

Written Statement  
2 December 2005



# Rural Area Plan

Review No.1

ENVIRONMENT  
A States of Guernsey Government Department





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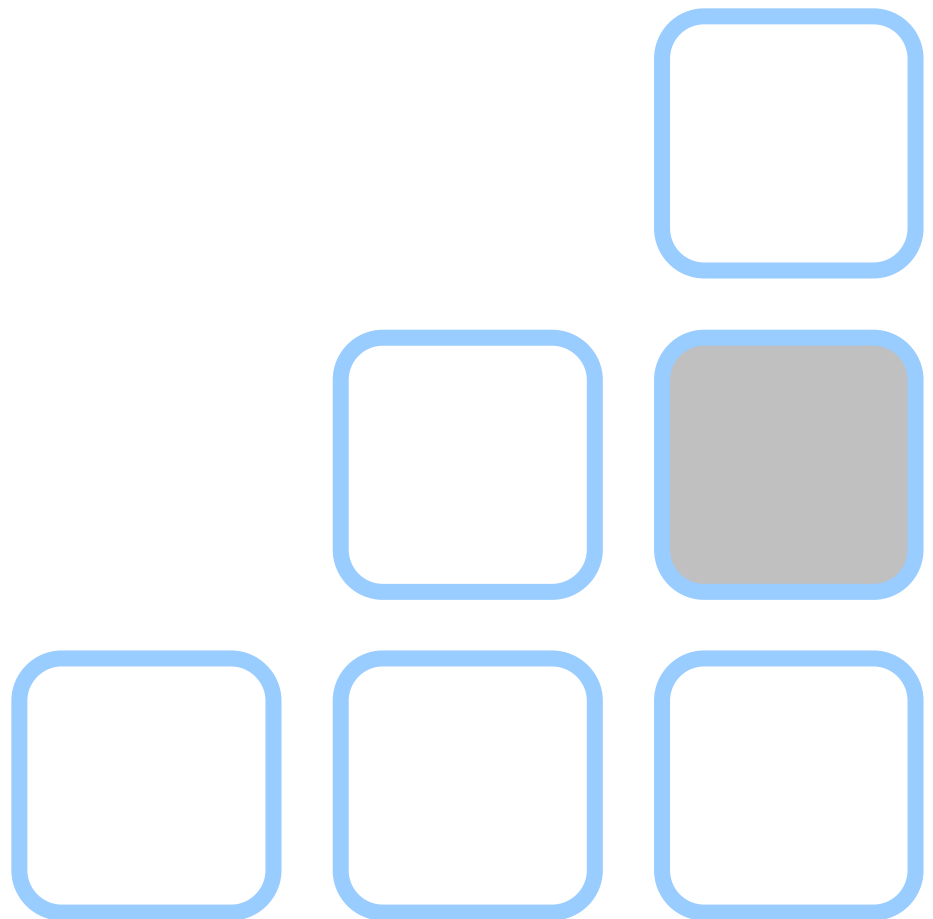
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# About the Plan

## One





### Background to the revised Rural Area Plan

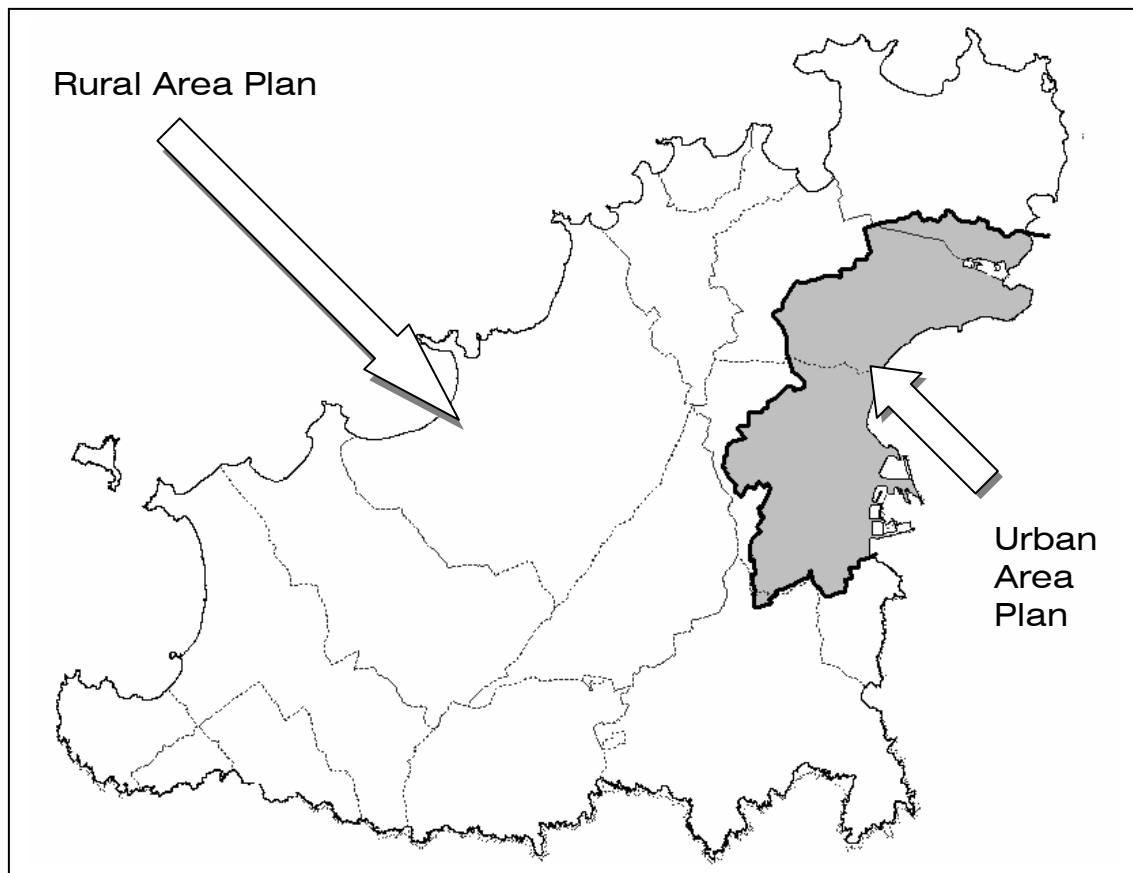
#### 1.1 What is the revised Rural Area Plan (RAP)?

The Rural Area Plan is a Detailed Development Plan, prepared by the Environment Department (the Department), which sets out the planning policy for the whole of the rural area in a single document. The revised RAP replaces Rural Area Plan, Phase 1<sup>(1)</sup> and Rural Area Plan, Phase 2<sup>(2)</sup>. Their validity was extended in order to allow the plan review process to be completed.

The RAP has been prepared in accordance with Section 8 of the Island Development (Guernsey) Law 1966 (as amended) – (the Law). This Law also requires that Detailed Development Plans be reviewed every five years unless, as was the case here, the States have agreed to extend their life.

#### 1.2 What area does the Plan cover?

The Plan covers approximately 21 square miles (55 sq.km), representing 87% of the Island's landmass, considered to be primarily rural in character. The Island's two principal settlements of St Peter Port and The Bridge form the urban area, which is covered by a separate plan - the Urban Area Plan Review No. 1<sup>(3)</sup>. The extent of coverage of the RAP is shown below.



(1) Approved October 1994 – Billet d'État XVIII, 1994  
(2) Approved July 1997 – Billet d'État

(3) Approved 31 July  
2002 - Billet d'État  
XVII, 2002

### 1.3 Strategic context

The relevant policies of the States are set out in the Strategic Land Use Plan, which is incorporated into the Strategic and Corporate Plan, prepared and reviewed annually by the Policy Council. The Department is required to take into account the policies of those documents by virtue of Section 2 (4) of the Island Development (Amendment) (Guernsey) Law, 1990. The RAP has been certified by the Policy Council as being in conformity with the Strategic and Corporate Plan.

It should be noted that whilst the Strategic and Corporate Plan is one of the principal factors to be taken into account when drafting the policies of the RAP, once the RAP has been formally adopted, its policies and provisions cannot be overridden by any subsequent Strategic and Corporate Plan.

The Strategic and Corporate Plan emphasises the overriding strategic importance of conserving and enhancing the rural environment. Accordingly, **the primary objective of the Rural Area Plan is the conservation and enhancement of the rural environment.**

### 1.4 How does this Plan relate to the Urban Area Plan?

The RAP completes the up-to-date island-wide coverage of Detailed Development Plans as required by the Law.

The Strategic and Corporate Plan directs that the majority of the Island's development needs be met within the urban area. The emphasis of the Urban Area Plan is, accordingly, on facilitating development and in particular, steering it towards brownfield sites within that Plan area. This strategic approach requires relative development restraint in the rural area. Moreover, and in line with strategic guidance, any such development as may be allowed in the rural area must, wherever possible, contribute to the achievement of the primary objective of conservation and enhancement. It is on this basis, taking full regard of the policies and provisions of both the Urban Area Plan and the Strategic and Corporate Plan, that the RAP has been written.

### 1.5 What is this Plan used for?

The plan has four main uses:

- 1) promoting the conservation and enhancement of the rural environment;
- 2) supporting the Urban Area Plan by steering the majority of new developments to sites within the urban area;
- 3) guiding decisions on planning applications; and,
- 4) guiding essential development to appropriate sites.

### 1.6 What does the Plan contain?

The Plan has two components: The **Written Statement** and the **Proposals Map**.

## Plan format

The RAP has been prepared on a policy, rather than 'land-use zoning', based format. This brings it into line with that adopted by the Urban Area Plan and ensures consistency of approach to planning issues island-wide.

### 1.7 Written Statement

Although Rural Area Plans 1 and 2 were more policy-based than previous plans, specific zonings remained an important element in them. Monitoring of the plans has shown that the policy-based, rather than land-zoning, approach has been very successful in meeting the plans' objectives. The revised RAP, in common with the Urban Area Plan, aims to build on the success of the policy-based approach.

The Plan has been structured to reflect the prime objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment. Each chapter begins with a reference to the **policy context** approved by the States of Guernsey, which is then translated into a set of **policy principles**. These are the tenets upon which the planning policies are based.

Each policy principle is then developed into a **policy** or series of **policies** for the use of land and related matters, with explanations of how these policies were reached. The policies are highlighted on a light blue background. Each policy has a title and a policy reference, which should be quoted in any correspondence.

The Plan commences with a series of **general policies**. These set the scene for the remainder of the Plan and are taken to apply to the whole of the Plan area, regardless of policy area as may be indicated on the Proposals Map. They are, in effect, the base layer upon which other Plan policies are added.

Where a particular development type or use of land is not specifically referred to in the Written Statement, then proposals for such will be considered against the policies of the General chapter, the Conservation and Enhancement chapter and any others that the Department considers relevant.

**Individual policies or paragraphs of the Written Statement should not be read out of context.**

The policies outline where, in certain circumstances, more specific planning guidance will be required, such as Rural Planning and Design Statements.

The policies are backed up by a set of **annexes** providing development guidance and useful supplementary information. The annexes are very much part of the Plan and should not be regarded as being separate. The Department will always encourage applicants to take full notice of the annexes when preparing planning applications.

### 1.8 Proposals Map

The various **policy areas** referred to in the Written Statement are identified on the Proposals Map. The revised Rural Area Plan moves away from the tightly drawn land-use zonings of Rural Area Plans 1 and 2. Instead, the new policy areas are broadly defined to present a clearer picture of the Department's overall strategy.

**The policy areas are described in the following pages:**

## Areas of High Landscape Quality

The most environmentally important areas of countryside and coastline are identified as Areas of High Landscape Quality. These areas generally possess some or all of the distinctive features of the relevant landscape type described in Annex 1 and illustrated on the following plan of Landscape Character Types, and these intrinsic qualities can be discerned without being significantly obscured or seriously marred by built development. As the Areas of High Landscape Quality are broadly drawn and may include small clusters of buildings and land of varying quality, comparisons between different areas of land should not be made out of context. In some cases, land within Areas of High Landscape Quality may need to be reclaimed and enhanced in order to restore the integrity and visual continuity of the underlying landscape. The Department will encourage such an approach where appropriate. The overall intention is to protect and enhance the landscape character and visual quality of the area. In this respect, direct reference to the landscape character assessment will form an important part of the decision making process.

Opportunities for development will be very limited.

## Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas cover parts of the rural area where the distinctive character of the existing built environment merits a special level of protection. The emphasis will be on conserving and enhancing the character and appearance of these areas, ensuring that any new development respects their special qualities. It will be important to consider individual buildings and spaces within the context of the wider area which forms their setting. Special attention must be paid to the value of groups of buildings and the spaces between them, as well as to the buildings themselves.

## Rural Centres

The rural area's main centres of Cobo, St Martin's, St Peter's, Le Bourg and L'Islet are indicated on the Proposals Map. These are the areas that are well located in relation to facilities such as shops, post offices, schools, banks, doctors' surgeries and other community services. It is not possible to precisely define the boundaries of these areas owing to their evolving nature and the different ways in which the local population use them. However, when assessing proposals that may affect a Rural Centre, the Department will give consideration to the need to maintain and strengthen the balance between shops and services and the local population.

The Plan aims to support the vitality and viability of the Rural Centres by allowing limited forms of development that would serve to further sustain these areas. In general terms, properties should be within easy walking distance of the shops and services in order for them to be considered an integral part of the Rural Centre.

Within the Rural Centres, high priority will be given to the protection of important aspects of the environment and to the achievement of good design and appropriate amenity standards. Careful attention will be given to the protection of valuable open spaces and important public views.

Annex 8 provides further detailed information relating to the rationale for the inclusion of Rural Centres within this Plan.

### Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

Sites of Nature Conservation Importance identified on the Proposals Map represent some of the Island's most important and often irreplaceable habitats. They also include examples of the range of habitats found in the rural area, illustrating Guernsey's rich and interesting biodiversity. Even modest changes in land management can make significant differences to the improvement or the loss of a site's biodiversity. The intention is to ensure that proposed new development, including changes of use and land management schemes protect and enhance these habitats. In cases where unacceptable damage to the habitat is inevitable, planning permission will not normally be granted.

### Land Reserved for Industry

Continuing with the aims of the industrial policy of Rural Area Plan, Phase 2, this Plan also reserves a site at La Villiaze for light industrial use, including; manufacturing, research and development and e-business purposes. The policies of the Plan seek to achieve a high quality development by emphasising protection of the environment and the importance of achieving high design and amenity standards.

No other sites have been reserved for industrial development as the Urban Area Plan is considered to make adequate provision in respect of the Island's industrial land supply.

### Airport Safeguarding Areas and Public Safety Zones

The safe and effective operation of the airport is vital to maintaining the Island's fast transport links with the UK and the rest of Europe. Physical obstructions to aircraft as they prepare for landing or take-off must be avoided. Within Airport Safeguarding Areas, therefore, additional restrictions on development, particularly in relation to building heights, may be required. The two Public Safety Zones are intended to keep to a minimum the numbers of people on the ground where there is greatest risk of aircraft accident.

### Mineral Resource Safeguarding Areas

The Policy Council will be reviewing the policy approach for minerals extraction within future Strategic and Corporate Plans. In the meantime, although not implying any commitment, the Proposals Map identifies areas on the Chouet headland and at Les Vardes, which will be safeguarded from any development that may compromise their possible future working for stone.

This policy area is carried forward from the Rural Area Plan, Phase 1.

### Non-designated areas

The remainder of the Plan carries no specific designation and is left white on the Proposals Map. The emphasis within these parts of the Plan will be on maintaining and enhancing the openness of the countryside and on safeguarding areas of agricultural land. The policies of the Plan make provision for some limited forms of development in these areas, primarily through redevelopment and conversion works.

## 1.9 How do I use the Plan?

The policies, their supporting text and the annexes, together with the Proposals Map are all integral parts of the Plan. For this reason, it is important that they are read as a whole and that no part is taken out of context.

Every effort has been made by the Department to make this Plan as simple and as easy to understand as possible. Nonetheless, it deals with a number of complex and often inter-related issues. Anyone unfamiliar with the Plan is recommended to seek professional guidance. The Department's staff will be pleased to provide advice and assistance with interpretation of the Plan if required.

If you are a regular user of the Plan you will probably develop your own method of working with it. However, for the less experienced, we recommend that you follow these steps:

**Step 1:** In all cases, please refer to the **General policies** in Chapter 2. These are, in effect, the basic planning considerations that the Department is duty bound to take into account.

**Step 2:** Ensure that your proposal respects and accords with the policies for **Conservation and Enhancement** in Chapter 3.

**Step 3:** Find your site on the **Proposals Map**. Consider any policies relevant to the policy area or areas within which the site is located.

**Step 4:** Refer to the policies specifically relevant to the existing use of the site and the proposed land use or building. For example, if the existing use of the site is industrial, refer to **Rural Economy Policy RE7 and RE8**; if the proposal is for a new house, then refer to **Housing Policy RH1**.

**Step 5:** Refer to any of the **annexes** that may be relevant to the site or proposal.

Where possible, the use of jargon has been avoided. Where technical or unfamiliar terms have been used, an explanation of their meaning is provided in the **Glossary**.

## 1.10 How will the Plan be monitored?

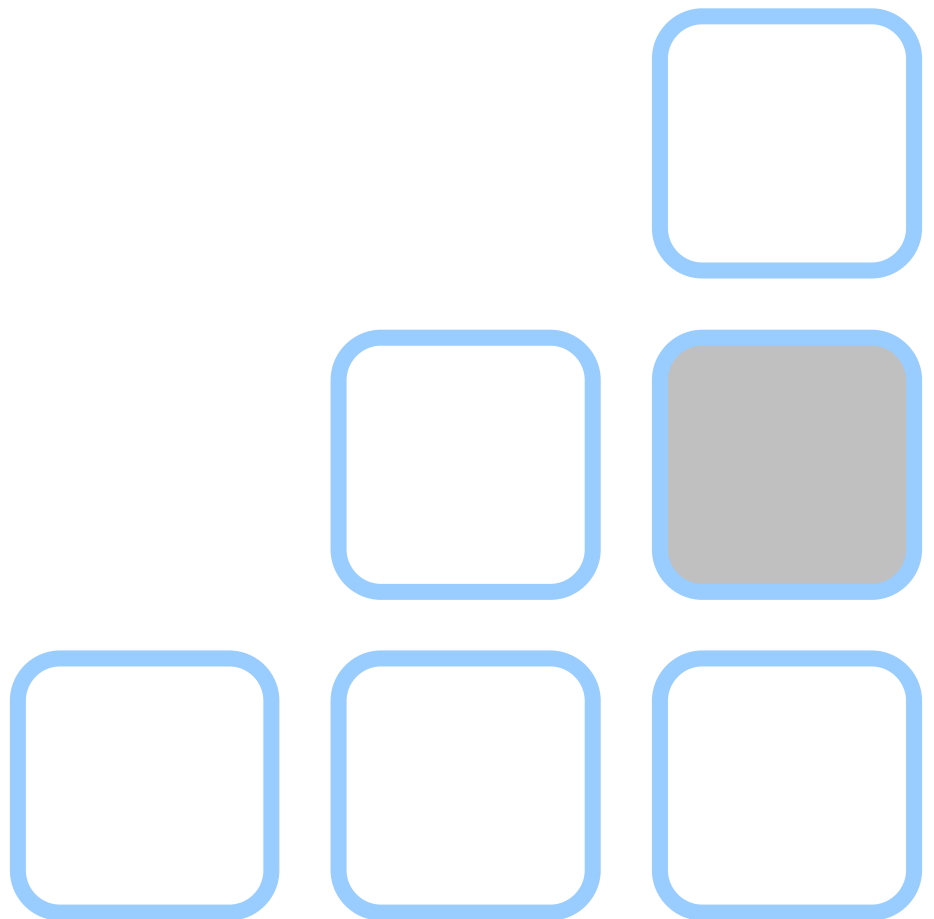
It is recognised that plan making does not end with the States' approval of the Plan. It is an on-going process involving the collection of information and data to enable the performance of the Plan to be monitored effectively. It also allows the use of that information in the evaluation and review of the policies and proposals of the Plan.

Since the preparation of the original Rural Area Plans (Phases 1 and 2), the monitoring procedures have been improved greatly. In particular, the Department's quarterly housing land availability statistics and the Policy Council's Sustainable Guernsey Monitoring Report are valuable tools in the review process. This process of regular review provides vital information for the policy planning process.

Where monitoring indicates that the Plan is not working effectively, consideration will be given to altering it accordingly.

# General Policy

## two





## Legal Context

This chapter of the Plan interprets how the requirements of the Island Development (Guernsey) Law 1966 apply to the Plan. These requirements are translated into general policies, which underlie the rest of the Plan and will form the basis of the Department's decision-making.

In this respect, the Law requires the Department to take into account:

- "a) the Strategic and Corporate Plan when approved by the States and any relevant Detailed Development Plans when so approved [*i.e. this Plan and the Urban Area Plan*];
- b) the effect of the development or other work on the natural beauty of the area;
- c) whether the movable or immovable structure or other work in relation to which permission is applied for, would be incongruous with its surroundings because of its siting, design, exterior appearance or the materials to be used;
- d) in the case of an application for permission to carry out any development of agricultural land or land designated in any Plan for agricultural use, the degree of suitability of the land as agricultural land;
- e) the extent to which the development, or other work, would detract from the character or the amenity of the locality concerned; and,
- f) the effect of the development or other work on roads, traffic, services, public health, parks, playing fields and other open spaces and the effect on adjoining properties".  
[ *Part III, section 17*]

There is a public perception that the term 'incongruous' is used by the Department to support seemingly arbitrary decisions in relation to matters of personal taste. This is not correct and although the term 'incongruous' is not repeated anywhere else in this Plan, incongruity is a factor which the Law requires the Department to take into account. The Department does this in an objective, measured and careful way. In order to help the Department in that approach and also to assist applicants for planning permission to understand the issues that will be considered by the Department, these matters are addressed more fully in the Conservation and Enhancement chapter and in the annexes.

It is anticipated that a new Planning and Development Law will be enacted during the lifetime of the Plan, and this may vary or extend the statutory planning considerations.

## General policy principles

Having regard to the planning considerations set out above, the following general policy principles will inform the decisions of the Department and the policies of this Plan:

- land should be used in a sustainable way to the optimum benefit of the environment, community and rural economy
- the Island's landscape, ecology and wildlife should be conserved and enhanced
- the Island's high quality built environment should be conserved and enhanced
- adverse impacts upon the character and amenity of the area should be avoided
- new developments should be well designed, enhance their locality and respect their surroundings
- development should be provided with safe and convenient access
- parking provision should be of an appropriate standard
- development should not give rise to unacceptable hazards, pollutants or nuisances, which would present a risk to the public and the environment
- development should help to support and maintain public enjoyment of the built and natural environment
- development should not be detrimental to the reasonable enjoyment of adjoining properties.

## General Policies

All the policies in this chapter are statements of general policy which will be applied in conjunction with the subsequent, more detailed policies of the Plan. These basic considerations apply to any form of development in any location. The basic planning principles outlined in this chapter underpin the whole Plan and introduce policy themes that are developed in more detailed and specific policies in the chapters that follow.

### 2.1 Sustainable development

The Department considers it of utmost importance that the quality of the environment be conserved and enhanced and that existing resources be used efficiently. Proposals for large-scale infrastructure, major development and development likely to have significant environmental effects will be subject to the requirements of Environmental Impact Assessment. These requirements are set out in Annex 5 and more fully detailed in the Code of Practice: Environmental Impact Assessment (February 2005).

Proposals that, for instance, require significant quantities of fresh water will be considered in light of adequacy and availability of water resources. The Department will resist proposals that place an excessive demand upon the Island's fresh water resource. Similarly, the Plan safeguards known, good quality stone resources. The States will review the policy approach for stone extraction as part of its consideration of the Strategic and Corporate Plan, prepared by the Policy Council.

#### Policy RGEN1

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account the need for the development to be beneficial to the community and sustainable in terms of its location, design, use and conservation of resources and impact on the environment.

The Department will encourage the use of design and technology to achieve sustainable forms of development.

RGEN  
1

### 2.2 Comprehensive development

It is vital that land is used in ways that make a positive contribution to the environmental, social and economic well being of the Island. The Department will, accordingly, seek to ensure that, where appropriate, development sites are planned in a comprehensive way where this will not conflict with the primary objective of the Plan. The Department may require a Rural Planning and Design Statement to provide practical guidance as to how sites can be developed beneficially in terms of land use and form. The circumstances when these are required are set out within Annex 4.

#### Policy RGEN2

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account the need, where appropriate, for individual proposals to conform to a comprehensive scheme for the area where implementation of the project in isolation would not accord with the general principles of good planning.

RGEN  
2

**RGEN  
3**

### 2.3 Landscape, ecology & wildlife

The attractive environment of the rural area derives largely from the natural qualities of the underlying landscape, its generally open character and abundance of ecological and wildlife interests.

In order to conserve and enhance the Island's rural environment, new development should respect existing landscape features, including trees, and include them as an integral part of the design process.

**Policy RGEN3**

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account existing features of landscape, ecological or wildlife value and the appropriate provision of new or improved landscape, ecological or wildlife features.

**RGEN  
4**

### 2.4 Built heritage

The landscape of the rural area is made up of both natural and man-made elements. The evidence that survives of human activity over the centuries remains an integral part of the rural environment, contributing to the character that makes Guernsey a special place for resident and visitor alike.

The States are committed to the conservation and enhancement of the Island's built heritage, which ranges from buildings and monuments benefiting from legal protection to features such as historic settlement patterns, field and roadside boundaries and vernacular buildings which contribute to the Island's distinctive character. In order to conserve and enhance this cultural heritage, great care needs to be taken to protect it from damaging change.

**Policy RGEN4**

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account the need to conserve and enhance the special quality of the built heritage.

**RGEN  
5**

### 2.5 Character & amenity

It is important that new development is consistent with the character and amenity of its setting, whether that character is special or of a more general nature. Modern residential clos, older farming settlements and even industrial estates each have a character and certain feel of amenity that should be respected when planning for new development in order that they can be readily assimilated into their surroundings.

**Policy RGEN5**

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account the need to respect and retain the general character and amenity of the rural environment.

## 2.6 Design

Development that has been designed to relate well to its surroundings can make a positive contribution to the character of an area, whereas visually obtrusive or poorly designed development can spoil the quality of the environment. For this reason, it is important that careful thought is given from the outset to the design, scale, massing and materials of construction of new development. The relationship of development to its surroundings will include the need to avoid light pollution wherever possible and minimise unnecessary light spillage.

### Policy RGEN6

In considering proposals for development, the Department will take into account the quality of design and the materials to be used and the relationship of the development to its surroundings.

RGEN  
6

## 2.7 Safe and convenient access

An environment that provides for safe and convenient access for people with mobility problems, including people with sensory impairment and carers with young children, is likely to benefit all users. Access requirements of people of all levels of mobility and health need to be considered at an early stage in the design process. Special care will need to be taken to ensure that access considerations respect the primary objective of the Plan.

Proposals for larger developments can also offer the opportunity to secure a more accessible environment for everyone. However, in accordance with the overall aim of the Plan, the impact of traffic on the rural environment should be kept to a minimum. The Department will, therefore, encourage the use of sustainable means of transport to and from workplaces, schools and the Rural Centres. It will also expect proposals for development to incorporate safe and convenient access arrangements, for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles sympathetically designed to respect the character and appearance of the area. In certain instances, a traffic impact assessment may be required, further information on which can be found in Annex 6.

### Policy RGEN7

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account the need to ensure safe and convenient access for all users, including the needs of people with mobility problems and the desirability of promoting sustainable means of transport.

RGEN  
7

## 2.8 Parking and open space

The provision of adequate open amenity space and an appropriate level of parking is important to the quality of development. Provision of amenity space will be assessed on the individual merits of the proposal whilst in the case of parking, the Department will require provision in accordance with the standards set down in Annex 7.

### Policy RGEN8

In considering proposals for development, the Department will take into account the provision of adequate amenity space and appropriate levels of parking in accordance with the guidance set out in Annex 7.

RGEN  
8

**RGEN  
9**

## 2.9 Hazardous development, nuisance and pollution

It is vitally important that the quality of the environment and the health and safety of people are not put at risk by hazardous developments, nuisance or from pollution. Care must be taken before new development is located close to existing hazardous development or contaminated land. Similarly, care must be taken in the location and design of new development that might, of itself, cause risks to the environment and to the public. New developments, including those for agriculture, should incorporate measures to prevent pollutants from entering streams and groundwater in order to protect water quality and wildlife habitats. In dealing with hazardous or potentially polluting developments, the Department will expect proposals to include an assessment of the risk of harm and proposals for minimising likely adverse effects. This would normally be in the form of an Environmental Impact Assessment as described in Annex 5.

**Policy RGEN9**

In considering proposals for development with the potential to cause or be affected by risks to public health and safety and the environment, the Department will require measures to satisfactorily address the risks arising from the proposals.

Permission will be refused if the level of risk or pollution associated with the development is considered to be unacceptable.

**RGEN  
10**

## 2.10 Public enjoyment

Access to open spaces, cliff walks and other rural amenities such as the ruettes tranquilles contributes so much to the enjoyment of the public on Guernsey. The quality of these places, that are freely available or visible for all to appreciate, also makes an important contribution to the special character and appeal of the rural environment.

**Policy RGEN10**

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account the need to safeguard and, where appropriate, create opportunities for public enjoyment, such as the provision of safe pedestrian and cycle routes.

**RGEN  
11**

## 2.11 Effect on adjoining properties

On a small and densely developed island it is perhaps inevitable that most development will affect someone, somewhere. In assessing the impact on adjoining property, the Department will consider whether an individual's reasonable expectation to develop property can be justifiably denied in order to protect a neighbour's reasonable enjoyment of amenity.

**Policy RGEN11**

In considering proposals for development the Department will take into account any significant impact on the reasonable enjoyment of adjoining properties, particularly in relation to overshadowing, overlooking, emissions, noise and disturbance.

## 2.12 Flood risk

RGEN  
12

There is mounting evidence that sea levels may rise as a result of climate change and also of a potential increase in the frequency of high water levels. There may also be secondary impacts such as changes in wave heights as well as in the frequency, duration and severity of storms. The risk of flooding in all low-lying land will, therefore, need to be carefully assessed so that measures to avoid flooding can be incorporated into development proposals at the outset.

Covering open land with buildings and hard surfacing reduces the potential for water to soak into the ground and increases surface water run-off. This alteration of natural flow patterns can lead to problems, particularly flooding, downstream. Increased flow rates may also damage stream and streamside habitats, causing erosion and reducing the quantity of fresh water recovered for the public supply. Where possible, therefore, new developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems which allow surface water to either soak into the soil or to discharge into a watercourse, and then to be treated by natural processes such as settlement, filtration and biological actions.

The Department may consult with the Public Services Department on proposals for sites that are susceptible to flooding.

### Policy RGEN12

In considering proposals for development that would be likely to cause or be adversely affected by flooding, the Department will take into account the need to incorporate adequate flood alleviation measures and include an acceptable surface water management plan, incorporating sustainable drainage systems.

## 2.13 Airport safety

RGEN  
13

The Proposals Map identifies an Airport Safeguarding Zone, within which, additional restrictions on new development may be required in order to ensure the safe and effective operation of the airport. Inappropriately sited floodlighting, for instance, could distract pilots during the crucial take off and landing stages of the flight. The Department will also take into account heights of proposed buildings/structures and also their materials of construction to ensure that they do not cause glare to pilots or interfere with radar and radio systems. In order to minimise the risk of bird strikes on aircraft, any planting schemes will need to be carefully thought out so as to discourage flocking or roosting birds.

In addition to the Airport Safeguarding Zone, Public Safety Zones are identified at either end of the runway. These are aimed at imposing additional controls over new development in order to keep to a minimum the numbers of people on the ground where there is greatest risk of aircraft accident.

The Department will require consultation with the Civil Aviation Authority where appropriate.

### Policy RGEN13

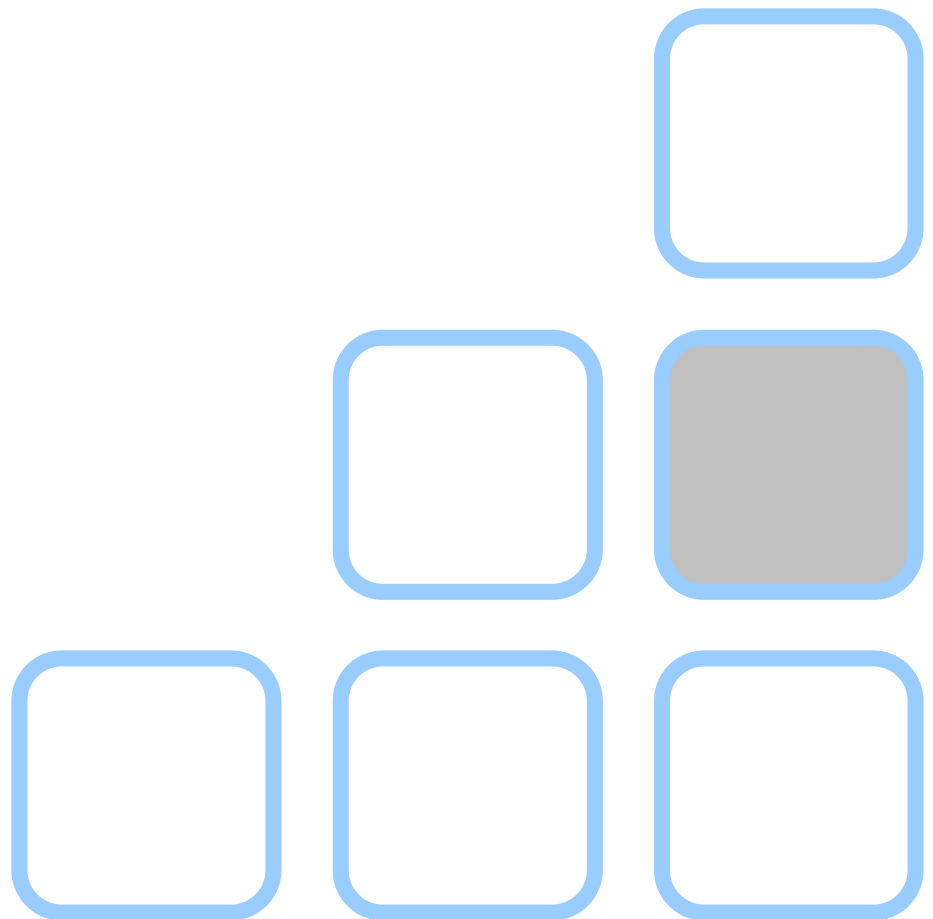
Within the Airport Safeguarding Zone, the Department may exercise additional control over proposed developments in the interests of the safe and efficient running of the airport.

Within the Public Safety Zones, proposals for development that are likely to significantly increase the number of people residing, working or congregating therein, will be resisted.



# Conservation & enhancement

## three





### 3. Conservation and enhancement

#### Policy context

The Strategic and Corporate Plan recognises the significant contribution that landscapes and ecological habitats make to the distinctive character of the Island and to its attractiveness for residents and visitors. It also recognises that a viable farming industry is essential to the continuing management of the countryside.

Changes in farming are expected to lead to lower grazing densities and more extensive farms, under a policy of environmental stewardship and 'greener' farming practices. The need to protect farmland, therefore, remains paramount.

The Strategic and Corporate Plan emphasises the need to conserve and enhance the rural environment by avoiding unnecessary development and, in particular, by protecting open land. It also promotes ways of improving the character and quality of the countryside by encouraging opportunities to create and improve wildlife habitats, accommodating acceptable forms of development that contribute to the character of the rural area, and targeting the restoration of derelict and disused land.

Having regard to the Strategic and Corporate Plan, the policy principles for the conservation and enhancement of the rural environment are:

- to protect open land and avoid unnecessary development
- to conserve and enhance the special character and local distinctiveness of the Island's landscapes and built heritage and to ensure that new development contributes to that character
- to encourage management schemes and other appropriate measures to ensure the protection and enhancement of important habitats
- to encourage the restoration of derelict land and to achieve environmental improvements with a beneficial after use.



## Conservation and Enhancement Policies

The policies contained within this chapter seek to protect and enhance those valuable features of the rural environment that combine to shape its unique character. This includes open landscape through to buildings of special interest. Even gradual erosion of these features could have a detrimental impact on Guernsey's local distinctiveness and result in an island that is a less special place to live or visit.

**The majority of policies in this chapter will be applied in conjunction with the General policies and the subsequent, more detailed policies of the Plan, together with any other relevant parts, when assessing all forms of development in any location.**

**The preparation of Rural Planning and Design Statements will be encouraged in order to illustrate how design solutions have been reached, taking full regard of the policies of this chapter. Please refer to Annex 4 for further information.**

### 3.1 Protecting open land & avoiding unnecessary development

The non-designated areas represent the foundation level of protection provided under Policy RCE1 that will be applicable throughout the Plan area either on its own or, where other designations exist, in conjunction with the policies relevant to those designations. In support of the strategic objectives of the States, the Plan aims to protect and enhance the open and undeveloped character of the rural area and to restrain development. Accordingly, under Policy RCE1, unnecessary incursions of development into the rural areas should be avoided. In this respect it is important to note that the Island's many glasshouse sites, whether still in operation, unused or derelict, are also regarded legally as undeveloped land with glasshouses being classified as temporary structures sited on agricultural land<sup>(4)</sup>. Agricultural land will be protected from irreversible development wherever possible and particular care will be taken to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land in consultation with the Commerce and Employment Department.

The Department accepts that some forms of development may necessarily require a rural location such as those associated with agriculture, horticulture, extensions to existing rural tourist facilities and outdoor recreation. Similarly, it may occasionally be desirable that developments needed for public utilities such as pumping stations and wastewater treatment are located within the rural area outside of the more densely populated areas. However, it will only be in these non-designated areas that social housing within rural centres or elsewhere under Policy RH2, retail developments within Rural Centres under Policy RE4, garden centres under Policy RE5, airport related development under Policy RE14, creation of new community facilities other than by conversion under Policy RS1 and, creation of new recreation facilities other than by conversion under Policy RS3 will be permitted.

Where such development is considered appropriate it should, wherever possible, contribute positively to the area by protecting and enhancing the rural character of the locality or by consolidating and enhancing an existing group of buildings.

The Department is keen to ensure that householders are allowed flexibility in planning for extensions and other forms of domestic development within residential curtilages provided that, having regard to their setting, the open character of the countryside and important public views are protected.

Development on greenfield sites outside of the Rural Centres will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances where they are in the public interest, in full compliance with the provisions of Policy RD1.

RCE1

(4) Part IV, Section 40 of the Law

#### **Policy RCE1**

There will be a presumption against the unacceptable loss of open and undeveloped land. Development will only be permitted where:

- a) it is an acceptable form of development for which a rural location can be justified or where the development can be located satisfactorily in a Rural Centre; and,
- b) the scale, location and design of the development would not detract from the openness of the countryside or result in the unacceptable irreversible loss of agricultural land, or have an adverse effect on the viability of an agricultural holding.

### **3.2 Landscape character**

#### **RCE2**

The rural area offers a rich and diverse environment accommodating a variety of landscape character types, ranging from the low-lying marais to the upland plateaux. These landscape character types are unified by the intricate pattern of field and roadside boundaries throughout the Island. It is this special quality and variety that contributes so much to the character of the Island and that is so vulnerable to unsympathetic change. Proposals should not only respect, but wherever possible, enhance the character of the local landscape type and serve to maintain its distinctiveness.

The Department will continue to promote the conservation, management and enhancement of the landscape, which is described in detail in a landscape character assessment presented in Annex 1.

#### **Policy RCE2**

The Department will require proposals for development to:

- a) take account of the relevant landscape character type in which it is set;
- b) take account of any specific features that contribute to the landscape character; and,
- c) take advantage, where practicable, of opportunities to create or improve features of landscape interest.

### **3.3 Areas of High Landscape Quality**

#### **RCE3**

The most valuable landscapes in the rural area are designated as Areas of High Landscape Quality. These are considered to be the most environmentally important areas of countryside and coastline within the rural area. Their special qualities could easily be destroyed or damaged by new development, by the removal of distinctive features or by the extension of domestic gardens into neighbouring fields and open land. In addition to meeting the requirements of Policy RCE1, in order to preserve their special qualities, there will be a presumption against allowing new development within Areas of High Landscape Quality other than in exceptional circumstances or where the resultant development does not have any significant adverse impact on the visual quality or landscape character of the area. The Department is keen to ensure that householders are allowed flexibility in planning for extensions and other forms of domestic development within residential curtilages provided that the requirements of the policy are met.

In order to preserve the visual quality and landscape character of these areas, the following developments will be precluded within Areas of High Landscape Quality: the erection of social housing under Policy RH2, retail developments within Rural Centres under Policy RE4, garden centres under Policy RE5, airport related development under Policy RE14, creation of new community facilities other than by conversion under Policy RS1 and, creation of new indoor recreation facilities other than by conversion under Policy RS3. In addition, buildings to be considered for conversion to new uses under Policy RCE14 will be required to meet a more stringent test than those within non-designated areas.

### **Policy RCE3**

In Areas of High Landscape Quality, development will only be permitted where:

- a) the development would not have a significant adverse effect on the visual quality or landscape character of the area; and,
- b) in the case of proposals to rebuild, extend or alter existing structures the development would respect the size, form, bulk and siting of the original structure.

Permission will not be granted for the replacement of buildings or other structures that are derelict or structurally unsound and, in cases involving dwellings, currently not habitable.

## **3.4 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance**

Throughout the rural area, there is a wide variety of important ecological habitats, many of which are remnants of more extensive areas of natural or semi-natural habitat. The areas that remain and the species they support make a significant contribution to the environmental quality of the Island. Many have been identified as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and are described in Annex 2 and identified on the Proposals Map. There will be a presumption against allowing new development that would adversely affect an SNCI.

Where a development is proposed within, close to, or potentially affecting, an SNCI, it will be the responsibility of the developer to demonstrate, as part of the planning application, the likely impact of the development on the nature conservation interest of the site. There may be circumstances where an unavoidable conflict arises between nature conservation and the benefits for the community if the development proceeds. The outcome should be based upon an ecological appraisal of the site, comparing it with the community benefits of the development.

There are a number of factors that must be considered, including the rarity of the nature conservation feature and the significance of the feature in relation to the local or wider ranging resource. The circumstances where the community benefits are overriding will be exceptional and will need to be clearly demonstrated.

Provision can often be made to retain and protect the features of nature conservation interest within a development, or where appropriate, to establish new features of nature conservation interest. The preference will always be for the protection of the existing features of wildlife interest. Where new features are proposed, it will be the responsibility of the developer to make arrangements for the long term future maintenance of the habitat allowing it to become established and self sustaining.

### **Policy RCE4**

Development that would adversely affect a Site of Nature Conservation Importance will not be permitted unless:

- a) the benefits to the community are clearly demonstrated to outweigh the nature conservation interest of the site; and,
- b) adequate provision is made within the development for the protection and enhancement of existing features of nature conservation interest and/or for the establishment of new features of nature conservation interest.

RCE4

### 3.5 Derelict land in the countryside

The agricultural and horticultural activity that shaped the Island's landscape is concentrating on fewer holdings, leaving remnants of land without full care and management. Many of these pockets of derelict land are now degraded, are of little or no economic value and may even represent a liability to their owners. In this respect, it is important to remember that glasshouses are regarded in Law as being temporary structures on agricultural land. Accordingly, the existence of glasshouse development, regardless of age, condition or function will not affect how planning applications for non-horticultural developments are considered.

The Department is aware that glasshouses are often left derelict for a number of reasons, the most obvious being the financial outlay required to demolish and clear the sites. However, the fact that many of them have not been cleared could indicate a preference by the owner to leave glass derelict on the assumption that sites not cleared stand a better chance of obtaining permission for housing at some time in the future. However, releasing these sites for development would have a negative effect on the rural countryside both in the short and long term and conflict with the strategic policies set by the States. It would promote the unnecessary development of the countryside whilst at the same time encourage dereliction.

In support of the strategic policies of the States and the primary objective of the Plan, the Department will encourage the clearance, restoration and enhancement of derelict land. This will require a positive approach aimed at securing environmental improvement and beneficial use of land. The Department will seek to ensure that established programmes, such as glasshouse clearance and tree planting schemes, focus on sites where restoration will help to enhance the environmental and visual quality of the Island. In this respect, the Department is keen to work with landowners on restoration initiatives and will help identify specific objectives. This will ensure that restoration achieves the greatest benefits for wildlife, landscape and in some cases public enjoyment as well as being appropriate to the site and its setting.

The after-use of each site will depend on its individual characteristics and those of the particular locality and, of course, on the relevant policies of this Plan. It could include, for example, reinstatement to agricultural use, land for wildlife or conservation purposes or recreational provision. In very exceptional circumstances, small parcels of derelict land that would not realistically contribute to the rural character of the locality or to the agricultural land reserve could be used for minor forms of development such as extensions to domestic gardens.

Opportunities for built development will be very limited.

#### **Policy RCE5**

The Department will encourage the restoration and beneficial after-use of derelict land having regard to:

- a) the location of the site and its relationship with surrounding land uses;
- b) the landscape character of the area; and,
- c) any public or private sector scheme for environmental enhancement and management.

In identifying sites with potential for creating new habitats, the Department will have regard to an ecological appraisal of the site and its surroundings. Restoration projects should be carried out in accordance with appropriate enhancement guidelines prepared or promoted by the Department.

### 3.6 Creation or extension of curtilages

The extension of a garden or curtilage, whether serving a house, commercial property or any other use, can easily harm the character and appearance of the rural area, particularly when it would encroach onto agricultural or other open land. Similarly, the creation of a wholly new curtilage to serve, say, a barn conversion can also have a damaging effect on the quality of the landscape. The degree of change can be significant, through the introduction of lawns, flowerbeds and ornamental shrubs to sheds, pools, washing lines, fences and walls, storage areas and other paraphernalia associated with a particular land use. However, most of the Island's landscapes need appropriate management and care to maintain their visual and ecological value. Where land is unused or poorly maintained, it could detract from the character of an area or become a target for fly tipping.

In order to protect the quality of the rural environment, the Department will seek to ensure that the change of use of land to garden, or any other form of curtilage, will make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area, either when viewed individually or cumulatively with similar incursions into the countryside. Where planning permission is forthcoming, the Department will require the establishment of an appropriate boundary treatment and tree-planting scheme.

#### Policy RCE6

Proposals for development to create or extend a curtilage will only be permitted where there is a clear functional need and where they:

- a) would not result in the unacceptable loss or fragmentation of agricultural land or have an adverse effect on the viability of an agricultural holding;
- b) can clearly be demonstrated to make a positive contribution to the visual quality, landscape character and environmental value of the area;
- c) would not involve the unacceptable loss or repositioning of established boundary features; and,
- d) would not adversely affect the reasonable amenity expectations of neighbouring residents.

RCE6

### 3.7 Public views

Planning policies cannot legally guarantee private views from individual properties. Public views, however, which contribute to the amenity and general character of the rural area can be protected under the provisions of the Law<sup>(5)</sup>. These views vary from glimpses between buildings into open spaces behind, to sweeping panoramas across valleys, open land, coastal areas and out across the sea. Proposals will be carefully assessed for their potential effect on views enjoyed by the general public.

#### Policy RCE7

Development that would significantly adversely affect an important public view will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it would produce substantial benefits for the community that would outweigh the resultant impact upon the public view.

RCE7

(5) Section 17 (e) of the Law

### 3.8 Landscape design

Landscape design should form an integral part of the planning process of any significant development within the Plan area. Typical developments that should incorporate landscape design include those that the Department considers are within environmentally sensitive locations, represent large developments or are likely to have a significant visual impact. However, the Department will assess whether there is a need for landscape design proposals on a case by case basis.

Landscape design is particularly important in helping to integrate new development into its surroundings. Landscape schemes should take full account of existing features as may be detailed in Annex 1 and, where possible, improve the ecological value of the locality.

Landscape schemes should include the following:

- a survey of any existing features on the site, especially trees, hedgebanks, hedges, watercourses, walls and historic or archaeological remains
- proposals for the retention, and protection of any important landscape features
- proposals for any new surfaces, structures and planting showing the location, species and planting size of new trees and shrubs
- arrangements for the replacement of failed planting and future maintenance for a specified period to allow it to become established.

Longer-term management proposals will be necessary for features that are of importance for nature conservation.

It should also be noted that landscape / planting schemes alone cannot render an otherwise poor development proposal acceptable.

#### **Policy RCE8**

Proposals for development that the Department considers to be significant in terms of scale, setting and/or appearance will normally be required to incorporate landscape schemes where:

- a) landscape treatment is a necessary or intrinsic part of the design;
- b) it will reduce the impact of the development;
- c) the development would affect either a Conservation Area or the setting of a building of architectural or historic interest;
- d) there are public open areas within the site; or,
- e) the site contains an important landscape feature which contributes to the appearance, character and historical interest of the local area.

### 3.9 Protection / recording of archaeological remains

RCE9

Archaeological remains provide evidence of the Island's history and can be of great interest and value to residents and visitors alike. However, they are very vulnerable to damage, especially from groundwork during development, and once lost cannot be replaced. They will, therefore, be afforded significant protection throughout the development process.

Basic advice on their protection is offered in Annex 3, which identifies a representative selection of individual sites and wider areas of archaeological importance, although this is not an exhaustive list. A definitive list of sites of archaeological importance (the Sites and Monuments Record) is, however, compiled and maintained by the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer and should be referred to when conducting any archaeological research. Where the importance of a site is unclear, appropriate professional advice should be sought before proposals are drawn up in any detail.

It will be the responsibility of the developer to demonstrate, as part of the planning application, the likely effect of the development on any archaeological interest within or adjacent to the site. Developers will, therefore, be encouraged to assess the archaeological implications of their proposals at as early a stage as possible and to provide, where appropriate, for the retention or the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains.

There will be a presumption against allowing new development that would adversely affect important archaeological remains unless it is clearly demonstrated that the proposed scheme will incorporate appropriate measures to avoid damage to them. In most cases, mitigation measures (either through the design of the development, prior excavation and recording or through an archaeological watching brief during the development) should provide adequate protection.

It may be possible for developments to be located or designed so as to retain any valuable deposits in their present location. In exceptional cases, where the remains are of outstanding importance, preservation in their present position will take priority over development.

Where appropriate, the Department will attach conditions to planning permissions to ensure that adequate action is taken to protect the archaeological significance of the site or wider area.

#### **Policy RCE9**

Developments that would be likely to adversely affect areas of archaeological importance will only be permitted where the applicant makes appropriate and satisfactory provision for mitigation measures to avoid damage to the remains, or for archaeological investigation and recording, in accordance with a scheme to be agreed by the Department. Conditions will be attached to planning permissions to ensure the implementation of the agreed mitigation and/or investigations.

### 3.10 Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas have been designated on the basis of the outstanding qualities of their special architectural and historic interest. All the designated areas have a cohesive, recognisable sense of place where buildings and spaces interact to form a distinctive character and appearance that the Department considers desirable to conserve and enhance. The areas retain traditional features and include few, if any, discordant elements, while having a clear focus and readily defined boundaries.

New development should be designed from the outset to respect the character and appearance of the area and a Rural Planning and Design Statement will be the obvious means by which to show how the design solution was arrived at.

In due course, the Department will produce character assessments, which will set out an analysis of the special qualities of each area for the guidance of future development. Such assessments may form part of an Area Design Statement, as detailed further in Annex 4.

#### Policy RCE10

Development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will not be permitted unless:

- a) it can be clearly demonstrated that the development would serve to conserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the areas in terms of land-use, spatial relationships, form, design, scale, materials, architectural detailing and boundary treatment; and,
- b) particular attention is paid to securing the retention of distinctive features of historic or other interest, including trees, that contribute to the character or appearance of the area.

Proposals that would detract from the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or that would result in the unacceptable loss of a feature or tree of distinction or other interest, will not be permitted.

### 3.11 Buildings of special interest

Buildings of special interest are Ancient Monuments and Protected Buildings. It is important that development is carefully designed in order to avoid damaging the special quality and interest of these structures. In addition, their settings (including other buildings or structures that form part of that setting) are often an integral part of their character and should also be protected from damaging change.

Any proposal that is likely to affect a building of special interest, or its setting, must be accompanied by sufficient information to enable its effect to be fully assessed. In certain circumstances, the Department may request a structural survey to be undertaken by an appropriate professional to demonstrate the potential impact of any proposals. The Lists of Protected Buildings and Ancient Monuments are available for inspection at the Environment Department.

#### Policy RCE11

Buildings of special interest and their settings will be protected from development that would detract from their special qualities. Development will only be permitted where:

- a) it respects the building and its setting in terms of siting, scale, massing, form, proportions, detailing and materials; and,
- b) it would not result in the loss of any significant element of the building or its setting or of any ancillary features that contribute to its character or appearance.

### 3.12 Design and local distinctiveness

RCE  
12

Good design helps promote sustainable development, improves the quality of the environment and helps conserve and strengthen local distinctiveness.

Outside of the Conservation Areas are many smaller hamlets, groupings or clusters of traditional buildings that represent equally important elements within the cultural landscape. Whilst not designated because they do not constitute readily defined 'areas', these are, nonetheless, worthy of special consideration owing to their largely unspoilt traditional form and strong feeling of local distinctiveness. The Department will be keen to ensure that the composite elements and cohesion that positively contribute to the definition of these settlements are retained. The principles of traditional design will be appropriate in many circumstances in such contexts.

Elsewhere, or exceptionally where full consideration has been paid to the setting and context to enable assimilation within its setting, contemporary design may be encouraged. Outside Conservation Areas and away from Protected Buildings or their settings, in the design of minor developments, such as house extensions, it is intended that flexibility and personal choice will be available, subject to the objective of limiting the impact of the development and of respecting local distinctiveness. However, obviously poor or obtrusive designs will be resisted.

The Department will encourage close liaison with applicants to achieve a satisfactory design from the earliest stages in the planning process.

#### **Policy RCE12**

Proposals for development will only be permitted where they:

- a) achieve a good standard of design;
- b) respect the scale and massing of other buildings in the vicinity;
- c) avoid the introduction of obtrusive or discordant elements; and,
- d) retain and respect features that contribute to local distinctiveness and the quality of the built heritage.

### 3.13 Demolition of buildings and features

RCE  
13

Buildings, walls and other distinctive features that are of some interest or importance should, where possible, be preserved in order to give a sense of continuity and to maintain the rich fabric of the rural area. The loss of such buildings or features, as well as being undesirable in itself, may also lead to unsightly 'gap' sites that can have an adverse and often disproportionate effect on the character and appearance of the area. Rehabilitation of existing buildings is usually more effective and less wasteful than demolition and replacement with new development. Policy RCE14 addresses this particular issue.

There will be a presumption, therefore, against allowing the demolition of buildings, walls and other distinctive features that are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the locality. Where a building clearly detracts from the character and appearance of the locality, proposals for its demolition may be considered favourably.

It will usually only be appropriate for the demolition of a building to be allowed after planning permission has been granted for a scheme of land restoration or redevelopment and then only when the Department is assured that such scheme will be implemented within a reasonable time scale. The use of planning conditions in this respect will be considered.

Poor condition of a building alone will not normally be considered to be adequate justification for its demolition. The Department may, therefore, require the submission of information to demonstrate that the structure is beyond reasonable repair and could not be reinstated without incurring costs that would not be offset by the resultant development.

#### **Policy RCE13**

Proposals to demolish buildings, walls and other distinctive features will only be permitted where the importance of the proposed replacement, other development or resultant vacant site would produce substantial benefits for the community that would outweigh the loss resulting from demolition; or,

- a) where the existing structure clearly does not make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area; and,
- b) the proposed replacement, other development or resultant vacant site would make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

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

#### **RCE 14**

### **3.14 Conversion and re-use of buildings**

In considering proposed conversions, the Department will wish to be satisfied that the existing building is no longer useful or reasonably capable of being used for its original or last known purposes and, that the proposed new use represents a more appropriate use of that building. Conversions that would result in the unacceptable loss of accommodation to another sector of the rural economy or that would necessitate the construction of replacement buildings that may harm the open nature of the countryside will, generally, be resisted. The Commerce and Employment Department may be consulted on applications proposing the removal of buildings from agricultural use.

It is also important that conversions do not result in the continued retention of inappropriate buildings in open or potentially open areas. Hence, the Department will generally support the removal of undistinguished impermanent forms of building, and those that are clearly unsound, structurally. Conversions that would involve major re-building works may, depending on the scale and nature of works proposed, be assessed as being 'new-build' and will, accordingly, be considered under the relevant Plan policies. In most cases, the Department will require the submission of a structural survey prior to determining an application for the conversion of a building. Glasshouses are, by definition, not regarded as being of sound and substantial construction as, in law, they are regarded as being temporary structures on agricultural land.

Conversion can, also, result in a significant change to the fabric of buildings and to their appearance in the landscape through the introduction of gardens, driveways, walls and fences and ancillary buildings. With this in mind, the Department will carefully consider whether such conversions can comply with the overriding conservation and enhancement objective of the Plan and will expect all ancillary features to be clearly indicated on the planning application. Permission will not be given to proposals that would destroy the very character that would otherwise justify the building's retention.

As the Areas of High Landscape Quality represent the most sensitive landscapes within the rural area, the Department will only permit the conversion or re-use of buildings that make a positive contribution to them. The conversion or re-use of buildings that are not of any distinguished character or that detract from the character of the area will not be permitted within the Areas of High Landscape Quality.

Where a building is protected or of other special interest, great care will be taken to ensure that the original character of the building is retained. Policy RCE11 addresses this issue further.

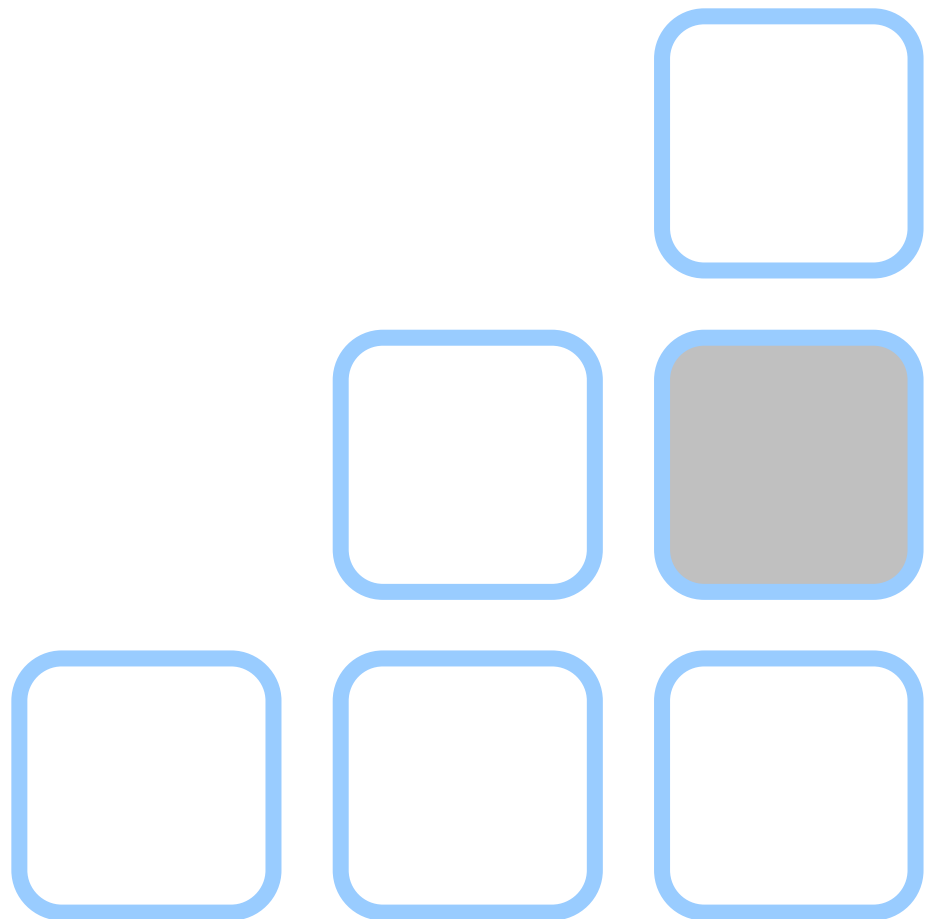
#### **Policy RCE14**

Proposals to convert or re-use buildings will only be permitted where:

- a) it has been clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Department that the building is no longer useful, or capable of being used for its current or last known viable purpose or that more appropriate buildings are available to accommodate such use;
- b) the building is of sound and substantial construction and is capable of conversion without extensive alteration, rebuilding or extension;
- c) in Areas of High Landscape Quality, the building is of architectural or historic interest or makes a positive contribution to the character of the rural environment;
- d) the conversion can be implemented without adversely affecting the character or appearance of the building; and,
- e) the provision of curtilage, road access, driveways and parking, ancillary buildings and boundaries would not adversely affect the character of the building or its setting.



# Housing four





### Policy Context

The Strategic and Corporate Plan seeks to allow adequate opportunities to meet the Island's housing requirement, but without impacting upon the character or appearance of the rural environment. The Urban Area Plan makes provision for at least 90% of the Island's housing requirement for five years to be met within that Plan area, in accordance with the policies of the Strategic and Corporate Plan. The UAP incorporates a number of methods for achieving this including development on opportunity sites, conversion and sub-division and, if needed, through the release of Housing Target Areas. Hence, the majority of new residential development will be guided to sites within the urban area.

There will, however, be some scope for the creation of new homes in the rural area through methods such as conversion and subdivision of existing buildings. Every encouragement will be given to the re-use of surplus accommodation for housing purposes including the re-use of visitor accommodation, but only where this can be balanced with the need to maintain an adequate stock of visitor accommodation. Methods for making better use of the existing housing stock will also be encouraged through proposals for improving properties, bringing empty houses back into use and reducing under occupation.

The Strategic and Corporate Plan requires the Detailed Development Plans to achieve a sustainable mix of housing. Specific issues identified include affordability and the ability to accommodate a range of housing needs for all members of the community, including elderly people and those with disabilities.

It has not yet been possible to bring forward a practical and legally robust policy for affordable housing as part of the Rural Area Plan, in a situation where firm proposals for the provision of affordable housing have yet to be established. From experience however, where the Department has made provision for new houses within the rural area, they are often sold for a premium and command a commercial value well above that of a similar home within the urban area. This situation does nothing to help local housing needs. Therefore, for the time being, the delivery of affordable homes to meet identified social needs will be limited to sites where the States is able to exert controls as landowner or other enforceable means.

Having regard to the Strategic and Corporate Plan, the housing policy principles are that:

- the erection of new housing, other than on a one for one replacement basis, will be guided towards sites within the urban area
- provision for a limited amount of the Island's housing requirement will be made within the rural area where this can be achieved through the sub-division or conversion of suitable buildings and where the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment is not compromised
- in very exceptional circumstances, provision will be made for the erection of social housing that meets a clearly identified need.



## Housing Policies

For the purposes of this chapter, 'housing' is taken to mean that which is usually regarded as being conventional residential use. Private or rented accommodation in the form of houses, bungalows, flats, bed-sits or lodging houses are all considered to be forms of housing. Nursing or care homes, residential schools and colleges, hospitals and other forms of accommodation for people requiring care or special attention are not considered to be 'housing' for the purposes of this chapter and will be regarded under the provisions of the Social, Community and Recreation chapter.

### 4.1 New housing

One of the strategic policies of the States is that the majority of new housing provision should be within the urban area on previously developed land<sup>(6)</sup>. In light of this and with regard to the primary objective of this Plan, the Department acknowledges that opportunities for new housing development within the rural area will be very limited. Such opportunities will, therefore, be restricted to the subdivision of existing dwellings, the conversion of buildings and to the replacement of dwellings on a one for one basis within the same site. Proposals involving subdivision of existing dwellings will be considered under the provisions of Policy RH3.

**The provision of new housing through other means, such as new-build, will not be permitted unless the proposal fully satisfies the provisions of Policy RH2**

In the case of replacement dwellings, proposals will be expected to conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the locality and, in particular, respect the feeling of openness within the rural area. For this reason, the siting, design, scale and massing of such developments especially within Areas of High Landscape Quality and in Conservation Areas will be given very careful consideration by the Department. Proposals that would result in any detriment to the character or appearance of the area will not be permitted. All proposals involving demolition and rebuild will also be considered under the provisions of Policy RCE13 and, where appropriate, RCE11.

Where conversions are proposed, the Department will wish to be satisfied that the site is suitable for the introduction of residential use in terms of the existing characteristics of the site and its relationship with the surrounding area. Full compliance with the provisions of Policy RCE14 will be necessary in all cases. The establishment of new residential curtilages to serve such conversions will be considered under the provisions of Policy RCE6.

Owing to the impact that even a modest replacement dwelling or conversion may have on the rural area, the Department may, at its discretion, request a Rural Planning and Design Statement. Further information can be found in Annex 4.

Proposals for special forms of housing such as sheltered accommodation will generally be supported where they form part of a sensitive conversion scheme, although it is acknowledged that most of the opportunities for new housing are likely to be too insignificant to achieve the necessary economies of scale to support such accommodation. Where the States have clearly identified a need for specific forms of social housing, then the provisions of Policy RH2 may, exceptionally, override those of RH1.

All proposals for residential development will be considered very carefully against all relevant policies of this Plan, particularly policies RCE1, 6, 7, 8, 13 and 14.

RH1

(6) Strategic Policy 3  
2002 SLUP

### Policy RH1

Proposals for residential development (excluding the subdivision of existing dwellings) will only be permitted where:

- a) they involve the conversion of existing buildings or the replacement of existing dwellings on a one for one basis; and,
- b) the site is suitable having regard to the existing characteristics of the site and its relationship with the surrounding area;
- c) the development is acceptable in terms of siting, design, scale, massing, amenity and provision of a satisfactory living environment; and,
- d) in the case of replacement dwellings, they also satisfy the provisions of Policy RCE13 and where appropriate, RCE11.

Exceptionally, replacement of other buildings may be acceptable subject to the requirements of (d), provided that their conversion under Policy RCE14 had first been granted detailed planning permission and Building Regulations approval and the floorspace and volume of the approved conversion scheme are not exceeded. Replacement of a scheme for residential sub-division which has been granted detailed planning permission and Building Regulations approval under Policy RH3 may also be acceptable subject to (d) provided that the floorspace and volume of the approved sub-division scheme are not exceeded, nor the approved number of dwelling units exceeded.

## 4.2 Social housing

### RH2

**Where a need has been established by the Housing Department for specific forms of social housing, then the provisions of Policy RH2 may, at the Environment Department's discretion, override those of Policy RH1.**

For the purposes of this Policy, social housing is taken to be that which is (a) provided by the States' Housing Department, (b) provided by a recognised Housing Association in co-operation with that Department, or (c) in a scheme to secure specific forms of social housing sought in the Corporate Housing Programme, with the support of the Housing Department. Such housing would normally be for subsidised rent or for partial ownership but may include sheltered housing in schemes that are approved by the Housing Department.

The provision of social housing is part of the Corporate Housing Programme. The majority of this accommodation is expected to be provided within the Settlement Areas of the urban area. However the Department acknowledges that an element of new social housing may be required in the rural area to ensure the local provision of social housing in different parts of the Island and to meet a range of different housing needs.

It is, however, important that a satisfactory balance is struck between the provision of genuine social housing and the general objectives of the Plan, which are taken to be the primary objective of conservation and enhancement, together with the policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters.

In order to minimise any impact on the character or appearance of the rural area, sites for new social housing should consolidate (i.e. round-off) existing States controlled housing developments before exceptional consideration can be given to limited development that is well related to the Rural Centres. This will enable the maximum potential of the social housing to be realised in terms of sustainability and quality of life for residents.

The creation of social housing through the conversion or replacement (on a one-for-one basis) of buildings or through the sub-division of existing dwellings will be considered under all other relevant Plan policies and in particular, Policies RH3, RCE14 and, where appropriate, RCE11 and RCE13.

#### **Policy RH2**

Proposals for the erection of social housing will only be permitted where:

- a) the site is suitable, having regard to its characteristics and neighbouring land-uses and is, or can be, integrated into the existing built environment;
- b) the site is within or would round off existing State-controlled housing or is well related to one of the designated Rural Centres;
- c) the development would be of a scale and design appropriate to the rural setting; and,
- d) adequate provision is made for the protection of the rural character of the site and appropriate measures for the general environmental enhancement of the locality.

The erection of new housing in Areas of High Landscape Quality will not be permitted.

### **4.3 Subdivision of dwellings to provide additional housing units**

Within the rural area there are a number of dwellings and other buildings that are too large for a single household, do not make efficient use of the accommodation or are simply no longer required for their current or last known viable use. The subdivision of dwellings into self contained units and into houses for multiple occupation can be an effective way of providing relatively low cost accommodation without the need to develop on greenfield sites. The Department will ensure that satisfactory living standards are provided and that a concentration of such property does not adversely affect the mix and balance of housing types and amenity of an area.

The subdivision of dwellings often results in an intensification of ancillary domestic fixtures and features on the site, such as car parking, bin storage, clothes drying areas, sheds and dividing fences. Where appropriate, the Department will require such facilities to be incorporated into the overall design of the development.

Schemes to subdivide dwellings may be accompanied by a modest extension under Policy RH6, provided that the extension is not of such scale or significance that a new-build unit would be created contrary to Policy RH1.

Proposals involving the creation of additional housing units through conversion of non-residential buildings are addressed in paragraph 3.14 and must satisfy Policy RCE14, as well as Policy RH1.

#### **Policy RH3**

The subdivision of a dwelling into two or more self contained units or into a house of multiple occupation will only be permitted where:

- a) the density of occupation is compatible with the character and residential amenity of the surrounding area;
- b) the proposal would not result in an excessive concentration of such uses in the locality; and,
- c) the development would be acceptable in terms of provision of a satisfactory living environment and amenity.

Proposals must adequately demonstrate methods for addressing intensification of ancillary domestic fixtures and features and include these as part of the integral design of the development.

**RH3**

#### RH4

### 4.4 Protection of housing stock

In order to support the objectives of the Strategic and Corporate Plan and the Urban Area Plan, it is important that there is no overall loss to the existing housing stock either through redevelopment or change of use. Generally, the Department will support proposals to upgrade substandard accommodation where this can be achieved in accordance with the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment.

There will be a general presumption in favour of the retention and improvement of existing housing. Redevelopment or refurbishment schemes that affect existing housing, will be required to incorporate proposals to maintain the number, and where possible improve the quality, of housing units on the site, where this can be satisfactorily achieved. The Department will, where possible, require the new development to provide better standards of accommodation and layout and accord with the primary objective of the Plan and the provisions of Policy RH1 and RH3.

In exceptional circumstances it may be acceptable to allow the loss of residential units that offer poor amenity standards and which are not practical to improve. The loss of housing may also be acceptable where the site or building is needed to meet an essential social or community requirement, or where the removal of the building could lead to the creation of an important open space or view into undeveloped countryside.

#### **Policy RH4**

The loss of existing housing or of a building designed for residential use, but presently vacant, will only be permitted where:

- a) the accommodation is substandard by virtue of its size, location or means of access and there is no reasonable prospect of upgrading the accommodation to provide satisfactory living conditions;

**OR**

- b) the site or building is needed to meet an essential social or community requirement;

**OR**

- c) the resultant open site would lead to the creation of an important open space or view into such a space.

#### RH5

### 4.5 Dower units

In order for close family members to be accommodated as part of an extended household, it may be possible for an additional living unit to be linked to, either physically or through association with, the main dwelling. Such developments are usually referred to as dower units or granny wings and form a traditional method of providing informal sheltered accommodation on the Island.

Dower units can be acceptable in circumstances where a completely independent unit of accommodation would not comply with the normal criteria regarding access, space about dwellings and residential amenity. Proposals usually take the form of extensions to the main dwelling but can also include conversion of outbuildings within the recognised domestic curtilage, where these are reasonably close and well related to the principal dwelling. In order to prevent dower units being used as conventional dwellings, proposals will be expected to clearly demonstrate that the unit will not be a wholly self contained unit of residential accommodation and that it cannot readily be converted to such. The Department will normally expect a dower unit to retain some shared facility, such as kitchen, with the principal dwelling.

The Department will treat proposals for dower units sympathetically, provided the property clearly remains as one dwelling unit and subject to the proposal being acceptable in terms of scale, design, materials and impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Proposals involving the erection of a new building to serve as a dower unit will be considered additionally under the provisions of the policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters.

#### **Policy RH5**

The alteration or extension of houses, including the conversion of outbuildings within the residential curtilage, to form additional living units for occupation in association with the principal dwelling will normally be permitted provided that:

- a) the accommodation would be clearly subsidiary to and dependent upon the main dwelling unit and be of appropriate design; and,
- b) in the case of conversion of an outbuilding, or new curtilage building, the building is well related to the principal dwelling in terms of siting within the curtilage, proximity to and ease of access from the dwelling.

## **4.6 Extensions and alterations to dwellings**

The Department acknowledges the reasonable aspirations of people to extend or alter their homes to provide greater comfort, additional living or storage space or simply to improve the appearance of their dwelling. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy includes curtilage development that is incidental to the enjoyment of a dwelling and is applicable in both non-designated areas and Areas of High Landscape Quality, subject to the application of Policy RCE1 and, where appropriate, Policy RCE3.

Generally, the Department will support such proposals where they comply with the policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters of the Plan. In particular, policies RGEN6, 7, 8 and RGEN11 will be relevant, but as with any other development proposal, there may be other policies that may apply.

It is important, therefore, that no part of the Plan is taken out of context. Staff of the Department will be pleased to advise, when so required.

#### **Policy RH6**

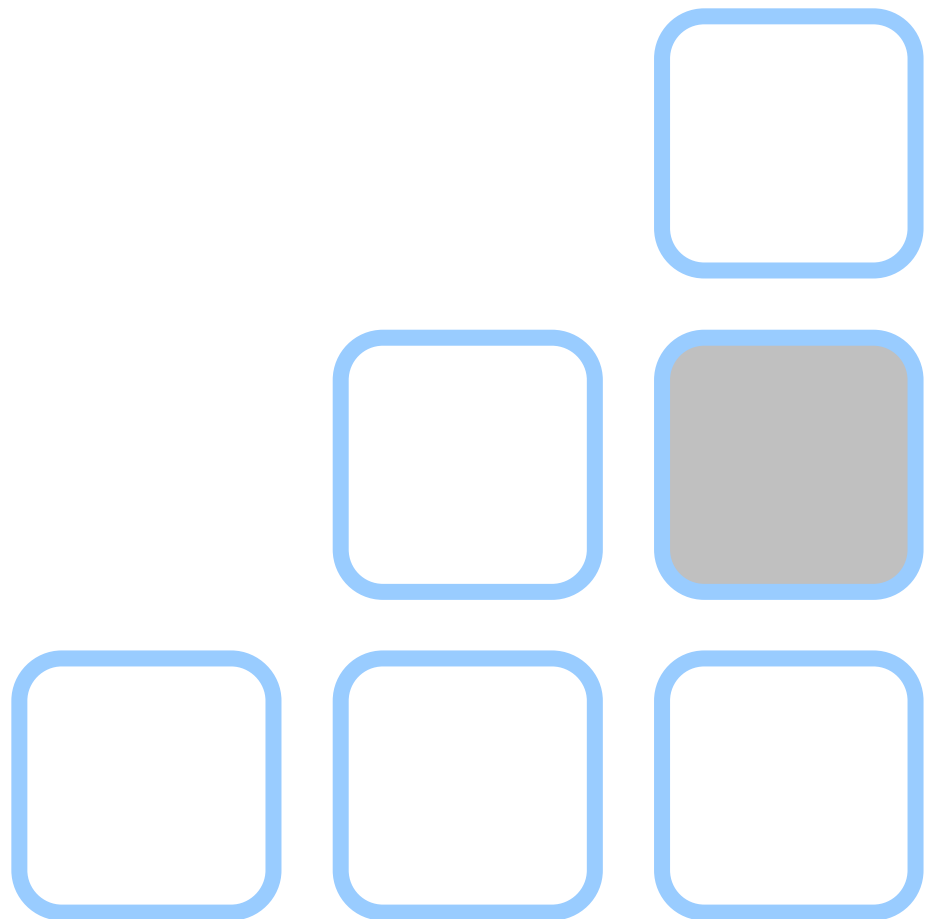
Proposals for extensions or alterations to existing houses will normally be permitted where they do not conflict with other policies of the Plan.

**RH6**



# Rural economy

## five





### Policy Context

The rural area supports a diverse economy ranging from traditional agricultural, horticultural and quarrying activities to medical, industrial and service-related employment. In addition, there are a number of smaller, more localised areas of employment such as the Barras Lane industrial estate in Vale and Garenne Park in St Sampson. It also includes the Island's airport and associated commercial activity. The rural area remains well served by shops and services located primarily within the centres of St Martin, Cobo, St Peter's, L'Islet and Le Bourg. A significant proportion of the rural community can easily access their nearest centre by bus, on foot or by cycling and the centres are, therefore, an important element in encouraging sustainable modes of transport within the Island.

However, the Department remains concerned that provision, within the rural area, for additional retail outlets outside of these centres could threaten their vitality and viability. In line also with strategic policy objectives, new retail developments will, therefore, generally be resisted where they do not help to sustain a Rural Centre.

There are, however, a number of new, emerging economic activities that may also need to be located within the rural areas. The Department will keep such activities as e-business under review and proposals for new forms of activity within the rural area will be judged against the Plan policies. In particular the General policies, those of the Conservation and Enhancement chapters and, where appropriate, those of this chapter will be relevant.

The Strategic and Corporate Plan recognises that where the rural landscape, nature conservation, historic interest or the land needed for farming activities will not be damaged, appropriate forms of development may be accommodated within the rural area.

Having regard to the Strategic and Corporate Plan, the policy principles for the rural economy are that:

- support should be given to agriculture and associated environmental management to maintain and enhance the countryside to the benefit of the farming industry, the rural environment and the Island community
- the rationalisation of horticultural holdings should be allowed to take place on suitable sites
- provision may be made for additional out of town retail developments only where there is an acknowledged demand, where the vitality and viability of any commercial centre would not be undermined and the local environment would be improved
- a diverse and sustainable mix of activities should be encouraged where they will support the Rural Centres
- a very limited amount of industrial development may be accommodated where this can be successfully balanced with the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment. Land designated for industrial development at La Villiaze will be carried forward from Rural Area Plan, Phase 2
- home based employment should be encouraged, where appropriate
- provision should be made for visitor related developments, taking into account the Tourism Strategy and the need to conserve and enhance the rural environment
- provision may be made for airport related uses requiring accommodation at or adjacent to the airport, as may be identified by the Department.



# Rural economy policies

## Agriculture

The open agricultural landscapes of the rural area contain a wealth of important natural and man-made features including flower rich grasslands, hedge banks, hedges, trackways, trees, walls, streams and ditches and historic features. Within the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment, the Department will ensure that the right balance is struck between encouraging a healthy agricultural sector and maintaining a high quality rural environment.

Viable and sustainable farming on Guernsey is essential to the protection of countryside character and quality. Agriculture makes use of approximately 1,640 hectares (10,000 verges) of land, representing 26% of the Island's total land area and 65% of all open land<sup>(7)</sup>. Farming plays an essential role in the management of the countryside and biodiversity and the Department acknowledges its valuable and significant contribution to the unique character and appearance of the Island's rural environment.

However, the Commerce and Employment Department has identified a steady decline in the number of farmers operating across Guernsey. In order to maintain a satisfactory and realistic balance between the primary objective of the Plan and a viable farming economy, the use of Farm Management Plans will be encouraged as a means by which this change can be managed effectively. The Environment Department will generally support proposals that form part of an approved Farm Management Plan, subject, of course to them being in line with the primary Plan objective.

The keeping of horses on agricultural land can inflate its value and often brings with it a desire for more permanent forms of development such as stables and riding schools. The Department is also aware that land does not often revert to agricultural use once it has been used for the keeping or riding of horses. The loss of good agricultural land should be avoided if the character and appearance of the rural environment is to be conserved and enhanced. However, policies controlling such recreational development can be found within the Social, Community and Recreation chapter of the Plan.

The Plan aims to protect the extent of land currently in agricultural use and to promote its enhancement. In exceptional circumstances, however, some agricultural land may have to be released for an essential economic, social or community use of overriding importance to the Island. In such cases, the Department will need to be satisfied that the implications for farming have been satisfactorily addressed, that the chosen location is fully justified and that no other more appropriate, viable site on brownfield land or within the urban area is realistically available. The Environment Department will consult with the Commerce and Employment Department on all matters concerning the significant loss of agricultural land.

(7) Figures from Commerce &  
Employment Department

## 5.1 Agricultural development

As with any other sector of the economy, it is difficult to predict the future of agriculture on the Island. As the number of active farmers continues to decline, those remaining in the industry are being encouraged by the Commerce and Employment Department to move towards less intensive farming practices. This is, in itself, leading to a significant increase in the average size of farm holdings. The Environment Department is aware that with this change, there may be a requirement for new development to facilitate diversification, to improve the standard of accommodation, to help reduce pollution or to increase the capacity for foodstuffs, crops and farm vehicles within the holding. Farm Management Plans may be a useful tool in considering such proposals.

However, in order to minimise the need for new farm buildings within the countryside, it is important that full and appropriate use is made of existing structures. In all cases relating to agricultural development, the Department will need to be satisfied that the proposal is clearly essential to the proper running of an established, or proposed, agricultural holding or farmstead and to this end, may consult with the Commerce and Employment Department as part of its consideration, particularly where the requirement of acknowledged need has to be demonstrated.

Owing to the sensitive location of many of the Island's farms, the majority of which lie within Areas of High Landscape Quality, the Department will pay careful attention to the primary objective of the Plan and to the need to safeguard the reasonable amenity of nearby residential properties.

Proposals involving the conversion of agricultural buildings to other uses will be assessed under Policy RCE14.

### Policy RE1

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, rebuilding or other works to buildings remaining in agricultural use will generally be permitted where they are acceptable in terms of siting, design and scale and where they are incidental and essential to the proper running of the holding.
- b) Proposals for new farm buildings at existing farmsteads on existing holdings will only be permitted where:
  - i) they are acceptable in terms of siting, design and scale;
  - ii) they are incidental and essential to the proper running of the holding; and,
  - iii) any existing buildings on the holding clearly cannot, with or without reasonable adaptation, be otherwise used for the proposed purposes.
- c) Proposals involving the development of new farmsteads whether on existing or proposed holdings will only be permitted where:
  - i) the resultant farmstead would meet an acknowledged need and where the requirement could not be reasonably, or practically, assimilated into an existing or former farmstead;
  - ii) any buildings or structures are incidental and essential to the proper running of the holding; and,
  - iii) they are acceptable in terms of siting, design and scale; and,
  - iv) the proposal does not involve the erection of a new dwelling house which would be precluded under Policy RH1.

## Horticulture

RE2

### 5.2 Horticultural development

As the horticultural sector continues to restructure and consolidate on fewer, but larger, holdings the productivity levels of individual businesses are expected to increase. This change must be managed in order to secure the conservation and enhancement objective of the Plan, whilst maintaining the viability of the sector and encouraging important new growth sectors in the industry. Accordingly, provision will be made to extend and develop horticultural holdings where the Department, in consultation with the Commerce and Employment Department, agrees that the consolidation of horticultural operations on a single site would be beneficial to the industry and where it would help maintain a sustainable balance of horticultural production and expertise.

It is the nature of commercial glasshouse operations that they have very large areas of glass in order to achieve the economies of scale required to sustain a viable operation. The Department is, nevertheless, concerned that the introduction of this form of development, if sited inappropriately, could have an adverse effect on the rural character of the Island. For this reason, any development involving commercial glasshouses in Areas of High Landscape Quality will be carefully assessed in relation to Policy RCE3 as well as to Policy RCE1, which will apply in non-designated areas, while the establishment of wholly new horticultural holdings anywhere within the rural area will be resisted in order to encourage best use of existing horticultural holdings. Where a development proposal involves bringing a disused holding back into production, this will be generally permitted where it does not require the reconstruction of significant areas of glass or ancillary buildings or structures or, alternatively, where it would result in the creation of a key horticultural site (see paragraph 5.3). Glasshouse sites that are clearly derelict will be considered under Policy RCE5 and other relevant policies of the Plan.

In order to prevent incremental change away from horticultural use, the Department may attach conditions to any permission granted restricting the type of any goods sold on the premises and the scale of any ancillary or incidental operations.

Proposals involving the development or alteration of glasshouses located within the domestic curtilage of a residential property will be considered under other relevant Plan policies including RH6.

For the purposes of this policy, new buildings, including glasshouses that are clearly incidental and essential to the operation of the holding, will, at the discretion of the Department, be regarded as constituting an extension.

For the avoidance of doubt, non-domestic glasshouses are considered under the Law to be agricultural land. For the purposes of this Plan, however, proposals involving glasshouses will be considered under the provisions of this policy and not under Policy RE1.

Garden centres are not considered to be a primary horticultural use and are considered separately under Policy RE5.

### **Policy RE2**

Proposals for extensions, alterations, rebuilding or other works to glasshouses or buildings associated with horticulture will generally be permitted where:

- a) the site forms part of an existing holding which is in operation, or one which although disused could be brought back into operation without requiring significant works to existing ancillary buildings or structures or the erection of significant areas of new glass or, exceptionally, where such significant works as may be necessary would result in the creation of a key horticultural site;
- b) the holding is considered to make, or be capable of making, a valuable contribution to the industry and is likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future, by virtue of its suitability for commercial operations;
- c) the proposals are of acceptable in terms of siting, design and scale; and,
- d) the proposals are incidental and essential to the operation of the holding.

The establishment of new horticultural holdings will not be permitted.

## **RE3**

### **5.3 Protection of key horticultural sites**

The Department recognises that existing key horticultural sites are an important element of the Island's economy. As the restructuring of the sector continues, it is essential that those holdings identified as being of strategic importance to the future viability of the industry be safeguarded from proposals that would compromise their existing or potential contribution. The Department will work closely with the Commerce and Employment Department in order to identify the key sites and to assess the likely impact of any development proposals involving them.

Proposals that would undermine the future viability of key horticultural sites will be resisted.

### **Policy RE3**

The change of use or redevelopment of key horticultural sites to other uses will only be permitted where:

- a) it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Department that the site is no longer required for strategically important horticultural production and is not likely to be so required in the future; or,
- b) the proposed new use is of strategic importance and complies with the provisions of Policy RD1.

## Retailing

Local shops and services provide for community needs and make a significant contribution to sustainability by reducing the need to travel by car to other more distant facilities and by supporting alternative means of transport to and from the Rural Centres. The Plan aims, therefore, to promote the vitality and viability of these centres by making provision for limited retailing opportunities that will serve to sustain and improve the quality and range of facilities they offer. The Plan will also seek to prevent those developments that could undermine their vitality and viability, or that of the Town and the Bridge.

In identifying Rural Centres, the Department uses a formula based on a set of indicators of sustainability, highlighting the common areas that lie within 500 metres of each indicator. Rural Centres must have good, easy access and contain such a mix of shops and services that they perform an important social, cultural and economic function – serving the everyday needs of the local community. The indicators include:

- general store selling fresh produce
- post office
- public transport with services at least once every hour during the day (excluding Sundays)
- primary public healthcare (doctor's surgery and pharmacy)
- public primary school
- bank or cash machine
- play area / open amenity area such as public park or garden and beaches with toilet or kiosk facilities
- recycling facilities.

Owing to the way in which rural communities and economies can change with time, it is acknowledged that some areas may gain additional indicators of sustainability under the provisions of this Plan. For this reason and because of the ways in which local communities use them, Rural Centres have not been defined on the Proposals Map. Areas clearly meeting the criteria for consideration as a Rural Centre are at Cobo, St. Martin's and St. Peter's. However, while lacking in some of the indicators of sustainability, L'Islet and Le Bourg are also acknowledged as Rural Centres in order to reflect their long-standing role in serving established communities. Annex 8 explains the rationale behind the Rural Centre designation in greater detail.

Outside of the Rural Centres, there are also a number of small retail outlets such as convenience stores and garages. Whilst these do not form cohesive shopping cores, many of them still play an important role in serving the rural community. The Department recognises the contribution that these facilities make to community life and the policies will generally allow, where appropriate, existing retail outlets to adapt and upgrade so they can continue to meet the changing needs of the community.

### 5.4 Retail development

In line with the strategic objectives of the States, the Department aims to guide most new retail development to the Urban Area Plan Settlement Areas, in order to support the vitality and viability of the Town and the Bridge.

The Department will generally seek to resist the introduction of new retail development that would not serve to sustain the Rural Centres. This will help secure the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment and protect the vitality and viability of the existing centres.

RE4

The Department will also ensure that alterations to existing retail uses are of an appropriate scale that would not lead to unreasonable competition with the other Rural Centres or with the main centres of Town and the Bridge, and that any related development is appropriate within the rural area.

Owing to their unique nature, garden centres and coastal kiosks will be considered separately, under the provisions of Policy RE5 and 6 respectively.

#### **Policy RE4**

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building or other works to an existing retail outlet will only be permitted where:
  - i) they are of a scale in keeping with that of the existing retail operation and where the resultant outlet would not detract from the vitality or viability of any of the Rural Centres or of Town and the Bridge; and,
  - ii) associated ancillary development such as car parking and other related works do not conflict with the objective of conserving and enhancing the character and openness of the rural area.
- b) Proposals for the creation of new retail outlets will not be permitted unless they would support the viability and vitality of a Rural Centre and where:
  - i) they are of a type and scale consistent with the function and character of the Rural Centre and are not within an Area of High Landscape Quality ; or,
  - ii) they satisfy the provisions of Policy RE10.

### 5.5 Garden centres

#### **RE5**

Garden retail developments fall into one of three broad categories – plant nurseries, plant centres and garden centres. Nurseries and plant centres, which comprise the smaller scale horticultural operations, will be considered against the relevant policies of the General, the Conservation and Enhancement and Rural Economy chapters of the Plan. Garden centres, however, are not considered to be a primary horticultural use and will be regarded separately owing to their unique nature and relatively extensive land requirement.

The States have resolved<sup>(8)</sup> that there is a demand for a new garden centre and that certain new developments may be permitted within the rural area where they meet specified criteria and where more appropriate, alternative sites cannot be found in the urban area. However, in order to prevent any threat to the viability of Rural Centres, Town and the Bridge, the Commerce and Employment Department intends to licence and regulate garden centres when relevant legislation is enacted. This will allow further control over the scale and nature of the retail element of new garden centres. The Environment Department will, therefore, consult the Commerce and Employment Department on any new proposals.

In light of the primary objective of the Plan and of the objectives of the Strategic and Corporate Plan, the Department will need to be satisfied that any new garden centre would be sustainable in terms of location, access and effect on the environment. They will, therefore, generally only be permitted on substantial horticultural holdings that are not considered key horticultural sites or on other degraded sites that could be enhanced significantly through the development of a garden centre. They should have safe and convenient access and must clearly be able to be developed without unacceptable detriment to the landscape character of the area or to residential amenity.

(8) Billet D'Etat IV, 2002

It is recognised that most garden centres have similar requirements in terms of cultivation and sales areas, associated buildings, security fencing, open storage and car parking. Accordingly, their impact upon the character and appearance of the rural environment can be significant. With the primary conservation and enhancement objective of the Plan in mind, the Department will resist proposals for new garden centres within Areas of High Landscape Quality.

Where development is considered appropriate in principle, it should wherever possible, contribute positively to the area by protecting and enhancing the rural character of the locality. To this end, the provision of green space within the development will be expected in order to retain a generally open character, with the greater the size of garden centre, the greater the amount of open space required.

In all cases where a new garden centre is proposed, a Rural Planning and Design Statement will be expected. Annex 4 gives more information on this aspect of the planning process. Assessments may also be required to gauge the likely impact upon the environment and traffic flows. Annexes 5 and 6 will guide the preparation of environmental impact assessments and traffic impact assessments. Where permission is forthcoming, it is likely that the Department will attach conditions restricting both the nature and the scale of ancillary sales and facilities offered by the centre in order to safeguard the viability of the Rural Centres and the Town and Bridge. In certain instances, a retail impact assessment may also be requested. This will be expected to give details of the site selection process and of any issues that may be raised in respect of existing garden centres and any extant planning permissions for garden centres that have not yet been implemented.

Proposals for works to existing garden centres will be assessed on their individual merits in light of the policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters of the Plan.

Where buildings are required for the operational use of the garden centre, preference will be given to the re-use or conversion of existing buildings on site rather than the erection of new buildings. Policy RCE14 will also be relevant in this respect.

#### **Policy RE5**

Proposals for new garden centres will only be permitted where they clearly meet the acknowledged demand of the Island community for a new garden centre and where:

- a) the site relates to a substantial horticultural holding or to a disused or degraded horticultural site;
- b) the site is not a key horticultural site (unless Policy RCE3(a) can be complied with) and the site is not required for any other strategically important use;
- c) the site would be used predominantly for the cultivation or sale of plants;
- d) adequate provision is made for the protection of the rural character of the site and its surroundings and that proposals include measures for the general environmental enhancement of the locality; and,
- e) open green space within the site is provided in accordance with the following;
  - i) sites up to 1 hectare – 20% of total site area to be green space
  - ii) sites between 1 and 2 hectares – 30%
  - iii) sites in excess of 2 hectares – 40%.

The establishment of new garden centres in Areas of High Landscape Quality will not be permitted.

## 5.6 Coastal kiosks

The kiosks along the coast and cliffs represent a unique form of facility providing simple food and recreational goods for sale. The role they play in support of the Island's tourism and informal recreation, especially during the summer months, is fully recognised by the Department. Modest up-grading and modernisation of these facilities will, generally, be encouraged, but the Department will wish to be satisfied that their prime function remains as an ancillary element to peoples' enjoyment of the outdoor, rural environment.

As most of the kiosks are sited within sensitive and prominent locations, applications involving them will be assessed very carefully to ensure that there will be no adverse effect on the character of the rural environment. With this in mind, proposals for new kiosks will only be allowed in very exceptional circumstances as detailed in clause (b) below.

Proposals for significant extensions or re-development works that are likely to result in the formation of shops or restaurants not allied to outdoor recreation on the Island will, generally, be resisted in order to safeguard the coastal kiosks as a major recreational resource.

### Policy RE6

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building or other works to existing coastal kiosks will only be permitted where the resultant facility would be of a scale and nature appropriate to meeting the demand of visitors to the coast and where the prime function clearly remains ancillary to peoples' enjoyment of the outdoor, rural environment.
- b) Proposals for new coastal kiosks will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that they would make a significant contribution to the social wellbeing of visitors and the Island community and where they would serve to enhance the character of the area.

## Industry

Industrial activities, including storage and distribution uses, within the rural area range from high-tech electronics manufacturing to more fundamental and often essential, small-scale service trades such as car mechanics' and builders' yards.

There has been a gradual evolution of these activities over time, resulting in a fairly haphazard spread of businesses across the area. Many developed close to where the trade originated such as the aeronautical engineering operations to the south of the airport runway and the industrial estate at Barras Lane which developed on land originally occupied by a large-scale horticultural enterprise.

However, the Department is aware that there is a shortage of industrial accommodation across the Island and has, therefore, introduced a number of measures into the Urban Area Plan to address this issue. Accordingly, and in recognition of the need to assist small businesses, new industrial developments will generally be guided towards sites specifically allocated within the urban area.

## 5.7 Industrial development

RE7

Proposed alterations and extensions to industrial premises will be treated on their individual merits although any such works will be expected to comply with the primary objective of the Plan and to satisfy other relevant policies of the Plan.

Operations considered by the Department to be incompatible with neighbouring land uses will generally not be permitted to extend or redevelop unless conflicting issues can be fully resolved. Where appropriate, the Department will seek to ensure that proposals lead to a demonstrable enhancement of the site and that opportunities are taken to carry out other improvements such as soundproofing. In this respect, the Department wishes to ensure that the reasonable amenity of any nearby residents is safeguarded.

The Department will, generally, seek to resist the introduction of buildings for new industrial purposes in order to help secure the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment. Businesses that require substantial increases in floor area, either from new build or from extending existing premises or that require new, significant outside storage will be guided to sites within the urban area. This will support the objectives of the Urban Area Plan, which aims to facilitate such developments on allocated sites, in accordance with the strategic objectives of the States. Nevertheless, while recognising that the majority of the Island's development needs should be met within the boundary of the Urban Area Plan, adequate provision should be made for those businesses that have good and justifiable reasons, in terms of their particular characteristics, for operating in the rural area. In making such provision, any commercial or industrial development must be balanced against the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment. Additional land requirements over and above that carried forward from Rural Area Plan Phase 2, need to be justified in a way which balances the need for environmental protection and the specific economic development opportunities represented within the area covered by the Rural Area Plan which could not be met within the boundary of the Urban Area Plan.

For the purposes of this policy, new buildings on an existing industrial site that are incidental or ancillary to the existing industrial use will be treated as being extensions, subject to compliance with any relevant General or Conservation and Enhancement policies of the Plan.

Proposals involving the conversion of existing buildings to industrial use will be considered against policy RCE14 of the Plan, with any related curtilages considered against Policy RCE6 of the Plan.

The States of Guernsey has instructed that, for strategic reasons, an area of land shall continue to be reserved for light industrial use, including manufacturing, research and development and e-business purposes at La Villiaze, to the north of the airport runway<sup>(9)</sup>. The site is identified on the Proposals Map. The Department will expect any development of this site to respect its rural setting and to take into account the importance of conserving and enhancing the quality of the rural environment and the need to achieve high quality design and amenity standards. The relevant States departments, including the Commerce and Employment Department and the Public Services Department, will be consulted on any proposal. A Development Brief is likely to be required for any such development at La Villiaze and the Department will advise further as to its requirements when appropriate.

(9) Billeis D'Etat III, 2001 & XXI, 2002

#### **Policy RE7**

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building or other works to an existing industrial operation will generally be permitted where:
  - i) they are incidental and essential to its proper running; and,
  - ii) they resolve any conflicting amenity issues of operations considered to be incompatible with neighbouring land uses.
- b) Proposals for the creation of new industrial establishments will not be permitted unless they satisfy the provisions of Policy RCE14 or RE10 and all other relevant Plan policies.

Notwithstanding b) above, an area of land has been specifically allocated for 'Light Industrial Purposes' and indicated on the Proposals Map. Permission will only be granted for development on this site where the proposals can satisfy all other relevant policies of this Plan, particularly in terms of design, layout, amenity, protection of open spaces, access and safe and efficient operation of the airport.

#### **RE8**

### **5.8 Protection of industrial accommodation**

The Department recognises that existing industrial accommodation within the rural area makes an important contribution to the overall stock within the Island and often provides space for the smaller, more casual businesses. The Department will seek to retain good quality industrial accommodation, where it is appropriately located, in order to prevent a significant reduction of industrial sites within the rural area.

#### **Policy RE8**

The change of use or redevelopment of industrial premises to other uses will only be permitted where it would serve to enhance the amenity or character of the area and where:

- a) the existing premises provide unsatisfactory accommodation and cannot reasonably be upgraded to a satisfactory standard; or,
- b) the use of the existing premises for industrial purposes is not compatible with neighbouring land uses and cannot reasonably be altered or upgraded to ensure compatibility.

## Commerce

Within the rural area there are a number of small-scale offices and commercial premises that are clearly distinct from retail and industrial uses. These uses include information technology related businesses, professional support services such as architects and surveyors and a small amount of independent office accommodation. The Department recognises the important contribution that these businesses make to the rural economy and will, generally, support proposals to upgrade them and will also encourage working from home, where this will not conflict with residential amenity.

For the purposes of this section, therefore, the term 'commerce' relates to all offices, financial and professional services, other support services and any other businesses not specifically covered under other sections of this chapter.

For the purposes of this policy, new buildings on an existing commercial site that are incidental or ancillary to the existing commercial use will be treated as being extensions, subject to compliance with any relevant General or Conservation and Enhancement policies of the Plan.

In light of the strategic aims of the States, the Department will generally resist the introduction of buildings for new commercial operations within the rural area and will, instead, guide them to appropriate sites within the urban area.

### 5.9 Commerce related development

The Plan aims to support existing businesses within the rural area while resisting the introduction of new commercial uses that would be better located within the urban area. The Department will ensure that any extensions or other alterations to existing premises are appropriately located and designed so that they do not conflict with the Plan's primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment. Operations considered by the Department to be incompatible with neighbouring land uses will generally not be permitted to extend or redevelop unless the Department is satisfied that the conflicting issues can be fully resolved. In this respect, the Department will seek to ensure that the reasonable amenity of any nearby residents is safeguarded.

The Department will seek to resist the introduction of buildings for new commercial purposes in order to help secure the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment and in support of the objectives of the Urban Area Plan which aims to facilitate such developments within the Mixed Use Redevelopment Areas and the Centres within the urban area. Provision of new commercial units outside of these specific areas could seriously undermine the efforts of the States in regenerating the areas and could adversely affect their viability.

Proposals involving the conversion or re-use of existing buildings for commercial use will be considered against policy RCE14 of the Plan.

#### Policy RE9

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building or other works to existing commercial operations will generally be permitted where:
  - i) they are incidental and essential to their proper running;
  - ii) they are of an appropriate scale that would not undermine the objective of the Urban Area Plan by competing with the commercial centres of Town or the Bridge; and,
  - iii) they resolve any conflicting issues of operations considered to be incompatible with neighbouring land uses.
- b) Proposals for the creation of new commercial establishments will not be permitted unless they satisfy the provisions of Policy RCE14 or RE10 and all other relevant Plan policies.

RE9

## 5.10 Home based employment

Working from home can reduce the demand for additional business accommodation and lessen the need to travel to the principal workplace. It is therefore a good example of sustainable development and will be encouraged where it will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring residents or the surrounding area as a result of increased activity and disturbance.

Uses which may be acceptable include those which rely on modern technology and communications as well as small-scale operations such as workshops and goods storage which can reasonably be carried out from a residential property.

In order to protect the amenities of nearby residents, conditions are likely to be attached to any planning permission granted for home based employment limiting the hours of work, the types of activities that can be carried out and restricting the business to the occupier of the house.

Proposals involving the conversion of outbuildings will also be considered under Policy RCE14.

Proposals involving the erection of a new building to support home based employment will be considered primarily under the provisions of the policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters. If such proposal complies fully with those relevant policies then for the purposes of Policy RE10, it would be regarded as though it were a conversion of an outbuilding.

### **Policy RE10**

The use of part of a dwelling, or the conversion of a building within its curtilage, for the purpose of a business carried out by the occupier will generally be permitted where the primary use of the property will clearly remain as a dwelling and where it will not lead to any significant impact on the amenity of the area or of nearby residents.

## Tourism

Tourism underpins many essential services and facilities across the Island and offers local employment opportunities, mainly in related support services. The Plan's primary objective will assist in maintaining and improving the quality of the Island's environment, which ultimately is our main tourist attraction.

In line with strategic policies of the States, new large-scale visitor accommodation developments will be guided towards the UAP Settlement Areas. Here, they will play a supporting role to other nearby businesses in providing facilities such as conference rooms and health suites, and will help sustain new tourist developments and improve the vitality of the urban areas. Proposals for large-scale visitor accommodation developments within the rural area will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

As with other forms of development within the rural area, all tourist related development must be carefully located and designed to provide high quality facilities that fit successfully into the environment. However, refurbishment and upgrading of visitor accommodation may be necessary to enable appropriate standards to be maintained and to provide new facilities that can aid the viability of Island tourism. The Department will, generally, support such proposals, having regard to the primary objective of the Plan.

Individual hotels, guest houses and self catering apartments all require different levels of staffing to ensure they are appropriately serviced. The Department will, therefore, ensure that any new staff accommodation allowed, serves to satisfy the operational requirements of the facility whilst preventing unnecessary development within the rural area.

For the purposes of this section, visitor accommodation is taken to refer primarily to hotels, guesthouses and self-catering units. Camp sites are regarded by the Department as being outdoor recreational facilities and will, accordingly, be considered under the provisions of Policy RS4.

### 5.11 Visitor accommodation development

For the purposes of this Policy, the term 'visitor accommodation' includes staff accommodation linked to such establishments.

The Department acknowledges that some of the Island's visitor accommodation may benefit from ancillary alterations and extensions in order to keep pace with changing visitor expectations. It also recognises that in certain instances, it would be reasonable for establishments to wholly redevelop in order to attain the level of service and quality reasonably expected by visitors to the Island.

The Plan aims, therefore, to support existing establishments that wish to upgrade to higher standards of accommodation where this would be undertaken sensitively and be compatible with the primary objective of the Plan. The siting, design, scale and massing of such developments, especially within Areas of High Landscape Quality and within Conservation Areas will be given very careful consideration by the Department. As upgraded or extended visitor accommodation also often leads to demands for further additional works such as larger car parks, garden areas and swimming pools, the Department will be keen to ensure that the development as a whole will not detract from the openness of the rural area or otherwise conflict with the primary objective of the Plan.

The Department will, however, seek to resist the introduction of wholly new establishments which would provide tourist accommodation through new buildings. This is in order to help secure the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment and in support of the objectives of the Urban Area Plan which aims to

RE11

facilitate such developments as they can add vitality to the Central Areas of the Town and the Bridge.

For the purposes of this policy, new buildings at existing establishments to which this policy applies and which are incidental and ancillary to the existing use will be treated as being extensions, subject to compliance with any relevant General and Conservation and Enhancement policies.

Proposals involving the conversion of existing buildings to visitor accommodation use will be considered against Policy RCE14 of this Plan.

#### **Policy RE11**

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building or other works to an existing visitor accommodation establishment will generally be permitted where:
  - i) they are ancillary to its operation; and,
  - ii) they, and any associated development such as car parking and other works, do not conflict with the objective of conserving and enhancing the character and openness of the rural area.
- b) Proposals for the creation of new visitor accommodation establishments will not be permitted unless they satisfy the provisions of Policy RCE14.

#### **RE12**

### **5.12 Rationalisation of visitor accommodation**

The Island's stock of visitor accommodation has been undergoing a process of rationalisation in order to stimulate investment and achieve a sustainable level of accommodation, whilst maintaining the Island's external transport links and the tourism infrastructure. The Commerce and Employment Department aims to retain a core bed stock<sup>(10)</sup> of at least 2,700 rooms/ units through:

- continuing to protect hotel and self-catering sites that represent the core bed stock
- accepting that accommodation that is not regarded as core bed stock may leave the industry
- improving profitability to encourage new good quality accommodation to enter the industry.

There is a growing requirement for new forms of self-catering visitor accommodation, both for holidaymakers and business users. This form of accommodation requires less labour than a conventional hotel and provides direct support to Island businesses by virtue of the need to buy food and goods for self-catering. Changes of use from hotels not regarded as the core bed stock, to self-catering visitor accommodation will therefore be supported.

Only in exceptional circumstances will permission be granted for the change of use of visitor accommodation to any other use. This means that the applicant must demonstrate that the accommodation is substandard and incapable of being upgraded and that the continuing use of the site as visitor accommodation is not viable.

In determining whether the accommodation is capable of attaining a satisfactory standard so as to be regarded as core bed stock that should be retained, the Department will take into account the following factors:

- the size of the establishment and the size of the site on which it is located
- the physical condition of the premises including the standard of accommodation and amenities and the potential for upgrading or conversion to other tourist accommodation, including the cost of the works involved
- the level of available facilities
- the location of the establishment and ease of access for visitors. Those locations regarded as of importance are within the Town area, on the south-coast cliffs and adjacent to the south-east beaches, on west and north-coast beaches and, those in good rural locations.

In order to demonstrate non-viability, evidence of occupancy rates for at least the last three years of operation will be required together with the marketing and business plans for the relevant periods, plus evidence that the tourist accommodation has been marketed for sale for its existing use at a competitive price for at least twelve months prior to the making of any application for change of use.

In assessing whether the accommodation is substandard and incapable of being upgraded at reasonable cost and not capable of viable operation, the Department will seek the views of VisitGuernsey.

#### **Policy RE12**

The change of use or redevelopment of visitor accommodation to other uses will only be permitted where:

- a) the existing premises provide an unsatisfactory standard of accommodation and facilities are incapable of being upgraded to a satisfactory standard or adapted to good quality self-catering accommodation at reasonable expense, having regard to the location of the establishment; or,
- b) the premises are too small for a modern, viable operation, and the site is of insufficient size to enable the premises to be adequately extended or improved;

Where a residential use is proposed, a satisfactory living environment and standard of accommodation must be provided, including satisfactory levels of amenity, servicing and parking provision appropriate to the type of accommodation being created and its location.

### **5.13 Visitor facilities and attractions**

Guernsey has a unique and attractive physical environment combining cliff paths, country walks and beaches with traditional buildings and other structures. Fortifications, museums, galleries and certain craft workshops all contribute to the character of the Island and are attractions in their own right.

However, tourists do not just enjoy the individual attractions but also the wider experience of the historic and cultural environment. In general terms, places and attractions enjoyed by locals are also likely to be visited and enjoyed by tourists. Whilst these facilities and attractions are enthusiastically promoted, VisitGuernsey notes that a number currently lack the level of investment necessary to meet rising visitor expectations. The Department is aware of this and will encourage, where appropriate, the sensitive modernisation or upgrading of existing facilities.

**RE13**

It is also important that new visitor facilities and attractions within the rural area complement existing tourism themes such as the Island's heritage, the built and natural environment, formal and informal recreation and any visitor initiatives promoted by the States. This will help strengthen and sustain the visitor economy.

Proposals involving significant extensions, rebuilding or the introduction of new buildings or structures will be assessed very carefully against other policies of the Plan. In this respect, the Department will need to be satisfied that the proposal relates to a genuine visitor facility and that it is not likely to be subjected to incremental change that would alter the principal use, character or nature of the facility. For this reason, conditions are likely to be attached to any permission granted, restricting the scale and nature of retail sales, opening hours and the nature and level of any ancillary or incidental activity.

Particular attention will be paid to those proposals falling within Areas of High Landscape Quality.

#### **Policy RE13**

Proposals for the development of visitor attractions and facilities will only be permitted where they complement and enhance existing tourism themes and where they clearly meet the acknowledged demand of the visitor population.

## **Airport Development**

### **RE14**

#### **5.14 Development requiring an airport location**

Guernsey Airport is a major asset, inextricably linked to the future of the Island's economy. However, any expansion of businesses located at or in close proximity to the airport, is likely to have some impact on the quality of the rural environment. In recognition of this, the States generally encourage the future development of the airport but only by businesses and industries that actually require an airport location. These are known as 'airport related uses'. Identified airport related uses include airline operations such as freight, aeronautical engineering, general aviation (including hangarage and maintenance for business and corporate flying, private flying and aero club activities), storage and distribution directly linked to the operations of the airport and other businesses such as car hire operations and other travel related businesses.

As the primary objective of the Plan is to conserve and enhance the rural environment, the Department will consider proposals for airport related uses very carefully and will generally only support them when they are clearly required for the safe and efficient running of the airport. Where such a development is proposed, then Policy RE14 will normally override the preceding policies of this chapter.

It is a fact that as air travel becomes more commonplace, travellers expect to be provided with higher levels of service. The Department acknowledges that, in common with most new airport developments across Europe, the terminal building should accommodate good quality passenger facilities such as retail outlets, cafes and bars.

The Department will support the provision of further passenger related facilities, where these require planning permission, but will ensure that new development remains ancillary or incidental to the normal operation of the airport. The Department will also ensure that new development is of an appropriate scale and that any proposed retail content would not unreasonably compete with the Rural Centres or those of Town and the Bridge.

Large-scale proposals that provide or support essential infrastructure related to the operation of the airport will be considered under Policy RD1.

#### **Policy RE14**

Notwithstanding the preceding policies of this chapter, proposals for development requiring close proximity to the airport may be permitted where the development:

- a) remains ancillary or incidental to the operation of the airport;
- b) would be of a scale that would not unreasonably compete with the Rural Centres or those of Town and the Bridge;
- c) would not be likely to prejudice the long-term operational needs of the airport; and,
- d) would not be within an Area of High Landscape Quality.

## **Minerals**

### **5.15 Mineral Resource Safeguarding Areas**

In 1994 when the States considered the review of the Strategy on Waste, Water and Stone (Billet D' État XX, 1994), it was resolved that a further report should be made to the States on such requirements at least 10 years before the exhaustion of Les Vardes Quarry. The indications are that reserves in the currently permitted area at Les Vardes could be worked out by 2015 at anticipated rates of extraction and a review is, therefore, to take place.

Pending States' decisions in the light of that review, it is important that known reserves of stone should be protected. Mineral Resource Safeguarding Areas are, therefore, indicated on the Proposals Map at Les Vardes and Chouet Headland.

#### **Policy RE15**

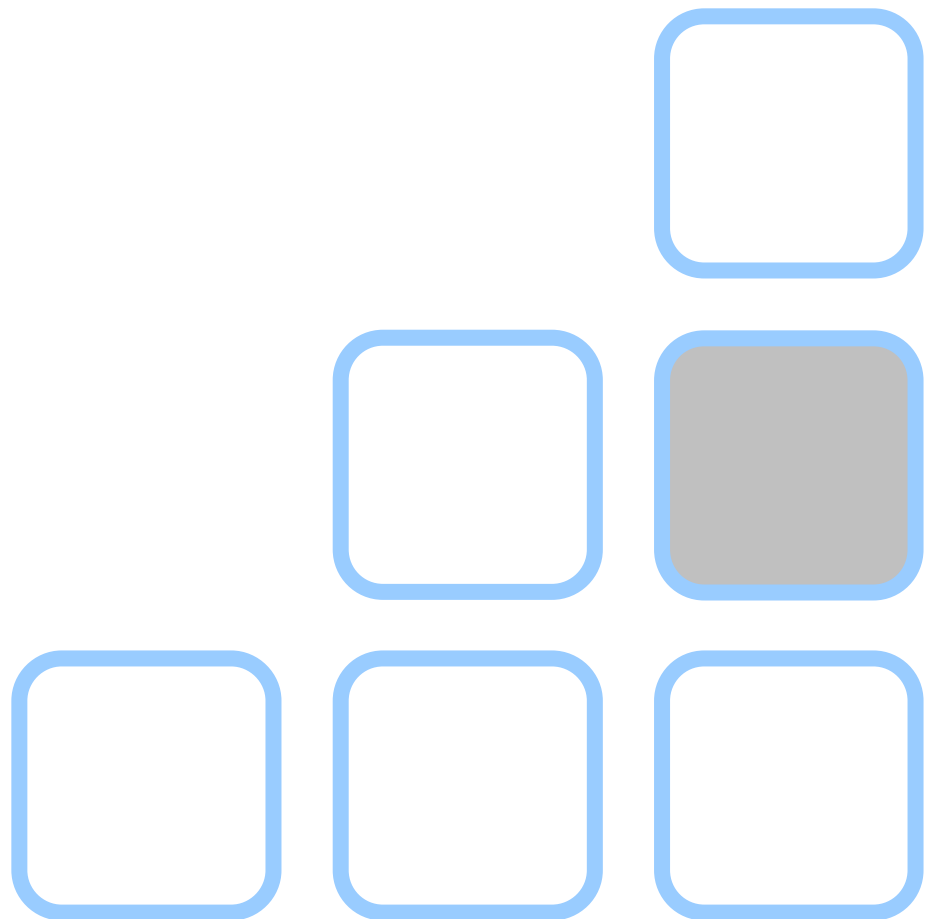
The areas designated on the Proposals Map as Mineral Resource Safeguarding Areas will be safeguarded from any development that may compromise possible future working for stone.

**RE15**



# Social, community & recreation

## Six





### Policy Context

The Strategic and Corporate Plan encourages the provision of opportunities for leisure and the development of community facilities that are easily accessible to all but which would not damage the environment. The Department will, therefore, allow for the limited development of services and facilities for health, education, sports and leisure provision within the rural area, in accordance with assessments of existing provision and predicted demand. All such proposals will be weighed against the primary conservation and enhancement objective of the Plan.

The Strategic and Corporate Plan also encourages the optimum use of existing facilities with particular emphasis on the joint provision and dual use of education facilities to meet growing demand.

Having regard to the Strategic and Corporate Plan, the policy principles for social, community and recreation are that:

- provision should be made for the protection, enhancement and new development of community services and education facilities
- accessible sporting, recreational and leisure facilities should be provided through -
  - the optimum use of facilities, including joint provision and dual use of education facilities for leisure purposes; and
  - the provision and enhancement of facilities that reflect a level of quality in keeping with the image of the Island.



# Social, community & recreation policies

## 6.1 Community services

RS1

Community services include facilities such as schools, hospitals, hospices, medical centres, surgeries and clinics, churches, community centres and public meeting rooms. Among the principal community buildings within the Plan area are the Douzaine Rooms, which represent key meeting points, although the wider community also uses schools for such purposes. The Education Department is further encouraging this dual use of facilities.

Community services are essential to the social and economic wellbeing of the Island. The Plan generally aims to support proposals for those services that will help sustain the Rural Centres provided they meet an acknowledged demand and cannot be successfully located within the urban area because of operational requirements. The Department recognises the contribution that these facilities make to community life and will generally allow, where appropriate, existing community facilities to adapt and upgrade so they can continue to meet the changing needs of the community.

Alterations and extensions to existing community facilities that would not directly benefit the Rural Centres will be regarded on their individual merits although any such works should generally retain the type of facility and level of activity that currently exists. Proposals will also be expected to comply with the other objectives of the Plan.

The Department will seek to resist the introduction of new community development that will not serve to sustain the Rural Centres or otherwise contribute to the social or economic wellbeing of the Island community. This will help secure the primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment and will ensure that new facilities are located close to the main rural communities, in the interests of sustainability.

The Health and Social Services Department will be consulted on any proposals for new, or significant extensions to, nursing or care homes and other similar facilities.

Proposals involving the provision of social housing will be considered under the provisions of Policy RH2.

### Policy RS1

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building and other works to existing community related facilities will generally be permitted, where:
  - i) they are incidental and essential to their proper running; and,
  - ii) they are suitably designed and sited to have minimal impact on the rural landscape.
- b) Proposals for new community facilities will only be permitted where:
  - i) they meet an acknowledged demand and cannot practicably be located within the urban area owing to particular operational or locational requirements;
  - ii) it can be clearly demonstrated that they would help sustain a Rural Centre or would make a significant contribution to the social well-being or economy of the Island community; and,
  - iii) the site is not within an Area of High Landscape Quality unless the provisions of Policy RCE14 can be fully satisfied.

## 6.2 Protection of community facilities

Suitable community facilities in the rural area are a scarce and valuable resource. In order to ensure that facilities continue to be available, buildings or sites that are well suited to community use will be protected. If an alternative use is proposed, the Department will need to be satisfied that the building or site is genuinely surplus to requirements, or can be developed without adversely affecting the provision of good quality community facilities within the rural area. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy does not only apply to public amenity or assembly and leisure class uses, but also to retail uses, including public houses and recreational uses, where the use provides, or could provide, a needed community facility that could realistically be retained.

The Department will also seek to protect existing services unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed or that an alternative acceptable site can be provided within a Rural Centre to serve the same local community.

### Policy RS2

The development for alternative purposes of buildings or sites that accommodate community facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the building or land is surplus to requirements and/or is capable of satisfactory development without prejudicing provision of community facilities.

Buildings no longer required for community related activities should either be reused in accordance with policy RCE14, or removed to meet the States' agreed objective of conserving and enhancing the environmental quality of the rural area where this would not conflict with the provisions of Policy RCE12.

## Recreation

Recreational pursuits range from the organised sporting activities of athletics, archery and team games to more informal activities like walking, cycling, fishing, surfing, horse riding and, simply, playing on the beach. A wide range of facilities is already in place to cater for the requirements of this diverse element of Island life, with kiosks, toilets, car parks, stables, picnic areas and purpose built sporting pavilions scattered across the area. However, it is recognised that with changing lifestyles and expectations, many of these facilities may require adapting or upgrading and new facilities may be needed to meet future demand. It is also acknowledged that the scale, nature and locational requirements of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities are significantly different. The following two policies reflect this.

The Department will support the dual use of educational facilities for recreational purposes to help meet demand without the need to construct new, independent facilities on greenfield sites.

In line with the strategic objectives of the States, the Plan aims to support existing recreational facilities within the rural area, but to resist the introduction of new, large-scale facilities that would be difficult to assimilate into the landscape and, as such, would be better located within the urban area. There will, therefore, be a presumption against allowing new large-scale recreational facilities within the rural area. Any such proposals will be considered in light of the primary objective of the Plan and the policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters.

### 6.3 Indoor recreational facilities

RS3

Indoor recreation refers primarily to activities where the principal leisure use is carried on within the confines of a building or other structure. Sports halls, covered horse riding arenas and cinemas are all examples of indoor recreation. However, buildings and structures that are ancillary to a principal leisure use that is mainly outdoor in nature will be assessed under Policy RS4.

The Department recognises the contribution that good quality and accessible recreational facilities make to community life and to the enjoyment of visitors to the Island. It will therefore allow, where appropriate, existing recreational facilities to adapt and upgrade so they can continue to meet the changing needs and expectations of the community and visitors alike.

Any extensions or other alterations to existing premises will need to be appropriately located and designed so that they do not conflict with the Plan's primary objective of conserving and enhancing the rural environment.

New indoor recreational facilities will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where operational or locational requirements clearly necessitate a site within the rural area. In this respect, the Department may consult with appropriate departments and other bodies for advice. Where acceptable in principle, proposals will also be expected to be designed and located in such a way that they do not detract from those very qualities of the rural environment that people enjoy. However, as with any new development, some degree of impact is inevitable and it is important therefore that there is not a proliferation of facilities and that those provided are of a small, appropriate scale that meets a recognised need.

#### **Policy RS3**

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building and other works to existing indoor recreational facilities will generally be permitted where:
  - i) the resultant facility is compatible with neighbouring land uses and does not adversely affect the reasonable amenity of nearby residential properties; and,
  - ii) the resultant structure is suitably designed and sited to have minimal impact on the rural character.
- b) Proposals for new indoor recreational facilities will only be permitted where:
  - i) they meet an acknowledged demand and cannot practicably be located within the urban area owing to particular operational or locational requirements;
  - ii) it can be clearly demonstrated that they would help sustain a Rural Centre or would make a significant contribution to the social well-being or economy of the Island community;
  - iii) the site is not within an Area of High Landscape Quality unless the provisions of Policy RCE14 can be fully satisfied; and,
  - iv) adequate provision is made for the protection of the rural character of the site and its surroundings and that proposals include measures for the general environmental enhancement of the locality.

All such proposals will be considered in light of the primary objective of the Plan and all other relevant Plan policies.

## 6.4 Outdoor recreational facilities

Outdoor recreation usually requires only small ancillary or incidental buildings, or no buildings at all, and can often be accommodated without compromising the primary objective of the Plan. However, larger scale facilities associated with outdoor recreation, such as club-houses, will also be considered under this Policy but with particular assessment against all relevant policies of the General and the Conservation and Enhancement chapters. Environmental and traffic impact assessments may be required in the case of certain large, or otherwise significant, development proposals. Further guidance can be found in Annexes 5 and 6. Wherever possible, ancillary accommodation should be created by conversion of existing buildings under Policy RCE14, but where no suitable buildings are available, existing structures within the site that cannot be utilised should be cleared unless retention is necessary under Policy RCE13, in order to maintain the openness of the rural environment.

Proposals that involve the release of agricultural land for outdoor recreation considered essential to the economic, social or community use will be required to demonstrate that the implications for farming have been satisfactorily addressed, that the chosen location is fully justified and that no other more appropriate, viable site on brownfield land or within the urban area is realistically available. The Department will consult with the Commerce and Employment Department on all matters concerning the significant loss of agricultural land.

For the purposes of this policy, new buildings that are clearly ancillary and incidental to the operation of an existing outdoor recreational facility will, at the Department's discretion, be regarded as constituting extensions.

Proposals that involve any enlargement of a curtilage associated with a recreational facility will also be considered against Policy RCE6.

Proposals for changes of use and ancillary development, such as stables, tack-rooms, covered storage or all-weather training surfaces for equestrian purposes that involve agricultural land will, wherever possible, be directed to redundant horticultural sites that can usually be made suitable after clearance of glasshouses. Whether such proposals are within existing or newly created residential curtilages, or involve agricultural land, all relevant General and Conservation and Enhancement policies should be complied with.

Proposals for major built facilities such as indoor riding schools will be considered under the provisions of Policy RS3.

As golf-courses involve such extensive areas of land, they are subject of a specific Policy RS5, which is covered in the following section of the Plan.

#### Policy RS4

- a) Proposals for extensions, alterations, re-building and other works to existing facilities associated with outdoor recreational facilities will generally be permitted where they are ancillary and incidental to the proper running of the recreational activity.
- b) Proposals for new outdoor recreational facilities or for the expansion of sports pitches, motor sports circuits, camp sites and other areas of formal outdoor recreational provision will only be permitted where:
  - i) it would not result in the unacceptable irreversible loss of good agricultural land or have an adverse effect on the viability of an agricultural holding;
  - ii) the development would not have a significant or adverse effect on the visual quality or landscape character of the area;
  - iii) they meet an acknowledged demand and cannot practicably be located within the urban area owing to particular operational or locational requirements; and,
  - iv) adequate provision is made for the protection of the rural character of the site and its surroundings and measures taken for the general environmental enhancement of the locality.

### 6.5 Golf course development

As golf courses have such extensive land requirements, golf course development is subject of specific policy provision in order to avoid distorting general policies to fit golf courses within them.

On 30<sup>th</sup> July 1992 the States resolved to agree in principle to designate La Grande Mare as the location for a second 18-hole golf course. Work has commenced on implementing that proposal but the course still needs lengthening and providing with additional ancillary accommodation.

The Proposals Map accordingly includes an area of search of around 180 acres at La Grande Mare within which proposals for a golf course will be considered in accordance with Policy RS5. A high standard of layout and general design will be required in order to make a positive contribution to the locality whilst respecting and maintaining key features of the existing environment.

Should the States endorse the provision of a third 18-hole golf course a further area of search of about 150 acres is shown on the Proposals Map at La Ramee within which such a course could be devised.

RS5

## Policy RS5

Areas of land at La Grande Mare and La Ramee have been defined as areas of search within which proposals for 18-hole golf courses will be considered. The Environment Department will require a comprehensive scheme for the development of the course to be submitted. This must include an assessment of the overall character of the site and its surroundings and any measures required to maintain its key features. Development proposals will need to:

- (i) accord with the following:

Topography / Layout-	Open landscape broken by natural hazards (trees, scrub, water) or capability to introduce such hazards. Presence of public roads acceptable, excluding play across or immediately alongside.
Support / Services-	Clubhouse, public toilets, car park, road access, water / electricity supply.

- (ii) be well conceived, of a high standard of design and be laid out to make the best and most efficient use of the land available;
  - (iii) respect the character of the setting and as far as possible protect any features of interest within the site, including areas of nature conservation importance, streams, banks, trees, lanes and other features which give character to the landscape;
  - (iv) be satisfactory in terms of site access, provision of adequate parking and, where appropriate, provision of footpath connections;
  - (v) avoid, wherever possible, the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- and where clubhouse, public toilets and other ancillary buildings or related facilities are proposed they should make a positive contribution to the surroundings by reflecting the influence of the local setting.

### Phasing of development

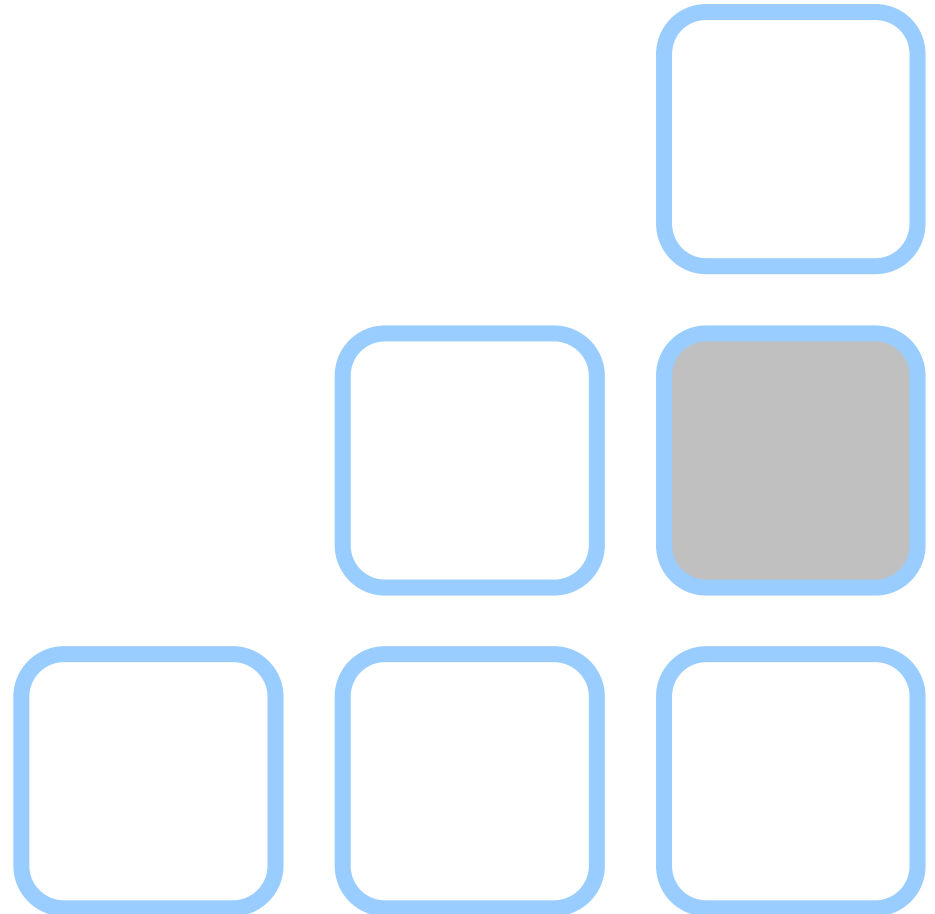
As part of a comprehensive plan for an 18-hole golf course within the area of search, the Department will be prepared to consider proposals for not less than 14 greens incorporating 18 holes and playable off 18 tees on land within the ownership or control of the applicant.

### Management Agreement

The States have resolved that the necessary administrative procedures should be implemented to provide adequate protection for the Island's environment and, where appropriate, legislation to achieve such protection should be enacted. In the meantime, the Department policy is to encourage, inter alia, management schemes designed to maintain and enhance sites of nature conservation importance.

Favourable consideration will be given to golf course proposals which include an environmental statement and demonstrate measures to reduce the impact of the development on sites of nature conservation importance, and which indicate a willingness to enter into a voluntary management agreement designed to protect the environment and maintain and enhance ecologically important areas.

# Essential development & infrastructure seven





### Policy Context

The Strategic and Corporate Plan acknowledges the need for physical infrastructure to support the provision, to the public, of essential services such as utility undertakings, transport and communication links and facilities for water and waste management. It is likely that, for logistical reasons, some of this may need to be provided within the rural area where other forms of development would not normally be permitted.

Having regard to the Strategic and Corporate Plan, the policy principles for essential development and infrastructure are that:

- in very exceptional circumstances, developments that are demonstrated to be clearly essential to the public interest, health, safety or security of the community may be allowed
- essential and minor forms of physical infrastructure should be accommodated within the rural area insofar as this is compatible with the primary objective of the Plan
- infrastructure development should be provided in such a way as to mitigate harmful environmental effects.



## 7.1 Essential development

RD1

Where a development, including infrastructure provision, is clearly essential to the public interest, health, safety or security of the community, the Department will generally support the proposals where they are in compliance with the primary objective of the Plan of conserving and enhancing the rural environment, even if they may conflict with certain specific policies. All relevant General and Conservation and Enhancement policies will be complied as far as possible. However, the Department will need to be satisfied that the particular choice of location can be clearly justified and that the proposals represent the best practicable environmental option. For this reason a detailed and comprehensive site selection study, forming part of a Rural Planning and Design Statement, together with more technical evidence such as environmental and/or traffic impact assessments may be requested. Annexes 4, 5 and 6 offer further guidance in these matters. For the avoidance of doubt, proposals for new telecommunications masts will be subject to this Policy RD1.

Measures to minimise any harmful effects on the environment should be incorporated into any scheme from the outset.

This Plan does not make provision for proposals that are clearly demonstrated to be essential to the well-being of the Island community but are of such a scale or nature as to be in conflict with the primary or general objectives of the Plan. Such proposals would require the formal amendment of the Plan.

### Policy RD1

Proposals for developments that are clearly demonstrated to be essential to the public interest, health, safety or security of the community and which comply with the general Plan objectives may, exceptionally, be allowed where:

- a) there is no alternative site available that, in the opinion of the Department, is more suitable for the proposed development;
- b) the chosen position for the development within the site will have the least possible visual impact on the surrounding landscape and would present the best practicable environmental option;
- c) materials sympathetic to the surrounding landscape are utilised. The preference will be for materials that will assist in harmonising the development with its surroundings;
- d) the development is of very high design quality and accords with Policy RGEN6; and,
- e) landscape design, as may be required by Policy RCE8, forms an integral part of the proposal.

## 7.2 Small-scale infrastructure provision

RD2

The Plan provides for minor forms of development such as electricity sub-stations and distribution pillars, small-scale telecommunications equipment (such as affixing additional or replacement antennae on existing structures), post boxes and other service apparatus to be supported where their siting and design does not conflict with the primary conservation and enhancement objective of the Plan. In this respect, the Department will encourage the sharing of existing facilities and supporting structures such as telecommunications masts.

### Policy RD2

Proposals for developments that will contribute to the maintenance and support of an efficient and sustainable infrastructure will normally be permitted where they would not conflict unacceptably with other Plan policies.



# landscape character assessment

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## Annex 1. landscape character assessment

This annex presents a summary of the landscape character assessment of the rural area. It is intended to guide the conservation, management and enhancement of the rural landscape. A similar assessment covering the urban area is embodied in Annex 8 of the Urban Area Plan. Together, these two studies give a clear insight into the distinct and varied landscape types that contribute to the unique and attractive character of the Island.

### What is a landscape character assessment?

It is a comprehensive study that identifies and details the different landscape types that comprise the Island. It categorises the landscapes into three broad types, each of which is then broken down into sub-zones. The assessment also incorporates a plan showing the make up of the Island in terms of landscape type. The term 'landscape' not only includes topography, vegetation and uses of land, but also the character and appearance of the built environment. The complete study is embodied in the document "A Strategy for the Conservation and Enhancement of Guernsey's Rural Environment", prepared by Land Use Consultants in 1989. A copy of this document is available for perusal at the Department's offices.

### Why have a landscape character assessment?

The rural area accommodates a surprising variety of landscape character types, each being largely determined by the underlying geology, landform, vegetation cover, climate, erosion and land use. It is the variety that contributes so much to the character of the Island and in this respect, it must not be assumed that one particular landscape type is somehow 'better' than another.

A very important and unifying element in many of the landscape types is the intricate pattern of field and roadside boundaries. Walls, hedgebanks, hedges and trees all make an enormous contribution to the character of the rural area. In fact, it is often the pattern, scale, materials and construction of these boundaries that help define the local distinctiveness of a particular area. Of greater significance, however, is the extent of damage to that distinctive character if traditional boundaries are lost or replaced by inappropriate means of enclosure. Retention of these features will, accordingly, be encouraged.

Historically, the different types of landscapes have played a significant role in shaping the development of the rural area as well as providing important areas of open space and wildlife habitats. Their contribution to the local distinctiveness of an area cannot be over-stated and it is important that they are preserved and enhanced whenever possible, for future generations to enjoy.

In this respect, the landscape character assessment is a valuable reference document that can guide developers, planners and the public when determining the particular landscape characteristics of an area. It will also form the foundation to any Rural Planning and Design Statement that may be produced during the life of the Rural Area Plan (see annex 4).

With this information in mind, any developments that may be allowed within the rural area will be expected to be designed and sited so as to respect, complement and enhance the character of the local landscape type.

# The landscape character assessment

The landscape of the rural area falls into three broad categories:

## 1. Coastal landscapes

–cliffs, western bays and northern shores.

## 2. Lowland landscapes

–wetlands, lowland hills and the central plain.

## 3. Upland landscapes

–escarpment, valleys and plateaux.

The three primary landscape types can easily be sub-divided into distinct areas, each with a different character and appearance. The landscape types are detailed as follows:

## 1. Coastal landscapes

- a) **The Cliffs** present the wildest and most dramatic scenery within Guernsey. Rising from the sea immediately south of St. Peter Port, they continue along the south-east and south coasts before giving way to the western bays at a point just west of Fort Pezeries, Pleinmont. Short, steep valleys punctuate the 13 or so miles (21km) of cliffs that present quite a sheer drop from the largely undeveloped agricultural land of the upland plateau.

*The cliff faces* along the south coast rise vertically from the sea to the plateau almost 100 metres above. The steep slopes are vegetated with gorse, bracken, grass and scrub but much of the lower cliff faces remain exposed granite. There is much greater tree cover (holm oak, ash and sycamore) along the east coast cliffs. This woodland provides a pleasant, green backcloth to the town, particularly noticeable when approaching St Peter Port by sea or from St. Sampson along the coast road.

*The cliff valleys* of the south coast drain the southern edge of the upland plateau and are, for the most part, short – between 350 and 900 metres in length. Semi-natural scrub dominates, with established trees only in the more sheltered upper reaches. The valleys of the south east coast cliffs, on the other hand, are in the lee of the prevailing winds and the vegetation here is more lush and varied with significant tree cover. Some of the valleys accommodate limited and small-scale development such as cafes / kiosks as well as evidence of the Island's military history.

*The cliff tops* cover around 300 metres of the upland plateau's southern edge and are generally flat, open pasture divided by low earthbanks with the occasional tree or building.

- b) **The Western Bays** form a 5½ mile (9km) long sequence of bays and headlands with an expanse of inter-tidal rocks and extensive sandy beaches, stretching from Fort Pezeries up to Port Soif. This coastline is of tremendous scenic quality when viewed from either the escarpment just to the east or from along the coast itself. The sweeping bays are backed by a series of mares, although these are now separated from the coast by sea defences and by the coast road. There are three sub-zones in this group, namely the headlands, the coast road and the mares.

*The headlands* are a series of rocky promontories, jutting out into the sea between the bays. Each offers easily accessible viewing points, provide for pedestrian access to the inter-tidal rocks and beaches and also accommodate visitor car-parks. Each headland is marked by a fortification, either Napoleonic era or German and often both.

*The coast road* running the length of the west coast provides virtually continuous views out to sea and gives access to the beaches and headlands. Development has largely been restricted to the landward side of the road. Tamarisk hedges and granite walls are typical boundary features along this road and verges of established dune grass are still evident.

*The mares* were originally lagoons in the low flat land at the mouths of valleys between the bays and the escarpment. They have been progressively reclaimed as grazing land and in some instances for development. Encouragingly, some flower-rich wet meadows still remain.

- c) **The Northern Shores** comprise a low, windswept area with extensive sandy beaches separated by rocky points and headlands. Backed by the horizontal expanse of lowland landscapes this coastline is still generally open and undeveloped. The zone divides into two sub-zones of headlands & islets and the muelles.

*The headlands and islets* of the north coast tend to be lower and less dramatic than the main west coast headlands. Nevertheless, most of these rocky promontories support important semi-natural habitats.

*The muelles* are areas of sandy heath lying between the beaches and marais. Primarily, of dune origin, they are characterised by scattered, often treeless hougues. L'Ancrese Common is the finest example, remaining unenclosed and generally undeveloped.

## 2. Lowland landscapes

- a) **The Wetlands** in the north of the Island are found in extensive low lying basins, many of which are poorly drained as they lie below the level of ordinary high spring tides. These wetlands divide into two sub-zones – the Braye du Valle and the marais.

*The extensive marais* across the north of the Island is, essentially, freshwater marshland with alluvial and peat deposits, still occasionally flooded, but increasingly drained to 'improve' the land. Although largely flat and treeless, it is broken up in places by scrub hedges and several tree covered hougues. The agricultural land and other areas of vegetation within the marais areas manage to retain much of their original character and provide important habitats for plant and animal life.

*The Braye du Valle* is similar in many ways to the marais. It is of marine origin, having been closed off from the sea and drained at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is a broad plain with higher land to both the north and south. Apart from the flatness of the old seabed, a noticeable feature is the grid layout of land divisions and road alignments.

- b) **The Lowland Hills** are a series of hougues across the north of the Island and are a unique element of the lower parishes. Stone outcrops on these hills were, historically, quarried and the abandoned workings often remain as quarry ponds and reservoirs, surrounded by scrub or woodland. Old farmsteads, small fields, trees and narrow, irregular lanes enclosed by boulder walls are all distinctive elements of this landscape type.

*The lowland escarpment* is of the same geological base (diorite) as the hougues, giving rise to many similar characteristics, but forms a relatively well-defined edge to the north of the central plain area, rather than a series of separated hills.

- c) **The Central Plain** is a higher, gently undulating area forming an intermediate level between the wetland areas to the north and east and the upland plateau to the south. It accommodates some fairly densely wooded tracts of land and while there is some variation in character across the area, the changes are too gradual to form positive boundaries to specific sub-zones.

### 3. Upland landscapes

- a) **The Escarpment** forms the northern and western edge of the upland plateau. It rises about 60 metres above the west coast mares and the central plain, acting as both a physical division and as a visual backdrop that can be seen from the lower ground throughout the north and west of the Island. From the crest of the escarpment, long views extend over the plain and coasts to the sea. The escarpment is a transition zone with a steep, largely tree-covered character of its own. It can be divided into the sub-zones of the west coast scarp and the inland scarp.

*The west coast scarp* is emphasised in places by stretches of woodland, particularly at Le Guet and behind Rocquaine Bay. In combination with patches of dense scrub and field boundary trees, this creates the general impression of a well-wooded slope. The trees are mostly native species, notably oak and ash, but with significant groups of pine and holm oak. Development has obscured some of the landform from view.

*The inland scarp* is less evident than that of the west coast, but is still a strong feature. Although there is little actual woodland, the combined effect of garden and hedgerow trees creates an impression of woodland from a distance. There is a greater variety of trees here than on the west coast scarp.

- b) **The Upland Plateau** is characterised by a network of hedges, banks, hedgerow trees and tree-lined lanes, often enclosing small pastures. This tight pattern tends to keep views short and development well screened. Interspersed throughout the plateau is a series of small hamlets, usually on lower sheltered ground. The parishes that make up this area each tend to have their own distinctive character and provide the basis for division into sub-zones – the western plateau, the Central Plateau and the south eastern plateau.

*The western plateau* is enclosed by hedgebanks and trees, with small, dispersed groups of buildings, often nestling within the valleys. The trees are concentrated in the westward draining valleys, while the open farmland on higher ground provides views out to the western bays.

*The central plateau* lies on the edge of St. Peter Port and has been influenced by the expansion of the town, with the separation between settlements becoming increasingly blurred. Tree cover extends beyond the valleys into the hedgerows and roadsides. The plateau is sharply divided by the two main valleys of the Island – Fauxquets and Talbot.

*The south eastern plateau* extends from the airport and St. Martin's into the urban area. The general character of this plateau is of established development interspersed with open fields and large gardens, all with a good cover of trees.

- c) **Valleys** reach far into the upland plateau in a series of narrow stream courses that drain down through the escarpment to the coast. The steep, sheltered slopes provide one of the main areas where woodland still survives in Guernsey. The valley system can be divided into two sub-zones, the valleys themselves and the area around St. Saviour's reservoir.

*The valleys* divide the plateau into a series of high ridges. In the valley bottoms, open meadows provide long views along the valley, while the valley sides are often wooded with a fine pattern of field boundaries. Small, clustered settlements are traditional in the valleys but other developments, including glasshouses, have crept in over time. The valleys of Fauxquets and Talbot are notable as being larger and broader than the others.

*The reservoir* at St. Saviour is the largest expanse of inland open water on the Island, formed by the damming of two valleys in the 1930s. It is surrounded by pine trees and semi-natural vegetation, providing rich habitats for wildlife.

## Key Issues for conservation and enhancement

Landscape, when viewed as a resource for the Island, has four key roles to play:

- it maintains an historic record of the changes in land-use, economic fortune, customs and taste which have occurred over time
- it offers a unique form of small-scale, intricate and densely occupied island landscape
- it creates a sense of identity or local distinctiveness for different parts of the Island and provides a backdrop to daily life
- it provides open space, pathways, wildlife habitats and opportunities for good views for the enjoyment of the Island's residents and visitors.

When looking at ways in which landscape types can be conserved and enhanced, it will be important to bear in mind these four key roles and to ensure that any new development does not lead to conflict with them. It is for this reason that efforts to conserve and enhance should be focussed and clear.

## Conservation of Landscape Features

The focus in landscape conservation must be on:

- retaining the essential 'structural' features of the landscape which give it its overall character, namely the cliffs, mares valleys and escarpments, headlands and coastal strips
- conserving the remnants of 'semi-natural' vegetation and wildlife habitats
- conserving the historic fabric of the landscape, and
- maintaining and strengthening the diversity of landscape character of different parts of the Island by ensuring that key features are retained and, where appropriate, new ones added.

## End note

The landscape of the rural area is under considerable pressure to change in response to trends in land use, economic activity and changing patterns of recreation. This process of change should not be allowed to erase historic evidence or obscure the essential and unique character of the landscape and its composite features such as traditional boundaries and field patterns, trees and important buildings and structures. The landscape character assessment will play a significant role in helping all to understand the complex issues that need to be addressed when assessing proposals for new developments within the rural area.

Staff will be pleased to advise, where possible, developers and the public with regard to siting and designing new developments such that the landscape character of the area is reflected and enhanced in any scheme. It may be the case that for policy reasons or by virtue of the particular landscape character that new development will not be appropriate for a given location and this should be borne in mind when approaching the Department for informal advice.

## Key

### Coastal Landscapes

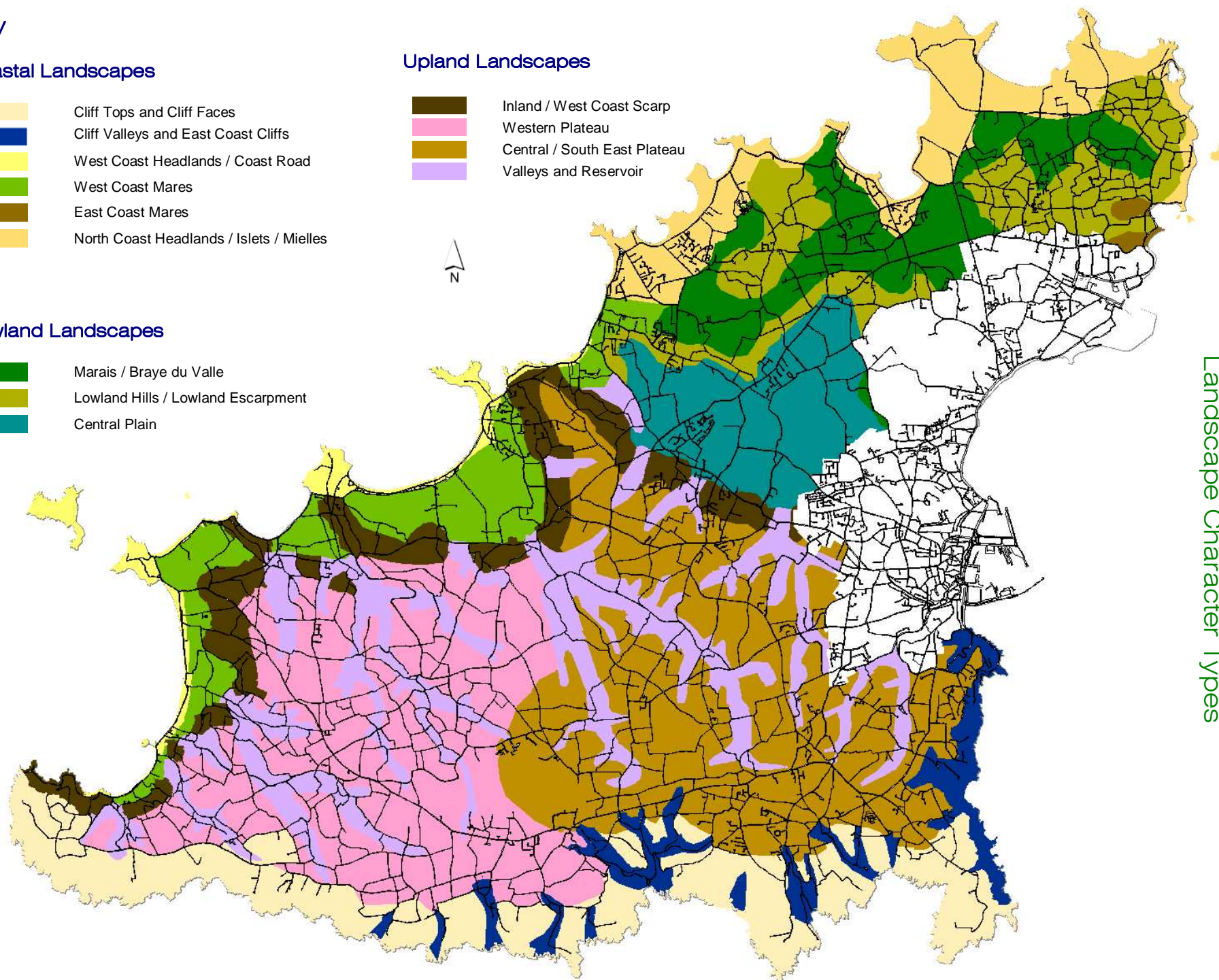
- Cliff Tops and Cliff Faces
- Cliff Valleys and East Coast Cliffs
- West Coast Headlands / Coast Road
- West Coast Mares
- East Coast Mares
- North Coast Headlands / Islets / Mielles

### Upland Landscapes

- Inland / West Coast Scarp
- Western Plateau
- Central / South East Plateau
- Valleys and Reservoir

### Lowland Landscapes

- Marais / Braye du Valle
- Lowland Hills / Lowland Escarpment
- Central Plain





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Wildlife on Guernsey is a fragile, yet important resource and the conservation of nature must be given careful consideration in any proposal for development. This annex gives a summary of nature considerations in the rural area and introduces Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI). The Urban Area Plan includes a similar assessment of nature conservation (UAP annex 5) and taken together, these documents give an insight into the importance of nature as an Island-wide resource.

A map and gazetteer identifying SNCIs accompanies the annex. The Phase 1 Habitat Survey, mentioned below, is available for inspection at the Department's offices during normal working hours.

### The importance of biodiversity

Biodiversity, or biological diversity, refers to the variety of all plant and animal life and their habitats within a particular area. Guernsey is fortunate in having a relatively rich and interesting biodiversity.

The wild flowers, birds, butterflies and moths, together with abundant shore and marine life make the Island an attractive place for visitors, businesses and residents alike. Biodiversity affects our lives in many ways, although we often take it for granted. However, the benefits of having a wide range of natural resources are invaluable, both in economic terms and in terms of the enjoyment and health of the community and visitors to the Island.

Maintaining a rich biodiversity is, therefore, essential and the Department will continue to ensure that new developments do not harm the fragile balance of nature on the Island.

### Habitats within the rural area

The Phase 1 Habitat Survey of Guernsey (1999) provided an initial assessment of the local nature conservation resource and identified the complexity of habitats and ecosystems within both the rural and urban areas. This assessment helps in the selection of sites for a Phase 2 Survey, which is a much more detailed look at specific SNCIs. Phase 2 Surveys will continue to be undertaken during the Plan period, where resources allow.



It is clear that some of the habitats are of more interest than others. An area of broad-leaved woodland will, for example, generally support more species than a field of improved grassland. However, even modest changes in land management can make a significant improvement to the biodiversity of a site. With a little thought, new developments can incorporate measures to improve biodiversity, perhaps by choosing plants that attract certain species of birds or insects. Staff of the Department will be pleased to give advice on such schemes to ensure that the planting is appropriate to the location. Exceptionally, SNCIs may be designated on the basis of the significance of the exposed geological outcrop.

Complex habitats such as marshy grassland and broad-leaved woodlands may have been developing inter-dependent plant and animal communities for centuries. Once destroyed, these habitats cannot be recreated. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that proposed new developments (including change of use to domestic garden) and land management schemes respect and, where appropriate, protect and enhance those habitats deemed to be of some importance. In cases where unacceptable

damage to the habitat is inevitable, then there will be a presumption against allowing development.

The SNCIs identified in this annex include the most important and irreplaceable habitats as well as examples of habitats across the range found within the rural area.

The range of recorded habitats is given in the table below:

habitat 	characteristics 
Woodland and scrub	<b>Semi-natural broad-leaved</b> ; Planted broad-leaved; Planted coniferous; Planted mixed; Scrub; Parkland; Scattered trees
grassland and marsh	<b>Unimproved</b> ; Semi-improved; Improved; <b>Marshy</b> (wet meadow)
tall herb & fern	Bracken; Tall 'weeds' & herbs growing on poor or disturbed land
swamp	<b>Reed beds</b>
open water	Brackish and fresh standing water (flooded quarries, reservoirs, ponds); Running water (streams, doughts)
coastland	Hard cliff (includes exposed rock above HWM), soft cliff Inter-tidal (mud/sand, boulders/rocks, seaweed beds, salt marsh); <b>Shingle banks; coastal grassland; coastal heathland; dune slack; dune heath; dune grassland;</b> open dune, dune scrub
rock exposure	Naturally exposed rock; Quarry faces etc
other types	Cultivated/disturbed land – arable and amenity grassland (playing fields, gardens, parks etc); Boundaries – species rich hedges, species poor hedges, earthbanks, stone walls

All areas defined in **bold** in the table are identified as being vulnerable or of sufficient importance to warrant inclusion as an SNCI. Other habitats are recognised as being generally robust or less rare but these may still be included, albeit on a more selective basis.

Sites of Nature Conservation Importance within the rural area are listed in the following gazetteer. More detailed information about each one can be found in the report entitled “[A Review of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance in the Revised Rural Area Plans](#)” produced by the Scientific Committee of La Société Guernesiaise in April 2003. The document is available for inspection at the offices of the Environment Department.

## Gazetteer of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

Please refer also to the accompanying location map and the Proposals Map.

West Coast	
Area	Characteristics
1 L'Ancrese Common	DG DH HC MG OD RB RW SC SG SH Sh SS SWF
2 Le Pont du Valle to Port Grat	DG OD SG Sh SS
3 Pulias pond & Headland	A DG OD RB SC SG Sh SM SS SWB
4 Portinfer, Port Soif & Grandes Rocques	DG OD RWB SG Sh SS
5 Fort Hommet	DG DW HC SS Sh SG SC
6 La Grande Mare	EB I MG PMW RB RW SAG SP SS SWF
7 South Vazon	MG RB SWF
8 L'Eree Headland	DG HC SC SG Sh SS
9 Rousse Mare / Claire Mare	MG NG RB RW SAG SG Sh SM SS SWB SWF
10 Rue Rocheuse	MG RW SAG
11 La Saline	NG RW SAG SG Sh SWB
12 Les Vicheries	MG RB RW SAG SS
13 Rocquaine	DG OD

South & East Coasts	
14 Cliffs and Cliff Valleys	AF BW CW HC I MG NG PBW RB RW SAG SB SC SG SH Sh SS SWF
15 Les Villets	MG RB RW SAG

Vale Marshes	
16 Vale Pond and Meadows	DG MG RB RW SM SWB

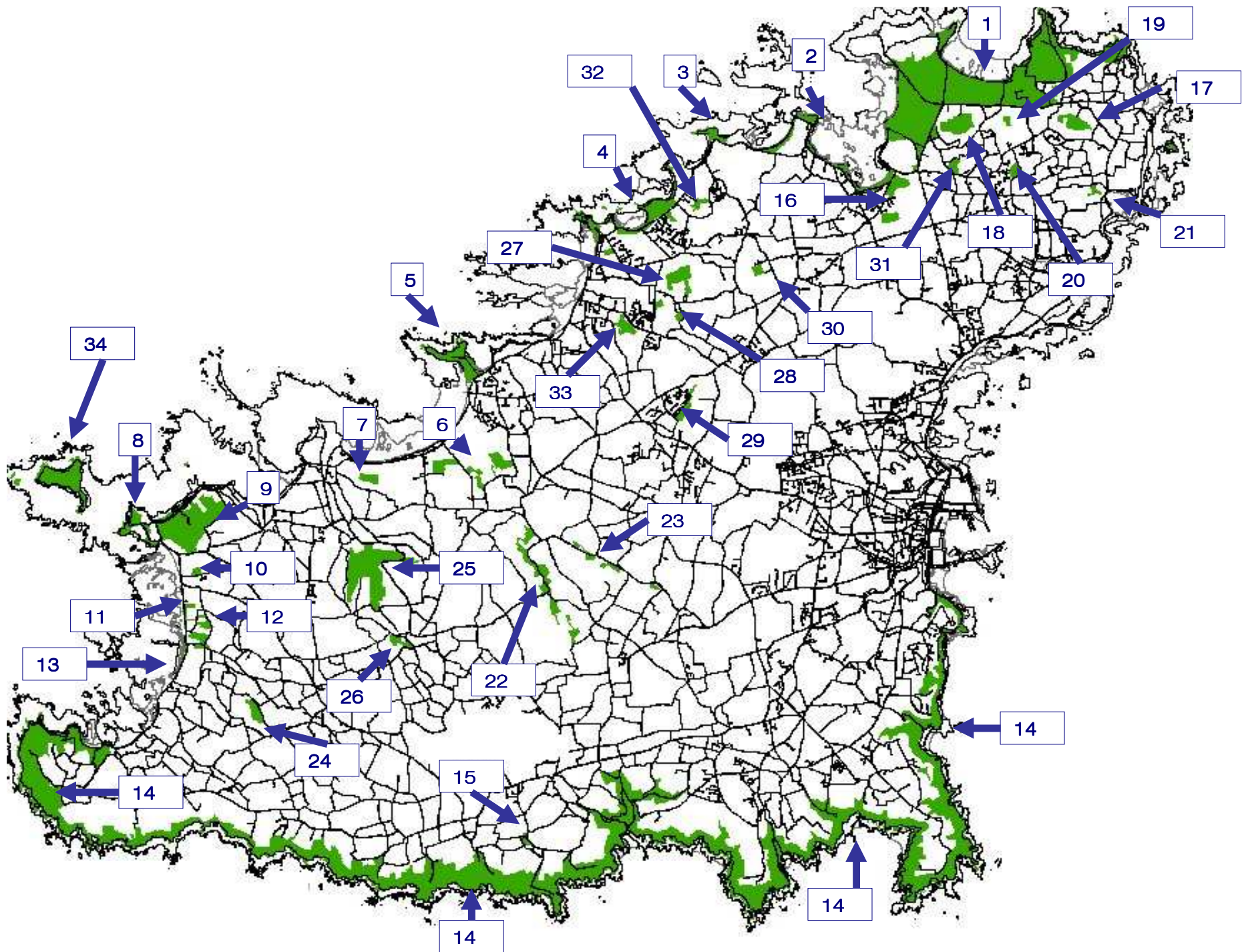
17	Le Grand Pre	EB MG RB RW SAG SWF
18	Le Marais	EB MG NG RB RW SAG SWF
19	Le Mielles	EB MG NG SAG
20	Cuckoo Lane	EB MG SS SWF
21	Bordeaux	MG RW SAG SWB

Inland Valleys		
22	Fauxquets	BW EB I MG RW SAG SWF
23	Talbots	BW EB MG NG RB RW SAG SWF
24	Quanteraine	BW MG NG RW SAG SS SWF
25	St Saviour's Reservoir	BW CW FM MG PBW RB RW SS SWF
26	Sous l'Eglise	BW EB I RW SS SWF

Other Inland Areas		
27	Vingtaine de l'Epine	EB I MG RW SAG
28	La Hougue du Pommier	BW EB MG RW SWF
29	Le Villocq	EB I MG RW SAG SS
30	La Garenne d'Anneville	BW NG RB SB SS SWF
31	Les Hougues Pères	BW SB SAG SB SS SWF
32	Hill & Quarry at Portinfer	DG SS SWF
33	Heritage Walk	BW I PMW SAG SS

Islands & Islets		
34	Lihou & Lihoumel	DG HC SC SG Sh SS SWB
	Various small islets around the coast	DG HC SB SC SG Sh SS

Key to Symbols			
A	Arable field	RB	Reed bed
AF	Flush	RW	Running water (fresh)
BW	Broad-leaved woodland (semi-natural)	RWB	Running water (brackish)
CW	Coniferous woodland	SAG	Semi-improved grassland
DG	Dune grassland	SB	Bracken
DS	Continuous scrub woodland	SC	Soft cliff
EB	Bank	SG	Coastal grassland
FM	Mixed woodland	SH	Coastal heathland
HC	Hard cliff	Sh	Shingle
I	Improved grassland	SM	Saltmarsh
MG	Marshy grassland	SP	Swamp
NG	Unimproved grassland	SS	Scrub
OD	Open dune	SWB	Standing water (brackish)
PBW	Broad-leaved woodland (planted)	SWF	Standing water (fresh)
PMW	Mixed woodland (planted)		



# archaeological assessment

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This annex offers advice on how to deal with proposals for development where a site is known, or suspected, to be of archaeological importance.

### Why the Plan seeks to protect archaeology

Guernsey has a particularly rich archaeological heritage with evidence of human settlement and activity from the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Significant remains in the rural area include:- prehistoric landscapes, burial mounds, standing stones, medieval road patterns, iron age and medieval field systems, fortifications, agricultural, domestic and ecclesiastical buildings and ancient settlements. Few parts of the Plan area are likely to be free of archaeological interest.

The Plan will, where possible, give protection to the archaeological heritage of the rural area which provides invaluable and irreplaceable information about the past. It is part of the shared heritage of the community and, in addition to its intrinsic interest, is an important resource for education, recreation and tourism as well as for the Island economy in general.

### What forms do archaeological remains take?

Archaeological remains can take a number of forms. In some cases substantial standing structures survive, such as at Le Dehus, which is of international importance. Many archaeological structures are also Scheduled Ancient Monuments and are offered significant protection under the Ancient Monuments and Protected Buildings Law, 1967. In other cases, however, only vestigial remains of structures are evident, such as the medieval settlement at Albecq. The most problematic cases to deal with, however, are sites where there are no surviving structural remains or where there are only the faintest of traces of potential archaeology within the landscape. The waterlogged deposits showing evidence of early agricultural activity at La Grande Mare fall into this category.

The form of the remains requires specific responses in terms of evaluation and protection. As no two sites are the same, it follows that methods of evaluation and protection will vary from case to case.

### What is the objective of archaeological protection?

The primary objective of the Plan is the conservation and enhancement of the rural environment. A necessary element of this objective is the need to avoid damaging archaeological remains by ensuring the careful control of new development. The importance and fragility of archaeological remains must, where appropriate, be balanced with new development and may need to take precedence over it.

However, because of the hidden nature of many archaeological remains, it can be difficult to reconcile their protection with development programmes. It is important, therefore, to consider both the evaluation of sites and appropriate mitigation / protection measures at the earliest opportunity.

### Evaluation

It will be the responsibility of the developer to demonstrate, as part of the planning application, the likely effect of the development on any archaeological interest within or adjacent to the site. Developers are therefore encouraged to assess the

archaeological implications of their proposals at as early a stage as possible. There are several steps involved in this.

The first step is to find out whether the development of a particular site is likely to affect archaeological remains. This can be tackled in a number of ways:

- the site might be, or be in the vicinity of, a Scheduled Ancient Monument or Building. Information on this can be gathered from the Register of Ancient Monuments and Protected Buildings which is available at the Greffe and at the Department's offices. The Sites and Monuments Record, compiled by the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer should also be consulted. This identifies all known archaeological remains. A copy is available for consultation at the Environment Department's offices. Developers need to be aware of statutory archaeological interest and its implications for their project.
- the individual site might be within a wider area of archaeological importance or be of archaeological importance in itself. A representative selection of such areas and sites is set out in the Gazetteer in this annex and identified on the location map, although this should not be considered an exhaustive list. A definitive list of sites of archaeological importance is compiled and maintained by the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer. The Sites and Monuments Record should always be referred to when conducting any archaeological research. An archaeological assessment is always advisable where development might affect sites which appear on the Record.
- the site might be, or be in the vicinity of, a site suspected to be of some archaeological interest. Local knowledge and consultation with the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer may be useful in identifying likely sites. Developers need to be aware of potential archaeological interest, especially if development involves excavation works.

Outside the above areas there is always the potential of archaeological remains. Further information can be gathered by research. The Island's Museums service can be a good source of helpful information. Historic maps (particularly the Duke of Richmond Map) may also be of assistance.

The best way to take this basic assessment further is:

- consult the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer
- undertake a desktop study. This is where a specialist is asked to bring together all available, existing information and to come to a view about the archaeological potential of a site
- where it seems more than likely that archaeological potential exists, it may be worthwhile to commission fieldwork, such as; boreholes, small trenches and geotechnical investigation to determine this with greater accuracy.

The last two suggestions are recognised as best practice in this area, but will depend on securing appropriate archaeological expertise. The Environment Department would, nonetheless, recommend that they be undertaken in appropriate circumstances. Their advantage to the developer is that they can allow greater certainty that the development can proceed to a planned programme, secure in the knowledge that the unpredictable nature of archaeological investigation has been tied down as far as possible. It also allows mitigation measures to be planned from the earliest stage, where appropriate.

## Protection and mitigation

If it becomes evident that a particular development will, or is likely to, have archaeological implications, a number of responses relating to protection of the resource are possible:

- preservation – where the archaeological remains appear to be of high significance. This is particularly likely where a monument and its vicinity is concerned, or in the case of areas of archaeological importance. In exceptional circumstances, this will mean that the development cannot proceed. More usually, it will mean that the development should be designed in such a way as to prevent harm to the remains, for example, through careful design of foundations.
- investigation / recording of remains – This is the most likely response where the presence of archaeology is strongly suspected. It may also be an additional response in the foregoing circumstances. The Department may use planning conditions to ensure that suitable provision is made. The investigation may be carried out by the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer or by an archaeologist employed by the developer.
- watching brief – This is the most likely response where there is less likelihood of archaeological implications. The Department may use planning conditions to ensure adequate access to the site for the Archaeology Officer.

Where investigation and recording, or access for a watching brief are required, the careful programming of the work will usually prevent any undue delay to the development.

## Gazetteer of AREAS of archaeological importance

Please also refer to the accompanying location map

St. SAVIOUR	
L'Eree Headland and Lihou Island	Passage graves, prehistoric settlement, evidence of flint working, prehistoric/Roman salt working and post-medieval fortifications, medieval priory
Richmond Headland	Prehistoric standing stones, destroyed prehistoric monument and cists, medieval settlement and post-medieval fortifications
Les Tranquesous	Iron Age settlement, with associated house structures, pits, postholes and other features

VALE	
L'Ancrese Common	Numerous prehistoric sites of both local and European importance – passage graves, cists, standing stones and fortifications from Napoleonic era to twentieth century. Whole area very sensitive to disturbance. Also includes Vale Church and environs
Headlands at Rousse, Port Grat, Portinfer and Port Soif (part Vale, part St. Sampson)	Evidence of prehistoric flint working, cists and possible remains of prehistoric tombs

St. MARTIN	
Jerboung Peninsula	Bronze Age triple bank and ditch. Other fortifications up to the twentieth century.
Saints Bay	Multi-period defensive earthworks
Petit Bôt (part St. Martin, part Forest)	Multi-period earthworks
La Moye	Promontory defended since prehistoric times
Fermain Bay and environs (part St. Martin, part St. Peter Port)	Evidence exists that Fermain Bay was used as a landing place since at least the Roman period. Multi-period fortifications

CASTEL	
Grand Rocques Headland	Evidence of prehistoric flint working, medieval settlement and post-medieval fortifications
La Grande Mare	Neolithic activity over a wide area. Surviving waterlogged parts may contain archaeological evidence
Hommet Headland	Evidence of prehistoric flint working, Iron Age field systems, extensive medieval settlement and post-medieval fortifications
Kings Mills	Medieval road pattern, field systems and mills
Castel Church and environs	Evidence of prehistoric and Roman settlement pre-dates the medieval parish church
St. George	Ruins of 12 <sup>th</sup> C chapel, holy well and feudal court-house within bounds of medieval estate

TORTEVAL	
Pleinmont	Field systems which follow patterns from the medieval period
Pleinmont Headland	Medieval field pattern, La Table des Pions and post-medieval fortifications

FOREST	
Petit Bôt (part Forest, part St. Martin)	Multi-period earthworks
La Corbière	Prehistoric earthworks. A stone built castle is illustrated on the Legge report of 1680

St. PETER PORT	
Havelet & Fort George	Fortifications dating from the Napoleonic era
Fermain	Fortifications

### Gazetteer of individual SITES of archaeological importance

Please also refer to the accompanying location map

St. SAVIOUR	
1. La Route des Frances	Prehistoric flints and pottery
2. Le Trepied at le Catoroc	Prehistoric megalithic burial chamber
3. Pre du Galet	Remnant of prehistoric boundary wall
4. Hougue Fouque Mound	Stone axes, grinding tools and an iron spur found in nineteenth century
5. Chemin le Roi at le Catoroc	Track passing Le Trepied to the south east is one of the ancient Chemin le Roi
6. Chapelle Dom Hue	Masonry remains of a probable Benedictine cell, contemporary with Lihou Priory
7. St. Saviour's church and churchyard	12 <sup>th</sup> C church possibly on pagan site. Standing stone, inscribed with cross
8. St. Appoline's chapel	Medieval chapel
9. Le Moulin du Mont Saint	One of three 19 <sup>th</sup> C windmills engaged in the production of cement. Tower still standing.

St. PIERRE DU BOIS	
10. La Longue Rocque	Standing stone
11. Fort Grey	Bronze Age settlement, Briquetage site – late Iron Age or Roman salt making, prehistoric urns
12. St. Peter's church, churchyard and environs	Part 14 <sup>th</sup> C, mainly 15 <sup>th</sup> C
13. Les Arquets	Prehistoric stone implements, medieval pottery

VALE	
14. La Rocque Qui Sonne	Remnants of large passage grave
15. Weather stone	Standing stone
16. Vale Mill	Windmill in this location since c.1787, includes German observation tower
17. Picquerel Barrow	Barrow recorded in nineteenth century. No above ground trace visible today
18. Old sea wall	A stretch of the old sea wall of Braye du Valle

St. SAMPSON	
19. L'Islet – Sandy Lane	Cist
20. Sandy Hook	Cists within circular enclosures
21. Les Anneville	13 <sup>th</sup> C Manor and chapel Garenne d'Anneville – rabbit warren
22. Oatlands	Brick kilns, oldest dating from 1850
23. Grand Fort	Bank constructed to keep back the sea and create a saline, now used as a footpath

St.. MARTIN	
24. Priory of Martinvast	Medieval priory belonging to the Norman Abbey of Blanchelande which held land in St.Martin's
25. La Gran'mère du Chimquière	Anthropomorphic standing stone. Possibly Neolithic, modified during Gallo-Roman period
26. St.Martin's church and church yard	Medieval church with graveyard
27. Sausmarez Mill	Seigneurial 14 <sup>th</sup> C mill
28. Sausmarez Manor	Originally medieval, 16 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> C

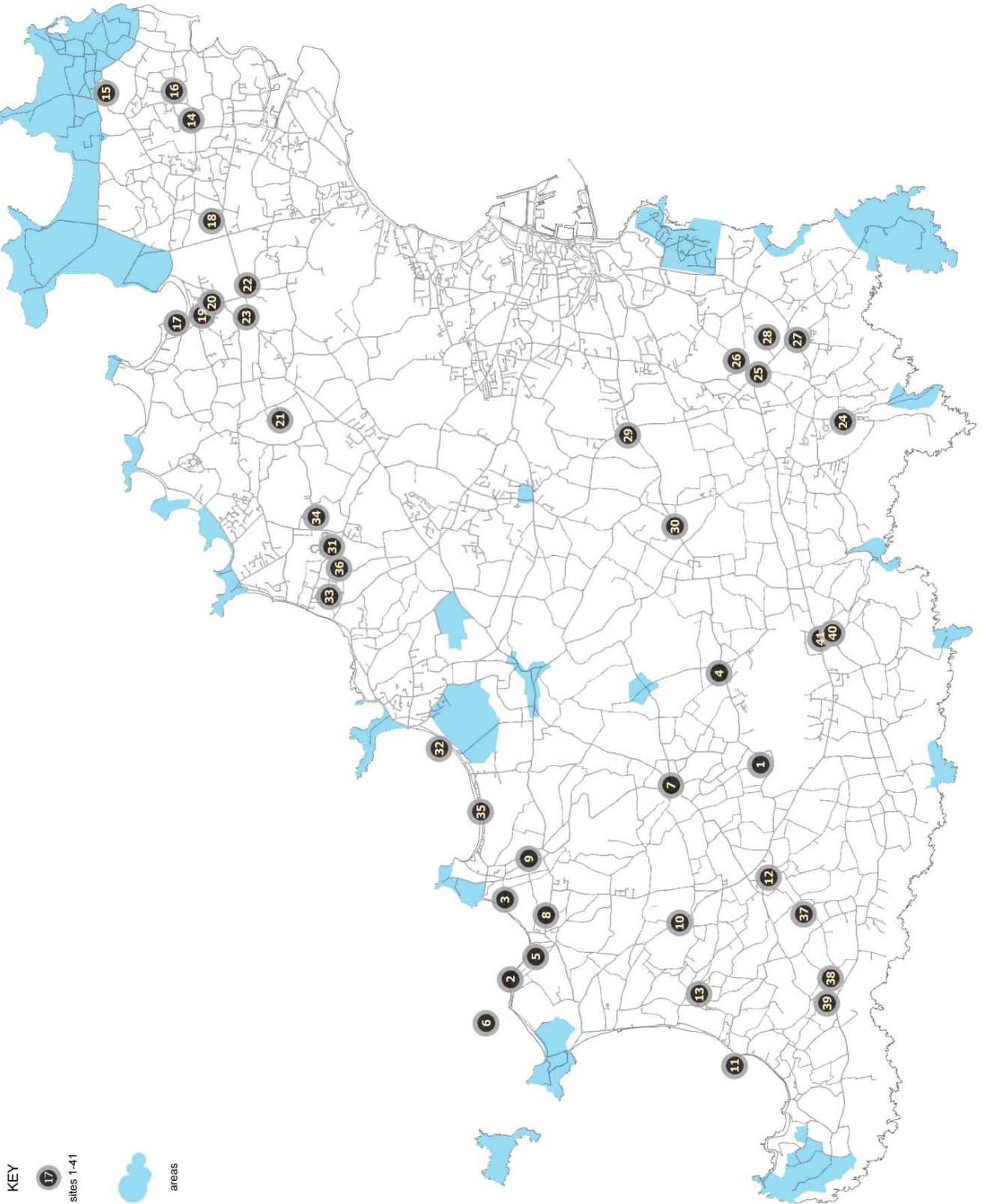
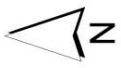
St. ANDREW	
29. Bailiff's Cross	Stone dating from c. 6 <sup>th</sup> C
30.St. Andrew's Church & churchyard	Medieval church with graveyard

CASTEL	
31. Clos du Pont	Neolithic / Bronze Age settlement
32. Vazon Bay	Peat deposits containing prehistoric forest lie below sand on beach. Evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age activity
33. Cobo Long House	Site of house constructed 800 to 1150 AD now built over
34. Hougue du Pommier	Pottery finds indicate presence of building in the medieval period, also prehistoric pottery
35. Fosse aux Feves Earthwork	Star shaped earthwork within sand at Vazon
36. Ozanne Tower	Folly incorporating demolished prehistoric monument

TORTEVAL	
37. Le Colombier	Partly reconstructed medieval dovecote
38. Torteval Church and churchyard	Ground plan and sub floor levels of medieval church may still exist under churchyard
39. Les Buttes	Earthworks associated with post-medieval firing range following the line of the road

FOREST	
40. Forest Church and churchyard	Medieval church, possible megaliths built into structure
41. Le Bourg	Probable medieval settlement pattern, incorporating standing stone 'Perron le Roi'

# Areas and Sites of Archaeological Importance





# planning & design statement

# A n n e x

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## Annex 4. planning & design statement

This annex explains the range of planning and design guidance that will be available within the rural area. The purpose of this guidance is to help secure an appropriate planning and design approach to ensure that development achieves the conservation and enhancement objectives of the Plan.

The guidance offered here is designed to cater for a range of sizes or complexities of development, whether it be for an individual site or for various developments within a particular part of the rural area. The procedures in each case are similar with the site or area being carefully analysed so that all opportunities and constraints can be identified. Using this structured analysis, appropriate design principles will be established which will inform the planning and detailed design of development.

In all cases, the guidance offered will serve to highlight specific General and Conservation and Enhancement objectives of the Plan where there is discretion for interpretation and will assist both the applicant and the Department to reach a suitable planning and design approach for development. The guidance is not a substitute for an environmental impact assessment or a traffic impact assessment, which, in certain circumstances, may be required in addition to a Rural Planning and Design Statement.

The guidance detailed here should not be seen as a planning hurdle but rather as helpful advice that encourages good practice. However, **in appropriate circumstances the Department will require a Rural Planning and Design Statement to form part of a planning application for the development of specific sites.**

### Types of planning and design guidance

There are two forms of guidance as follows:

#### **Rural Planning and Design Statement**

This is a site-specific assessment normally prepared by the applicant to demonstrate how individual sites can be developed beneficially in terms of land use, form of development and their relationship with the surrounding landscape.

#### **Area Design Statement**

This is guidance normally prepared by the Department applying to all developments within a particular area. It will identify and describe the unique or special character of an area and provide guidance on how its locally distinctive characteristics should be respected when formulating development proposals. Preparation of this form of guidance will involve local communities.

In exceptional circumstances a Rural Planning and Design Statement may not adequately address issues arising from major development proposals. Opportunities for this kind of development within the rural area are very limited, however if the occasion for such development does arise, within the policies of the Plan, a Development Brief will be prepared by the Department. The Department has published a manual on development briefing, which contains additional information and the Department's staff will offer applicants appropriate advice in these circumstances.

**The two forms of guidance are explained in further detail as follows:**

## Rural Planning and Design Statements

### What is a Rural Planning and Design Statement?

A Rural Planning and Design Statement analyses the characteristics of a specific site and its surroundings in order to set out principles for its development. It will specifically address issues such as land use, access, form of development and assimilation within the landscape.

The objective of the Statement is to assist in the design process by ensuring that development proposals respond to the opportunities and demands of the specific site and its surroundings and take full regard of the conservation and enhancement policies of the Plan. If an Area Design Statement has been prepared for the area concerned, this will also need to be taken into account.

A Rural Planning and Design Statement, prepared by the applicant, is submitted alongside the planning application and assists the Department in its assessment.

### When will a Rural Planning and Design Statement be required?

A Rural Planning and Design Statement can be carried out for any form of development and is an aid to the planning and design process that can resolve potential conflicts at an early stage. However, the Department will require the submission of a Rural Planning and Design Statement in the following circumstances:

- large-scale development or redevelopment proposals such as social housing development
- larger scale conversion schemes, for example the conversion of a disused hotel to residential accommodation
- all development proposals within Areas of High Landscape Quality and Conservation Areas excluding minor extensions and alterations
- any other development likely to have a significant impact on the rural landscape due to its design, siting, scale or generation of activity.

The Department will not normally require a Rural Planning and Design Statement to be submitted with an application for a domestic extension. On the other hand, applications for development within particularly sensitive areas such as Areas of High Landscape Quality and Conservation Areas may well merit a Statement. **Applicants are therefore strongly advised to ask for advice on whether a Rural Planning and Design Statement is required and how it should be prepared.**

### Who will prepare a Rural Planning and Design Statement?

In most cases the prospective applicant will be responsible for the preparation of a Rural Planning and Design Statement which will be submitted with the planning application.

## What should a Rural Planning and Design Statement cover?

The Statement should contain two elements; a Site Appraisal and a Planning and Design Statement. These are detailed below:

### Site Appraisal

This could be a diagram, written description or both, which sets out the main characteristics of the site. This will enable the applicant to identify constraints and opportunities that may influence the development. This appraisal would cover:

- buildings or other physical features within the site
- the landscape character of the site and its surroundings, including trees and other landscape features within the site
- access and services
- boundaries
- levels within the site and in relation to adjoining land
- character of surrounding landscape and/or
- form, scale character and materials of surrounding built development; and,
- residential amenity issues (such as overlooking, overshadowing).

### Planning and Design Appraisal

This will describe how the development will respond to the Site Appraisal to create an appropriate design, form and/or layout, to minimise the impact of the development and enhance the locality. The Appraisal would include:

- proposed uses
- buildings and other features, trees and landscape features to be retained
- access and parking areas
- any new boundary treatments and landscaping
- provision of amenity space
- provision of storage areas and management of other paraphernalia associated with a particular land use
- measures to protect neighbour's amenity
- form and layout
- materials and styles; and,
- any particular measures that have been taken to minimise the impact of the development.

It is important that the Statement demonstrates how it has been informed by the analysis.

## Area Design Statements

### What is an Area Design Statement?

An Area Design Statement is a detailed study of a specific area that describes and analyses its physical and social characteristics. This can include its character in terms of the buildings and spaces between them, overall architectural style, materials used, special features such as boundary treatments and the landscape setting, as well as the way a particular area is used by its local community. This Statement will then inform design guidance intended to help applicants create developments that conserve and enhance the area's special character.

An Area Design Statement will provide communities with an opportunity to have a role in the decision making process within an identified area by becoming actively involved in the Statement's production.

### When should an Area Design Statement be prepared?

Unlike Rural Planning and Design Statements, the Department will not require an Area Design Statement to be prepared before considering applications. Instead, they will be prepared where the Department, in consultation with the community, considers that an area would benefit from this type of design guidance. Typical areas where they could prove beneficial include the Rural Centres and Conservation Areas. However the Department may identify other areas where they might prove beneficial.

Once prepared, the Department will use the guidance contained in the Statement when assessing whether a particular development is acceptable in terms of the policies of the Plan or the Law, for example when assessing whether development detracts from the character and amenity of the locality.

### Who will prepare an Area Design Statement?

The Department will normally prepare the Statement and will work in close liaison with the local community to identify the matters to be addressed in the Statement and to collate the information necessary to prepare it. In some cases this will involve assistance with surveys, photography and other fieldwork, the analysis of information and the formulation of policy. In some cases it may involve questionnaires, workshops and public meetings to ensure that the Statement is a true reflection of the views of the community as a whole.

## What will an Area Design Statement cover?

An Area Design Statement must accord with the objectives of the Rural Area Plan and will explain how the General and the Conservation and Enhancement policies in particular will be interpreted for a specific area.

The Statement will have two parts, which parallel the two stages of the Rural Planning and Design Statement:

### **Area Appraisal**

This will describe the visual character of the area in terms of:

- the boundary of the area concerned
- the landscape setting
- the evolution of the area
- the characteristics and details of the buildings and spaces within the area
- local landmarks and special features
- roads, streets and pathways
- enhancement opportunities; and,
- in Rural Centres – analysis of local facilities and associated social issues.

### **Design Guidance**

Design principles should be set out giving clear and practical advice, typically covering:

- general design approach
- advice on design for the various elements of the built environment
- built and natural features to be retained and enhanced
- spaces to be retained
- suggestions for enhancement
- advice on planting and landscaping; and,
- where appropriate, the compatibility of use within an existing area.



# environmental impact assessment

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## Annex 5. environmental impact assessment

This annex gives a brief guide to environmental impact assessment (EIA) within the rural area. For more detailed information, please refer to “[Environmental Impact Assessment – A Code of Practice](#)”, available from the Department’s office.

### What is an EIA?

It is a detailed process, undertaken by the developer, by which the effects of a proposed development on the quality of the environment; the use of natural resources; or, biodiversity can be identified and measured in an objective manner. It also looks at the ways in which people and communities may be affected by proposed developments and the likely implications of any such impact.

### When is an EIA required?

The simple answer is; when the proposed development, whether undertaken by a private developer or a States Department, would be likely to have a significant impact upon the environment. Examples of the kind of development likely to require an EIA, are; large-scale infrastructure projects, proposals with a high risk of pollution or hazard, proposals involving a major traffic impact and, projects with a significantly high demand for fresh water.

Some smaller projects may also require an EIA, depending on their likely impact upon an area or, upon where they are located (eg, close to a Site of Nature Conservation Importance).

In cases where an EIA is required, the Department will usually advise you within four weeks of a planning application being registered. However, it would make sense and save time if you asked the Department, well in advance of submitting a planning application, whether one is required. This procedure is known as a Request for a Formal Opinion and is explained further in the Code of Practice.

### What basics should the EIA include?

Briefly, it should include the following:

- a description of the existing site and the surroundings and of the proposed development
- a detailed analysis of the likely effect of the development on all aspects of the environment, including effect on people
- a detailed description of the measures that could be used to minimise the impact of a project
- a non-technical summary of the above information that can be easily read and understood by the public.

### What detailed information needs to be covered?

As no two projects are ever exactly the same, the information required by the Department will, obviously, vary from case to case. However, in the instances when an EIA is required, the Department will issue a Scoping Document advising on which factors should be addressed in respect of that particular proposal.

These factors are likely to include:

- impact on people and communities
- water (supply and likely threat of pollution to supply)
- air quality
- climate (any likely contribution to climate change should be addressed, eg. Emission of 'greenhouse gasses')
- landscape character and soils (reference to the landscape character assessment will be expected)
- plant and animal life
- archaeology.

Owing to the very complex and often inter-related issues involved, only qualified and appropriately experienced people should carry out an EIA.

Detailed information regarding the various characteristics of the development (eg; size of the development, use of natural resources, emission of pollutants, creation of nuisance and wastes etc.) should be given, together with information on all possible measures to prevent or minimise any adverse impacts.

The EIA should clearly show that the proposed development represents the 'best practicable environmental option'.

It should also be appreciated that the submission of a comprehensive EIA does not imply that the Department will look favourably on a proposal for development. All applications for development shall be determined on their merits in light of the policies of this RAP and of any other material considerations as may be required by the Law.

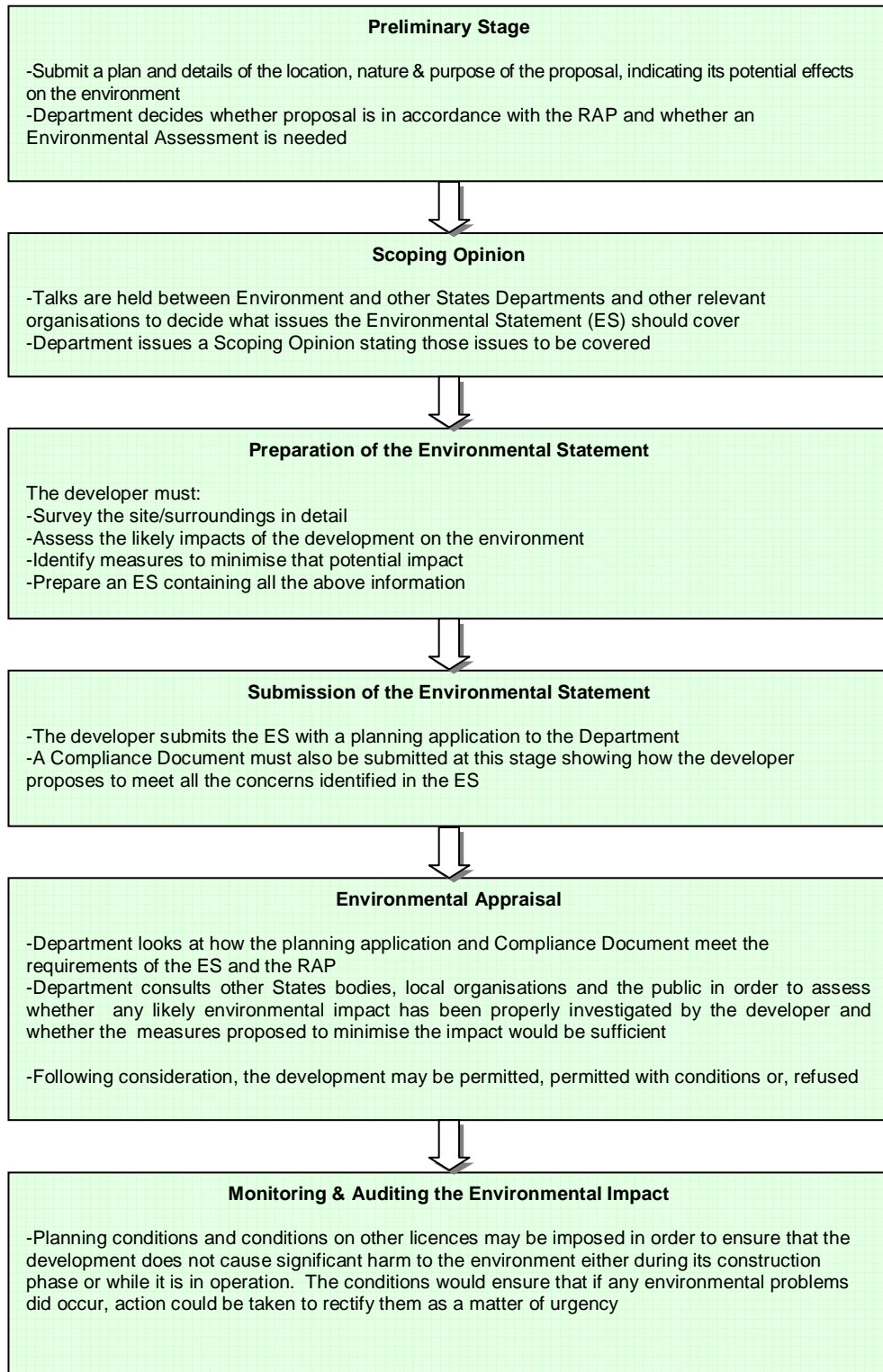
The Code of Practice explains more fully what is involved in the various stages of the EIA process. It also explains key terms and technical matters in an understandable and easy to read format.

**Please read the code of practice thoroughly before undertaking an EIA.**

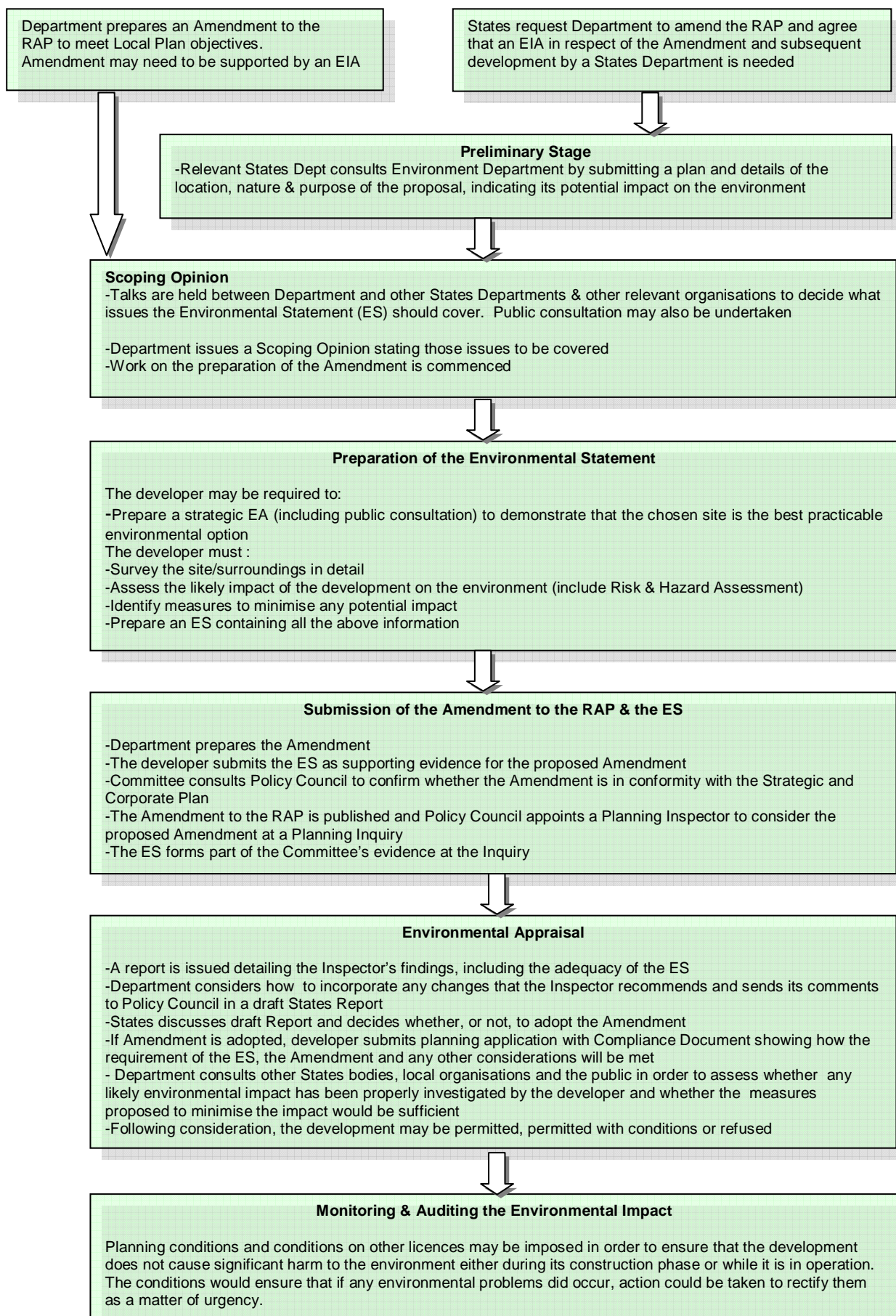
Staff of the Department will offer guidance on the likely need and content of an EIA and the two following diagrams represent simplified flow charts detailing the procedures involved.

## Procedures for undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment

- i) When the EIA forms part of a planning application submitted in accordance with the RAP (or where a States Department agrees to submit an EIA in support of a development proposal) the procedure is as follows:



- ii) When the EIA forms part of an Amendment to the RAP, followed by a planning application submitted in accordance with the Amendment, the procedure is as follows:



# traffic impact assessment

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## Annex 6. traffic impact assessment

This annex gives a brief guide to traffic impact assessment (TIA) within the rural area. By *traffic*, we mean all road user groups including; pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, public transport, cars, lorries and motorcycles.

### What is a TIA?

It is a study, undertaken by the developer, which enables the Environment Department to accurately gauge the likely impact of a development proposal on traffic flows, neighbours and general transportation patterns in the locality, or even island wide. It also suggests practical ways in which any potential adverse impact caused by traffic resulting from a proposed development can be prevented or reduced to an acceptable level.

Major developments, whether commercial, residential, retail or leisure inevitably generate more traffic. A TIA is valuable in establishing the likely volume and type of the additional traffic, the areas of potential impact and any measures required to reduce that impact to an acceptable degree.

The scale of the likely impacts determines the level of detail involved. Small-scale developments may only require a statement of the traffic movements that are likely to be generated while a major development may require a comprehensive and detailed TIA. Owing to the relative development restraint within the rural area, most TIAs are expected to be of the simpler type.

### When is a TIA required?

They are not required for every development. Those developments that are not likely to adversely affect traffic management or road safety generally do not require a TIA.

As a rough guide, the following scales of development would be likely to require a traffic impact assessment:

New housing	Developments resulting in the creation of 25 or more dwelling units
Hotels	Development that would result in the creation of 25 or more additional bed spaces or the creation of conference or leisure facilities intended to cater for more than 25 people at a time
Retail	Developments exceeding 100 sq.m gross floor area
Industry	Developments exceeding 250 sq.m gross floor area
Offices	Developments exceeding 200 sq.m gross floor area
Leisure	Developments resulting in additional peak hour traffic movements of 25 vehicles or more
Airport related developments	Developments resulting in additional peak hour traffic movements of 25 vehicles or more. The likelihood of abnormal loads, or significant volume of HGV movements
Other developments	Any development that generates additional traffic which, by its scale or nature is likely to affect journey times, the operation of highway junctions or adversely affect people and communities in other ways

These figures are for general guidance only, and the Department may request TIAs for developments not falling within the above criteria if it considers this necessary.

If additional traffic resulting from a new development is likely to affect existing journey times, the operation of highway junctions or affect people and communities in other ways, then a TIA would be an essential requirement of any such proposal.

The following criteria will be used to determine whether a development proposal requires a traffic impact assessment:

- the level of traffic congestion associated with the surrounding road network
- the likely impact on vulnerable road users
- the size of the development in terms of the volumes of traffic movements that it will be likely to generate
- the type of development in terms of the composition of the traffic movements that it will be likely to generate

In cases where a TIA is required, the Department will usually advise you within four weeks of a planning application being registered.

## What should a TIA cover?

As no two developments are the same, each TIA will differ from those previously considered. Prior to one being undertaken, the applicant should prepare a consultant's brief covering the scope and extent of the assessment to be undertaken.

Only appropriately experienced and qualified people should carry out a TIA.

As a general guide, a TIA would normally contain the following information:

### i) Background

- a description of the proposed development, the site and its surroundings
- location of proposed access points
- identification of peak hours and whether weekends will be used in the impact analysis

### ii) Base traffic conditions

- description of road network, junctions and access points in the vicinity of the site, including the level of congestion and availability of parking
- local traffic counts during peak hours

### iii) Site traffic generation

- trip generation rates and the source of the generation
- traffic generation during the peak and off peak hours

### iv) Traffic distribution

- method of traffic distribution both within and away from the site
- appraisal of need for on and off site highway works in order to achieve appropriate traffic distribution
- a statement of how measures for sustainable transport have been incorporated into the proposed development (eg. Pedestrian links and cycle-ways, alternative modes of transport)

v) Off-site traffic generation

- identification of other developments, whether existing, proposed or under construction, whose traffic is to be included in the relevant TIA calculations

vi) Traffic modelling

- detailed modelling of peak and off peak traffic flows on existing junctions and access points
- detailed modelling of peak and off peak traffic flows on proposed or altered junctions and access points

vii) Summary and recommendations

- a summary of the report with detailed recommendations and reasoning behind those recommendations
- a summary as to the sustainable transport initiatives incorporated into the development
- a non-technical summary, written clearly and concisely for members of the public to read

viii) Additional information

- the Department may request any additional information it deems necessary in the consideration of a planning application

A TIA should not be confused with an environmental impact assessment as certain planning applications will need to be accompanied by both forms of assessment.

Staff of the Department will be pleased to offer informal advice on the need and likely content of a traffic impact assessment, but will need clear and detailed information about a particular proposal in order to do this.



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This annex covers parking standards. The guidance follows on from that given in the Urban Area Plan, but there are differences. It is important, therefore that you follow the correct guidance for the Plan area.

### Parking standards

These standards apply to both new build and change of use applications. They are intended as guidance and are not, therefore inflexible. Variations will be allowed depending on the individual characteristics of each site and those of the end user. However, where conflict seems inevitable between the parking standards and the primary conservation and enhancement objective of the Plan, then the Plan objective will take precedence. If the conflict appears to be irreconcilable, then planning permission would not normally be granted.

Where a development will include two or more uses, each use will be assessed individually for its parking requirement. Shared parking areas will be considered if it can be demonstrated that such uses will operate at different times.

The criteria for assessment will include:

- the need to conserve and enhance the quality of the rural environment
- access and amenity implications for other residents
- highway safety
- type of development proposed
- accessibility to the Rural Centres by foot or bicycle
- accessibility for the mobility impaired
- level of public transport provision
- on street parking capacity and proximity to public car parks.



Car parking spaces should be conveniently accessible, without the need to manoeuvre within the public highway. However, in light of the primary objective of the Plan, the Department will normally resist proposals that would result in the loss (whether partial or not) of features of local distinction such as walls, hedges, hedgebanks or trees.

Where provision is made for disabled drivers, then the parking space should be located within easy reach of the entrance to the facility or premises and should generally be larger to allow for wheelchair access to the driver / passenger doors.

Cycle parking provision will also be sought in conjunction with new developments, both for employees and for the public, as appropriate. One secure (loop type) cycle stand should be provided for every 10 car parking spaces for all forms of development other than housing. A higher level of provision may be appropriate for facilities likely to attract a high number of trips by cycle.

Where appropriate, provision should also be made for motorcycle / scooter parking.

All floor area figures relate to gross floor area or, where stated, public floor area (pfa).

Rural area parking standards	
Type of development 	Standard required 
<b>Housing</b>	
Barn conversions etc	Assessed on merits
Less than 3 habitable rooms	1 space / dwelling
3 to 6 habitable rooms	2 spaces / dwelling
More than 6 habitable rooms	3 spaces / dwelling
Sheltered housing	8 spaces / 10 units
Hostels and other residential establishments	1 space / 3 occupants
<b>Retail</b>	
Shops	1 space / 20 sq.m
Public houses / restaurants / bars	1 space / 8 sq.m pfa
<b>Offices</b>	
Professional services	1 space / 70 sq.m
Other offices	1 space / 100 sq.m
<b>Industrial</b>	
Industrial premises & distribution warehousing	1 space / 50 sq.m
Wholesalers	1 space / 20 sq.m
<b>Others</b>	
Hotels	1 space / bedroom + provision for restaurants, bars, function rooms as quoted elsewhere in this table
Function rooms	1 space / 4 sq.m pfa
Cinemas / theatres	1 space / 30 sq.m pfa
Churches / community halls	1 space / 20 sq.m pfa
Medical / health centres	4 spaces / consulting room + 1 space / each staff
Other forms of development	Assessed on merits
<b>Additional requirements for disabled people</b>	
Employment premises and retail, recreation, community & education	<p>1 space where total is 10 – 20 spaces</p> <p>2 spaces where total is 21 – 50 spaces</p> <p>Where total spaces are above 50, additional requirements for disabled people will be assessed on merits</p>

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This Annex provides further detailed information relating to the rationale for the inclusion of Rural Centres within the Rural Area Plan.

The Plan identifies Rural Centres in response to Policy SP19 of the Strategic & Corporate Plan. This strategic directive notes that the provision of local shops and services is important in providing for local needs and reducing the need to travel. Therefore, where sites are well located to the Rural Centres the retention and improvement of local support services and community facilities may be supported, provided that the development is of a scale consistent with the function and character of the local area.

As a result, the Plan identifies five Rural Centres which are located in St Martin, Forest, St Peter's, Cobo and L'Islet. These are depicted by the use of a star symbol on the Proposals Map.

### How have the Rural Centres been defined?

The Rural Centres have been defined by using a formula based on a set of indicators of sustainability, highlighting common areas that lie within 500 metres of each indicator.

The eight indicators are:

- A general store selling fresh produce
- A post office
- Public transport services at least once every hour during the day
- A doctor's surgery and pharmacy
- A public primary school
- A bank or cash machine
- A play area or open amenity area such as a public park or garden and beaches with toilet or kiosk facilities and
- Recycling facilities

All indicators within each of the eight groups are plotted on a map of the Rural Area and a 500 metre buffer is then placed around each group of eight indicators. The area where there is an overlap of at least five separate indicators represents an 'area of sustainability'. It is within these areas that the Rural Centres lie. By adopting such an approach, no one part of the Rural Centre is more than 500 metres away from at least five indicators.

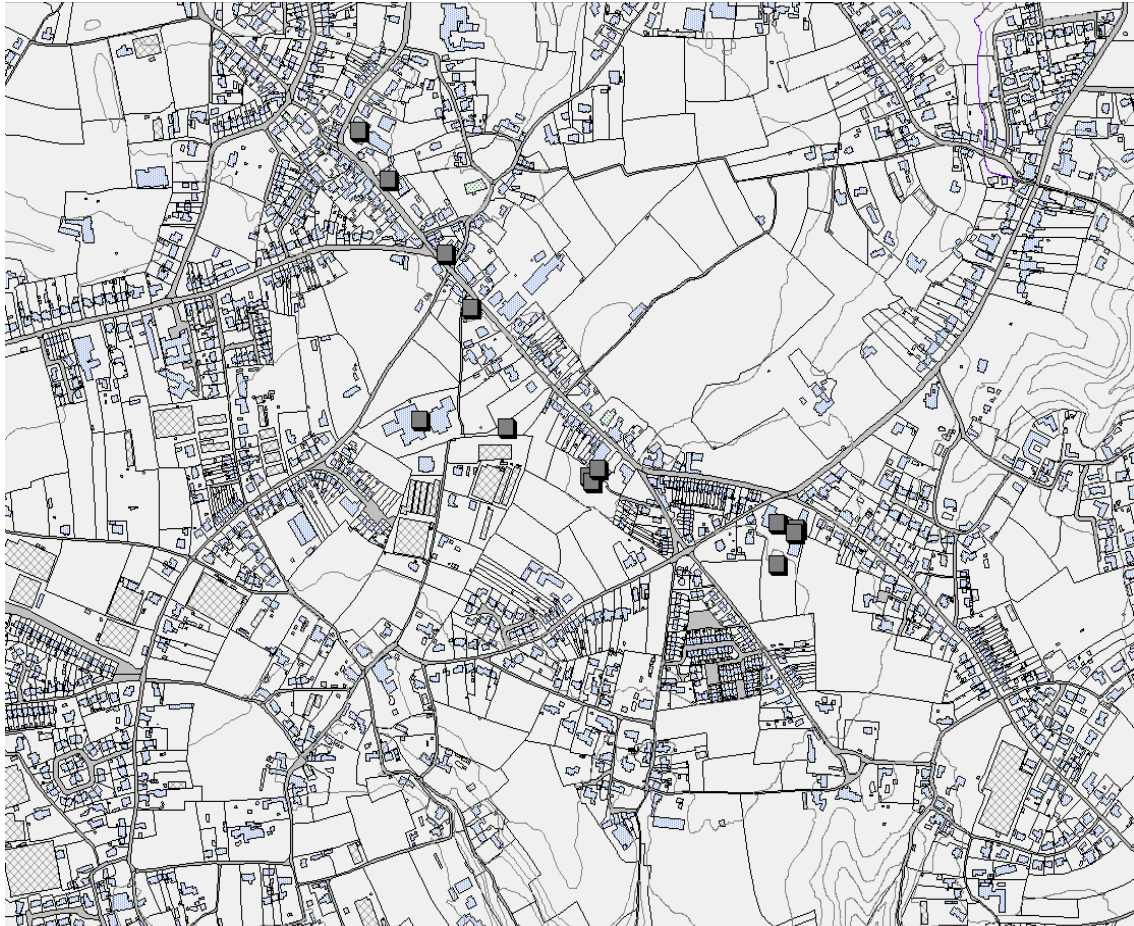
Owing to the way in which rural communities and economies can change over time, it is acknowledged that some areas may gain additional indicators of sustainability under the provisions of this Plan. For this reason and because of the ways in which local communities use them, it is important to note that **it is not possible to precisely identify the extent of the Rural Centres.**

The extent of each Rural Centre will be influenced by a number of interlinking factors such as the nature of the physical environment, the relationship of the shops and services within the area of sustainability and the nature of the local transport network.

The diagrams below illustrate the indicators of sustainability at St Martin, Forest, St Peter's, Cobo and L'Islet.

The information provided within this annex is intended to aid the interpretation of the information contained within the Plan regarding Rural Centres and is therefore included for guidance purposes only. The diagrams are not intended to define the extent of the Rural Centres. They illustrate the sustainability indicators that result in the Rural Centre designation. This information is not binding on the Department and should not be regarded as a definitive method of determining whether a particular site is considered to be well related to a Rural Centre.

### St Martin's sustainability indicators

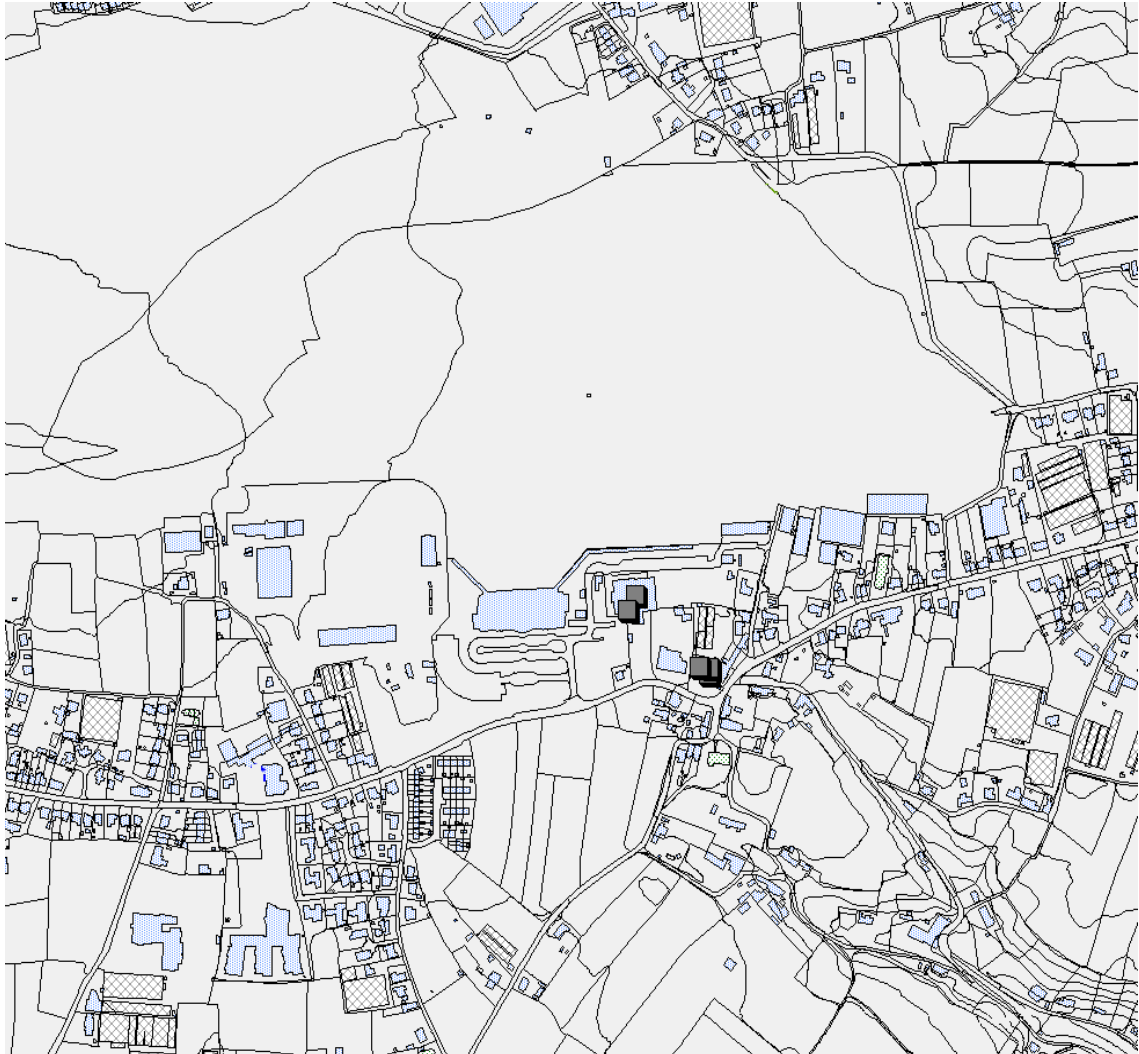


Not to scale.

For purposes of clarity, the Public transport services sustainability indicator is not illustrated.

**Note: This drawing is not intended to define the extent of the Rural Centre**

## Forest's sustainability indicators

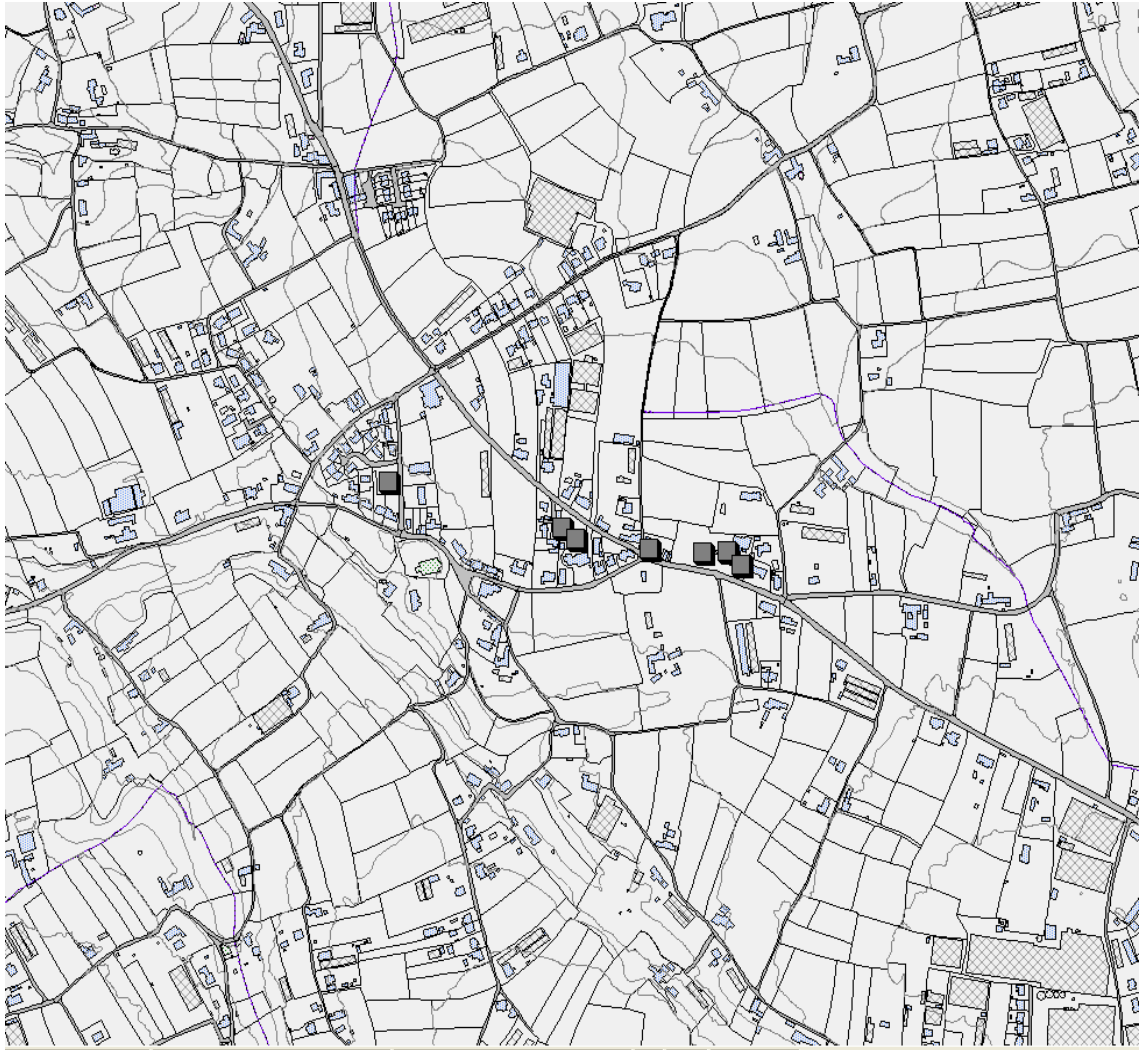


Not to scale.

For purposes of clarity, the Public transport services sustainability indicator is not illustrated.

**Note:** This drawing is not intended to define the extent of the Rural Centre

## St Peter's sustainability indicators

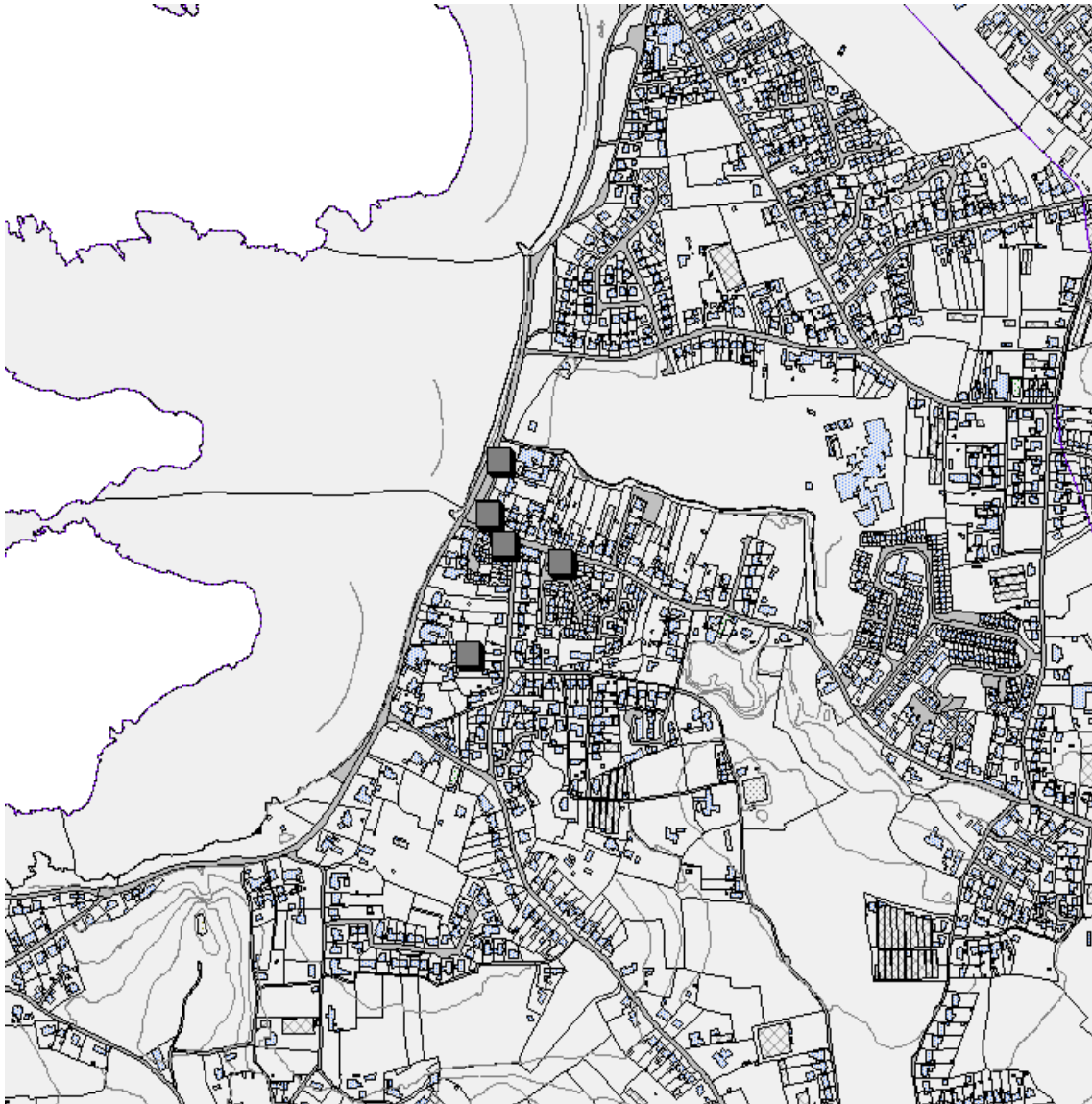


Not to scale.

For purposes of clarity, the Public transport services sustainability indicator is not illustrated.

**Note: This drawing is not intended to define the extent of the Rural Centre**

## Cobo's sustainability indicators

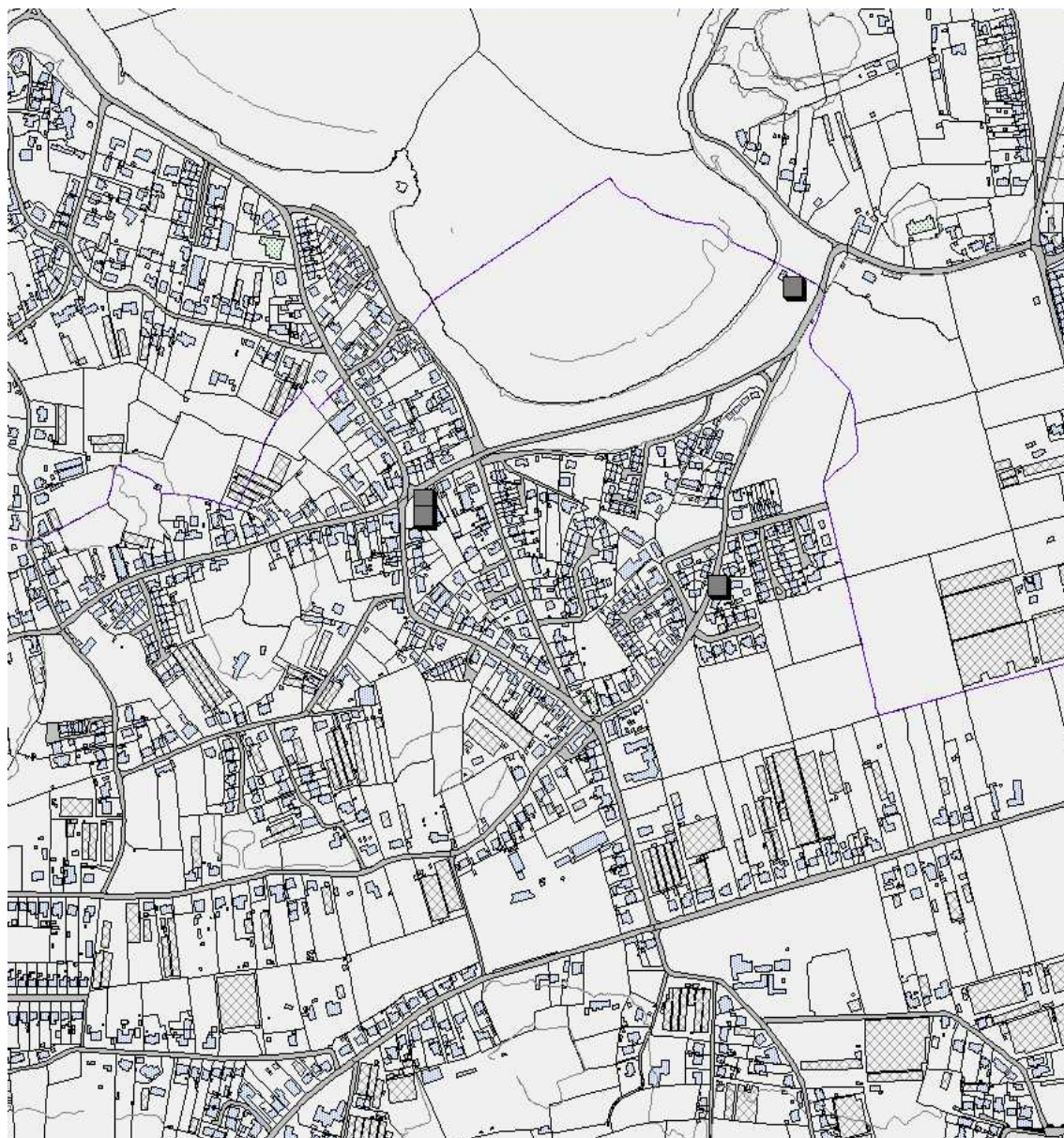


Not to scale.

For purposes of clarity, the Public transport services sustainability indicator is not illustrated.

**Note:** This drawing is not intended to define the extent of the Rural Centre

## L'Islet's sustainability indicators



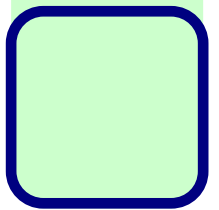
Not to scale.

For purposes of clarity, the Public transport services sustainability indicator is not illustrated.

**Note: This drawing is not intended to define the extent of the Rural Centre**

key terms used  
in the RAP

Glossary





The Department wishes to involve the public more in the planning process and has therefore avoided the use of jargon, wherever possible, throughout the Plan. However, there will always remain words and phrases whose meaning is not immediately apparent. This glossary aims to explain some of these terms in the context of the Plan.

Please be aware, however, that they are not necessarily legal definitions and that some of the terms may have other meanings in different contexts.

Accessibility	The ability of all people to enter or move between places and facilities. It can apply to individual buildings, open spaces, Rural Centres and to transport networks.
Acknowledged demand	The need of any sector of the Island community for a facility or development that is recognised as being necessary to the operation, well-being or longer-term future of that sector. The need may be specifically identified in the Strategic and Corporate Plan but where it is not, the Department may seek advice from relevant qualified bodies when determining <i>acknowledged demand</i> .
Agricultural land	Any land used, or with good husbandry, capable of being used for the purpose of any trade or business of dairy farming, the producing, rearing or maintenance of livestock, market gardening or the outdoor cultivation of flowers, bulbs or nursery stock and includes land which was, but no longer is, covered by a glasshouse if the land is capable of being used as aforesaid and land which is covered by a glasshouse but does not include land used as a garden other than a market garden. (Taken from 1966 Law)
Amenity	The 'feel' of a place in terms of it being pleasant or agreeable. In respect of residential property, <i>amenity</i> relates to the feeling of 'homeliness', which is a combination of pleasant living space within, provision of natural light, privacy, security, and where appropriate, pleasant space outside.
Ancillary	In planning terms, this generally relates to uses that are entirely subservient to and dependent upon the main use of the site / building and which are relatively minor in scale and level of activity.
Biodiversity	Short for <i>biological diversity</i> : the variety of all plant and animal life and their habitats within a particular area.
Best practicable environmental option	Or <i>BPEO</i> . The choice that provides the greatest benefit or the least damage to the environment as a whole (both long term and short term), at acceptable cost. BPEO decision making process has to be systematic and thorough with relevant consultations to give a comprehensive assessment of the situation. Please refer to the Department's publication entitled "Environmental Impact Assessment – Code of Practice".
Brownfield site	Also known as <i>previously developed land</i> . Land which is, or was, occupied by a permanent building or structure and infrastructure such as roads. It also includes land within the <i>curtilage</i> of an existing building. It does not include land used for agricultural or horticultural purposes, fortifications, or sites where a structure is disused and now forms an integral part of the open landscape.

Built environment	The combination of characteristics and features of a particular area that have been made or influenced by man.
Coastal kiosk	<p>An informal and relatively low-key retail/catering facility accommodated within a small building located adjacent to a beach or on the cliff-top. Most kiosks offer simple hot or cold food with limited seating either inside or out. They also sell a range of goods associated with the enjoyment of the coast, such as buckets &amp; spades, inflatable toys, wind-breaks and beach wear.</p> <p>Kiosks are considered by the Department to be an ancillary element to outdoor recreation. An exact definition of a <i>coastal kiosk</i> is not possible as no two are the same, but the Department's staff will be pleased to advise whether Policy RE5 is applicable in a particular case.</p>
Conversion	Development that involves works to a building to facilitate a different use (eg; barn to residential). Proposals that would require significant works to the fabric of the structure, such as rebuilding of external walls, may be regarded as being 'new-build' rather than conversion.
Curtilage	The area of land associated with a building and used for purposes ancillary to the primary use of that building (eg; a house and its original garden, but normally excluding any paddock / field area).
Density	A simple ratio of units to an area (eg; number of dwellings per hectare or vergee).
Development	The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land and includes the making of any material change in the use of any building or land (Section 40 of The 1966 Law). <i>See note on the Law.</i>
Dower unit	An addition to a house normally used for the accommodation of dependent relatives of the occupiers of that house. Usually an extension or converted outbuilding. Sometimes referred to as a granny annex or widow's third.
Garden centre	<p>A retail establishment offering a broad range of plants, shrubs, trees and other goods associated with domestic gardening, including tools, fencing, pond equipment, garden furniture, pet accessories and seasonal products.</p> <p>Usually have a combination of covered and open sales areas. Some garden centres also have small cafés. This is only a general description and not a legal definition.</p>
Greenfield site	Open land that is not developed other than for agricultural, horticultural or recreational purposes. Glasshouses are legally regarded as being greenfield sites. Please also see note on <i>brownfield sites</i> .
Habitable room	Bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms are generally considered to be <i>habitable rooms</i> but bathrooms, hallways and landings, utility rooms and kitchens (unless a dining-kitchen) are not.
Heritage	Buildings, landscapes, culture or artefacts that have been handed down through the ages and which are generally recognised by the community as being of some significance.
Horticulture	The intensive growing of plants for food, medicinal or decorative purposes, such as in glasshouses or plant nurseries.
Hougue	Local name for a small hill or rocky outcrop.

Infrastructure	The basic facilities such as access roads, sewers, gas, electricity and water supply that are needed to serve developments.
Landscape	The character and appearance of land including its shape (topography), ecology, natural or man-made features, textures and colour.
The Law	The Island Development (Guernsey) Law, 1966 (as amended). Copies are available for purchase at the Greffe. There is a likelihood that during the lifetime of this Plan, a new law may be enacted. Before referring to the Law, please check that you are using current legislation.
Local distinctiveness	The special characteristics of a particular locality that make it noticeably different from other places.
Minerals Plan	A document prepared by the Policy Council for approval by the States. It will provide a framework to guide any future stone quarrying on the Island and will give information on all aspects of quarrying, including phasing, working practices, restrictions and final land restoration. A <i>Minerals Plan</i> is expected to be published during the lifetime of this RAP.
Primary objective	The conservation and enhancement of the rural environment. This is the fundamental tenet upon which the Plan is based.
Proposals map	The 1:10,000 scale map attached to, and forming part of, the RAP that shows the various policy areas referred to in the Plan.
RAP	The Rural Area Plan. This document.
Ruettes tranquilles	A network of public lanes where motorised traffic is encouraged to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders in order to promote the recreational value of this resource.
Sites & monuments record	Or SMR. A document listing and describing features of the Island's ancient past which still survive today. The record is prepared and maintained by the Culture and Leisure Department's Archaeology Officer.
The States	The States of Guernsey. The Island's Government.
Strategic & Corporate Plan	A document required by the Law and prepared by the Policy Council for approval by the States. It sets out the key objectives to be followed by the Department in administering the Law and preparing plans such as the RAP and UAP.
Street furniture	Items such as lamp posts, litter bins, bus shelters, seats, railings and signs which are found in, or near to, roads, streets and paths.
Sustainable development	That which meets the needs of the present generation without harming the ability of future generations to meet their own particular needs.
Sustainable drainage	The use of techniques to control surface water run-off as close to its origin as possible, before it enters a watercourse. This involves using engineering solutions that mimic natural drainage processes, such as reed beds that can slow down the flow and filter surface water run-off.
UAP	The Urban Area Plan, Review No.1 (approved July 2002).
Written Statement	The text of this document, stating the various policies applicable in the rural area and giving the rationale behind those policies.

