

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

18th March, 2020

Proposition P.2020/23

AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Deputy E A McSwiggan

Seconded by: Deputy H L de Sausmarez

DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING AUTHORITY

THE ISLAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN –
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF THE ISLAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. To insert the following Proposition:

“3. In its review of Agriculture Priority Areas, to direct the Development & Planning Authority to give particular consideration as to:

(a) The extent to which existing policies relating to Agriculture Priority Areas are effective in encouraging small-scale, sustainable farming projects, and/or whether any revisions may be needed, in order to foster a community in which local growing initiatives (including non-commercial initiatives) are positively supported; and

(b) Whether a separate policy should be drawn up under the Island Development Plan, consistent with the principles of the States of Guernsey’s Climate Change Action Plan, which has the purpose of providing a clear policy gateway to support the development of small-scale, sustainable farming projects both within, and beyond, Agriculture Priority Areas.”

2. To renumber the subsequent Propositions.

RULE 4(3) INFORMATION

The scope of the Island Development Plan's five-year review is set out in Proposition 2. This includes a specific review relating to Agriculture Priority Areas. The scope of that review is outlined on pp 420-21, in the final appendix to the policy letter. Section 5.1 of the policy letter acknowledges that the Climate Change Action Plan (which is currently in development, and for which the States has already agreed some guiding principles, including the need for "local policies to stimulate the 'green' and 'blue' economy") will be taken into account as part of the five-year review. At this stage, we believe that this amendment fits within the general scope of the work envisaged in respect of Agriculture Priority Areas, and should not incur additional costs.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The aim of this amendment is to ensure that, so far as possible, Guernsey's planning policies are capable of supporting small-scale local farming initiatives, as well as larger-scale commercial agriculture. While this is already an aim of the Plan, anecdotal experience suggests it may not always be wholly effective in practice. The five-year review process provides an opportunity to test that anecdotal experience against a broad range of evidence and will allow the DPA to reach a more objective view as to the current situation, and any steps that might need to be taken to improve it. Since it is already the intention of the DPA to look at Agriculture Priority Areas, this amendment simply aims to ensure that the question of small-scale growing initiatives is explicitly addressed within that work.

It is important to address this issue as we believe that providing opportunities for small but sustainable growing projects to flourish is an essential element of Guernsey's response to the climate crisis. We also recognise that improved food security, which can only be achieved by encouraging small-scale and large-scale horticultural and agricultural developments (including farming and secondary processing), is an important aspect of our Island's ability to maintain its stability and independence – as well as a strong cultural tie to Guernsey's heritage as an Island of growers.

While it is implausible to expect that an island of Guernsey's size and population could ever be fully self-sustaining, we could nevertheless do much to improve our current position. In the context of widespread global uncertainty, and the known pressures of climate change, it is right that we give this due consideration, and ensure that our planning policies are capable of addressing it in a way that is consistent with the strategic objectives of the States.