

Sandwick Community Council Area Statement

See *Sandwick Proposals Map*

Background

1.1 Sandwick Community Council area covers the east coast of the south Mainland of Shetland. It is approximately 14 miles (22km.) south of Lerwick and 12 Miles (19km.) north of Sumburgh. As a result, it has become home to many people working in each area. Sandwick is a thriving community, with the Community Council winning the 1999 Community of the Year Award in recognition of the excellent quality of life on offer in the village.

1.2 The uninhabited island of Mousa with the stunning Mousa Broch lies to the east of Sandwick. A seasonal ferry runs between Wick of Sandsayre and West Ham on Mousa. There are numerous pleasure and wildlife-watching tours to the island.

Planning Context

2.1 The previous Local Plan that covered the Sandwick Community Council area was the West, South and Central Interim Local Plan, which was approved in 1992. Local planning aims for Sandwick are:

- **To help sustain and enhance community well-being**
- **To help promote and encourage sustainable economic growth**
- **To develop the tourist potential of the area.**
- **To conserve and enhance the natural and built environment.**

Natural and Built Environment

3.1 This is an area of softly undulating land that runs along the east coast of the Shetland Mainland. There are large bays at Hoswick and Sandwick, which are sheltered by the headlands of Cumliewick and Noness and at Channerwick.

3.2 Sandwick is a dispersed community, which consists of numerous clusters of

buildings scattered around the lowland landscape. The largest of these are at Setter, Leebitton, Central, Stove, Swinister, (Brentfield, Veester Hill) and Hoswick.

3.3 The main area of nature conservation interest in the Sandwick Community Council area is the island of Mousa with its rocky coastline and low cliffs. Separated from Mainland by Mousa Sound, the island is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Protection Area (SPA) for ornithological reasons. The coastline of Mousa and the surrounding sea is also identified as a cSAC for common seals and its reefs and caves. In 2001, Mousa was also declared a RSPB reserve. Noness and Cumliewick headlands are also important features in the Sandwick landscape. Noness is also noted for seabirds. Many locally important sites are detailed in "Living Sandwick", the local Biodiversity Action Plan. The Channerwick, Hoswick and Sandwick area up to the Meal brig experienced a severe flood in 2003. This affected areas that had never experienced flooding before changing the perspective on future developments and land management.

• **Built Heritage**

3.4 The Sandwick Community Council area has 5 Listed Buildings, one of which is the category A Mousa Broch, and two Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the care of the Scottish Ministers. The others are Sand Lodge and Sandwick Church and Manse, all of which are classified as category B. Also listed in category B is Sandsayre Pier. Currently, there are 29 known archaeological sites in the area with 3 that are scheduled.

3.5 The areas of **Leebitton** and **Hoswick**, were suggested as potential Conservation Areas in the West, South and Central Local Plan. The areas are notable for their traditional form and appearance and for the fact that recent building is mostly sympathetic to the original style of each area.



Sand Lodge and Mousa

3.6 At Leebitton, the community is working to reach a solution, which will secure and preserve the 150 year old stone-built Sandsayre Pier, which was designed by Stevenson. Sandlodge is also listed and the neighbouring walled fields are also a particularly striking feature of the area. At Hoswick, there are many examples of the two-storied, two or three-bay croft houses that are particularly associated with the district. Enhancement proposals in these areas would seek to encourage the restoration of traditional features and building styles where these have been lost. It is proposed that the possibility of formal designation as Conservation Areas should be considered in consultation with the communities involved.

- **Local Protection Areas (LPAs)**

3.6 Two LPAs have been identified by the Community Council and local residents, one on the land between Hoswick and Stove to prevent the two settlements joining together. The other being the coastal area lying north of Leebitton and east of the road, which is identified to protect the views of the sea. Although not a LPA Sannick is recognised as a distinct settlement and any development needs to be seriously examined.

Coastal Management

4.1 The coast is rocky, fringed by low cliffs and bedrock platforms, with numerous pools and some caves on Mousa. The island and the surrounding waters are designated as a cSAC (candidate Special Area of Conservation) for its marine interest primarily in recognition of the large number of common seals in the area.

Water and Drainage

5.1 Sandwick’s water supply comes from the Sandy Loch Treatment Works in Lerwick.

The flood of 2003 cut off the supply. The likelihood of this happening again could be reduced if a backup feed in point could be established at the Sandwick end thus avoiding the vulnerable pipe around Channerwick.

5.2 There are small wastewater collection (i.e. drainage) schemes at Hoswick, and at Beachcroft and Sandsayre, Sandwick. The tank at Beachcroft was upgraded in 1998. The tank at Hoswick was upgraded in 2003 after the flood. Due to the scattered nature of the remaining houses all have private septic tanks. The main area not served by a drainage scheme is in the vicinity of the Central.

Waste Management

6.1 Rural skips are available on a rota basis at various locations throughout the area, giving residents convenient disposal points for bulky household items. There is a recycling collection point at the Central crossroads.

Energy

7.1 Sandwick Social Club currently have a 15kW aerogenerator under construction. Provision of sources of renewable energy for other community facilities will be considered. One domestic aerogenerator exists in Hoswick. There is potential for further domestic scale renewable energy projects in this area.

Minerals

8.1 Currently there are no mineral extractions taking place in the Sandwick Community Council area. Nevertheless, there has been considerable mining activity in the past with areas of Sandwick being mined for copper. There is also evidence of talc quarrying in the hills between Cunningsburgh and Sandwick that has taken place since Viking times. Catpund quarry has been used recently but currently it is not a working quarry although an access road was built in the

1990's with the intention to develop a talc quarry.

8.2 Any mineral proposal will be considered in line with the Shetland-wide policies contained within the Shetland Development Plan.

Business and Industry

9.1 Sandwick is increasingly becoming a commuter village although the traditional industries of agriculture and knitwear are still an important factor in retaining the local population. New business activity will be encouraged in the area in accordance with the policies in the Shetland Development Plan.

- **Service Sector Jobs**

9.2 The Junior High School and adjacent swimming pool are significant employers, helping to sustain the village, although many of the employees live outwith the Community Council area.

- **Industrial Estate**

9.3 Sandwick's industrial area is at Broonies Taing, a former oil industry supply base, consisting of a collection of large sheds used for storage and a pier, currently in poor condition, for the loading and offloading of bulk cargo. This area is under-utilised at present but offers considerable potential for further industrial development. The Broonies Taing Pier Trust was set up to provide support for local businesses, individuals and groups.

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Broonies Taing

9.4 Planning permission was granted in 2001 to develop a Cod Hatchery in one of the main buildings. Considerable investment is now taking place in the

Hatchery which is a key factor in Shetland's aquaculture industry.

Tourism

10.1 The tourist industry has considerable potential for growth in Sandwick. There are self-catering units, a bed and breakfast, and one hotel, which is located in Hoswick a few minutes walk away from the local Visitor Centre and Café.

10.2 Mousa is undoubtedly Sandwick's greatest tourist attraction. The island is a RSPB reserve.

10.3 During the summer months regular boat trips are laid on to Mousa from the pier at Sandsayre.

10.4 Shetland Amenity Trust plan to install an Interpretive plaque at the North Sandwick Junction which will provide information for visitors on the geography of the area.

Development Opportunity

The Sandwick Social and Economic Development Company has carried out a series of visitor, conservation and community projects in the area, including:

- The refurbishment and conversion of the boat sheds at the Pier into a museum/interpretative centre and waiting room for people awaiting the ferry to Mousa.
- The extension and refurbishment of the visitor centre at Hoswick, to include a small wireless museum, offices, improved visitor interpretation and tea-room.

Project currently being developed:

- New displays in Hoswick Visitors Centre focussing on 'Land, Sea and People' from this area. The Hoswick Whale Case of 1888 will be a highlight of the interpretation.
- Improved marketing and promotion of the area.
- Development of merchandise specific to the area.

Based on the mining heritage in the area, Sandwick Community Council and Sandwick Social and Economic Development Company would welcome an opportunity to be part of the GeoPark bid, being planned by SIC

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that ways and means of raising the quality of resources and facilities for the benefit of visitors and the local community, should be taken forward in consultation with Shetland Enterprise Company, SIC Economic Development Unit and other appropriate agencies.

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Sandsayre Pier

Commercial Development

11.1 A significant commercial development in Sandwick is centred in the Cod Hatchery at Broonies Taing. Sandwick Baking Company's shop and post office have recently undergone major improvements. The Bakery continues successfully.

11.2 Childcare

Services are provided by Central Private Nursery and Out of School Care, Childminders and Nursery in Sandwick School.

Transport

12.1 Sandwick has good road links to Shetland's main road network, particularly the A970 to Lerwick, Sumburgh and Sullom Voe.

• Public Transport

12.2 Sandwick has relatively good public transport links to both Lerwick and Sumburgh as it is on the main bus route from Lerwick to Sumburgh Airport. The bus service is made more useful in that there are about half a dozen stops throughout the village enabling people to catch the bus relatively close to their own homes.

• Road Improvements

12.3 Improvements are needed to the road from Rompa junction to main A970. This will remove the severe bend that causes problems in winter for the bus service and others.

Population and Housing

13.1 The population of Sandwick is fairly stable, staying at around 880 for the past 20 years. Despite this, if current trends continue, the population is projected to decline to 810 by the year 2011, although this has more to do with an overall projected decline in Shetland as a whole.

13.2 Hjalmland Housing Association are developing 10 houses in the community. A number of private houses are under construction or are being planned. The numbers provide a significant increase of building activity over the last decade.

13.3 There are approximately 420 dwellings in the Community Council Area. Shetland Islands Council owns 66 houses and 12 sheltered housing units.

13.4 As part of the Council's rolling programme, environmental improvement works are scheduled for **Brakefield Road** in 2007/8.

- **Housing Zones**

13.5 Within the framework of the Local Plan housing policies, (**LP HOU4**) . The majority of the settlements in Sandwick are within a Zone 2 area where permission for new houses will be favourably considered. The rest of the Sandwick Community Council area is identified as Zone 4 where new houses are strictly controlled.

13.6 Further details of the housing zone requirements are set out in policy **LP HOU4** and shown on the Proposals Map.

Community Services and Facilities

14.1 Sandwick Community Council area is well served by community facilities. Sandwick Junior High school provides modern education facilities from nursery age right up to and including secondary four. It has a combined school roll of 300 pupils (181 secondary, 103 primary and 16 nursery) in 2006.

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Sandwick Junior High School

- **Sandwick Swimming Pool**

14.2 The adjacent Swimming Pool and School Games Hall are well used by both the school and the community in the south mainland. Ness United Football team is a major user.

- **Opportunity for Development**

14.3 A need has been identified in the south mainland for a fitness suite to be provided at the South Mainland Pool.



14.4 There is a sailing club based at Sandsayre and there are also two churches and one graveyard.

14.5. There is a Community hall at Stove, as well as the Social Club and Youth and Community Centre at Central with adjacent play-park. The multi-use pitch at Central has recently been improved to a high standard.

14.6 The development of skateboard facilities is being actively pursued by Sandwick Youth and Community Centre. The objective is to provide a mobile unit of skateboarding resources.

- **Public Toilet at Sandwick Play Park**

14.7 Planning permission has been granted to provide a public toilet. A working group is now seeking to identify potential funding and develop procedures for how the community can best operate such a facility.

- **Environment**

14.8 Following the floods and landslides in September 2003:

- The area from Swinister to Hoswick has subsequently been the subject of a long-term project of development, with installation of footbridges and planting of bushes.
- Shetland Crofting and Farming Advisory Group is working with local groups to support the continuing development.
- Landowners in the area are co-operating in the development of land management scheme, which will enable a footpath to be developed. It is proposed, in the long term, that this path will link with a network of footpaths around the coast.
- At Channerwick, the footbridge, which was washed away in the floods, will be replaced by SIC.
- Shetland Amenity Trust is developing a path from Sandsayre to Burland.
- These developments form part of "Living Sandwick", Sandwick's local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Websites:

www.mousaboattrips.co.uk

www.sycc.shetland.co.uk

