

**GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL**

**ISLE OF WIGHT**

Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

**GURNARD PARISH LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**

Advice on the Landscape Impact of further development in the Parish of Gurnard in relation to the Gurnard Neighbourhood Plan.

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## **GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL ISLE OF WIGHT**

### **LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT for GURNARD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2011 – 2031**

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The purpose of this assessment is to provide advice to Gurnard Parish Council on the potential landscape implications of development within the Parish of Gurnard. In this assessment the most appropriate areas for future development will be identified, purely from a landscape perspective.

1.2 The results of this assessment will be fed into the Neighbourhood Plan process which will take into account a range of other factors in determining where development should be located. There will be sites where development may be appropriate from a landscape point of view although it may be inappropriate for other reasons. [Photo 1]

1.3 The methodology used in this assessment follows the recommended practices in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (second edition) by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

2.1 The first of the key steps in carrying out this landscape assessment was to identify the key characteristics of the landscape covering the northern area of the Isle of Wight as defined in Natural England's National Character Area plan. Then desk study and field survey work was carried out in the Parish of Gurnard to analyse and describe its landscape and define Landscape Character Areas (LCA's). The quality of each LCA and its landscape was then evaluated.

2.2 The visual implications of development within each LCA could then be assessed. From this and the work in 2.1, sites where development would be least damaging from a landscape perspective only, could then be identified.

2.3 The desk study included using

- i) the Ordnance Survey map, Outdoor Leisure 29. Isle of Wight at 1:25,000
- ii) the Isle of Wight Geological Survey map at 1:50,000. Sheets 344 and 345. Part of sheets 330 and 331
- iii) Google Earth aerial photos

2.4 The field survey work involved walking or driving all the publicly accessible routes in and adjacent to the study area. Photographs were taken at key points for record and reference purposes in February 2013, in August 2015 and in November 2015. Photographs 14 and 20 were taken on private land. Unless I have otherwise stated the photographs were taken by me with a Panasonic DMC - T260 digital camera with a Leica telephoto lens. Photographs 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 23 were taken by Jonathan Pearson in 2013 using a Nikon D700 camera with a 50mm lens. Photographs 2, 5, 6, 24 and 25 were taken by Richard Cobden in November 2015 using a Canon 450 camera with an 18 – 55 lens. Site visits took place in August 2015.

### **3 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

3.1 The landscape and visual issues raised by the possible requirement for further development in the Parish of Gurnard are addressed.

3.2 The following points are addressed in particular.

- The existing visual and landscape character of the Parish of Gurnard and adjacent areas
- The likely impact of any further development on that existing visual and landscape character
- Whether any further development would be in keeping with the landscape character of existing settlements.

## 4 EXISTING LANDSCAPE OF THE PARISH OF GURNARD

4.1 Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) plan identifies the NCA profile 127 covering the Isle of Wight. This gives an appreciation of the national scale landscape type in which the Parish of Gurnard is located.

4.2 In the NCA profile 127 the Statement of Environmental Quality number 4 on page 4 states: 'Manage and enhance the historic character of the island's landscapes and settlements and reinforce and enhance the existing settlement structure as part of any sustainable development ....'

4.3 On page 6 on the NCA profile 127 there is a description of the key characteristics of the landscape of the Isle of Wight. Listed below are the key characteristics that apply to the Parish of Gurnard and adjacent areas.

### Key characteristics

- 'This is a small scale island landscape with an intimate feel but with often sudden and dramatic views of the sea.'
- 'The island has a varied landscape as a consequence of its geological history. The northern half is characterised by low-lying Tertiary clays overlain in places by gravel capped ridges.'
- 'Woodland cover varies, with pockets of ancient woodland interposed with small woodlands. Most of the ancient woodland is found on the northern clays....'
- 'The character of the northern pastures is determined by dairy farming, which has created the permanently lush, green, irregular fields bounded by mature hedgerows.'
- 'Hedgerows are the predominant boundary feature throughout with variations in field size and pattern'

4.4 The landscape description in this study of the LCA's builds on the broad National Character Area description.

From the field studies and desk studies it is clear that the landscape can be divided into areas of distinct, recognisable and common character. Each division of the landscape is called a Landscape Character Area (LCA). Each LCA is relatively small because of the complex nature of the landscape in the parish. The character of each

LCA is then described in detail. Using this information possible development sites can be identified from a landscape impact perspective.

## **5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1 Thorness Valley Landscape Character Area 1**

5.1.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by a wide gently sloping valley immediately to the west of Gurnard Parish. The valley is relatively remote with restricted access. There is a very small stream which arises in the north-west section of Parkhurst Forest in the centre of the valley. A secondary minor stream arises near Great Thorness. The valley has a scatter of small woodlands and tree belts.

5.1.2 The Bembridge Marls at the northern end of the valley allow for livestock agriculture. The Hamstead Beds in the southern section allow for livestock agriculture.

5.1.3 At the seaward end the valley floor grades into areas of mud and sand at low tide on the southern edge of The Solent. At the eastern and western ends, the valley landscape ends on top of low cliffs overlooking The Solent with the Bembridge Marls forming landslips. Much of the valley floor is less than 5 metres AOD (Above Ordnance Datum).

5.1.4 Apart from the Park Resorts caravan site on the western side of the valley there are only scattered farms. Consequently, this unspoiled valley has a good quality landscape because of its gentle valley topography, its remoteness and wildlife, its views of The Solent and its woodlands. [Photo 1]

5.1.5 The Thorness Valley Landscape Character Area reaches just inside Gurnard Parish to the west of Hillis Farm. This character area terminates on the northwest boundary of Parkhurst Forest.

### **5.2 Rew Street Plateau Landscape Character Area 2**

5.2.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by a broad whale back ridge running north – south along the western side of Gurnard Parish. It has a rural character with linear Rew Street village defining its eastern edge. The quality of the landscape is enhanced by scattered woodlands and a predominately grassland land use.

5.2.2 Much of the crest of the ridge is formed from Hamstead Beds which gives rise to heavy soils. There are extensive views across the Thorness valley to the west and the Gurnard Luck valley to the east. There are framed views of The Solent. The plateau reaches a maximum height within the parish of 50 metres AOD at Sticelett Farm.

5.2.3 The settlement pattern is almost completely restricted to the linear village of Rew Street and a small area of holiday buildings to the west of Cliff Farm. Because of its elevated landform it is visible from the western edge of Gurnard. [Photo 7]

5.2.4 Consequently this unspoiled plateau has a good quality landscape because of its topography, its land use, its woodland and its extensive views. [Photo 2, Photo 3]

5.2.5 Development in this area would have a considerable and detrimental impact because of its good quality landscape and high visibility.

5.2.6 The Rew Street Plateau Landscape Character Area terminates just outside the Gurnard parish boundary to the south of Hillis Corner in the area of Skinners Farm.

### 5.3 Rew Street Landslip Landscape Character Area 3

5.3.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by an unstable sloping cliff face looking to the north-west across The Solent. Beneath the landslips the cliffs are formed from unstable Bembridge Marls. On the highest southern section Hamstead Beds lie on top of the Bembridge Marls. The cliffs reach a maximum height of 45 metres AOD to the west of Cat's Copse. From here they gradually fall away to sea level at the Gurnard Luck valley at their northern end and to sea level at the Thorness Velly end to the south.

5.3.2 The northern half of the area has a well established woodland cover. The southern half of the area has a very fragmented tree cover due to frequent landslips. The coastal footpath follows the top edge of the landslip but has been closed following further landslips in 2014. [Photo 4]

5.3.3 The wooded north section has restricted views of The Solent because of the trees. The southern section has extensive views of the western Solent and the Christchurch area of south Hampshire. There are views inland across the Rew Street Plateau only along the top edge of the landslip.

5.3.4 Consequently this unstable cliff has a natural slowly changing landscape with geological interest. Together with the variety of its tree cover and extensive views it has a high quality landscape.

5.3.5 Development in this area, if it were possible, would have a considerable and detrimental impact because of high quality landscape and its high visibility from The Solent.

### 5.4 Gurnard Luck Valley Landscape Character Area 4

5.4.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by the Gurnard Luck stream where it has eroded a valley through the Hamstead Beds and the Bembridge Marls to the Osbourne and Headon Beds. The stream arises at about 60 metres AOD on the eastern edge of Parkhurst Forest. It flows through Parkhurst Forest and reaches the Gurnard Parish boundary on the western edge of Northwood at about 9 metres AOD. Here it has cut into the Bembridge Marls forming a small scale V-shaped valley. From Gurnard Pines Holiday Village, the valley floor is flat and this gradually widens to 300 metres on The Solent coast. The flat valley floor is covered with alluvial deposits. The gently sloping valley sides rise up to Rew Street on its western side and up to Cockleton Lane and the south-west side of Gurnard village on its eastern side.

5.4.2 There is a substantial area of woodland across the southern half of the valley that stretches from the northern side of Northwood to the southern and western sides of Gurnard Pines Holiday Village. This is the largest area of woodland in Gurnard Parish. [Photo 6] Gurnard Pines also makes a substantial contribution to the woodland character of the valley. South of Gurnard Farm there is another wooded area. Other areas of the valley are under grassland management leading to the western side of the valley being more open. [Photo 7]

5.4.3 There are extensive views of the valley looking east from Rew Street. [Photo 8] From Cockleton Lane the views are restricted by the areas of woodland with occasional framed views of The Solent. [Photo 9] Northwood is sited just south of Gurnard Parish and is well screened from the valley by woodland and strong hedgerows.

5.4.4 Existing development within the Gurnard Luck Valley is fragmented and tends to lie on its margins. Thus Rew Street sits on its western skyline with a few buildings being located within the valley character area. [Photo 7] Where the valley meets The Solent there is a linear visual barrier of Gurnard Luck village with its boat storage areas. [Photo 9] To the east of Gurnard Luck village the south western side of Gurnard village covers the valley side and just links up with Gurnard Luck village. Gurnard Pines Holiday Village is located on the eastern side of the valley to the south of Gurnard village. [Photo 10] Along Pallance Lane outside the southern boundary of Gurnard Parish the western arm of Northwood runs down the eastern side of the valley.

5.4.5 The Gurnard Luck Valley has a very high quality landscape because of the valley landform and the extensive tree and woodland cover that provides landscape settings for the settlements in and adjacent to the valley. There are also many high quality views. [Photo 6, Photo 7]

5.4.6 Development in the Gurnard Luck Valley may be possible if great care is taken to minimise any detrimental impacts on the valley's landscape character. Development would need to be located where existing vegetation can mitigate the

impact, together with major new woodland planting. Importantly new development must not reach the valley floor. That is, it must only extend part way down the valley side in order to retain Gurnard's hilltop character. [Photo 8]

#### 5.4.7 Development potential [See Appendix 4]

There are two sites on the eastern side of the valley that are acceptable for development from a landscape perspective.

##### A / Gurnard Pines Holiday Village

There are numerous sites within the holiday village that could be developed as long as the existing trees are retained and new tree planting is carried out with each development.

##### B / The hillside on the northern edge of Gurnard Pines Holiday Village and to the west of Cockleton Lane. [Photo 8]

An area of existing trees on its northern boundary would provide an immediate landscape setting, with a new major tree belt planted along its western boundary to provide further mitigation.

#### 5.5 Gurnard Plateau Landscape Character Area 5

5.5.1 This landscape character area is formed by a narrow whale back ridge running north- west to south-east. It is contained by Gurnard Luck Valley to the west, by the Jordan Valley to the east, Gurnard village to the north and Place Road to the south. The Gurnard Ridge terminates at its northern end at the top of the Gurnard Cliff and Wood at a height of about 20 meters AOD. The highest areas of Gurnard Village are at about 40 metres AOD. To the south the plateau reaches 60 metres AOD on the Gurnard Parish boundary at the northern tip of Northwood. Most of Northwood is located on the plateau. South of Northwood the plateau narrows to a ridge with the Newport Road running near its crest. The ridge terminates around Nodes Farm to the north of Northwood village.

5.5.2 Gurnard Plateau is formed from the Bembridge Marls where Gurnard village is located but further inland in the Gurnard Plateau Landscape Character Area the Bembridge Marls lie underneath the Hampstead Beds. Most of the plateau is capped by Plateau Gravels.

5.5.3 The northern half of the ridge is covered by the housing areas of Gurnard village. This development has occurred during the last 150 years. The southern edge of the village forms a straight line across the plateau from Cockleton Lane to Tuttons

Hill. Most of the village is located on the crest of the ridge but the north-western area of the village is on the western hillside.

5.5.4 The only existing development within the Gurnard Plateau Landscape Character Area is at Cockleton Farm [Photo 11] and the industrial site off Place Road.

5.5.5 The plateau south of Gurnard has an open landscape with few trees. [Photo 26] The fields are bounded by cut hedgerows. The southern edge of Gurnard has a strong hedgerow. Most of the fields are under grassland management with a few under arable. From the plateau there are views of the western edge of West Cowes at Place Road and Baring Road. From Cockleton Lane these views are screened by hedgerows. Generally, views from Gurnard village are screened by the houses but there are views to the west of The Solent and the Gurnard Luck Valley from Hilton Road, Church Road and Solent View Road. [Photo 12, Photo 13]

5.5.6 Consequently the Gurnard Plateau south of Gurnard village has a moderate quality landscape because of its lack of trees and plateau landform. [Photo 14] However it does have some good views and has an undamaged landscape in spite of its proximity to Cowes and Northwood.

5.5.7 The landscape contributes to the countryside buffer between Cowes and Northwood, between Gurnard and Cowes and between Gurnard and Northwood.

5.5.8 Development on the Gurnard Plateau is possible because Gurnard is a hilltop settlement. However, the scale of development must be carefully restricted because of the important countryside buffer role which this area provides between Cowes, Northwood and Gurnard. The recently approved development to the west of Place Road will have a major impact on the scale of development on the plateau because it significantly narrows the landscape buffer between Cowes and Gurnard.

5.5.9 Development potential [See Appendix 4]

There are two sites south of Gurnard village that are acceptable from a landscape perspective.

A / Cockleton Lane [Photo 14]

This site covers only the western half of the field that is located opposite numbers 34 to 56 Cockleton Lane. Development can only go half way across the field from Cockleton Lane because of the significant reduction in the buffer between Cowes and Gurnard as a result of the recent Place Road development decision. Significant areas of woodland planting and tree planting will need to be carried out to mitigate the impact of this development.

B / North of Northwood [Photo 27]

There are two fields that are located between Cockleton Lane and Place Road which are south of Cockleton farm and north of Northwood. Development here would be acceptable from a landscape perspective EXCEPT that it would lead to the coalescence of Northwood and Cowes. It is important that Northwood retains its independent identity with a countryside buffer. However, if major development outside Gurnard parish should lead to the coalescence of Cowes and Northwood at a future date then this site could be reconsidered because it does not impact on the Gurnard and West Cowes coalescence issues.

5.6 Gurnard Cliff and Wood Landscape Character Area 6

5.6.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by an unstable sloping cliff face looking to the north-west across The Solent. Beneath the landslips the cliffs are formed from unstable Bembridge Marls. The lower section of the cliff is formed from Osbourne and Headon Beds. At the very base of the cliff at the back of the beach there is a narrow band of Bembridge Limestone which erosion has left as numerous large blocks on the foreshore.

5.6.2 The landslip is covered with woodland which provides a landscape setting for the northern edge of Gurnard and the housing area around Shore Road. It also provides a wind break for the Village Green and Esplanade area. The wooded landscape setting of Gurnard is also important when viewed from The Solent. [Photo 15] The highest point of this area is about 20 metres AOD. Views of The Solent are limited by the woodland except in the area of Shore Road and Gurnard Yacht Club where there is a limited area of development.

5.6.3 Consequently the Gurnard Cliff and Wood Landscape Character Area has a moderate quality landscape because of its elevated woodland, geological interest and limited views.

5.6.4 Development potential

Apart from any redevelopment of the existing house plots along Shore Road, the unstable geology and the importance of the woodland in providing a strong landscape setting for Gurnard precludes any development.

5.7 Jordan Valley Landscape Character Area 7

5.7.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by the Jordan stream cutting through the Hamstead Beds into the Bembridge Marls. The southern section of the valley (south of Tuttons Hill) has the Plateau Gravel covering the Hamstead Beds.

5.7.2 The Jordan Valley is an enclosed landscape running roughly from south-east to north-west. It is bounded on its western side by Gurnard village and Gurnard Plateau LCA and on its eastern side by Cowes on the Cowes Plateau and the north-east corner of Gurnard village in the Gurnard Heights and Woodvale Road area. The valley head is at Place Road on the south-west boundary of the recently approved Place Road development at about 45 metres AOD. The narrow valley floor falls to about 35 metres AOD at Tuttons Hill. Here the valley side rises to about 40 metres AOD on its western side to the edge of Gurnard village. On its eastern side it rises to about 45 metres AOD on the western edge of Cowes. Further down the valley below Dottens Farm the narrow valley floor has fallen to about 20 metres AOD. The valley side rises to about 35 metres AOD on its western side to the edge of Gurnard village. On its eastern side it rises to about 40 metres AOD at Baring Road on the western edge of Cowes. At Shore Road by Gurnard Village Green the Jordan stream is about 10 metres AOD. The Jordan stream then crosses Gurnard Village Green to reach Gurnard Bay under the Esplanade.

5.7.3 Upstream from the Shore Road crossing there is a linear wooded area running inland for about 400 metres to a point below Dottens Farm. This is important for providing a landscape setting for the Shore Road and Woodvale Road areas of Gurnard. In the rest of the Jordan Valley tree cover is limited to hedgerow trees.

5.7.4 The Jordan Valley is divided into small or very small fields below Tuttons Hill while above they are of moderate size. Around Dottens Farm and the disused farm adjacent most of the land is currently unused. The inland section of the valley is used for grazing and some arable. [Photo 26]

5.7.5 Existing development within the area is limited to Dottens Farm, the disused Pig Farm nearby and the Kennels. Within Gurnard Parish the Jordan Valley is enclosed by development on the surrounding higher land by Gurnard village, the Woodvale Road and Gurnard School area, and houses on the west side of Place Road and down the south-east side of Tuttons Hill. The recently approved Place Road development will further enclose and reduce the scale of the valley. Outside Gurnard Parish the Jordan valley is enclosed by housing areas in Cowes along the east side of Baring Road. [Photo 17, Photo 24, Photo 27]

5.7.6 Some of the most important public views in the Parish of Gurnard are to be seen in the Jordan Valley area. In particular, the lovely views west from Baring Road between Woodvale Road and Tuttons Hill to Gurnard village across the small scale landscape of the Jordan Valley clearly and emphatically define Gurnard as a separate village and community. [Photo 18, Photo 19, Photo 20] This separation is reinforced by the views coming down Tuttons Hill towards Gurnard village together with the views to the north and south along the Jordan Valley from the lowest area of Tuttons Hill. [Photo 16] The other important view of the Jordan Valley from Place Road will now be lost by the recently approved Place Road development. The

Jordan Valley clearly provides the landscape setting for Gurnard village and for the western side of Cowes.

5.7.7 Development within the Jordan Valley LCA would lead to further serious erosion of its small scale landscape. There are mostly only two fields separating Gurnard village and Cowes at many points along the valley below Tuttons Hill. In the valley above Tuttons Hill there is only one field separating Gurnard village from the Place Road development. [Photo 26]

5.7.8 Any further development within the Jordan Valley LCA would easily lead to the coalescence of Gurnard village and Cowes.

5.7.9 Development potential [See Appendix 4]

There are no potential development sites in this area because the small scale character of the landscape and the risk of coalescence of Gurnard and Cowes.

## 5.8 East Gurnard Cliff and Wood Landscape Character Area 8

5.8.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by unstable Bembridge Marls forming the cliff. At the base of the cliff Osbourne and Headon Beds are exposed. Plateau gravels cover the Bembridge Marls at the top of the cliff. The cliff faces North-west across The Solent and its crest is at about 30 metres AOD,

5.8.2 The cliff is located in the north-east corner of Gurnard Parish. Its north-western boundary is defined by Prince's Esplanade and its single line of houses overlooking The Solent. Its south-eastern boundary is defined by Gurnard Primary School's playing fields and housing estates in the Gurnard Heights area and in Cowes. The eastern half of this character area is located in Cowes.

5.8.3 The cliff face is completely covered in well-established deciduous woodland. [Photo 22] This forms an important landscape feature and makes an important contribution to the landscape setting of Gurnard when viewed from Prince's Esplanade and from passing boats on The Solent. [Photo 23] The woodland comes right down to Prince's Esplanade in the Cowes section.

5.8.4 From within the woodland views out to The Solent are obviously blocked by the vegetation but there will be a few glimpses.

5.8.5 This is an important high quality landscape because of its woodland and steep hillside location. It provides a landscape setting for all the adjacent development and an important backdrop to all the waterborne activities on The Solent.

5.8.6 There is no development within the East Gurnard Cliff and Wood LCA but there is coastal development on its north-western boundary in Gurnard Parish and on sections of its south-eastern boundary. The playing field of Gurnard Primary School forms an important break in the line of cliff top development.

### 5.8.7 Development potential

There are no potential development sites in this area because of its important landscape role, its high visibility particularly when viewed from The Solent, and its unstable geology.

## 5.9 Cowes Plateau Landscape Character Area 9

5.9.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by a broad area of plateau that is bounded by the Jordan Valley LCA on its western side, by the wooded cliff face of East Gurnard Cliff and Wood LCA and further east by Baring Road in Cowes. Its eastern side is bounded by the Medina River Valley. To the south the plateau narrows, near the Aldi store, and joins the Gurnard Plateau LCA north of Northwood. The plateau is formed from Bembridge Marls and further inland these are overlaid by Hamstead Beds. Most of the plateau is then covered by a layer of Plateau gravel. The general level of the Plateau varies from about 40 metres AOD on its northern edge to about 50 metres AOD further south.

5.9.2 The development of Cowes covers most of the plateau. [Photo 24] A small section of the north-west corner of the Cowes Plateau Landscape Character Area lies within Gurnard Parish. It includes Gurnard Primary School and playing fields and a small number of homes adjacent to the school in Baring Road and Woodvale Road.

### 5.9.3 Development potential

The small section located within Gurnard Parish is fully developed so there are no potential development sites.

## 5.10 The Solent Landscape Character Area 10

5.10.1 The landscape character of this area is formed by the waters of The Solent and the wide range of climate impacts upon the water. The Solent is a wide valley that was flooded at the end of the last ice age. The foreshore is formed from Osbourne and Headon Beds while further from the shore ancient rivers will have cut down to the Bagshot Beds. There will be alluvial deposits on top of these rocks.

5.10.2 The landscape character of The Solent LCA is of a completely open flat water landscape on a calm day. In stormy weather the water surface changes into waves of various heights which crash onto the foreshore. The character is also continuously changed by the number and types of boats passing by on The Solent.

5.10.3 The foreshore varies from being completely covered by the waters of The Solent at high tide to being an exposed extension of the land surface. The foreshore

varies in width from about 5 metres at Prince's Esplanade to about 25 metres at Gurnard Ledge. The foreshore's variable character is the result of cliff erosion and various human activities. There are sandy areas, silted areas, stony areas and at the western end of Gurnard Bay there are large blocks of Bembridge Limestone. Human activity results in rubble, shipways and coastal sea defences of various kinds.

5.10.4 The Solent LCA has an outstanding landscape character and makes a major contribution to the landscape character of Gurnard Parish in so many ways. This influence gets stronger the nearer all of Gurnard's landscape character areas get to The Solent. [Photo 25]

#### 5.10.5 Development potential

There are no potential development sites because of the exceptional positive impact of The Solent Landscape Character Area in Gurnard Parish.

## **6 SETTLEMENT SETTING OF GURNARD VILLAGE** [See Appendix 3]

6.1 A settlement setting is defined as the countryside around a village, town or city that needs to remain undeveloped in order to maintain a meaningful contribution to that settlement's existing character in the long term.

6.2 From the Landscape Character Assessment in Section 5 it has been established that Gurnard village is a hilltop settlement. It maintains its separate identity from adjacent settlements because of the rural valleys on its eastern and western sides. The rural section of the Gurnard Plateau maintains separation to the south. To the north-west The Solent makes a very important contribution to Gurnard village's character.

6.3 Sections of the western side of Gurnard do extend from the Gurnard Plateau into the Gurnard Luck Valley. Gurnard Pines Holiday Village does occupy a considerable area of the valley side but it does not encroach on the valley floor. Gurnard Pines is however so well screened by woodland and tree planting that the whole area looks like a very large woodland in the wider landscape. All the woodland around Gurnard Pines falls within Gurnard's settlement setting and makes a major contribution to the setting because of its woodland character. [Photo 6]

6.4 The small scale hillside around Gurnard Farm makes an important contribution to the settlement setting of Gurnard village. The western side of the valley is very visible and makes an important contribution to the settlement setting of Gurnard village. [Photo 8]

6.5 The settlement at Gurnard Luck has a special seaside and fishing character. Its landscape setting with the marshy Gurnard Luck Valley floor to the south and The Solent to the north-west makes a major contribution to Gurnard's character. [Photo 9]

6.6 On the eastern side of Gurnard Village there has been almost no encroachment down the western side of the Jordan Valley. Along the eastern side of the valley below Baring Road there has been almost no encroachment from Cowes except in the Woodvale Road area. Consequently, the Jordan Valley forms a very strong publicly visible landscape feature that makes a major contribution to the landscape setting of Gurnard village and to the western edge of Cowes. [Photo 16, Photo 17, Photo 18, Photo 19, Photo 20]

6.7 South of Tuttons Hill existing and proposed development along Place Road will come well down the small scale hillside on the eastern side of the Jordan Valley. This development will compromise the landscape setting of Gurnard village and Cowes. There will in effect be only one field separating Gurnard village from Cowes around Tuttons Hill. This heightens the importance and landscape value of the remaining land in the Jordan Valley. [Photo 26]

6.8 From the Landscape Character Assessment in Section 5, the Gurnard village and Gurnard Pines Holiday Village settlement setting that has been identified in Appendix 3 is the landscape that has been created by an interaction between the local geology, land form, woodland, tree belts, open farmland, The Solent and the activities of mankind for many thousands of years. Any development within the settlement setting boundary will have a negative impact on the character and landscape setting of Gurnard Village and Gurnard Pines Holiday Village particularly in the Jordan Valley LCA.

## 7 POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES AND THEIR LANDSCAPE IMPACTS

7.1 There are several potential development sites all of which have a negative landscape impact. However, their impact on the landscape is at the lowest level possible. Development on any other sites within the Gurnard village and Gurnard Pines Holiday Village settlement setting would have a greater negative impact. Development in the wider countryside of Gurnard Parish would also have a greater negative impact. Importantly the potential development sites will maintain Gurnard's hilltop settlement character.

7.2 A secondary benefit is that the potential development sites help to maintain Gurnard village as a separate community by avoiding any further coalescence of Cowes and Gurnard. However, the primary reason for identifying potential development sites is to retain as much as possible of Gurnard Parish's beautiful and varied landscape with a minimum of damage.

7.3 It is important to remember that none of the sites have to be developed in the current period 2011-2031. The suggested sites offer no beneficial reason, in landscape terms, by being developed, however if development is required these sites are the least damaging to the Parish of Gurnard's landscape.

7.4 Development Potential [See Appendix 4]

7.4.1 Cockleton Lane – site A [Photo 14]

This site is located in a moderate quality landscape on the Gurnard Plateau south of Gurnard village and east of Gurnard Pines Holiday Village. It maintains the hilltop character of Gurnard village.

This site

- is located in a moderate quality landscape.
- is located on the Gurnard Plateau LCA.
- is located south of Gurnard village and east of Gurnard Pines Holiday Village.
- is maintaining the hilltop character of Gurnard village.
- Is located on the western half of the two fields in order to maintain a viable landscape setting for Gurnard to the west of the Place Road development.
- would require mitigating woodland and tree planting along its eastern and southern boundaries in order to provide an appropriate landscape setting for the new extension to Gurnard.
- would result in the loss of part of the Gurnard Plateau LCA open landscape.
- would be visible from parts of the western edge of Cowes until new tree planting has developed.

- would result in Gurnard village and Gurnard Pines Holiday Village having a closer relationship.
- is located within Gurnard's settlement setting and would result in a negative impact.

#### 7.4.2 North of Gurnard Pines – site B [Photo 8]

This site

- is located in the high quality landscape of Gurnard Luck Valley LCA but is already well screened by trees to the north and south.
- will require mitigating woodland on its western boundary in order to protect the very high quality landscape of the Gurnard Luck Valley LCA and to provide an appropriate landscape setting for the new extension to Gurnard.
- would result in the loss of part of the Gurnard Luck Valley LCA.
- would be visible from Gurnard village when developed.
- would be visible from the northern end of Rew Street until the new tree planting has developed.
- would impact on the hilltop character of Gurnard until the western tree belt has developed.
- would result in Gurnard village and Gurnard Pines Holiday Village having a closer relationship.
- is located within Gurnard's settlement setting and would result in a negative impact.

#### 7.4.3 Gurnard Pines Holiday Village – site C [Photo 10]

This site

- is located adjacent to the high quality Gurnard Luck Valley LCA on its northern, western and southern sides.
- is located adjacent to the moderate quality Gurnard Plateau LCA on its eastern side.
- has a large scale woodland screening it on its southern and western sides.
- has a substantial tree population.
- has a very low level of visibility when viewed from the adjacent landscape.
- would have a minor impact on the surrounding landscape following development as long as the onsite and offsite trees are retained.
- does not lead to the loss of any settlement setting landscape areas.

- would result in Gurnard village and Gurnard Pines Holiday Village having a closer relationship.
- is located outside Gurnard's settlement setting and will have a minor impact.

#### 7.4.4 North of Northwood – site D [Photo 27]

This site

- is located on the Gurnard Plateau LCA.
- is located in a moderate quality landscape.
- is located close to developed areas in Northwood and Cowes and the open landscape of the BAe Systems Site.
- would not impact on Gurnard's settlement setting.
- would extend the plateau development in Northwood.
- would lead to the loss of the only remaining countryside view from Place Road.
- Is located outside Gurnard's settlement setting.
- would lead to the coalescence of Cowes and Northwood.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

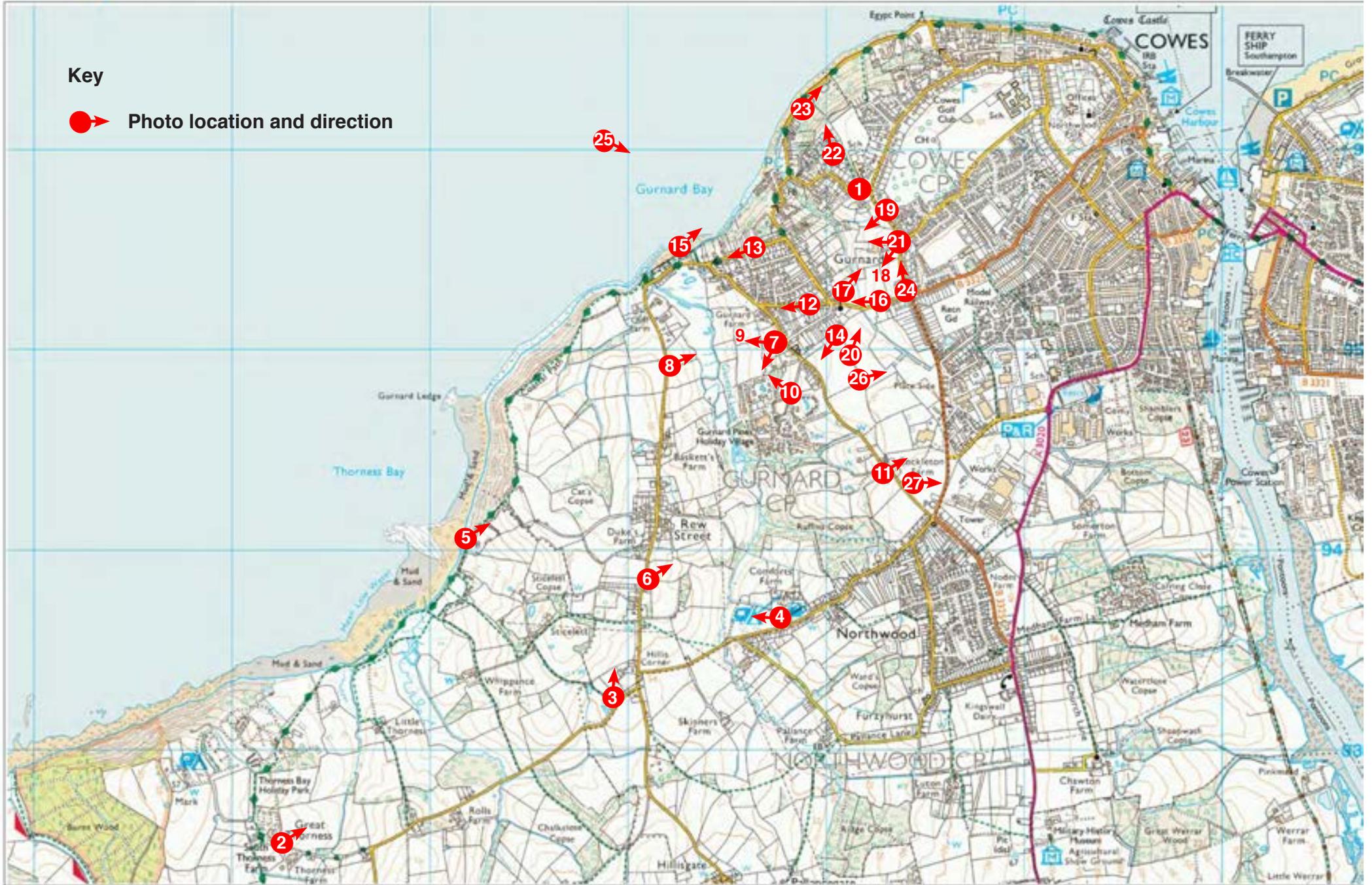
8.1 In strategic terms the potential development areas will lead to a south-westerly expansion of Gurnard village. This will ensure that the more sensitive areas of countryside in the Parish of Gurnard are not lost through development. It will also ensure that a rural buffer will be maintained between Cowes and Gurnard for the future. These potential sites will also ensure that the settlement setting of Gurnard village will be maintained together with its important hilltop setting.

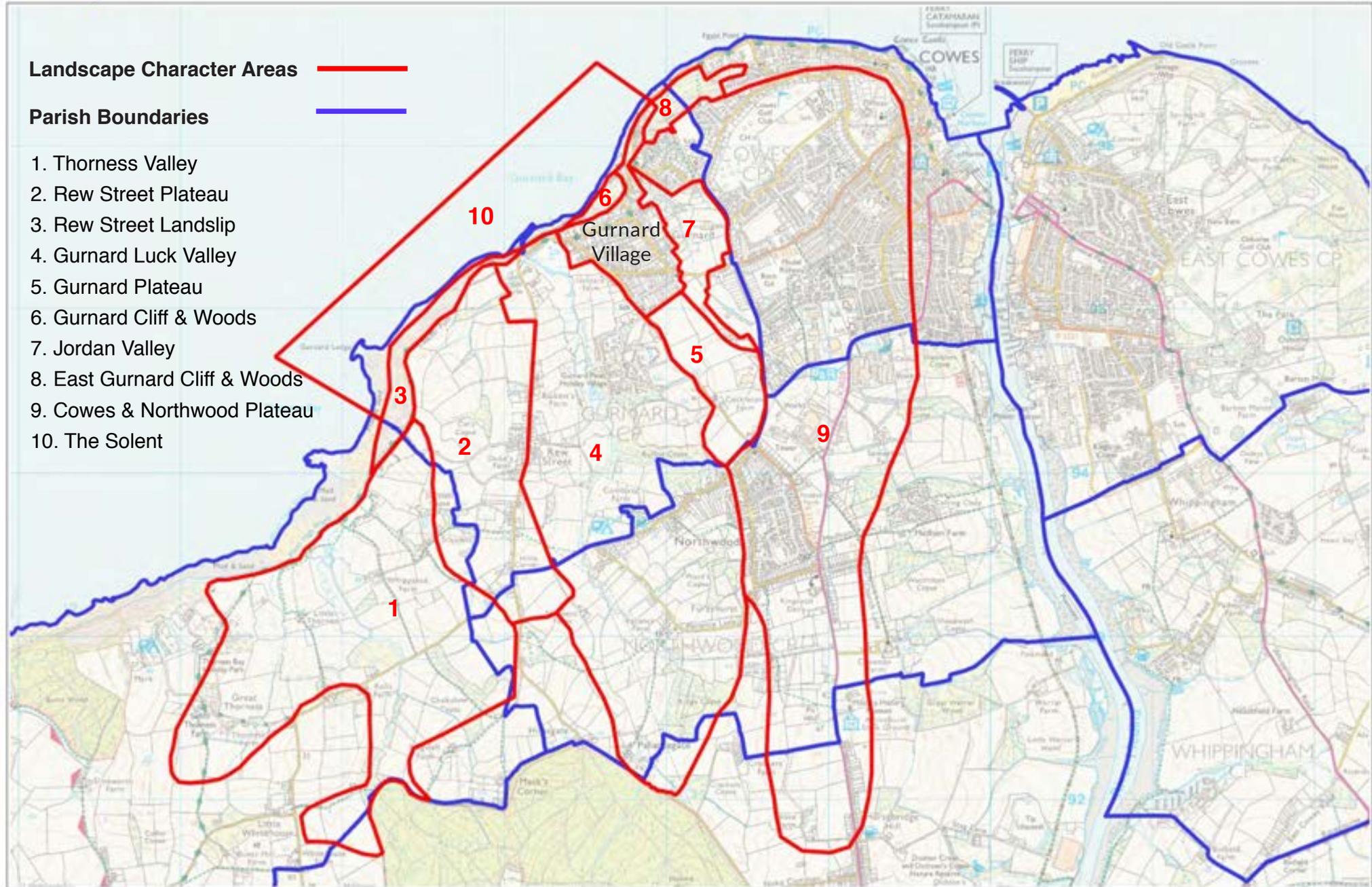
8.2 From a landscape perspective the best order of site development, if it has to happen would be as follows.

- **Cockleton Lane** - site A
- **Gurnard Pines Holiday Village** - site C
- **North of Gurnard Pines** - site B
- **The Area North of Northwood** - site D

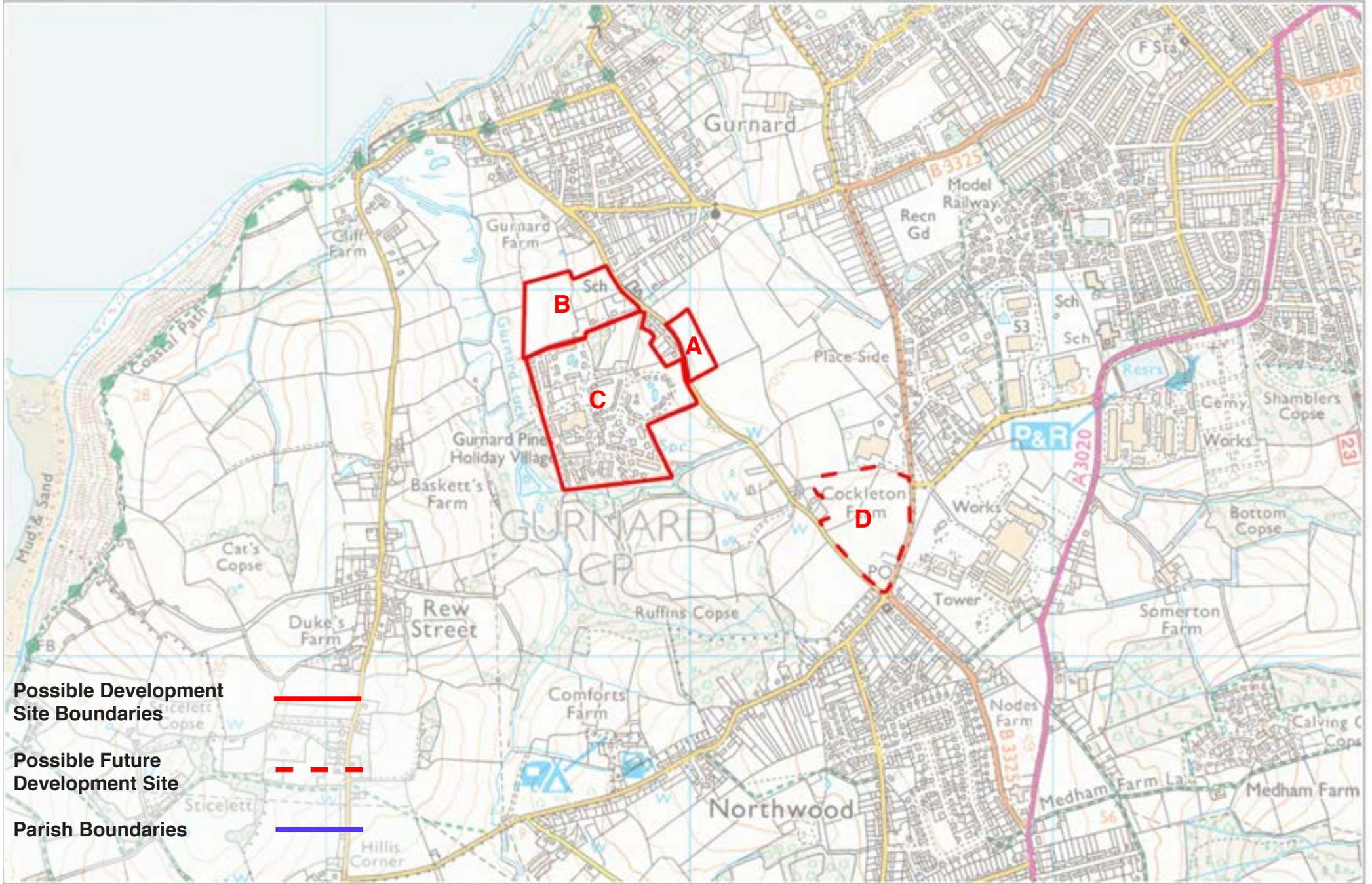
Key

 Photo location and direction









## Appendix 5. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS SUMMARY TABLE

Landscape Character Area	Why Area is Special	Possible Development Potential
1. Thorness Valley	Apart from the Parks Resort caravan site on the western side of the valley there are only scattered farms. Consequently this unspoiled valley has a good quality landscape because of its gentle valley topography, its remoteness and wildlife, its views of The Solent and its woodlands.	Only a small area is in Gurnard Parish, development in this area would have a considerable and detrimental impact because of its good quality landscape and high visibility.
2. Rew Street Plateau	The unspoiled plateau has a good quality landscape because of its topography, its land use, its woodland and its extensive views.	Development in this area would have a considerable and detrimental impact because of its good quality landscape and high visibility.
3. Rew Street Landslip	This unstable cliff has a natural slowly changing landscape with geological interest. Together with the variety of its tree cover and extensive views it has a high quality landscape.	Development in this area, if it were possible, would have a considerable and detrimental impact because of high quality landscape and its high visibility from The Solent.
4. Gurnard Luck Valley	The Gurnard Luck Valley has a very high quality landscape because of the valley landform and the extensive tree and woodland cover that provides landscape settings for the settlements in and adjacent to the valley. There are also	Development in the Gurnard Luck Valley may be possible if great care is taken to minimise any detrimental impacts on the valley's landscape character.

	many high quality views.	<p><b>Possible Development Sites:</b></p> <p>Site B: North of Gurnard Pines</p> <p>Site C: Gurnard Pines Holiday Village</p>
5. Gurnard Plateau	<p>The Gurnard Plateau south of Gurnard village has a moderate quality landscape because of its lack of trees and plateau landform.</p> <p>However it does have some good views and has an undamaged landscape in spite of its proximity to Cowes and Northwood.</p> <p>The landscape contributes to the countryside buffer between Cowes and Northwood, between Gurnard and Cowes and between Gurnard and Northwood.</p>	<p>Development on the Gurnard Plateau is possible because Gurnard is a hilltop settlement. However the scale of development must be carefully restricted because of the important countryside buffer role which this area provides between Cowes, Northwood and Gurnard. The recently approved development to the west of Place Road will have a major impact on the scale of development on the plateau because it significantly narrows the landscape buffer between Cowes and Gurnard.</p> <p><b>Possible Development Sites:</b></p> <p>Site A: Cockleton Lane</p> <p>Site D: North of Northwood</p>
6. Gurnard Cliff and Wood	It provides a wind break for the Village Green and Esplanade area. The wooded landscape setting of Gurnard is also important when viewed from The Solent.	Apart from any redevelopment of the existing house plots along Shore Road, the unstable geology and the importance of the woodland in providing a strong landscape setting for Gurnard precludes any

	<p>This is moderate quality landscape because of its elevated woodland, geological interest and limited views.</p>	<p>development.</p>
<p>7. Jordan Valley</p>	<p>Some of the most important public views in the Parish of Gurnard are to be seen in the Jordan Valley area. This is a good quality landscape, with lovely views west from Baring Road between Woodvale Road and Tuttons Hill to Gurnard village across the small scale Jordan Valley clearly and emphatically define Gurnard as a separate village and community.</p> <p>The Jordan Valley clearly provides the landscape setting for Gurnard village and for the western side of Cowes.</p>	<p>Any development within the Jordan Valley LCA would lead to further serious erosion of its small scale landscape. There are mostly only two fields separating Gurnard village and Cowes at many points along the valley below Tuttons Hill. In the valley above Tuttons Hill there is only one field separating Gurnard village from the Place Road development.</p> <p>Any further development within the Jordan Valley LCA would easily lead to the coalescence of Gurnard village and Cowes.</p>
<p>8. East Gurnard Cliff and Wood</p>	<p>This is an important high quality landscape because of its woodland and steep hillside location. It provides a landscape setting for all the adjacent development and an important backdrop to all the waterborne activities on The Solent.</p>	<p>There are no development proposals in this area because of its important landscape role, its high visibility particularly when viewed from The Solent, and its unstable geology.</p>

9. Cowes Plateau	The development of Cowes covers most of the plateau.	The small section located within Gurnard Parish is fully developed so there are no development proposals.
10. The Solent	The Solent LCA has an outstanding landscape character and makes a major contribution to the landscape character of Gurnard Parish in so many ways. This influence gets stronger the nearer all of Gurnard's landscape character areas get to The Solent.	There are no development proposals because of the exceptional positive impact of The Solent Landscape Character Area in Gurnard Parish.

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY FOR GURNARD PARISH LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**



**Photo1** Gurnard Village sign on Woodvale Road



**Photo 2** Thorness Valley looking east to Rew Street Plateau from Great



**Photo 3** Southern end of the Rew Street Plateau looking north from Hillis Farm



**Photo 4** Gurnard Luck Valley and Rew Street Plateau looking west from



**Photo 5** Rew Street Landslip looking north-east from Thorness Bay



**Photo 6** Gurnard Luck Valley from Rew Street looking north-east to Gurnard Pines and adjacent woodlands



**Photo 7** Lower Gurnard Luck Valley and Rew Street looking south-west from Cockleton Lane



**Photo 8** Lower Gurnard Luck Valley and Gurnard from Rew Street looking east



**Photo 9** Lower Gurnard Luck Valley and The Solent from Cockleton Lane looking west



**Photo 10** Gurnard Pines Holiday Village



**Photo 11** Cockleton Farm from Cockleton Lane looking east



**Photo 12** Gurnard Luck Valley and The Solent from Church Road looking west



**Photo 13** Gurnard Luck Valley & The Solent from Solent View Road looking west



**Photo 14** Gurnard Plateau from the southern edge of Gurnard looking south-west to the Cockleton Lane development site 1 on the western half of the field



**Photo 15** Gurnard seafront, Gurnard Cliff and Wood, and East Gurnard Cliff and Wood from near Marsh Road looking north-east



**Photo 16** Jordan Valley, Gurnard and All Saints Church from Tuttons Hill looking west



**Photo 17** Jordan Valley from Tuttons Hill looking north-east towards Baring Road and Cowes



**Photo 18** Jordan Valley from Baring Road looking south-west to Tuttons Hill



**Photo 19** Jordan Valley from Baring Road looking west towards Worsley Road



**Photo 20** Jordan Valley from the Gurnard Plateau looking north-east to the western edge of Cowes



**Photo 21** The Pig Farm from Baring Road looking west



**Photo 22** East Gurnard Cliff and Wood from Gurnard Heights footpath



**Photo 23** East Gurnard Cliff and Wood and The Solent from Prince's Esplanade looking north-east



**Photo 24** Western edge of Cowes from Baring Road looking north



**Photo 25** Gurnard from The Solent looking south-west



**Photo 26** Gurnard Plateau and Upper Jordan Valley from the south east edge of



**Photo 27** Cockleton Farm immediately north of Northwood from Cockleton Lane looking east