



# Defining Redundant Glasshouse Sites

Supplementary Planning Guidance  
December 2018



Development &  
Planning Authority

# Foreword

The Development and Planning Authority (the Authority) has prepared this Supplementary Planning Guidance to provide more detail and guidance on the policy principles set out in the Island Development Plan as well as providing a context for the evaluation of planning applications by the Authority.

This Supplementary Planning Guidance explains what a redundant glasshouse site is in accordance with the Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) and for the purposes of the policies of the Island Development Plan (IDP).

## 1. Introduction

**1.1.** Commercial horticulture was once the basis of Guernsey's economy. Over time, the industry has declined and the Island has been left with increasing numbers of redundant glasshouses. Whilst some glasshouses are still in use, and some structures are in a reasonable condition, we have been left with many potentially dangerous and unsightly structures in varying states of disrepair scattered across largely open and attractive parts of the Island.

**1.2.** Under the Planning Law, horticultural sites, including redundant glasshouses and ancillary structures, are treated as agricultural land. On clearance they are therefore expected to be used for agriculture.

**1.3.** However, the cost of removing glasshouses is often a barrier to their clearance. Owners are understandably reluctant to spend money on the maintenance and repair of unused glasshouses or to make the substantial investments required to clear former horticultural sites of glasshouses and ancillary structures when the value of land as agricultural land may not make this viable. With the further decline of the industry over the passing of time, this continuing neglect will lead to further deterioration of glasshouse sites, to the detriment of the visual amenity and landscape character of the countryside.

**1.4.** The IDP addresses the issue of redundant glasshouse sites. Where these sites are located within a Main or Local Centre there are opportunities for development which will be assessed under the relevant policies for those areas. However, most of the island's redundant glasshouse sites fall Outside of the Centres where their visual appearance reduces the quality of the landscape. The IDP policies therefore offer limited support for certain development proposals on some redundant glasshouse sites Outside of the Centres, depending on their location in order to secure removal of redundant structures and deliver enhancement of visual amenity and landscape quality. However, land planning alone cannot provide a comprehensive solution to the clearance of all redundant glasshouses and ancillary structures, which can only be achieved through joint working across the Committees of the States and action by landowners.

## 2. Policy Context

**2.1.** The Strategic Land Use Plan states that 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 well-being and to the Island's economy. It identifies Guernsey's underlying landscape character and the openness of the undeveloped parts of the island as factors that contribute positively to its character.

**2.2.** However, the Strategic Land Use Plan also acknowledges that there are parts of the Island that are of lesser quality, such as redundant glasshouse sites, which are regarded as visually unattractive and would benefit from enhancement.

**2.3.** In exploring ways to tackle the adverse impacts of redundant glasshouse sites on open land and landscape quality, the SLUP cautioned against allowing the wholesale redevelopment of such sites to facilitate the clearance of glasshouses. Given their scattered locations in largely open and otherwise attractive areas of countryside, unrestricted development of such sites would urbanise the countryside, having a far greater impact on the visual amenity and landscape quality of the Island, run counter to the spatial strategy of the SLUP to focus development in the Centres, and could encourage land owners to allow their land to become derelict.

**2.4.** Instead the policy direction given to address this issue stems from the SLUP objectives for landscape (Policy SLP27) and open countryside (Policy SLP28). These policies seek protection of important landscapes and the openness of the countryside while providing for appropriate development that retains and where possible enhances the quality of the landscape character. The SLUP required the IDP to identify priority areas for the maintenance, enhancement and/or restoration of that character and circumstances where change can be accommodated without significant adverse impact on the landscape or loss of openness (Policies SLP27 & SLP28).

**2.5.** Taking these objectives into account, Policy LP13 of the SLUP encourages the removal of redundant glasshouse structures and promotes the use of land to make a positive contribution to agriculture and/or open land in the first instance. The SLUP contains a number of policies which are relevant to the possible future uses of redundant glasshouse sites that may be appropriate and help facilitate the removal of redundant glasshouse sites as sought by Policy LP13.

**2.6.** IDP policy flows from, and reflects, the SLUP and the legal context. The IDP also recognises that across the island there are a number of redundant glasshouses and associated structures that impact upon landscape character and openness. Policy OC7 applies to redundant glasshouse sites Outside of the Centres and sets out the presumption that when a horticultural use ceases and the site is no longer required or capable of being used (i.e redundant), it will be cleared of glasshouses and ancillary structures and returned to agricultural use. Where agriculture is not a viable option and where the site does not contribute positively to a wider area of open land, the policy then offers limited support for other specified forms of development depending on their location and other planning considerations, where this would secure removal of redundant structures and would address the legacy of negative visual impact that redundant glasshouses have throughout the Island by restoring the open nature of the land.

**2.7.** In supporting limited development which will secure removal of redundant glasshouses and ancillary structures, planning policy aims to address the legacy of dilapidated and deteriorating glasshouses throughout the Island by accommodating change and securing visual and landscape improvements without significant adverse impact in accordance with the SLUP.

### 3. What is a Redundant Glasshouse site?

#### 3.1. Within the IDP a 'Redundant glasshouse site' means:

*'a glasshouse or glasshouses together with ancillary structures and land where the glass and ancillary structures are no longer required or capable of being used for their authorised purpose. Often the condition of such structures will deteriorate over time through lack of use and management to leave only partial remnants of structures.'*

**3.2.** There are two elements to this definition. First, there must be a clear indication that glasshouses are no longer required or capable of being used for their authorised purpose for a site to be considered a redundant glasshouse site.

**3.3.** Second, in the context of the IDP as outlined above, the purpose of the policy is to secure improvements in the physical appearance and quality of the landscape. To be able to fulfil the purpose of the policy a redundant glasshouse site must be one where there is visible evidence of substantial superstructures still remaining on the site, the clearance of which will have a positive impact on visual amenity and landscape quality and character. This must include a glasshouse or substantial part of the above ground structure (superstructure) of a glasshouse, which may or may not be in a state of disrepair. Visible substantial superstructures will be assessed on a case by case basis but will generally include above ground glasshouse walls and frames. The presence of solely ancillary buildings and structures above or below ground is not sufficient to constitute a redundant glasshouse site. Where some visible substantial glasshouse superstructures remain but some have been cleared the extent of the redundant glasshouse site will be assessed on a case by case basis. The whole of a site or land parcel may not be considered a redundant glasshouse site.

**3.4.** Sites that have been cleared where a substructure remains below or at ground level (for example concrete floors and foundations or drainage), are not considered to be redundant glasshouse sites for the purposes of IDP policy as there is no possibility of fulfilling the objectives of the policy of securing visual enhancement of the landscape character of the Island. This is due to the policy direction of the SLUP and the IDP to facilitate the clearance of glasshouses and improve the visual quality of the environment.

**3.5.** Redundant ancillary buildings such as packing sheds, that are of sound and substantial construction and capable of conversion without extensive alteration or rebuilding, may, in principle, be converted for use for a range of alternative uses and Policies GP16(A) and GP16(B) of the IDP would be applicable. Please refer to the IDP for more information.

**3.6.** Please note that a site which is partially covered by redundant glasshouses, does not necessarily mean that the entire site will be considered to be a redundant glasshouse site. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

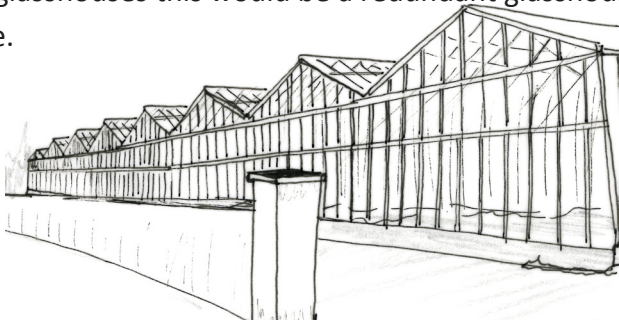
# Questions and Answers

**My site was cleared of glasshouses, but there is still a chimney stack and a packing shed. Is this a redundant glasshouse site?**

No, if there are no substantial glasshouses visible above ground (superstructures) on the site then this site would not be considered a redundant glasshouse site. Structurally sound ancillary buildings may, in principle be converted to a range of alternative uses. Please see Policy GP16(A) and GP16(B) of the Island Development Plan for more information.

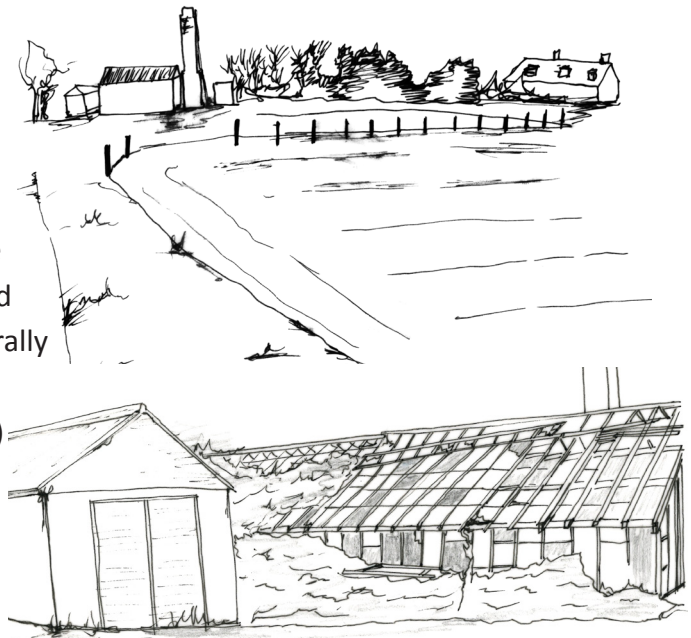
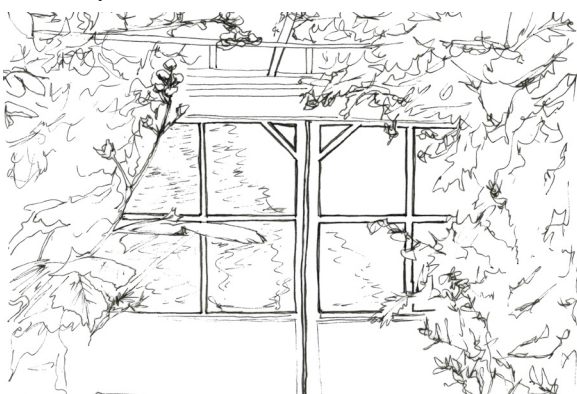
**I have glasshouses on a horticultural site which have been left for many years. The site is overgrown but you can clearly see the broken structure of the glasshouses, and some ancillary structures remain. Is this a redundant glasshouse site?**

If there are substantial visible remains above ground of glasshouses this would be a redundant glasshouse site.



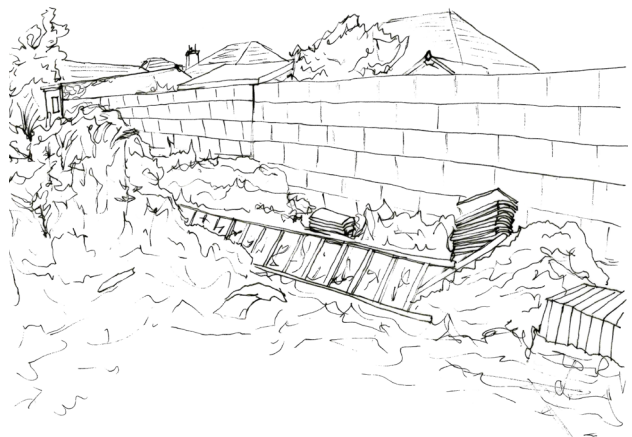
**My site has been cleared of glasshouses but there are still parts of drainage and foundations. Is this a redundant glasshouse site?**

This would not be considered a redundant glasshouse site. The presence of small or unsubstantial remnants of structures above or below ground level, is not sufficient to be considered a redundant glasshouse site for the purposes of the IDP Policies. The main purpose of the policy is to secure the clearance of substantial redundant glasshouses, improving the landscape quality and reducing the negative impact on visual amenity.



**My glasshouse site is still commercially active but I want to stop growing. At what point would my site be considered a redundant glasshouse site?**

We recognise the decline of the horticultural industry and aim to provide for the managed exit from this sector in terms of land use. A site can be considered a redundant glasshouse site if it is demonstrated that the site is no longer required for commercial horticultural purposes. Examples of this could be by providing a business plan or details of efforts to market the site for horticulture. The Authority will consult with the Committee for Economic Development if necessary.



**There are visible glasshouse frames and walls, but the glass has been removed. Is this a redundant glasshouse site?**

This will be judged on a case by case basis, but in principle, a glasshouse frame and above ground walls would constitute a redundant glasshouse site. Please note the whole of a site or land parcel may not be considered to be a redundant glasshouse site and this will be judged on a case by case basis.

**Contact Us** for further information and advice at: Planning Service, Sir Charles Frossard House, St Peter Port. GY1 1FH Telephone 01481 717200 Email [planning@gov.gg](mailto:planning@gov.gg)

**Have you visited our website?** Go to [www.gov.gg/planningandbuilding](http://www.gov.gg/planningandbuilding) for additional guidance material and other planning information, including how to request a pre-application discussion.

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