

Isle of Wight Council

Gurnard Neighbourhood Development Plan Adoption Environmental Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following a positive result in the referendum held on 7 September 2017, the Isle of Wight Council 'made' the Gurnard Neighbourhood Development Plan (Gurnard NDP) part of the Isle of Wight Council's Development Plan on 11 September 2016.
- 1.2 In accordance with Regulations 16(3) and (4) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 this statement has been produced, which sets out:
- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Gurnard NDP;
 - How the environmental report has been taken into account;
 - How consultation responses have been taken into account;
 - The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as 'made', in the light of the other reasonable alternatives; and
 - The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme

2. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Gurnard NDP

- 2.1 The Sustainability Assessment (SA) Report¹ for the Gurnard NDP sets out the baseline information about the Parish of Gurnard as the Neighbourhood Plan Area. It identifies the environmental and sustainability issues affecting the plan area, both now and in the future.
- 2.2 In addition to the baseline information, the SA Report identifies the key plans, policies and guidance that have influenced the content of the Gurnard NDP. This has enabled sustainability issues affecting the Neighbourhood Plan Area to be identified.
- 2.3 This has included environmental issues. The issues that were identified informed the sustainability objectives, against which the options for the Gurnard NDP were assessed. Having a number of objectives that reflected current environmental issues ensured that the most sustainable options were generally the most beneficial/least detrimental in environmental, economic and social terms. The identification of environmental issues, as well as economic and social issues, also helped shape the policy requirements of the Gurnard NDP.
- 2.4 The Examiner in her report noted that

"The Gurnard Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed by means of a Sustainability Statement, this forms part of the Sustainability Assessment and Screening Reports for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment. The conclusion of this process was that the principles of Sustainable Development required in the NPPF have been taken into account in the development of the plan and its policies and where issues have been identified they were addressed by revisions to the document prior to submission. I

¹ incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment

am satisfied that the Gurnard Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications addresses the sustainability issues adequately”.

- 2.5 A Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report into the Gurnard NDP was also undertaken, in accordance with the Habitat Regulations, to demonstrate that the policies in the plan do not harm European designated sites for nature conservation. The conclusion of the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report was that a HRA would not be required.

3. How the Environmental Report (Sustainability Report) has been taken into account

- 3.1 The SA has contributed to the development of the Gurnard NDP by providing an assessment of the policy options considered as well as the emerging policies of the plan. The SA demonstrates how sustainability considerations have been taken into account and provides an audit trail and formal statement on the consideration and assessment of all policy options.
- 3.2 The SA was prepared by the qualifying body (Gurnard Parish Council) alongside the Gurnard NDP. It was reflected within and supported the draft Gurnard NDP that was subjected to public consultation both at the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre Submission Stage and the Regulation 16 Publicity Period conducted by the Isle of Wight Council as the Local Planning Authority.
- 3.3 The draft policies included within the Pre Submission Regulation 14 and the Publicity Period at Regulation 16 stage were analysed against the sustainability objectives. This involved assessing the impacts in the short, medium and long-term as well as any cumulative, secondary and synergistic impacts.
- 3.4 The SA concluded that the implementation of the Gurnard Neighbourhood Development Plan will result in no negative impact on local sustainability objectives within Gurnard Parish. It also determined that implementing the plan would result in appropriate sustainable development in Gurnard, thereby contributing and conforming to the Island Plan and National Planning Policy Framework.

4. How consultation responses have been taken into account

- 4.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that the authorities referred to in article 6(3) shall be consulted for a screening opinion. In England the key bodies are the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England. Opinions were sought at the screening opinion stage and at the pre submission and submission stage of the proposed Gurnard NDP.
- 4.2 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive also requires the public to have an early and effective opportunity within appropriate timeframes to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme, and the accompanying Environmental Report, before the adoption of the plan or programme or its submission to the legislative procedure. This was done at the Regulation 14 and 16² stages of the proposed Gurnard NDP, and information relating to this is set out in Gurnard Parish Council’s submitted Consultation Statement.

² Of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

- 4.3 The Sustainability Appraisal and policies within the Gurnard NDP were amended to take into account representations received.
- 5. The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as ‘made’, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives**
- 5.1 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes 2004 (12) (2) requires environmental reports to examine reasonable alternatives for the plan or programme whilst taking into account the objectives and scope of the plan or programme. This statement is required to set out the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as ‘made’ in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with.
- 5.2 The Gurnard NDP has been ‘made’ by the Isle of Wight Council, following a decision by the council’s Executive and taking into account the recommendations of a suitably qualified Independent Examiner. No new evidence has been brought to the attention of the Isle of Wight Council since the Examination took place to bring into question those recommendations.
- 5.3 During the neighbourhood planning process three separate consultations were held. The first was that of the Sustainability Screening Report to consider if a Strategic Environmental Assessment was required. The second consultation included the proposed Gurnard NDP with its policies, and thirdly was the formal regulation 16 consultation.
- 6. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme**
- 6.1 The effect of the Gurnard NDP will need to be monitored using the Sustainability Objectives identified contained in the Gurnard NDP SA. Information published by the Isle of Wight Council in its Monitoring Reports, along with information collected by Gurnard Parish Council will assist the Parish Council monitor their plan. The results of this monitoring will then be considered and inform any review of the Gurnard NDP. This will also ensure that any unforeseen effects, which have not been identified in the SA/SEA Report, can be acted upon in a timely manner.