

**Area Action Plan  
Informal Discussion Document**

**The Medina Valley Plan**

**May 2014**



## Introduction

The [Island Plan Core Strategy](#) is the document, along with [national planning policies and guidance](#), against which planning applications are determined by the Isle of Wight Council. The Core Strategy covers the whole Island, but recognises that the Medina Valley, Ryde and The Bay are the key areas for housing, jobs and infrastructure on the Island and will need different planning approaches.

The council is preparing an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Medina Valley, which we are calling the Medina Valley Plan, to recognise and address the individual characteristics and needs of each area. The process for preparing such documents are set nationally but the council has prepared this informal discussion document outside of the required formal stages, to invite comments on its emerging thinking and the way in which it may go forward in the next stages of the Medina Valley Plan process.

Some issues raised and questions asked in this document are not land-use planning issues, but have been included because the council covers a wide range of services. While the formal AAPs may not be able to address these issues, the information gained from this consultation exercise will be shared with other areas of the council where relevant.

As it is an informal discussion document, there are no environmental assessments (such as a Habitat Regulation Assessment or a Sustainability Appraisal) – these, and other technical evidence base documents, will be prepared and published for the formal consultation stages.

The Core Strategy has a policy (AAP1) that sets out the requirements that the Medina Valley Plan will need to address. When the Medina Valley

Plan gets to the formal stage of going through a public examination, the council will need to demonstrate how the Medina Valley Plan addresses these and complies with the National Planning Policy Framework, which is the document that sets out the Government's planning policies. The headings within the main section of the document are those requirements as set out in AAP1.

## Making Comments

If you have any comments on what is in this document, please send them by email to [planning.policy@iow.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@iow.gov.uk), or by post to:

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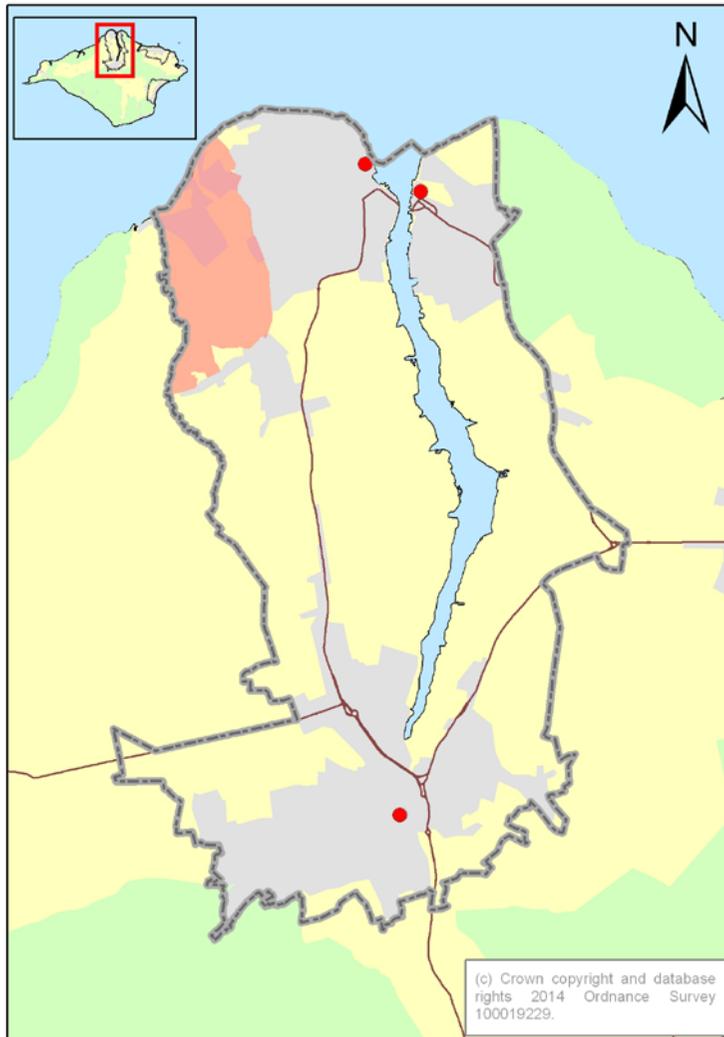
There will be a 6 week period for people to comment on the document, which will run from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May until midday Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

A comments form, which includes all the questions posed in this document, is available on the council's website, or alternatively paper copies will be available in local libraries, Seaclose Office and Customer Services at County Hall.

Any comments that we receive will then influence the content of the AAPs going forward into the formal stages. A timetable for these stages can be found on our [website](#).



Medina Valley Plan Area



This document explores the planning-related issues for the Medina Valley area, as set out within the Island Plan Core Strategy, and poses some questions that we would like your feedback on. This document is intended to provoke discussion and includes some of our current thinking and other things that you've told us you would like to see happen.

In the Core Strategy, Medina Valley has been identified as being an appropriate area to accommodate further development, primarily due to the scale of the existing settlements and levels of employment.

Within the Medina there are three main settlements; Cowes, East Cowes and Newport, along with smaller communities such as Gurnard, Northwood and Whippingham. There are also a number of environmentally sensitive areas, mainly focussed around the River Medina.

Because of this diversity, a number of different approaches will be needed to make sure the town and parish councils, and their communities, can feel confident that the Medina Valley Plan delivers the requirements for the Medina Valley in a way that reflects local circumstances.

We have worked with the town and parish council's in thinking about how the requirements of the Core Strategy can be met through the Medina Valley Plan. This covers both the process and possible outcomes.

Within the Medina Valley, Gurnard Parish Council is undertaking a Neighbourhood Development Plan (as indicated by the area shaded pink on the map opposite) with the support of the council. Because the Gurnard Neighbourhood Development Plan will include its own locally-

derived policies to manage development within the parish, we did not want to duplicate this through the Medina Valley Plan. Therefore, the Medina Valley Plan will not cover Gurnard Parish, other than on the issue of settlement boundaries.

East Cowes Town Council has prepared a Town Plan, which although not a statutory plan, we will refer to in the formal Medina Valley Plan to ensure that any proposals for East Cowes are in general conformity with the Town Plan.

We hope that these bespoke approaches reflect the wishes of these local communities, and along with the detailed discussions between ourselves and the other parish and town councils within the Medina Valley, show our commitment towards 'localism' within the plan-making process.

The document is now split under headings that are the requirements for the Medina Valley Plan in the Core Strategy. We've provided some commentary on the issues being faced and posed a number of questions for you to answer, to help us understand your thoughts.

## **1. Identify appropriate development sites, within or immediately adjacent to the settlement boundaries within the AAP boundary, for the majority of the dwellings allocated for the area**

1.1 Our preference towards housing development, which is established in the Core Strategy, is broadly speaking that they should be brownfield and/or located within or immediately adjacent to settlements. To help us, and those interested in

development, know what potential development sites will be considered for allocation in the Medina Valley Plan, assessment work has been undertaken in a document called the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#) (SHLAA).

1.2 Following the Government's publication of the national Planning Policy Guidance in March 2014, we have started to review our SHLAA to make sure it follows the latest national guidance in seeing whether there are enough suitable potential development sites in the Medina Valley area to meet the required amount of housing development set out in the Core Strategy.

1.3 This review shows that there is likely to be more sites than we need to meet our housing target. This means that we can 'cherry pick' the best sites, and also it potentially means that we could meet our target by using more sites but having fewer houses on them.

1.4 In carrying out various consultations over the last few years a constant message has been that "the council should only allow housing that brings forward the required infrastructure" to support it. However we also receive messages that we should develop brownfield sites first.

1.5 In this current market, and thinking about the period to 2027 (which is how long the Core Strategy runs for), we need to ensure that the right sites are brought forward. Therefore careful balance has to be struck between the support for brownfield land (which is generally more expensive to develop and therefore may not be able to cover the costs of wider infrastructure improvements) and the release of greenfield sites.

## Question 1

**What are your views on the use of brownfield land first, to support regeneration, and the impacts this could have on infrastructure development?**

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## Question 2

**If viability is an issue on brownfield sites, should the local planning authority take a pragmatic approach to negotiating s106 contributions?**

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- 1.6 We are aware of the public concern in relation to the proposals for large scale residential development at various sites across the Island. Because of this, we want to raise a number of issues and options about the way we look to plan for the future of the Medina Valley area through our planning documents.
- 1.7 In order to meet housing requirements we could allocate large sites. Alternatively we could limit the scale of development on each site which would then mean that more sites would be required to meet the overall number. We are therefore exploring whether setting a limit on the size of development sites to minimise the impact of such proposals would be appropriate.
- 1.8 This could be done in a number of ways, such as a blanket approach of 'no more than an X% increase from the host settlement' or a site-sensitive approach where the character and

density of existing development in the surrounding area are taken into account

- 1.9 Regardless of the details, such an approach is likely to also increase the number of sites that would be needed (which in turn may increase the likelihood of settlement coalescence) and perhaps most importantly, may reduce the ability of the development to provide the necessary financial contributions or actual provision of infrastructure.

## Question 3

**Should housing allocations be made on fewer, larger sites or on a higher number of smaller sites?**

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## Question 4

**What are your views on how the council should approach the size of sites that it allocates in the Medina Valley Plan?**

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- 1.10 Large greenfield sites are able, due to their nature, to provide the necessary infrastructure because their viability is less constrained. However a number of the large sites that have been put forward for consideration in Medina Valley could encroach into the gaps between settlements.
- 1.11 There are a large number of potential development sites in the Medina Valley and we are working through these to balance the environmental, economic and social issues involved. By going through this process we will be able to allocate the best available sites for housing.

- 1.12 We have started work thinking about the different options for where, in general terms, new housing development should be located within the Medina Valley. Our early sustainability work indicates that the majority of the housing development should be located in and around Newport, with the remainder in Cowes and that housing allocations are probably not required within East Cowes, due to the level of recent large-scale planning permissions and the ongoing work in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Red Funnel and the Town Council to reconfigure the town centre.
- 1.13 We have been in talks with the Ministry of Justice, who, as the landowner of the Prison Estate, are exploring the potential for alternative uses including residential development on parts of their land.
- 1.14 However, there are a number of issues that we need to understand more about before we can decide whether the site is right for redevelopment. These issues include highways access, the utility infrastructure within the area and the historical significance of the buildings within the Prison Estate.
- 1.15 With this in mind we have to consider where, in each of the main settlements, the broad areas of growth should be. Our initial view is that the broad areas for new housing development should be:
- To the west of Newport (whilst supporting wherever possible the use of available brownfield land in the town, which includes available Prison Estate land)

- To support the redevelopment of Medina Yard in Cowes whilst recognising that additional land may be required to meet locally identified housing need
- To support other brownfield redevelopment opportunities such as the SARO site (next to the Folly Inn) that bring forward vacant and/or derelict land

## Question 5

### What are your views on these broad locations for new housing development?

- 1.16 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy says that development should be located on sites within or immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary. We know from feedback that we should be clearer about what we mean by 'immediately adjacent', as there is public concern that some development proposals have stretched what they would consider 'immediately adjacent' to reasonably be.
- 1.17 So far, we have considered the definition of 'immediately adjacent' to be if part of the proposed development site is either directly touching part of the settlement boundary or there is a road between the two. Examples of how it has been interpreted are shown below.
- 1.18 The view that we have been hearing is that our community does not necessarily consider a site to be immediately adjacent if, for example, only part of the site, such as the access, is adjacent.



## Question 6

**How do you think the council should define “immediately adjacent” to the settlement boundary?**

**2. Demonstrate that the allocated sites, either individually or in combination, will have no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites**

2.1 There are a number of high quality environmental areas in the Medina Valley that are of European importance. Whilst we think

that this is a positive thing, it also means that we have a legal responsibility not to allocate sites that individually or collectively would have a significant adverse impact upon them, which is usually in relation to the likely recreational impacts that would arise from new development.

2.2 We are aware of the frustration that some experience when proposed development schemes cannot be brought forward, or are significantly modified, because of concerns over impacts on these designated sites. It has been described as a ‘birds before people’ approach and whilst we will always seek what we think to be the best outcomes for Islanders; we still have to abide by European legislation and national planning policy.

2.3 We have already had some work done to help us to better understand what measures might be appropriate to mitigate (see glossary) recreational impacts on the international nature conservation designations in the Medina Estuary. These include:

- ensuring that sufficient green space is allocated as part of proposed housing schemes
- fencing located in specific areas to manage access, dog walking and recreation
- improving signage and managed links away from the estuary
- develop key interpretation points including signage and message boards
- increasing quiet areas for over wintering birds
- improved access to existing green infrastructure (such as Parkhurst Forest to attract and hold people

- 2.4 Because other local authorities are facing the same issues, a Solent-wide piece of work has been going on with involvement from a number of Solent local authorities. This work is called the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project (SDMP).
- 2.5 As part of this work, and our commitment to meeting our legal responsibilities, we are in the process of putting in place a mechanism for collecting financial contributions towards mitigation from certain types of new development.
- 2.6 The mitigation referred to above will be a package of measures to alleviate the recreational impacts on the Medina Valley that will come about from new residential development. The precise mitigation measures are not yet finalised, but are likely to include a team of rangers to instigate and oversee projects that reduce disturbance levels.
- 2.7 Part of the way we will demonstrate no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites will be through a document called a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The strategic level Island-wide Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) that supported the Core Strategy will, along with the work mentioned above, form the basis for the Medina Valley Plan HRA.
- 2.8 This is an iterative process and has not yet been completed. This assessment will be completed to inform our proposed housing allocations in the formal stages of the AAP process.
- 2.9 It is not just the housing allocations that may impact on the European designations within the Medina Valley Plan boundary.

Where other allocations/designations are made the HRA of the plan will need to demonstrate that there are no significant adverse impacts.

## Question 7

**What are your views on the approaches to ensuring no adverse effects on the integrity of designated sites within and next to the Medina Valley as suggested in paragraph 2.3?**

- 3. **Provide for the target of 35% of affordable housing, but consider whether levels of affordable housing higher than that set out in DM4 can be achieved on land owned by affordable housing providers**
  - 3.1 Having consulted with affordable housing providers, there currently seems to be no opportunity for a higher level of affordable housing within the Medina Valley. However, we will continue to explore whether this can be achieved.
  - 3.2 We are aware of concerns of current residents that affordable housing on the Island is being taken by people who are not from the Island. One of the duties of the LPA is to plan for the needs of our residents through a local lettings policy for new development, which is a legal agreement signed by the developer that sets out to who, and the way in which, affordable housing is to be distributed.

- 3.3 We will look to ensure that local housing needs are being met through the introduction of local lettings policies for new development. We will ensure, where possible, Island residents are prioritised for this accommodation whilst recognising that there may be exceptional circumstances that influence the way we determine certain cases.

## Question 8

**Should the council seek 'local lettings' policies wherever possible, and if so should any particular group(s) of people be prioritised?**

## 4. Revise the settlement boundaries within the AAP boundary as required

- 4.1 We have been working with the Town and Parish Councils within the Medina Valley, to update the settlement boundaries that have been in place since the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). We want to ensure that the settlement boundaries remain fit for purpose, by helping to deliver the wider aims of the Core Strategy and meeting the aspirations of the local communities.
- 4.2 Consultation with the Town and Parish Council's, and our thinking suggests that:
- the settlements of Gurnard and Northwood are not part of the settlement of Cowes, and should be treated differently;

- the settlements of Cowes and East Cowes should be separated, as they are not the same (and do not form the same housing market); and
- the area of Newport needs amending to correct some anomalies left over from the Unitary Development Plan.

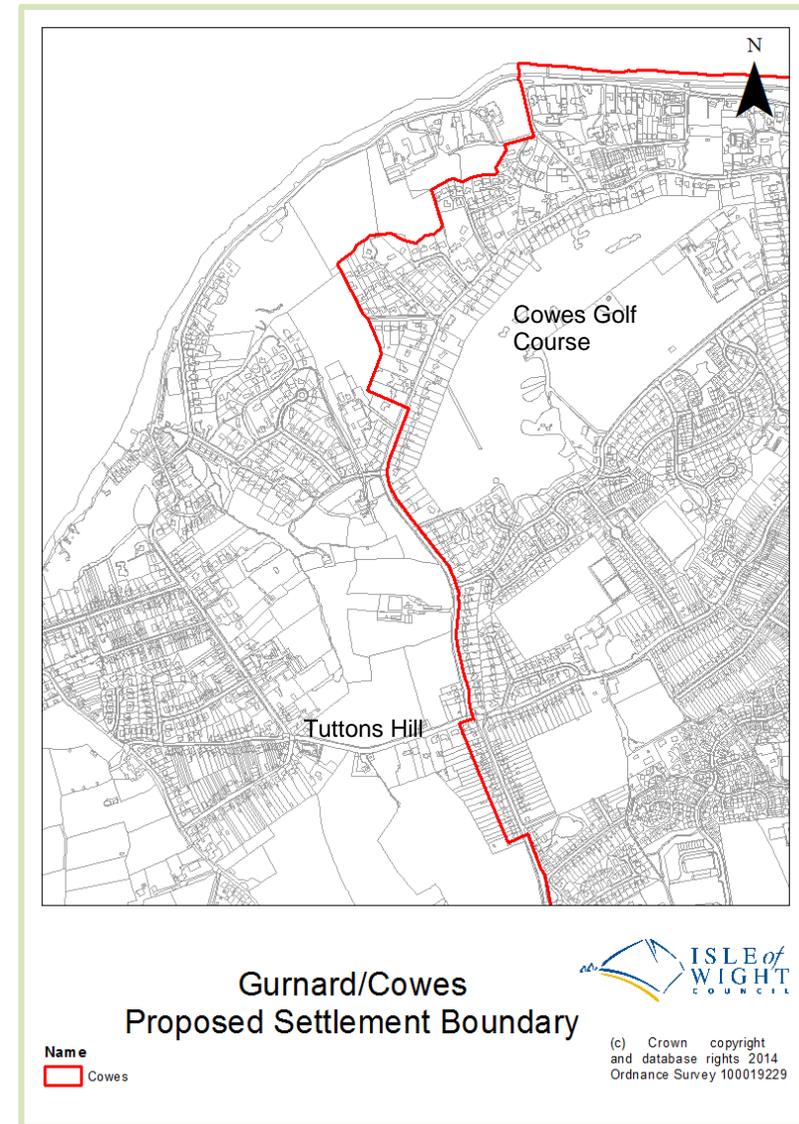
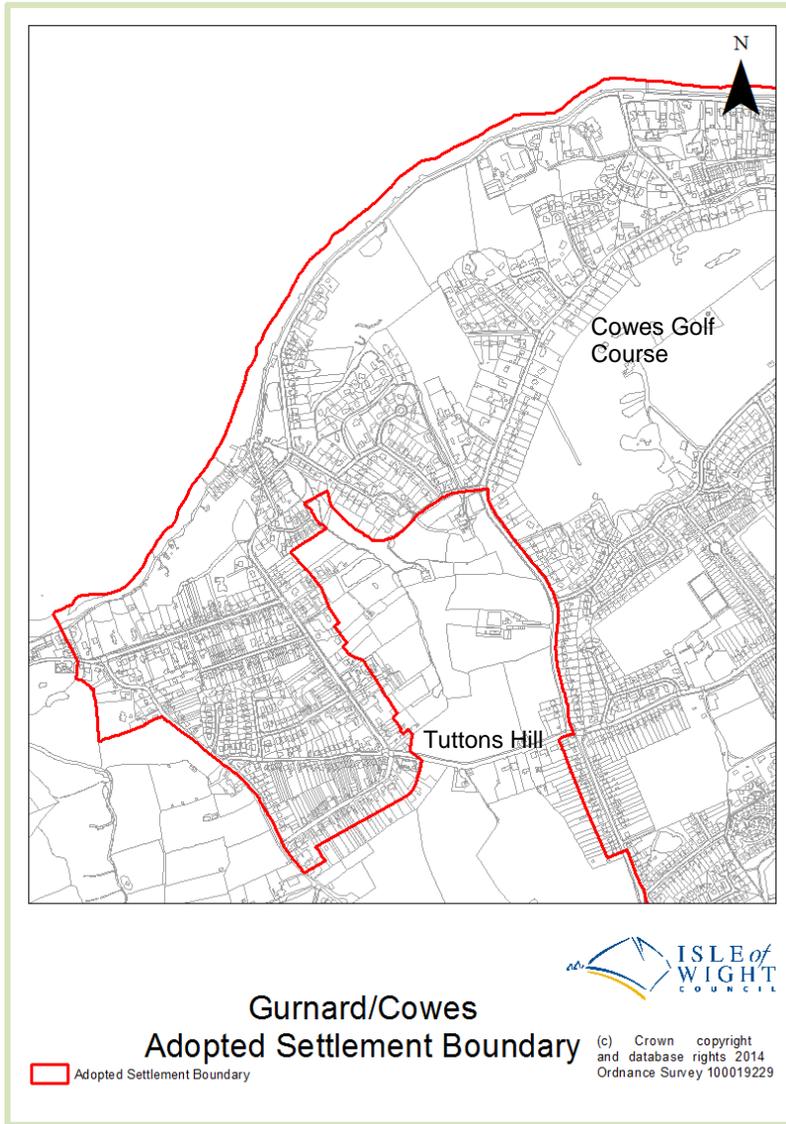
- 4.3 The current settlement boundaries, along with the potential changes set out above, are shown on the following pages.

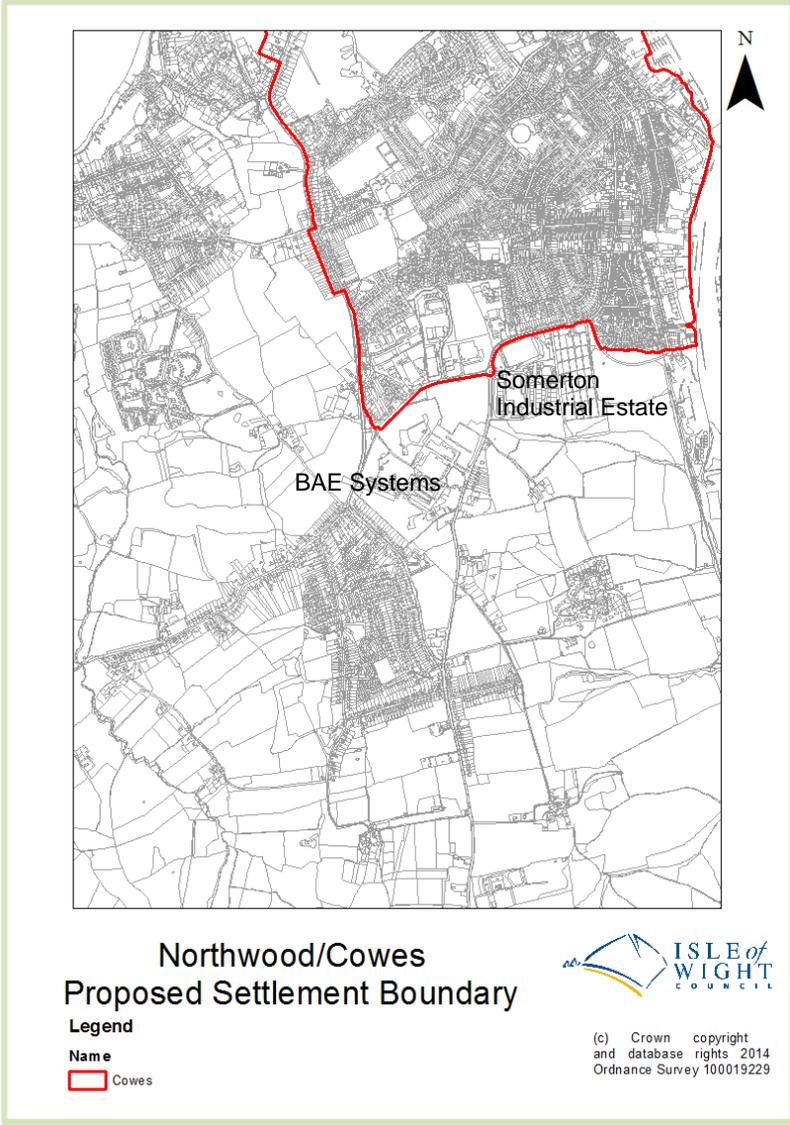
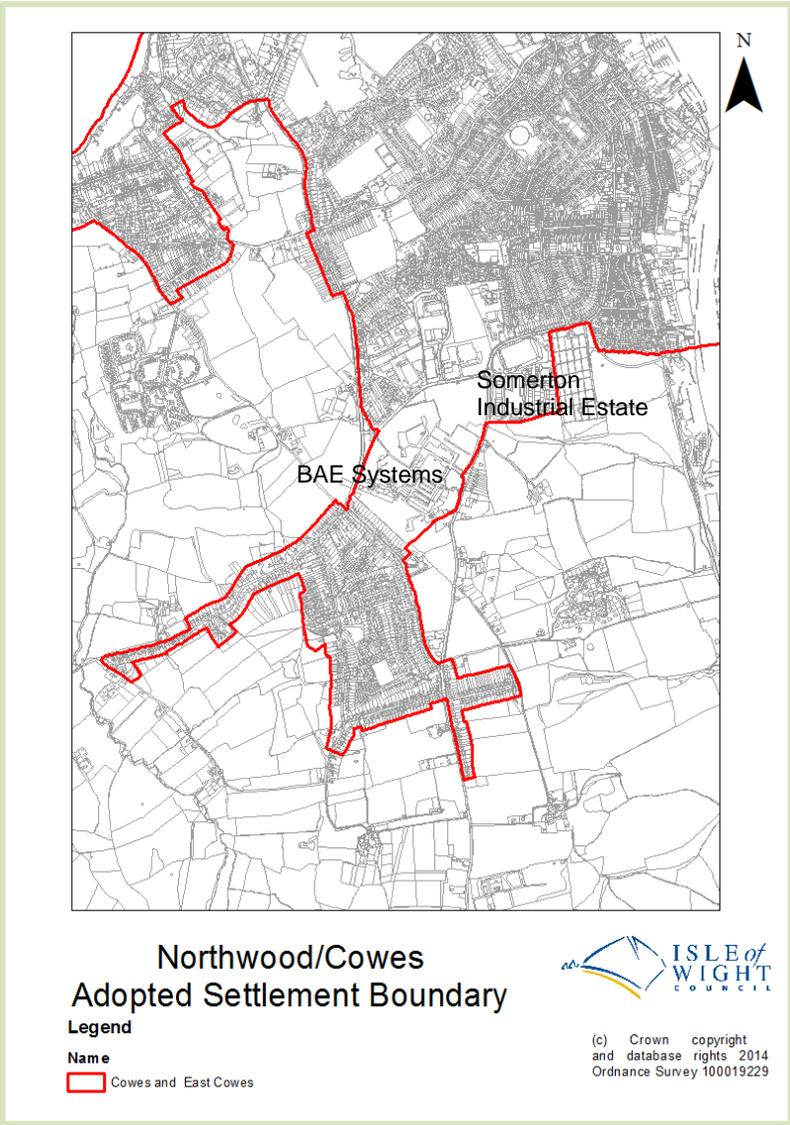
## Question 9

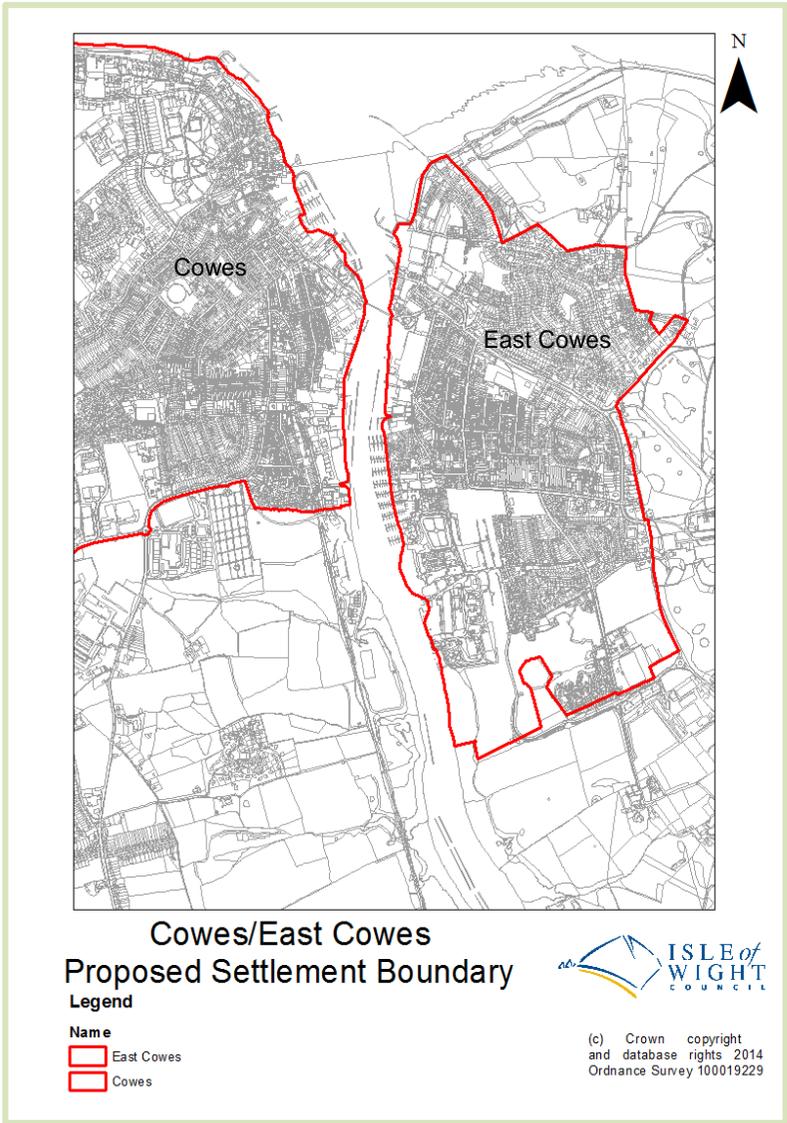
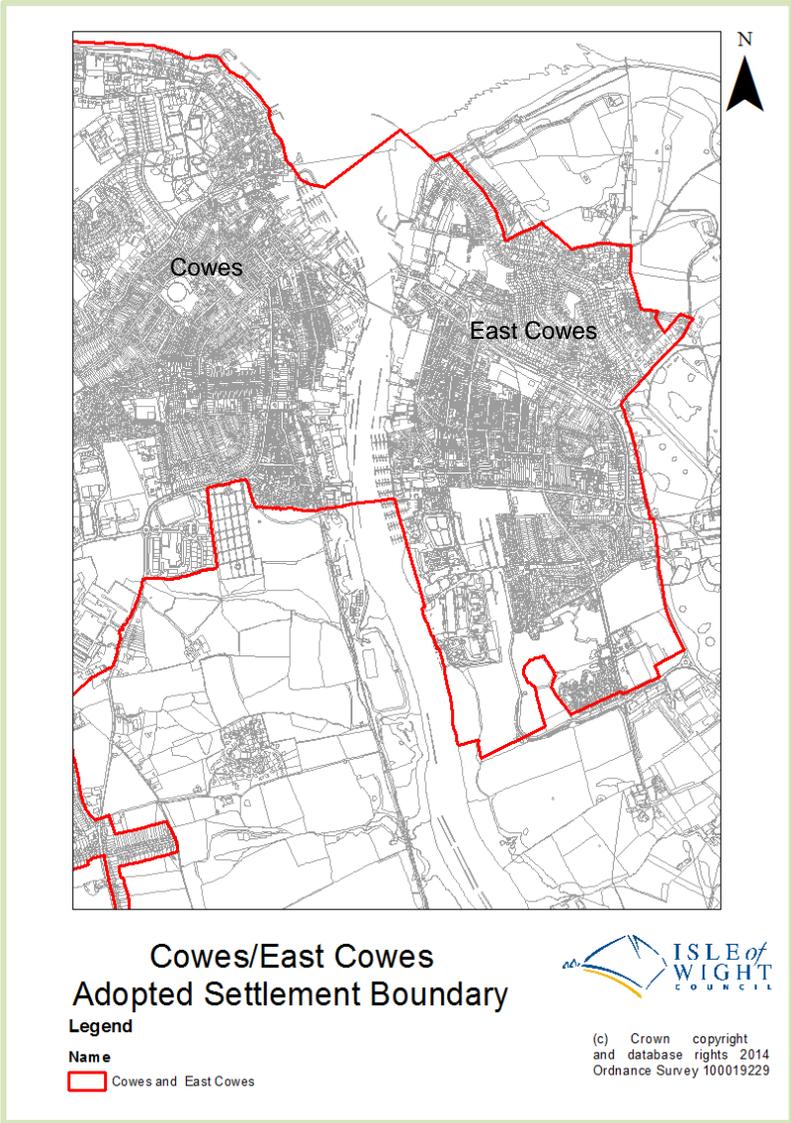
**Do you agree with the suggested amendments shown in the maps on the following pages?**

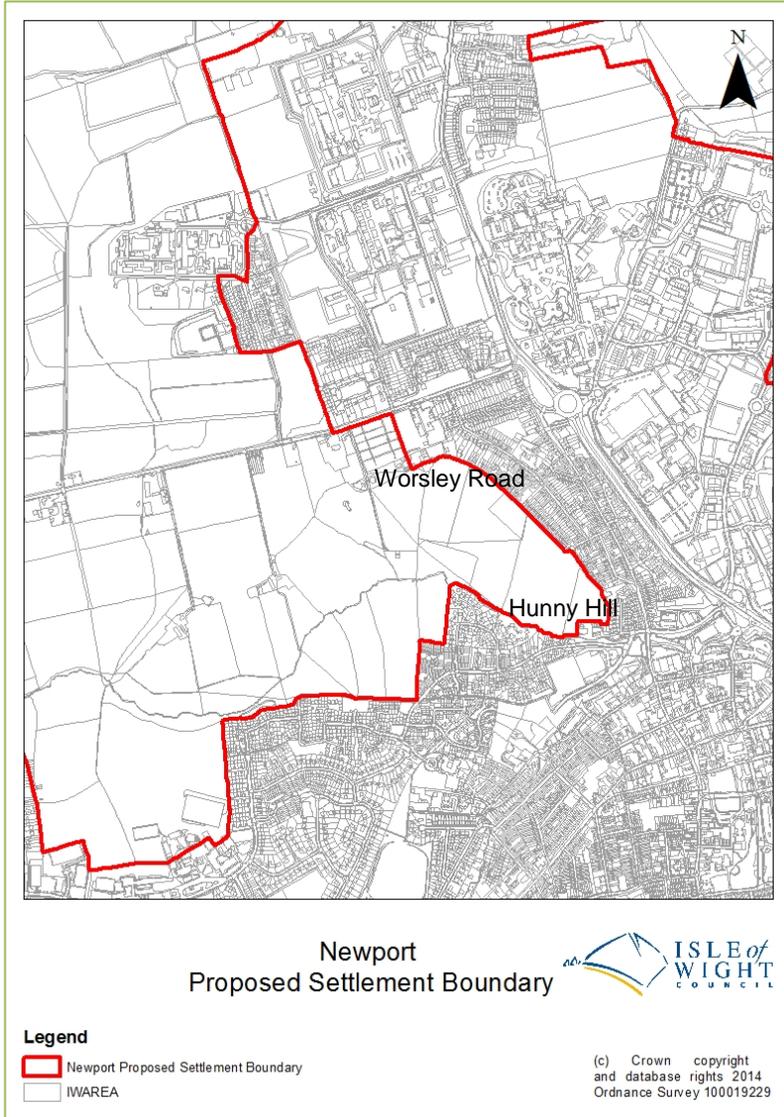
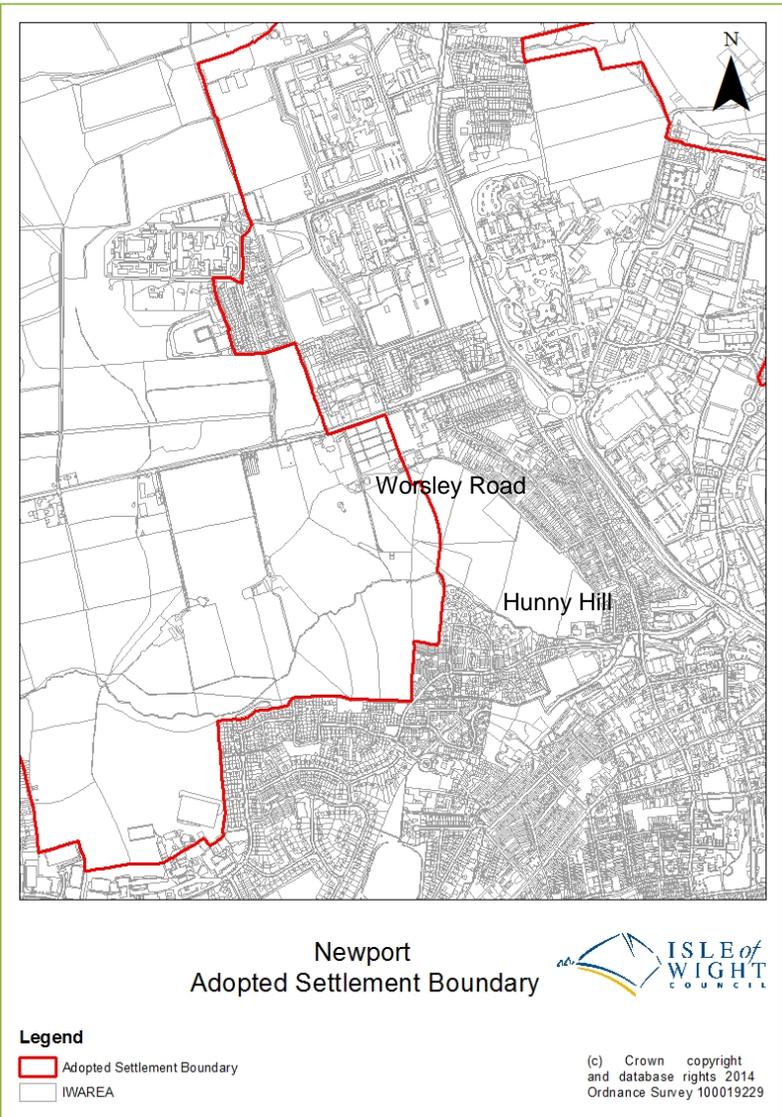
## Question 10

**Do you think there are any other areas where changes to the settlement boundary should be considered?**









## 5. Identify and allocate suitable sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, in line with the provisions of DM6

- 5.1 We have a duty to identify sustainable locations to meet the needs of gypsies and travellers, and we are aware that in some circumstances gypsies and travellers have been using unauthorised stopping places. Because of this we think there is a need to plan for this community in a positive and proactive manner.
- 5.2 We will be consulting with landowners to understand whether there is suitable land available to be allocated for sites for gypsy, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- 5.3 The Core Strategy sets out that sites for gypsies and travellers should be located on “appropriate land within or immediately adjacent to the defined settlement boundary”. If no sites within or immediately adjacent settlement boundaries are identified, then the council will need to consider alternative locations for allocations.

### Question 11

**If enough land cannot be identified within or immediately adjacent to settlement boundaries, what other locations do you think should be considered for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople?**

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### Question 12

**Should the council seek to regularise existing unauthorised stopping places as an alternative to providing new sites?**

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## 6. Determine whether further economic development land is required to facilitate B8 distribution facilities in this area

- 6.1 Land use is classified through the Use Class Order. This defines B8 as use for storage or distribution centre. The issue of whether a dedicated facility is required on the Island has been raised, and previously land at the Racecourse roundabout at Whippingham had been suggested as a potential location.
- 6.2 We have been working with a group called Solent Transport (formerly Transport for South Hampshire), and speaking to local operators, to understand how local freight operations are managed and whether B8 distribution facilities are needed on the Island and how this fits in with the wider Solent area.
- 6.3 A study undertaken by consultants on behalf of Solent Transport suggests that so as to make the most of vehicle space and minimise travel / ferry cost, the bulk of handling and sorting of freight goods occurs on the mainland, before items are brought over to the Island.

- 6.4 Southampton City Council are working in partnership with the freight industry to reduce the amount of freight vehicles entering Southampton and have helped fund the establishment of a Sustainable Distribution Centre (SDC) within an existing freight facility just outside the city. We are looking to see if the Island can benefit from this facility.
- 6.5 When undertaking deliveries from the Island, handling and sorting is typically undertaken by the freight and distribution companies at their own facilities. This allows operators to manage deliveries by grouping or palletising items and parcels and there is no reason why outgoing shipments can't continue to be dealt with in this way.
- 6.6 Therefore, it is suggested that in light of the current evidence, it is unlikely that there will need to be an allocation made in the AAP for such facilities. The study suggests that the situation should be kept under review and considered again should this prove to be necessary.

## Question 13

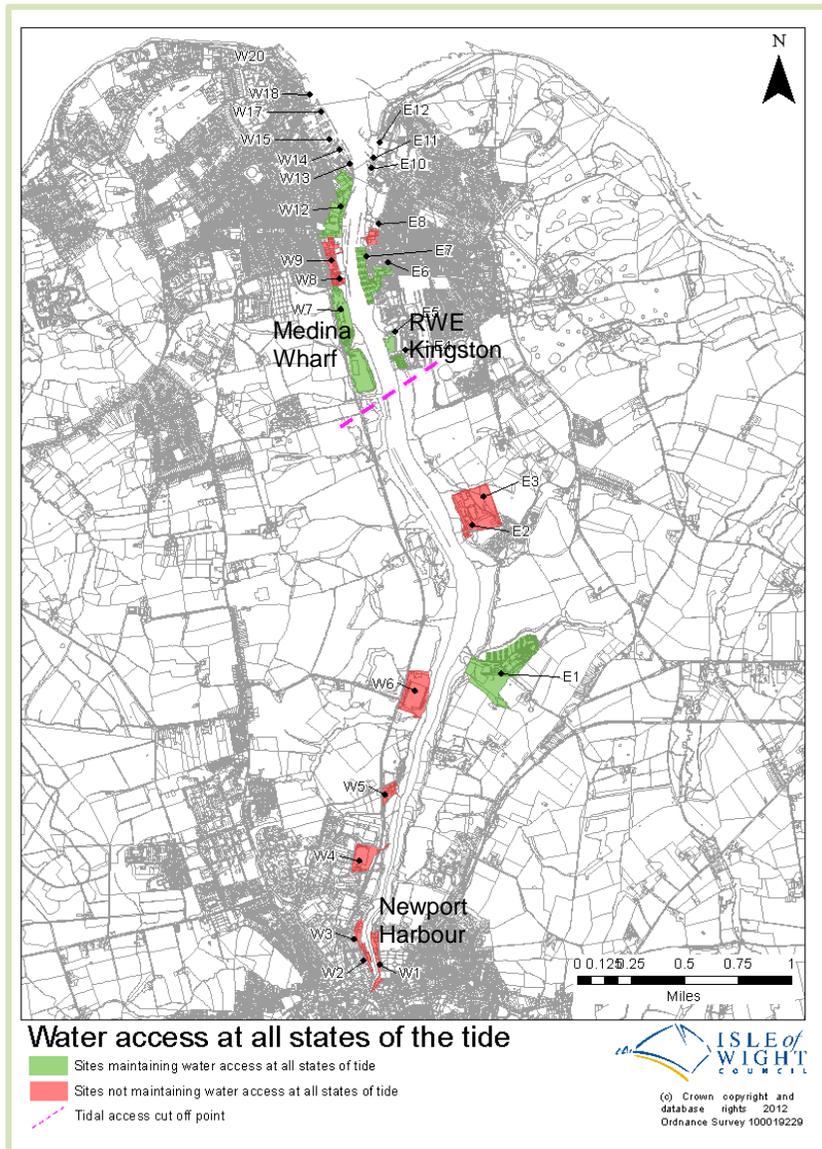
**What are your views on the need for a B8 distribution centre within the Medina Valley?**

- 7. Identify employment sites with water access to ensure that appropriate access is maintained for employment uses that require water access**

- 7.1 Waterfront sites are very important to the Island and its economy because they provide employment opportunities and transportation infrastructure (mainly relating to the import / export of goods, materials and waste).
- 7.2 Whilst there are other navigable rivers on the Island that provide some level of marine-related employment, we think the River Medina provides the main potential to meet any existing and future demand for waterfront access from employment uses.
- 7.3 We've undertaken work that has identified a range of employment sites with water access. It also identified that the chain ferry restricts the size of craft that can enter/exit the River Medina and significantly the evidence suggested a cut-off point between Medina Wharf and RWE Kingston Oil Depot.
- 7.4 Sites to the north of this line maintain water access throughout the tidal range and therefore would be the best sites for providing and/or maintaining employment sites with water access. This 'cut off point' is shown in the map on the next page.

## Question 14

**Should we protect employment sites with water access, to make sure they are not lost to other uses?**



## 8. Establish whether there is a need for further retail allocations above that already allocated

8.1 There are three main town centres within the Medina Valley; Cowes, East Cowes and Newport. We think that these three town centres, and indeed all town centres on the Island, offer something different. As such we don't see that the town centres compete against each other, but instead complement each other.

8.2 Cowes and East Cowes provide primarily local shopping opportunities, although Cowes does have a speciality offer associated with sailing. Newport, as the county town, has the main shopping offer on the Island and attracts shoppers from all over the Island.

8.3 We have undertaken surveys of vacancy rates in and around the town centre boundaries of Newport, Cowes and East Cowes since 2012. The latest survey, from April 2014, shows that shop vacancy rates in Newport and Cowes (at 11.3% and 9.9% respectively) are below the national (13.9%) average; as such it is considered that the town centres are performing relatively strongly in the current economic climate.

8.4 East Cowes, however, had a higher shop vacancy rate of 33.3%, although the town centre is very different to the others as it is focussed around a very small area, which perhaps makes the vacancy rate seem higher.

- 8.5 Emerging evidence indicates that there is available market capacity for additional floorspace in both convenience and comparison goods in Newport, to serve not only that area but the Island as a whole. Within Cowes and East Cowes this capacity is limited.
- 8.6 We are in the process of determining planning applications for an ASDA store in Newport. A decision has not yet been made, but whatever the outcome is, it will have an impact on how retail provision is considered through the AAP.
- 8.7 With this in mind we don't currently think that we will need to make any allocations for retail sites. Instead, we think that in order to support the towns, and reduce vacancy rates, support should be given to sustaining and improving the existing retail areas.
- 8.8 Not all measures that could help support the town centre are necessarily related to land use or planning. For example, as a council we are looking at introducing various rate relief schemes, and there is also the difficult issue of car parking charges.

## Question 15

**How can the council support the individual shopping offers of Cowes, East Cowes and Newport town centres?**

## 9. Review the town centre boundaries and primary retail frontages

- 9.1 In order for us to identify and prioritise the main shopping areas from a planning perspective, we have designated town centre boundaries and primary retail frontages. For these areas the Core Strategy policies set out what type of development we would like to see. The boundaries of our town centre boundaries and primary retail frontages have been in place for a number of years, and the AAP gives us a good opportunity to review them.
- 9.2 We want the community to shape its town centres to ensure that the right mix of units is available for its residents. The high street is changing and we want to understand whether we need to introduce specific policies to address concerns.

### Newport

- 9.3 We know from consultation there are a number of areas in Newport where there is the potential to rationalise parts of the Town Centre Boundary, such as to the north and south-east.
- 9.4 It has also been suggested that the Primary Retail Frontage should be extended to include all of St. Thomas Square, along with the introduction of secondary retail frontage areas in the Nodehill area and possibly around Holyrood Street/eastern end of Lugley Street. The map opposite shows the current boundaries.

## Question 16

**What are your views as to the suggestion that the main shopping area boundaries should be altered as set out in paragraph 9.4?**

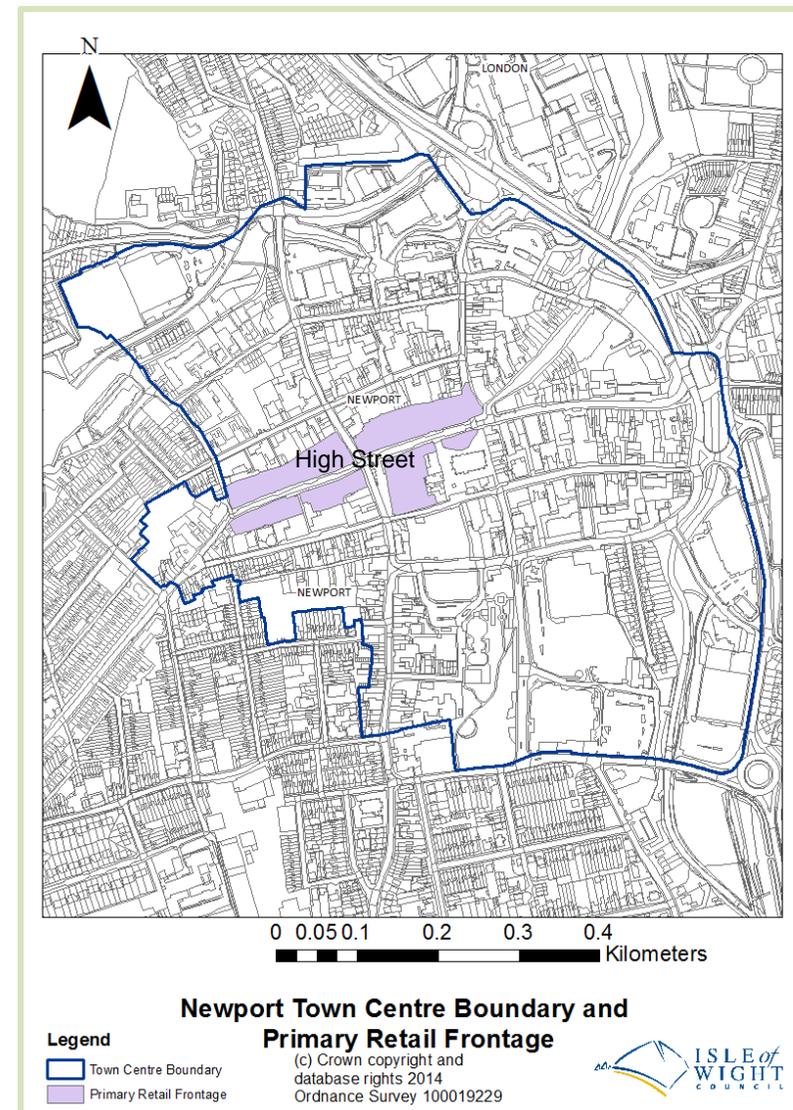
- 9.5 However this is not just about where areas should be located but also what types of uses we'd all like to see. Do we want a Core Area for shopping or do we want it spread out? Do we want all of the leisure activities (and the night-time economy) located in a specific area? Do you think there are too many of one type of shop in one area and what should be done about it?
- 9.6 The Government has introduced a number of changes to permitted development rights (the circumstances when you don't need planning permission to change the use of a building). This means that the council will have less control over whether shops change to, for example, banks or residential units.
- 9.7 The NPPF defines what, in planning terms, are considered to be main town centre uses. These include, but are not limited to, retail development, cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, bingo halls, offices, theatres, museums and hotels.

## Question 17

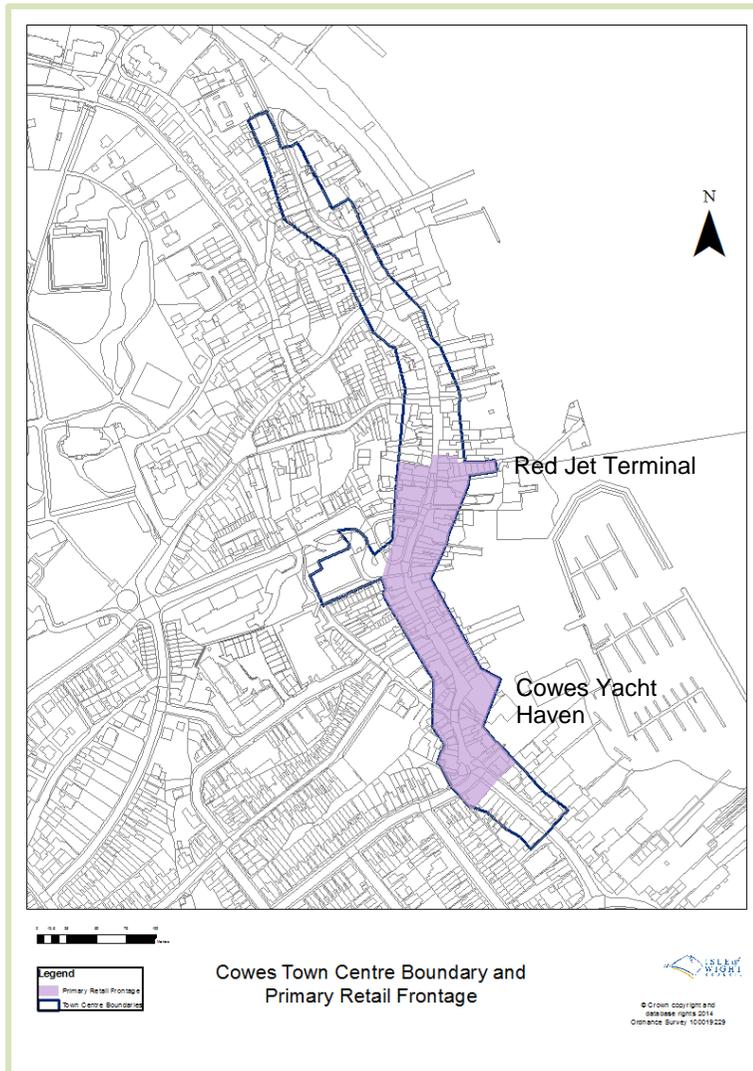
**Are there any main town centre uses that we should restrict in certain areas, and if so where and why?**

## Question 18

**Should there be core areas for specific main town centre uses, and if so what uses and where?**



## Cowes



- 9.8 The shopping area of Cowes is long and narrow, and we think that there are limited opportunities for change. An area that could be investigated for further retail space is in Cowes Yacht Haven. In addition the retail only frontage could be extended to include the Co-operative store.
- 9.9 Over the last few years in Cowes town centre there has been a noticeable increase in the number of pubs, bars and restaurants from (generally) empty retail units. Such changes maintain employment, help the local economy and help contribute to the vitality of the high street. These social leisure-type uses support the yachting industry and the visitors it brings to the town.
- 9.10 However, it does mean that a different offer on the high street is evolving. Whilst Cowes has always had a pretty high number of pubs, bars and restaurants, the increase has seen a more noticeable move away from the more traditional retail uses.
- 9.11 We think there are pros and cons to this and would welcome your thoughts on what you would like Cowes High Street to be in the future.

### Question 19

**What are your views as to the suggestion that the main shopping area boundaries should be altered as set out in paragraph 9.8?**

### Question 20

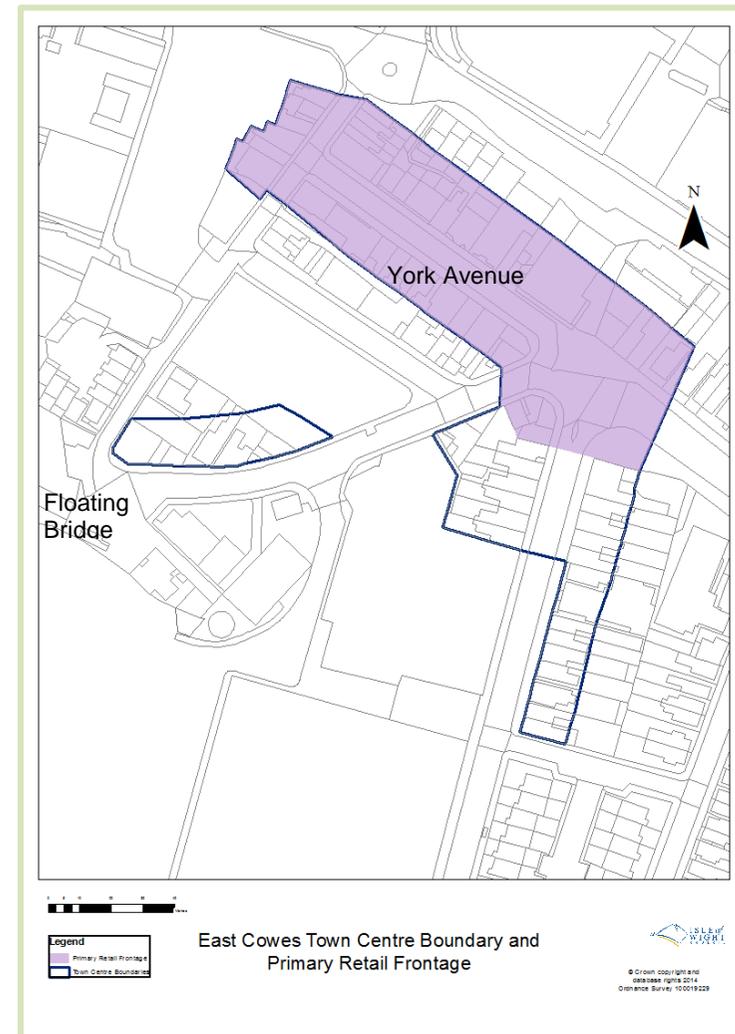
**Are there any main town centre uses that we should restrict in certain areas, and if so where and why?**

## Question 21

**Should there be core areas for specific main town centre uses, and if so what uses and where?**

### East Cowes

- 9.12 The work undertaken by East Cowes Town Council identifies the retail offer in the town as something that needs to be addressed, and in part this should be through continued protection of existing shopping areas.
- 9.13 Whilst East Cowes town centre is struggling, certainly in comparison with other Island town centres in terms of vacancy rates, we should remember that there are a number of improvements that will be coming forward through the HCA-led masterplan.
- 9.14 The HCA masterplan identifies further retail provision in a number of locations including the waterfront and town centre. This may include a range of other town centre uses, such as offices, cafes, bars and restaurants.
- 9.15 We think that there may be the opportunity to extend the Town Centre Boundary and/or Primary Retail Frontage into newly developed areas, or areas identified for retail uses within the approved masterplan. For example Well Road including the new town square, and the southern end of Castle Street.



## Question 22

**What are your views as to the suggestion that the main shopping area boundaries should be altered as set out in paragraph 9.15?**

## Question 23

**Are there any main town centre uses that we should restrict in certain areas, and if so where and why?**

## Question 24

**Should there be core areas for specific main town centre uses, and if so what uses and where?**

**10. Define and ensure that the areas which separate the key settlements of Cowes, East Cowes, Gurnard, Newport, Northwood and Whippingham within the Medina Valley are appropriately protected to prevent settlement coalescence**

- 10.1 Settlement coalescence is a term used in planning for where development would contribute to, or result in, the merging of separate settlements into one.
- 10.2 We are undertaking work to identify the key areas between the settlements where the pressure of coalescence is at its greatest.

It is emerging that the most sensitive areas are likely to be around Gurnard and Northwood, around the Newport to Cowes main road and to the south of East Cowes and Whippingham.

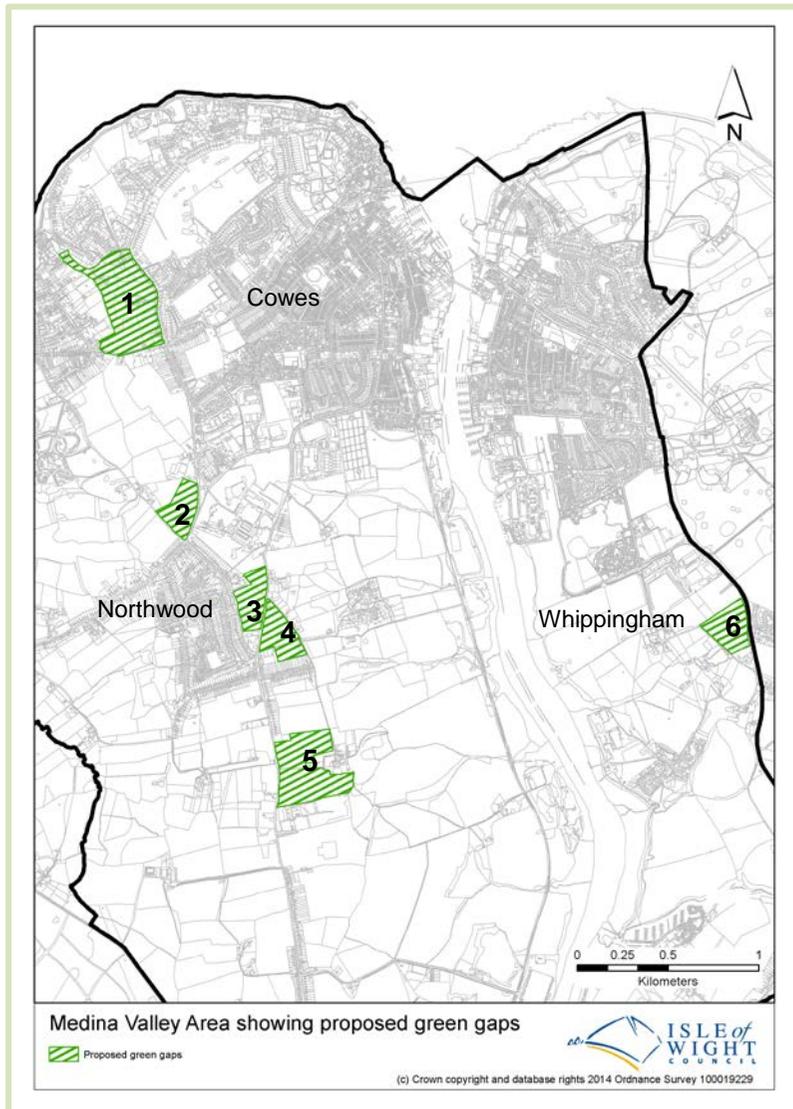
- 10.3 We expect the work on revising the settlement boundaries will contribute to the prevention of settlement coalescence, and we will also look to identify specific areas on a map and examine whether introducing a specific policy to restrict development in these areas can be justified.
- 10.4 The current areas (please see map on next page) that we consider should be protected are:
1. Land between Baring Road, Tuttons Hill and Worsley Road, Gurnard (A)
  2. the corner of Cockleton Lane and Place Road (C);
  3. Land between Nodes Road and Newport Road (B); Land on
  4. Land between Newport Road, Church Lane and Medham Farm Lane (D);
  5. Land to the North and South of Chawton Lane (E) ; and
  6. Land on Whippingham Road opposite Campfield Road (F).

## Question 25

**What are your views on the areas of land listed within paragraph 10.4?**

## Question 26

**Are there other areas that need protecting to prevent settlement coalescence?**



## 11. Determine how the identified deficiency in green infrastructure can be addressed

11.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) is a collective term for a network of multi-functional green spaces, urban and rural, which are capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

11.2 Work has already been undertaken for each Key Regeneration Area to identify deficiencies and opportunities for GI. We have identified some general improvements that the GI network could contribute towards or benefit from. These general improvements are:

- Improving connectivity alongside the Medina Estuary through sustainable transport routes.
- Managing the pressure on sites important for nature at a European level.
- Reducing the risk of flooding and helping with flood management.
- Managing settlement coalescence.

11.3 To help address these issues, specific projects have been identified within the Medina Valley plan boundary that could contribute to the improvement of the GI network. These include:

- Improvement to cycle and foot path network;

- Improved management of areas sensitive due to their importance to birds and other ecology;
- Identify area of land that could be used to manage flood risk;
- Improved access in to and around Parkhurst Forest;
- Improve land management for nature conservation within the Osborne, Norris, Barton and Springhill areas of East Cowes; and
- Identify areas needed to prevent settlement coalescence.

11.4 Each plan area needs to be properly connected to other parts of the Island. There has been a long standing ambition to establish a Newport to West Wight cycletrack, possibly along the former railway route.

## Question 27

**Other than the actions suggested in paragraph 11.3 can you think of any other opportunities there may be to improve the GI provision in the Medina Valley?**

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## Question 28

**Do you think it's a good idea to start a Newport to West Wight cycletrack, based on the former railway route?**

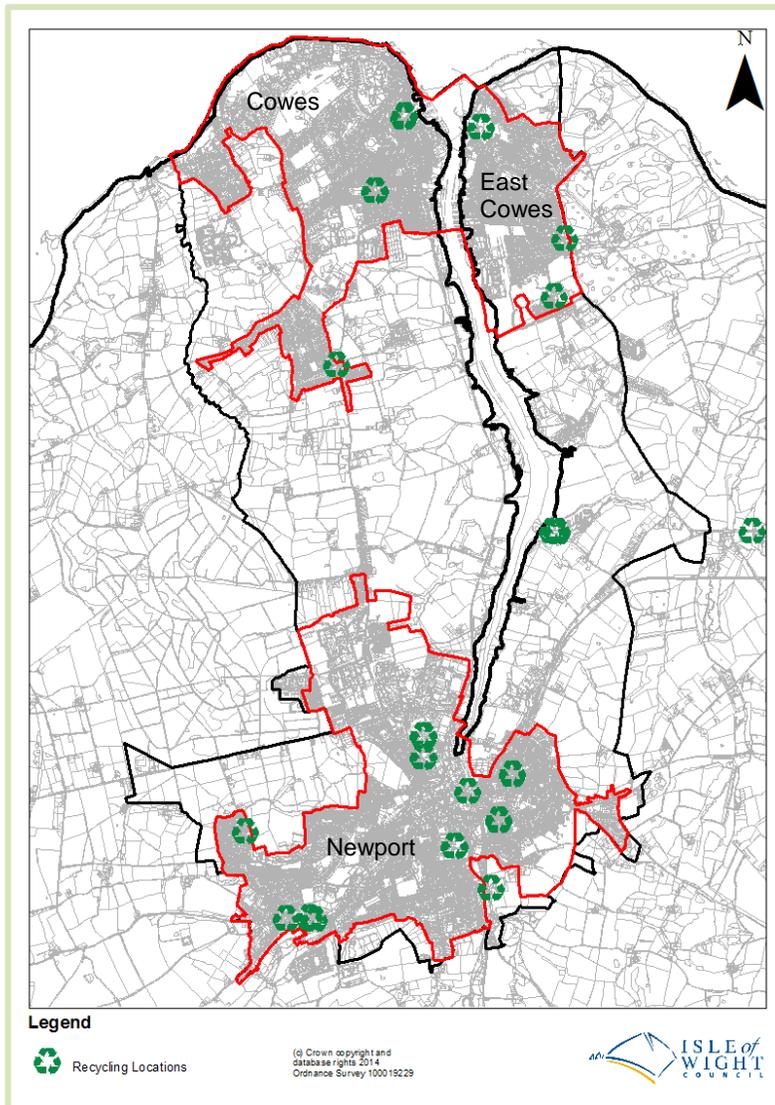
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## 12. Identify the precise type and location of waste facilities to serve development to significantly contribute to the waste target set out in SP8

12.1 We have already allocated a landfill site (an extension to the existing site at Standen Heath), but other waste management sites will still be needed and we have the opportunity to do this through the Medina Valley Plan.

12.2 The approach we take towards waste management sites will need to be positive and based on a number of principles, which are already set out in the Core Strategy. Generally speaking they are to:

- Trying to deal with waste in the priority order of reducing, reusing and recycling prior to disposal.
- Treat waste as a resource in its own right, with all options for keeping it away from landfill to be used wherever possible.
- Treat waste as close to the source as possible and locating strategic Island-wide facilities in the most sustainable locations.
- Become self-sufficient in treating our own waste, where practical.
- Consider a range of sites to provide waste management facilities, which could include existing employment sites.
- Not permit development that prejudices the use of areas identified as suitable for waste management facilities.



- 12.3 The ways in which our waste is managed is the responsibility of the council's contracted waste provider, which is currently Island Waste Services. As the current waste contract is due to end in September 2015, a procurement process is currently underway to appoint a new waste management provider.
- 12.4 The procurement process has been set up to allow the bidders to come up with the proposals for how they would deal with our waste, which includes the details of what waste management facilities would be needed.
- 12.5 The outcomes of the procurement process will shape the approach taken towards waste management within the Medina Valley Plan.
- 12.6 We think it's important that people are able to recycle their waste locally. Therefore, as a start point we think it is sensible to review the existing locations of waste and recycling facilities and consider their requirement in the future.
- 12.7 There are a number of local level recycling facilities (such as bottle banks and textile banks) that don't need their own specific sites, but are in places such as car parks. The locations of these facilities within the plan boundary are shown on the map opposite.

## Question 29

**Do you think the current locations of local level recycling facilities are right? If so why, if not can you suggest any alternative locations?**

## Question 30

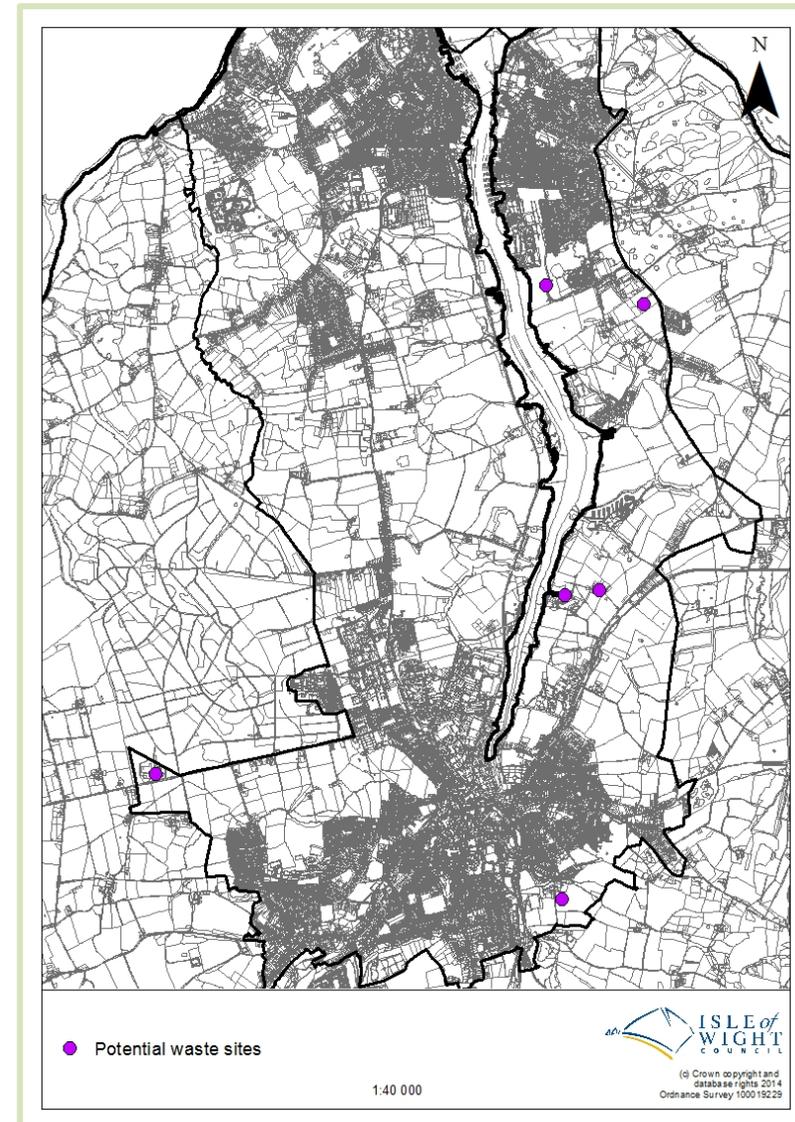
**What items do you want to be able to recycle at these local level recycling facilities?**

- 12.8 Previous work, undertaken to inform the Core Strategy, identified potential sites for larger waste management facilities that due to their nature would need their own specific location, such as the tip or a waste processing plant.
- 12.9 Potential sites across the Island were identified, with a number of them being within the Medina Valley Plan area. They are (as identified on the map opposite):
- Parkhurst Forest Works
  - Whippingham Road, Whippingham
  - Land adjacent to Cowes Power Station
  - Pan Lane, Pan
  - Sewage Works , Fairlee
  - North Fairlee Farm

## Question 31

**What are your views on the sites in paragraph 12.9?**

- 12.10 The location of the Medina Valley, in the middle of the Island, where significant levels of waste are produced and close to the main ferry ports, means that it is well-placed to receive, process and, where necessary export, waste off the Island.



## Question 32

**Should there be more local waste facilities in the Medina Valley or would you prefer to see a larger appropriately located waste management facility that would be capable of dealing with most of the Island's waste?**

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### **13. Establish the nature and level of renewable energy that will be brought forward through the proposed development, although the use of combined heat and power and/or district heating schemes will be expected**

- 13.1 The Core Strategy expects that certain types and scales of development will include CHP and/or community district heating systems. The decision whether it will be appropriate to seek such provision will be made when the preferred allocation sites are identified. It is likely that the location and viability of the preferred allocation sites will determine the type and level of renewable energy that can be provided.
- 13.2 Through new development there will also be the opportunity to provide other kinds of renewable energy. This localised level of provision could take the form of micro-generation for each new house through technologies such as solar panels or turbines.

- 13.3 There will also be the opportunity to think about design issues that will improve energy efficiency. This could be things as simple as the way houses face to maximise sunshine in the main living spaces.

## Question 33

**What, if any, types of renewable energy technologies would you like to see on new developments?**

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### **14. Consider the feasibility of improving the sustainable transport route on both sides of the River Medina**

- 14.1 Because of the size and shape of the Island, journey to work distances are actually very short by comparison to elsewhere. Its diamond shape, location of Newport at its centre, radial road layout, width and position of the Medina estuary with a capacity restricted crossing point at Cowes, means that the majority of cross Island road journeys pass through Newport.
- 14.2 We know that some parts of the Island's strategic road network are at, or near capacity at peak times, particularly around Newport. We have already identified a number of areas where improvements to existing junctions are required to help relieve traffic congestion and congestion issues in and around the town.
- 14.3 The adopted local transport plan for the Island seeks to increase travel choice and encourage travel by sustainable means. The west of the River Medina is well served by public transport, park

and ride facilities and a connected footpath and cycle route network. However, the eastern side of the Medina Valley currently does not benefit from the same level of accessibility.

## Cycle Path Network

- 14.4 A popular cycle route exists on the western side of the river linking Cowes to Newport, and on to Sandown. We have secured just under £4m from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and are using part of that money to address this particular issue within the Medina Valley, by improving the Newport to Wootton cycle route and significantly extending the existing Newport to East Cowes cycle route.

## Medina Crossing

- 14.5 We have considered options to construct a bridge crossing the River Medina to the north of Newport in the past. A number of routes were considered at the time, and the options assessed and discounted on environmental and cost reasons.
- 14.6 The idea of a bridge was raised again in the examination into the Core Strategy. It was suggested to us that a low level opening bridge that linked into the existing highway network in the vicinity of Stag Lane and the Racecourse Roundabout could be feasible. To fund such a bridge, a significant amount of enabling residential development (that could still contribute to the housing target for the Medina Valley) would be needed, as we have no funds to deliver it and we think that such a proposal would be unlikely to qualify for central government funding.

## Question 34

**Do you think the council should use its resources to further explore whether such a bridge is feasible?**

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## The Floating Bridge

- 14.7 The floating bridge chain ferry operates between Cowes and East Cowes. Over 40 years old, the craft is nearing the end of its operational life and must be replaced within the next few years. As we think it's an essential transport connection linking the two towns, we are seeking funding to replace the floating bridge as part of a joint bid with Southampton City Council and others.

## Question 35

**Do you agree that there should be a Floating Bridge between Cowes and East Cowes? What are your views on the importance of a pedestrian and vehicle link across the River Medina between Cowes and East Cowes?**

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## Park and Ride site for Newport

- 14.8 We've previously been involved in providing a Park and Ride site at Somerton on the outskirts of Cowes. With frequent bus connections into the town and the Red Funnel terminal, this site which operates near or at capacity offers an easy alternative to driving into Cowes and parking in the town centre. A similar facility was provided for Ryde at Ryde St Johns railway station.

14.9 We know that these sites and many others on the mainland operate very successfully. Providing park and ride sites on the main roads into Newport could help remove the number of cars, especially commuter cars seeking to enter and park for longer periods in Newport town centre. This could help free up in-town spaces for shorter term parking and local residents who currently find town centre car parks and on-street spaces occupied by long term parkers.

### Question 36

**Do you think that the council should consider the potential for park and ride for Newport?**

### Question 37

**Are there any sites that you think would make good park and ride sites? If so where?**

**15. Establish whether a plan-led, viable and deliverable solution can be identified to address the capacity issues at East Cowes ferry terminal**

15.1 Developed and expanded around its original location at the head of the River Medina in East Cowes, the ferry terminal and marshalling areas now operate from a number of prominent sites within the town centre.

15.2 A part of a master planning project promoted by the then Economic Development Agency (SEEDA) involving the ferry operator, council and others, it is considered that the relocation of the ferry terminal and marshalling area onto one site would improve local traffic movements and release some current town centre land for beneficial development.

### Question 38

**If this project goes ahead what, if any, uses would you wish to see developed on the current marshalling areas in East Cowes?**

15.3 In September 2013 work began on a £3m breakwater, funded by the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) and when considered alongside the other town centre improvements will further improve the East Cowes environment and help stimulate the development of the marina facilities in the area.

15.4 The council is a member of the project board and is working with partners to ensure the delivery of this important scheme to regenerate East Cowes. Consultation will be undertaken as plans become clearer and the final designs will be the subject of a planning application. We are working with partners to try to align the timing of this work and the AAP.

15.5 We are also working in partnership with Southampton City Council, Red Funnel ferries and others to bid for funding to the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (SLEP) to help bring this about and if successful this project will improve access into the

marshalling areas, improve public realm and help unlock beneficial developments in East Cowes and Southampton.

## Question 39

### Do you support the improvements planned for East Cowes?

- 15.6 The current “Union Jack” building (Columbine Works) could be retained as part of the project as an iconic building. We think that there are likely to be a number of opportunities for the building and we would like to see future uses that contribute to the wider economy and visitor experience for East Cowes, and to compliment the proposed leisure and marina uses.
- 15.7 We don’t think that having dedicated employment uses, such as manufacturing would necessarily be appropriate because of how the building sits in relation to the proposed regeneration programme.
- 15.8 The kind of uses we would like to see are uses such as an exhibition space, a museum (to house existing facilities or new ones), restaurant(s), market halls. We want to see uses that bring people in and open up the area for tourism.

## Question 40

### Should the “Union Jack” building be retained as part of the project, and if so what could it be used for?

- 15.9 We also think that the wider improvements to East Cowes could also include advanced real time / interactive signing on the approaches to the town advising users of any problems or hold ups.

## Question 41

### Is there any reason why we shouldn’t deliver interactive signalling to advise users of traffic-related problems before they arrive in East Cowes?

16. **Establish the precise form of the identified junction improvements and whether further minor infrastructure provisions will be required to support the location and level of growth proposed within the AAP**
- 16.1 Through our membership of Solent Transport we have access to a highways model that can be used at the Solent local authority level to understand the transport movements between and within Hampshire and the Island. It can also work at a lower level to understand how individual proposals could affect the highways network.
- 16.2 A model has been run, taking account of current permissions since the adoption of the Core Strategy, showing delay and queue hotspots.

16.3 It is considered that the following junctions are at, or close to capacity and that junction improvements will be necessary:

- Dodnor Lane/Daish Way Junction
- Field Place/Carisbrooke Road junction
- The Medina Way gyratory
- Newport Road/Nodes Road junction
- Horsebridge Hill/Noke Common junction
- Hunnycross Way/Hunnyhill junction
- Quay Street/Sea Street junction

## Question 42

**In addition to those listed in paragraph 16.3, are there any other junctions that you think are at capacity, or are problematic, and if so can you suggest any solutions?**

- 16.4 As part of the allocations process the model will be re-run just for the Medina Valley and also with the proposed allocations within the other Key Regeneration Areas to identify the individual and in combination infrastructure demands caused.
- 16.5 We may need to safeguard land for precise junction improvements through the AAP process and impacts on the highways network will be managed through developer contributions.
- 16.6 When developing the Core Strategy the council consulted with utility providers to ensure that sufficient infrastructure would be available to support the planned level of growth. The discussions

with the utility providers will continue as part of the allocations process to ensure the delivery of sufficient infrastructure to support the proposed level of growth.

16.7 Southern Water has confirmed that they do not consider there to be any fundamental reasons why residential development allocations couldn't be made in the Medina Valley, although the increase in housing would create the need for both strategic and local water and wastewater infrastructure and therefore new development will need to bear the costs of these.

16.8 In addition each of the utility providers has agreed, as part of the consultation process, to identify any specific infrastructure provisions that may preclude the development of individual developments sites.

## Question 43

**Are there any particular utility infrastructure issues within the Medina Valley that you think we need to be aware of?**

**17. The Council believes the issues listed above to be the key considerations for the Medina Valley AAP. However, it may be appropriate for the AAP to consider further issues to those listed above, that are identified through further technical work and consultation**

- 17.1 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy and following changes to national policy and public feedback, we have identified a number of further issues that we think the Medina Valley Plan should cover.

## Heritage at Risk

- 17.2 We have undertaken work to identify heritage assets at risk within the Medina Valley. Of the 441 assets within, or partially within, the Medina Valley only 9 (2%), have been identified as being 'at risk' and 11 (2.5%) as 'vulnerable'.
- 17.3 We are working with the owners of these assets, to find positive solutions to ensure their future. It is proposed to include a policy within the AAP, which will contribute to a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

## Buildings and sites that are empty, derelict or in need of regeneration

- 17.4 We know that there are a number of key buildings and sites that are empty, derelict or in need of regeneration within the Medina Valley Plan boundary. The main sites within the Medina Valley Plan area that we can think of are:
- Frank James, East Cowes
  - Site at Corner of Pyle Street/South Street, Newport
  - SARO site, Whippingham
  - Various Prison sites
  - AB Cooke, Newport

- The Three Crowns, Cowes

## Question 44

**In addition to the sites listed in paragraph 17.4, are there any other buildings or sites that you are aware of that you would like the council to consider taking action on?**

- 17.5 Following any feedback we receive we will work towards identifying all the sites and compiling a list of priority actions. These actions could include the following:
- **Section 215 Power to Require Proper Maintenance of Land**, in some circumstances a Local Authority has the power to ensure land is cleaned up;
  - **Section 54 Urgent Works Notices**, enables local authorities to execute any works which appear to them to be urgently necessary for the preservation of a listed building;
  - **Compulsory Purchase Orders**, a local authority has the ability to purchase a building or land in order to carry out a function that is in the public interest; and
  - **Local Development Orders**, a tool that allows Local Planning Authorities to introduce new permitted development rights.

## Question 45

**Do you support the council in putting in place a more proactive approach to empty and derelict sites?**

- 17.6 We think the first three sites could benefit for an approach that would secure capital funding (funds used by a company to acquire or upgrade physical assets such as property, industrial buildings or equipment) to be invested in the sites, while the last three sites may be able to benefit from the recently acquired (draft) Assisted Area Status and Enterprise Zones for the latter.

## Question 46

**What are your views on the use of Local Development Orders to enable economic development? What areas in particular do you think the council should consider?**

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- 17.7 Assisted Area Status permits the granting of additional financial support from the government to businesses in economically disadvantaged locations. The support, which usually takes the form of a percentage of the costs of capital investment, is designed to encourage business to grow, innovate and thrive thus delivering economic improvements in the area.
- 17.8 A significant area of the Isle of Wight has been provisionally designated as an Assisted Area within the current review and it is hoped this is confirmed later this year. A supply of available sites, preferably with suitable incentives, is vital to make best use of the status.
- 17.9 The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Strategy, known as the Solent Strategic Economic Plan, proposes to designate a portfolio of sites for a local Enterprise Zone within Cowes and East Cowes and establish an Isle of Wight infrastructure expansion fund to

assist companies coming forward with suitable investment which will create badly needed jobs on the Island.

- 17.10 We also know that people are concerned about the appearance of development sites, when building work has started but for whatever reason has stopped. Whilst we might not be able to make developers carry on with the building work, we could introduce a condition when we grant planning permission that would require the site to be maintained to a reasonable appearance.

## Question 47

**Do you think the council should introduce a requirement for the appearance of development sites to be maintained to a reasonable standard?**

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## Question 48

**Is there any planning matter not covered in this document that you think the council needs to consider within the Medina Valley Plan?**

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## Questions

**1 What are your views on the use of brownfield land first, to support regeneration, and the impacts this could have on infrastructure development?**

**2 If viability is an issue on brownfield sites, should the local planning authority take a pragmatic approach to negotiating s106 contributions?**

**3 Should housing allocations be made on fewer, larger sites or on a higher number of smaller sites?**

**4 What are your views on how the council should approach the size of sites that it allocates in the Medina Valley Plan?**

**5 What are your views on these broad locations for new housing development?**

**6 How do you think the council should define “immediately adjacent” to the settlement boundary?**

**7 What are your views on the approaches to ensuring no adverse effects on the integrity of designated sites within and next to the Medina Valley as suggested in paragraph 2.3?**

**8 Should the council seek ‘local lettings’ policies wherever possible, and if so should any particular group(s) of people be prioritised?**

**9 Do you agree with the suggested amendments shown in the maps on the following pages?**

**10 Do you think there are any other areas where changes to the settlement boundary should be considered?**

**11 If enough land cannot be identified within or immediately adjacent to settlement boundaries, what other locations do you think should be considered for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople?**

**12 Should the council seek to regularise existing unauthorised stopping places as an alternative to providing new sites?**

**13 What are your views on the need for a B8 distribution centre within the Medina Valley?**

**14 Should we protect employment sites with water access, to make sure they are not lost to other uses?**

**15 How can the council support the individual shopping offers of Cowes, East Cowes and Newport town centres?**

**16 What are your views as to the suggestion that the main shopping area boundaries should be altered as set out in paragraph 9.4?**

**17 Are there any main town centre uses that we should restrict in certain areas, and if so where and why?**

**18 Should there be core areas for specific main town centre uses, and if so what uses and where?**

**19** What are your views as to the suggestion that the main shopping area boundaries should be altered as set out in paragraph 9.8?

**20** Are there any main town centre uses that we should restrict in certain areas, and if so where and why?

**21** Should there be core areas for specific main town centre uses, and if so what uses and where?

**22** What are your views as to the suggestion that the main shopping area boundaries should be altered as set out in paragraph 9.15?

**23** Are there any main town centre uses that we should restrict in certain areas, and if so where and why?

**24** Should there be core areas for specific main town centre uses, and if so what uses and where?

**25** What are your views on the areas of land listed within paragraph 10.4?

**26** Are there other areas that need protecting to prevent settlement coalescence?

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**30** What items do you want to be able to recycle at these local level recycling facilities?

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**33** What, if any, types of renewable energy technologies would you like to see on new developments?

**34** Do you think the council should use its resources to further explore whether such a bridge is feasible?

**35** Do you agree that there should be a Floating Bridge between Cowes and East Cowes? What are your views on the importance of a pedestrian and vehicle link across the River Medina between Cowes and East Cowes?

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**37** Are there any sites that you think would make good park and ride sites? If so where?

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**45** Do you support the council in putting in place a more pro-active approach to empty and derelict sites?

**46** What are your views on the use of Local Development Orders to enable economic development? What areas in particular do you think the council should consider?

**47** Do you think the council should introduce a requirement for the appearance of development sites to be maintained to a reasonable standard?

**48** Is there any planning matter not covered in this document that you think the council needs to consider within the Medina Valley Plan?

## Glossary

**ANGSt standards** – accessible natural greenspace standards introduced by Natural England for guidance

**B8** – From the Use Class Order, B8 is defined as use for storage or distribution centre.

**Comparison goods** – generally more expensive goods that people don't buy too often, such as clothes or electrical goods.

**Convenience goods** – generally things that people buy every day, such as milk and newspapers.

**Green Infrastructure** – a network of high quality spaces and environmental features, including parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, river and canal corridors, allotments and private gardens.

**Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** – A requirement that land use plans must undergo an assessment of their potential effects upon European-designated sites.

**Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)** – A national housing and regeneration agency for England, providing investment for new affordable housing and to improve existing social housing, as well as for regenerating land.

**Key Regeneration Area (KRA)** – Areas identified in the Island Plan Core Strategy as focal points for development over the plan period, where AAPs will be prepared.

**Local Planning Authority (LPA)** – The Isle of Wight Council is the LPA for the Island, and it is their duty to carry out specific planning functions (such as preparing plans and determining planning applications).

**Mitigate/Mitigation** – The measures envisaged to avoid, reduce, repair and/or enhance any significant impacts of implementing an action or decision.

**Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)** – A partnership dedicated to delivering sustainable, economic-led growth and regeneration to create a more prosperous, attractive and sustainable South Hampshire.

**Settlement coalescence** – Where development would contribute to, or result in, the merging of separate settlements into one.

**Solent Disturbance Mitigation Project (SDMP)** – A project introduced to understand and manage recreational pressure from new residential development on internationally designated sites in the Solent.

**Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (SLEP)** – A locally-owned partnership between businesses and local authorities, which plays a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.

**Solent Special Protection Area (SPA)** – Internationally important areas for the breeding, feeding, wintering or migration of rare and vulnerable birds.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** – An assessment of potential development sites put forward to the council. The sites allocated for housing through the AAP will come out of the SHLAA.

**Sustainability Matrix** – A tool used in the Sustainability Appraisal process, to assess a policy/proposal against locally identified criteria.

**Unitary Development Plan (UDP)** – The Plan used before the Island Plan Core Strategy.