

NEWCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk Gareth Hughes

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AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF NEWCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD AT THE PARISH HALL, NEWCHURCH AT 7.30 PM ON MONDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2021.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Bevan, Blezzard, Davison, Harris, West and Whittaker.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Hughes (Clerk).

7.30pm to 7.45pm time allocated for residents of Newchurch Parish to speak to the Council on Parish matters.

MINUTES

142/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Councillor's Earley and Mosdell.

143/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None

144/21 ISLAND PLANNING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

After due consideration the following comments were agreed to form the basis of the submission to the IW Council -

SECTION 4 ENVIRONMENT (Pages 46-83)

Policy EV1: Conserving and enhancing our historic environment (pages 47-48)

The wording that substantial harm to or loss of grade 2 listed buildings or registered parks or gardens will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances does not go far enough, nor does the wording "wholly exceptional circumstances in the case of scheduled monuments, scheduled wreck sites and Grade 1 and Grade 2* buildings and parks. This potentially provides developers a loophole. There should be a presumption against any development which causes substantial harm or loss of such assets with the penalties for failure to properly maintain stressed.

Policy EV7 – good

Policy EV10: Preserving settlement identity (page 66)

Preservation of the settlement gap between Apse Heath and Lake should be included in this policy together with the gaps between Apse Heath/Winford and Alverstone.

Policy EV12: Dark skies (page 69)

The dark sky park should be extended to include rural communities beyond the south-west of the Island.

Policy EV13: Managing our water resources (page 71)

The wording that development proposals will be expected to conserve and manage water resources by a number of measures is not strong enough. Wording that “development proposals will be required to.....” would be more appropriate with an absolute requirement for rainwater harvesting to be included in all new development.

Policy EV14 (Flood Risk) – needs to be more forceful e.g. “development will not be allowed etc.” rather than the current wording of will expect.

Policy EV19 – supported.

SECTION 5 COMMUNITY (pages 84-114)

Policy C8: Facilitating a blue light hub

A control room receiving all emergency calls for Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard and Lifeboat services should be returned to the Island. When emergency calls are actioned on the mainland lack of local knowledge can result in life-threatening delays.

SECTION 7: HOUSING (pages 128-157)

Policy H1: Planning for housing delivery

We welcome the reduced numbers but question whether even the reduction is deliverable. The unique circumstances of the Island would justify it being treated as an exception from the Government’s methodology for assessing housing numbers.

Policy H4: Infill Opportunities outside settlement boundaries

Policy H4 includes “ a small gap in a row of houses, or an otherwise built-up frontage“ but para 7.44 states “Infill sites are a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage “ with no reference to ‘a row of houses’ i.e. not necessarily ‘built-up frontage’ - which is correct? And how is ‘small’ defined ? Room for a single detached property or a pair of semis.

Policy H5: Delivering affordable housing (page 143)

The private sector will not in itself generate sufficient affordable and social housing needed to meet the Island’s housing needs. The council should therefore investigate the potential use of its borrowing powers whilst interest rates are at a historically low level to finance building council houses and build up a new stock.

In addition, the council should more actively seek to bring long term empty properties back into use and in appropriate cases use its compulsory purchase powers.

Suggest definition of “mortgage or rent should cost no more than 30% of average Island gross household income (~£635 per month).

Policy H7 - “in perpetuity” supported as will help to keep a stock of affordable housing.

SECTION 8: ECONOMY (pages 158-190)

Policy E1: Supporting and growing our economy (page 159) ad Policy EA6: Employment allocation at Sandown Airport, Sandown (page 168)

We are concerned that Isle of Wight Airport, Sandown is not an appropriate site for B2, general industrial or B8 distribution and storage use although it may be suitable for Class E, office use. We would not wish to see any developments at the site which could be detrimental to either the recreational use of the airport or the adjacent caravan and camping site which is a valuable part of the Island’s tourist economy.

Policy E4 Supporting the rural economy - section b. - ?principal not principle?

SECTION 9: TRANSPORT (pages 191-202)

Policy T1: A better connected Island

The road junctions at Branstone Cross and Sandown Airport should be included on the list for key infrastructure improvements.

Policy T2: Sustainable public transport

Every parish on the Island should be served by public transport and in rural areas local schemes should be developed in partnership with parish councils.

Policy T3: Cross-Solent transport

We need greater regulation on prices, frequency of service and connectivity. The council should press the Government and Transport for the South-east to achieve this.

Policy T4: Supporting our railway network

In addition to the proposals set out we would support the establishment of a rail link or preferably light tram from Sandown to Newport.

Policy T5: Electric charging points

There should be at least one publicly accessible vehicle charging point in every parish on the Island. The council should work with the parishes to attract funding for charging points to be located at parish owned sites.

OVERALL / GENERAL

Like / Support:

1. Compared with number produced by standard national methodology, reduction in total number of dwellings over period of the plan and hence dwellings per year (dpa).
2. Introduction and enforcement of 'Hard' local settlement boundaries.
3. Protection of the environment.
4. Promotion of employment opportunities.
5. Inclusion of notion of 'in perpetuity' for affordable housing.

Challenge:

1. Underlying methodology for number of dwellings is irrational – surely should be based upon best available projected demographic data.
2. Explanation given (“Introducing their professional skills and spending power will support the provision of, and improvement to, services and improve the prosperity of the Island.”) for the perceived need to encourage ‘professionals’ and ‘high-earning’ new residents to move to the Island (see para 2.36 & especially 2.37) and the ‘need’ for ‘aspirational’ housing.

Already have sufficient aspirational housing – need affordable housing

145/21 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

The Chairman had brought colour samples for the proposed bridge –

RESOLVED: That green be chosen as the colour for the bridge with a standard coloured platform.

The meeting closed at 8.28pm

CHAIRMAN

18TH OCTOBER 2021