



Key Messages, Issues and Options

Consultation

AUGUST 2013

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Preface

BACKGROUND

The Environment Department began the formal review of the Urban Area Plan (Review no.1) (UAP) and the Rural Area Plan (Review no. 1) (RAP) in January 2012. These existing Development Plans need to be comprehensively reviewed to ensure that land use policies comply with the Strategic Land Use Plan, which was approved by the States in November 2011, and so that they can respond to the current and emerging land use issues over the next ten years.

A new Development Plan will have a vital role in the Island's future by providing for the development it needs to maintain its economic prosperity and social and environmental needs whilst ensuring that it remains a unique and attractive place in which to live, work and to visit.

The Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP)

The Strategic Land Use Plan sets out the spatial strategy for Guernsey. It provides both general guidance and specific direction to the Environment Department on the important planning issues affecting all sectors of the population, the economy and the environment of Guernsey when preparing the Development Plan. The Plan must be prepared in conformity with the aims and objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan.

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Development concentrated within and around the edges of the urban centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale with some limited development within and around the edges of the other main parish or local centres to enable community growth and the reinforcement of sustainable centres.

Box 1: The approved spatial strategy as set out in the Strategic Land Use Plan

CORE OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC LAND USE PLAN

To improve the quality of life of Islanders and to support a successful economy while protecting the Island's environment, unique cultural identity and rich heritage through spatial planning policies that enable:

- I. a diversified, broadly balanced economy with high levels of employment and a flexible labour market
- II. the fostering and promotion of an inclusive and caring society which supports sustainable communities and removes barriers to social inclusion and social justice
- III. levels of housing availability, quality and affordability to be improved, enabling people to help themselves become independent where possible
- IV. the maintenance of a healthy society that safeguards vulnerable people, maintains Guernsey as a safe and secure place to live and provides for a wide range of leisure opportunities
- V. the wise management of Island resources such as land, air quality, energy and water
- VI. support to be given to corporate objectives and associated policies relating to the conservation of energy, reduction of our carbon footprint, development of renewable energy and adaptation to climate change
- VII. the protection of local biodiversity and the countryside
- VIII. the enhancement of the culture and identity of Guernsey by protecting local heritage and promoting high standards of new development
- IX. the management of solid and liquid waste
- X. the maintenance and enhancement of modern key strategic infrastructure

The order of listing of these core objectives reflects the arrangement of the objectives within the States Strategic Plan and they are therefore not listed in order of priority.

Box 2: Core Objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan

Public engagement

When reviewing Development Plans the Environment Department is legally required to undertake a minimum level of community involvement. However, the Department has committed to exceed the minimum requirements and to engage with, and inform, the public during this plan review process so that individuals and organisations have a range of opportunities to get involved in the plan making process. Further information about how to be involved is available in our “Community Guide to the Plan Review” which can be downloaded from www.gov.gg

The first stage of public consultation

The first stage of public consultation in the plan review process took place in early 2012 and ‘threw the net wide’ to inform as many people as possible about the review and to seek their views and opinions on a wide range of topics. This first consultation was supported by six topic papers, produced by the Environment Department, to help stimulate discussion and to get people thinking about the implications of the new strategic policies and spatial strategy and about how much, where, and in what form, development on the Island should take place over the next ten years. The results of the first stage public consultation are available in a report which can be downloaded from www.gov.gg

What have we done since the first public consultation?

Since the first public consultation the Environment Department has been engaged in an intensive period of evidence gathering so that the future social, economic and environmental needs of the Island can be better understood and so that future policies can respond to current and emerging land use issues. The results of the first public consultation, together with important information compiled by the Environment Department and gathered from States Departments and other relevant bodies, have contributed to a series of evidence reports which will help to inform future land use policy for the Island.

The purposes of the second public consultation

The Environment Department is carrying out this second phase of public consultation, which will run until 13th September 2013, to give feedback generally on some of the evidence it has gathered and to maintain its commitment to keep the public informed about the progress of the plan review.

Although, in some subject areas, the Department’s research and the responses to the first stage of public consultation have provided the information that is required, for other topics a number of key issues and messages have emerged, principally in the areas of:

- *Main and Local Centres;*
- *Housing;*
- *Employment;*
- *The Natural and Built environment; and,*
- *Open Space and Recreation.*

This consultation will outline these key issues and messages. Possible options for tackling some of the issues are suggested, however it is important to clarify that these have been included to stimulate thought and discussion and do not represent any agreed course of action or policy direction.

This public consultation is also an opportunity for the Environment Department to launch a 'Call for Sites'. This is an important opportunity for residents, land owners and organisations to bring to the Department's attention land which is located within and around the edges of main and local centres, and so fits the spatial strategy of the Strategic Land Use Plan, and which may, in principle, be available for development. Details of the 'Call for Sites' and how to inform the Environment Department of potential sites can be found in a guide which can be downloaded from www.gov.gg

How can you be involved and what is happening next?

This booklet summarises the key issues and messages which have emerged in the areas of Main & Local Centres, Housing, Employment, the Natural and Built Environment and Open Space & Recreation as well as possible options for tackling some of the issues. If you would like more information or background about any of the key issues or messages raised you can find the detailed evidence reports, which have been produced by the Environment Department, on its website at www.gov.gg. These provide useful reference, survey results and the facts and figures which have informed the booklet. Your feedback and thoughts on the emerging key issues and messages as well as possible options will provide valuable information which will help the Environment Department to formulate effective land use policies in the future.

There will be media coverage of the launch of this public consultation and the Department's staff will be available at various locations on the Island between 29th July 2013 and 10th August 2013 and would be pleased to meet you to answer any questions, to explain the plan review process, how you can be involved and to discuss any views you may have. Details of the locations and times will be posted on the Department's web site or please telephone the Department on (+44) 01481 717200 for more information.

How to contact us

Please email the Department with any comments you may have on issues raised in the attached booklet or the plan review generally by 5pm on 13th September 2013 at planreview@gov.gg or write to us at Review of the Island Development Plans, The Environment Department, Sir Charles Frossard House, La Charroterie, St Peter Port Guernsey, GY1 1FH.

What happens next ?

The Environment Department will prepare and publish a Draft Island Development Plan in the Spring of 2014, based on work carried out and consultation responses gained from the previous stages. Representations both for and against the proposed policies, can be submitted to the Planning Inquiry and will be considered by an independent Planning Inspector. The Public Inquiry is expected to be held in Autumn 2014 and subsequently, the Draft Plan together with any proposed changes will be considered by the States in 2015.

If you would like any further information please telephone us on (+44) 01481 717200 and ask for the Forward Planning Team or visit us between 29th July 2013 and 10th August 2013 at various Island venues which can be found on our website.

1

Main & Local Centres

KEY ISSUES

Where might the Local Centres be located?

What are the visions for Main Centres?



MAIN & LOCAL CENTRES

BACKGROUND TO LOCAL CENTRES

The spatial strategy in the Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) approved by the States in 2011, allows for some limited development within and around the edges of local centres to enable community growth and the reinforcement of sustainable centres. Local centres can play a key role in providing social and recreational facilities (**Policy SLP10**); in providing housing to meet identified needs (for example, providing for older residents to be able to stay in their local communities) (**Policy LP5**); and some local centres may also play a role in providing employment opportunities, where appropriate. The Local Centres will be identified through the Development Plan process based on an assessment of services and facilities (sustainability indicators) in the locality (Policy LP10).

What you have told us so far

The first stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans asked what services and facilities, or indicators, should be included for the assessment of Local Centres and what the role of local centres should be. Respondents generally felt that the indicators identified in the consultation were about right, but some additions were suggested, such as pre-schools/nurseries and dentists, leisure facilities, existing concentrations of population and transport hubs.

What we have learnt so far

Following on from the first stage public consultation the Department has developed the assessment criteria into a definition of a sustainable local centre in Guernsey and has applied them across the island. A sustainable local centre has a clear and identifiable mixed-use centre containing at least five of the following:

- *A general convenience shop selling fresh produce;*
- *Other shop*
- *A post office;*
- *A doctor's surgery;*
- *A primary school;*
- *A bank;*
- *A cash point;*
- *A play area or open amenity area, such as a public park, garden or beach;*
- *Public house, café or restaurant;*
- *Other services (such as hairdressers or estate agent);*
- *Place of worship;*
- *Community/Church Hall/Douzaine Room; or*
- *Leisure/Recreation facilities.*

They also have:

- *A bus service (at least one bus every hour);*
- *A cross section of the residential population within 420m (5 minute walk), or 250m (3 minute walk) in urban areas;*
- *Safe walking routes to the centre and a high quality pedestrian environment within the centre.*

Application of the assessment criteria across the Island identified the following ten centres as being the most sustainable, and which are therefore under consideration as potential Local Centres:

- *Cobo;*
- *Forest;*
- *L'Islet;*
- *St Martin's;*
- *St Peter's ;*
- *Trinity Square;*
- *Longstore;*
- *The Rohais;*
- *L'Aumone; and*
- *Capelles.*

Not all the potential Local Centres have the same levels of opportunity or need for change. For example, it may be desirable to just support and maintain the level of sustainability of those centres already served by a variety of shops and services and supported by a large residential population. In other Local Centres, there may be an opportunity to improve their sustainability by improving the range of shops, services or employment opportunities, improving the public realm or increasing their residential population. This will need to be balanced against the sensitivity of the Local Centre to change; the willingness of landowners to develop sites within the Local Centre; the capacity for development in the main centres; and other core objectives of the SLUP. For example, protecting the Island's environment, unique cultural identity and rich heritage. Some of the potential Local Centres identified so far fall within the main urban centres. However it has been recognised that they provide services and facilities that support a local neighbourhood and therefore meet the criteria for assessment at this stage.

In order to further assess the scope of Local Centres, as part of the 'Call for Sites' process the Department is inviting the public to tell it about sites that fall within and around these potential Local centres which may be available for development. For full details about the 'Call for Sites' please refer to the Housing section below or refer to the 'Call for Sites' guidance which can be found on the Department's website at www.gov.gg.

The full report of the assessment of potential Local Centres can be viewed on the Departments website at www.gov.gg

BACKGROUND TO MAIN CENTRES

The SLUP recognises that the main centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson's/Vale, are complex places where the needs of modern businesses and retailers need to be balanced with providing culture and leisure facilities and residential opportunities whilst reconciling how people and vehicles move and intersect and our desire to protect and enhance the historic environment (Policies LP6, LP7, LP8, LP9). The SLUP proposes that, in order to promote environmental improvement, including development, appropriate vision documents are prepared for Town and the Bridge involving the users of the main centres, that bring together the opportunities into a clear picture of how the Main Centres may appear in the future and how various agencies can contribute to its successful delivery(Policy LP9).

What you have told us so far

In the first stage of public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans the Department asked about what land uses were thought to be appropriate in Main Centres and how they could work together, how the public realm could be improved, how traffic and parking could be managed, and how other forms of transport could be encouraged. There was a high level of interest from respondents and thoughts fed directly into the process to produce the visions for Town and the Bridge.

What has been done so far

In response to the direction in the SLUP and responses received to the first stage public consultation the Environment Department helped to establish a Visioning Team in May 2012 to prepare and coordinate the delivery of a Vision for Town and the Bridge. The Visioning Team is a group of volunteers representing a cross section of Town and Bridge users including business, residents, tourism,

relevant States Departments, cultural aspects and leisure. The Environment Department is not part of the Visioning Team but has acted as facilitator. The remit of this group is to prepare the Visions and promote them, identify the projects and programmes that will deliver the visions and coordinate action and will include aspects which go beyond land use issues.

In June 2012 a wide range of stakeholders and users of Town and the Bridge attended a Visioning Day to review what they knew about both centres, identifying the best elements and opportunities for improvement. They created their own visions for St Peter Port and The Bridge that focused on the overall look, feel and function of the places and used images from Guernsey and across Europe to represent particular ideas or concepts. The outputs of this day have been refined into a draft Vision document, which is due to be launched later this summer. The Vision, when published, will not be an Environment Department document however the land use aspects of it will be taken into consideration along with other documentation to help us to prepare relevant policies in the new Development Plan for the Main Centres.

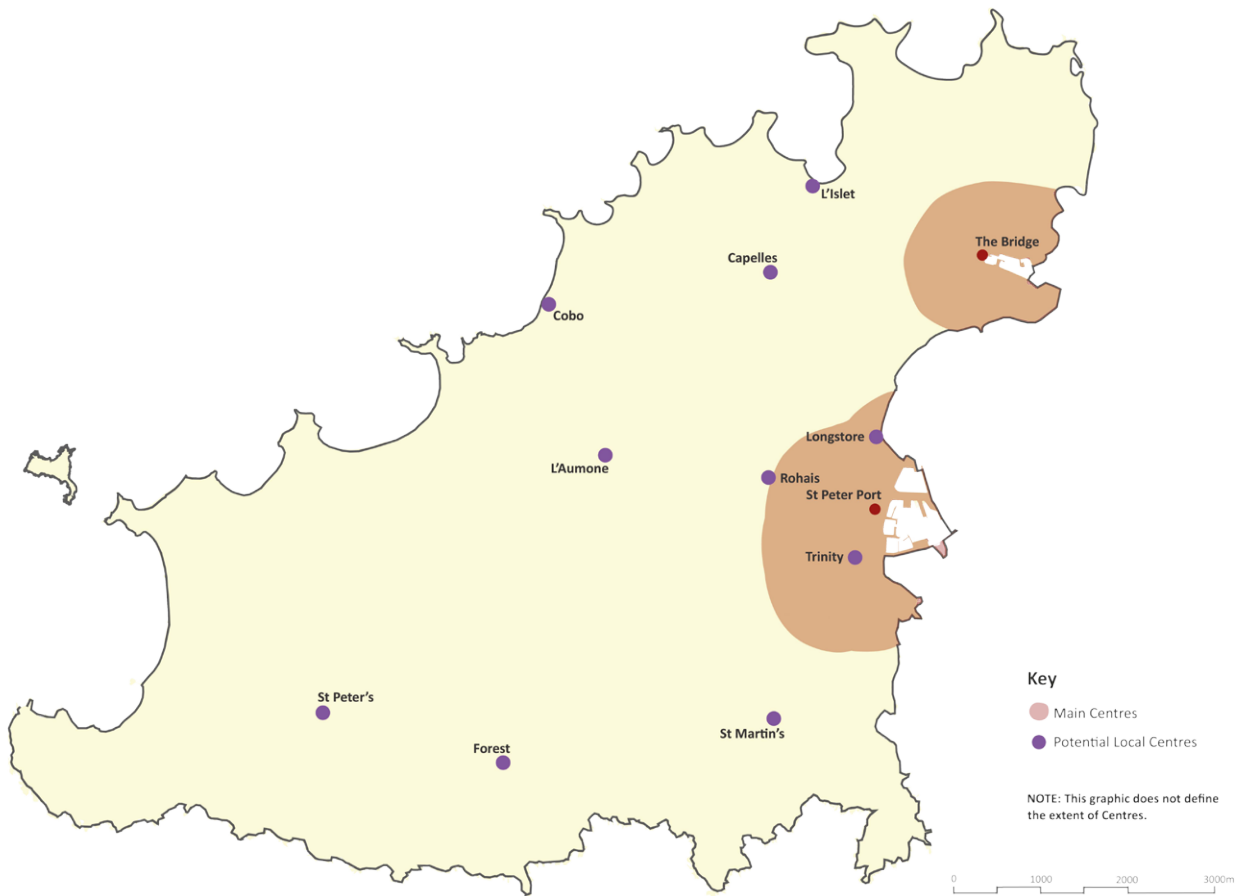


Figure 1: Main Centres and potential Local Centres

2 Housing

KEY ISSUES

How do we make provision for new housing?

How can planning covenants help deliver affordable housing?



HOUSING

BACKGROUND

In preparing the new Island Development Plan, the Environment Department must ensure that there is an appropriate supply of housing to meet the Island's needs. This involves managing where housing can be located, the type and mix of units, and the sources of supply, be it general market, social or specialised housing.

The Strategic Land Use Plan

The Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP), which was approved by the States in 2011, provides the overall direction for housing development on the Island.

Regarding the locations for new housing, the SLUP sets the overall spatial strategy which is to concentrate the majority of new housing development within and around the edges of Main Centres (St Peter Port and St Sampson's / Vale)(policies SLP 15 and LP7) and requires that the existing Housing Target Areas are reviewed to determine how they can contribute to meeting housing supply (Policy SLP14). Additionally the SLUP makes provision for some limited development within and around the edges of Local Centres where this would enable community growth and reinforce their sustainability (Policy SLP16.)

The SLUP requires the supply of houses to meet *all* of the Island's housing needs; this means new homes must be of appropriate sizes and type, as well as mix of tenures (Policy SLP12). Policy SLP17 requires the Development Plan to make provision for a range of social and specialised housing as part of the annual requirement for new homes as set out within Policy SLP13. It also says that appropriate levels of social and/or specialised housing on larger general market sites may be required through planning conditions or covenants.

THE ISLAND REQUIREMENT FOR HOUSING

How much housing is required?

The three Housing Needs Surveys commissioned by the Housing Department since 2001 show a growing requirement for housing on the Island. The most recent Housing Needs Survey (2011) showed that the number of households in need of housing has increased to 451 per year although it is important to note that this figure relates to households and not new dwellings. This requirement can be met by better use of existing housing stock through subdivision, conversion of existing buildings to housing, and bringing vacant stock back into use, as well as building new housing.

The States currently requires the Environment Department to maintain a supply of planning approvals for 300 dwellings per year. Since the adoption of the UAP in 2002, sufficient planning permissions for the creation of homes have existed on a rolling basis to meet this strategic target. However, since the year 2000 the average number of dwellings actually built every year, of any tenure, was just short of 200; since 2005 this has dropped to around 160 dwellings built every year. Whilst this is affected by factors other than the planning process such as access to finance, the capacity of the local building industry and potential for landbanking, it is clear that the Island's housing needs are not being met by supply. The results of the Housing Needs Survey 2011, together with other considerations, will inform the review of the housing target for the Island. This is currently being undertaken by the Housing Department in conjunction with the Environment Department. It is expected to be considered by the States towards the end of 2013 and the decision will inform the review of the Development Plans.

What type of housing is required?

The required tenure (i.e. the ownership arrangement under which someone lives in a dwelling) of those in need of housing varies; the Housing Needs Survey 2011 found that of the 451 households in need of housing every year from 2011 to 2016, 258 (57%) will require some form of affordable housing (158 households requiring social rented accommodation and 100 households requiring partial ownership accommodation). The Survey also found that the majority (74%) of households in need of housing would require smaller dwellings (1 and 2 bed units). This has significant implications for housing land supply.

KEY ISSUE 1

How do we make provision for new housing?

What you have told us so far

The first stage of public consultation for the review of the Development Plans asked about an appropriate approach for identifying sufficient housing land supply. In the responses received, general support was given for a systematic, criteria-based approach, or for the use of a sequential test, to ensure that the most sustainable locations are developed first.

What we propose

The SLUP (Policy SLP13 & SLP14) says that arrangements must be put in place through the Development Plan which ensure that a minimum of five years worth of land for housing is available, and to make adequate provision for housing beyond this period through the review of existing and potential designation of new strategic reserves of housing within and around Main Centres.

Before the end of the first five year period, housing policies in the new Island Development Plan will be reviewed to determine the appropriate amount of housing required for the remaining duration of the Plan.

Under the existing approach to housing land supply, the Island relies solely on windfall sites for housing supply coming forward through enabling policies (unless a strategic need is identified that warrants the release of greenfield land reserved for housing known as Housing Target Areas). Windfall sites are those that have not been identified specifically for housing in a Development Plan, but that come forward for development and receive planning permission by being otherwise consistent with planning policy and other material considerations identified in the Planning Law. Examples include redevelopment or conversion of buildings in other uses (including rural buildings, hotels), redevelopment of car parks, previously developed vacant/derelict land and buildings, redevelopment/subdivision of existing housing and redevelopment of back land/gardens. This is a reactive and unpredictable approach which relies on policies which promote or restrict housing in different areas resulting in the right amount of housing coming through overall. It also means there is less surety of whether landowners can or will develop their sites, as the Department only responds to landowners as and when they bring sites forward for development.

To meet the aims of the SLUP, the proposed new approach to housing land supply is to identify a five year land supply primarily through the ‘allocation’ of housing sites within and around Main Centres. ‘Allocating’ a site means identifying it in the Development Plan with policies which secure and promote the site for housing. Whilst the majority of the five year supply will be met by allocations, the Department will still allow for windfall provision to come forward and contribute to the housing supply. For the remainder of the Plan, beyond the first five years, ‘Broad Areas of Search’ will be identified within and around Main Centres, as strategic reserves of housing land to be brought forward for development if required. Overall the approach of a combination of ‘Allocations, Windfalls and Broad Areas of Search’ will give flexibility to match the growth or decline in housing supply requirements in the future. It is more proactive and provides greater surety to the public and the market as to where the majority of housing is likely to be located by engaging earlier with landowners who have demonstrated an interest in building housing.

This proposed new approach is centred on the allocation of sites for housing which have been assessed and identified for consideration through a ‘Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment’ or ‘SHLAA’.

What is the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment?

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a systematic way of appraising sites that may be appropriate for housing, which can then help to identify and maintain a supply of housing land going forward. Carrying out the assessment is best practice in other jurisdictions, but has not been done before for Guernsey.

The main steps in preparing the SHLAA are:

- **Step 1:** Identify and assess all of the sites available for housing development, including a ‘Call for Sites’
- **Step 2:** Estimate the potential for housing on each site, including when and if sites are likely to be developed
- **Step 3:** Assess whether the total housing need can be met by the identified potential sites (and if not, how to identify additional land)
- **Step 4:** Identify the preferred locations for housing development
- **Step 5:** Review and update the assessment over time

A copy of the complete proposed SHLAA methodology is available from the Department either online or upon request from the Environment Department, Sir Charles Frossard House.

What you can tell us

‘Call for Sites’

To identify an appropriate supply of sites for development, the Department must first know what land is available for potential development. To assist in this, one of the first steps in preparing the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a ‘Call for Sites’.

The Call for Sites is a period of public consultation where the Department invites members of the public, companies and organisations to submit details of sites, along with indicative proposals, which may be suitable for potential development. However, this is not a ‘blank sheet of paper’ and there are clear parameters for site consideration set by the States in the SLUP. Sites must fall within or around the edges of

Main or Local Centres to be considered for development in principle (please refer to the map identifying the Main and Local Centre locations earlier in this booklet or attached to the 'Call for Sites' guidance). It is also important to understand that regarding housing land supply, the 'Call for Sites' is to contribute to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to inform the formation of policies in the new Development Plan and does not signify that a site will be allocated for development in the Development Plan or that planning permission will be granted.

However, the Call for Sites is an important opportunity for residents, landowners, developers and the wider public to submit their land for consideration as a development site and for the Department to gain valuable information about the amount of land potentially available, its capacity for development and potential availability. The Call for Sites is taking place between 29th July and 13th September 2013. You can find a copy of the site submission form and guidance note attached to this document or they can be found on the Departments web site at www.gov.gg or at the Environment Department at Sir Charles Frossard House.

The Department is keen to hear about any suitable sites you may have, as well as any comments on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment approach to identifying a five year housing land supply.

If you are submitting a site please use the site submission form as it sets out important information that the Department needs to assess each site. Additional information about the Call for Sites can be found in the form and supporting guidance.

After the Call for Sites consultation has ended, each site submitted will be assessed through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The sites that best help to meet the Island's development needs will be identified for development in the next stage of the Development Plan preparation process, the publication of the Draft Development Plan and the Public Inquiry. Details of the sites submitted and selected and rejected, as well as the site assessment process, will be made available for public comment at that time.

KEY ISSUE 2

How can planning covenants help deliver affordable housing?

Background

The main way that the new Development Plan can help to deliver affordable¹ housing is by putting in place policies to help increase supply. One way of doing this is to require some general market housing developments to contribute directly to the supply of affordable housing.

¹ The full definition of affordable housing in this context is set by *The Land Planning and Development (Planning Covenants) Ordinance, 2011*. Broadly speaking it includes **social housing** and also **intermediate housing**. Both types are for persons whose housing needs are not met by the private sale or rental market. **Social housing** is offered to persons on low incomes or with other needs as identified by the Housing Department. **Intermediate housing** includes part ownership, part share of equity or low cost ownership or similar schemes mainly for those who cannot meet the full cost of renting or buying on the private market.

General market housing schemes, required to contribute, could provide a certain proportion of the completed dwellings as affordable units, or could provide land for other parties to build affordable housing. The key to the effectiveness of this approach is that the market housing required to contribute only does so to the extent that it would remain viable (i.e. where the developer can still receive a satisfactory return on their investment). This means that the main costs of provision are carried by the developer and those selling the land, rather than the builder, States or taxpayer. It also means that it should not place an undue burden on the housing market and if applied generally on larger sites, rather than only on some, it would not place developers at a relative disadvantage.

This approach would complement existing sources of affordable housing provision, such as the programmes operated by the Housing Department and Guernsey Housing Association which could continue to provide social housing on specific sites.

Although best practice in other jurisdictions, this is a new approach for Guernsey. What also makes this proposal different is that it would be supported by and achieved through ‘planning covenants’.

What are planning covenants?

Planning covenants are the mechanism that would enable the affordable housing policy requirement to be implemented. They are an established legal provision (known as ‘planning agreements’ or ‘obligations’ in other jurisdictions), but have not been used in Guernsey yet.

Planning Covenants are a legal agreement between a landowner and the States which requires the landowner to do or not to do certain things in relation to a particular site. The covenant remains with the site regardless of whether it is sold or redeveloped. The covenant could require the site to be managed, maintained or used in a certain way or require certain works to be carried out either on- or off-site. It could also require an amount of money to be paid to contribute to public works which are considered to benefit development on the site or which are needed in the area as a result of the development.

An affordable housing planning covenant would normally require a landowner or developer to contribute towards affordable housing provision, either by providing properties or land for affordable housing in lieu. The covenant is normally entered into as a result of policies in the Development Plan, such as those requiring affordable housing. The planning policy sets out the main features that must be complied with. The covenant is the binding legal agreement which sets out the detail of what is required for the site, is signed by the landowner or developer and the States, and then remains with the site.

How the States has agreed to use Covenants for affordable housing

The legal basis to use planning covenants is already in place. Section 23 of the ‘*Land Planning & Development (Guernsey) Law 2005*’ allows for the use of planning covenants; The ‘*Land Planning and Development (Planning Covenants) Ordinance, 2011*’, provides for the use of covenants for the purposes of ensuring the provision of affordable housing.

The direction for planning policy in the new Development Plan to consider requiring general market housing to contribute towards affordable housing supply, and for this to be secured through the use of covenants, is set out in the Strategic Land Use Plan which was agreed by the States in 2011 (Policy SLP17):

‘The Development Plans will make provision for a range of social and specialised housing as part of the annual requirement for new homes as set out within Policy SLP13. Appropriate levels of provision of social and/or specialised housing on larger general market sites may be required through the use of planning condition or covenant and established through a specified mechanism.’

What you have told us so far

The question was posed during the first stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans whether there was support for seeking provision of affordable housing from general market housing sites in principle, and if so, which approach should be considered. There was general support for a contribution based system (i.e. the direct provision of houses and land), as opposed to a tariff-based system (i.e. monies in lieu which may require a change to the Planning Law). There were mixed views about whether this should apply to all sites, or only to those over a certain threshold. Respondents also suggested that new affordable homes should be indistinguishable from other homes (or be ‘tenure blind’) and that there should be greater support for first time buyers.

What we’ve learnt so far

The 2011 Housing Needs Survey showed that the number of households in need of housing on the Island is 451 per year over the five years to 2016; of this, 258 households (57%) need affordable housing. Despite the Environment Department maintaining a supply of planning permissions for at least two years worth of dwellings (i.e. approvals for 600 dwellings, general market and otherwise) since the year 2002, the average annual total number of dwellings of any tenure actually built since the year 2000 was just short of 200. Since 2005 this has dropped to around 160 units per year. Whilst this is affected by factors other than the planning process, it is clear that existing sources of supply are not meeting the Island’s needs.

In light of the above, the Department commissioned an independent report ‘*The Use of Planning Covenants in the Delivery of Affordable Housing in Guernsey, 2012*’, which is available on the Department’s website at www.gov.gg. The study assessed the potential for introducing new policies in the Island Development Plan that would be capable of securing affordable housing on larger, general market housing sites in Guernsey. It also explored the option of prescribing a site size threshold above which a percentage of affordable and/or specialised housing should be provided on site, together with the practicality of requiring commuted sums on housing proposals that fall below the threshold. (It should be noted that this latter approach would require a change/amendment to the Planning Law)

The report demonstrated that even in the current housing market it is still feasible to require the provision of a percentage of affordable housing units on larger general market housing developments.

The key findings and recommendations are set out on pages 91 to 94, and include:

- *‘There is a robust planning and legislative framework in place to deliver affordable housing using planning covenants.’*
- *‘Landowners’ expectations of residual land values at around £3 million per hectare should be tempered if the affordable housing needs of the Island’s community are to be satisfactorily addressed.’*
- *‘Changes in average earnings ... during the last 5 years (i.e. 8%) have been outstripped by increases in average house prices during the same period (i.e. 28.5%)’*
- *‘If residential site allocations are utilised in the emerging Development Plan Review, they could sustain levels of affordable housing at 20%-30% through on-site provision.’*

What options are available?

Based on this approach, set out below are a number of options for the approach to the Development Plan policy to increase the supply of affordable housing.

Each policy option could include a mix of the following elements and/or a variation on the specific requirement in each element:

- **A certain percentage of completed dwellings must be affordable housing,** (e.g. 20%, 25%, 30%);
- **Land in lieu of dwellings** could be provided, which another party such as a Housing Association could build affordable housing on;

The options below would constitute the ‘headline’ or overall requirement which developers would have to meet. There are a multitude of other, more detailed factors which must be agreed to show how this approach would work in practice. These are wide-ranging and include: how a developer can show if their scheme is viable; what the mix of social and affordable houses required would be; what would the design & location of affordable housing be; how those in need of affordable housing make themselves known to the Housing Department, and; on what grounds the Housing and Environment Departments would negotiate with developers. These factors will be defined once the headline requirement is agreed.

The Department is not suggesting a preferred option; the options are only suggestions to stimulate discussion and do not infer any preferred approach or policy option. The final policy could reflect one or more of these options, or vary the proposed requirement, or could include other suggestions which may come forward during the consultation. However, each option will generate a different result on the ground and a different yield of affordable housing overall.

OPTION 1: The same requirement for all housing development schemes

Proposed Policy Approach	For example, all proposals for housing development would provide as affordable housing at least 20% of the units proposed.
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option seeks to encourage more affordable housing in Local Centres and Main Centres, which are generally the more sustainable locations. • There is an element of fairness to applying the same requirement to all areas and the minimum requirement for provision would be known by developers from the outset. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites.
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option may not achieve the potential maximum affordable housing provision possible or appropriate on a particular site and would not target areas which (due to the possible greater uplift in land values and the development achievable under the SLUP spatial strategy, such as Local Centres) may have greater potential to viably provide higher levels of affordable housing. • It is less flexible and responsive to changes in the housing sector over time and does not respond to the viability of a particular site or scheme. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites.

OPTION 2: Vary the requirement between different areas

Proposed Policy Approach	For example, Main Centres would be required to provide as affordable housing at least 20% of the units proposed, with all other locations providing 25%
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option seeks to encourage more development in Main Centres, which are generally the most sustainable locations. • This option seeks, in those instances where housing development may be considered acceptable in and around Local Centres, to maximise the provision of affordable housing as a result of the envisaged greater uplift in land values • Development in and around Main Centres could be at higher densities and more small affordable units (1 & 2 beds), which are in greatest demand on the Island, would be likely to come forward under this option. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites.
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the different requirements strike the optimum balance to maximise the provision of affordable housing. • As the SLUP only allows for limited development in and around Local Centres for specific purposes, the size of developments, particularly if a threshold is applied, is likely to limit the amount of affordable housing delivered. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites

OPTION 3: Site-by-site approach

Proposed Policy Approach	For example, there would be a minimum requirement for affordable housing provision, but the final proportion of affordable housing required for a site would be negotiated between the developer and the Environment Department on a case-by-case basis. This approach would be supported by an agreed framework included in the Development Plan to assist in assessing the affordable housing requirement.
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option provides the greatest degree of flexibility which should enable the differences between schemes to be addressed. For example it would enable less viable sites to make a smaller contribution, and to enable more viable developments to contribute more. • It will retain flexibility so that affordable housing can be provided in the most appropriate locations at appropriate levels. It also ensures that the affordable housing requirement can respond quickly to changing market requirements and constraints in the future. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More difficult to ensure clarity, surety and consistency for all proposals. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites

OPTION 4: Staircase approach

Proposed Policy Approach	For example, the requirement would increase year-on-year during the Plan period, from a minimum (e.g. 12%), along a set scale, to a maximum requirement at a specified future date (e.g. 20% by the end of the Plan period) or until such time as the development is commenced or completed. Any annual increase in the requirement would be made according to how little affordable housing was coming forward each year and how much is required at any one time.
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This approach would incentivise the housing market to bring more dwellings on-line earlier in the Plan period. • The approach would have some flexibility for the percentage requirement to respond to the demands for affordable housing as time goes by. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option may be seen to work against more complex schemes which take longer to come forward. • This approach allows for mixed tenure on sites

OPTION 5: Allocating sites for general market housing and affordable housing separately**Proposed Policy Approach**

In this option, some sites would be allocated only for general market housing and some sites would be allocated only for affordable housing (including socially rented and partial ownership).

PROS

- The supply of land for affordable housing would be fixed, giving certainty on the overall level of provision
- There would be more land available for affordable housing.
- There would be no mixed tenure on sites.

CONS

- There would be less flexibility in the delivery of housing to meet changing conditions
- There would be less land available for general market housing.
- There is a significant risk that less affordable housing would get built as there would be no cross-subsidy from general market developments, and the delivery of affordable housing sites may be dependent on subsidy from the States to make them viable for developers.
- There would be no mixed tenure on site.

Policy options for the Affordable Housing policy:

It is important to note that in each option a threshold could be applied below which there would be a lesser or no requirement to provide for affordable housing; e.g. sites of five or fewer dwellings.

Summary

- 57% of all new households on the Island every year are unable to buy or rent general market housing and are in need of affordable housing.
- Existing sources of supply are falling significantly short of meeting the Island's needs.
- The proposed approach is to increase supply by requiring general market housing schemes to provide a proportion of affordable housing or to meet the overall need for affordable housing by requiring certain land to provide 100% affordable housing.
- General market housing schemes would only contribute to the extent that they would remain viable and the developer would continue to receive a satisfactory return on their investment.
- The main costs of provision would be carried by the developer and parties selling the land, rather than builders, the States or the taxpayer.
- The planning policy and legal basis to support this requirement is in place.
- A robust, Guernsey-specific evidence base to support the approach is already in place.

The approach is consistent with feedback from previous public consultations. The options cover the headline or overall requirement which developers would be expected to provide; there is a range of other factors which are yet to be defined.

3

Employment

KEY ISSUES

Which employment sites are likely to become obsolete and what could they be used for?

Which types of sites might be suitable for new office and storage and distribution uses?

Where are the retail cores of the Main Centres?

Where are the large contiguous tracts of viable commercial agricultural land?

What is the nature and scale of redundant vineries on the island?

KEY MESSAGES

Viable large tracts of continuous agricultural land should be safeguarded

The number of redundant vineries is likely to increase over the life of the Island Development Plan

Four broad options have been identified by the SLUP for potential future use of redundant vineries

Most redundant vineries are best suited to reversion to agriculture use or open land

Limited potential for redundant vineries to provide development for a mix of uses including housing within and around main and local centres

A small number of redundant vineries may provide for small scale business, industry and other appropriate uses, such as renewable energy, on sites outside the centres, as exceptions to the agreed Spatial Strategy.

Land-use planning alone has limited potential to promote clearance and there is a need to investigate other measures that the States could put in place to achieve this.



INTRODUCTION

The following section covers the following sectors of employment:

- Financial and professional services (offices), industry and storage and distribution;
- Retail; and
- Agriculture and redundant vineries.

Other categories of employment related to uses, such as tourism, were previously consulted on in the Review of the Development Plans 1st stage public consultation and the Department considers it has sufficient information regarding these areas.

Strategic Land Use Plan - Offices, Industry, Storage and Distribution

One of the State's strategic objectives is for Guernsey to be a globally competitive centre of economic growth with a diversified economy. The Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) has as one of its core objectives, that a successful economy will be supported through planning policies which enable a diversified, broadly based economy, with high levels of employment and a flexible labour market.

With regard to offices, the SLUP directs new larger office developments to the commercial cores of Main Centres (including Admiral Park) and directs the Development Plan to enable physical improvements in the quality of office accommodation by replacing or refurbishing older office stock (Policies SLP1, SLP2 and LP6). The SLUP also provides for new small-scale office development within local centres (LP10). It prioritises brown field sites over green field ones and encourages the refurbishment and reuse of the existing office stock in Main Centres where this is compatible with the need to protect the valued historic character (SLP2 & LP9).

The SLUP also directs the main focus of industry to remain within and around the Main Centres, specifically including Admiral Park and Saltpans (SLP3 & LP6). However, it also sets out that there is potential for Local Centres to provide some opportunities for industrial development (LP10).

It is recognised that certain small scale businesses such as those operating on a home working basis or those requiring workshops, secure storage or open yards may have a justifiable need to develop outside the main and local centres. These small scale business may have no operational requirement to be located within or on the edges of the main centres and are unable to find suitable sites within land currently reserved for industry or are businesses that are unable to compete with larger firms looking for higher quality accommodation. As such, limited provision for small scale business should be made outside of the centres where this respects the scale and character of the surroundings (SLP4).

The SLUP directs the Environment Department to assess existing reserves of business land supply against the Island's current and longer term economic development needs, including the needs of the lower value industrial and service sector, and to investigate appropriate mechanisms for securing such an adequate supply of land.

What we have learnt so far

To assess existing reserves of land and test whether these are adequate for the future, the Department is undertaking, in accordance with best practice, an Employment Land Study considering Industry, Offices and Storage and Distribution. The study will provide valuable evidence and is in three stages, with two stages now completed. These have considered what employment land (land in industrial, office or storage and distribution use) we have at present and creates a picture of future requirements. The first two stages of the study can be found on the Department's website at www.gov.gg.

KEY MESSAGES

The following key messages have emerged for each sector:

General

- Being able to run a business from home is a valuable source of premises for all sorts of start-up and micro-businesses;
- All new business premises need to have built in flexibility to accommodate a company's changing needs and changes in technology; and
- Majority of our existing stock in these employment categories is made up of small premises.

Offices

- After a prolonged period of growth, the Finance sector is fluctuating, showing both growth and decline in recent periods, largely as a result of global recession. Other office related sectors are either stabilising or are experiencing some growth;

- Most new office space over the last 10 years has come from a few large sites designated for that purpose. New offices are best located within or around existing office clusters, with good access to parking;
- Older and smaller office premises which do not have a flexible layout are in least demand;
- Taking a flexible approach to the change of use of smaller premises in and out of office use can allow rapid response to changes in the market;
- In December 2012, an estimated 13% of the existing office stock was being marketed to let and a proportion of this had been on the market for more than 6 months; and
- The study indicates that the Island is likely to need between 40-45,000m² more office space between 2015 and 2025 (an equivalent floor area of 9 Carey Houses).

Industry

- There is a strong concentration of industrial premises around St. Sampson's Harbour, Salt pans and Longue Hougue together with land currently reserved for industry. Two further notable clusters of industry provision are around Pitronnerie Road and around the Airport;
- Although the construction sector is likely to remain an important employer, a trend for a decline in manufacturing is likely to continue and subsequently demand for general industrial premises is low and will continue to decline;
- Large, older, inflexible industrial premises that do not meet the needs of modern business are likely to become obsolete;

- The need to specifically allocate land for industry is likely to remain if we wish to control industrial land values, particularly land with good accessibility to the container route between St Peter Port and St Sampson's Harbours;
- The trend of converting industrial premises into storage use is likely to continue;
- In December 2012, an estimated 4.2% of the existing industrial stock was being marketed to let and a proportion of this had been on the market for more than a year;
- The study indicates that the Island is likely to need between 6-18,000m² less industrial space between 2015 and 2025 (the equivalent floor space of 17 Target Auto premises on Pitronnerie Road).

Storage & Distribution

- There has been a large increase in the amount of storage space permitted over the last 9 years, though this is unlikely to continue given the loss of Low Value Consignment Relief –the full effects of which are still being played out;
- In December 2012, an estimated 14.7% of the existing storage and distribution stock was being marketed to let;
- Despite this, there appears to be a base level of demand for this type of premises with good access to the Inter-Harbour Route;
- Demand for open storage space appears to be low. There may be an increase in demand for low cost, temporary open storage if Fontaine Vinery is no longer available for this purpose however this

would appear to be a matter of cost rather than a land supply issue as current land identified for such purposes elsewhere remains available. In addition, the forthcoming surplus of industrial land may be appropriate for such uses;

- The study has indicated that the Island is likely to need between 10-15,000m² more storage and distribution space (the equivalent floor space of 2.75 Co-op warehouses on Longue Hougue Lane)

What you have told us so far

The Respondents to the first stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans thought that:

- There is a shortfall of purpose built, high quality offices with large floor plates and parking
- That we should consider retaining the fronts of historic buildings and create larger floor plate premises behind for offices and shops.
- Mixed-use areas should be created to prevent 'dead' areas after 5pm
- Allow flexibility for change of use for poorer standard premises
- There is some need for low rent basic industrial premises
- Some business uses would be acceptable in local centres
- New office developments could fund public realm and infrastructure improvements

What options could be considered as part of the Review of the Development Plans?

Some possible options for tackling some of the above issues are suggested below however, it is important to clarify that these have been included to stimulate thought and discussion and do not reflect any agreed course of action or policy direction.

The Department could consider:

- In view of the declining need for industrial premises, consolidating industry and storage and distribution uses on the existing Key Industrial Areas (as identified in the Urban Area Plan) and other sites along the inter harbour route
- Change of use of isolated industrial sites within the main centres for other appropriate uses such as housing, gyms or community uses if they are no longer required for industry
- Locate new large floor plate primary offices only at Admiral Park, on waterfront opportunity sites in St Peter Port and through the selective redevelopment of existing sites in St Peter Port
- Offices could be encouraged at The Bridge as part of the wider regeneration of the St Sampson's Main Centre
- Continuing to allow people to run a business from home providing it does not unduly disturb neighbours or affect the character of the area
- Taking a more flexible approach to some historic buildings in the Town centre to allow them to be altered to respond to demand and maintain Town as an attractive business location
- Designation of larger sites for large floor plate office development to facilitate new offices in the future

What you can tell us:

The SLUP requires the new Development Plan to make provision for a comprehensive range of land opportunities for employment uses. As part of the consideration of this for the Plan Review the Department is seeking information from the public, owners and organisations about which sites may be available to potentially develop for office, industry or storage and distribution uses between 2015 and 2025.

The Department, as part of this consultation is therefore conducting a Call for Sites. However, there are clear parameters for site consideration set by the States in the SLUP. Sites must fall within or around main or local centres to be considered for development in principle (please refer to the map identifying the main and local centre locations earlier in this booklet or attached to the 'call for sites' guidance). It is also important to understand that the 'call for sites', in respect of employment land supply, is to contribute to the Employment Land Study to inform the formation of policies in the new Development Plan and does not signify that a site will be allocated for development in the Development Plan or that planning permission will be granted. **The Call for Sites is taking place between 29th July and 13th September 2013.** The Department is jointly considering sites for employment and sites for housing and further details of this process can be found in the Housing section of this booklet.

APPROACH TO RETAIL

Strategic Land Use Plan

The Strategic Land Use Plan sets out that the States will seek to support projects that encourage a wide range of retail opportunities and which focus retail operations in those areas best suited to meeting modern retailing requirements (Policy LP9). The Development Plan shall make provision for appropriate development to ensure that the main centres are able to accommodate the needs of modern commercial operators, including retail (Policy LP6).

The SLUP provides direction about where new shops should be located. It requires that the Development Plan makes provision for new large floor plate comparison retail² within Town and the Bridge, ensuring that Town remains the primary retail centre and to make provision for a limited amount of convenience³ retail in local centres to sustain and enhance their roles as sustainable centres (Policies SLP5 and SLP6). In doing so it requires assessment of the retail cores of Town and The Bridge to determine whether they need to be redefined in order to enhance the vitality and viability of the main centres (Policy LP6).

What we have learnt so far

The Guernsey Retail Study (2010) forecasts the need for an additional 7,900m² net sales area (11,300m² gross) for comparison shops between 2009 and 2020. The forecast for convenience retail is 1,250m² additional net sales area (1,900m² gross) over the same period.

² Comparison retail is a term used to describe the selling of goods including clothing, footwear, furniture, household equipment, which generally involves comparing similar goods before buying.

³ Convenience retail is a term used to describe the selling of often essential daily items such as food and drink.

This equates to a floor space requirement of approximately 19 more shops the size of New Look and a floor space requirement of approximately 9 more shops the size of Checkers Express on North Esplanade. These forecasts assume limited population growth and a fifth of comparison shopping taking place online or off-Island. However there is an emerging Retail Strategy for Guernsey which will update these requirements and, once approved, will inform the Review of the Development Plans.

What you have told us so far

Respondents to the first stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans told us that the retail core should be drawn in and shrunk to concentrate footfall and that new retail developments should reinforce existing footfall or be significant enough to generate their own footfall.

KEY ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Where are the retail cores of the Main Centres?

The SLUP requires that new retail development is predominantly met in the Main Centres. The following options detailed below and in Figures 2, 3 and 4 present different approaches that could be used to assess retail cores and to approach retail development in the Main Centres.

These options are put forward to stimulate thought and discussion and do not represent any agreed course of action or policy direction.

OPTION 1: Identify a prime retail core with targeted areas for retail expansion, if and when required, in both Town and the Bridge main centres

<p>Proposed Policy Approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect retail within the prime retail core and allow opportunities to create larger floor plate retail unit(s) if it can be achieved without being detrimental to historic character. • Identify one or more areas for expansion of the core if and when required where larger floor plates can be provided and where it would support the existing core and the vitality of the Main Centres generally.
<p>PROS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects the existing primary retail area and concentrates retail activity to aid its vitality. • Would encourage greater levels of services, office, cultural and leisure uses and homes in the areas outside of the core and areas for expansion. • Directs the growth of the primary retail core as and when required into the area(s) it is most likely to thrive • Certainty in specific areas of growth would appeal to retail investors • Potential growth areas selected due to their ability to accommodate an anchor store. • Greater chance of reinvigorating the existing Bridge frontage if retail uses are concentrated into a compact area and secures the Bridge frontage as the heart of the Main Centre. • Greater flexibility for buildings outside the prime core to change between other town centre uses, such as offices, cafés, restaurants, bars, cultural facilities, hotels and residential as the market dictates.
<p>CONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could have the effect of reducing the overall amount of retail in the Town centre. • Could lead to change of use or new development outside the core to the most valuable land use (often residential), which might need to be managed through other policies to maintain/create mixed use Main Centres • Could pull retail activity away from the Old Quarter in Town, but this could be mitigated through a specific policy approach to the Old Quarter.

OPTION 2: Identify a prime retail core and secondary retail area for Town and The Bridge

Proposed Policy Approach	Protect retail within the prime retail core and encourage its expansion into the secondary retail area
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects the existing primary retail core; Encourages the regeneration of existing retail areas adjacent to the primary retail core; Secondary areas could provide a focus for small scale, local convenience retailers, which would diversify the convenience offer in Town and support the existing convenience and takeaway offer on The Bridge .
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prime retail core could have expanded into secondary areas under existing policy, so need to explore what constraints have meant this hasn't happened. There may not be appropriate sites within the secondary retail area for larger floor plate shops, particularly in Town, without compromising the historic setting. Could lead to change of use outside the core and in the secondary areas to the most valuable land use (often residential), which might need to be managed through other policies. Could pull retail activity away from the Old Quarter in Town, but this could be mitigated through a specific policy approach to the Old Quarter. May not take advantage of the full development opportunities at Leale's Yard for retail-led mixed use development.

OPTION 3: Mixed-use central area with no identified retail core encompassing all the existing town centre uses of retail, services and facilities such as bars and restaurants and employment uses

Proposed Policy Approach	Give equal priority to all town centres uses, letting the market decide the balance between retail, offices, eateries, hotels, community, leisure and culture destinations.
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the Main Centres to quickly respond to changing market conditions, which may result in fewer vacant units. Could allow the Main Centres to respond to the trend of shopping being part of a wider leisure experience.
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May not give inward investors the confidence they seek in knowing what types of uses will surround them. May result in a more dispersed retail offer, which could undermine the viability of the Main Centres. Could encourage change of use movement up the value chain, with banks potentially taking high street locations, possibly creating dead frontages.

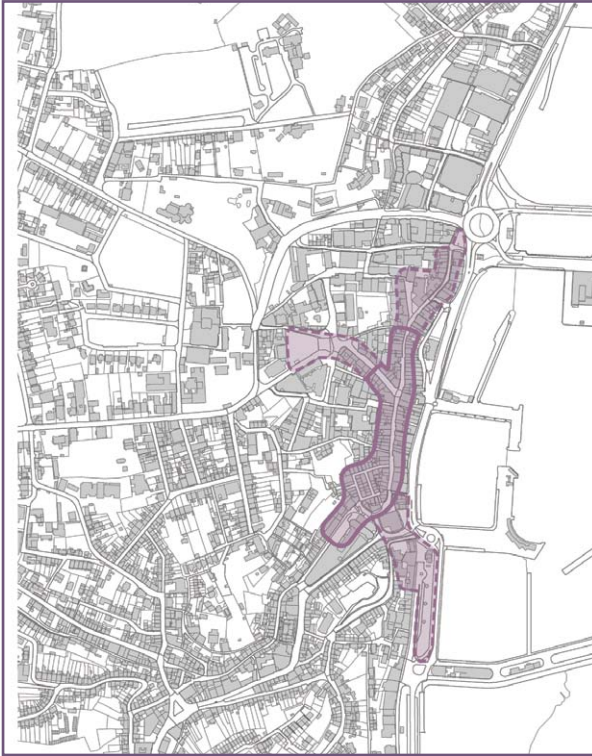


Figure 2: Retail Option 1 for Town and The Bridge

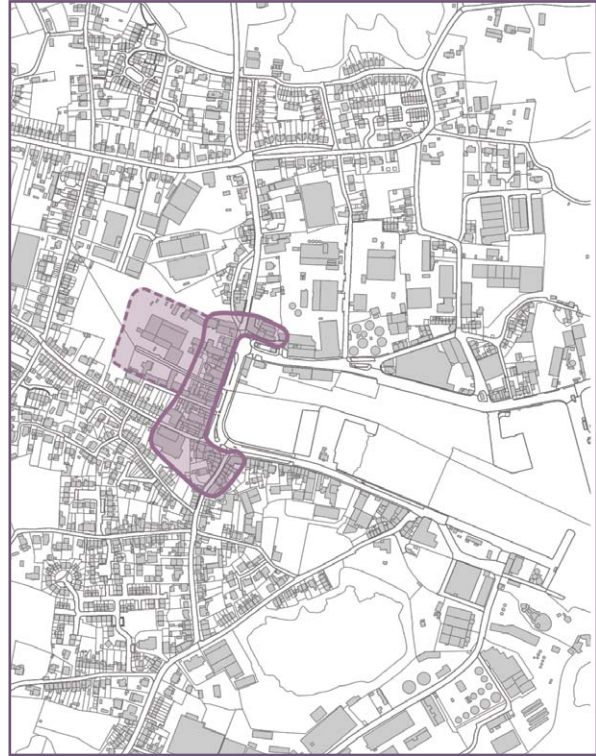
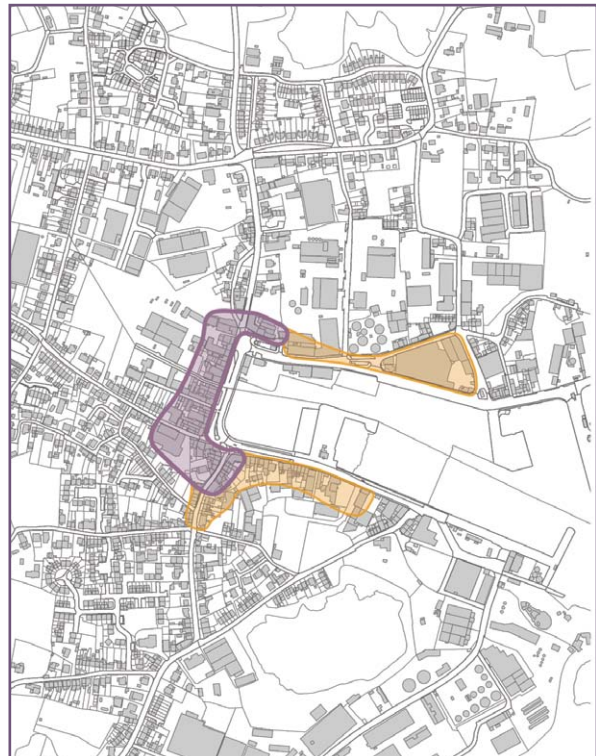


Figure 3: Retail Option 2 for Town and The Bridge



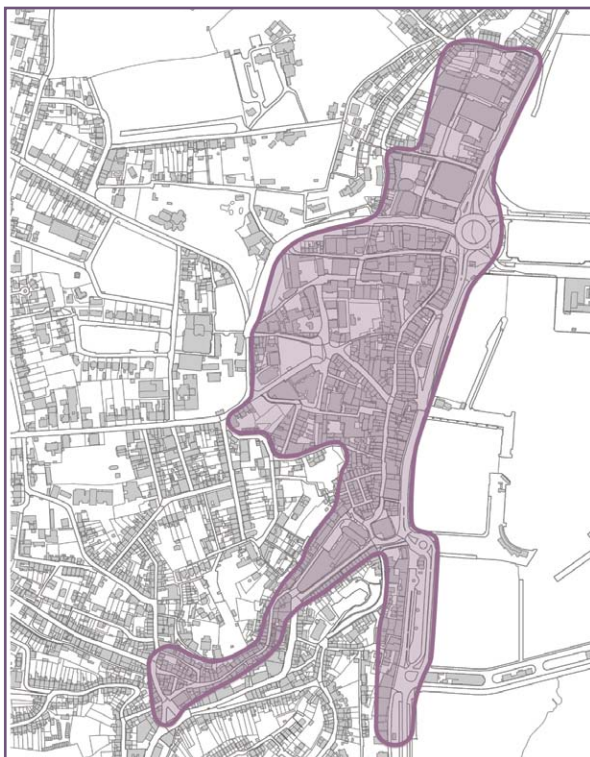
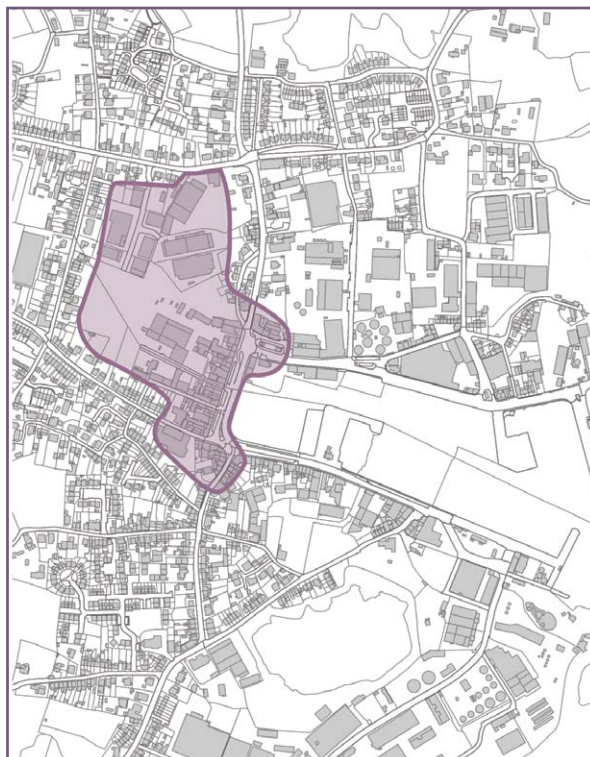


Figure 4: Retail Option 3 for Town and The Bridge



APPROACH TO AGRICULTURE & REDUNDANT VINERIES

The Strategic Land Use Plan

The Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) seeks to promote a viable agricultural industry and recognises that some of the challenges to agriculture in Guernsey relate to fragmented land ownership and small field patterns, leading to greater operational costs. It requires that large areas of contiguous agricultural land, and other suitable areas well-related to established agricultural operations, are identified and protected to meet the industry's current and future needs whilst balancing and addressing the demands on land for other legitimate development requirements (SLP8 and SLP28).

Formerly the basis of Guernsey's economy, commercial horticultural operations in the Island have greatly reduced in number and are consolidating on fewer, larger holdings with the inevitable consequence of an increasing number of redundant horticultural sites. These can provide a diverse natural habitat in some cases but are sometimes unsightly and can constitute a hazard. They are costly to clear and, despite a previous States-subsidised scheme for removal, many remain in situ in varying states of repair.

The SLUP contains a number of policies that relate to the possible future uses of redundant vineries including agriculture, landscape/ open countryside, biodiversity, horticulture, open space, industrial and business land supply and small-scale business development.

Provision is made for four broad uses of redundant horticultural land:

- Contribution to agricultural land;

- Contribution to open land;
- Potential development for a range of uses within or around the main and local centres, and;
- Exception sites, for small-scale business development or other appropriate uses, outside the centres.

The SLUP requires the new Development Plan to identify redundant horticultural sites which would, if cleared, make a positive contribution to open space or agricultural land provision, and to introduce policies to facilitate their removal (Policy LP13). The Redundant Vineries Survey 2013 can be viewed on the Departments website at www.gov.gg.

What you have told us so far

Respondents to the first stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans felt that agricultural land should be safeguarded. There was strong support for locally produced goods, including the dairy herd, and for preserving the remaining countryside in general. It was felt that it is necessary to define 'agricultural' land so as to distinguish it from other types of open land and to facilitate its protection.

It was stressed that small parcels of land, despite making a minimal contribution to the economy, remain suitable for agriculture and that such fields are under threat with pressures from housing, industry, recreation and renewable energy uses. Pre-existing patterns of field delineations, hedgerows and boundaries should not be eroded for large scale agriculture. Where fields are truly not suitable for agriculture they should be left fallow to encourage wildlife. Fields within the urban area also provide valuable open space and are part of the character of these areas.

There was a general presumption that the horticultural industry will continue to contract and that the remaining horticultural industry will concentrate on fewer, larger sites with modern glasshouses. There will be a need for ancillary buildings, packing sheds and such like, but these will need careful control to prevent change of use out of horticulture. It was felt that much of the glass in the Island is old and outdated and many sites have fallen out of use.

There was general support shown for redundant glasshouses to be redeveloped for housing or employment uses providing they are within local centres or within a developed area (i.e. sustainable locations). There was also a clear sentiment that outside those areas the land should be returned to open land and that industrial uses at unsustainable rural vinery sites should be prevented, if necessary through enforcement.

Respondents generally accepted that land use policies alone were unable to incentivise the removal of redundant glasshouses and that States intervention, in a variety of ways such as providing incentives, subsidised clearance schemes and indirect pressure through punitive measures, would be needed to clear redundant greenhouses on rural sites, due to the high costs of clearance for little financial return.

There was a general consensus that there is a need for additional low rent, basic accommodation for low value-added service industries and that there is a role for industry outside the main centres, but that should be low impact. Construction yards, agricultural and dairy holdings, horticultural holdings, manufacturing, countryside pursuits, farm shops and reclamation yards were all suggested and that these could be appropriately located on redundant greenhouse sites. The likelihood

of premises being less expensive outside of centres was the main reason cited for the need for such locations.

There was a general presumption that keeping of horses should come secondary to agricultural need but that this does make a contribution to the rural economy. Creeping urbanisation of the countryside as a result was of concern. Circumstances in which it was considered that development of redundant greenhouse sites for recreational use might be appropriate included woodlands, keeping of horses, a golf driving-range and provision of allotments, the latter mainly on the outskirts of the main and local centres.

There was very strong support for all forms of renewable energy and micro-renewable generation where this would not be of detriment to neighbours. A particular suggestion was for an energy Enterprise Zone for renewable energy uses.

What we have learnt so far

In accordance with the SLUP requirement to identify large areas of contiguous agricultural land and other suitable areas well-related to established agricultural operations, a picture of current agricultural operations on the Island has been established.

Five habitats, which best reflect the use of land for agricultural purposes, were selected from The Habitat Survey 2010 and were used to establish where agriculture is currently taking place. Land which is most suitable for agricultural purposes was identified using The Guernsey Soil Classification 1988. That document designates five grades of soil from which the top three grades were selected, being the Best & Most Versatile (BMV) land i.e. most suitable to all forms of agriculture.

Together these land parcels are considered to represent the land where agriculture is taking place on the Island and where it is most suitable to take place. Generally this land occupies a swathe of higher ground in the southern part of the Island. Smaller pockets extend northward, often avoiding the sandier coastal land.

Redundant horticultural sites were identified through the Redundant Vineries Survey 2013 using information from recent planning applications and appeal outcomes, previous research undertaken for an amendment to the Rural Area Plan in 2009, land suggested to date for alternative uses by site owners as part of the Development Plan Review, aerial photographs taken in 2009, and site surveys, together with consultation with the Commerce and Employment Department.

The Redundant Vineries Survey 2013 defines “redundant vinery” as:

“A greenhouse(s) together with ancillary structures and land where the horticultural operation has ceased and the glass and ancillary structures have fallen out of authorised use. Often the condition of such structures will deteriorate over time through lack of use and management to leave only partial remnants of structures.”

The condition of structures remaining on redundant sites varies significantly, from good quality yet unused glass to dilapidated, overgrown structures with many broken and/or missing panes. In some cases even access to sites is unclear due to a lack of basic maintenance.

For the four broad options for possible future uses of redundant vineries, as set out in the section above, an assessment framework for the potential contribution to agricultural

land and to small scale industrial uses was established.

The study identified 253 redundant vinery sites of varying sizes distributed across the Island. Due to topography and the historical development of Guernsey, a significant proportion of redundant glass is located, running north east to south west, in the northern part of the Island. A further, less obvious, band is present running east to west across the southern parishes.

The location of redundant greenhouses correlates well with the areas identified as valuable agricultural land. Over 180 existing redundant vineries are immediately adjacent to land in agricultural use. This represents over 70% of all sites identified. There are two sites within land in the top three grades of soil classifications (known as ‘Best & Most Versatile land’) but there are 64 existing sites lying immediately adjacent. It is clear that returning these redundant vineries to agricultural use could make a significant contribution to the agricultural industry.

Several redundant vineries occupy visually prominent sites which might otherwise contribute positively to tracts of open land in terms of landscape character, habitat and visual amenity. There is particular potential for cleared sites to enhance the openness of areas in the north of the Island and to benefit, in terms of access and extent, sites with nature conservation and biodiversity value. In appropriate cases, smaller redundant sites might lend themselves to incorporation within the curtilage of neighbouring land parcels, whether that land has a domestic or other authorised use.

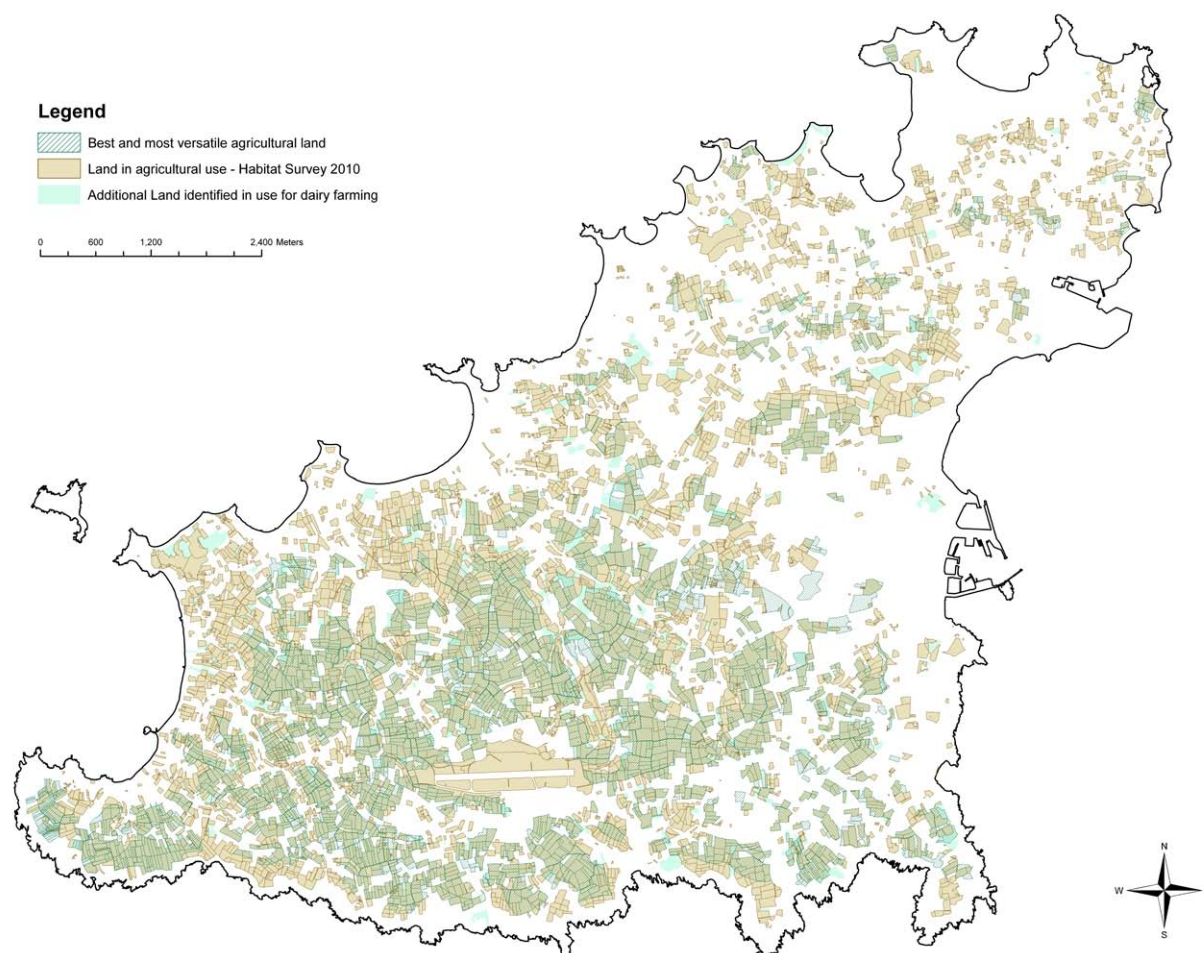


Figure 5: Land in Agricultural Use

Redundant vinery sites provide an opportunity for development to provide visual amenity, open spaces or mixed uses within and around the centres. However a comparison of the location of potential local centres with the distribution of redundant vineries has identified a weak correlation. An overlap of approximately 15 redundant vinery sites, a very small portion of the overall number of redundant greenhouses, is noted. The majority of horticultural sites lie in the countryside, isolated from particular hubs of development. Assessment of their suitability or otherwise is for further consideration, after consultation, once the location of the potential local centres is finalised.

Following assessment of access, employment area location, open amenity value, neighbour impact and other strategic priorities 30 redundant horticultural holdings were identified as offering potential for small-scale business development or other appropriate uses outside the centres, as exception sites to the agreed spatial strategy. Scores awarded to sites could play a role in identification of possible future use in accordance with the uses set out in the SLUP. The higher the score the more appropriate the vinery as an exception site.

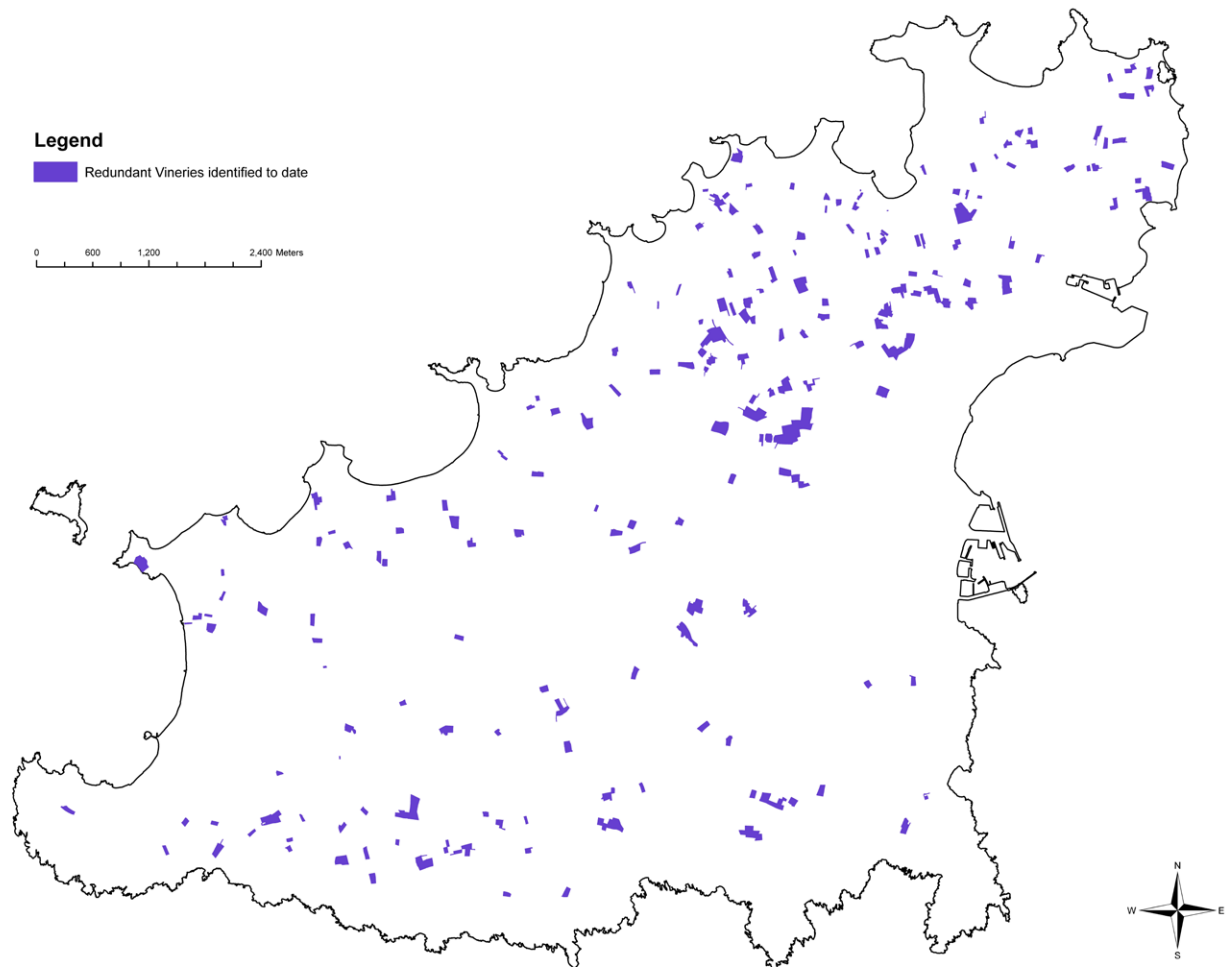


Figure 6: Redundant Vineries

Most of the possible exception sites are of relatively good quality. Those scoring lowest were often let down by access and employment area location and, in some cases, neighbour impact. The highest scoring sites often scored well on those same criteria reflecting the importance of those features. Those sites are located within the northern part of the Island and in many cases away from the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Key Messages

Large swathes of contiguous agricultural land extend across the Island with the BMV

agricultural land occupying the southern half of Guernsey and smaller pockets extending northwards. It is recognised that, in accordance with the requirements of the SLUP, these larger, contiguous areas should be afforded protection for viable agricultural purposes. Whilst generally the smaller areas where agriculture is not viable may be considered for alternative uses, this would not prevent them from being used for agricultural purposes and the overriding emphasis generally would be on retaining them as important open land in accordance with the policies of the SLUP.

Legend

- Redundant Vineries identified to date
- Land in Agricultural Use
- Local Centres

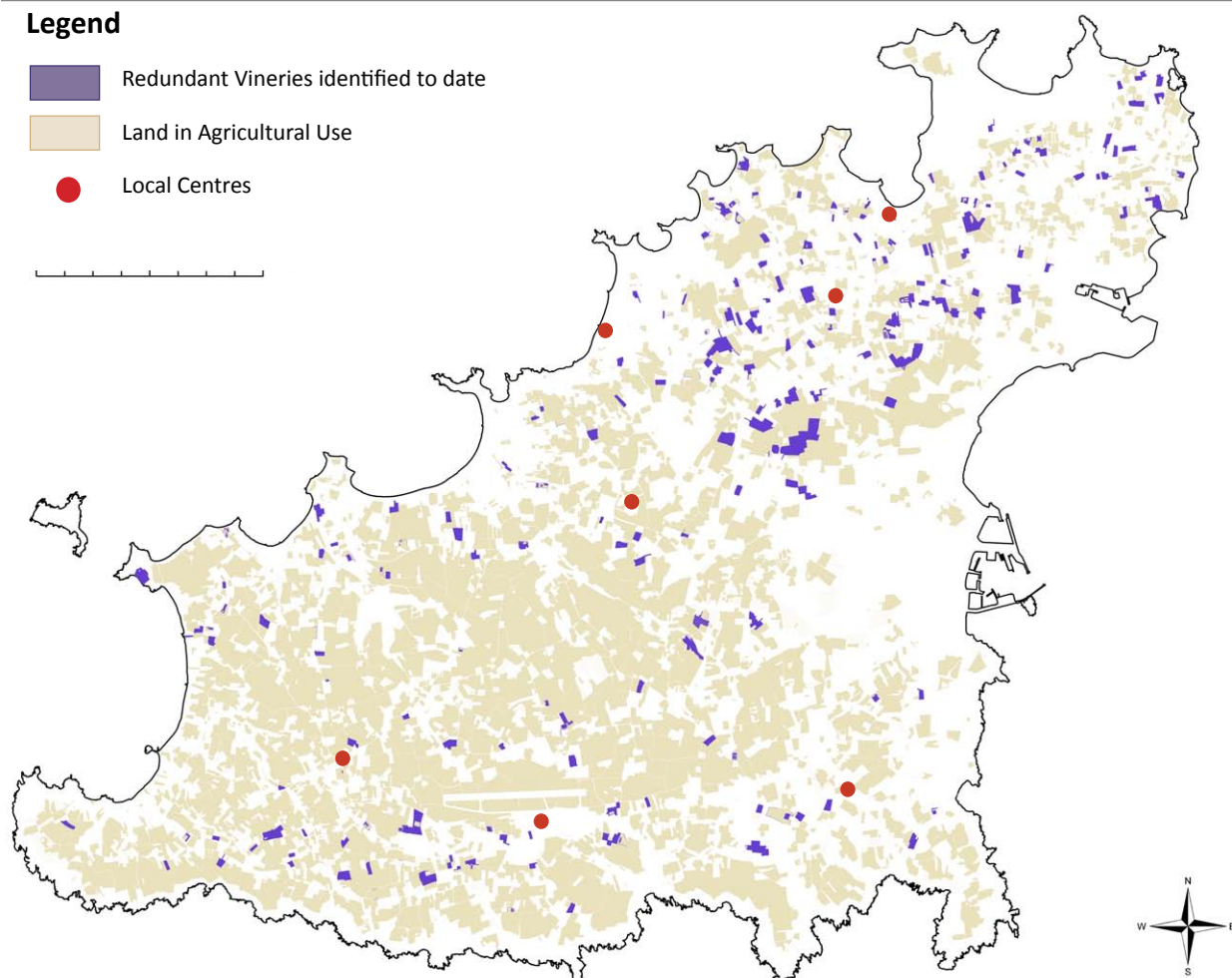


Figure 7: Land in Agricultural Use & Redundant Vineries

The Redundant Vineries study identified 253 existing redundant vinery sites. This is likely to increase over the life of the Island Development Plan with the continuing decline of the horticultural industry.

Taking account of the policies in the SLUP, there are four broad options for potential future use of these sites:

- Contribution to agricultural land;
- Contribution to open land;
- Potential mixed use development within or around the main and local centres, and;
- Exception sites, for small-scale business development or other appropriate uses, outside the centres.

Of the redundant vinery sites identified, the majority are more appropriately suited to reversion to agricultural use or as open land for recreation, wildlife, etc. This correlates well with the aim to support potential for improvements to the Island's agricultural land and open character.

The most appropriate future use for redundant horticultural land within and around the centres will be best considered as a whole within the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified for each centre and balanced against the aims of the SLUP.

The study identified 30 potential vinery sites which might be used for small scale industry and other uses such as renewable energy. The highest scoring sites could potentially, depending on stringent tests, accommodate uses such as builder's yards, storage, parking of plant/machinery, etc if a demand for these uses is established.

Those sites achieving lower scores might, in cases where reversion to agricultural land is less important, appropriately accommodate softer uses, for example harvesting of renewable energy, where dual use alongside agriculture may be possible and incorporation within a curtilage where this is likely to secure removal of glass. It may be appropriate to introduce a threshold to limit the area of site used for a particular purpose, and therefore its consequent impact on the surrounding area.

All of these potential uses are likely to uplift the value of land which may assist in clearance of sites but may also lead to competition between these uses for the few available sites. Such competition is likely to result in the more economically viable uses prevailing, to the detriment of lower value uses. The above approach to grade the sites may limit the level of competition on the lower scoring sites and assist in providing for all types of uses.

The SLUP directs that a means should be found of encouraging clearance and improvement of redundant sites. It is clear from the past that large scale clearance of glass occurred with assistance from the States. The study indicates that the majority of sites should revert to agricultural or open uses. Development potential is limited and the associated uplift in land value it may have, does not provide a wholesale solution to the problem of redundant and derelict horticultural vineries, wherever in the Island they may be located. Therefore land-use planning has limited potential to uplift the value of this land sufficiently to promote clearance. There is a need to investigate other measures that the States could put in place to achieve this.

Large areas of contiguous agricultural land and other suitable areas well-related to established agricultural operations can be enhanced through removal of redundant vineries and, if protected, can meet the industry's current and future agricultural needs whilst balancing and addressing the demands on land of other legitimate development requirements, which might include specific cases where use of redundant vineries for small scale industrial activities is acceptable. The Redundant Vineries Survey 2013 can be viewed on the Departments website at www.gov.gg

4 Natural & Built Environment

KEY MESSAGES

There are significant changes in character across the island. These changes are a result of the underlying landscape character (topography etc) combining with human intervention (roads, earth banks, boundary walls, buildings etc), over the past centuries and millennia.

Sites of Special Significance (SSSs) are a tool introduced in the Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law 2005 and as such there are currently no SSSs. They will be designated for the first time in the new Development Plan. The Planning Law places significant constraints in areas with a SSS designation. We must ensure the level is set high for SSS designation.

The Planning Law places additional constraints in areas with a conservation area designation. We must ensure the conservation area designation is used appropriately in the new Development Plan and identifies truly special areas worthy of designation.

Conservation Areas designated in the existing Development Plans have evolved through a piecemeal process. We need a comprehensive overview of the existing conservation areas on the Island as part of the Review of the Development Plans to analyse their degree of specialness.

Conservation Area Character Appraisals are an essential tool to manage new development in conservation areas.

KEY ISSUES

What are some options for approaching conservation area designation in the new Development Plan?

We need to gauge what is considered *special* in terms of architectural and historic interest in Guernsey.

How can we identify all the sites that might be worthy of SSS designation?

How can we ensure new development has minimal impact on biodiversity?



INTRODUCTION

Guernsey has an exceptionally fine natural and built environment. The character changes across the island, as a result on the underlying landscape character (topography etc) combining with human intervention (roads, earth banks, boundary walls, buildings etc), over the past centuries and millennia.

This section sets out the process the Department has gone through to produce the Guernsey Character Study (Stage 1). It then goes on to explain how we have considered designation of areas and features that have Island-wide importance. Both of these work-streams are key components and contribute to the evidence base for the Review of the Development Plans which will illustrate how and where growth and change may be accommodated without compromising the quality of the built and natural environment.

The Strategic Land Use Plan

A core objective of the Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) is that new development is provided for, but is also balanced with the conservation and enhancement of the character and landscape of the countryside, landscape and historic environment. Policies in the SLUP require the Development Plan to provide an overall analysis of the Island's landscape character and identify priority areas for the maintenance, enhancement and/or restoration of that character and circumstances where change can be accommodated without significant adverse impact (policy SLP27). Through the preparation of the Development Plan the Environment Department will provide measures to maintain biodiversity through the protection and enhancement of key habitats and landscapes (Policy SLP30).

GUERNSEY CHARACTER STUDY (Stage 1)

The Strategic Land Use Plan requires a landscape character study and analysis (**SLP27**), and an overall analysis of the built character of the Island (**SLP32**). In the first stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans, the Department proposed a two stage approach to these studies. The first stage would be a broad outline assessment that would strategically study the whole of the Island. The second stage would be a detailed assessment that would build on Stage 1 and provide a finer level of detail and assessment of the character and distinctiveness of individual areas or neighbourhoods.

We asked for feedback on the proposed two stage approach, how the community could get involved in the studies, if there is any further information available, and if/how the character study should identify local features.

What you have told us so far

In response to the first stage of consultation you told us:

- There was general support for the two stage approach, although it could be too resource intensive
- The community should be involved from the earliest possible stage in order to secure buy-in and add value to the process
- A number of sources of additional information were highlighted
- Local features should be identified in the character study, which could be done in association with Douzaines and/or using community plans.

What we have learnt so far

We carefully considered the responses, especially those that suggested communities are involved at the earliest stages. However, this needed to be balanced against the time constraints and resources needed to consult the community. The Department therefore decided the Stage 1 Outline Assessment, being a broad assessment, should be carried out to provide information for public involvement at a later stage. We felt this was the best means to quickly produce a fact-based document that focused on the strategic character of Guernsey. This decision also took account of opinion that community involvement would be most effective when producing the Stage 2, Detailed Assessment. Furthermore, local features could be identified at the Stage 2 assessment.

The Guernsey Character Study (Stage 1) aims to identify, analyse and describe in a systematic and objective way, those elements and/or combination of elements that help to form the character and distinctiveness of Guernsey. The study focuses on the tangible elements that define Guernsey's character and distinctiveness.

The Guernsey Character Study (Stage 1) is available on the Departments website at www.gov.gg and we welcome your comments on it.

AREAS & FEATURES OF ISLAND - WIDE IMPORTANCE

Background

A core objective of the Strategic Land Use plan is that new development is provided for but is also balanced with the conservation and enhancement of the character and landscape of the countryside, landscape and historic environment.

Those areas and features that are very special to the identity, character and distinctiveness of Guernsey can be afforded statutory protection. The Planning Law provides for the following statutory protection, which can be designated in the Development Plan:

- Site of Special Significance (SSS). These can be designated for archaeological, botanical, geological, scientific, cultural, zoological or other special interest; and
- Conservation Area. Conservation Areas are designated for their special architectural or historic interest and are mainly focused towards the built, rather than natural environment.

Protected Monuments, Protected Buildings and Tree Protection Orders are designated by processes separate to the Development Plan.

In the first stage of public consultation the Department set out the need for sufficient evidence to support the designation of SSSs and Conservation Areas, which could then be supported by policies in the Development Plan. We also identified that the character study could help to identify areas and features of island-wide importance.

The first public consultation also introduced the concept of local areas of interest. These areas could be those that are not of such high importance that they warrant statutory protection, but nevertheless have a local importance and, as such, could be afforded some protection by policies in the Development Plan.

We asked for feedback on this approach and if the use of statutory protection will facilitate a balanced approach to the management of change in the built and natural environment.

What you have told us so far

Respondents generally gave their overall support that the proposed approach would get the balance right and the following specific comments were made:

- Conservation Areas should be comprehensively reconsidered in view of the aims and objectives of providing appropriate new development within local centres;
- Don't overlook the big picture in examining detail;
- A more pragmatic approach when considering the use and usability of buildings for 21st century occupation is needed.

What we have learnt so far

Sites of Special Significance

The Rural Area Plan and the Urban Area Plan have a number of areas designated as Sites of nature Conservation Importance/Interest (SNCI). Some of these areas have such high value that they have potential to be designated as SSSIs. Others do not have such high value, but may be important locally and therefore

have potential to be designated as local areas of importance and afforded some protection by policies in the Development Plan. Some areas may have lost their value and thus do not warrant any form of protection in the new Development Plan.

Conservation Areas

Conservation Area designation has developed in a gradual and piecemeal way over the past 30 - 40 years. The pattern of Conservation Areas that we have therefore today is characterised by over 90 Conservation Areas, some very small and many very close to each other.

Currently none of the Conservation Areas have character appraisals which identifies what features of the area make it special, or management plans. The absence of such appraisals makes the application of current policies less robust and Conservation Areas vulnerable to inappropriate development. It is, therefore, essential that character appraisals and management plans are produced for each Conservation Area designated in the new Development Plan in order to effectively manage development in those areas.

This Review of the Development Plans is the first opportunity to analyse the designation of Conservation Areas following the enactment of the 2005 Planning Law. The 2005 Planning Law places additional constraints in areas with a Conservation Area designation and therefore we need to ensure that areas have enough special interest to warrant designation.

What we have done so far

Sites of Special Significance

The Department has been working with the Biodiversity Project Group, as part of the Review of the Development Plans process and will shortly be surveying the existing SNCIs designated in the RAP and UAP to assess the sites against criteria; and make recommendations for the new Development Plan as to what areas warrant statutory protection as a SSS.

The criterion for designation is included in the document 'Sites of Special Significance and other designated Nature Conservation Sites' available on the Departments website at www.gov.gg. We welcome your comments on this document.

Issues

- There may be sites that are currently not designated as an SNCI in the RAP and UAP, but may have sufficient value to be designated as a SSS or Local Area of Biodiversity Importance (LABI).
- Protection of important areas can be achieved through designation as a LABI or a SSS.
- How can biodiversity on designated sites be maintained through the protection and enhancement of key habitats and landscapes?
- How can we reduce or mitigate the negative effects that new development can potentially have on biodiversity?

Options

Any possible options for tackling some of the issues to do with protecting and enhancing biodiversity are included to stimulate thought and discussion and do not represent any agreed course of action or policy direction.

The above issues could be addressed by a combination of:

- Recognising that in some cases development can help to restore or enhance biodiversity
- A requirement for certain types of development to be accompanied by a *Biodiversity Statement*. The main purpose of the statement would be for the applicant to consider from the outset how biodiversity can be conserved or enhanced on a site.
- To consider the use of Planning Covenants to help conserve and enhance biodiversity, by securing, off-setting (the replacement or enhancement of biodiversity and habitat on another site to compensate for harm caused by development)
- Leaving the option open for designating further sites after the adoption of the new Development Plan through an amendment to the Island Plan or by preparation of a Subject Plan (a separate planning policy document prepared by the Department and subject to a public inquiry and if approved by the States forms part of the Island Development Plan).

Conservation Areas

An initial survey of all of the existing Conservation Areas in the RAP has been carried out. Also we have carried out a rapid survey of the Conservation Areas designated in the UAP. The conclusion of these surveys is that many of the existing Conservation Areas have architectural and/or historic interest and therefore warrant further evaluation.

The Department has produced a Conservation Area Report (available on the Department website at www.gov.gg), which sets out the issues with current conservation area designation, together with three possible options for how we might approach designation of conservation areas in the new Development Plan.

KEY ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR CONSERVATION AREAS

Issues

There are many areas on Guernsey that have some architectural/historic interest. However, we need to gauge community opinion on what makes an area *special* to Guernsey and what level of protection it considers is appropriate, rather than just a local/parish context. These *special* areas will need to be able to justify and warrant designation as a conservation area.

A description of the special architectural and historic interest (character appraisal) must be written for each Conservation Area that will be designated in the Development Plan in order that the policies are proportionate, robust and defensible.

A conservation area character appraisal is essential to effectively manage new development in designated areas.

Options

To help us gauge community opinion we propose three options. These options focus on the existing conservation areas but there may be new areas which criteria establish should be considered for conservation area designation.

The options below are not the only options available and do not signify a preferred approach but are to stimulate thought and discussion.

The three options are:

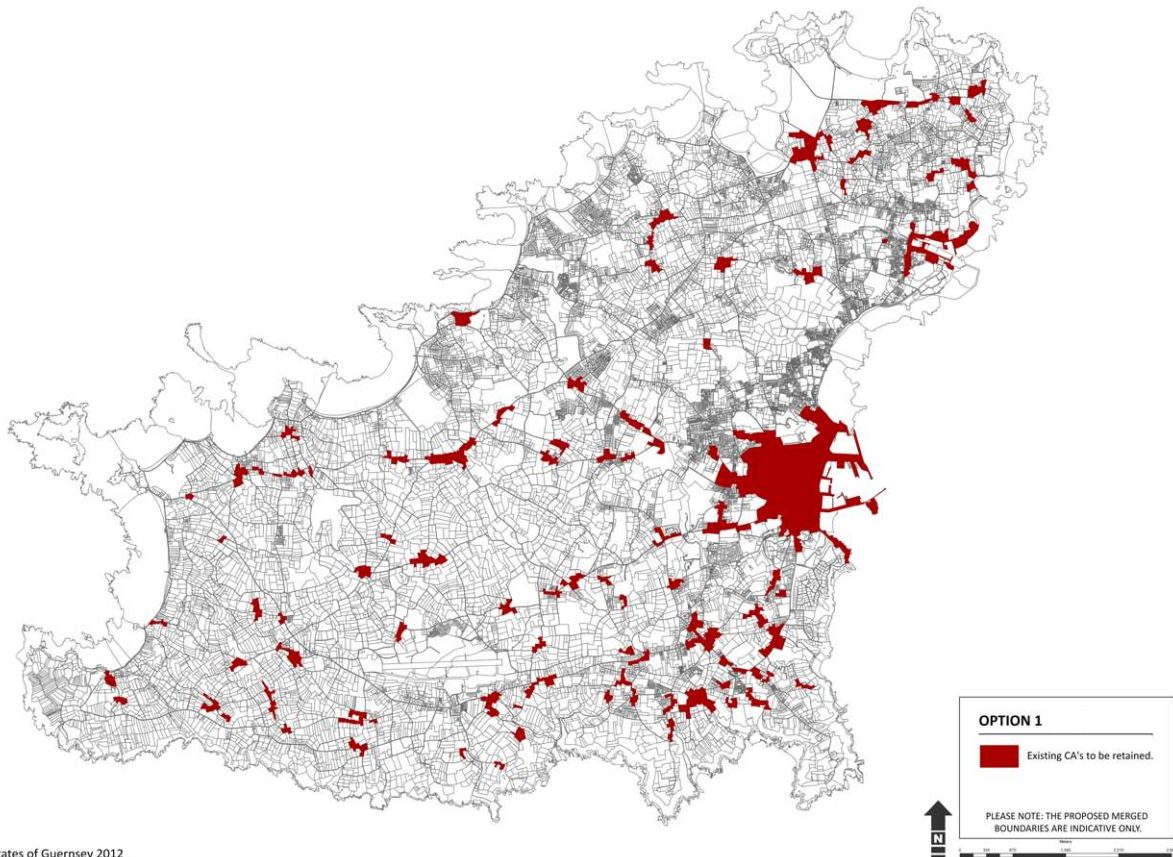
- 1. No change.** The current 90+ conservation areas could be re-designated in the new Development Plan.
- 2. Merge, Extend, Retain and Careful Removal.** Only those areas having particularly special characteristics and interest are retained, which might result in merging some areas or extending the boundary of others. Some existing conservation areas might not be special enough to justify designation. This option is likely to reduce the overall number of conservation areas.
- 3. Retain Only the Best.** Only the areas with outstanding architectural and/or historic interest would be designated. This would reduce the number of conservation areas.

The pros and cons of each option are set out on the following pages:

Option 1 - No change

The current situation is that there are over 90 conservation areas throughout both the rural and urban areas and under this option that would remain unchanged. See Figures 8, 9 and 10.

Pros	Cons
Additional work for the Review of the Development Plan will be reduced (e.g. there will be no need to redraw boundaries).	There is a considerable difference in the quality of the architectural and historic interest in the existing conservation areas. Such a wide variety devalues the conservation area status and reduces effectiveness of policies to be proportionate. It also increases the need for character appraisals in order to clearly set out what is special in each area.
There will be a very wide spectrum of architectural and/or historic interest and special character encompassed in conservation areas	Existing areas clearly do not have sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant designation given the constraints and requirements of the Planning Law. If these areas are re designated conservation area status will be devalued.
	Some historic, landscape or archaeological features are not within current conservation areas.
	90+ conservation areas would have to be named.
	90+ statements of the special architectural and historic interest would need to be produced in order to designate in the Development Plan.
	90+ character appraisals would need to be produced in order to effectively guide decision making and enable future policy to be robust and defensible.
	Many conservation areas are small collections of three or four buildings. The time and expense involved to write a full character appraisal would not be an effective use of resources.



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Note: The above map is purely illustrative and to help communicate the idea behind this option.

Figure 8: Conservation Areas Option 1

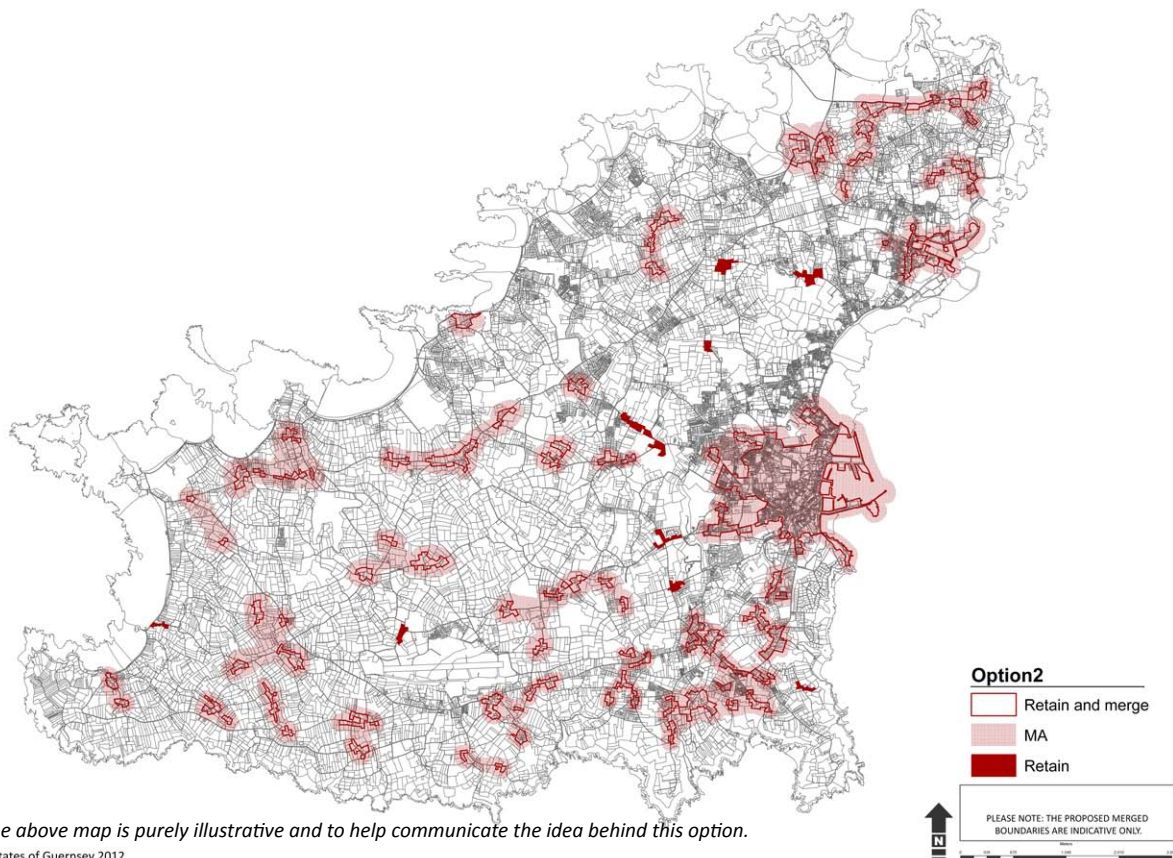
Option 2

This option would be to reduce the number of conservation areas and increase their value by merger, extension, retention, and some carefully targeted removal.

Names would then need to be given to these new conservation areas and character appraisals and management plans would need to be produced.

Many of Guernsey's existing conservation areas are very close together and divided by only a field or two or a number of modern houses. However, there are also examples where protected buildings or other historic buildings or archaeology or clusters of historic buildings fall just outside of current conservation area boundaries or between existing conservation areas. Such historic features could be included within new conservation area designations.

Pros	Cons
Larger and fewer conservation areas could be more effectively managed.	This option could potentially result in an a net increase in the area covered by conservation areas.
A review of the conservation area boundaries will allow the incorporation of historic buildings and other special historic or landscape features that currently fall outside of existing conservation areas.	The production of guidance and management plans for these conservation areas would still be a significant task which could be a lengthy and time-consuming one, but could be justified if the areas are truly special.
This approach would reduce the wide differences in the standards of quality of the architectural and historic interest. The value of conservation area status therefore increases.	
A reduction in the number of conservation areas would enable guidance to be written for all designated conservation areas. This would help manage development in these areas and inform the planning application process and ensure greater consistency.	



Note: The above map is purely illustrative and to help communicate the idea behind this option.

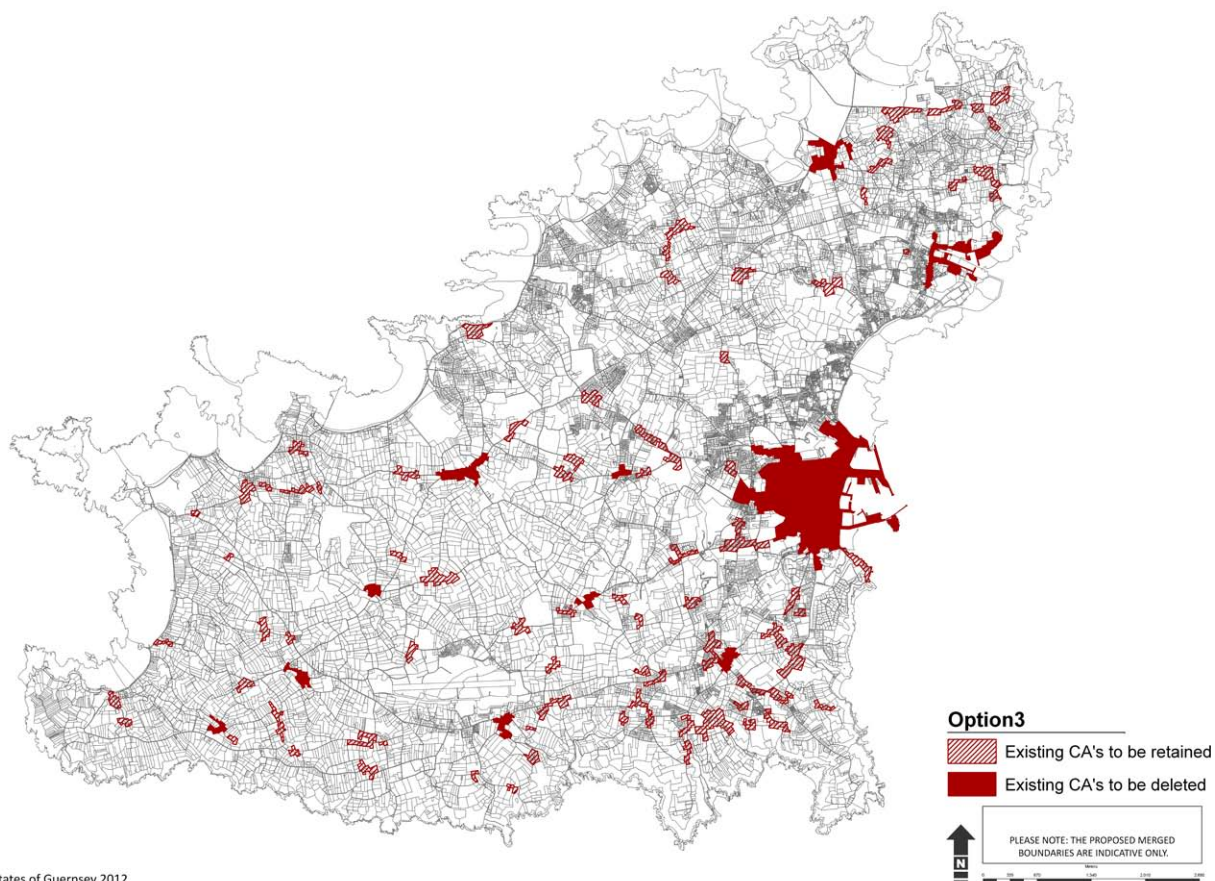
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Figure 9: Conservation Areas Option 2

Option 3

This option would designate only those areas of outstanding architectural and historic interest as conservation areas. The remaining areas would not be designated.

Pros	Cons
This approach would represent a marked reduction in workload necessary for designation through the Development Plan.	This option might result in conservation areas not being fully representative of the range of areas of special character and appearance of built features throughout Island.
Fewer conservation area character appraisals would be needed. These could be written relatively quickly and in more detail and policy would be more robust and defensible in a shorter time frame	
There would be little difference in the range of quality of architectural and historic interest because only the very best would be designated as conservation areas. Conservation Area designation would therefore be highly valued.	
A review of the conservation area boundaries will allow the incorporation of historic buildings and other special historic or landscape features that current fall outside of existing conservation areas.	
Areas previously designated Conservation Areas and worthy of an enhanced level of control could be protected through other appropriate policies and mechanisms.	



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Note: The above map is purely illustrative and to help communicate the idea behind this option.

Figure 10: Conservation Areas Option 3

We welcome your comments on the Conservation Area Report, together with your comments and thoughts about the level at which the special requirements for designation as a conservation area should be set in Guernsey.

5 Open Spaces & Recreation

KEY ISSUES

How can we enhance visual access to open space?

How can we address the deficiency in play space, and do we need to?

How can we improve accessibility to open space for the ageing population?

How can we enhance provision of green corridors?

How can we encourage the provision of allotments?



APPROACH TO OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Background

Public access to and views of the beautiful countryside, attractive coast and other open spaces and the recreational opportunities these afford underpins the high quality of life enjoyed by Guernsey residents. Competing demands on the use of land require careful management to operate at the height of, and not beyond their potential.

The core objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan include protecting local biodiversity and the countryside, providing a wide range of leisure opportunities and the wise management of natural resources whilst protecting the Island's environment and supporting a successful economy. Provision of good quality and accessible public open spaces and other leisure facilities enable healthy and active lifestyles to be maintained and complement the importance of visual access to open space.

The Island Development Plan is required to provide measures to maintain the Island's biodiversity and recognises that there is often a potential conflict between the uses of these areas for recreational purposes, even informally, and the protection of the habitat or landscape. The importance of the coast as an environmental, economic and recreational resource is identified alongside the need to balance competing demands for use to ensure its attractive character is protected.

What you have told us so far

The first Stage public consultation for the Review of the Development Plans identified a need to enhance public spaces in Town and on the Bridge to provide a more pleasant environment, perhaps through creation of pocket parks, improvements to civic spaces, art trails or part-time road closures to enable use of usually vehicle-dominated areas. There is strong support for better or multifunctional use of existing venues as follows:

- La Vallette bathing pools
- Church square
- North Plantation
- Vale Castle
- Market Square
- St Paul's Sunken Gardens
- Delancey Park
- Crown & Albert piers
- South Esplanade
- North Beach
- Saumarez Park
- Saumarez Nature Trail
- The Bridge
- St Germain Quarry
- Bus Terminus
- Area behind C  tel Hospital
- St Sampson's Clock Tower
- The Model Yacht Pond

The creation of new recreational spaces was generally desired, with universal support for a partnership approach towards funding of public spaces, with a note of caution about securing ownership and access rights. It is recognised that an attractive physical environment is unlikely to be created by accident, in particular when considering the harbours, and that a new recreational space could form part of a regenerated harbour area with a clear link to the sea to exploit Town's unique maritime setting and views.

It was commented that the interface between people and places is a critical element of community development, and while specific facilities are of great value, the places and spaces between them are very important in terms of community cohesion. Desire was expressed for attractive and continuous cycle paths and walking routes which are better marked and which link schools, spaces and the main and local centres, but also provide recreational routes, such as coastal and rural trails.

It was pointed out that Guernsey has a large resource of semi-natural, informal spaces (beaches, coastal headlands, etc.) that sensitive development, such as provision of facilities or access, could contribute to the enhancement of these areas, rather than providing new spaces in all cases.

It was commented that major parts of the Island are passively recreational, in terms of beaches, cliff paths and commons and should be protected from development and considered part of the character and uniqueness of the Island. Fields within the urban area are observed to provide valuable open space and are part of the character of those areas. The need to protect and manage skylines is a recurring theme relating to visual spaces and concerning not only townscapes but also countryside views across open land and seascapes.

It was recognised that provision of recreational facilities in Guernsey is good and should be maintained, particularly through greater dual-use of school sports facilities, though there was concern that existing policy encourages leisure uses in central areas where they have to compete with higher value uses. The needs of the Island's aging population were

noted in terms of provision of community and recreational space but also that those needs should be balanced with those of the remaining population. The need to design out crime when planning public spaces was also mentioned.

There is general public support for provision of allotments, mainly on the outskirts of main and local centres, and a feeling that this is a way in which to support trends towards local food production. This was considered to be an appropriate use for redundant or cleared vinery sites.

All open space will become increasingly important as population densities rise and it was considered that loss of open space should only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances, and where alternative provision is made elsewhere.

What we have learnt so far

The existing provision of open space and outdoor recreation across Guernsey has been assessed with regard to type, location, accessibility and opportunities for improvement and enhancement in accordance with the requirements of the SLUP. The Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Survey 2013 can be downloaded from www.gov.gg. It is the intention that the survey will inform policies in the Island Development Plan to enable new opportunities for provision of and enhancement of existing open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities.

Areas covered by different types of open spaces surveyed are broken down in the following table together with the level of provision of each type and per 1000 members of the population:

Typology	Hectares (Ha)	Ha/1000 pop.	Vergees (v)	v/1000 pop.
Amenity Space	13.07	0.21	79.75	1.27
Beaches*	233.55	3.71	1425.12	22.65
Cemeteries	15.87	0.25	96.84	1.54
Civic Space	7.52	0.12	45.89	0.73
Natural Space	209.55	3.33	1278.67	20.32
Recreation Space	225.72	3.59	1377.34	21.89
Parks & Gardens	25.69	0.41	156.76	2.49
Play Space	2.42	0.04	14.77	0.23
Total	733.39	11.66	4475.14	71.12

*Beach areas divided by 2 to account for tidal range

Amenity green spaces

(e.g. the Fair Field; mown coastal grassland)

- Small; evenly distributed; good quality; good access
- Uses: recreational walking; informal recreation
- Amount available: slightly below standards sought in other jurisdictions

Recreation beaches

- Sandy beaches concentrated on the north and west coasts; good facilities and access
- Smaller cliff beaches to south east; poorer access
- Uses: wide variety of land and water-based activities; important habitat

Churchyards and cemeteries

- Well-distributed; well-maintained; steps and uneven surfaces constrain physical access
- Uses: tranquil spaces for walking; contemplation; habitat

Civic spaces

(e.g. *Market Square; Trinity Square; Le Crocq*)

- Mainly concentrated within St Peter Port; sizes and characteristics vary
- Use: opportunistic; specific events draw visitors
- More effective use of the space could be made in many locations

Natural green spaces

(e.g. *L'Ancrese Common; Orchid Fields*)

- Concentrated on north, west and south west coasts; smaller inland sites; evenly distributed
- Good quality; access compromised by gradient and uneven surfaces
- Amount available: far exceeds standards sought by other jurisdictions

Outdoor recreation spaces

- Relatively well distributed; high quality formal facilities; lower quality informal facilities
- Uses: pitches; parks; commons; school facilities; inland waters; covered and open allotments
- Amount available: exceeds standards sought by other jurisdictions

Parks and gardens

- Primarily contained within the northern parishes; deficit to the south and west
- High quality; well-maintained; opportunities for improvement noted at Delancey
- Uses: strategic function in terms of appeal and landscape; community resources; events

Play spaces

- Main spaces are freely accessed within larger open spaces in the north
- Smaller spaces are less freely accessed and associated with housing estates
- Quality generally good; limited age range/ interests catered for
- Amount available: much lower than standards sought by other jurisdictions.

Other observations

- The majority of the types of spaces surveyed are in the north, in St Peter Port and on lower lying coasts
- There is no strong correlation between formal open spaces and the Island's centres
- Large areas of natural space stand adjacent to potential local centres at L'Islet and Cobo
- Civic spaces are more frequently used where a draw is provided: facilities; public art; events
- Conflicts between users must be carefully managed, e.g. recreation versus habitat
- Visual access to open space is as important as physical access
- Island wide catchment: larger areas; higher profile destinations
- Smaller catchment: smaller areas; ad hoc use; through routes; fewer facilities; limited access
- Smaller catchment areas also apply where the space is associated with the Parish

In order that open spaces are used to, and not beyond, their potential, it is important that a reasonable level of provision is made in terms of number of open spaces and a range of outdoor recreational opportunities offered together with good quality and sufficient associated facilities. This applies both Island-wide and at a more local level.

KEY ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Issue 1: How can we enhance visual access to open space?

Visual access (i.e. the ability to see beyond the frontage development) is identified in the SLUP as being of equal importance to physical access. Visual access is sometimes impeded by Guernsey's pattern of roadside ribbon development. This gives a false impression that the Island is more built up than it actually is and impacts on visual access to open land to the rear of buildings.

OPTION 1: The Island Development Plan could provide for demolition of ribbon development and for replacement buildings on other sites.

Pros	Cons
+ Increase in visual access to open space	- Difficult to achieve comprehensively because of individual land ownership which could lead to a piecemeal approach and which would not achieve the intended benefits
+ Reduction in false impression of built up character in some areas	- Could increase pressure for green field development and displace the negative impact
+ Opportunity to provide planned and comprehensive redevelopment	- May require costly infrastructure to accommodate new development
+ Opportunity to provide new areas of open space and to enhance and link areas of habitat	

The Department is not suggesting a preferred option; the options are only suggestions to stimulate discussion and do not infer any preferred approach or policy option.

Issue 2: How can we address the deficiency in play space and do we need to?

The results of the survey highlight an overall deficiency in number of play spaces when compared to standards set elsewhere and that those play spaces existing are unevenly distributed, the south western parishes being particularly lacking. Some play spaces are provided in association with housing estates which can discourage use by non-residents. A limited range of ages and interests is catered for.

OPTION 1: The Island Development Plan could require new housing or community developments over a certain size to illustrate provision of outdoor play space within a reasonable proximity

Pros	Cons
+ Potentially better recreational facilities for families close to where they live	- May become underused or redundant land where land is at a premium in and around the local centres if formal provision is not needed where that need is catered for by proximity to other informal play spaces such as beaches which fulfil the same role
+ Provision of community facilities to reinforce sustainability of local centres and community growth	- In and around the main and potential local centres provision may conflict with other land demands and uses which are desirable for the sustainability of that centre
+ Improved health and well-being	- Could have a negative visual impact in some areas
	- Could lead to pressure for further development (toilets, café, floodlights) with negative impacts

OPTION 2: The Island Development Plan could identify areas of potential new play space where there is a particular lack of provision

Pros	Cons
+ Potentially better recreational facilities for families close to where they live	- Generally dispersed nature of the population outside the main centres makes it difficult to provide play space areas within walking distance of potential users (local catchment may be too small to sustain the use)
+ Provision of community facilities to reinforce sustainability of centres and community growth	- Could lead to conflicts with or between land owners and achieve nothing where there is no buy-in
+ Improved health and well-being	- In and around the main and potential local centres provision may conflict with other land demands and uses which are desirable for the sustainability of that centre
	- Could have a negative visual impact in some areas
	- Could lead to pressure for further development (toilets, café, floodlights) with negative impacts

Issue 3: How can we improve accessibility to open space for the aging population?

Many open spaces and recreation spaces do not have good physical access especially given the increasing proportion of older people in the population.

OPTION 1: The Island Development Plan could encourage provision of associated facilities and upgrade of physical access to make open spaces and outdoor recreation areas more attractive and accessible to more users

Pros	Cons
+ Increased physical access to a wider range of opportunities for a greater proportion of society	- Difficult to achieve improvements to physical access of existing facilities and areas through land use policy where this is not associated with new development
+ Could encourage better and more effective use of existing spaces, such as civic space (art/events), reinforcing the role of centres, potentially through development, as places to spend leisure time	- Development required could destroy the character and attractiveness of some areas as open spaces, areas of outdoor recreation and habitat
+ Could encourage provision of spaces within and around potential local centres to support community growth and sustainable centres	- Could result in over use of those areas which are particularly accessible or have good facilities, in turn resulting in increased pressure for associated built development (car parking, cafes, restaurants, surfacing) with potential negative impacts on character

Issue 4: How can we enhance provision of green corridors?

A series of green corridors exists in the form of green lanes and Ruettes Tranquilles but these are not always well linked-up with one another or with open spaces and the network could be improved.

OPTION 1: The Island Development Plan could provide an identified and linked network of green corridors by restricting some forms of development on identified routes between open spaces and areas of outdoor recreation

Pros	Cons
+ Provision of landscape and habitat corridors to link areas and support biodiversity	- Might restrict opportunities for development or enhancement of some existing uses along identified routes which may conflict with potential for economic and social development
+ Provision of safe and easy access to and between areas of open space and outdoor recreation by linking up and encouraging use other than by car	- Would rely heavily on other legislation, i.e. traffic and enforcement, and would not be easily achievable through land use policy alone
+ Improved and enhanced visual access to open areas and green areas	- Might restrict vehicle movement, traffic management and road safety by impacting on other routes
+ Provision of better links with existing and new development	

Issue 5: How can we encourage the provision of allotments?

OPTION 1: The Island Development Plan could encourage the use of land for allotments by allowing for provision of associated facilities

Pros	Cons
+ Provides an outdoor recreational opportunity as well as potential visual access to open space	- Associated development (sheds, roads, parking, farm shop) and a possible untidy appearance could detract from character and visual amenity
+ Potential for associated re-use of better quality redundant greenhouses, particularly in the north of the Island where there is the greatest number of greenhouses and fewer allotments	- Increased activity could conflict with nearby uses
+ Alternative way of managing the land; could bring unused open land into use with minimal development retaining a generally open aspect and ability to revert to agricultural use if required	- Increased activity and cultivation could be detrimental to biodiversity
+ Promotion of community involvement and growth	- Possible conflict with other uses in and around the centres and with other economic, social and environmental requirements or demands
+ Small scale food production	- May not be located in accordance with the SLUP Spatial Strategy
+ May provide an incentive for removal of redundant greenhouses	- Cannot contribute significantly to Island food production and cannot reduce need for imports
	- Demand may not exist, particularly outside main centres, as many people have relatively good sized gardens which can accommodate growing

What Happens next?

The Key Messages, Issues and Options in this booklet have been informed by our research and the evidence that has emerged from it as well as the comments received in response to our consultations to date. The Environment Department would value your opinion and feedback on them.

You may wish to comment on all or just a few of the issues and you can respond by using the response form below. You may also wish to make a submission to the 'Call for Sites'. If so please read the guidance notes and use the special form for this purpose which can also be found below. Comments and 'Call for Sites' submissions are invited over the 7 week period commencing on the 29th July 2013 and closing on the 13th September 2013.

All responses to the Key Messages, Issues and Options booklet and submissions to the 'Call for Sites' will inform the preparation of a Draft Development Plan. The Environment Department expect to publish a Draft Island Development Plan in Spring of 2014. The draft plan will be subject to a public inquiry and representations both for and against the proposed policies, can be submitted to the Planning Inquiry for consideration by an independent Planning Inspector. The Public Inquiry is expected to be held in Autumn 2014 and subsequently, the Draft Plan together with any proposed changes will be put forward for States consideration in 2015.

If you have any queries please contact the Forward Planning Section at The Environment Department at planreview@gov.gg or telephone us on 01481 71700. Alternatively visit us at various locations on the Island between 29th July 2013 and 10th August 2013 the details of which can be found on our website at www.gov.gg

