the pier reaching out over Ryde Sands to welcome visitors.

The pier was the Victorians solution to accessing the Island over the shallow intertidal shoreline and is still used as the connection for a high speed pedestrian ferry service. The other high speed service to Ryde is the faster hovercraft link to Southsea with its technical solution to crossing the foreshore.

### Integration of Transport

The pier carries the first part of the Island's electric railway to Shanklin, with the Esplanade Station adjoining both the bus terminus and the hovercraft terminal. Each of these is currently a separate operation and leads to a fragmentation of facilities, with two separate taxi ranks. Whilst bisected by the railway line, it is considered that there is great potential in this area for the creation of an integrated transport interchange facility. Draft proposals for such a scheme have been drawn up. The electric railway now provides access at Smallbridge junction for the Island's steam railway which now extends to Wootton.

### Town Centre & Shopping

The historic shopping centre of Ryde is elongated and fulfils two different functions in retail terms, being both a tourist centre and a district shopping centre. The consolidation of the district centre shopping around the High Street is considered vital to defending in-town shopping in Ryde and securing its long-term future as a functional centre. The development of George Street car park for retailing will assist with this and needs to be combined with a town centre management plan to ensure that things such as traffic management, car parking and environmental improvements can be co-ordinate to the benefit of the town. Union Street is expected to continue to support a mixture of district, local and tourism retail uses and retain the flexibility to meet changing market demands for town centre frontage.

### Holiday Town

As a holiday centre, Ryde does not have a distinct hotel areas as found in other resorts, but has a range of different size and quality of tourist accommodation throughout the town. Much of the tourist accommodation has been upgraded to meet the expectations of today's holiday makers. A large proportion of the town's historic trade came from day visitors and it is considered that there is again scope for expanding this and the short-break sectors within Ryde.

### The Seafront

The seafront retains much of its original charm as a traditional seafront, with the Esplanade, Appley Park and safe sandy beaches. There is scope to upgrade some of the traditional facilities and provide others in addition, for example showers, to improve the attraction for seaside holidays and activities. New attractions have been added in the form of a ten pin bowling centre, the swimming pool has been covered and a small boat leisure harbour is constructed. The seafront also hosts special events through the year including the annual regatta with a national coastal rowing competition and an international kite festival, which bring additional visitors to the town.

## Employment Development and Opportunities

A major new business park is now under construction at Great Preston Road, with further serviced plots available and room for longer-term expansion. Flat, level land at Westridge Cross, on the strategic road network, has also been identified for a high quality mixed business and high technology employment development. The adjoining sports and leisure complex is proposed to be upgraded to provide a range of top quality indoor and out-door leisure facilities, including an ice rink. A 200 seater conference facility has now been opened at this site, which can therefore host both local and visiting conference business. The development of both these sites in a co-ordinate fashion should be seen as a priority for the future of the town and a detailed development brief will be prepared.

## Roads

The road traffic network in and around Ryde is overloaded at certain times of the day due to locally generated, as well as through traffic. It is no longer considered feasible to develop a separate Ryde Southern Relief Road, so any improvements to the system will be small-scale and local.

## Cowes & East Cowes

### Introduction

Cowes and East Cowes are situated on opposite sides of the mouth of the River Medina. The area has a history based on yachting, the Victorian Royals and ship building, developing into specialised manufacturing skills at the heart of the Island's industrial economy. The towns are a gateway to the south east and the mainland in general, providing good access to both holiday makers and the import and export of produce. The following overview is based on the assumption that the proposed Medina Bridge crossing at Kingston does NOT proceed due to changing Government policy.

### The Focus of the Harbour

Cowes is the one individual town on the Island which has an international reputation due to Cowes Week regatta, Admirals Cup and Commodore Cup events and increasingly other international yachting events. It is only recently, partly in response to planning policy, that the town has ceased to turn its back on the harbour. East Cowes also has tended in the past to ignore and not participate in the yachting activities of the harbour. Both towns should be developed with the harbour as their focus, but both can build on their individual character and attributes.

### Harbour from Entrance to Floating Bridge

Development around the periphery of the Harbour to the north of the floating bridge should be promoted to enhance the harbour for yachting and boating recreation and sport. A priority should be to ensure that shore side facilities required to enable competition and events to international standard continue and expand. A key site in this has been the improvements started at Cowes Yacht Haven which need to be progressed. Additional facilities could be provided on this site in isolation or in conjunction with adjoining land at Town Quay and Fountain Quay to the north.

### Ferry Services

The harbour is also the gateway for ferry services from Southampton, with the high speed passenger service to Cowes and the vehicle ferry service to East Cowes. Terminal facilities have recently been improved at Fountain Quay and the landing facilities could be upgraded and improved. The vehicle ferry service has recently been upgraded and improved by the introduction of new vessels, two in 1995 and the third new ferry in service in 1996. The vehicle ferry terminal is constrained on its site although the facilities have been augmented by the use of additional marshalling facilities on a nearby site. The marshalling areas are split in the centre of East Cowes and are far from ideal.

#### New Ferry Terminal

The relocation of the ferry terminal and marshalling facilities from the centre of East Cowes would allow the regeneration of the town centre and release some of the existing marshalling area for town centre development and car parking. The most appropriate location, would be in the vicinity of the East Cowes breakwater which would relate well to the proposed new eastern channel. If this area, either the existing shoreline or after reclamation, were to be developed for a new ferry terminal, either for the existing company or for a new service, then the existing public amenity and viewing facilities offered by the seafront would have to be replaced by incorporating public access to the new seafront. This may in fact provide better facilities and views of the harbour and Solent activities than existing viewpoints. Road access should be by existing main roads and Castle Street and not Old Road.

#### A New Eastern Channel

The provision of a new eastern channel is proposed in the Cowes Harbour Development Plan to provide the separation of commercial and recreational shipping movements in the harbour. This would also provide a better approach to a new ferry terminal as suggested above and help safety and navigation for larger vessels, vital for the economic well-being of wharfage facilities, passing through the narrow point of the harbour, by the floating bridge. A detailed technical appraisal of this proposal will be needed to ensure the long-term impact and practicality of a new channel work in terms of hydrology and sediment movement.

#### The Working Harbour

Upstream of the floating bridge is the heart of the working harbour and support facilities for boat building and the shore side areas should be retained for such uses requiring waterfrontage rather than allowing redevelopment for uses which could be developed elsewhere.

#### Wharfage

The Island's principal bulk goods import and export facilities are located at Arctic Road in Cowes and Kingston in East Cowes. Imports, particularly aggregates for construction and road surfacing are imported to both wharfage areas. The Arctic Road site provides facilities for the export, mainly to Europe, of grain and other agricultural produce. Both these wharves, and that at Stag Lane in Newport Harbour, should be protected from alternative development and improved facilities for the bulk handling of goods be encouraged to keep pace with modern shipping requirements. This may also involve further dredging within the harbour to allow larger modern vessels access to the Island.

#### Kingston Access

The Cowes Local Plan proposed the construction of the Kingston Relief Road to address the inadequacy of the road network serving the Kingston area of East Cowes. This road was to have been financed by housing development south of Kingston Farm Lane, later phases of housing development at the Cowes Marina site, and industrial development behind the power station. A new vehicular access to Osborne House could have been incorporated. Negotiations at that time failed to secure agreement between the various land owners to provide this link.

The eastern approach road to the Medina crossing would have provided an alternative road further to the south, with a north/south link between the bridge and Kingston. The abandonment of the bridge crossing has required a rethink of achieving adequate access for this area, and a reappraisal of the development opportunities. Access from Whippingham Road should avoid segregating the school(s) in Beatrice Avenue from the town.

Critical for the economic expansion and reorganisation of the harbour's waterside activity is the need for further employment land for marine related industry. Land south of Kingston is therefore allocated, which is considered suitable for new or growing boat building and should not provide shared access to the river for all the new development at Kingston.

#### Crossways Field

The area previously proposed for open space use is now considered appropriate for location of a new primary school on the site adjoining Osborne Middle School. The remainder of the field is considered appropriate for the provision of an all weather sports pitch or the relocation of school pitches to be redeveloped for all weather pitches. Shared community use of the sports and school facilities should be promoted.

#### GKN/Westland Osborne Works

Proposals for refurbishment, redevelopment and new development of the existing and extended site to create a new modern employment and research campus will provide facilities for this leading Island company and support for Island industry. The site is being reserved for such development to safeguard future employment generating opportunities. The site is ideal, being well located on the main road network close to the vehicle ferry terminal.

#### Somerton/Three Gates Road

Road access to these employment sites is now improved by the roundabout at Newport Road. Development of Three Gates Road should allow access, limited to non-commercial traffic, to the housing, development at Broadfields Farm site (released to subsidise industrial development) and subsequent access to Seaview Road housing development. Siemens Plessey's site south of Three Gates Road should be allowed to continue to provide for future expansion of the company's facilities.

#### Floating Bridge

It is considered that the floating bridge, a connection between Cowes and East Cowes, must be retained following the demise of the bridge crossing proposal. It is considered vital to retain a pedestrian/cycle/wheelchair/pram/pushchair link between the two towns and to enable parcels and packages to be transferred across the harbour. There is also a need for a water taxi to service moorings and marinas and potential for a water bus which would provide a more flexible service than the chain ferry, including potentially a town centre to town centre service. As suggested by the Cowes Harbour Plan, purpose-built vessels could be constructed and further investment provided for appropriate and safe landing facilities. This would not, however, provide for cars and light vans which would continue to require the floating bridge.

#### Estuary Conservation and Public Access

The estuary south of Kingston has been recognised as being of international conservation value which is considered to be compatible with the quiet recreational use of the countryside and as a cruising destination for visiting boats. Public access through the area has been encouraged by the re-use of the former railway line on the west bank as a footpath and cycleway. It is proposed to provide a similar facility on the east bank which will provide a circular route around the estuary.

There is a shortage of public slipway facilities in the harbour and estuaries existing facilities should be safeguarded, and new opportunities sought to enhance these, in particular in conjunction with proposed development at Kingston.

## South East Seaside Resorts

### Introduction

The seaside resorts of Ventnor, Shanklin and Sandown are situated along the south east coast of the Island and grew rapidly in the Victorian period, as holiday destinations, with the arrival of the railways. The area is renowned for its beaches, cliff and landscapes as well as its mild climate and sunshine, which continues to make it popular with holiday makers. Although the number of visitors has declined the resorts remain a major tourism destination for summer holidays and play a major role in the overall Island economy.

### Holiday Area

Although the resorts have suffered at the expense of cheap foreign holidays, the opportunity has been taken to broaden the areas appeal in terms of short breaks (1-3 nights) and specialist holidays, such as walking, cycling, etc, which utilise the beginning and end of the traditional season. Opportunities exist to develop the areas as a base for visiting and exploring the rest of the Island, by providing for a wide range of facilities and also developing communications links with the remainder of the Island.

### Browns/Sandown

The Plan recognises the potential in the area along the Esplanade, including Browns, to develop a wider range of tourist and recreational facilities to meet the needs both of the traditional holiday maker and also out-of-season visitors, by providing wet weather attractions, museum and interpretation centre and dual facilities, which can also provide for the needs of local people. The proximity of the town centre and main hotel area could aid a general revitalisation of Sandown as a whole. The successful integration of seafront development opportunities with the natural hinterland of a flood plain and major infrastructure requirements of the area is considered feasible, with benefits to the area away from each element.

### Shanklin Seafront

Shanklin seafront has suffered since the loss of the pier, but provides potential for tourism development to complement the sandy beaches and the various leisure activities that the seafront has to offer. The idea of an offshore Island, conference centre, marina and hotel development incorporating ferry links to the continent has been proposed by local hoteliers as a scheme which could provide a much needed boost to the area, but the source of the major investment which could be required for such a project has not yet been identified, so the proposal does not form part of this plan.

### Communication Links

Although the existing railway links Sandown and Shanklin with Ryde there are currently limited opportunities to visit the remainder of the Island other than by car, bus or coach. Proposals to link Ventnor and Shanklin by rail will provide greater opportunities for the availability of attractions as could any proposal to link the area by rail with Newport. The improvement of passenger transport link along the revetment between Shanklin and Sandown will be encouraged, to enable better use of facilities that both resorts could do for.

### Traffic

Like most holiday resorts, the congestion in the summer months provides the twin problems of parking and ease of movement, not to mention pollution, particularly in the town centres.

Opportunities exist to explore potential re-routing of traffic and pedestrianised or traffic quiet areas to provide a better environment for both visitors and local people. A possible one way solution to Shanklin traffic problems is being considered.

Budget constraints mean that the proposed Sandown to Shanklin relief road is no longer considered a feasible option in this plan.

#### Heights/Los Altos Park

The Heights continues to provide a range of sports and leisure facilities for both local people and visitors. Opportunities exist for future development into the Los Altos Park area to complement the Heights and provide a greater range of wet and dry weather facilities.

#### Upper Chine School, Shanklin

Since the amalgamation of this and Ryde School, the building and grounds have become surplus to educational requirements. There is a possibility of utilising the existing facilities to provide a conference/educational/tourist use, and residential use, again in the older properties if reconverted from dormitory blocks. The well landscaped grounds are important to the amenity of the area and any development opportunities need to be considered in the context of the overall plan for the whole site.

#### Business/Employment Opportunities

The Temperatures site in Lake is currently being refurbished for employment uses and has opportunities for the development of further business units and links with the adjoining industrial estate. Scope exists for further new development at College Farm at land adjoining Technacron and Ventnor Industrial Estate to provide additional employment for local people.

#### Natural Environment

The major attraction for the Ventnor to Sandown area is its natural beauty and the close proximity of the open countryside and coast to the built up areas. It is therefore important to continue to promote the footpath network, both into the countryside, within the resorts and the links between them, for example, Cliff Path and revetment from Sandown and Shanklin, the landslip route between Ventnor and Shanklin and the revetment between Ventnor and Bonchurch.

#### Ventnor Regeneration Study

The Civic Trust, together with the Council and local people, have formulated a series of policies and proposals for the revitalisation of Ventnor, the main thrust of which is the return of the rail link to Shanklin and beyond. The creation of a sheltered harbour facility on the seafront is also being pursued, in conjunction with providing sea defence in this area. This document will enable future individual schemes to be considered against the broad aims of the study.

### The Countryside and Rural Settlements

#### Introduction

The countryside is perhaps one of the Island's least recognised resources. It is characterised by a picturesque undulating patchwork landscape of valleys, downs, woodlands, trees and fields, punctuated by small villages, farms, and settlements. The special quality of the countryside is further enhanced by the influence of the sea, a beautiful coastline and favourable marine climate. The landscape holds many of our natural and cultural resources, and forms a vital component of quality of life and economics, not least for the tourism industry. The countryside has seen much change since the last war, accelerated in the last twenty years. Changing social and economic patterns, agricultural intensification, habitat loss, recreation and tourism use, all present challenges. The countryside is largely privately owned (with the notable exception of the National Trust who own 10% of the land area) and is a working landscape, very much driven by the farm subsidy system. Countryside management respects the living landscape and the active rural way of life. Planning must respect and balance these interests with the need to provide informal and quiet recreation. We are duty bound to conserve this richness and diversity of our landscape for its own sake, for future generations, and for us all to enjoy.

#### Settlements and Services

Rural settlements, including Freshwater, Yarmouth and Bembridge have to remain viable both socially and economically. Ignoring this can result in the loss of services, and the potential increase of social problems. Countryside areas do present more logistical problems in terms of access to shops, services transport and community facilities and one role of planning is to ensure that they remain viable and sustainable.

The problem have become exaggerated by the dominance of the main towns on the Island with villages increasingly becoming dormitories for them. Thus measures which help promote village centre services and community facilities will be encouraged. A dialogue with the rural community, through parish councils, the Joint Advisory Committee, the NFU, CLA and other groups, will be continued so that the special needs of rural areas can be taken into account.

#### Countryside Designations

The Island countryside has many special qualities, recognised by an increasingly complex set of international, national and local designations. These effectively protect the most important areas of landscape, coast, the natural and cultural heritage. Without care, a two tier countryside can be created and the Plan's policies are intended to promote a sympathetic approach across the whole rural area. Without doubt, our heritage must be respected and the designated landscape and coast protected from inappropriate development. However, both within and outside of these areas, the countryside remains a dynamic living and working system. The diversity of our landscape, one of the Island's strengths, relies on the maintenance of the right balance for the countryside.

#### Coast and Estuaries

Many of the Island's estuaries lie within rural areas and have specific characteristics and pressures for development and recreational activities. Improved harbour facilities in the harbours of Cowes, Newport, Yarmouth, and Bembridge will increase activity levels and visitor numbers. Estuary management plans for the Medina and Western Yar are being prepared and briefs are suggested to guide activities and manage potential conflicts between tourism recreation and conservation interest.

A Shoreline Management Plan is being prepared, by the Council, the Environment Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), to establish the strategy for the future coastal defence of the Island, and coastal zone management plans to set out guidelines as to how the coastal areas of the Island should be used. These non-statutory plans, in conjunction with the UDP will provide comprehensive guidance to the development and use of the Island's coast and estuaries.

#### Better Design

There is a danger of being over protective within rural areas leading to sterilisation and stagnation. Development has many positive benefits for rural areas. It is often not the extent of development which is controversial but the quality of what results. To help remedy this problem, a Countryside Design Summary and Village Design Statements will be produced. These will not only build a framework which will respect the local distinctiveness of the Island but also allow the views of local people to be incorporated.

#### Countryside Work Patterns

Changing work patterns in the rural economy will continue. These particularly concern the need for agricultural diversification and the trends towards working from home and self employment. The re-use of surplus farm buildings to serve both purposes can often be an ideal solution. Agricultural and farm economics are likely to continue to change, and thus supplementary business and diversification measures require great care, and the use of whole farm plans will help ascertain their relative importance within the agricultural business.

#### Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is seen as one way of complementing the traditional British Holiday, diversifying the existing products and extending the season. The Island is ideally situated to capitalise on this market, possessing unspoilt countryside and coast, and an excellent rights of way network. Great care is needed to ensure that new development does not conflict with this tourism goal, and that measures to improve the resource are encouraged.