



STRATEGIC LAND PLANNING GROUP  
THE STATES OF GUERNSEY

# The Strategic Land Use Plan



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# Part A

## 1. Legal Position

Section 5 of the Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005 states it is the duty of the Strategic Land Planning Group to consider the implications for land planning and use of the strategic, economic, social and environmental objectives of the States in preparing the Strategic Land Use Plan. The Plan will provide general guidance and specific directions to the Environment Department in the exercising of its functions under the Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005.

### Transitional arrangements

This is the first Strategic Land Use Plan to be prepared under the terms of the law which was enacted in April 2009.

The current Development Plans [the Urban Area Plan (Review No.1) and Rural Area Plan (Review No. 1)] were formulated in accordance with the Strategic Land Use Plan as it stood at the time of their adoption by the States.

**In accordance with the Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005 this revised Strategic Land Use Plan will guide the preparation of a new Development Plan or Plans but in the interim, nothing in this Plan shall entitle or require the Environment Department to permit or refuse any development which it would otherwise be precluded from permitting under the terms of the current Urban and Rural Area Plans. This Plan includes measures to ensure that there is a smooth transition from previous policies to new policies.**

## 2. The States Strategic Plan

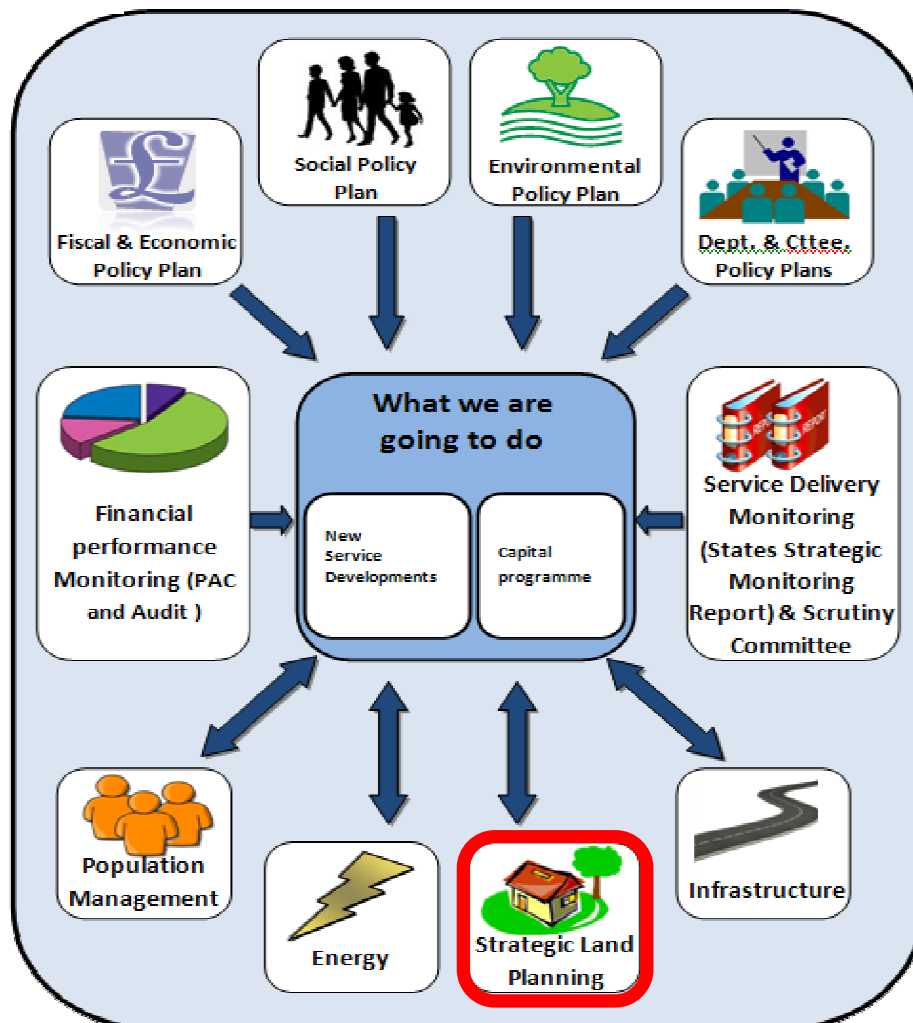
The States Strategic Plan is the corporate planning document for the States of Guernsey. This Strategic Land Use Plan is the document that sets out the long term agenda for land use planning<sup>1</sup> in Guernsey and its relationship with the States Strategic Plan is explained below and illustrated by the diagram on page 5. The Strategic Land Use Plan is a legal document that sets out guidance for the Environment Department<sup>2</sup> in achieving the States land use strategic, economic, social and environmental objectives.

### The Strategic Land Use Plan's relationship with the States Strategic Plan

The Strategic Land Use Plan is one of the four Island Resource Plans (see diagram below) that form part of the States Strategic Plan. The other Island Resource Plans cover Energy, Population Management and Island Infrastructure. The Strategic Land Use Plan provides a high level spatial planning framework endorsed by the States to guide the Environment Department in the preparation of the more detailed Development Plans<sup>3</sup>.

- 1 *Land use planning is the term used to describe the whole function of making provision for and controlling development, including setting policies and controlling location and form of buildings*
- 2 *In the context of this document, the 'Environment Department' is referred to as the States department responsible for operating the Island's land planning system.*
- 3 *Development Plans are documents prepared by the planning section of the Environment Department that set out the detailed, specific policies for land use and planning and influence decisions in relation to the control of development. They are tested in public at an inquiry and are subsequently approved by the States.*

## The States Strategic Plan A family of related plans



To support the delivery of policies aimed at achieving the economic, social and environmental objectives contained within the States Strategic Plan, the Strategic Land Planning Group has produced a new type of Strategic Land Use Plan that continues to take a broad and long term view of land use and spatial matters but which also focuses strongly on the successful achievement of desired outcomes. The Plan emphasises the importance of corporate working between States Departments and positive relationships between the public and private sectors in putting spatial policies into effect. This means that the Plan concentrates on the action that needs to be taken to achieve identifiable and measurable results through the use and management of land as a strategic resource, rather than only looking narrowly at individual topics and land supply targets. In this way the Plan is strategic in scope rather than impinging on the Environment Department's more detailed planning role but also provides a framework for different agencies to work together.

The planning horizon of the Strategic Land Use Plan is 20 years and extends far beyond the rolling 4-5 year plan period of the States Strategic Plan. It therefore needs to ensure that the Island can adapt to accommodate sustainable development and growth in the longer term and in response to changing economic, social and environmental circumstances.

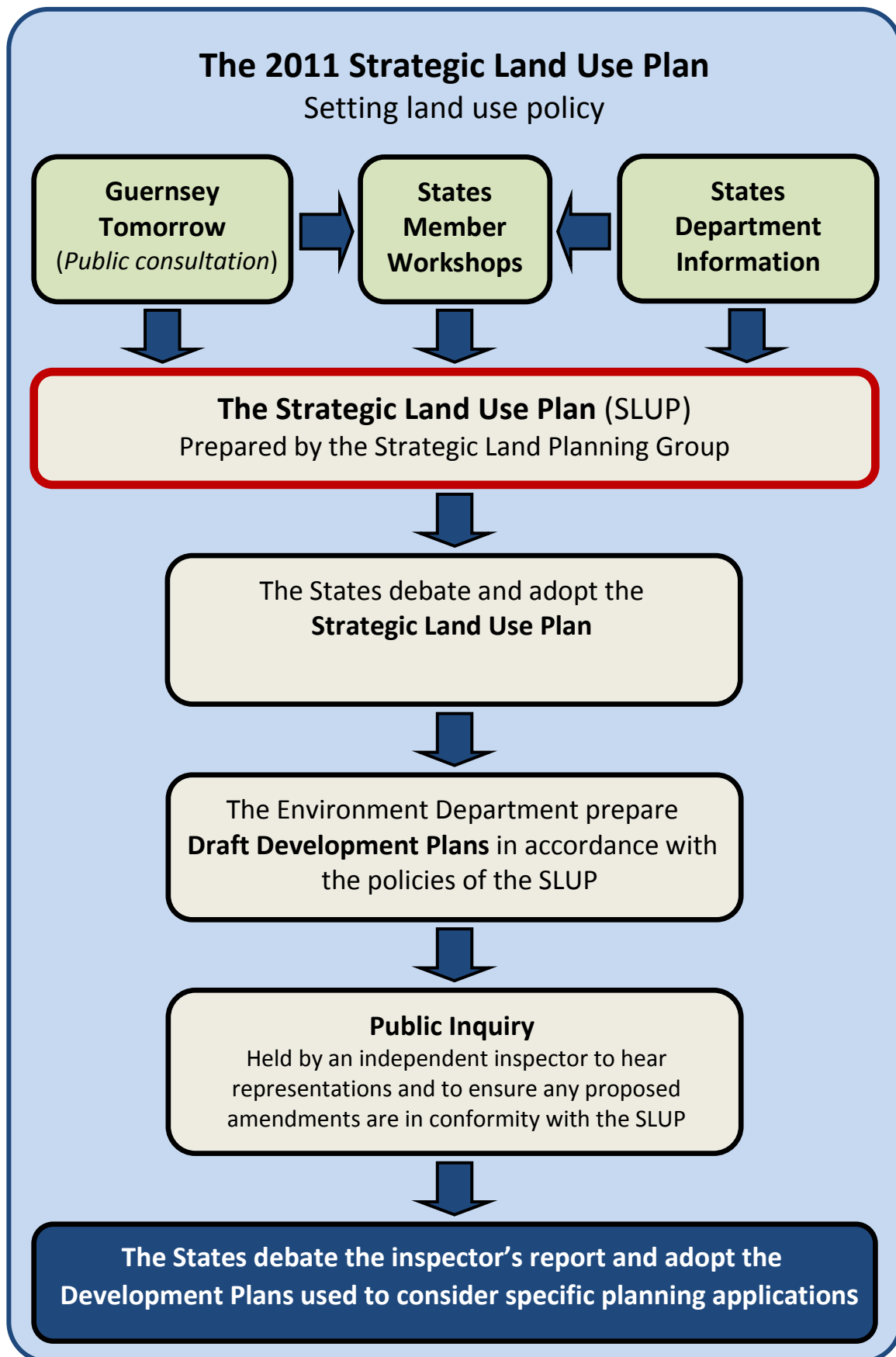
## Relationship with other plans and strategies

In addition to supporting the corporate direction set by the States Strategic Plan through its suite of contributory Policy and Island Resource Plans, the revised Strategic Land Use Plan takes into account other related plans and strategies that have been approved by the States such as the Corporate Housing Strategy and Programme as well as future plans and strategies addressing transport, infrastructure provision and environmental issues.

The Plan also makes reference to emerging policy approaches such as the strategy for older people's accommodation and the Economic Development Plan. The Commerce and Employment Department is leading the preparation of an Economic Development Plan as part of the ongoing review process of the Fiscal and Economic Plan and this will identify a direction for economic development within the Island. This will need to be taken into account when the Environment Department prepares future Development Plans.

This long term spatial framework is likely to influence other government strategies that need to take into account changing patterns of development and the Island's changing demographic profile that are envisaged over the next 20 years.





### 3. Purpose, Vision and Objectives

#### **Purpose**

**The Strategic Land Use Plan will contribute positively to maintaining Guernsey as a desirable place to live, work and enjoy leisure time through the implementation of land use policies that create a socially and economically strong Island balanced with the protection and enhancement of Guernsey's physical environment and respecting international efforts to safeguard the global environment.**

The Strategic Land Use Plan sets out the spatial framework for Guernsey for the next 20 years. It provides both general guidance and more specific directions to the Environment Department in preparing the Development Plans and exercising its other planning functions in order to achieve the States' agreed economic, social and environmental objectives set out within the States Strategic Plan. The Strategic Land Use Plan is a key instrument in identifying the best way to achieve these States objectives through land use and spatial planning.

The Strategic Land Use Plan includes a set of policies that relate to specific land uses and activities. These provide the framework for the preparation of specific land use policies within the Development Plans but these alone will not guarantee that the right development takes place in the right place at the right time. Identifying and promoting positive results that can be gained through considering issues together can better satisfy our social, economic and environmental aspirations. Therefore, this fundamental revision of the Strategic Land Use Plan is heavily 'outcomes focused' and aims to ensure positive things happen 'on the ground'. This emphasis on results is an important shift in strategic policy and will ensure Development Plan policies also focus on the delivery of positive sustainable development.

The physical characteristics of our surroundings contribute positively to our quality of life and play a key role in attracting economic investment. However, the Island cannot afford to stand still and the achievement of environmental objectives will need to be balanced with other States objectives to enable the Island's economy to flourish and social wellbeing to be maintained and enhanced.

The Strategic Land Use Plan needs to remain fit for purpose over time and be capable of adjusting to demographic change and future revisions to the strategic policies of the States, as set out within the States Strategic Plan. Therefore, adequate adaptability has been built into the Plan. Elements of the Plan can be revised if it appears to the Strategic Land Planning Group that an alteration is necessary or when directed to do so

by the Policy Council. The core objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan are, however, unlikely to change significantly.

### **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**

## Part B – Core Strategic Policies

### 4. Spatial Strategy

As part of the Strategic Land Use Plan review a broad cross section of people were involved in the ‘Guernsey Tomorrow’<sup>1</sup> consultation initiative to provide the Strategic Land Planning Group with a better understanding of the sort of place people want Guernsey to be in the future. The views and opinions gathered have been taken into account alongside the particular strategic requirements identified by the States Strategic Plan, other plans, policies and programmes and advice from relevant States departments. This process has established a set of nine desired outcomes that the revised land use strategy should aim to achieve. These are summarised in the table below:

<b>SOCIAL &amp; COMMUNITY</b>	<b>BUSINESS</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>
Socially inclusive & diverse communities & neighbourhoods	A range of business opportunities for new & innovative enterprises	A high quality & accessible physical environment
A range of training & employment opportunities to match all skills & needs	A globally competitive centre of economic growth	Effective & efficient conservation & use of land & buildings
A safe, secure & accessible environment for all	Sustainable management & wise use of environmental resources	Protection & enhancement of the natural & built environment

Working with States Members through a series of meetings, the Strategic Land Planning Group has subsequently identified an appropriate Spatial Strategy for the distribution of development within the Island, namely:

#### **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**

<sup>1</sup> *Guernsey Tomorrow was a consultation exercise that preceded the drafting of the Strategic Land Use Plan and invited the views of over 1000 people through a number of different events including workshops, drop-in sessions and visits to schools.*

The Strategic Land Planning Group considers that this will require a coordinated approach to managing physical change in the Island which will be achieved through:

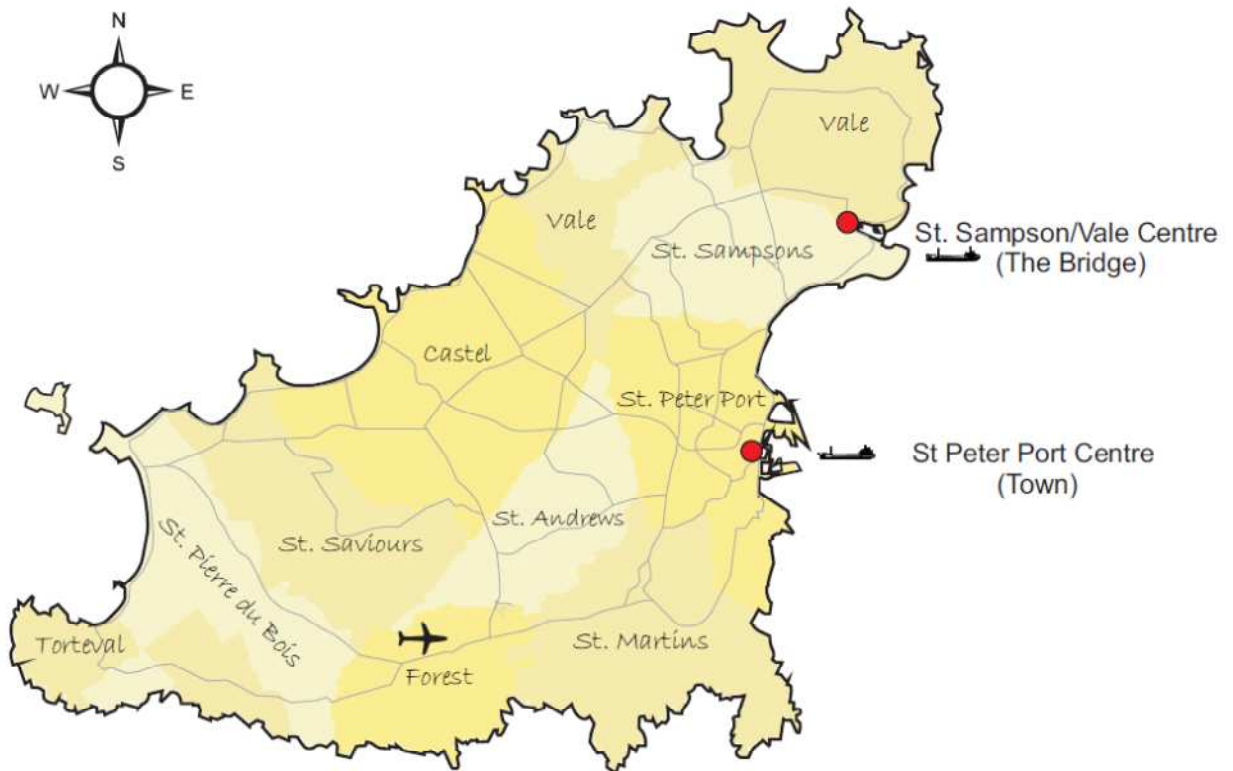
- the identification of a hierarchical structure of main (St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale) and local centres and the promotion of safe and easy access within and between them
- providing a range of business opportunities, recognising the role of the main centres including Admiral Park and the Saltpans industrial site as focal points for economic development and the role of local centres in providing local employment opportunities of an appropriate scale
- encouraging the development of urban sites in the interests of the efficient use of land and protection of the rural environment. The redevelopment of brownfield sites is particularly desirable
- supporting the role of the main and local centres as socially inclusive and diverse communities and neighbourhoods
- respecting the quality of the physical environment and local heritage and seeking a good standard of design of new development
- protecting open countryside while facilitating a viable rural economy and enabling small scale business and industrial development, where appropriate <sup>1</sup>
- a flexible and proportionate approach to the control of development that can adapt to more or less growth or change over time

The parish or local centres will be identified through the Development Plan preparation process, based on an assessment of 'sustainability indicators', i.e. those services and facilities that contribute to an area's ability to meet local social, economic and environmental needs such as doctors surgeries, public transport links, convenience goods shops selling daily essentials, public open space, etc.

This spatial strategy will enable the land planning process to achieve the desired outcomes set out above, with an emphasis on the priorities, initiatives and actions required to ensure the Island's development needs are effectively met and to ensure the sound management of urban, rural and coastal areas. **This Spatial Strategy applies to all subsequent policies contained within this Plan.**

<sup>1</sup> *While the overarching spatial strategy aims to concentrate development within and around the main centres with some limited development occurring within the local centres, the Plan will not seek to constrain the location of agricultural development or other commercial development where appropriate and where it would not undermine the adopted spatial strategy.*

## Orientation map



## 5. Linking Policies

### Introduction

This section highlights the linkages that exist between land uses, activities and development types and identifies opportunities for working in a joined up way to better meet the overarching objectives of the States. By pulling together identified States needs, assets and resources it is possible to produce corporate outcomes that are not achievable by focusing on satisfying single targets or meeting individual policies alone. In other words this section identifies those things we cannot do without better corporate working. The success of corporate working will rely not only on political and senior management commitment, but a commitment from all involved to meet a wide range of corporate objectives.

Through the Strategic Land Use Plan the Development Plans are encouraged to be more proactive in order to enthusiastically promote the delivery of States objectives,

as set out within the States Strategic Plan. This section will provide the Development Plans with an agenda that also identifies opportunities for the private sector to invest in the physical environment.

The Strategic Land Use Plan initiates the examination of spatial opportunities and pressures facing various States Departments, the private sector and the community as a whole. It provides guidance for the Development Plans to identify ways to achieve multiple States objectives through the preparation of subsidiary documents such as masterplans and community plans. Some of these will be statutory planning documents such as Local Planning Briefs which will directly influence planning decisions and others will be non-statutory which might be prepared by non-government organisations and will influence public and private sector thinking and inform the formal planning decision making process. Planning is promoted as an activity that provides opportunities to meet our strategic needs and enables private sector investment in development so that it can be harnessed for the greater good of our community.

## Sustainable development

Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of the present while safeguarding the interests of future generations. In order to achieve development and growth that is environmentally sustainable, we need to find ways of achieving our current economic, social and environmental objectives whilst also considering the longer-term local and global implications.

Good land use planning is essential in delivering sustainable development. It is central to the delivery of housing, supports the business development necessary to create and maintain jobs and prosperity and in combination with any States adopted plans, enables the delivery of essential infrastructure.

However, there are issues concerning sustainability that make it difficult to achieve on a small island. With no significant local manufacturing almost everything we need to sustain our quality of life has to be imported. This includes; the majority of the food we eat, animal feed, almost all building materials, as well as the energy we need to heat our homes and power our motorised transportation. Consideration also needs to be given to issues such as decommissioning and disposing of goods once they reach the end of their useful life. Whilst recycling makes good use of the raw materials contained within goods no longer required for their original purpose, it does result in the exportation of elements of our waste stream.

It is inappropriate simply to import policies and directives from the UK or Europe where opportunities exist to strive for higher levels of sustainability. For example, the UK government is aiming to ensure all new homes are 'zero carbon' by 2016 with all non-domestic buildings following suit by 2019. At present neither the Environmental Plan nor the Energy Policy require such standards to be met and comparisons with the UK are difficult owing to the additional carbon costs of building in Guernsey that are accrued as a result of the importation of all building materials.

Sustainable development concerns need to be pursued in an integrated way rather than a narrow way. The needs and aspirations of Islanders inevitably change over time and it is essential that development takes place if we are to meet our social, economic and environmental objectives. The Strategic Land Use Plan seeks to ensure development is carried out in a sustainable manner, ensuring continuing investment in and care for our physical environment.

#### **POLICY LP1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**Achieving social wellbeing and maintaining economic development with high levels of employment are sustainable development priorities for Guernsey. These will be realised through:**

- i. achieving the prudent use of natural resources, including those that may enable the supply of renewable energy**
- ii. ensuring the physical and natural environment of the Island is conserved and enhanced**
- iii. reducing, where practicable, the Island's contribution to greenhouse gases**

#### **Climate change mitigation**

The 2011 States Environmental Plan explains that global population and energy use per capita doubled during the second half of the 20th century. Without redress this combination of pressures will continue to drive an exponential growth in fossil fuel use. Guernsey will have to play its part in addressing this. However, the Fiscal and Economic Policies and strategies seeking to deliver States corporate objectives also necessitate sustainable levels of economic growth.



The Environmental Plan does not set a target for reducing carbon dioxide emissions but instead sets out the general aim to reduce Guernsey's contribution to global warming by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In the event of the States setting specific targets, they will be taken into account by the planning system when the Environment Department prepares future Development Plans. In the absence of firm guidance, the Development Plans will explore options for sustainability and demonstrate adequate balancing of economic and social objectives.

One of the main contributors of greenhouse gases in the Island is through the use of motorised vehicles. Therefore policies that lead to a reduction in the need to travel by car should be supported. This respects the spatial strategy set out within this Plan which seeks to support the development of sustainable settlements and to locate homes and shops and services within close proximity.

As there is no significant manufacturing in the Island and as the majority of goods are imported climate change mitigation is likely to focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy and waste management. Even so it must be appreciated that almost all building materials are imported into the Island and that this has its own carbon footprint and it may not be appropriate to adopt UK standards for carbon dioxide emissions when assessing building energy efficiency.

Opportunities to make use of locally produced renewable energy are under exploration within the Island's Energy Plan (an Island Resource Plan forming part of the States Strategic Plan). The ability to locally harness wind, tidal or other sea-derived power would reduce the Island's reliance on fossil fuels and the planning system will need to make provision for any associated development that may be required. The EU and International obligations regarding good environmental status of our seas and joined up management with a thematic marine approach (the marine framework directive) across jurisdictions has led to the States exploring the principle of establishing a Marine Spatial Plan. This will bring together multiple users of the sea to make informed and co-ordinated decisions about how to use marine resources sustainably. While this is in its infancy, the Strategic Land Use Plan will ensure both onshore and offshore requirements are correctly coordinated through appropriate policy.

At the time of preparing this Strategic Land Use Plan the Public Services Department is undertaking a major consultation exercise on the Island's future waste strategy. The current method of disposal to landfill creates significant emissions of greenhouse gases and any future strategy will need to consider this along with other economic and social considerations as the States seek to adopt a viable and appropriate approach to waste

treatment. It is acknowledged that all methods of waste disposal will result in some emissions to land, sea or air and will not be a carbon-neutral activity.

#### **POLICY LP2: CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION**

**Mitigation, through reducing greenhouse gas emissions, will primarily be addressed through greater resource efficiency including:**

- i. improving the energy efficiency and carbon performance of new buildings and encouraging existing building occupants to improve efficiency where reasonable**
- ii. reducing the need to travel and ensuring good accessibility to public and other sustainable modes of transport**
- iii. enabling the development and use of renewable energy**
- iv. putting policies in place that facilitate the development of an appropriate waste strategy**

#### **Climate change adaptation**

Climate change can lead to sea ingress and large areas of flooding. Whereas poorly managed development can have a negative impact on the effects of climate change, if it is well planned development can focus investment in areas vulnerable to the effects of climate change bringing in essential funding for improving flood defences and thereby protecting existing neighbouring properties as well as the new development.

Some land uses will be more vulnerable to flooding than others. For example, the provision of outdoor sport and recreation facilities will not be as adversely affected by flooding as, for example a new health facility. Therefore the Development Plans should enable the risk of flooding to be assessed on a case by case basis, rather than adopting a general policy approach that discourages development within vulnerable areas.

Greater levels of winter rainfall will require improved drainage systems to be incorporated into developments. Sustainable Urban Drainage systems replicate natural systems to control the quantity of run-off from a development; to improve the quality of the run-off and to enhance the nature conservation, landscape and amenity value of the site and its surroundings. This approach should be encouraged through appropriate Development Plan policies.

Through a co-ordinated approach to land planning it is possible to improve the Island's resilience to the effects of climate change by increasing adaptation capacity, especially in respect of coastal defences.

**POLICY LP3: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

**Adaptation to risks and harnessing opportunities will be achieved through:**

- i. assessing the level of risk and locating particular land uses appropriately and harnessing investment that would address flooding-related problems**
- ii. ensuring new and existing building stock is more resilient to climate change impacts**
- iii. incorporating sustainable drainage measures and high standards of water efficiency in new and existing building stock**

**Sustainable design and construction**

Sustainable construction includes both new building and altering existing building stock in such a way that it reduces or avoids adversely impacting on the built and natural environment. There are a number of principles that can be followed to achieve sustainable construction:

- encouraging the use of renewable resources
- reducing the use of energy and water in the construction and use of buildings
- minimising the production of waste associated with the construction and use of development

Satisfying these principles can pose choices between maintaining the traditional character and design of buildings and meeting higher environmental standards through the incorporation of non-traditional design features.

Meeting these principles may also result in locating development in such a way as to best respond to the effects of the natural environment on a particular site. In terms of efficient use of resources, multiple-storey buildings take up less land than single storey buildings with the same floor area and therefore should be encouraged unless there are overriding social or environmental reasons not to do so. There will clearly be circumstances where the protection of the historic built form including Protected Buildings will be a priority and sustainability and climate change criteria will need to be

applied appropriately. However in many other circumstances the pursuit of wise use of resources should take precedence.

Whilst the Island's built form has historically been constructed from stone produced by a local quarrying industry, the quality of stone extracted locally now means it is mainly limited to the production of aggregates. Therefore whilst the use of recycled local granite in new developments represents the wise use of natural resources, the importation of granite from places as far away as China represents poor resource use and raises issues of sustainability.

#### **POLICY LP4: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION**

**The design and construction of new development and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock will be expected to incorporate appropriate sustainable construction techniques. This will include:**

- i. giving consideration to how the development can meet higher standards of sustainable development**
- ii. making the best use of natural resources**
- iii. balancing the need to protect the integrity of historic and otherwise important structures with sustainability and resource use priorities**
- iv. seeking flexibility of design to enable buildings to adapt and change over time whilst enabling the demolition and rebuilding of structures where greater long term efficiencies can be achieved**

### **Independent living for all**

The States Population Policy Group's consultation document "Managing Guernsey's Population" published in January 2011 states that Guernsey's population is ageing and by 2039 the largest age groups are projected to be between 65 and 74 years for males and between 65 and 79 years for females. The number of people aged 60 years or over is projected to approximately double between 2009 and 2039. Conversely, the population under 60 years of age is projected to decrease over the same time period.

Dependency ratios are used to indicate the portion of a population that is economically dependent, i.e. those who are eligible for retirement and those who are still in compulsory full time education (represented by the 15 and under and the 65 and over years of age categories).

In 2010, the overall dependency ratio was 0.48, which means that for every 100 people of working age (between the ages of 16 and 64) there were 48 people of dependant age. The dependency ratio is projected to increase to 0.85 by 2070 (or 0.77 based on the upper limit of the working age group increasing to 66 years), compared to 0.48 in 2010, which means that for every one hundred people of working age there is predicted to be 85 people of non-working age.

An alternative model, forecasting a constant population and varying migration, reflects how the demographics of the population is projected to change if the States successfully implements its policy to keep the total population stable. This predicts the proportion of people under 15 would fall from 16.3% of the total population in 2010 to 13.0% in 2070. The proportion of people aged 16 to 64 would also decrease (from 67.3% to 57.1%), whilst the number of people over 65 would increase (from 16.4% to 29.8%). The result is a projected dependency ratio of 0.86 by 2050, reducing to 0.75 by 2070 (or 0.85 and 0.74 respectively based on the upper limit of the working age group increasing to 66 years), compared to 0.48 in 2010.

This 'ageing' of the population will have major economic and social consequences as we move towards a population where an unprecedented number of people beyond working age will be required to be supported, both physically and financially, by a diminishing proportion of people of working age.

HSSD's 2020 vision of the health and social services system document approved by the States in May 2011, states that the vision for the future of the health and social care system is to enable people to live healthy, independent lives. To deliver this vision HSSD will promote, improve and protect the health and social wellbeing of all and will achieve this by:

- promoting healthy lifestyle choices and social wellbeing
- improve services, continuously striving for safety, quality, efficiency and effectiveness
- protect and support the community

This section of the Strategic Land Use Plan emphasises the importance of creating sustainable communities in line with the desired outcome of creating socially inclusive and diverse neighbourhoods. The local centres will play an integral role in meeting this objective. Strategic housing requirements are set out in Section 8 below. However, achieving independent living will require more than simply making provision for housing development.

The need to provide greater choice of housing for older people to enable 'ageing in place' is clearly a significant factor but to ensure results are achieved on the ground a culture shift in housing provision is required. Clearly policies requiring such alterations to homes should be applied logically and reasonably.

Rather than solely focusing on the format of residential units it will be necessary to consider how all of the aspects of community life that contribute to independent living can be integrated and supported through the land planning process. Those aspects are:

- integrated communities (opportunities to be involved in community life)
- appropriately designed homes that offer flexible accommodation that can be easily modified to meet the changing requirements of the householder
- appropriately located homes with good access to shops, services, transport, neighbour support, etc.
- community shops and services
- appropriate levels of residential amenity space (not necessarily gardens - this can include access to public open spaces, usable balconies, an open view, etc.)
- appropriate public transport provision and safe and direct walking routes

In meeting the Plan's objective of supporting the role of the main and local centres as socially inclusive and diverse communities and neighbourhoods it will also be necessary to consider how people move around within and between the centres.

While it is not possible, or from an aesthetic perspective wholly desirable to alter the historic centre of St Peter Port to provide complete access for wheelchair users and parents with prams, the Development Plans will include policies to ensure the needs of all sectors of society are considered and that efforts are made to integrate good levels of accessibility into all new developments.

#### **POLICY LP5: INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR ALL**

**In preparing Development Plan policies and other associated programmes particular regard should be given to the significant and increasing proportion of older people in the Island over the next 20 years and the following issues should be addressed:**

- i. the need to create sustainable communities with appropriate support services**
- ii. adapting existing housing and building new housing to a standard that will offer flexible accommodation that can be easily modified to meet the changing requirements of the householder**
- iii. through the emerging Island Infrastructure Plan and working with States Departments and outside agencies, the promotion of good public transport, Information Technology and communications links to communities**
- iv. providing good quality and accessible community services, public open spaces and other leisure facilities to enable healthy and active lifestyles to be maintained**

### **Main centre vitality and viability**

#### **Introduction**

The main centres are St Peter Port Town and the commercial centre at St Sampson/Vale known as the Bridge. Both are focal points for a range of community, leisure and commercial activities. St Peter Port Town faces many pressures that need to be managed successfully if current vitality and viability levels are to be retained and enhanced. The pressures of managing an historic town centre, dealing with high levels of traffic, providing for the shift in shopping habits to larger floor plate shops, accommodating a world class finance industry and meeting the future requirements of an expanding commercial port are huge, but with these pressures come opportunities that can be harnessed through a proactive land planning system to the wider benefit of Islanders.

Successful management extends beyond the confines of Town and the Bridge and the Development Plans will also need to ensure that development elsewhere does not dilute their role as the Island's main centres or detract from their current and future role as attractive and viable commercial, leisure and residential areas.

The Island's main parish or local centres will be defined through the Development Plan review process. These localised centres meet the needs of a community by building on the support services that currently exist while protecting and wherever possible enhancing these areas and the contribution they make to the sustainable development of the Island.

### **Main Centres as attractive places to do business**

St Peter Port Town includes a wide range of business activities including retailing, the finance industry, port-related services and other supporting operations. It also includes a number of functions that benefit from the concentrated resident and working population such as restaurants, cafes, hairdressers, doctors, dentists and community facilities all of which contribute positively to the commercial mix and viability of the town centre.

The main focus of commercial activity at the Bridge is retail with industrial uses located on its edges and while relatively small scale at present (compared to Town), this provides a much valued shopping centre to residents in the northern parts of the Island in particular.

At the time of writing, planning permission has been granted in principle for a large scale retail and residential development on the Leale's Yard site to the west of the Bridge frontage. This area is likely to attract a broader range of customers in the future, which will enhance the shops and services available locally and offer greater competition to Town as a comparison goods<sup>1</sup> retail destination. Notwithstanding this however, Town will remain the primary retail centre on the Island.

Retail operations in Town clearly benefit from the lunchtime-spend of nearby office workers and this cross-pollination of business should be encouraged to continue. However, it is the role of Town and the Bridge as comparison goods centres and especially in Town as places to socialise at cafes and restaurants that draws in other customers and extends activity beyond the normal commercial operating hours of nine to five.

1 *Comparison retail is a term used to describe the selling of goods including clothing and footwear, furniture, furnishings and household equipment, which generally involves comparing similar goods before buying. By contrast, convenience retail is the term used to describe the selling of often essential, daily items such as food and drink.*



The retail areas of Town are extensive, continuing from the South Esplanade in the south to St Julian's Avenue in the north and extending from the sea front as far west as Vauvert. The peripheral areas to the south are also located on one of the main vehicular routes into Town and the mix of activities in this area raises issues of accessibility, traffic management, pedestrian safety and air quality.

The Development Plans should assess the retail cores of Town and the Bridge and determine whether they need to be redefined in order to concentrate effectiveness and thereby enhance the vitality and viability of the main centres. There may be benefit in identifying primary and secondary retail areas to ensure land use policies adopt a more flexible approach to fringe areas where the market can best determine their future use whilst protecting the key areas from dilution of non-retail activities.

Some tough decisions will need to be taken if the Island is to meet the retail challenges resulting from greater internet use and in the case of Town, competition from the Leale's Yard development planned to take place at the Bridge. The topography of Town makes it difficult to accommodate buildings with modern retail floor space, but opportunities do exist on some of the flatter undeveloped parts of the Town waterfront and through the careful redevelopment of larger existing buildings where opportunities may exist to positively enhance an area. The adopted spatial strategy acknowledges that there will be a tension between absolute protection of our built environment and the need to accommodate modern, fit for purpose buildings that are capable of meeting our economic and social needs in the future.

At the time of writing the Commerce and Employment Department is undertaking a review of the Island's retail strategy. The findings of this review should be taken into account by the Environment Department in preparing retail policies within future Development Plans.

Section 6 sets out specific requirements for employment provision. The redevelopment of the Gategny Esplanade and Admiral Park Mixed Use Redevelopment Areas has substantially increased the stock of new office accommodation in the Island. However, there remains a continuing demand for accommodation as Guernsey's economic prosperity is likely to continue to depend on office based activities. High quality, value added activities require buildings that are fit for purpose and meet modern standards in respect of size, layout, facilities and access. In the case of St Peter Port, this raises issues with integrating the scale of such buildings into an historic town centre. This has been difficult to achieve successfully but good examples do exist and this economic investment within Town has many positive side effects such as inward investment in the built environment, encouraging

more people to work and live in Town and encouraging the recycling of buildings so that older office developments within Town are either redeveloped as modern offices or reused for other purposes such as housing. The need to protect the historic core of St Peter Port will be a significant factor in determining specific proposals for integrating such structures.

The development of Admiral Park as a consolidated commercial office centre has regenerated what was a run down, contaminated site and has taken some of the pressure off Town to integrate large floor plate buildings. Therefore further opportunities for commercial development should be explored as part of the review of the Development Plans.

A significant number of the Island's hotels are located within Town, reflecting current visitor aspirations to stay within central town environments. In terms of the viability and vitality of Town, hotels introduce an important additional activity to the area that contributes positively through comparison goods shopping and visiting the many cafes, bars and restaurants within the area. Previous strategic and land use policies have made provision for new hotels within Town but these have failed to bring about the construction of any new developments. It is therefore understood that the viability of new hotel developments is finely balanced and is likely to rely heavily on the inclusion of support facilities such as restaurants, bars and health suites available to non-residents.

Simply providing a land use policy that allows the consideration of new hotel development is unlikely to yield any significant provision. In line with the spirit of this section of the Strategic Land Use Plan, the States will be encouraged to explore the feasibility of new hotel provision within Town and to consider how best to work corporately to deliver a viable development. In land use terms, this will require provision to be made in the form of the development of a currently undeveloped site, the total redevelopment of a building or buildings that could be better used for alternative uses or through the conversion of historic buildings. This would link in well with the leisure activities within Town, as set out below.

In summary, the mix of commercial and support services in Town and the Bridge bring about greater interaction of activities and it is this mix and interplay that maintains their success and makes them attractive places to do business, live and spend leisure time.

#### **POLICY LP6: MAIN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY - BUSINESS**

**The States will seek to instigate measures and support projects that enable Town and the Bridge to be maintained as the Island's main economic centres by:**

- i. making provision for appropriate development to ensure the main centres of Town and the Bridge are able to accommodate the needs of modern commercial operations, including retail, supporting services and, in the case of the Bridge, industrial development**
- ii. assessing the retail cores of Town and the Bridge to determine whether they need to be redefined in order to concentrate effectiveness and enhance vitality and viability**
- iii. enabling the main centres to accommodate the needs of the office sector while respecting the historic core of Town and making the most efficient use of land such as at Admiral Park**
- iv. ensuring they are accessible by a range of transportation methods, including walking to work and making adequate provision for appropriately located car parking**
- v. adopting a flexible approach to the control of uses to enable a steady improvement of commercial accommodation while respecting the overall objective of protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the main centres**
- vi. requiring high standards of building design**
- vii. promoting the reuse of vacant buildings**

#### **Main centres as attractive places to live**

Section 8 of this Plan sets out specific requirements for housing provision within the Island and Linking Policy LP5 addresses independent living for all. This is a concept that can be successfully delivered over time through the development of housing within the main centres, supported by some development within the local centres and the adaptation of existing homes.

Provision of homes in and around centres ensures that residents are close to shops and services and are provided with easy access to a range of activities. This in turn can reduce the need to travel, resulting in more sustainable living and fewer journeys

undertaken by the motor car. However, the main centres must also be attractive as desirable places to live to a broad spectrum of our society.

Some members of our community will prioritise access to good housing, others to good schooling while a number may appreciate easy access to leisure facilities and bars and restaurants. Provision needs to be made for a range of housing types along with the appropriate management of development within the urban environment which play a critical role in maintaining and enhancing diversity of the residents of Town and the Bridge.

Increasing the resident population of Town and the Bridge will also increase the 'critical mass' of these areas, meaning there will be more people to support the commercial and leisure facilities within them. People are the lifeblood of any town and increasing the resident population can extend the hours of operation of a town and rather than mainly operating between 9am and 5pm, can enhance vitality of the centres later into the evening thereby extending the social mix of people after 5pm. Increasing the resident population can also lead to an improvement in the level of natural surveillance of public streets and spaces. Residential properties will have windows looking out over the public areas that also provide the access to homes. This in turn can lead to lower crime rates and make the centres safer and more desirable places to be.

Additional homes can be achieved by the Development Plans making specific provision for new-build housing within the main centres, regenerating some of the more run down and less precious parts of these areas and in the case of Town making use of the vacant spaces above a number of existing shops within its core. This will require balancing the desire to conserve existing shop frontages and rear elevations of these buildings with the many benefits of providing new homes within existing floor space. Every effort should be made to promote such an initiative.

As part of the reassessment of the key retail cores of the main centres, the Environment Department should consider whether the relaxation of protection currently afforded to the retail activities in these areas could release some buildings or sites that could be more appropriately used for other uses such as housing.

Delivering residential development on urban sites may prove challenging and the Environment Department will need to consider the value of development proposals in terms of their contribution to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the main centres relative to other environmental considerations including the conservation of buildings.

#### **POLICY LP7: MAIN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY - LIVING**

**The States will seek to instigate measures and support projects that enable Town and the Bridge to be maintained as attractive places to live by:**

- i. making provision for the development of a wide range of housing types**
- ii. encouraging the regeneration of parts of Town and the Bridge to provide modern, attractive housing**
- iii. retaining and increasing residential accommodation within the main centres**
- iv. making provision for a good mix of support services to promote sustainable settlements**
- v. enabling householders to meet their reasonable development aspirations**
- vi. encouraging the appropriate management and development of public areas**
- vii. encouraging the reuse of vacant buildings and making better use of upper floors within the main retail areas**
- viii. giving consideration to the reuse of premises that are regarded as being no longer fit for their original purpose for housing accommodation**
- ix. managing traffic appropriately to ensure good levels of residential amenity but also enabling residents to have access to private transport without undue restriction**

#### **Main centres as attractive places to spend leisure time**

The historic core of St Peter Port contains Protected Buildings and groups of structures that respect the medieval street pattern and contribute positively to Town's very strong distinctive character and appearance. Some parts of Town, including the most central areas, are showing signs of inattention and there is a growing contrast between some of the reasonably well maintained privately owned buildings and the less well cared for public spaces that connect them.

It is therefore important to protect what sets St Peter Port apart from other towns but at the same time provision must be made for investment in order to ensure Guernsey keeps pace with other jurisdictions in terms of the quality of accommodation and services and to reinvest in the rehabilitation of the more neglected yet valuable parts of Town. The quality of the public areas will play a key role in attracting people to the

main centres who will see them as destinations to spend their leisure time and as a result will assist in supporting local businesses within the areas.

The Bridge frontage forms an edge to the inner harbour area and is recognised and valued by the local community. As in Town, there is a lack of co-ordination of hard and soft landscaping in public spaces and a disproportionate amount of space allocated for the exclusive use of the car. The development approved in principle at Leale's Yard could emphasise the contrast between a managed, privately operated site and a less well maintained public harbour frontage. As part of the review of the Development Plans the Environment Department should address this issue by encouraging appropriate enhancement of public areas. This may take the form of traffic management, improved lighting and better landscaping within both of the main centres, enabling the public, private and voluntary sectors to work together efficiently.

Town and the Bridge are both located on the eastern side of the Island and originally developed as trading destinations associated with the Island's main sea ports. This location was obviously chosen by the need to access deeper water for harbour development but it does mean the main frontages of Town and the Bridge lose direct sunshine by the late afternoon. However, there are places within these areas which could become attractive outdoor spaces and these should be identified and improved for greater social, economic and environmental benefit. By way of example, many of the piers in Town enjoy late sunshine and therefore offer opportunities for extended leisure use of Town beyond 5pm.

This raises issues of ensuring commercial harbour activity can adequately function, appropriately safeguarding our borders and dealing with issues of public car parking. These issues have historically been treated separately and consequently many positive opportunities have not been fully realised.

Through a co-ordinated approach to the planning of development, a strategy should be prepared that looks beyond the purely functional requirements of the ports and seeks to satisfy wider social, economic and environmental objectives. Such a strategy should identify areas for commercial development and expansion as well as areas attractively situated for leisure uses such as restaurants, bars, public open spaces and appropriate and associated retail development.

The harbours may offer opportunities for further marine-based leisure development that could harness opportunities to expand the contribution to the economy from visiting cruise liners and attract visiting yachtsmen currently unable to utilise Guernsey's facilities owing to vessel size restrictions. The average size of local craft has also increased since the construction of the QEII marina in the late 1980s and

therefore there is also scope to provide improved facilities for local boaters. This would make the most of one of our strongest natural assets and potentially draw in greater economic contributions while at the same time improving leisure facilities and the quality of the environment.

A comprehensive strategy might involve relocating some existing port functions from areas that constrain commercial activity and also making more productive use of areas currently used for parking. It may be considered appropriate to utilise more of the harbour and east coast areas as marinas. However, thought should be given to wider environmental enhancement that could be carried out as part of future development that would significantly enhance the setting and surroundings to the benefit of all those wanting to spend leisure time around the harbours and coastal areas. Care will be needed to ensure such initiatives impact positively on the overall performance of Town and the Bridge.

Leisure activities within Town and the Bridge could be enhanced through the introduction of facilities such as cinemas, performance venues and open spaces that can be used as informal leisure spaces where people can meet. Such facilities would extend the hours of operation of the main centres and contribute positively to a more diverse evening economy but commercial facilities have to be financially viable and will not simply be provided as a result of planning policy. However, commercial viability can be achieved through mixed use developments where the overall balance of commercial viability is tested, as opposed to analysing the commercial viability of all of the separate elements. Therefore, the Development Plans should seek to introduce policies that enable the delivery of commercially viable development incorporating leisure facilities.

Guernsey has a very high car ownership and there are long established expectations that individuals should have the personal choice to use cars rather than public transport. However, traffic affects the quality of the urban environment by contributing to localised noise and air pollution and often setting aside considerable amounts of public space for the exclusive use of vehicles. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring the main centres are accessible for all, including families with young children, offering safe and convenient access.

Town and the Bridge should not be primarily moulded to meet the requirements of motorised traffic and it is important to reduce negative effects in order to improve both centres as attractive leisure areas and places to live and work.

Finding a good balance will not always be easy. Town and the Bridge rely on easy access to areas of employment, shops, homes and services and therefore cannot

simply exclude vehicles. The Development Plans should therefore seek to implement policies that reduce the negative effects of traffic through carefully managed environmental enhancement schemes that identify and remedy those aspects of traffic that have a negative impact on that particular area. Rather than looking at these areas in isolation, enhancement plans should be worked up as part of an overall vision for Town and the Bridge in conjunction with users of the main centres and the traffic section of the Environment Department that will enable the rationalisation of private vehicle parking and reduce the requirement to drive through Town.

A fast, reliable and comfortable public transport system can provide a viable alternative means of transport to reduce the need to travel by private motor car. This in turn can lead to quieter, safer roads, more attractive centres and opportunities for new economic development benefitting from a more attractive environment. The land planning system therefore has an important role to play in ensuring public transport facilities are appropriately designed and located in order to maximise their use. The Development Plans should therefore make provision for public transport facilities, such as bus termini, that meet modern expectations for comfort and convenience.

**POLICY LP8: MAIN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY - LEISURE**

**The States will seek to instigate measures and support projects that enable Town and the Bridge to be maintained as attractive places to spend leisure time by:**

- i. respecting their special historic character while enabling development to take place that will permit them to respond to modern leisure and recreation expectations**
- ii. encouraging the improvement of public areas to ensure the centres are desirable places to spend leisure time**
- iii. making provision for opportunities to improve leisure and recreation facilities within and around the harbour areas while balancing this with essential port development and operational requirements**
- iv. developing a harbour strategy to balance competing uses**
- v. encouraging the development of a diverse range of economically viable leisure, culture and arts related developments within the main centres**
- vi. developing a vision for traffic and transport within and between the main centres that seeks to minimise the negative impact of the motor car on leisure spaces while also making provision for modern public transport facilities**



## **Making it all happen**

The positive and comprehensive management of a town centre can ensure the economic growth and development of a town by drawing together all sectors of the community to improve the vitality and viability and delivering initiatives and plans produced either by the States or in partnership with the private sector. This requires the main centres to be regarded by everyone with an interest in them as unified places, rather than simply as locations for competing activities.

Harnessing appropriate investment will be the key to unlocking the full potential of the main centres and with public finances remaining tight for the foreseeable future this will rely on the States working closely with the private sector to mutual benefit. In the UK, for example, many town centres are investigating various mechanisms for collecting funding for the greater good of the town through schemes such as Business Improvement Districts or BIDs. The aim of a BID is to develop and implement a series of new and additional initiatives designed to both further promote and improve the trading environment of an area within a BID boundary in which rate payers operate their business. Many other mechanisms exist and should be actively investigated as part of the development of a vision for Town and the Bridge.

This will require the development of a strong framework for implementation in order to provide a co-ordinated approach to development and to enable the private sector to identify appropriate opportunities for working in partnership with the States. The Environment Department has previously prepared a Streetscape Strategy in an attempt to guide future enhancements to the public areas within Town but implementation has been poor mainly owing to a lack of public and private sector co-ordination and a scarcity of adequate opportunities to cross subsidise such improvements.

The Liberation Station bus terminus in St Helier, Jersey is a good example of where the inclusion of private sector funding, in the form of high quality holiday apartments over the terminus, has assisted in the delivery of a public facility. The result is an excellent modern bus terminus in the centre of town that significantly enhances the appeal of an alternative means of travelling to the private car.

In the interests of creating well connected centres that are easy, safe and enjoyable to move around, every opportunity should be explored to improve the walking environment within them and to introduce policies and initiatives that encourage greater use of cycling.

The Mixed Use Redevelopment Areas (MURAs) identified within the 1995 and 2002 Urban Area Plans have proved successful in identifying and delivering opportunities to combine uses across larger development sites. The Development Plans should investigate opportunities for further and similar mixed use re/development opportunities within the main centres, with the aim of promoting and enabling development that can deliver economic, social and environmental benefits to the positive advantage of the Island as a whole. This approach should seek to bring together a number of opportunities into a single vision that presents a picture of how the main centres may appear in the future and how various agencies can contribute to its successful delivery.

Engagement with all relevant stakeholders will be required if this is to genuinely meet the aspirations of Islanders and the Environment Department should clearly set out how such public consultation will be undertaken as part of the Development Plan preparation process.

Many of the opportunities for economic, social and environmental enhancements identified within this section of the Plan centre on the eastern coastal areas of the main centres. These areas do accommodate land which is either inefficiently used or could be put to better alternative use through the implementation of a co-ordinated strategy. Provision should be made within the Development Plan for the reclamation of land from the sea where this would facilitate the delivery of some of the social, economic and environmental benefits identified here. However, it is appreciated that such development is very expensive and the feasibility of reclamation should be evaluated as part of the development of a co-ordinated strategy for the harbour areas.

The reclamation of land from the sea to facilitate the development of future additional port facilities is addressed within Section 13 of this Plan.

#### **POLICY LP9: MAIN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY - DELIVERY**

**Through corporate working and forging appropriate public and private partnerships, the States will seek to instigate measures and support projects for Town and the Bridge that:**

- i. encourage a wide range of retail, commercial, leisure, business, culture and arts facilities and residential uses to ensure the main centres as attractive places to shop, work and spend leisure time**
- ii. focus the retail operations in those areas best suited to meeting modern retailing requirements and enhancing the vitality and viability of the retail cores**
- iii. promote the reuse of vacant buildings**
- iv. retain and increase overall levels of residential accommodation**
- v. promote environmental improvement, including development, through appropriate vision documents for Town and the Bridge**
- vi. safeguard the historic character of Town and the Bridge while enabling appropriately scaled new development to meet the objectives of the States**
- vii. improve pedestrian and cycle access, improve public transport links and facilities and provide for appropriate levels of car parking**
- viii. make provision for land reclamation where such development can support and enable the objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan to be met**

**Implementation of this policy will require the production of appropriate guidance by the Environment Department that identifies development opportunities for social, environmental and economic enhancement by combining individual needs for the greater overall good while balancing the need to respect the historic built environment and safeguard diversity of activity.**

#### **Local Centres**

As set out in Section 4 above, the adopted spatial strategy for the distribution of development within the Island involves concentrating development within and around the edges of the urban centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale with some limited development around the main parish or local centres to enable community growth and the reinforcement of sustainable centres.

This will require the identification of a hierarchical structure of main (St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale) and local centres. As previously stated, the main parish or local centres will be identified through the Development Plan preparation process, based on an assessment of 'sustainability indicators', i.e. those services and facilities that contribute to an area's ability to meet local social, economic and environmental needs.

There is and will continue to be considerable pressure for development beyond the main centres, particularly for residential development. However, in order to respect the Spatial Strategy and to avoid the urbanisation of the countryside, the Development Plans will seek to promote sustainable communities within the main parish or local centres, building on the support services that currently exist while protecting and wherever possible enhancing these areas and the contribution they make to the sustainable development of the Island.

As a result, it is not intended that substantial levels of development will take place within the main parish or local centres but the Development Plans should make provision for an adequate level of development that will support their role as socially inclusive and diverse communities and neighbourhoods.

Within the main and local centres and in line with the overarching Spatial Strategy the redevelopment of brownfield sites will be encouraged in the interests of the efficient use of land and protection of the natural environment.

### **Community Plans**

The Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005 enables the Environment Department to prepare statutory Subject Plans and Local Planning Briefs to address issues affecting the development or use of land or planning issues within a specific location. These provide for a formal consultation mechanism and public opinion is considered in public by an independent inspector. Community Plans are not statutory planning documents but will act as conduits for harnessing local opinion and informing subsequent planning decisions in areas where the Development Plans allow for new development.

In this context, Community Plans are a means of a community coming together to contribute to discussions relating to the development of an area. It is not the intention that the local community will act as a second planning system but a Community Plan could represent an action plan that sets out the community's vision for improvements to the local centre. Through harnessing private sector investment within an area and the private sector and community working in partnership with the States, it could be possible to bring about environmental enhancements and other changes identified

within a Community Plan as being necessary or desirable. Examples might include traffic calming, improved landscaping, and improved public walkways, etc.

They will however be regarded as a formal consultation document and will inform future decisions made on development proposals within an area. The Development Plans will consider the specific role of Community Plans for the main parish or local centres and set out the community's role in influencing development within a specific area.

#### **POLICY LP10: LOCAL CENTRES**

**The Development Plans will identify main parish or local centres based on the assessment of services and facilities (sustainability indicators) within the locality and enable limited development of a scale that is appropriate for the specific location and would not result in the centre affecting the vitality and viability of the main centres. This will be achieved by:**

- i. respecting the quality of the physical environment and local heritage and seeking high quality building design**
- ii. protecting open countryside while facilitating a viable rural economy and enabling other small scale economic development, where it is appropriate to do so**
- iii. enabling a flexible approach to the management of development that can adapt to more or less growth or change over time**

**The role of Community Plans will be clearly set out within the Development Plans**

## **Infrastructure and implementation**

Modern infrastructure is vital to the Island and the ability of the planning system to enable its timely provision is an important objective of the Strategic Land Use Plan.

In the context of the Strategic Land Use Plan, infrastructure includes the basic physical structures and large physical networks needed for the functioning of a modern society.

This covers: transportation infrastructure (road network, seaports and lighthouses, airports, etc.), energy infrastructure (importation and distribution of fuel, electrical power network, etc.), water management infrastructure (drinking water supply,

sewage collection and disposal of waste water, etc.), communications infrastructure (fixed and mobile telephone networks, transmission stations, Internet, etc.) and solid waste management.

The Plan supports:

- making better use of existing infrastructure
- reducing demand through measures such as reducing reliance on the motor car through the development of sustainable communities
- providing additional capacity by extending existing or providing new infrastructure

The States of Guernsey are currently formulating the Island Infrastructure Plan and an update on progress has been included in the 2011 States Strategic Plan Report (page 1971 of Billet XVI 2011). The prime purpose of the Infrastructure Plan is to facilitate new infrastructure investment by the States and the private sector over the next 5 to 20 years in a co-ordinated way and to improve the management, use and value for money of Guernsey's existing infrastructure assets.

The chapter 'Main Centre Vitality and Viability' deals with land reclamation in the context of enhancing the roles of the main centres. However, it may be necessary to reclaim land from the sea for other purposes and development associated with the harnessing of renewable energy and accommodating development with a high environmental impact regarded as being of strategic importance could make use of such reclaimed areas and should be regarded as priority uses in this respect.

The airport and harbours represent key infrastructure that ensure our physical strategic links with the outside world are maintained. However, while it is essential that provision is made to enable this to continue, potential exists for cross subsidisation through private sector investment. This is explained in some detail in the section 'Main Centre Vitality and Viability', above, where it highlights potential economic, social and environmental benefits in adopting a joined up approach to the future development of the harbour areas.

In addition, opportunities may exist to adopt a similar strategy at the airport where a co-ordinated approach between the States and the private sector may harness additional investment opportunities which can in turn enhance operational viability. In accordance with the spatial strategy of the Strategic Land Use Plan, any economic opportunities identified will need to be balanced with the requirement to respect social concerns and the protection of the environment.

#### **POLICY LP11: INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION**

- i. The Development Plan will make provision for the development of Guernsey's infrastructure to meet the social, economic and environmental objectives of the States**
- ii. The location of strategically essential development should have first priority in existing and new areas of land reclamation**
- iii. Through policy formulation and other initiatives, the States should investigate opportunities to harness investment to assist in maintaining and developing airport and harbour-related infrastructure**

Making the best use of sites where strategic opportunities exist

#### **Introduction**

The objective of the Strategic Land Use Plan is to concentrate development within and around the edges of the urban centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale, while allowing some limited development within and around the other main parish or local centres to enable community growth and the reinforcement of sustainable centres. Notwithstanding this however, the Plan also notes the importance of establishing a flexible approach to the control of development that can adapt to more or less growth or change over time and that enables reasonable development aspirations to be met.

Beyond the main and local centres there are sites which may require a more flexible approach to the control of development if they are to be fully and appropriately utilised in the future for the economic, social and environmental benefit of the Island. This policy is intended to provide very limited opportunities for the Development Plan to establish exceptions to the overarching spatial strategy in very specific circumstances while still satisfying the fundamental objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan and not detracting from the intention to reinforce the role of the main and local centres.

There are a number of larger sites in the Island that are becoming obsolete for their intended purpose or are underused in their current form. Such sites include hospitals, schools and industrial areas. These sites, mainly in public ownership, present opportunities for reuse and redevelopment but their potential may be unduly constrained if planning policies designed for smaller scale sites beyond the main and local centres have to be applied without the ability to take a more comprehensive approach. Adopting a more flexible approach could potentially enable economic, social and environmental objectives of the States to be met through appropriate development.

The Development Plans will identify appropriate sites where, through the balancing of social, economic and environmental concerns and the adoption of appropriate mechanism/s (e.g. Local Planning Briefs) necessary to set a planning framework, development can bring about benefits to the wider community. Provision will be made within the Development Plans to enable full public consultation through either formal or informal mechanisms or by a combination of both. It is anticipated that formal mechanisms for consultation will involve the preparation of a planning framework document that would be subject to consideration by an independent inspector, through a public planning inquiry.

**POLICY LP12: MAKING THE BEST USE OF SITES OFFERING STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES**

**Notwithstanding the spatial strategy set out within Section 4 of this Plan, the Development Plans will identify and make individual provision for the planning of sites where potential exists to meet the corporate economic, social and environmental objectives of the States through the adoption of a more flexible land use policy approach. The Development Plan will include an appropriate mechanism for full public consultation in establishing site-specific planning framework documents.**

**Tackling the adverse impacts of redundant glasshouse sites**

Following the decline of the horticultural industry, the Island has been left with a legacy of significant areas of redundant glasshouses. Some of these structures are in reasonable condition while others are derelict, potentially dangerous and regarded by many as visually unattractive.



Glasshouses are often left derelict because of the financial costs involved in demolishing glass and ancillary buildings and fully clearing these sites. However, owing to their scattered location in largely open and otherwise attractive parts of the Island, their wholesale development would urbanise the countryside and run counter to this Plan's Spatial Strategy.

Such an approach could also reward dereliction, encouraging other landowners to allow their sites to become derelict. However, there are only a limited number of realistic options for glasshouse clearance which could include the planning system offering some uplift in land value (through enabling some form of development) that could assist in financing complete removal, the States of Guernsey offering direct financial incentives or supply of labour, penalising dereliction (i.e. through taxation) or the landowner deciding to remove the glass for personal reasons. Therefore, it may be necessary for a number of States departments to work together to fully resolve this issue.

Through the Development Plan review the Environment Department should work with the Commerce and Employment Department to assess all sites and determine the location of the most unsightly redundant glasshouse sites that can realistically be returned to valuable open space. This analysis of glasshouse sites is likely to also identify smaller areas of glass where an acceptable approach might be to include the site within the curtilages of adjoining properties.

Such an audit will enable decisions to be made about which sites are likely and able, to contribute to the agricultural industry and therefore be afforded suitable protection and those that are not contiguous with other areas of agricultural land and therefore can be used for other open purposes.

Within and around the main and the local centres the Development Plan may identify opportunities for development that coincides with the existence of areas of redundant glass and in such circumstances this will deal with the issue of site clearance. However, care will be needed to ensure that areas of glass that can be cleared to make a positive contribution to agriculture or open space provision is safeguarded for such within the Development Plans. Once the scale and nature of the problem is fully understood, the Development Plans should explore how to deal with the most problematic sites.

#### **POLICY LP13: REDUNDANT GLASSHOUSE SITES**

**The Development Plan will identify redundant glasshouse sites that, if cleared, are capable of making a positive contribution to open space/agricultural land provision within the Island and will introduce policies that facilitate their removal.**

## Policies for specific land uses

### Economic Policies

#### 6. Economic Development

##### Office development

The current focus of office accommodation is within the St Peter Port main centre with prime office accommodation recently being built at the Gategny Esplanade/St Julian's Avenue and at Admiral Park Mixed Use Redevelopment Areas (MURA). The third MURA, located at Leale's Yard (the Bridge), does not preclude significant office development from being built, but the developers have chosen not to include office accommodation as part of their proposals.

Guernsey's stock of office accommodation can be considered to comprise of three categories:

- Primary – recently developed or refurbished to modern standards
- Secondary – older purpose-built offices that may or may not be capable of being refurbished or redeveloped to modern standards
- Tertiary – existing offices resulting from the conversion of units of accommodation, retail, etc. that may never meet modern standards

Meeting the demands for office accommodation of modern standards requires a combination of:

- the development of Primary offices including large floor plate buildings on new sites
- the refurbishment or redevelopment of Secondary offices into Primary offices where feasible, and
- the release of unsuitable Secondary and Tertiary offices for other uses (which will have an effect on the availability of office space)

A strategic objective of the States is to make Guernsey a globally competitive centre of economic growth with a diversified economy. In order to support the advancement of this objective effectively the Development Plan will need to provide a strong framework for enabling an improvement in the physical quality of office accommodation on both existing and new sites. This requirement is important for the

high value, large floor plate schemes and the replacement or refurbishment of the older office stock. Recycling the latter for smaller businesses will remain important, although in certain circumstances it may be acceptable to utilise these for alternative uses.

A significant characteristic of the office land use pattern is the clustering of interrelated commercial activity around major offices and the inter-dependence of various sectors of the economy. The existence of high quality financial, legal and accounting services provides an attraction for new businesses in other sectors which require international standard services for branding, franchising and e-business to locate in Guernsey.

Office accommodation will also need to be provided for facilities that enable training and development of the existing workforce, including providing opportunities that support available employment for the workforce beyond the existing retirement age.

The actual provision levels of new large floor plate offices over the course of the Plan period will ultimately be determined by the scale of demand and the ability to accommodate it.

In spatial terms, new larger office developments will be focused in the main centres (including Admiral Park) but with the ability to make provision for new small-scale office development within certain local centres, based on an individual assessment of the impact of such on the local area. Redevelopment of brownfield sites within the core areas of centres will be prioritised over greenfield site development in order to achieve economic investment and environmental enhancement of the built environment and protection of important open spaces. However this will be balanced against the need to protect the valued historic buildings that contribute positively to the character of the centres.

#### **POLICY SLP1**

**The Development Plans may make provision for new office development within the main centres, including Admiral Park, that would help deliver wider economic, social and environmental benefits**

#### **POLICY SLP2**

**The Development Plans will encourage the refurbishment and re-use of the existing office stock in the main centres.**

## **Industrial and business land supply**

The Guernsey economy has experienced structural transformation over recent decades. The switch from land-based primary industries to office/service based businesses requiring high specification ICT infrastructure, has led to a variety of opportunities and challenges for managing development.

A major objective of the Fiscal and Economic Plan is to support a ‘diversified, broadly balanced economy’ which includes the need to provide for a comprehensive range of accommodation for business and industry. This overall position will also include meeting the accommodation needs of the lower-value<sup>1</sup> industrial and service sector where appropriate in the Development Plan.

The main focus for industry will remain within or around the main centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale, Saltpans Park and Admiral Park. The local centres may also provide some opportunities.

The Development Plans will assess existing reserves of business land supply in order to test whether these can meet the Island’s current and longer term economic development needs. In preparing the Development Plans the Environment Department will investigate appropriate mechanisms for securing an adequate supply of land such as designating specific sites (possibly as strategic industrial reserves) and/or putting in place enabling policies that set criteria against which proposals would be assessed. The Commerce and Employment Department will be encouraged to provide regular reports on business needs to the Strategic Land Planning Group.

### **POLICY SLP3**

**The Development Plans will make provision for a comprehensive range of land opportunities for employment uses.**

*1 Lower value industrial development is regarded as including a variety of traditional service industries (i.e. construction-related trades, contractors and crafts) that are usually accommodated in small workshops and/or open storage areas.*

## **Small scale business development**

Certain small-scale businesses such as those requiring workshops, secure storage or open yards may have a justifiable need to develop outside the main and local centres due to the special requirements resulting from the nature of their operations. This could include small commercial businesses that have no operational requirement to be located within or on the edges of the main centres and are unable to find suitable sites within the Key Industrial Areas or businesses that are unable to compete with larger firms looking for higher quality accommodation.

Small scale business development could also include minor forms of office development, such as home-based working, that is required to operate small office-based businesses not requiring significant levels of support services such as parking, etc.

Provision should be made for these forms of development beyond the main and local centres but it is important that they are of such a scale and form that they respect the character of the surroundings of less developed areas and do not undermine the Spatial Strategy or the Core Objectives of this Plan.

### **Policy SLP4**

**Limited provision will be made within the Development Plans for small-scale business development outside the main and local centres that respects the scale and character of the surroundings.**

## **Retail development**

The Island is well served by convenience shopping outlets and new additional floor space requirements are likely to be relatively limited in the medium term according to a Retail Study (Roger Tym & Partners 2010). In general, the main centres offer a good level of provision which is complemented by shops elsewhere, such as at St Martin's local centre which provides a good range of convenience shopping and local services.

In terms of comparison shopping (see Main Centre Vitality and Viability in Section 5 for definition), some scope to strengthen the role of Town has been identified in the retail study, particularly from 2015 onwards. A substantial amount of comparison retail development is currently planned to be included as part of the Leale's Yard scheme at the Bridge. The Leale's Yard development will enable a critical mass of floor space to

be brought forward to provide a range of shops not currently available in the Island and will go some way to addressing 'leakage' from the local economy through special forms of trading such as internet shopping.

It is fundamental to ensure that the vitality and viability of Town and the Bridge are sustained and enhanced through continued new investment and regeneration. Retail areas need to constantly keep pace with the demands of the modern shopper, although this will represent a challenge within the historic town centre of St Peter Port.

As mentioned in Policy LP6, the Commerce and Employment Department is undertaking a review of the Island's retail strategy and its findings should be taken into account by the Environment Department in preparing retail policies within future Development Plans.

#### **POLICY SLP5**

**The Development Plans will make provision for new large floor plate comparison retail development within Town and the Bridge to meet modern demand and to enhance the vitality and viability of the main centres. The scale of provision within each centre should be such that Town is maintained as the Island's primary retail centre.**

#### **POLICY SLP6**

**The Development Plans will make provision for a limited quantity of convenience retail development in local centres to sustain and enhance their roles as sustainable local settlements.**

### **Tourism**

Guernsey's high quality environment and cultural heritage are marketable products and yield economic value through tourism. Visitor attractions in St Peter Port include Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery in Candie Gardens, Castle Cornet and the house of Victor Hugo. There is also an impressive array of historic and archaeological sites including unusual churches and fortifications.

Both general and special interest leisure visitors to the Island are largely attracted by the beauty of the natural habitat and the authentic nature of Guernsey. This is partially reflected in an on-going trend for rationalisation and consolidation around smaller and often specialised facilities. It is also reflected in the importance of offering value for money and a high quality experience across all grades of hotel and self catering tourist accommodation as well as tourist and community led facilities. This includes the need for further improvements to various supporting facilities such as pedestrian and cycle trails, public facilities, signage, storyboards kiosks and parking areas and will be subject to further assessment in the emerging Infrastructure Plan.

It is essential that sufficient, good quality visitor accommodation across all types and grades is available to meet demand and to allow growth of the visitor economy. Policies to encourage upgrading the stock will be pursued where properties and sites still suitable to the industry have fallen into decline or where they are not currently utilised for tourism accommodation but would be potentially fit for purpose.

Whilst in exceptional circumstances the release of properties and sites that are no longer suitable for tourism purposes may be allowed, in general terms, almost all such properties have already left the sector. Any individual schemes for new accommodation and proposals, which upgrade the quality of existing accommodation within each grade band, will be encouraged where satisfactorily aligned with Development Plan policies. Building a large-scale high quality hotel for instance would potentially be complementary to this approach as would small to medium size properties at the two to three star end of the market.

#### **POLICY SLP7**

**The Development Plans will seek to enable economically beneficial tourist-related development, especially where this improves quality and choice of facilities at all accommodation grades, whilst maintaining an adequate stock of visitor accommodation to support the future viability and growth of the industry.**

#### **Primary industries**

The primary industries of agriculture and horticulture, although still covering major tracts of the Island, play a much reduced role in the economy as a whole. Agriculture and fisheries in recent years have represented only about 1% of gross national product. However, it is widely accepted that agriculture has a multi-functional role,

delivering not just food but other ‘public goods’ that have a considerable value for the local population, such as the protection and enhancement of the countryside.

## **Agriculture**

The countryside is a ‘managed environment’ created by historical agricultural practice. Today, good agricultural management can:

- enhance the value of farmland for biodiversity
- sustain the beauty and diversity of the landscape
- enhance existing habitats and create new wildlife habitats
- conserve archaeological sites and historic features, such as the network of small fields and field boundaries
- improve opportunities for countryside enjoyment and
- enhance surface and groundwater quality

Milk production is the most important farm enterprise with dairy farmers, in view of their valued role in maintaining the traditional countryside, field pattern and the supply of locally produced milk and dairy products, receiving support that operates through a contract and quota system to control production and farm management.

Inevitably the cost of farming in Guernsey will remain high, with high cost of local labour, a scattered pattern of small fields that limits the use of large machinery and the expense of providing farm services to a small number of farms. Although the outlook for agriculture is challenging in the immediate future, the States has acknowledged the importance of securing a more balanced economy which provides a valuable land management regime for the countryside. In addition, dairy farming has played a large part in creating the traditional appearance of the countryside and this continues to be valued. Through the work undertaken as part of the Guernsey Tomorrow initiative, amongst those taking part, keeping dairy farming alive in the Island scored very highly as a priority objective for the States.

It is therefore clear that to manage and conserve its value the countryside needs viable agricultural businesses which promote and protect the rural environment, as further detailed in Section 10 – Countryside and Landscape Management.



One of the findings of the Dairy Industry Review, commissioned by the Policy Council (but not considered by the States at the time of writing) notes there is pressure on dairying due to the growing transfer of land to non-agricultural use which, according to the Dairy Review Panel, warrants control by legislation. The Panel therefore recommends that consideration should be given to introducing legislation to retain land for agricultural use. This is a matter for consideration beyond the Strategic Land Use Plan. However, the policies of this document and subsequent Development Plans will need to be capable of delivering the agreed States position regarding the protection of agricultural land, be that through the introduction of new legislation or, as is the case now, through the exercising of land use policies.

The main consideration for this document is to determine how to adequately balance the protection of agricultural land for the industry's current and future needs with the need to ensure that an adequate amount of land can be made available for meeting other legitimate development requirements.

Larger areas of contiguous agricultural land offer greater efficiencies for farming and as a result smaller, more isolated areas of agricultural land that are not as desirable to the industry are facing increasing pressure to accommodate alternative uses. Accordingly, the Development Plans should focus on maintaining the most important areas of agricultural land for that purpose while also allowing other objectives of the States to be met through supporting physical development and other open land uses, where appropriate, which are considered compatible with the Spatial Strategy.

#### **POLICY SLP8**

**The Development Plans will put in place policies that enable:**

- i. a viable agricultural industry through integrated development linked to nature conservation and environmental management**
- ii. large areas of contiguous agricultural land and other areas well related to established agricultural operations identified as being of value to the industry to be protected for agricultural use**

## **Horticulture**

The horticulture industry in recent years has represented only about 1% of gross national product.

The most important sector is now that which produces young plants (including cuttings) for export with a limited amount of flower and vegetable production, a proportion of which is sold locally. The edible crop sector has rationalised to a small number of specialist growers who are producing high quality crops which has increased the viability of this industry for the top few businesses currently trading. A policy from local retailers towards buying Island-based produce and the introduction of more sustainable methods of production will also help to provide further support within a highly competitive business environment.

Commercial horticultural operations in the Island are greatly reduced in number and are consolidating on fewer, larger sites with the inevitable consequence of an increasing number of redundant horticultural sites.

### **POLICY SLP9**

**The Development Plans will support proposals that allow the extension of horticultural operations that are beneficial to the industry and where it would help maintain a sustainable level of horticultural production**

## Social Policies

### 7. Community, Social and Leisure Facilities

Access to a range of social, community and leisure services and facilities is an important aspect of quality of life. There is a wide range of facilities in the Island, supporting sustainable communities, making for a healthy population and bringing about positive economic benefits through extended use of facilities and tourism.

The provision of adequate community, social and leisure facilities is fundamental to supporting sustainable local centres. The States Education and Health and Social Services Departments both have ongoing development programmes to improve current social and community infrastructure. Existing facilities should be permitted to develop and expand to meet the needs of the Island population.

A strategic approach to the provision of leisure services and facilities will be required by assessing need and demand. The Culture and Leisure Department's strategy for sport and leisure will identify the need for new services, but the continued and expanded use of school recreational facilities outside of school hours and full utilisation of existing leisure and recreational infrastructure will alleviate the need to develop entirely new stand alone facilities.

#### **POLICY SLP10**

**Provision should be made in the Development Plans to enable the provision of an adequate range of community, social and leisure facilities to be developed according to need and demand whilst maximising the use of existing sites**

## 8. Housing

### Introduction

The housing policies of the previous Strategic Land Use Plan led to the majority of housing provision being made within the Urban Area Plan in the form of:

- enabling policies,
- significant numbers being included as part of the approval of Mixed Use Redevelopment Areas, and
- strategic reserves, to be brought forward in the event of an unacceptable level of provision in the pipeline, known as Housing Target Areas.

The only provision made for housing within the Rural Area Plan was in the form of:

- the subdivision of existing units,
- the conversion of redundant buildings, and
- exceptionally, the development of sites adjacent to existing States Housing sites or near a Rural Centre for social housing only.

This policy approach has been successful in integrating new housing development into mixed-use urban schemes, making good use of existing structures and protecting the open, rural countryside. Based on figures from 2004 to 2008, an average of 87% of permissions are translated into actual development and the average completion time for small developments is around 18 months, with larger sites taking longer to finish.

There is a difficult balance to be struck in ensuring the right level of housing development results from the agreed policy base. If the market is flooded with housing opportunities and subsequent planning permissions, the market could stagnate with landowners being unwilling to sell and developers unwilling to buy land and build with uncertainties over the final value of the property. Alternatively, if too few housing opportunities are provided it could lead to the delivery of housing but at a very high cost per unit, reflecting the strong demand and low supply. As it is, economic conditions tend to dictate when land with planning permission is actually developed, with the result that the level of permissions granted is no guarantee of physical supply regardless of the level of demand.

The policies contained within this section of the Strategic Land Use Plan aim to strike the right balance of supply and demand but also seek to ensure that land that is appropriate for housing development, as defined by the spatial strategy, is actually

brought forward for that purpose. This will involve cross-departmental working and the adoption of a proactive attitude towards housing development.

### **Overall need and monitoring of provision**

Core objectives of this Plan are to improve housing availability, quality and affordability and to enable people to remain independent in their own homes throughout their lives (as identified in Section 3, Purpose, Vision and Objectives).

In 2002 the first Housing Needs Survey was presented to the States by the former Housing Authority. The States agreed with the Housing Authority's recommendation that a target should be set to make effective provision for 300 new homes per year. This figure was agreed on an interim basis and it was anticipated that a later Survey would refine this target.

The figure of 300 homes substantially exceeded the minimum of 179 homes needed to satisfy the net annual shortfall in housing units identified by the Needs Survey. It was intended to provide for a sufficient 'surplus' to cater for the needs of a backlog of potential new householders wanting to obtain independent accommodation and to provide some spare capacity in the system to enable a better 'fit' between the size and type of housing people wanted and the accommodation that was available.

The 2006 Housing Needs Survey showed a demand for 340 new homes per year. The strategic target however was not revised after this survey and has remained at 300 since 2002. Notwithstanding this, however, the Environment Department has consistently met and exceeded the 'pipeline' figure of a minimum of 600 housing units (two year's supply) with planning permission at any one time.

In considering the strategic target, it is important to understand that the States cannot force developers to construct those housing units with consent, i.e. the figure of 300 units relates to the number of houses with planning permission and not to the number constructed per year. Nonetheless, to assist with strategic planning, at the time of writing the Housing Department is in the process of commissioning a further Housing Needs Survey, the results of which will be published in the first half of 2012.

Between Housing Needs Surveys, the Housing Department has been drawing upon a range of other monitoring sources to fully understand the overall need and composition of new housing. For example, it has been working closely with the Health and Social Services Department to better understand what the changing demographic profile of the Island and the significant increase in proportion of older people over the

next twenty years will mean in housing terms. It has also been working with employing departments to review the requirements to house public sector key workers<sup>1</sup>. Finally, earlier this year saw the publication of the first Annual Housing Stock Bulletin that incorporates detailed information on the number, type, size and location of Guernsey's housing stock. This monitoring framework is delivered through individual departmental contributions and joint working between the Housing and Environment Departments and the Policy Council's Policy and Research Unit.

The Development Plans will be required to provide scope and flexibility for a sufficient quantity of housing provision to meet all the identified needs. The Plans will also be required to adopt a proactive role in overcoming barriers to housing delivery and to encourage the Environment Department to work proactively with the Housing Department to enable designated sites to contribute to meeting housing needs.

Therefore the number and type<sup>2</sup> of new homes being provided (in terms of size and tenure) need to be kept under regular review. Part C, Implementation, Monitoring and Review, sets out the requirements for monitoring housing figures. In the interim, however, the current overall housing supply target will remain in place, but this will be reviewed in line with the 2012 Housing Needs Survey.

#### **POLICY SLP12**

**Arrangements will be put in place through the Development Plans to ensure that provision is effectively made to meet the annual requirement for the creation of new homes of an appropriate mix of tenures, housing sizes and types, to meet the Island's housing needs. This should be monitored through regular research and data collection and reviewed as necessary through the Strategic Land Use Plan**

#### **Housing supply**

Under the terms of the Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005, the Development Plans are valid for a 10 year period before requiring review, but may be reviewed in whole or in part at more frequent intervals if this appears necessary as a result of monitoring the effectiveness of policies in achieving States objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> See Billet d'Etat XI, March 2007.

<sup>2</sup> In this context 'type' means whether housing is intended to meet general or specialised needs. 'Specialised housing' includes sheltered, supported or extra care housing.

Applying an annual housing supply target as required by Policy SLP12 (300 units per year based on 2011 requirements), would assume that housing need remained constant over the 10-year life of the Development Plan and would result in a total requirement to grant sufficient planning permissions to deliver 3,000 housing units.

However, identifying the land supply necessary to achieve this potential requirement for a full decade may not take sufficient account of the need to manage supply in a more responsive way taking into account the effectiveness of the housing policies in place or longer-term variables in the development sector such as market conditions and the 'build capacity' of the local construction industry.

Accordingly, the Development Plans will be required to initially make provision for a 5-year supply of housing through a number of mechanisms that the Environment Department considers appropriate (such as allocated sites, enabling policies, etc.). However, throughout the first 5 years of the Development Plan, the Environment Department will be required to demonstrate, through regular monitoring and reporting to the Strategic Land Planning Group as set out within Part C, that there is a maintained minimum 2-year supply of housing permissions within the 'pipeline' that is able to come forward for development. This will enable the Environment Department and the Strategic Land Planning Group to monitor the outcome of housing policies over a shorter period to determine whether they are meeting the objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan, conforming to the intentions of its spatial strategy and ensuring supply is in balance with demand.

Based on this monitoring, before the end of the first 5-year period of validity of the Development Plans, the Environment Department will review the delivery of housing units over that period and assess the appropriate scale of housing provision for the remaining 5 year period of the Development Plans.

This could result in an amendment to the Development Plans to identify additional areas of housing land and to test these through a planning inquiry process.

#### **POLICY SLP13**

**Arrangements will be put in place through the Development Plans to ensure that a minimum 5 year land supply is effectively made to meet the annual requirement for new homes as determined by evidence supported by the Housing Department. Before the end of this 5 year period, the housing policies in the Development Plan will be reviewed in order to assess the appropriate scale of provision for housing that is required for the remaining duration of the Plan**

### **The existing Housing Target Areas and meeting future housing needs**

The Urban Area Plan (UAP) approved by the States in July 2002 will be replaced by the first Development Plans to be produced under the guidance of this Strategic Land Use Plan. The UAP allocates a number of sites as Housing Target Areas, which represent a strategic reserve of housing that is only to be developed when monitoring indicates that the housing supply is insufficient to satisfy the policies of the UAP or when the Environment Department is directed to do so by the States. At the time of writing, none of the Housing Target Areas designated within the UAP (first identified in 1989 as part of the Land Use Consultants' "Corridor Report") have been brought forward for development. However, the Environment and Housing Departments are holding discussions on whether the release of one or more Housing Target Areas is now required, but there are concerns that the release mechanism for the Housing Target Areas is currently too cumbersome and protracted.

There are a number of options for dealing with the existing Housing Target Areas and how to make adequate provision for housing beyond the first 5-year period of the Environment Department's Development Plan. Environment could assess which of the Housing Target Areas could be kept as strategic reserves for use some time in the future, as and when needed. Alternatively, they could be assessed in terms of which of them might form part of the first 5-year supply by, for example, identifying them as allocated sites that would not require an additional planning inquiry to be released for development.

Following the assessment of the existing Housing Target Areas, it may be considered appropriate to remove them from allocation for housing purposes entirely or look at them as part of meeting the second 5-year supply to meet the ongoing demand for housing units.

#### **POLICY SLP14**

**The existing Housing Target Areas will be reviewed to determine how they can contribute to meeting the housing supply target set out within Policy SLP13 while meeting the requirements of the Spatial Strategy within Section 4 and the policies of Section 5 of this Strategic Land Use Plan**



### **Building sustainable communities (location of development)**

The provision of new housing can create opportunities to help strengthen and build sustainable communities. However, new housing development is also likely to have one of the greatest impacts on the character of the Island and it is essential that it is appropriately located to enhance and integrate with the existing character and form of the Island wherever possible.

The spatial planning framework and the hierarchical role of the main centres and local centres dictate that the majority of new housing development will take place within and around St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale where sites will have, or be capable of being provided with, good public transport links and good links to walking and cycling networks, which can encourage a reduction in car use.

In addition, strategic housing land reserves mentioned above may be identified within and around the urban centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale in accordance with the Policies set out within Part B, Sections 4 and 5 of this Strategic Land Use Plan.

The Local Centres will provide more limited opportunities for housing development. This should be of a scale that is appropriate for the local centre concerned and that does not undermine the spatial strategy of the Plan which seeks to enable community growth within these areas, reinforcing them as sustainable centres (see Section 5, Local Centres).

#### **POLICY SLP15**

**The Development Plans will make provision for the majority of new housing development within and around the main centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale**

#### **POLICY SLP16**

**The Development Plans will make provision for local centres to provide more limited opportunities for housing development to enable community growth and to reinforce them as sustainable centres**

### **Social and specialised housing provision**

A major component of this Plan's spatial strategy is to assist in the delivery of socially inclusive and diverse communities and neighbourhoods. Social and specialised housing provision is fundamental to this purpose because it addresses issues of

affordability and/or the ability for members of the community to be accommodated, wherever possible, in their existing locality, according to their specific housing needs.

Social housing includes social rental housing (for those on low incomes) and partial ownership housing; specialised housing includes sheltered housing, supported housing and extra-care accommodation for older Islanders (and younger adults with care and support needs). Although neither social nor specialised housing, provision also needs to be made for retirement housing for outright sale (to facilitate downsizing).

In fulfilment of the States Housing Strategy, the Housing Department is responsible for co-ordinating a comprehensive approach to meet the Island's overall housing needs through the Corporate Housing Programme<sup>3</sup>. Within this overall Programme, there are specific plans (e.g. the Social Housing Development Plan, which deals with social rental and partial ownership housing) and other work streams (e.g. the Supported Housing Strategy). The Social Housing Development Plan<sup>4</sup> has, to date, focused on the redevelopment of run-down social housing estates that are mainly located in the main centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale, although it is acknowledged that this process is nearing an end and new sites are now urgently required.

With respect to design, the lack of available sites for housing development, combined with the Island's limited landmass, means that there is an urgent requirement for new homes to be built to provide flexible accommodation which is adaptable to the changing needs of the householder (as explained in Section 5 – Independent living for all, Policy LP5), where appropriate.

This approach is consistent with the emerging Older People's Housing, Care and Support Strategy<sup>5</sup> and HSSD's 2020 Vision for the future of health and social care<sup>6</sup>, both of which aim to encourage a move away from institutionalised care to looking after people in their own homes and to extend the range of housing options, thereby giving older Islanders, and younger adults with care and support needs, more choice.

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<sup>3</sup> See Billet d'Etat XI, May 2010.

<sup>4</sup> See Billet d'Etat XXV, December 2007.

<sup>5</sup> *At the time of writing, the Older People's Housing, Care and Support Strategy has not been formally agreed by the States of Guernsey, but a list of provisional draft objectives was included as an appendix to a report on extra care housing debated in May 2011 (Billet d'Etat VIII) to indicate the direction of future policies emerging from the Health and Social Services Department and the Housing Department.*

<sup>6</sup> Adopted by the States in May 2011: see Billet d'Etat VIII.

It is therefore necessary for the spatial strategy to enable provision of new dwellings of the right type and size in suitable locations in the Island that offer, amongst other things, good amenities, key services and transport connectivity. Providing a better mix of dwellings will help meet the needs of specific groups, assist in maximising densities, create varied designs and layouts, and contribute to the development of socially inclusive communities.

To meet the aims and objectives of this Plan, it will be necessary for the Development Plans to make allowance for a proportion of social and/or specialised housing to be secured through planning covenants or by condition on larger private development sites. Development Plan policies may also request the inclusion of a number of social and/or specialised housing units as part of general market housing developments. In such circumstances a mechanism for assessing the appropriate circumstances for triggering the inclusion of social and/or specialised housing will be clearly set out within the Development Plan. This mechanism could also be developed to enable the Environment Department to negotiate an appropriate proportion on each individual site. At all times effective provision will be guided by the spatial strategy and satisfactory compliance with levels of housing provision identified as appropriate by the Housing Department. Larger sites should allow for mixed tenure provision within a framework of creating balanced communities. The scale of the development will be limited to their ability to be successfully integrated into their surroundings so as to respect the scale of the settlement concerned.

Rather than setting prescriptive target levels for social and/or specialised housing, it will instead be for the Housing Department in conjunction with the Environment Department to determine and inform the Development Plan through the analysis of existing relevant data sources.

#### **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**

### **Making the best use of land and buildings**

In order to meet anticipated housing demand, some greenfield land will need to be identified for housing development. However, the Development Plans will be expected to promote the development of pre-used brownfield sites in order to maximise the use of land and buildings in the most efficient and effective manner. This will include promoting high density development whilst ensuring good levels of accommodation, amenity and design.

Opportunities to reuse previously developed sites and convert, redevelop and/or reuse vacant buildings and accommodation should be thoroughly explored. This will include opportunities in the main centres to re-use and/or convert space above shops to promote sustainable living close to employment and services.

The inclusion of housing within mixed use schemes can also help create attractive and desirable communities. Where opportunities exist and are encouraged through the Development Plans, mixed use schemes that include an element of housing should be positively encouraged.

#### **POLICY SLP18**

**In addressing housing need, the Development Plan should seek to make the most efficient and effective use of land and buildings by encouraging the re-use of previously developed land, promoting increased housing densities where appropriate and encouraging the inclusion of housing within mixed use schemes**

## **Environmental Policies**

### **9. Natural Resource Management**

#### **Water**

The Island is reliant upon precipitation for its water supply which is collected and stored in reservoirs. Guernsey Water has a responsibility to ensure that it conserves and enhances the natural environment within the water catchment area. Overall, it is necessary to ensure that the maximum possible amount of rainwater is successfully channelled to the Island's reservoirs.

Although rainfall records show that the probability of a prolonged period of low rainfall is small, there is statistical evidence of climatic change towards lower rainfall and some evidence that fluctuations in weather conditions are becoming more extreme. If rainfall is lower and less reliable, there is an increasing risk that a prolonged and serious drought could occur and a need to carefully conserve water.

In response to the States resolution, as part of the review of its Strategy on Waste, Water and Stone (2006) Les Vardes Quarry should continue to be identified and safeguarded as a strategic asset for freshwater storage once quarrying activities there cease; unless the States prioritise its future use for an alternative form of strategically essential development.

The Island's bathing waters are important for recreational, environmental and economic reasons. Therefore, it is important that development is managed in such a way as to create minimal negative impact on the Island's beaches and sea water quality.

#### **POLICY SLP19**

**The Development Plans will include measures to prevent the pollution of potable water supplies and sea water as a consequence of development**

#### **POLICY SLP20**

**Les Vardes Quarry, St Sampson will be safeguarded as a future strategic water reserve following the end of quarrying activities**

The planning system plays an important role in safeguarding water resources through the careful management of new development. New developments will be expected to use water in an efficient manner wherever possible. See also Policy LP3 in Part B, referring to the requirement for the installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, where appropriate.

#### **POLICY SLP21**

**The efficient use and reuse of all available sources of water should be maximised and new development should wherever possible have appropriate sustainable drainage systems to maximise the efficient capture, use and reuse of water**

## **Flood management**

Rising sea levels will increase the risk of inundation by sea water, especially during extreme storm surges and there is also a greater risk of flooding in low lying areas of the Island due to higher winter rainfall. However the level of risk associated with locating particular land uses should be carefully assessed as certain land uses will be affected to a greater extent than others. Findings from the Coastal Defence Flood Studies (2011) will help inform the Development Plans to pursue appropriate individual policy approaches to different situations across the Island.

The Development Plan should give consideration to adaptation measures needed to lessen the impact on the existing land drainage system to avoid exacerbating flooding problems. Even so, there must be an element of risk tolerance in flood management especially in the urban parts of the Island. The nature of the risk in any given circumstance must be weighed against competing economic, employment, social, environmental or recreation benefits that might accrue. Opportunities to harness investment that would address flooding-related problems should be identified when considering development proposals.

### **POLICY SLP22**

**The risk of flooding should be carefully evaluated and taken into account when planning for development**

## **Air quality**

Guernsey has generally excellent air quality. The use of low sulphur fuels at the Power Station and the importation of electricity via the cable link can help in keeping industrial pollution to a minimum.

The main factors affecting air quality are the growth in motor traffic and fuel consumption, which creates localised pollution. With a high level of car ownership and usage, existing peaks of atmospheric pollution associated with high pressure systems are likely to increase and potentially lead to more respiratory diseases. In response to this position the States Environmental Plan sets out an identified outcome for a reduction in air pollution.

The main control of emissions from development lies with the Island's Environmental Health Department and it would not be appropriate for the Development Plans to preclude the consideration of development based on the effect on air quality alone. The planning system is able, however, to influence the location of development and the movement of traffic by reducing the need to travel and subsequently addressing localised pollution problems and may condition planning approvals to support Environmental Health regulations.

#### **POLICY SLP23**

**In the interests of air quality, the Development Plans will take into account:**

- i. the location of development and the extent to which it is possible to influence a reduction of unnecessary vehicle journeys**
- ii. the degree to which planning policies may be able to support Environmental Health controls over air pollution**

## **Waste and Stone Extraction**

### **Solid waste**

The path to securing an acceptable solution to the Island's solid waste has been long and difficult.

In April 2002 the States approved an amendment to the Urban Area Plan to enable Longue Hougue to be developed for waste management purposes.

In May 2005 the States initiated a comprehensive review of the 1989 solid waste strategy including a worldwide search for alternative (to incineration) waste treatment solutions.

In November 2005 the States confirmed the previous strategy for the disposal of inert waste by land reclamation at Longue Hougue.

In February 2006 the States considered and rejected working with Jersey to provide a new waste incineration facility to serve the Channel Islands.

In July 2006 the States considered and rejected export of putrescible waste as an interim measure.

In February 2007 the States approved an interim Waste Disposal Plan with a target of recycling 50% of all commercial and household waste by 2010 and specifically directed provision to be made for dry materials recovery, mixed waste recovery, in vessel composting, civic amenity sites and scrap metal. The States also agreed to seek tenders for the design, build and operation of:

- Either a mass burn energy from waste plant;
- OR a mechanical biological treatment plant coupled to an energy from waste plant, which facility may be a mass burn or advanced thermal treatment plant;
- INCLUDING consideration of modular development options for such facilities and any combination of mechanical heat treatment, mechanical biological treatment and advanced thermal treatment.

This subsequently resulted in the appointment of Suez Environnement as the Preferred Bidder for the design, build and operation of a residual waste treatment facility. However, in February 2010 the States resolved to reverse the previous decisions of the States endorsing the Public Service Department's Procurement Strategy as set out in Billet d'État No. I, 2007. As a consequence, the Public Services Department was required to formally notify Suez that the States will no longer proceed to contract closure and to develop and report to the States on a revised strategy for waste disposal as soon as practicable.

At the time of writing, a Solid Waste Strategy is being prepared by the Public Services Department with extensive community engagement. It is expected that this will be presented to the States for its decision in the near future. With the possible exception of continued landfill, any agreed strategy is likely to have land use implications in terms of waste infrastructure which will need to be addressed in the review of the Development Plans. It is important that the Development Plans enable the implementation of a States strategy whatever the waste management approach may be.

#### **POLICY SLP24**

**The Development Plans will include policies to ensure that sufficient land is made available for future solid waste treatment solutions forming part of the current or revised States-agreed solid waste strategy**



## **Liquid waste**

Wastewater currently undergoes preliminary treatment at Belle Greve before being pumped out to sea via a long outfall pipe. Guernsey Water is committed to undertaking improvement works to replace and substantially upgrade the existing works by 2012.

### **POLICY SLP25**

**The Development Plans will include policies that enable the implementation of appropriate wastewater treatment techniques and associated infrastructure**

## **Quarrying**

Stone extraction on the Island takes place at Les Vardes Quarry which is currently being extended with a view to continuing operations for another 15-20 years. The States has also agreed to safeguard it as a strategic asset for the future storage of potable water once extraction ceases (Billet d'Etat X, 2009), which accords with the States-agreed strategy on Waste, Water and Stone (2006).

A further area of stone exists at Chouet Headland (Vale) which is considered to be viable to extract. Through the review of the Development Plans the Environment Department will need to ensure that this area of land is suitably identified as a strategic reserve of stone and is protected from other forms of development that might otherwise adversely affect stone extraction.

### **POLICY SLP26**

**The Development Plans will safeguard Chouet Headland (Vale) as a strategic reserve for stone extraction**

## 10. The Natural Environment

The quality of Guernsey's natural environment is important, not simply for its inherent value, but for its contribution to quality of life and social wellbeing and to the Island's economy.

### Landscape

The character of Guernsey's landscape derives from many factors; underlying geological features, the wildlife it supports and the physical survivals of centuries of man's management of the land. It is a unique, small scale, intricate landscape which is found only in the Channel Islands, although it is similar to the landscapes of Brittany and Cornwall. Its quality and diversity is acknowledged in the States Environmental Plan which seeks to retain its distinctive character.

Coastal landscapes are especially dominant and the cliff tops with open pasture, low earth banks and fortifications characterise the south and south east coasts. Other important landscapes across the island comprise open common, managed fields, valleys and escarpments. The interplay between natural and manmade elements is of special significance.

At the same time there are parts of the Island, for instance associated with redundant horticultural land, that are of lesser quality and would benefit from enhancement (see Linking Policy LP13). Currently there is also a desire to tidy up and domesticate the landscape, which will have an impact on landscape character. While this generally runs counter to the desire to preserve the local character of our landscapes, minor shifts in the management style of small parcels of land not forming part of larger areas of open land and not visually prominent will not fundamentally alter the character of the Island. They will also retain the ability to be used for agricultural purposes, if needed, in the future.

#### **POLICY SLP27**

**The distinctive qualities and features of Guernsey's countryside should be retained and enhanced. The Development Plans will provide an overall analysis of the Island's landscape character and will identify priority areas for the maintenance, enhancement and/or restoration of that character and circumstances where change can be accommodated without significant adverse impact**

## **Open countryside**

As well as providing the backdrop to the daily lives of Islanders, the rural environment continues to be a landscape defined by the working practices of man and although not as significant as previous times, farming, horticulture and fishing play an important role.

Core Strategic Policies set out in the Strategic Land Use Plan seek to ensure that open countryside is protected while also facilitating a viable rural economy and enabling other acceptable small-scale economic development to be further defined in the Development Plan (See Small Scale Business Development, Policy SLP4). Certain areas of land hold a particular value in terms of their potential for agricultural use and therefore need to be conserved where appropriate.

The Dairy Industry Review (Policy Council, 2010) has emphasised the continuing pressure on dairying due to the growing transfer of land to non-agricultural use. However, the dairy farming industry is a government-subsidised practice and is unlikely to be a viable industry without financial assistance. Therefore the farming industry is protected as much for the role it plays in managing open land as it is for its produce.

The general consolidation of farming activities suggests there will be parts of the countryside that are not likely to be required for farming purposes in the immediate future. These small, isolated land parcels are often located between and immediately behind areas of development where a change to other open land uses such as curtilage extensions will be acceptable providing the ability to use the land for agricultural purposes in the future is retained.

### **POLICY SLP28**

**Open land in the countryside will be protected and provision will be made within the Development Plans for appropriate development associated with facilitating a rural economy or enabling other small-scale economic development**

## **Public access to the countryside**

Public access to the countryside has an essential part to play in quality of life, especially as many people now live in urban or suburban parts of the Island.

Public access to coastal countryside areas for informal recreation purposes along the foot and cliff path network and through 'green lanes' is a well established part of Island life.

These lineal routes are complemented by 'ruettes tranquilles', (designated Narrow Lanes) which although part of the road network, give priority to walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. Opportunities to provide safe routes within and around the main centres and local centres should be explored.

Visual access (i.e. the ability to see beyond frontage development) to the countryside is of equal importance to physical access. Much of the Island's countryside is hidden from public view by a frontage of roadside ribbon development and while it is acknowledged that any reversal of this would be extremely difficult, owing to the financial implications of demolishing and relocating homes, the Development Plans should not preclude such action and should explore policies that encourage and support proposals to improve visual access to the countryside.

#### **Policy SLP29**

**The Development Plans will promote improvement of public access to the countryside and explore opportunities for the development of green lanes and pedestrianised off-road routes**

#### **Biodiversity**

Global biodiversity is being lost at an alarming pace. While it is not being lost at the same speed as other places, biodiversity loss is occurring in Guernsey. Some native species are suffering due to fragmentation of habitats and the loss of salt marshes, soft coastal defences, unimproved land and wetlands. Semi-improved grassland for instance has decreased by a significant extent during the first decade of this century. The Island's natural biodiversity is strongly evident and prevalent in the marine environment. A key area for consideration is therefore the intertidal zone.

The States of Guernsey's Environmental Policy plan seeks to 'ensure healthier biodiversity and support specific species and habitats'. Increasing knowledge of location, extent and distribution of species and habitats is essential and has been met to a significant degree by the completion of a Phase 1 Habitat Survey conducted in

2010. The Development Plan review process will interpret this information when preparing planning policies and will contain policies to resist the unnecessary loss of significant areas of biodiversity.

There may also be opportunities to enhance biodiversity through new development by conditioning the requirement for new or extended habitats, either on the site of a development or on an alternative site identified through the planning process.

#### **POLICY SLP30**

**Through the preparation of the Development Plans the Environment Department will provide measures to maintain biodiversity through the protection and enhancement of key habitats and landscapes**

#### **Management of development along the coast**

Guernsey's coast is highly valued. It consists of a number of landscape character types ranging from the cliffs in the south to low-lying wet 'mares' to the west and includes the important foreshore areas. In addition to its visual values, it also provides livelihoods to many who operate coastal restaurants and outdoor recreation facilities and represents an attractive place to live and enjoy. The coastal area has always been subject to considerable development demands and pressures and care will be needed to ensure its attractive character is protected and enhanced when considering proposals for new development.

In the future, the coastal area may also have a valuable role to play in providing for certain types of physical infrastructure, including improved sea defences required to respond to the effects of climate change and possibly any shore-based renewable energy equipment required as part of the development of a local programme.

#### **POLICY SLP31**

**Particular regard will be given to maintaining the coastline as an environmental, economic and recreational resource while responding to climate change pressures including rising sea levels and to the possible future need for infrastructure development**

## 11. The Built Environment

As with the natural environment, with which it is closely intertwined, maintaining the richness and diversity of Guernsey's built environment is important. The quality of the built heritage is a major component of this. It too supports the Island's quality of life and social and economic wellbeing. It forms the physical link to the Island's past and helps create its unique identity.

### **The built heritage**

The Island's built heritage is made up of many elements from archaeological remains, ancient burials and historic fortification through to the many buildings of architectural and historic interest, many of which have formal legal protection as protected monuments and buildings.

In addition the Island is rich in traditional buildings and other structures – walls, earth banks, barns and watering places - many of which have no formal protection but which contribute to Guernsey's special character, or local distinctiveness as it is sometimes termed. Many of these collectively form attractive areas, or are set in the landscape in an attractive way that warrants conservation and enhancement.

The Island's heritage is an irreplaceable resource. The challenge is to secure its conservation and enhancement in an appropriate way, recognising its special values, acknowledging that development and adaptation may be the best way to achieve this and also to support social and economic objectives. The important thing is that change sustains the special values and character of the heritage for the future.

As with the landscape, policies relating to the built heritage should be informed by an understanding of the character and quality of its various elements and their relative value so that a proportionate approach can be taken to the level of protection afforded and to the reasonable management of change. This is particularly important in the case of protected monuments and buildings as designation can have significant consequences for property owners.

### **POLICY SLP32**

**The Development Plans will include policies to ensure that the unique built character and heritage of the Island is conserved and enhanced. Allied to landscape character studies, an overall analysis of the built character of the Island will be provided as a basis for the management of change**

## **New development**

It is important that new development contributes in a positive way to the Island's built environment and becomes the heritage of the future. This means an approach to design that responds to the special character and heritage of the Island but also maintains high standards of sustainable construction as mentioned within Linking Policy LP4.

As with the natural environment, there are elements of the Island's built environment that would benefit from enhancement and the Development Plans should put in place policies that adopt a flexible approach to the alteration of the less valuable building stock, while striving for high quality, sustainable design as appropriate.

### **POLICY SLP33**

**The Development Plans will include policies to promote quality and sustainability in new development and to enable the enhancement of the built environment where appropriate**

'Public art' initiatives can enhance the cultural experience of the Island and are able to reflect the lives and aspirations of the parishes, the main centres and the Island as a whole. Therefore public art initiatives should be incorporated into the public realm and the built environment, particularly in new development where the scale of the scheme justifies this investment.

### **POLICY SLP34**

**The Development Plans may include policy mechanisms for incorporating works of public art in major new development schemes and in enhancements to the public realm**

## Infrastructure

### 12. Transport, Road Use and Car Parking

At the time of writing, a revised road transport strategy is being devised by the Environment Department. In preparing future Development Plans a proper co-ordinated approach will be required to ensure the successful integration and delivery of land use and transport policies (see Linking Policies LP6, LP7 and LP8).<sup>1</sup>

#### Transport

Although the continuing long term trend for high levels of car travel remains a significant factor, a number of policies have been identified for this Plan which will help to address the issue. A key outcome statement identified by the Spatial Strategy is to work towards achieving ‘a safe, secure and accessible environment for all’. Within the context of an island that has already seen development occur, it is possible to shape travel behaviour to a certain extent by establishing development patterns that complement public transport provision and reduce car dependence, as reflected by Policy LP2 in Section 5.

The creation of compact, walkable communities centred on a high quality public transport system can make it possible to live a higher quality life without complete dependence on a motor car. It is therefore beneficial to provide improved and attractive infrastructure facilities for public transport, walking and cycling. It remains important for services to be well linked in relation to the main transit routes. These policy measures and others referenced below will ensure more effective utilisation of the road network.

#### **POLICY SLP35**

**The States will work in a co-ordinated way to ensure a complementary relationship between land use and current and future road transport strategies, and the Development Plans will make provision for additional associated infrastructure required to ensure successful implementation**

<sup>1</sup> The system of amending strategic and specific land use planning policies set out within the Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005, does enable adjustments to be made if necessary in the light of emerging road transport policies.



## **Road network**

There are approximately three hundred miles of public roads in Guernsey, ranging from main arterial routes that are heavily used on a daily basis to minor lanes used infrequently. Given the distribution of residential and commercial property the roads network is extensive and plays a key role in the Island's social and economic well-being. Roadways form the principal routes shared by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and rising numbers of vehicles of increasing average size. Therefore it is essential that safe, efficient and fair access is afforded to all users of the public roads and pavements.

The historic form of the public road network constrains the scope of potential highway improvements with buildings and other structures often positioned on the back edge of the pavement. This form of development is prevalent in the urban areas of St Peter Port and St Sampson and this is representative of the character of the Island. In the main, Guernsey has not undergone major highway improvements in an attempt to accommodate a high level of car ownership. Although this has helped to preserve local character, unconstrained traffic signage and other related infrastructure can have a negative impact on the character of streets and roads as public spaces. Detrimental effects on the physical character of areas and a deterioration of road safety are mitigated when alternatives to car travel are available.

Given the strategic importance of the east coast transport corridor between the two main centres, there is a clear need to see a high level of connectivity maintained. Opportunities for efficient vehicle movement together with measures to provide realistic alternatives to the car should therefore be explored.

### **POLICY SLP36**

**In setting policies to control development on or affecting the road network, consideration should be given to the need to:**

- i. provide safe access and movement for all users**
- ii. support environmental enhancement**
- iii. ensure strategically important routes are maintained to safeguard links to and between strategically important development**

## Vehicle parking management

Convenient access to and within the main centres of St Peter Port and St Sampson/Vale is important for those needing to get to work, to shop and to enjoy the facilities they offer.

Local reliance on car use has, however, led to the creation of large car parks especially within St Peter Port. A substantial area of the harbour is dedicated to surface parking which appears visually unattractive and does not represent an efficient use of land in a prime location.

### **POLICY SLP37**

**While ensuring economic and social objectives of the States can be met, opportunities should be explored to minimise the negative effects of car parking, particularly within the centres**

## 13. Strategic Transport Links

### **Airport**

Ensuring that Guernsey Airport is able to meet transport needs is critical to ensuring the co-ordinated and cost effective delivery of a key public service for Islanders and visitors. It is also vital to the local economy. The States have prioritised funding to upgrade the runway, taxiways and aprons to meet new safety requirements, which will ensure the airport remains fit for purpose for the foreseeable future.

However, while advances in aircraft technology might reduce the need for a longer runway in the future, this is something beyond local control. It is also possible that other external factors, such as UK hub airports not accepting smaller regional aircraft, may trigger the consideration of a runway extension some time in the future.

Moreover, future changes in aviation standards or legislation may lead to additional protection around the airport in terms of safeguarding areas.

Strengthening the trading position of Guernsey Airport may require additional private sector investment in commercial enterprises on or around the airport's operational area. This might include additional hangarage and new business/office development. The 'Infrastructure and Implementation' section (Policy LP11) identifies potential

opportunities that may exist to co-ordinate States and private sector initiatives that could harness investment in the operational aspects of the airport.

#### **POLICY SLP38**

**The Development Plans will make provision for airport-related development that ensures Guernsey Airport is able to meet modern operational standards and respond to opportunities to strengthen its contribution to the economy**

### **Harbours**

The harbours at St Peter Port and St Sampson provide key infrastructure not only for the continuing import and export of goods and raw materials, but also in support of visiting yachts, cruise liners and commercial ferries. St Peter Port Harbour is the point of entry for the vast majority of the Island's foodstuffs and is a gateway to Guernsey for passengers visiting the Island by ferry.

The 'Main Centre Vitality and Viability' section (Policy LP8) identifies potential opportunities that may exist to co-ordinate States and private sector initiatives that could harness investment in the operational aspects of the main harbours.

The Island's fuel supplies are currently brought in through the tidal harbour at St Sampson. Volatile fuels are imported by means of a flat-bottomed ship that is able to take to the harbour floor during low tide and unload directly into a piped network feeding holding tanks at Northside and Southside. This situation is far from ideal but can only be addressed by either switching the importing of fuels to St Peter Port and addressing inherent problems that would arise, or constructing new deep water berths on the east coast of the Island.

This is a matter currently under investigation by the Public Services Department but from a land use perspective, the Development Plans will need to make provision should the development of new deep water berths and associated land reclamation be required, in the event that this is determined to be the most appropriate strategy for the importation of fuel and other goods.

The Environment Department, Public Services Department and other relevant States departments should work closely with the private sector to prepare an appropriate Harbour Strategy.

This document will identify the short, medium and longer term needs of the ports and balance the need to make provision for essential harbour-related development to ensure the continued successful operation of the harbours with identified opportunities to meet wider States economic, social and environmental objectives.

**POLICY SLP39**

**In the event that the States agree that the development of new deep water berths and associated land reclamation on the east coast of the Island is required, the Development Plans will put in place appropriate policies to enable this**

**Through corporate working and forging appropriate public and private partnerships, the States will prepare a strategy for the harbours that enables essential operational harbour development and additional forms of development that is able to meet economic, social and environmental objectives of the States**

## Part C – Implementation, Monitoring and Review

### Implementation

This Strategic Land Use Plan provides the overall policy direction for the planning system to regulate land use in Guernsey. The Plan will be delivered through the Development Plans prepared by the Environment Department and through integration into other States programmes that are likely to have a significant bearing on land use or are affected by the strategic planning policies set out within this Strategic Land Use Plan.

The Development Plans are documents prepared by the Environment Department that set out the detailed, specific policies for land use and influence decisions in relation to the control of development. They are tested in public at a planning inquiry before the Plan and the planning inspector's report are passed to the States for final approval.

The successful implementation of the Strategic Land Use Plan will rely on a new approach to dealing with spatial issues and securing social, environmental and economic benefits through the land planning system.

To fully realise the potential of the Strategic Land Use Plan there needs to be:

- better corporate working and relationships with the private sector
- policy monitoring and review to ensure that objectives are being met
- a form of Development Plan that is positive and adaptable to changing circumstances
- an exploration of new methods of funding to achieve greater public benefit

### **Better corporate working and relationships with the private sector**

The Linking Policies contained within this Plan make it clear that there is much to be gained from States departments and the private sector working together to provide a framework within which development can be planned and regulated in accordance with the strategic policies of the States. Tackling some of the more difficult issues facing the Island such as transportation, urban regeneration and countryside management requires a change in States approach from that adopted at the time of writing.

The successful implementation of the Island Infrastructure Plan will also require a more co-ordinated approach to land use and States departments will need to fully understand and take into account the opportunities and restrictions presented by the planning system. The States will always need to take into account the challenges of delivering major infrastructure when Development Plan review cycles are relatively short in comparison with infrastructure delivery timescales (particularly harnessing renewable energy).

### **Policy monitoring and review**

Development Plans prepared so as to be consistent with the Strategic Land Use Plan will be the first to be drafted since the introduction of The Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005. Therefore, for the first time the Environment Department will need to take into account Section 6 (a) of the Law, which states that the purposes of the Law have to be balanced with the Strategic Land Use Plan.

The Purposes of the Law are to protect and enhance, and to facilitate the sustainable development of, the physical environment of Guernsey. Amongst other things the Law will seek to protect and enhance the Island's natural beauty and built heritage, preserve biological diversity, achieve high quality in the design and implementation of development, maintain a balance between the competing demands for the use of land, ensure that development is carried out in a sustainable manner and in such a way as to achieve a safe and healthy living and working environment.

The Law further states that a draft Development Plan must, in relation to the area covered by it, set out the Environment Department's proposals for managing the physical environment with a view to facilitating the achievement of the objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan, having regard to the implications for land planning of those objectives.

As part of the Environment Department's general duties for the purposes of the Law, it is the responsibility of the Department to seek to achieve and, where they conflict, to balance, so far as possible, both the purposes of the Law and the objectives set out in the Strategic Land Use Plan.

It is clear therefore that satisfying these legal requirements will result in the Environment Department, through the preparation of the Development Plans, balancing potential conflicts within the purposes of the Law, potential conflicts within the Strategic Land Use Plan and potential conflicts between the purposes of the Law

and the objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan. As a result the planning system has to do its best to give effect to the requirements of both documents.

In determining a Development Plan's conformity with the Strategic Land Use Plan, the Strategic Land Planning Group will have to decide whether the Development Plans achieve this difficult balance in a satisfactory way or whether too much emphasis has been placed on one particular element of either the Law or the Strategic Land Use Plan. In such circumstances the Strategic Land Planning Group may determine that the Development Plans are not in conformity with the Strategic Land Use Plan.

To ensure the Development Plans successfully deliver the land use objectives of the States, as set out within this Strategic Land Use Plan, the Strategic Land Planning Group will work closely with the Environment Department to monitor key Development Plan policies in order to assess their robustness, continued relevance and effectiveness.

Effective monitoring will be managed through the Environment Department submitting regular reports to the Strategic Land Planning Group setting out how the Development Plans are satisfying specific economic, social and environmental objectives of the States. These reports will be provided at quarterly intervals or such longer time periods as are agreed between the parties. In addition and on an annual basis the Environment Department will report to the Strategic Land Planning Group on how the Development Plans are playing their part in enabling the proactive elements of the Strategic Land Use Plan to be delivered, specifically those set out within Section 5 (Linking Policies) of the Plan. The Strategic Land Planning Group in turn will provide updates to the Policy Council for inclusion in the annual report on the Strategic Land Use Plan within the States Strategic Plan.

The objectives for the monitoring reports will be to:

- assess the implementation of the Strategic Land Use policies through the Development Plan policies and the management of development
- identify and remove any blockages to the delivery of sustainable development for which provision is made within the Strategic Land Use Plan
- identify potential revisions required to the Strategic Land Use Plan or Development Plans to ensure the objectives of the States are adequately satisfied by the land use planning system

The Monitoring Reports will be required to indicate the responses of other States Departments and members of the public to the implementation of policies within the Development Plans and whether any need for policy change has been identified.

## **SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS**

**The Environment Department will liaise with other relevant bodies and report on a regular basis to the Strategic Land Planning Group on the progress towards achieving the objectives of the Strategic Land Use Plan policies**

**Quarterly monitoring during the year will focus on assessing:**

- **the delivery of housing in accordance with identified housing need**
- **the provision of adequate employment-related development as identified within States-adopted plans\***
- **the management of natural resources**
- **the delivery of infrastructure identified as being required by the States-adopted plans\***

**Annual monitoring will focus on assessing:**

- **how the Development Plans are delivering the proactive elements of the Strategic Land Use Plan, specifically those set out within Section 5 (Linking Policies) of the Plan**
- **whether any action is required to maintain and in particular to enhance the effectiveness of delivery of the strategic economic, social and environmental objectives mentioned in this section of the Plan**

- \* The Plans referred to here are the Economic & Fiscal Policy Plan, the Environmental Policy Plan and the Social Policy Plan, together with the Island Resource Plans of Population Management, Energy and Infrastructure (The Strategic Land Use Plan is the fourth of the Island Resource Plans).

## **Responsive and adaptable Development Plans**

### **Introduction**

Under the guidance of this Strategic Land Use Plan, the Development Plans will be expected to be responsive to changing social, economic and environmental circumstances to ensure land use planning can continue to enable the corporate objectives of the States of Guernsey to be met.



## **Policy gateways**

Within the planning policy framework established by the Urban and Rural Area Plans (produced in 2002 and 2005 respectively) an identifiable policy needs to exist within the Plans to enable the consideration of specific forms of development. In circumstances where a policy provision potentially enabling permission to be granted does not exist, the proposed development either has to be rejected or tested against exception principles to determine whether the development can be regarded as a minor departure or essential development, thereby providing a policy gateway for the consideration of the proposals. This could result in otherwise acceptable development failing the essentiality test and being rejected as outside the parameters of the Development Plan. Therefore, future Development Plan policies need to be drafted in such a way that they aim to avoid the situation arising where the Environment Department is unable to consider forms of development that were not envisaged at the time of drafting. This will ensure the Plan offers flexibility to consider proposals within a robust framework for managing development.

In assessing Development Plans consistency with the Strategic Land Use Plan, the Strategic Land Planning Group will take into account the entirety of the Strategic Land Use Plan, including all relevant policies, all of the policy preamble and the overall scheme and content of the Plan. Equally, Section 5 of the 2007 Plans Ordinance enables the Strategic Land Planning Group to comment on the style of the Development Plans and notwithstanding the wording of specific policies, to determine whether the overall approach of the Plan is in conformity with the specific policies and overall aspirations of the Strategic Land Use Plan.

## **Balancing public interest and personal choice**

Land planning operates in the interests of the wider public good and is by its nature an encroachment into private property usage. The balance that is struck between the public interest and the individual choice of property owners is important.

The philosophy behind this Plan drawing on the wider spectrum of opinion, which was canvassed through the Guernsey Tomorrow consultation, is to achieve the States objectives in a positive and where appropriate, an enabling way while ensuring the continuing protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment.

When decisions are made on individual planning applications the outcome will reflect Development Plan policies relevant to the particular circumstances with a stronger emphasis on control in cases involving development of protected buildings and in

areas carrying a greater level of protection such as Conservation Areas or Sites of Special Significance, and less prescriptive control in less sensitive circumstances.

To achieve consistency with the Strategic Land Use Plan, however, a Development Plan will need to demonstrate that the level of control it provides for in all situations is reasonable and proportionate and that it respects the exercise of private choice in matters that have no significant bearing on the achievement of the strategic policies of the States.

### **Funding mechanisms**

The funding of development within the Island has historically been achieved through the States investing in essential infrastructure or services or through the private sector identifying opportunities for achieving profit through development. The Guernsey Housing Association's partnership with the Housing Department as part of the Corporate Housing Programme is one notable exception of how different funding mechanisms have been used.

There will continue to be a commitment from the States to fund public sector-related development at an appropriate scale, where this satisfies corporate objectives. However, other mechanisms should be explored such as; harnessing profit obtained through the designation of land through the planning system, through the Environment Department entering into planning agreements with developers<sup>1</sup>, by adopting local tariff approaches such as the Communities Infrastructure Levys and Business Improvement District schemes introduced in the UK and exploring other potential taxation methods. These mechanisms can create funding for project specific, area specific or general investments. Some of these mechanisms can be established through the land planning system but others will require the involvement of other States agencies and their commitment to better meeting overarching States objectives. The Strategic Land Planning Group encourages the Policy Council to investigate such opportunities that might arise through the use of land.

<sup>1</sup> The Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005 makes provision for the use of Covenants (Section 23). These allow the Environment Department to, amongst other things, require specific activities to be carried out on land and for land to be used, maintained or managed in a specific way.

## **Appendix 1**

### Glossary of terms



## Glossary

Agricultural land	Any land used or capable of being used for the purpose of any trade or business in dairy farming, the producing, rearing or maintenance of livestock, market gardening or the outdoor cultivation of flowers, etc.
Biodiversity	Abbreviated from biological diversity, this refers to the variety of all plant and animal life and their habitats
Brownfield site	Also known as previously developed land. Land which is or was occupied by a permanent building or structure and infrastructure such as roads
Built environment	The combination of characteristics and features of a particular area that have been made in influenced by man
Curtilage	The area of land associated with a building and used for purposes in connection with the main use of that building
Decommissioning	To remove from service
Development Plan	A Plan prepared by the Environment Department that sets out the specific land planning policies for Guernsey, which have been prepared in accordance with the Strategic Land Use Plan
Escarpment	A steep slope separating two comparatively level of more gently sloping surfaces
Infrastructure	The basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society, such as transportation and communications systems, water and power lines, and public institutions including schools, post offices, and prisons
Putrescible Waste	Waste that is liable to decay and become putrid (often described as being the opposite of inert waste)
Ribbon Development	The building of often detached houses in a continuous row along a main road
Spatial	Relating to, occupying or having the character of space
Topography	The three-dimensional arrangement of physical attributes (such as shape, height, and depth) of a land surface in a place or region. Physical features that make up the topography of an area include hills, valleys, plains, and bodies of water.



## **Appendix 2**

The Environment Department's consultation response





Deputy B M Flouquet  
Chairman  
Strategic Land Planning Group  
c/o Policy Council  
Sir Charles Frossard House  
La Charroterie  
St Peter Port  
Guernsey  
GY1 1FH

30 September 2011

Dear Deputy Flouquet,

**THE LAND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (GUERNSEY) LAW, 2005**


**Consultation on The Strategic Land Use Plan.**

Thank you for attending our recent meeting and for your presentation on the draft Strategic Land Use Plan, copies of which had been provided to Environment Board members in advance. I understand that this constitutes the formal consultation under section 5(4) (a) of The Land Planning and Development (Guernsey) Law, 2005.

The Board considers that the draft Strategic Land Use Plan provides a sound basis for the preparation of the Development Plans. It successfully translates States' Strategic Plans, the Guernsey Tomorrow consultation and States Members' workshops into high level strategic spatial objectives and policies. The Department notes that these high level policies are the starting point and, if supported by the States, will guide the more detailed work that will be undertaken by the Department in preparing the Development Plans.

Board members noted the monitoring requirements of the draft Plan as set out in the specific directions to the Department and noted the considerable resource implications that such monitoring will entail. Whilst the Department recognises and supports the need for monitoring it feels obliged to point out that existing resources are most unlikely to be able to deliver the required outputs and that to take this work forward the States may need to approve a new service development bid in this respect.

Yours sincerely



**Deputy Peter Sirett**  
Minister, Environment Department

**POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Environmental policy; Management of States and Crown land; Land use policy and plans; Control of development including conservation and heritage protection; Public transport, traffic management, road safety, road networks and co-ordination of road works; Driving licences, vehicle taxation