

Brock Road Development Brief Concept Statement

Final version - December 2010

Site Description

The site is located in Brock Road, St Peter Port in a highly sustainable location close to local services. The total site area is slightly less than a hectare (2.5 acres) and the existing buildings footprint amounts to about 50% of the site coverage. The site lies within a Conservation Area, but none of the existing buildings on the site are protected. The built form comprises the original Boy's Grammar School block which dates back to the late 19th Century together with a 1930's extension, several later systems-built flat roofed additions, which are mid-late 20th Century, a range of outbuildings/annexes with little or no townscape value and a large swathe of car parking accommodating in excess of 70 spaces. The environs of the site are predominantly residential gardens, but the site is somewhat elevated, particularly in its relationship to residential properties in Dalgaurns Road on its western boundary. The site also includes a thin sliver of land linking the site to La Gibauderie to the north.

Site Assets

- The site context has a strong residential character.
- The site lies within a highly sustainable location, close to local services/amenities with good public transport and footpath links to the town centre.
- The original school building is worthy of retention and could be adapted and integrated into the new development whilst enhancing the character of the Conservation Area.
- The entrance to the site provides a strong arrival/focal point with boundary walls/railings/pillars and mature trees.
- Mature trees and granite boundary walls on the perimeter of the site provide privacy and a sense of enclosure.
- The site relates well to its surroundings and though elevated, it enjoys a buffer against residential gardens that avoids overlooking.
- The topography of the site is a positive asset, sheltered from prevailing winds with a gentle downward slope (south east to north west) that provides opportunities to accommodate development with minimal impact on neighbours and the surroundings.
- There are important views out of the site, such as Ebenezer Church to the south and Ladies College Lower School to the south west.
- There is the potential to maintain/improve access from Brock Road and create egress to La Gibauderie.
- The site offers connectivity and permeability for pedestrian access from several vennels.
- There is the potential to include a small parcel of additional land in the north west corner of the site that currently provides a valuable landscaped buffer area.



Development Principles

Historic Context

- There is a preference for the original 19th Century Grammar School building to be retained and converted into residential, providing a strong focal point at the entrance to the site.
- The Department will consider the demolition of the original school buildings (in whole or in part) subject to the tests set out in Policy DBE9* of the Urban Area Plan being fully satisfied.
- There should be a sympathetic use of natural materials, such as granite and slate, to reflect the existing historic character of the site and floorscape treatments within the site should engender a dominance of the pedestrian over the car.
- Particular care needs to be exercised in protecting and enhancing the setting of the original school buildings if they are retained (in whole or in part), though there may be an opportunity to add to the 1930's extension, possibly through the introduction of a contemporary design, which respects and remains subservient to the historic context.

*Footnote (Extract from Urban Area Plan adopted in 2002)

Paragraph 4.2.5 Demolition of Buildings and Features

There is a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings and features that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of an area. Rehabilitation of existing buildings with selective redevelopment can be more effective and less wasteful than demolition and replacement with new development.

However, where a building clearly detracts from the character and appearance of the locality, proposals for its demolition and redevelopment could help to enhance the character and appearance of the urban environment.

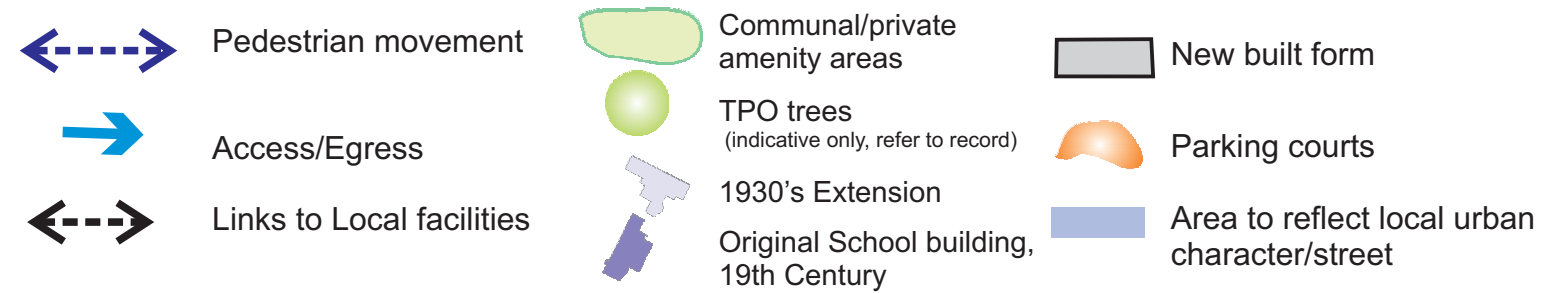
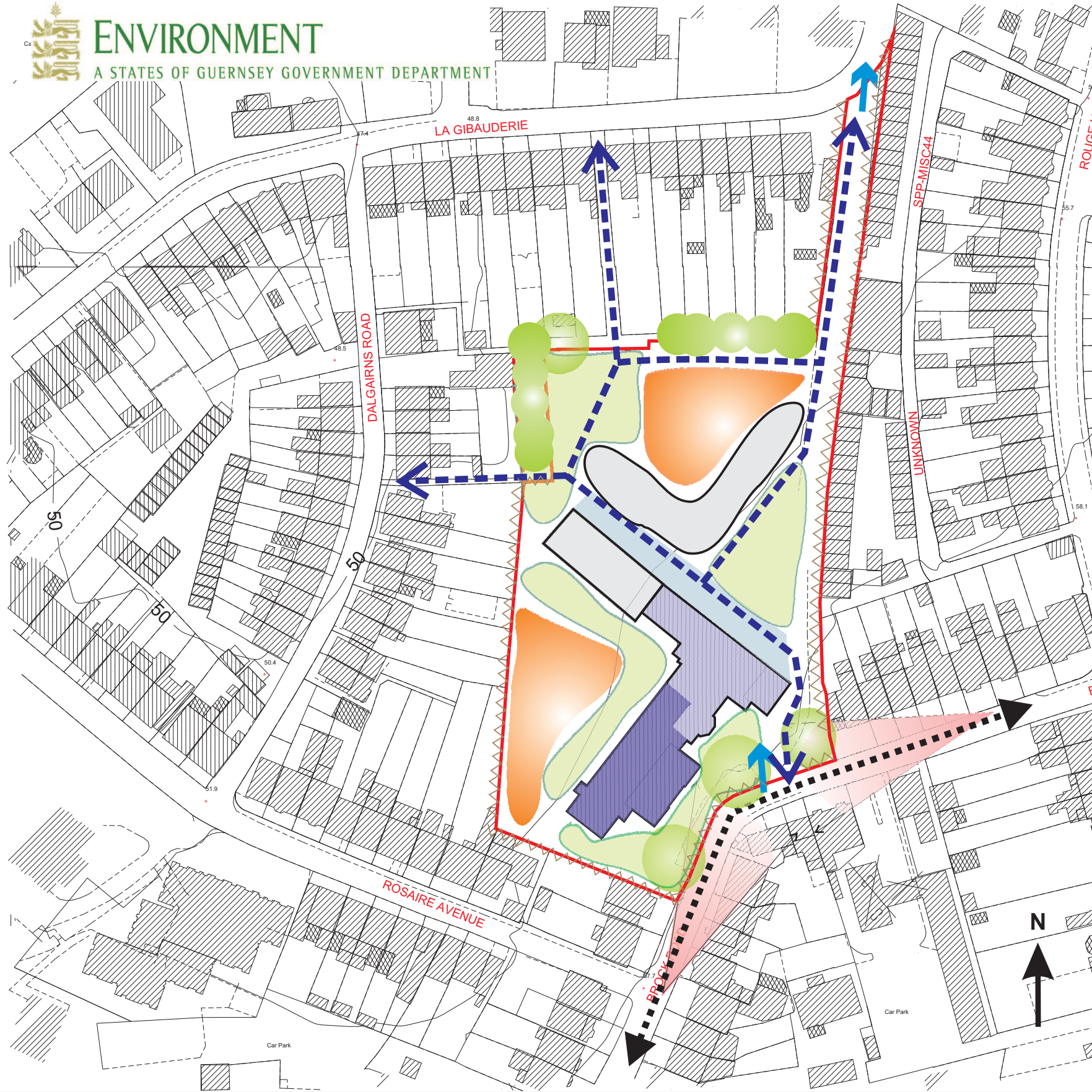
In order to avoid the creation of 'gap sites', which can remain vacant for long periods, it is important that consent should not be given for demolition unless it is clear that the site will be redeveloped within a reasonable timescale.

Policy DBE9

Proposals to demolish existing buildings and features will be considered against the following criteria:-

- The contribution of the building or feature to the character and appearance of the area (absence of such a contribution will not necessarily be a reason for demolition);*
- The contribution that the proposed replacement, other development or vacant site, would make to the character or appearance of the area;*
- The condition of the building, the cost of repair and maintenance and the economic value of the building if reused; and*
- The importance of the new development and whether it will produce substantial benefits for the community that would outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.*

Where it is important for the character or appearance of an area that the structure be replaced or the site landscaped, any consent involving demolition will be subject to a condition that the building shall not be demolished until a contract for acceptable new work has been made.



Development Principles

Landscaping/Views

- Proposals should incorporate a detailed landscaping scheme which retains and augments the strong emphasis on boundary planting, as well as securing the enhancement and future maintenance of the Protected Trees at the Brock Road entrance and along the site's northern and western boundaries.
- All boundary walls/railings should be retained and renovated as appropriate, adding to the strong sense of enclosure.
- Where possible, important views, both into and out of the site, should be maintained and the layout design should incorporate a mix of private and communal amenity areas with opportunities taken to maximise solar gain.

Built Form

- The site should provide for a mix of flats and houses, in the region of 40-50 units, to meet the needs of a range of household types. Some of the accommodation will be made available for partial ownership.
- Any new build should reflect the scale and massing of the existing buildings to be retained on the site and should conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- The built form should comprise a mix of 2 and 2 ½ storey development that respects the amenity of surrounding residents in terms of privacy/overlooking and takes full advantage of the site contours, but in the northern and eastern parts of the site, there may be opportunities to introduce a limited number of 3 storey elements.
- The site should enjoy connectivity and permeability in relation to pedestrian linkages to its environs, principally via the enhancement and consolidation of existing vennels to La Gibauderie and Dalgairns Road and the creation of well proportioned 'streets' within the built form will be encouraged.

Access/Parking

- The potential to create a through route linking Brock Road to La Gibauderie should be fully investigated in order to both reduce vehicle/pedestrian conflict and to minimise internal road construction
- The potential to create a car club/car pool for residents should be fully explored, but if this is not feasible, car parking should be accommodated within the site at a maximum of 1.25 spaces per dwelling (including cycle parking) and the natural surveillance of parking courts should be achieved.