

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 both Hoswick and Sandwick which are sheltered by the headlands of Cumlewick and Noness.

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, Leebiton, 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 Cumlewick headlands are also important features in the Sandwick landscape. Noness is also noted for seabirds.

• Built Heritage

3.4 The Sandwick Community Council area has 4 Listed Buildings, one of which is the category A Mousa Broch, also a Scheduled Ancient Monument 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. 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 Leebiton, Sandlodge is listed and it is hoped that the pier can be restored. 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.

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 is taken from the Sandwick Water Treatment Works that sources its water from both the Burn of Greystanes and the Burn of Channerwick. These sources will be discontinued when the new pipeline taking water from Lerwick's Sandy Loch reservoir to serve Sandwick and the South Mainland is commissioned in 2002.

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. There is considerable pressure on both the Sannock and Hoswick drainage schemes which are working at capacity, Scottish Water are not permitting any new connections prior to the facilities being upgraded. Due to the scattered nature of

the remaining houses all have private septic tanks.

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 for glass at the garage at the Central crossroads.

Energy

7.1 . The one domestic aerogenerator that existed in Sandwick was removed approximately a year ago. Although there is no longer an active wind generator in the area there is potential for 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.

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 only remaining 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 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.



Broonies Taing

9.4 Planning permission was granted in 2001 to develop a Cod Hatchery in one of the main buildings. It is estimated that this proposal could generate up to 12 local jobs.

Tourism

10.1 The tourist industry has considerable potential for growth in Sandwick. There are several B&Bs and self-catering units 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. With the island being declared a RSPB reserve, there is now tremendous potential to improve visitor interpretation and facilities to help increase visitor numbers.

10.3 During the summer months regular boat trips are laid on to Mousa from the pier at Sandsayre. The local community has ambitious plans to develop the area and improve visitor facilities.

Development Opportunity

The Sandwick Social and Economic Development Company propose to carry out a series of visitor, conservation and community projects in the area. Projects include:

- The renovation and conservation of the historic Sandsayre Pier.
- 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.

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that ways and means of bringing forward improvements to visitor interpretation and facilities are investigated with the local community, the RSPB and other funding and interested parties.



Sandsayre Pier

Commercial Development

11.1 There is little commercial development in the area. In recent years there have been a number of closures that have hit the local community hard, including the Central Bakery. Notwithstanding this, the Sandwick area still has one shop, a post office at Hoswick and one bakery still in operation.

11.2 The Central Bakery building is now operating as a private children's nursery.

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 The Council intends to undertake improvements to a section of road between **Bronies Taing junction** and **Hoswick** bends in 2001/2002.

12.4 The Council intends to carry out improvements to footways and minor road improvements between Setter and Central in 2002/2003.

- **Traffic Management**

12.5 The Council introduced speed limits within the boundary of Sandwick during 2001.

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 There has been a steady increase in new housing in the area, with 25 new houses built between 1994 and 2000, an average of 4 a year.

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

are no Hjaltland Housing Association houses in the Community Council Area.

13.4 As part of the Council's rolling programme, environmental improvement works are scheduled for **Park Wynd** in 2003/4 and **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 246 pupils (162 secondary, 81 primary and 21 nursery) in 2001.



Sandwick Junior High School

14.2 The adjacent Swimming Pool and School Games Hall are well used by both the school and local community.



Sandwick Swimming Pool

14.3 The fifteen bed Overtonlea Care Centre at Levenwick run by Shetland Welfare Trust, offers long-term and respite residential care and day care facilities.



Overtonlea

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 Centre at Central with nearby play-park and a poor quality football pitch.

14.6 The local community has identified a need for improvements to the outdoor sports facilities. Suggested improvements are a multi-use pitch at the site of the existing poor quality field together with a junior practice pitch and the development of skateboard facilities and public toilets.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that ways and methods of bringing forward the improvement of the outdoor sports facilities be investigated with the local community, funding bodies and other interested parties.

Websites:

www.mousaboattrips.co.uk

www.sycc.shetland.co.uk

