



# Environment Scrutiny Panel

## Urban Regeneration Review



**Presented to the States on 4th December 2008**

**S.R.15 /2008**

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## 1. Chairman's Foreword

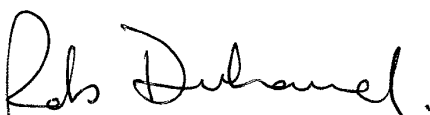
The development of the built up area is a matter for concern if the island is to preserve its countryside. The boundary between the two is under constant pressure - demand for better housing and population growth continues. Is there a better way to address these needs without spoiling the open spaces which remain?

With this in mind the Panel has undertaken a brief report to start the debate. The Panel is clear that for too long the urban district has been under-planned with too much emphasis on the new development at the waterfront. The improvement of the existing town and built up area is vital if islanders are to be convinced of the benefits of town living. Moreover residents must be more involved in planning the future of their own neighbourhood.

The Environment Protection and Improvement Area scheme previously provided opportunities for public involvement. The Panel considers that this scheme should be revived and extended to the wider built up area and the public re-engaged in the planning process.

By incorporating modern design and environmental sustainability into the refurbishment of existing buildings, a better quality of life and more effective use of space could be achieved. The Panel has set out three ideas to take this argument forward. The movement for the greening of buildings is very much underway elsewhere in the world and there is no reason why Jersey should not take advantage of this modern thinking to improve the built up area along similar lines.

In doing so, the island would be taking new steps to bring about an urban renaissance for the benefit of all.



Deputy R. Duhamel

Chairman, Environment Scrutiny Panel

## 2. Executive Summary

The Panel wished to analyse the impact of the current planning consultation documentation on innovation and the provision of modern, cost effective living opportunities within the Urban Area. Concern also arose over the ability to ensure the protection of amenity areas.

The Panel has noted that despite a raft of costly consultation documents and reports, no masterplan has been forthcoming that guides developers, residents of the area concerned or the public of the Island in a definitive manner towards a given, overarching objective. The Panel has found that residents and businesses of urban areas should have the opportunity to be involved in planning the regeneration of their area within such an overarching masterplan. Further, those community requirements should drive that regeneration.

A higher level of direction from the Planning Department on open green spaces, amenities for residents and a demand for higher standards of amenity space within new or regeneration developments in consultation with residents would be a useful step toward encouraging urban living in the Island.

The Island Plan 1987 divided the Town into ten small sections called Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas (EPIAs). The principle being that consultation took place with residents' of an area of town. The establishment of a residents group within the area led to work being done on traffic calming and general improvements in the streetscape. The residents drove the improvements, the Planning Department planned the changes and Public Services (now Transport and Technical Services) implemented them. The Panel noted that this system was inclusive, allowed all parties connected with development to have their say in what was happening, be it regeneration or new build. It worked from the 'bottom up'.

That Island Plan identified EPIAs within the Ring Road and the Panel considered that the EPIAs should be extended to include all of the urban areas as far out as First Tower, Georgetown and Five Oaks. Empowerment of communities to participate in the regeneration of their own areas should be encouraged.

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The Panel considered that attempts at integrating heritage buildings with imitation period houses had failed to work in most cases. In these modern times, it is possible to achieve the integration of heritage and contemporary buildings to increase density and to improve the sustainability of existing structures. There is a place for the juxtaposition of old and new together to move forwards into sustainable standards expected within today's developments whilst protecting an element of the Islands' heritage.

Refurbishment and improvement are often more environmentally sustainable alternative for regeneration than demolition and reconstruction.

Increased density by building higher can provide increased amenity space, enhanced living accommodation and a more varied environment such as internal green areas. The Panel noted a general presumption or recommendation in most current consultation documents against change and that there was currently no guidance on the appropriate height for taller buildings. A decision on what is acceptable and what is not for the height of buildings in the urban area is essential if developers are to be able to work within a masterplan.

It was clear to the Panel that there is little or no planning of transport within the urban areas. Responsibility for that should form part of the masterplan process and be within the remit of the Planning Minister.

All these issues and more are discussed within the full report. The Panel has made 15 recommendations, the two main points being:

**The Panel recommends that a definitive urban masterplan be drawn up.**

**The Panel urges the extension of the EPIA model to include all of the urban areas around the town area including First Tower, Five Oaks and Georgetown encompassing outer areas such as Rue De Samares in St Clement.**

## 1.1 Panel membership

The Environment Scrutiny Panel is constituted as follows-

Deputy Robert Duhamel (Chairman)

Connétable Ken Le Brun (Vice-Chairman)

Connétable Simon Crowcroft

Deputy Celia Scott Warren

Deputy Paul Le Claire

**Advisor Support** -Mr. D. Mason, Derek Mason Architects Ltd

**Officer Support** - Mr. M. Robbins and Mrs. C. Le Quesne

## 1.2 Key Findings

- Every community area when defined should take into account the needs of the inhabitants in the masterplan for its regeneration;
- Refurbishment and improvement are often more environmentally sustainable alternative for regeneration rather than demolition and reconstruction;
- Despite a raft of costly consultation documents and reports no masterplan has been forthcoming for the whole of the urban area;
- Regeneration should be driven by community planning requirements although ad hoc developments if considered within the masterplan can play a useful part as catalysts for regeneration;.
- The Planning Department should require a higher level of protection on open green spaces and amenities for residents.
- Identification of extended EPIAs should include all of the urban areas to protect the remaining backdrop green field areas.
- Increased density by building higher can provide increased amenity space.

## 1.3 Recommendations

1. The Panel recommends that a definitive urban masterplan is drawn up.
2. The Panel recommends empowerment of communities to participate in the regeneration of their own areas.
3. The Panel urges the extension of the EPIA model to include all of the urban areas around the town area including First Tower, Five Oaks and Georgetown encompassing outer areas such as Rue De Samares in St Clement.
4. The Panel recommends an inclusive planning process involving the residents and businesses of the designated EPIAs
5. The Panel recommends an investigation of schemes which would enable residents to purchase a share of amenity facilities likely to produce revenue.
6. The Panel recommends a preference towards regeneration as opposed to demolition.
7. The Panel recommends integrating heritage and contemporary buildings to increase density and to improve the sustainability of existing structures.
8. The Panel recommends that the Minister decides, through consultation, the appropriate height of taller buildings in the urban area.
9. The Panel recommends that when tall buildings are constructed in the urban areas they should include internal green floors to provide amenity space and enhanced standards of residential space.

10. The Panel supports the inclusive 'Bottom Up' approach of the EPIA system
11. The Panel recommends the immediate implementation of previous sustainable transport measures such as the 'cordon zone' contained within successive Island Plans.
12. The Panel recommends that all recommended traffic management policies should include proposed timescales.
13. The Panel recommends that responsibility for the planning of transport within the urban areas should form part of the masterplan process and be within the remit of the Planning Minister.
14. The Panel recommends that all car parks allocate spaces for the establishment of car club facilities.



## **2. Background to the Review**

This review began on 4th September 2008, as the Panel decided that a more comprehensive and evidence based response was required to the Supplementary Planning Guidance and Island Plan consultation documents issued by the Department of Planning and Environment in 2008. Public Hearings were held on 20th October 2008. The report was presented to the States on 4th December 2008.

The intention of the Panel in producing this report is to analyse the impact of Planning Guidance on innovation and the provision of modern, cost effective living opportunities within the Urban Area and its ability to ensure the protection of green areas.

The Guidance reflects the aims of the Planning and Environment Department. The Panel has investigated the impacts of the guidance and policies currently in place and how improvements or changes may benefit inhabitants. It has reviewed the historical documents leading to the character areas and definitions currently proposed.

The 1987 Island Plan policy BE8 saw the introduction of Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas (EPIAs), the purpose of which was to improve small areas of town as a result of working closely with the community using a 'bottom up' approach. The programme delivered its aims albeit at a slower rate than originally anticipated when funding was allocated. Transport and Technical Services (TTS) faced challenges with the timetabling of the EPIA work into their work programme.

The States approved a report published in 1995 entitled '2000 and Beyond' which focused on a new approach to EPIA principles and adopted a more streamlined, 'top down' approach to improvements with a reduced community input in areas such as Havre des Pas and the former Channel Television site area. However the revised approach did allow for a more efficient incorporation of improvements into the TTS work programme.

The final application of capital funds within the EPIA programme was allocated to the Street Life Programme for a part of St. Helier.

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The 2002 Island Plan did not include EPIAs and there was a move to 10 Action Areas (Policy BE6). These were identified as areas that were a potential catalyst for change such as the proposed arrival of the millennium park. The Parade was also considered an Action Area and a detailed development brief was commissioned.

The 2005 St. Helier Urban Character Appraisal by Willie Miller provided 10 Character Areas. These categorised areas provided detail of the specific character of the various areas of town and a structure which could be applied to enhance and protect them.

That report was the basis for the further work commissioned in the EDAW Study. It contained specific proposals for sites and issues laid out in the St. Helier Urban Character Appraisal Report. The key work was the further design guidance for the character areas. Supplementary Planning Guidance then added detail to the above-mentioned work.

Because of the differing messages coming from so many documents, the Panel considers that the messages to the public of the Island from the Planning Minister are too complicated. This moved the Panel to ask:-

1. What is the progress on relevant States' Strategic Aims to date?
2. How reasonable are the 10 character areas for the Built-Up Area suggested in the St Helier Urban Character Appraisal report and how do they fit with areas laid out in other reports such as the EPIAs?
3. What are acceptable, sustainable levels of density and amenity space for apartment living in the Town?
4. What are the implications of continuing urban sprawl?
5. What scope is there for innovative and alternative schemes to address the need for cost-effective, spacious homes?

The questions were the basis for the Terms of Reference and subsequently the Urban Regeneration Review.

## 2.1 Terms of reference

1. To assess progress made on relevant States' Strategic Aims to date;
2. To review the 10 character areas for the Built-Up Area since the introduction of the EPIAs (Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas) and their use as a planning framework for Urban Regeneration;
3. To identify sustainable levels of density and amenity space for apartment living;
4. To consider the implications of continuing urban sprawl;
5. To provide proposals of innovative and alternative schemes to address the need for cost-effective, spacious homes; and,
6. To examine any further issues relating to the topic that may arise in the course of the Scrutiny review that the Panel considers relevant.

## 2.2 Historical reports on urban areas

Taking the 1987 Island Plan as a starting point, this document divided the Town into ten small sections called Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas (EPIAs). Policy BE8 states:

*The Committee will prepare, with full public consultation, Environmental Protection and Improvement Area studies and plans for the town of St Helier and will take the lead in implementing improvements within the areas.*

The result of the Island Plan was that consultation took place with residents of area 2, which includes Brighton Road and Clearview Street etc. The establishment of a residents' group led to work done on traffic calming and general improvements in the streetscape. The residents drove the improvements, the Planning Department planned the changes and Public Services (now Transport and Technical Services) implemented them. This proved to be an inclusive but time-consuming process, completed in only a few of the areas.

The 2002 Island Plan (B1) required:

*'The Planning and Environment Committee will initiate an appraisal of the urban character and townscape of the town of St Helier as an aid to the process of preserving and enhancing its character and in guiding policy formulation and the assessment of planning applications.'*

The result of this was the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal by Willie Miller. This document outlined ten new areas and included some areas outside the ring road. Although the document was detailed in its description of each area, it completely reversed the rationale behind the EPIAs of the 1987 plan by moving the 'bottom-up' process to a 'top-down' process. It returned the planning of the town to the planners without major reliance on public consultation.

In relation to design guidance, the report by Willie Miller stated:

*'The purpose of guidance should not be to try and control the detailed development of architectural design, as designing buildings is not a planner's job – similarly, designing towns or parts of towns, is not an architect's job. Planners and architects rarely have training or skills in each other's fields and it is important to separate out the specialist roles and responsibilities. The intention of this guidance therefore is not to provide a straightjacket for development but to:*

- *Provide a set of simple principles to protect and enhance genuinely significant urban characteristics*
- *Give architects and developers flexibility to respond in a positive way*
- *Create conditions that encourage the development of sensitive and urban outcomes*
- *Improve communication and participation among developers, designers, planners and residents in the design development process.'*

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Supplementary Planning Guidance includes a raft of documents that build upon the policies of the Island Plan 2002 and provide more detailed advice on the way in which those policies are likely to be interpreted and applied.

The guidance documents do not have the same status as the policies contained within the Island Plan, which remains the first consideration when Departmental Officers or the Minister are making decisions on development proposals. The guidance documents do form a material part of the consideration process in the determination of planning applications and can carry substantial weight.

Supplementary Planning Guidance includes documents covering the following subject areas

- Development plans and frameworks
- Development briefs
- Planning policy notes
- Planning advice notes
- Design guidance notes

These documents are regularly updated by the Planning and Environment Department and cover the period from 1999 to 2008.

The Minister for Planning and Environment has launched a public consultation process relating to the production of a revised Island Plan. The draft consultation paper is entitled '*Island Plan Review: Strategic Options Paper*', dated July 2008.

The consultation responses are being considered by the Minister. The Panel review has focused on the overarching strategic principles of urban planning and has not focused on the detail of the Supplementary Planning Guidance documents.

The various reports and documents commissioned by the Planning and Environment Department focusing on urban development over the years have produced a number of theories and proposals on alternative character areas providing alternative selected areas and designations, which has led to some confusion.

## 2.3 Why Urban Regeneration?

The Panel believes that the urban area represents an important part of our economy. Urban areas can be the most beautiful areas to live and work in or they can be socially polarised, physically squalid and environmentally destructive.

The Panel's commitment to regeneration comes from a deeply rooted belief that regeneration can engage the community and can be sustainable, and its conviction that higher density with good quality amenity space is achievable and sustainable.

It also believes that refurbishment and enhancement should be considered before wholesale demolition and that masterplanning for the identified urban areas is essential.

Urban design and planning can manage the dynamism of towns and urban areas to tackle social problems and achieve social inclusion. Spatial planning remains a vital tool for creating urban areas for residents and a better quality of life for all inhabitants, through improving the physical environment and in particular, creating the public realm that provides a shared space.

The Minister for Planning and Environment<sup>1</sup> stated -

*'as I have said before, if you look at what was achieved in Broad Street and Charing Cross with a few hundred thousand pounds of beautification expenditure, the whole area suddenly took on a new light and it really was not very difficult. If you improve the public spaces, if you green them, if you use our traditional materials in paving, if you put in good street furniture suddenly the area comes to life and the owners of buildings invest in their buildings. If the environment is poor, if the streets are rundown people do not invest in their buildings. A very good example of that was at the time the Broad Street and Charing Cross regeneration project was underway it coincided with a downturn in retailing. I spoke to most of the retailers in York Street and they all had noticed an upturn in business because their area had improved and it really is not that difficult.'*

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<sup>1</sup> Transcripts from 20th October 2008 available on Scrutiny Website

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*You can put in place all the physical controls you want by saying that your policy is going to be that you do not want to have further developments in the countryside other than exceptional cases but if you put in place the right regeneration in the town it will happen all on its own.'*

The Panel considers that an holistic approach to planning, which balances the demand for housing, parking and amenity space, is essential to meeting society's needs. The only way to ensure that urban areas function for the residents is through the creation of places where people want to be.

Urban areas have, to a large extent, evolved to accommodate the growth in car use, without realising that the approach can isolate communities, degrade the environment and consume greenfield land. Today there is an understanding that social and environmental sustainability can only be achieved by embracing the concept of compact urban areas providing for the needs of the population.

The Panel supports the principle that sustainable regeneration of defined urban areas is effective and that those areas should be compact. Community urban areas should be multi-centred, and provide mixed accommodation styles which can accommodate trends towards the live/work ethos popular with working families. Regeneration should support socially mixed communities in a well designed and connected built environment. It should focus on environmentally sustainable procurement as the way forward. Emphasis should be placed on upgrading the existing urban fabric of community areas.

The regeneration of urban areas should focus on making every street and every designated character area more liveable. Planners and architects, government and developers need to acknowledge the links between physical, economic and social regeneration. Research and experience has provided an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the problems, together with examples, of what can be achieved with the right tools and skills.

Without the commitment from Government to initiate action to tackle the complex issues of an integrated urban regeneration approach, the investments required will be difficult to secure.

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The Panel considers that the problems facing the Island such as the continued need for additional housing units, improved public transport and amenity spaces, require strategic planning supported by masterplans for character areas to ensure sensitive increased density in the existing urban areas.

## **Recommendation 1**

The Panel recommends that a definitive urban masterplan is drawn up.



## 2.4 The Panels consultation process

The Panel issued a call for evidence in the local media on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008 with an advertisement in the Jersey Evening Post explaining the Terms of Reference and inviting written submissions.

A public Hearing with the Minister for Planning and Environment took place on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008.<sup>2</sup>

The Panel held a static display at the Town Hall, which commenced on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Members of the public who attended provided positive feedback and appreciated the opportunity to discuss the Panel's proposals face to face.

The following comment was made to the Chairman at the display by an architect

*'it is radically refreshing to see a plan which could allow specific areas to develop their own identity'.*

The Panel met with Councillors from Eastleigh Borough Council on the 13th November 2008 and discussed successful regeneration projects of existing buildings and the use of brown-field sites. The issue of devolving Ministerial powers to local elected representatives was discussed.

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<sup>2</sup> Transcripts from 20th October 2008 available on Scrutiny Website.

## **3 Urban Neighbourhoods**

The Panel considered that the most effective and practical organisation of the urban areas was set out in the 1987 Island Plan in the form of Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas (EPIAs). The approach was to involve the residents of the area in its development and improvement through full public consultation according to the local design character and the needs of the community. It highlighted the integrated land use approach of the Island Plan and drew together aspects of conservation, housing, and traffic, the location of commercial activities, open spaces and tree planting. All the areas were within the ring road of the town.

The 'bottom up' approach and inclusive nature of planning a community's area impressed the Panel. However, it considered that identification of further EPIAs should be expanded to include the outlying urban areas such as Five Oaks, First Tower and Georgetown and to ensure that appropriate action is taken to protect the 'green lung' areas which could be enhanced to soften the continued urbanisation.

The Panel examined some of the character area selections proposed in both the EDAW and The St. Helier Urban Character Appraisal but did not support the areas or designations as presented. It considered that the lack of community centred focus in each area would be to the detriment of the local communities. The Panel therefore concentrated its efforts on drafting outline proposals for the expansion of EPIAs into the urban area beyond that contained within the ring road.

The current system of ad-hoc schemes, built in an area because of single site availability for the developer lacks strategic planning and is a poor way to organise any urban area. The lack of community involvement in ad-hoc schemes can result in concerns from the residents, discourages social inclusion and can be worsened by the perception of developer led planning permission. The designation of large urban areas for one purpose could result in residential deserts with limited public amenities (e.g. newsagents, pharmacies, pubs etc) leaving many residents socially excluded. The potential for creating a dependence on cars is very real in such cases.

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The Panel's proposals to extend the EPIAs were discussed with the Minister at the Public Hearing of 20th October 2008, as were conceptual proposals for the devolution of Ministerial powers to empower the communities to participate in the regeneration of their own areas.

The authority to make decisions in both transport and planning, within an agreed masterplan, could be delegated to Parishes working with the Deputies, Roads Committees and residents' organisations. Should this proposal be pursued, safeguards would be required, to prevent small communities from 'kidnapping' strategic areas.

## **Recommendation 2**

The Panel recommends empowerment of communities to participate in the regeneration of their own areas.

The Panel suggests that the expansion of the EPIA concept affords an opportunity to identify a few 'green lung' areas still visible within the urban area. It also considers that the periphery of the urban area should be subject to significant environmental projects to soften the edges of urbanisation by providing a green backdrop. Extensive tree planting schemes and the provision of more amenity space within those buffer zones can achieve this.

## **Recommendation 3**

The Panel urges the extension of the EPIA model to include all of the urban areas around the town area including First Tower, Five Oaks and Georgetown encompassing outer areas such as Rue De Samares in St Clement.

When regeneration is funded and the environmental infrastructure is improved, private investment in the area often follows; this has been borne out all over the UK and evidence is widely available in the form of White and Green Papers.

The Panel and the Minister were like minded in the view that regeneration must be funded and that any monies raised by innovation and developer partnerships should be retained for the purpose of enhancing community areas -

The Minister said<sup>3</sup>;

*'...but the real key to it is the funds that will come out of The Waterfront because that is the one opportunity to fundamentally change the town....'*

He also stated that<sup>4</sup>;

*'.....That is the one chance old St. Helier will have to become a better town that we must somehow or other deliver a mechanism that ensures that the money that comes out of The Waterfront is not absorbed into the Treasury and is used only for regeneration of the town and that means street beautification project, it may mean some grant money, it will be the core of huge regeneration'*

Policy BE6 of the 2002 Island Plan states:

*'The Planning and Environment Committee will, in consultation with other committees and interested parties, initiate the preparation of development frameworks for each of the following defined Action Areas, identified on the Island and Town Proposal Maps:*

- 1. Pier Road and Commercial Buildings;*
- 2. Snow Hill and Fort Regent;*
- 3. Town Park;*
- 4. Randalls brewery and North of Town Centre;*
- 5. Gloucester Street and the Parade;*
- 6. Ann Street;*
- 7. Le Breton Lane;*
- 8. Hilgrove Street*
- 9. Havre des Pas; and*
- 10. Red Houses.*

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<sup>3</sup> Minister for Planning and Environment Public Hearing 20th October 2008 Transcript

<sup>4</sup> Minister for Planning and Environment Public Hearing 20th October 2008 Transcript

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*Development frameworks will seek to provide guidance on the nature and general character of development likely to be favourably considered in these areas and to identify the potential to secure improvements to the public realm.*

*Redevelopment within Action Areas will incorporate new residential accommodation whenever this is reasonably achievable and desirable in terms of creating a vibrant mix of uses.'*

The Panel is concerned that redevelopment of the action areas will be undertaken out of context with the urban neighbourhood districts within which these action areas lie. It is convinced that the successful designation and use of Action Areas can only be achieved through forward planning within the EPIA and urban neighbourhood context.

## **Recommendation 4**

The Panel recommends an inclusive planning process involving the residents and businesses of the designated EPIAs

In some cases, the developer will be the driving force of a development from inception to completion; in others, it will for a client, namely the States or the landowners. With each option, it is important for the developer/investor and communities to be closely involved in the process. The Panel would also encourage resident ownership of developments, where appropriate, this could be achieved by various means, for example forming a company to own a share of a development in their area.

## **Recommendation 5**

The Panel recommends an investigation of schemes which would enable residents to purchase a share of amenity facilities likely to produce revenue.

Strategic planning for proposed areas for major development provides the following advantages:

- an integrated approach to ensure the development is responsive to its urban neighbourhood context;
- quality urban design outcomes through more integrated planning and appropriate design criteria for development;
- co-ordination of infrastructure provision to service the development;
- focused community participation at an early stage of the development process;
- co-ordination amongst the various public and private sector organisations that will have an influence on the eventual form of the development; and,
- clarity about the vision and expected outcomes.

## 4. New Build

The Panel is of the opinion that high quality modern design buildings in a green setting can play a valuable role in the regeneration of a whole area and saw evidence of this during its visit to Malmo, Sweden in 2007.

The most comprehensive green development viewed in Malmo was that located at the Western Harbour. It is the realisation of a vision for the City and known as Bo01 and Bo02 the aim of the development had been to provide sustainable and varied housing. To that end, 35 architects were selected to participate in the project to provide diversity in the design and styles of the homes. A mixture of houses and apartments were included in the project with varying heights of low rise. The vehicle allocation per unit within the Western Harbour is 0.7. The project combines the use of wind generated energy with vacuum solar panel, geo-thermal heating and cooling, the use of bio-gas, recycled grey water and many other sustainable approaches. The developments achieve high density and amenity space



and are designed for people rather than vehicles.

The communities are not gated and a boardwalk promenade area has been developed along the coast for the wider community<sup>5</sup>.

The Panel is concerned that the planning guidance currently does not encourage bold and innovative thinking in urban regeneration.

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<sup>5</sup> Malmo, Sweden 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September 2007 Sustainable Building Conference

## 5. Integrating modern design in a traditional setting

The Panel is supportive of refurbishment and enhancement of the existing building stock where possible through the use of contemporary technology and building styles.

At its meeting of the 13th November 2008, the Panel welcomed Councillor Chris Thomas, the Chair, Eastleigh Local Area Committee, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and ICT, Councillor Peter Wall, Cabinet Member for Business and Skills, Eastleigh Borough Council, Graham Foreman, MD Foreman Homes, Steve Carrington, Director Foreman Homes and Town Planner. Issues discussed related to the sympathetic regeneration of buildings such as the former Church of the Resurrection in Eastleigh, which had won awards for being a most sympathetic regeneration of a brownfield site or recycled building project. The building had lain derelict for 16 years and now housed 25 key workers in one and two bedroom flats. This was compared with a completely different project which had resulted in the demolition of an estate as there was no apparent possibility of regeneration. Eastleigh was working on live/work properties and the building of small, high-density communities with small public areas.



The Panel was encouraged by the sensitive approach of the building and noted that its completion had impacted positively on the surrounding areas.

### **Recommendation 6**

The Panel recommends a preference towards regeneration as opposed to demolition.



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The Panel supports the contrast of heritage and contemporary styles in architecture and it sought clarification from the Minister for Planning and Environment.

The Panel Chairman asked the Minister at the Public Hearing of 20th October 2008 -

*'Within your design book of preferences do you have any specific objections to the juxtaposition of the modern schemes with the older properties in town if it is done properly?'*

The Minister responded -

*'The concept of delivering pastiche next to traditional buildings is usually a disaster. You are far better off to have contemporary design next to traditional architecture and that is what I promote all the time.'*

The Panel agreed that pastiche architecture was a poor attempt at recreating period buildings and that it was reassured by the Minister's preference for the contrast of heritage and modern styles.

Bavarian Government Building in Munich



This example clearly shows the successful integration of architectural styles and could be applied in an area in St Helier requiring regeneration such as Royal Crescent.

## **Recommendation 7**

The Panel recommends integrating heritage and contemporary buildings to increase density and to improve the sustainability of existing structures.

The Panel suggests that with technological advances in transparent building facades and the general motivation for high quality green buildings, facade design alternatives have

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shifted to utilizing new fenestration technologies and shading systems for optimal control of daylight and solar gains. The concept of dynamic facades (installing controllable elements on the building envelope) is not new and can provide a basis for regenerating existing buildings. It recognised, however, that it is only during the last few years that architects and engineers have started to trust these systems and use them in buildings.



Dynamic fenestration can be seen along the south facade the IMA reinterprets traditional Arab latticework screens in glass and steel: 30,000 light-sensitive diaphragms are designed to regulate the penetration of light into the building.

The unique use of high-tech photosensitive mechanical devices to control light levels and transparency—as<sup>6</sup> well as the beauty of the solution—made this building famous and piqued interest in the use of ‘smart’ materials (which can respond to changing environments) in buildings.

As with many buildings dating from the 1960s and early 1970s, such as those in Convent and Caesarea Court, it is now time to ask the question whether it is more sustainable to knock them down and start again or to refurbish the existing block.

The style depicted is an example by Cole, Thompson, Anders which could be adapted to refurbishment projects such as Convent Court.<sup>7</sup>



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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/ima/index.htm>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.colethompson.co.uk/projects-urban-design.php?typeid=13&projectid=4&imageid=0>

## 6. Tall Buildings

The Island Plan 2002 policy designates a general presumption against all forms of new development for whatever purpose in the green and countryside zones. The Panel concurs with the policy and strongly supports conservation of the countryside; the people of Jersey need to recognise that it will not be possible for everyone to have a three bedroom house with a garden and a garage in the countryside. The Public should be provided with realistic and more attractive alternatives that allow for external amenity space and larger living spaces. Whilst this may be a harsh truth to many, acceptance of that principle by the public opens doors to other ways of thinking.

The Minister for Planning and Environment confirmed the premise, stating:

*'Even if you say, "We're not going to allow a single person to come into the island from today," there is a huge pent up housing demand in our community and we live in a society where many people have been brought up to want to live in the countryside and, as I have said before, we have an aspirational mismatch. We cannot deliver that for everybody unless we rape our countryside. So what we need to do is to provide accommodation in the town that people want to live in, not that it is second choice. There are a lot of developments now in the town that are first-choice developments. They are good room sizes; they are well designed, whether they be contemporary designs or whether they are refurbishments of historic buildings, and we are offering choice .....*'

The Panel considers that town topography, which is essentially a geographical bowl, lends itself to accommodating taller buildings.

If sympathetically constructed using the modern green tower or vegi-tecture (Ken Yeang) approach, taller buildings could provide the necessary density with a reduced impact on the skyline as a result of the natural backdrop. One site which would lend itself to increased density is the Westmount Quarry.

# Urban Regeneration Review

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To date, such regeneration and redevelopment has been restricted to approximately matching the roofline of neighbouring buildings or replacing 'like with like'. This type of regeneration can be seen locally in areas such as Clearview Street and Brighton Road.

The alternative to the *status quo* approach is increasing the height of buildings which can offer larger room sizes for people to live in, improved quality of life and increase the amenity space available to the residents without exponential increase in costs.



8

'There have been many examples of complex, large scale structures envisaged as "autonomous ecological machines". The tower named La Tour Vivante (the living tower) in Rennes, France is no exception to this concept. The architects at Atelier SOA, took the approach a bit further; the complex includes apartments, offices, shopping areas and a library. They added about 7000 square metres of greenhouses in the building, which act as

a corridor and form the link between the different functions. At the same time, the greenhouses produce a large amount of fruit and vegetables within the framework of a program of rainwater and waste recycling.

In the southern facade, solar panels are integrated, which, together with the two wind turbines on top of the building, provide for large portions of the energy requirements of the building. There are also smart water-separation and recycling systems.<sup>9</sup>

The Panel is of the opinion that addressing the issue of tall buildings in urban areas to green tower specifications would make better use of valuable land resources and give opportunities to future generations to live in a high quality sustainable environment.

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<sup>13</sup> Pierre Sartoux's "The Living Tower." Source: [verticalfarm.com](http://verticalfarm.com).

<sup>9</sup> <http://archipelagoes.blogspot.com/2008/03/la-tour-vivante-atelier-soa.html>

## **Recommendation 8**

The Panel recommends that the Minister decides, through consultation, what the appropriate height of tall buildings in the urban area should be.

The Panel has been encouraged by the Minister's move to increase minimum room sizes and will continue to pursue further increases of that standard.

It is anticipated that due to the land scarcity some taller buildings will be required to meet housing demands. The Panel suggests that with current technologies both sustainability and good private and public amenity space can be achieved in tall buildings. An example of such building can be seen below.



The building has been designed by the architect Ken Yeang. He is currently working as the director of Llewellyn Davies Yeang, a leading design and architect firm. He is well-known for developing environmentally sustainable buildings and believes in the philosophy that buildings should work like living systems.

## **Recommendation 9**

The Panel recommends that when tall buildings are constructed in the urban areas they should include internal green floors to provide amenity space and enhanced standards of residential space.

Another successful architectural team with a Jersey connection, working on high density development of at least 200 flats in a range of sizes, plus social and commercial facilities, created 'The Harbour' using a distinctive architectural approach to reflect the dockland location. The theme of the design represents moored ships.



The 2002 Island Plan policy BE5 states:

*Tall buildings, defined as those above five storeys in height, or rising more than two storeys above their neighbours will only be permitted where the accompanying design statement justifies their exceptional height in urban design terms. In addition to needing to be in accordance with all other policies and principals of the Plan, Tall buildings will be critically assessed for their:*

- (i) appropriateness to the location and context;*
- (ii) visual impact;*

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.inhabitat.com/2008/07/21/fusionopolis-singapore%e2%80%99s-new-green-skyscraper/#more-12679>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.colethompson.co.uk/projects-urban-design.php?subid=119&typeid=13>

- (iii) *design quality; and*
- (iv) *contribution to the character of St Helier.*

*Development proposals which fail to justify their exceptional height will not normally be permitted.*

The St Helier Urban Character appraisal of 2005 identifies key factors that contribute to the character and use of various areas. In assessing and listing these characteristics, the document has become a guide to the *status quo* and supports the presumption in the Island Plan against taller buildings. The Panel feels that opportunities exist for taller, higher density buildings in the urban areas.

The Minister concurs with the Panel stating<sup>12</sup>:

*'We want to encourage developers to produce high-quality, new residential units in the town and to discourage them from producing them in the countryside, to the point that I would go as close as I can to a ban for the foreseeable future on new Greenfield sites out of the town or in the countryside. That obviously has consequences and the draft development guidelines are designed to push up densities where appropriate, push up heights where appropriate, and to look at some of the areas that you have really introduced me to, Mr Chairman, in relation to communal amenity space and the advantages of communal amenity space.'*

The Panel is encouraged by his view as it shows a distinct desire by the Minister to move to new ground in relation to the height and densities of new developments within the town.

The Minister raised a very interesting point in relation to the height of developments in the urban area:

*'You ask about densities. Well, you can increase density by going a bit higher. It is quite easy to do and you can have very good size apartments with a slightly taller building.'*

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<sup>12</sup> Minister for Planning and Environment Public Hearing 20th October 2008 Transcript

*We then are left with the conundrum of what is the appropriate height of buildings in St. Helier? Now, people have wildly different views. If you ask Sir Michael Hopkins he will tell you that his assessment of St. Helier is that four or five storeys is the predominant level and that you can have the odd building popping out, but nothing more. By popping out I think his view is one or two storeys higher.*

*If you ask Sir Richard McCormack for his assessment he will tell you that St. Helier can accommodate buildings of 12, 13, 14, 15 storeys and as you saw Eric Kuhne was proposing buildings, I think, of 22 storeys high. What is appropriate for the town?<sup>13</sup>*

The Panel recommends that the Minister decides, through consultation, what is the appropriate height of buildings in urban areas and the locations where taller buildings might be acceptable.

The Panel would encourage developments to incorporate parking and utilities which are not visible. Perhaps on lower levels or underground, this would support and encourage innovative amenity space such as large balconies, atriums which provide winter gardens and roof gardens in addition to the public area around the development.

Such approaches are particularly successful for urban areas when land is at a premium and in short supply. Roof gardens are now the norm in many jurisdictions. Further greening of buildings is possible as can be seen in structures all over the world.

The concept was widely covered at a recent RIBA Conference in Barcelona<sup>14</sup> when the world renowned architect Ken Yeang presented his green tower proposals.

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<sup>13</sup> Minister for Planning and Environment Public Hearing 20th October 2008 Transcript

<sup>14</sup> RIBA International Conference Barcelona 2008



*The verdant skyscraper was designed to increase its location's bio-diversity and rehabilitate the local ecosystem in Singapore's 'zeroculture' metropolis... Approximately half of the surface area of the EDITT Tower will be wrapped in organic local vegetation, and passive architecture will allow for natural ventilation. Publicly accessible ramps will connect upper floors to the street level lined in shops, restaurants and plant life.*



*The building has also been designed for future adaptability, with many walls and floors that can be moved or removed. In a city known for its downpours, the building will collect rainwater and integrate a grey-water system for both plant irrigation and toilet flushing with an estimated 55% self-sufficiency.*

Whilst the Panel does not suggest that skyscrapers or high rise buildings are the way forward for all development in Jersey, it would invite the incorporation of these concepts and the combination of both internal and outdoor living space together with community amenity space.

On visits made to Vienna and Malmo in 2006 and 2007 respectively, the Panel viewed numerous housing projects, details of which can be found in the Panel's 2007 Design of Homes Report<sup>15</sup> SR15/2007. For the key points and recommendations from that report, see appendix 3.

The proposed skyscraper at the East of the centre of Copenhagen reflects its historical spire and present day high-rise blending in the skyline of the city; it further combines the

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<sup>15</sup> Design of Homes Scrutiny Review @ [www.statesassembly.gov.je/scrutiny](http://www.statesassembly.gov.je/scrutiny)

# Urban Regeneration Review

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single family home and the skyscraper in a vertical village. Consideration of these local characteristics leads to Copenhagen's first contemporary high-rise.



The design is based on a flexible grid, allowing alteration of the build by re-designating units. These ‘blocks’ are each 60m<sup>2</sup> and arranged around the central core of the building, which for flexibility consists of three service cores allowing separate access to the different building units.

On the lower floors the volume is slim to create space for the surrounding public plaza with retail and restaurants; the lower part of the high rise consists of offices, the middle part leans north, in order to create a variety of sky gardens that are terraced along the south side. This creates a stacked neighbourhood, a Sky Village. Flexibility for adaptation is one of the best sustainable characteristics of a building.

The Minister for Planning and Environment stated the following at the Public Hearing on the 8th October 2008 -

*‘...but clearly the higher you go the greater you will deliver out of each site and it is not an accident that in other places there is a premium the higher you go. You may charge more rent, as we saw in Malmo, and a higher price per square foot in high-rise developments the higher you go. That shows what premium residents place on going tall. Now, what is the appropriate height as a limit for St. Helier?’*



So how could the Island go about moving through the step change from predominantly small two or three storey buildings in the urban areas to larger buildings?

City dwellers have become used to innovative buildings of varying styles as depicted here and again, whilst the height of this development would

exceed what was suitable for Jersey, the style of the architecture shows that modern construction and design allows for much more than the standard rectangular single floor apartment living.

The Switzerland-based architectural firm breaks down the old image of the high-rise as a sleek, hermetically sealed urban object to propose instead a thoughtful and daring new alternative - the iconic New York skyscraper re-envisioned as a 'unitised' vertical layering of individually sculpted, graceful private residences opening to the atmosphere. The tower will house 145 residences, each with its own unique floor plan and private outdoor space, in a cascade of individual homes that the architects describe as "houses stacked in the sky<sup>16</sup>," blending indoors and outdoors seamlessly together.

By increasing the average height by one or two stories significant gains could be made in utilising the built up area to better effect.

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<sup>16</sup> [http://www.designaddict.com/design\\_addict/blog/index.cfm/2008/9/15/56-Leonard-Street](http://www.designaddict.com/design_addict/blog/index.cfm/2008/9/15/56-Leonard-Street)

## 7. Density

The Panel is aware of the concerns relating to density.

A prize winning social minded development can be seen at the Accordia in Cambridge<sup>17</sup> designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Alison Brooks Architects, and Maccreanor Lavington who won the 2008 RIBA Stirling Prize. The judges commented:



*"This is high density housing at its very best, demonstrating that volume house-builders can deliver high quality architecture – and that as a result they can improve their own bottom line. The whole scheme is about relationships: between architect and developer/contractor/client; between three very different firms of architects – Feilden Clegg Bradley, Maccreanor Lavington and Alison Brooks Architects; and between private and public external spaces, providing a new model for outside-inside life with interior rooftop spaces, internal courtyards and large semi-public community gardens."*

The brownfield site achieved a density of 47 homes to the hectare. The site is organized straddling a broad avenue with just the one entrance for residents allowed to the site by the planners. Planners were imaginative and firm with objectors and used their powers to withhold permission unless the developers used good architects to produce fine architecture. The usual strips of garden behind the houses were amalgamated to give common land where children safely play. Houses and flats have good-sized, well-proportioned rooms. The detailing varies with the architect, producing a different aesthetic in each.

There is plenty of individuality in the flexible house plans, there is privacy on (most of) the terraces and balconies; but there are village greens and strips of common land, cars are tamed not banned – this is architecture that treats adults as grown-ups and children as people with different needs.

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<sup>17</sup> [http://www.homedesignawards.com/homebuilder/homebuilder\\_2004/Category\\_14/accord\\_2004.htm](http://www.homedesignawards.com/homebuilder/homebuilder_2004/Category_14/accord_2004.htm)

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The Panel was impressed by the Cole, Thompson, Anders 'The Rainbow' Southend on Sea design, incorporating low carbon, low energy and low water use project. Houses and flats range in height from 2 to 6 storeys depending on context and form a sheltering wall around a communal garden. The proposals celebrate a new relationship with nature through the emphasis on green landscape treatment and on explicit demonstration of environmental technologies.

Another good development seen by the Panel on a fact finding visit in 2007 was a group of apartment blocks known as Tango<sup>18</sup>; this is a good example of the type of sustainable building design employed throughout Bo01.



Natural building materials were used and, when the buildings

are eventually demolished, all the materials are recyclable. The block comprises of eight towers surrounding a courtyard.



<sup>18</sup> Panel fact-finding visit to Malmö, Sweden in 2007

## 8. Amenity space

As mentioned in the Background and Character Areas of this report, EPIAs are laid out within the 1987 Island Plan Policy BE8<sup>19</sup>. The thinking behind this allows the community to be as involved as it wishes. Simple street beautification will provide pride in the area and attract investment. Active involvement in the strategic planning of the area will allow the creation of designed communities with area specific amenities that meet the needs of the local people. This might include local parks, shops and open spaces or Island wide



facilities such as swimming pools, large supermarkets or sports fields.

How can amenity space be increased? Some of the higher density developments viewed by the Panel during its Design of Homes Review provided evidence of communities which had benefited from internal winter garden atriums and external balconies/gardens such as the Zschokkegasse development in Vienna, described in the Panel's 2007 Design of Homes Report.

The Panel supports the view that people are drawn to green outdoor spaces, especially where there are trees. Researchers have found that residents of buildings with green common areas know more neighbours and have stronger feelings of belonging than those in barren buildings. Neighbourhood tree planting and beautification programs also increase residents' sense of a shared identity.

The Panel viewed homes both in Vienna and Malmo with small individual gardens and large shared community amenity spaces. It has seen the effective and innovative use of roof gardens as shared amenity space and would support the further capitalisation on this wasted resource of space.

Other dynamic and modern approaches to providing additional vegetation and relief to the solid construction of urban spaces and high density inside or outside include the 'green wall' concept introduced in 'Le Mur Vegetale' the vertical garden by Patrick Blanc<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> See Paragraph 2.1

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.murvegetalpatrickblanc.com/>

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The architectural arrangement of the installations is designed to allow each plant to catch the maximum amount of light (taking into account shade tolerance, leaf shape and arrangement etc). *Le Mur Végétale* is a three-part system consisting of a PVC layer, felt, and metal frame, providing a soil-free, self-supporting system light enough to be hung on the wall and weighing less than 30 kilograms per square metre. Cuttings, seedlings and

mature plants are then added to create the living vertical garden.

A vertical garden, once installed, requires minimal upkeep, and is more self sufficient than a normal, 'horizontal' garden. There is no loss of water - all water drained at the bottom of the watering system is re-used.



As part of its examination of the former EPIAs, supported by the then Planning Committee, the Panel considered ways in which community enhancements and increased amenity space might be achieved in areas such as St. Mark's Road. Whilst purely conceptual, the Panel agreed that one-way access into such residential areas could completely change the nature and dynamics of a community. In addition, if the central road area is greened as a recreational space and parking located beneath that shared community area, significant regeneration and improvements to property would be likely to follow. The Panel has included drawings of its conceptual proposals in Section 8 'The Way Forward' of this report.

## 9 The way forward

### **Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas (EPIAs)**

The Panel supports the inclusive 'Bottom Up' approach of the EPIA system. It considers that the involvement of the community in the future strategic planning of their area is paramount. Such planning opportunities bring various areas of community needs to the fore such as youth facilities, crime prevention planning and amenity areas. When examined at the planning stage by the people it directly affects, it provides opportunity for the ownership of schemes and encourages social responsibility.

#### **Recommendation 10**

The Panel supports the inclusive 'Bottom Up' approach of the EPIA system

The Panel finds that the system should be reinstated and expanded. Subsequent reports produced such as the 2002 Island Plan made no reference to the EPIAs, and the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal and the EDAW report propose alternative and ever differing character areas which appear not to focus on community development or provide any real guidance for how those areas should be developed.

In considering how to bring this scheme forward, the Panel noted that the 1987 EPIAs related to the town area within the Ring Road. This may well be significant to the heart of the town but it was clearly not representative of the urban community. That reached out beyond First Tower in the west, Greve d'Azette in the east and Five Oaks in the north. Therefore, the EPIAs needed extending to include these areas.

In considering methods to extend the concept of EPIAs beyond the town, the Panel examined parochial boundaries which formed wide communities. Whilst those were communities in a wider sense they would represent too large a spread of housing and focus for the purpose of an identifiable urban area which could become subject to a master-plan to meet the requirements of the immediate community. The level of urbanisation in St. Saviour was a particular example requiring more than one single



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character area. A small park, corner shop or other amenity area at Five Oaks would be of little use or even interest to those living at Georgetown.

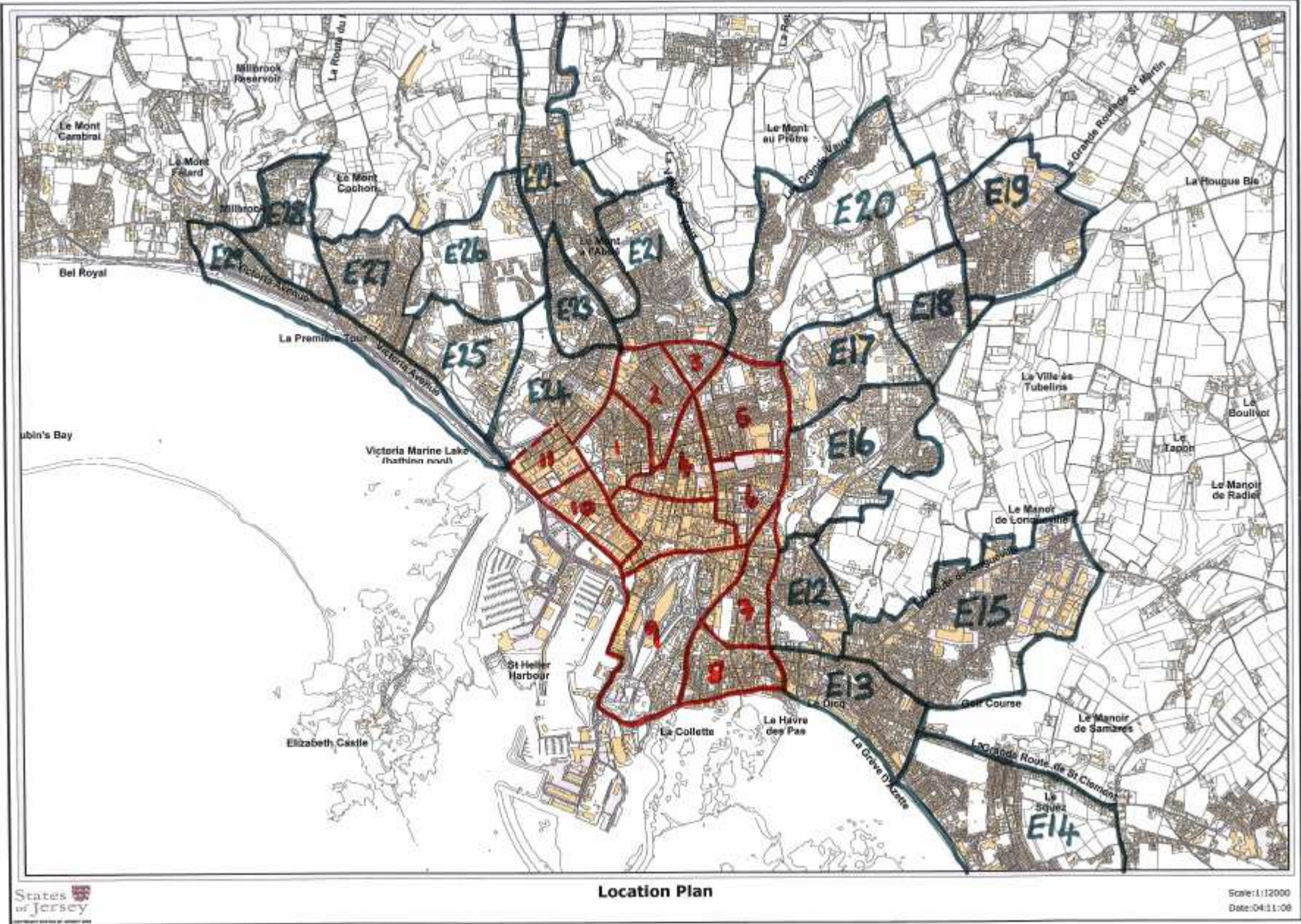
This suggested to the Panel that the areas needed to be significantly smaller than the parochial boundaries.

Having smaller areas would allow communities to consider the identity of their particular area. Communities could fall in with other neighbouring communities or not as the case may be, arranging a strategy for the next 30 years or not as they wished. Where there was no interest from the community, there would be nothing to prevent development or regeneration to continue as it does today.

The Panel examined the town and surrounding urban areas and laid a draft of possible area divisions on the map. The areas in red on the diagram are the original EPIAs, with which the Panel agrees. The green areas indicate the possible extension EPIAs as suggested by the Panel. Development to suit the community could take place within the EPIAs and all areas outside the EPIAs may carry a general presumption against development. This would protect the countryside and still permit the 'green lungs' to come into the urban area, where development would not be permitted.

The attached plan indicates in red the original EPIAs within the ring road area of St Helier and the green areas or the proposed extended EPIA areas.

EPIAs  
prop  
osed  
by the  
Environment  
Scrutiny  
Panel



Location Plan

Scale: 1:12000  
Date: 04/11/08

## 9.1 Conceptual proposals

In this part of its report, the Panel will seek to provide an overview of the regeneration concepts that it would like to see introduced in Jersey. The Panel has identified some building examples, which may benefit or lend themselves to improvement. The concepts will provide methods of increasing amenity space on the ground level, within and throughout buildings and in the volumetric space between existing buildings, which is currently a void.

The review adviser Mr. Derek Mason provided a contextual background to the planning guidance and direction currently in place and commented upon proposed changes to character areas. In addition, he provided advice on the Panel's conceptual regeneration projects.

The Panel's purpose in retaining an adviser to present its concepts was due to its concern that there were numerous planning guidelines and many documents addressing character areas in one form or another commissioned by the Department. The volume and variety of options is confusing and suggests a presumption against any real change in architectural style.

In the advisers introduction to the Panel he states –

*'The Environment Scrutiny Panel has embarked on an urban regeneration review of St Helier and selects a typical run down estate in the middle of the town and shows how, by imaginative skills, professional expertise and political will the area could be transformed into a new dynamic high quality, high density urban quarter providing an example of urban regeneration at its best.'*

Proposals for taller buildings in this report may indicate that the Panel sees skyscrapers as a suitable option for the island's housing needs. That is not the Panel's proposal. However, it suggests that if taller buildings than previously are constructed in Jersey, that these should incorporate modern green tower concepts and be adapted to sit comfortably within the local urban setting, either through blending with the topography or as an iconic building in an Action Area.

The Panel understands that things rarely change overnight and has undertaken an exercise in applying concepts successfully applied in other jurisdictions to recognised areas of the town.

***There is no presumption that the selected sites are to be developed to reflect the conceptual designs presented in the following pages of this report. Nor is there any pretence that the suggestions are anything more than a conceptual exercise intended as an illustration of modern solutions to social and environmental challenges.***

As some of the sites selected by the Panel for this conceptual exercise include Sites of Special Interest (SSI), it accepts that translation of the concepts to reality could be challenging in the perceived climate of 'No Change' towards heritage buildings, modern planning, architecture and urban regeneration. The Panel, as mentioned earlier in the report, has been encouraged by the Minister's statement at its public hearing that he was not averse to heritage and contemporary mix developments.

The three conceptual schemes selected by the Panel and worked up by the adviser are:

- Royal Crescent, Don Road, St. Helier;
- St Mark's Crescent and Temple Crescent, St. Mark's Road, St. Helier; and,
- Convent Court and Caesarea Court, Val Plaisant, St. Helier.

## **9.1.1 Royal Crescent**

The 1828 Royal Crescent in Don Road remains an excellent example of 19th Century, three storey architecture with basements. The sweeping crescent provides an insight into St. Helier of the era. Originally the crescent buildings framed a Chapel increasing the perception of the buildings curved design. The picture below, kindly provided by the Jersey Evening Post, shows the site in its former glory with the open amenity space at the front, together with the vehicle free frontage.



The detail and finish of the building's present plain render with moulded cornices and simple raised rendered frames around the window and door opening. Original windows are 12-pane sashes on the ground and first floor and 6-panel sashes on second floors. Original doors are 6-panel with decorative overlights. The crescent is set back from the road within a garden defined by fleur-de-lys railings.



Aerial View of Royal Crescent, Don Road, St. Helier

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The crescent is listed as a Site of Special Interest (SSI). Most of the houses have been reconfigured and are now flats. The frontages of individual properties are in need of some attention and improvements to the amenity space would improve the aesthetics of the existing site as a whole. The Panel suggests that, given the available site in the central position and the need for the regeneration of the surrounding area, the crescent would lend itself to a combined refurbishment and development project.

The Panel's proposal for improving density is conceptual and is in accordance with the SSI status of the crescent and is as follows -

The form of the crescent provides an opportunity to increase the overall density and amenity of the site. The removal of the low pitched roof and construction of an exoskeleton to support a further two storeys in a glass finish above the existing structure is proposed. The glass frontage extension would be set back from the front of the building line providing a garden roof balcony and community facilities for the residents.

Where the two halves of the crescent originally met the chapel, there is now a car park. The proposal would be to sink the car parking below ground level. A development featuring a central atrium running its full length with apartments on either side could be built. The covered atrium would provide the opportunity for internal balconies (winter gardens) and a ground floor covered amenity space for the residents, providing plenty of natural light for the apartments.



The rear of the crescent could be redeveloped with town housing units to make better use of this side of the site. An atrium winter garden style design with a communal garden area could run the length of each side of the crescent between the main buildings and the

rear accommodation. The proposal would significantly increase the density and

significantly improve the streetscape in Chapel Lane and would be invisible from Don Road.

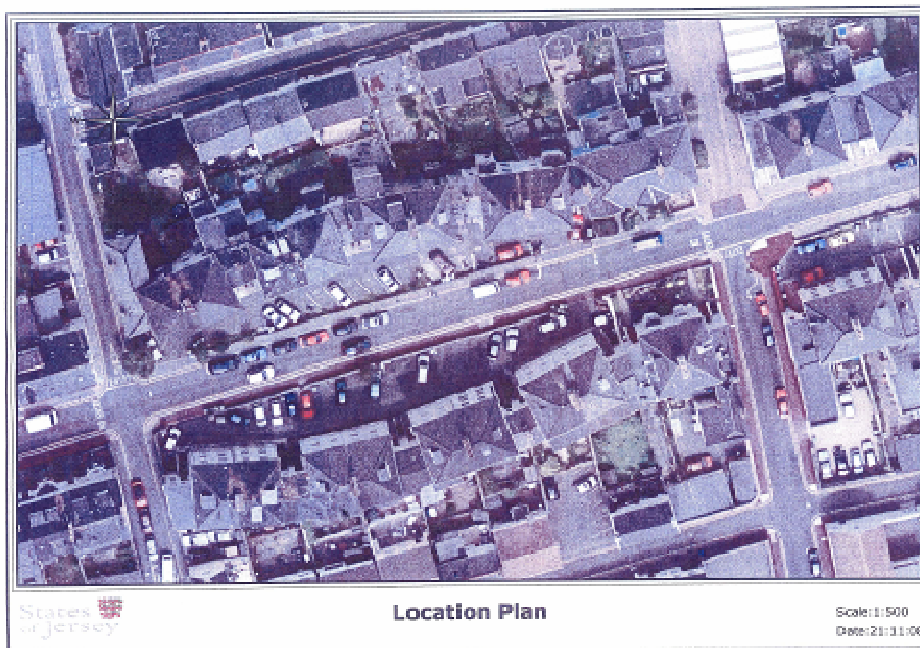
Extending the underground car park for the length of the frontage of the crescent would clear all vehicles from view and allow the sectioned off front gardens to be re-landscaped. The density of the whole area would be significantly increased and the overall effect would be a considerable improvement in the quality of life for residents.

## 9.1.2 St Mark's Road



St Mark's Road sits in the northern sector of the town and being residential it has evolved into a major thoroughfare for traffic. The road bisects two sets of 2 storey Victorian crescent houses with basements, namely St Mark's Crescent and Temple Crescent. The main entrance to the buildings is set back in a half bay with flight of steps. Each

side of the road has a crescent of ten houses set in an arc. The front of each of the crescents has a small utility area currently used for parking that is fronted by gate piers and a wall.



Aerial Plan of St. Mark's Crescent and Temple Court

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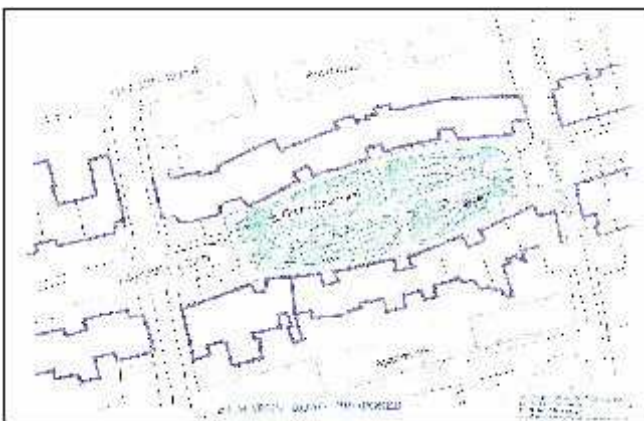
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Once again the Panel asserts that its proposals are conceptual and the properties were chosen as a means to illustrate the concept of increasing amenity facilities in areas that could benefit from regeneration.

As part of the proposal the Panel proposes the re definition of the road use as an amenity area for the residents to provide a green open space and improve the quality of life for the immediate and adjacent residents.

An assessment of the road usage revealed that it had two main functions, firstly as a rat run to cut off a section of the ring road and secondly for access and parking to residences in the area. The street parking is controlled by a residents' parking scheme and therefore unavailable to the public.

The Panel considered the impact of closing the road in front of the crescents and determined that there would be limited impact in real terms. Access to the properties would be retained but reduced to one point of entry and exit and could be located just as easily from either end of the street were that to be made the case. By closing St Mark's Road between Oxford Road and Byron Road junctions, the following scheme could become a reality.



The existing street level would be lowered to provide for basement parking. The area between the crescents would be covered over by a landscaped deck garden.

Line Drawing Mr. D. Mason

The parking would be removed from view opening up significant amenity space for both the residents of the crescents and wider community alike.

This sort of development and street beautification are exactly the sort of improvements the Minister was discussing when he gave evidence to the Panel, in a hearing about street improvements inspiring regeneration of an area through the natural effects of desire to live there.



There is also an opportunity to tidy up the development to the rear of the crescents in a modern architectural idiom to increase the density and fund the project.

The Panel recognises the urgent need to provide regeneration in areas of St. Helier to facilitate the inclusion of improved and increased amenity areas by adding a variety of green areas. Social scientists have found that green surroundings refresh us and help combat stress, anxiety and depression. Views of green are also associated with fewer sick days and faster recovery times. A study of over 10,000 people in the Netherlands found that greener neighbourhoods were linked to better overall health. The Woofnerf Schemes in Holland give some attention to the greening of streets

Deputy Le Claire at the Panel's Public Hearing with the Minister advised -

*At the moment the big complaint that I am getting, and I understand this one quite succinctly, is putting my child into a car and driving to a playground on the other side of the island because there is nowhere safe for him to run in town.*<sup>21</sup>

'Making Streets Liveable'<sup>22</sup> has been the subject of many research programmes and reports. The 1996 report states that

*"liveable streets. 'is the topmost action that would advance both children's access to diversity and the child's right to play' (Moore, 1986, 51)".* Reclaiming the Street as a residential play space would do this.

These benefits would be especially important for those who spend more time close to home, like children and the elderly.

### **9.1.3 Convent Court and Caesarea Court.**

The Panel has discussed tall buildings in various parts of this report. Tall buildings have previously been used as a solution to meet various community needs. The States has committed to the concept of tall buildings in the past, namely Hue Court and Cyril Le Marquand House which are just two examples. These buildings were considered modern although somewhat unpopular at the time. The popularity of the style does not appear to have increased and they are generally considered uninspiring. These buildings would fail to achieve environmental standards for tall buildings and fall far short of dynamic design.

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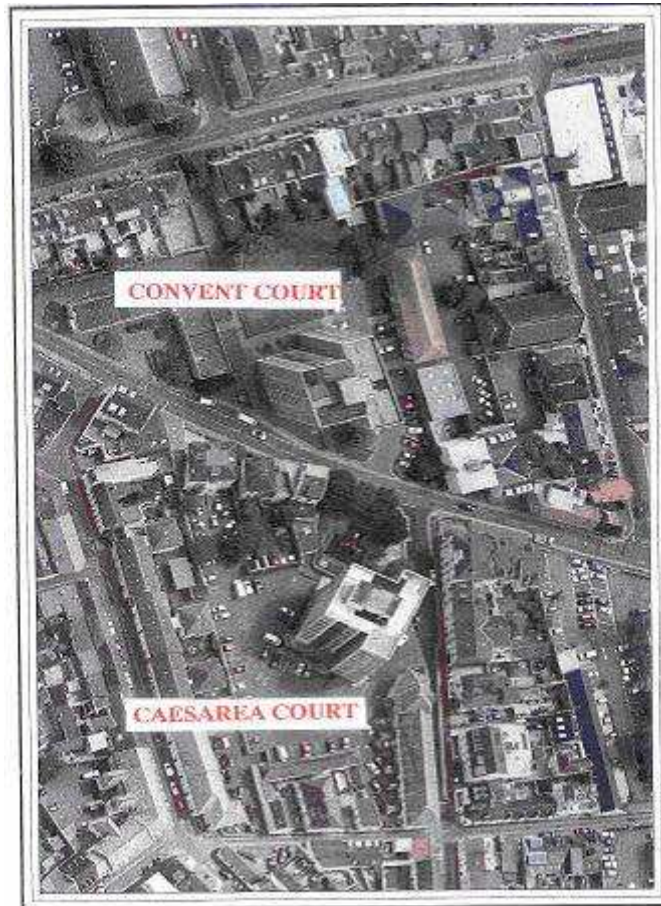
<sup>21</sup> Deputy P. Le Claire Public Hearing 20th October 2008 Transcript

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Even when built they were reluctantly and grudgingly accepted by the community. The only thing in favour of these buildings is that they remain functional.

The Panel decided to focus on the Convent and Caesarea Courts sites on the basis of their existing designation as requiring attention due to the condition of the buildings and were purported to be nearing the end of their useful life.



Aerial view of Convent and Caesarea Courts

The Panel decided that it would be worth looking at the possible regeneration of these tall buildings as opposed to the proposed demolition. The Panel considered what new architecture and design might bring to the site and what a new approach could offer. Its adviser, Mr D Mason, assisted in providing concept drawings of the Panel's in principle ideas and provided them with the following -



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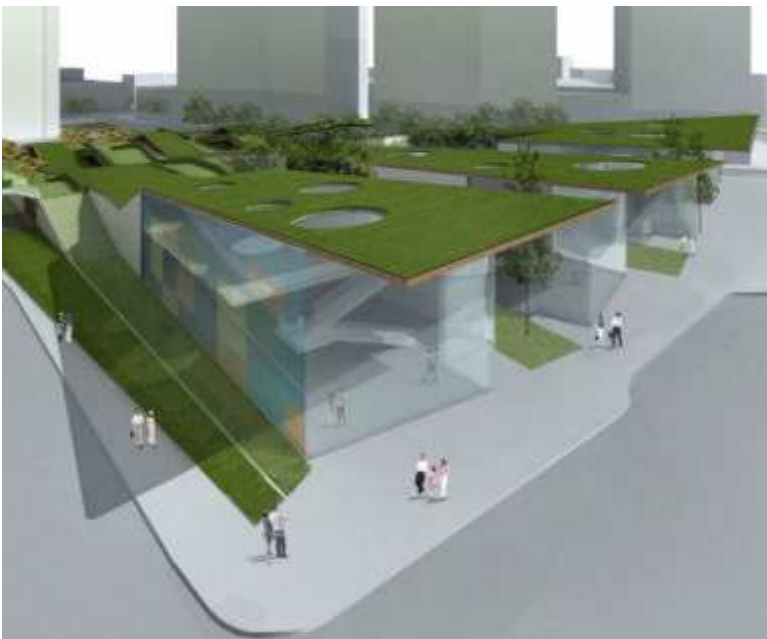
<sup>22</sup> <http://www.ecoplan.org/children/general/tranter.htm> Reclaiming the Street as a residential play space

# Urban Regeneration Review

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It is accepted that although the exterior of the towers is at the end of its life and the residential units within the blocks fail to reach current day standards for accommodation, however, the structure of the building remains sound. The Panel remains of the view that regeneration of a building does not require its demolition; re-use of existing buildings is an environmentally sound approach. The removal of the existing external cladding and its replacement with modern materials designed for such purposes, together with adding external feature lifts, balconies, and creating amenity areas on the first floors, would improve the structures and create an environment people wanted to live in.

The creation of a garden style deck at first floor level, with parking beneath and green areas above would allow the lower floors to be utility areas and provide large external amenity areas for the residents. The floors appearing out of the deck could be residential,



providing park like vistas with units large enough to offer comfortable living experiences. These units could vary from one to four bedroom units, some of which could be duplex apartments.

This would offer diversity and flexibility in occupancy and create a more balanced social mix.

Looking at the regeneration of each of these blocks led the Panel to consider the road between the two buildings. As with the St. Mark's Road concept it examined the importance of Val Plaisant as an artery through the town and questioned its necessity as a through route.

Traffic engineers may have us believe it is vital to the continued free flow of traffic and the subsequent financial lifeblood of the town. On the basis that the road was closed for several weeks through 2008 the Panel cannot support the suggestion that its existence is essential. During the closure period journeys were altered and that did not appear to have a devastating effect on the economic wellbeing of the town. Residents of the area have

informed Members that it provided a welcome relief from continual traffic noise and pollution.

So the Panel questioned whether the closure of Val Plaisant between Convent Court and Caesarea Court could be maintained on a permanent basis.

The Panel suggests that it could. Access would remain to all other properties from Midvale Road or Victoria Road junctions.

This would allow the green amenity area around the towers to be extended across the



road just above street level creating not only a huge traffic free area for recreation and leisure activities but also a vast amount of room for parking in the area beneath the deck.

## 9.2 Traffic Planning

It has become clear to the Panel that any review of urban regeneration, by its very nature, has to include an examination of transport.

Despite a preference for traffic free amenity areas, transport in one form or another is necessary to enable efficient movement from one place to another. The conceptual schemes referred to include provision for the motorcar and access for deliveries etc. However, the 1987 Island Plan Policy TR1 states:

*'In order to improve the residential environment of the town, through traffic will be excluded wherever possible from streets within the designated EPIAs.'*

The panel concurs with this policy statement and implementation of such would be assisted if it were to include proposed timescales.

### **Recommendation 11**

The Panel recommends the immediate implementation of previous sustainable transport measures such as the 'cordon zone' contained within successive Island Plans.

**Recommendation 12**

The Panel recommends that all traffic management policies should include proposed timescales.

Looking at overall planning of traffic matters, the Panel examined whether Transport and Technical Services (TTS) was the correct Ministry to be planning traffic issues. Whilst it accepts that there is a need for input of the engineering aspect required from TTS, the overall responsibility for the planning of transport within the urban areas should form part of the masterplan process and be within the remit of the Planning Minister.

**Recommendation 13**

The Panel recommends that responsibility for the planning of transport within the urban areas should form part of the masterplan process and be within the remit of the Planning Minister.

Finally, in relation to traffic, a masterplan should encourage the creation of car sharing clubs. This would significantly reduce car ownership, traffic volumes and pollution. A catalyst for this could be for all car parks to allocate spaces for the establishment of car club facilities.

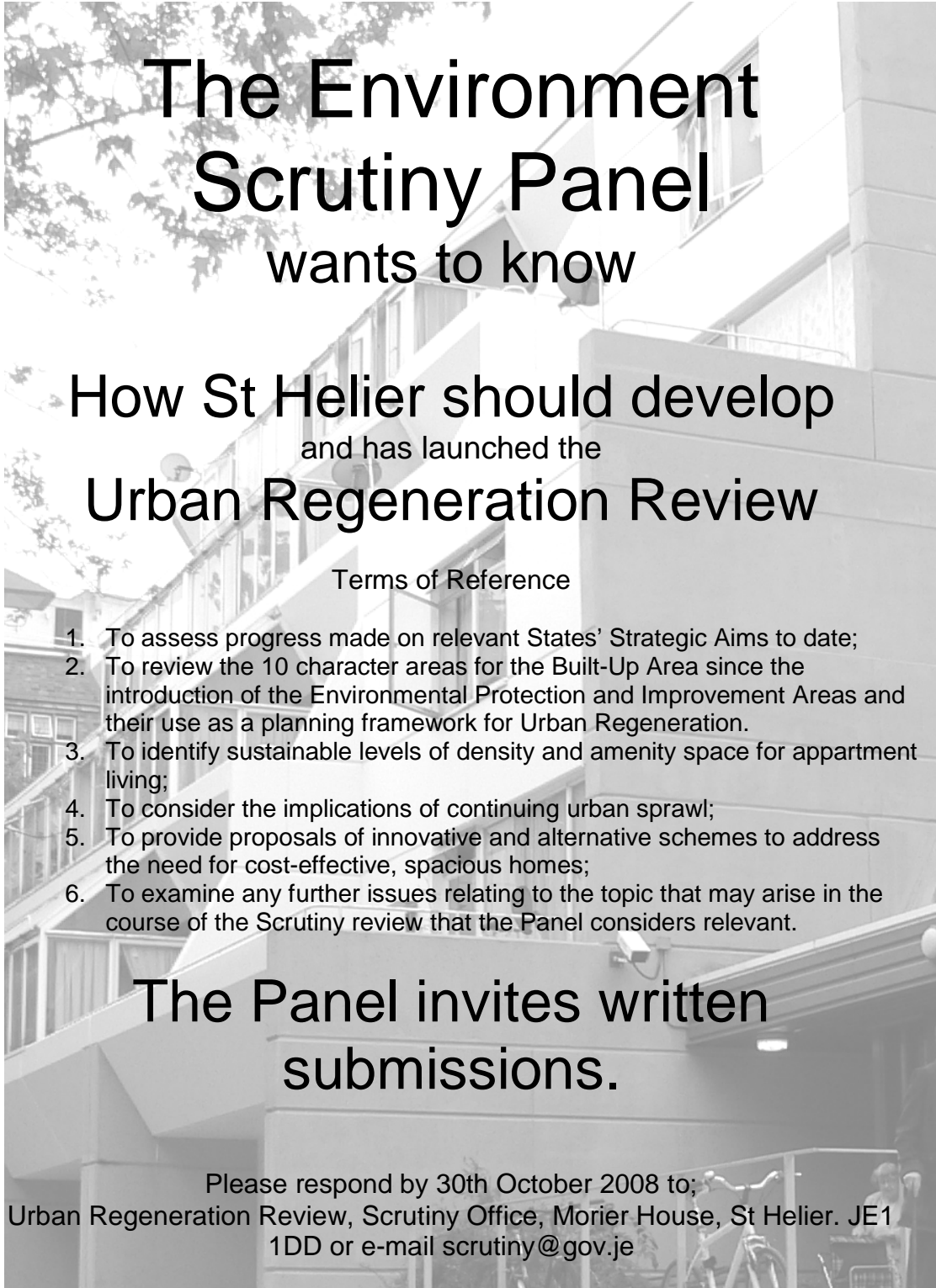
**Recommendation 14**

The Panel recommends that all car parks allocate spaces for the establishment of car club facilities.

## 10. APPENDICES

### 10.1 APPENDIX 1 Call for evidence

The following call for evidence was published in the Jersey Evening Post.



**Environment Scrutiny Panel**

# The Environment Scrutiny Panel wants to know

## How St Helier should develop and has launched the Urban Regeneration Review

Terms of Reference

1. To assess progress made on relevant States' Strategic Aims to date;
2. To review the 10 character areas for the Built-Up Area since the introduction of the Environmental Protection and Improvement Areas and their use as a planning framework for Urban Regeneration.
3. To identify sustainable levels of density and amenity space for apartment living;
4. To consider the implications of continuing urban sprawl;
5. To provide proposals of innovative and alternative schemes to address the need for cost-effective, spacious homes;
6. To examine any further issues relating to the topic that may arise in the course of the Scrutiny review that the Panel considers relevant.

## The Panel invites written submissions.

Please respond by 30th October 2008 to;  
Urban Regeneration Review, Scrutiny Office, Morier House, St Helier. JE1  
1DD or e-mail [scrutiny@gov.je](mailto:scrutiny@gov.je)

## **0.2 APPENDIX 2 - Public Hearing**

The Panel held a Public Hearing at 2.30 pm. on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

The witness was,

**Senator F. Cohen**, Minister for Planning and Environment.

**Peter Thorne**, Director of Planning.

**Kevin Pilley**, Assistant Director (Policy and Projects).

Transcripts of the hearing and submissions from interested parties and members of the public are available at [www.statesassembly.gov.je/scrutiny](http://www.statesassembly.gov.je/scrutiny), under the Urban Regeneration Review.

## 10.3 APPENDIX 3 - Advisor Report Summary

The text below is a synopsis of the Advisers report. No maps, photographs or drawings have been included but did form part of the Panels private working documents.

### INTRODUCTION

1.1 There are two main global issues that currently dominate the urban environment agenda:-

The provision of adequate housing for the increasing world population and the need to provide everyone with a roof over their heads be it a Mexican barricade; a third world mud hut in Africa; a rooftop apartment in New York City, or a States loan house in Jersey.<sup>23</sup>

The aspirations in every case are similar – to have affordable accommodation; to bring up a family; to be part of a community that in turn forms part of a street; a village; a town or a large city.

The second equally important issue facing the world in general and the built environment in particular is of course climate change with its oncoming effects permeating all levels of political, social and economic life in every strata of society.

The current president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, on a recent visit to Jersey remarked on the “extraordinary quantity and quality of social housing in such a small island” so clearly whilst there is much to be proud of in the recent past, many challenges lay a head in providing adequate residential accommodation for Islanders given the demographic situation the pressure of an increasing population.

The Environment Scrutiny Panel has embarked on an Urban Regeneration Review of St. Helier and this document sets out to collate the historic and current town plans over the past fifty years and selects a typical run-down estate in the middle of the town. It shows how, by imaginative skills, professional expertise and political will the area could be transformed into a new dynamic high quality, high-density urban quarter providing an example of urban regeneration at its best.

### SCRUTINY ENVIRONMENT PANEL – URBAN REGENERATION REVIEW

Year	Title	Author
1966	Island Plan	Barett Plan
1987	Islands Plan – EPIA's	IDC (Bob Paton)
2002	Island Plan – Town Areas	Atkins
2005	Urban Character Appraisal – Character Areas	Willie Miller
2007	Town Plan	EDAW
2008	Town Density Map	PED
2008	Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	PED
2009	Town Map Areas	DMA / Scrutiny

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<sup>23</sup> The House Across the World” by Pail Oliver, Oxford Brookes University, 1987.



2009	Island Plan Review	PED
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Vingtaine de Bas Town Map – Electoral List Map

## 2.0 St. Helier – Review of Town Plans – 1962 - 2009

The following section outlines the progress of the attempts to provide a working plan for the town over the past forty years. It provides a working tool for the Planning Department of the day and gives clear guidance to politicians, the town residents and the myriad planning, architectural professionals, and building industry and building industry involved in creating a pleasant, vibrant town.

In rough chronological order the main town planning landmarks appear to be:-

1962 – 1966 Prepared by William Holford Associates but known locally as the Barrett plan the planning work consisted of 4 planning maps and an accompanying document.

Plan 1: scale 1:1250 Town Map showing planning strategies and developments areas

Plan 2: scale 1:1250 Town Map showing land uses on outskirts

Plan 3: scale 1:1250 Town Map showing condition of all buildings

Plan 4: scale 1:15840 Island Strategic Plan

1988 Prepared by the Island Development Committee.

The document consisted of:-

1. An A3 policy document
2. A large scale Island Plan with an enhanced Green Zone
3. A 1:1250 Town Plan that was sub-divided into the 12 EPIA

2002 Prepared by Atkins for the Planning and Environmental Department.

1. An A3 policy document
2. A large scale Island Plan
3. A Town Plan showing new zoned areas for the town

2005 URBAN CHARACTER AREAS by Willie Miller

Consists of:

An A4 document analysing the visual and aesthetic of 10 areas (plus the central area) of St Helier.

2007 A strategy for the future Development and Regeneration prepared by EDAW  
An A4 document that splits town into 4 main areas with a regeneration policy and maps for each area. No overall co-ordinated town map.

2008 Town Density Map

Prepared by PED showing the various town densities on a colour basis.

2008 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Prepared by PED proposing new guidance lines on density, car parking, Amenity space etc. Divides the town into 3 main central areas with differing Standards.

2008 Proposed Simplified version of New Town regeneration map

Prepared by DMA as part of Scrutiny Regeneration Review, revives the EPIA

Concept.

## 2009 Island Plan Review

In the course of preparation by PED. Currently in consultation stage but will Result in revised Island Plan and presumably a revised Town Regeneration Plan.

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN PLAN 1962 – 1966

These town plans, prepared by Holford Associates (but which subsequently became known as the Barrett Plan after the senior planner who was more the partner in charge of the project) were the first to correctly survey and map out the condition of more or less all existing buildings in the town, identified States owned land, all feature which were to be lost in future plans.

The new plan introduced a form of zoning for the first time and areas for redevelopment were identified as well as open spaces, pedestrian routes etc.

The Plan fell into difficulties because it did not anticipate the great expansion of the finance industry and the subsequent pressure put on low rise generally residential and retail existing uses in the centre of town to accommodate wide-span, highly serviced office spaces.

The Plan also failed to anticipate the massive increase in car ownership and the inevitable need for large car parks.

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN PLAN 1988

This town plan was the first and only document to be produced by the then planning department (IDC – Island Development Committee) and was superbly led by the Chief Officer the late Bob Paton who introduced a whole new series of policy documents to planning agenda.

As far as the Town Map was concerned it saw the introduction of the EPIA's which attempted for the first time to divide the town into separate but concentrated areas. Each locality could then be treated as a local planned community so that the residents could play a part in shaping their own environment to the benefit of everyone.

Although some areas were successful in implementing these policies (particularly no's 2 and 6+ the EPIA concept for whatever reason grew to be unused.

At the same time the Island Plan was announced it coincided with the dramatic launch of a huge Waterfront project at Have de Pas which was the change the face of planning in Jersey forever.

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN PLAN 2002

Again due to the ever increasing presence of the finance industry and its effect on housing provision and the pressure on local sources another Island Plan was commissioned and awarded to Atkins, a large UK-based planning practise.

# Urban Regeneration Review

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Whilst the Plan noticeably tightened up the provision of development in the Green Zone the Town Plan remained similar in concept to previous plans but now had to acknowledge the biggest regeneration site ever seen in Jersey – the St. Helier Waterfront. Discussion on the developments would require a complete separate mammoth document. Suffice to say that the current Waterfront proposals are the subject of a Planning Enquiry.

A drawback with the Atkins Town Plan is the creation yet again of another set of zoned areas complete with a complicated numbering system e.g. BE6(D) – where on earth is that?

Within only five years from its issue there were calls for a new Island Plan and the consultation period for this exercise – the Island Plan Review is currently underway.

## URBAN CHARACTER APPRAISAL

This useful document came out of the concept embedded in the 2002 Island Plan to initiate a long-overdue appraisal of the urban character and townscape of St. Helier.

It defines the town by identifying the urban character of various areas of the town analyses and lists these in terms of scale, colour, material etc and clearly has been a useful guide for small or large refurbishment and infill schemes within each character area.

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN REGENERATION STRATEGY DOCUMENT – 2007

Conscious of the pressures created by the huge Waterfront development and the obvious need to protect, enhance and regenerate the existing town EDAW were commissioned to produce a strategic plan to ensure that this goal was achieved.

The EDAW approach was to collate all the existing development plans, organise public and stakeholders meetings and basically to divide the town up into four major quarters i.e. North, south, East and West and to provide strategic plans and crucially an overall phased programme for each area.

The documents are conveniently split into four sections but the exercise does suffer from the lack of provision of a single overriding master plan, so there is a subsequent lack of linkage between the areas.

The EDAW strategic documents remain the working plan for all current planning applications.

## CRITICAL REVIEW of the SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE - 2008

Since the publication of the EDAW Town Regeneration plan, the planners have issued quite a dramatic planning guidelines for the centre of town. These guidelines apply only to the central areas of the town but contain far fewer restrictions on car park provision: increased densities for residential projects: encourage

# Urban Regeneration Review

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taller buildings; the provision of more flexible amenity space whilst maintaining high design standards throughout.

These proposals are consistent with Richard Rogers' revolutionary task force work on the cities in the UK and with contemporary urban design theories throughout Europe.

The only criticism that could be made is that there is yet again another attempt to divide the town into various sections which the man in the street would find difficult to understand.

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE ISLAND PLAN REVIEW – 2009

Because of increasing concern over the demographic nature of the Island's population and the familiar problem of population growth a massive consultation exercise called "Imagine Jersey" concluded that the green open landscape areas all over the Island should be protected and any necessary development should take place within the existing urban areas.

In an effort to provide a solution to all these planning issues PED have launched a massive Review of the 2002 Island Plan, the consultation period has just concluded and we await the new version of the Island and town plan.

The enclosed section from the Review consultation document admirably covers all the urban environment issues that affect the town.

## SUMMARY – TOWN PLANS REVIEW

Any review of the chronological collection of St Helier town plans will conclude that the periods between the major documents i.e. 1966,1988,2002 and the Island Plan review in 2009 are becoming increasingly smaller as the pressures on the island in general and the town in particular continue to grow.

Apart from the major town plans recent years have seen the publication of the EDAW Town regeneration plan on 2007 and crucially the supplementary planning guidance: New development guidelines for the town produced by PED in 2009.

The philosophy of these key documents will feed naturally into the Island Plan review but there is no reason why the concept of the successful EPIA's should not now be revived and utilised as a key element in future town planning and on that basis DMA have produced a new town regeneration plan which shows the EPIA's located in the centre of town, the Waterfront as a separate regeneration area, with the east and West areas remaining under the present effective planning system.

Similar proposals for the town were outlined in DMA's JEP article on the future of housing in April 2008.

## REVIEW OF THE VINGTAINES AND THE ELECTORAL DISTRICTS MAP 2008

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It is very interesting to compare the map of the Vingtaines of St Helier as they very closely follow the electoral district map of town.

Residents can clearly identify their Electoral District or Vingtaine o it is important that the planning system should recognise thus and utilise the town's history, geography and physical background in its own mapping system.

If the whole Waterfront area is regarded as its own separate regeneration district then it is easy to see how a simple town plan with EPIA's at its centre can be the foundation of a new town regeneration plan.

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL PUBLIC CONSULTATION 2008

Utilising the sequential plethora of town planning documentation that the town has been subjected to over the past four decades the Environment Scrutiny Panel has organised a display of the town map which resurrects the idea of the successful EPIA's as the focus of future town regeneration.

The display extends the EPIA concept to the ease, West and North of town and feedback from the residents is essential in processing the many realistic development opportunities that are likely to occur in the near future.

## SUSTAINABLE-LED REGENERATION, MALMO

Following the Scrutiny Panels visit to Malmo in September 2007 one of the most successful regeneration projects in the city, that or a large housing estate in Augustenborg was visited as part of the tours associated with the cocurrent Sustainability Conference held in the city in 2007.

Augustenborg was built in 1948 as an exemplar of a new town settlement but over the years due to flooding in parts of the low lying estate, decay in the building and low lying estate by the late nineties. However by following a systematic programme over 5 to 8 years the estate has been dramatically turned into a wonderful sustainable environment.

## CONVENT AND CAESAREA COURT

### INTRODCUTION – SITE HISTORY

In the early 1970's Jersey was experiencing a major increase in its population due to the increasing success of the finance industry, the indigenous population and the general prosperity of the Island due to its successful tourism and farming.

Apart from an increase in the provision of private housing, the social housing needs of the day were met with either large residential estates in various parts of the Island or by the construction of fairly large tall towers within the town boundaries. Amongst these were the construction of two schemes along Val Plaisant in the North of the town in 1973 – Covent and Caesarea Court.

Although built primarily of a pre-cast concrete structure and cladding the two buildings appear to be structurally sound but inevitably have suffered from the effects of weather degradation and concrete decay over the years, Similarly the large amount of open space around the buildings is utilised car parking for the residents and adjacent sites which together with a public open route similarly the large amount of open through the site make for a generally unsatisfactory urban Environment.

## TOWN PLANS

The site located within the central area of town as shown on the enclosed PED town plan so all the current SPG requirements can apply to this site.

The site is also centrally located within town as shown on the current EDAW town plan.

## CONVENT AND CAESAREA COURT PHASE 1

Any regulation of the existing site must start with the up-grading of the external fabric of both towers (with increased insulation) followed by a major refurbishment to the interior providing new kitchens, bathrooms and redecoration etc (as recently carried out at The Cedars). A waste management strategy should be introduced linking the rain and waste water system to a new external SUDS system.

A strategic 5 year plan based on a programmed master-plan should then be made to upgrade the complete the complete estate with on going works carried out with a minimum of disturbance for the residents.

This kind of exercise has been carried out in most of the cities in the UK particularly in London. The principal reason for the upgrading and regeneration of these estates is primarily their location and the basic economics of refurb rather than knock down and rebuild.

## CONVENT AND CAESAREA COURT PHASE 2

The next phase in the regeneration process could be to build a single-storey deck across most of the site to create, at a stroke:

- A large open amenity space that could be used for playground facilities, small planting areas or simply to be used by the residents as a place to sit and enjoy free from the road traffic.
- The provision of a covered, protected and secure car park which would be a vast improvement on the existing disorganised layout.

## CONVENT AND CAESAREA COURT PHASE 3

Because of the amount of site area now created by providing the first floor deck it should be possible to create at least three more tall buildings on the site. These could be utilised

for further social or private housing or one or more blocks could be used for commercial purposes.

If the same number of units were provided in all three new towers as there are currently two court buildings then at least 200 residential units over and above the existing capacity could be created.

The provision of amenity space and car parking etc would all fall well within current SPG requirements.

As well as the surge of high-rise buildings all over the world there is enormous interest in hybrid buildings which combines a number of different uses in one building e.g. retail, commercial leisure and residential.

Clearly CCandCC lends itself to such a creative solution particularly as all the buildings can be connected at high levels with sky-parks.

## ROYAL CRESCENT – REGENERATION

### INTRODUCTION

The area in and around the Royal Crescent on the Eastern side of town has been chosen for some radical thinking for generating residential opportunities particularly as the town gravitates west towards the Waterfront.

Clearly the central section of the Crescent requires a major infill project whilst a radical thinking departure from conventional town planning would be to build over the existing terrace and also to the rear of the site with 3 or 4 storey apartment buildings of striking modern design.

The prominent infill section could be turned into two rows of double height maisonettes complete with a central landscaped street.

There are very few precedents for new residential buildings being constructed over existing (the best architectural example being Wil Alsop's Art College scheme in Toronto).

Clearly such innovative concepts can double or treble the potential residential capacity of any similar site.

## ST MARKS ROAD – REGENERATION

### INTRODUCTION

The third site selected for regeneration conceptual thinking is the curved section of St Mark's road located again in a slightly run-down part of town.

The widened section of the road could allow a first floor deck to be provided that instantly creates:

# Urban Regeneration Review

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- A green landscaped open surface for semi-private and public use (similar to the remarkable gardens located throughout Edinburgh new town)
- A secure and protected cover for parking for residents and visitors alike.

A further opportunity then lies in creating some innovative 3 or 4 storey on top of the deck and in the middle of the street.

The whole street block could then could again be transformed by utilising the rear garden areas for high-density modern design housing.

## URBAN REGERATION REVIEW

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (Draft for RH comments)

This is the summary of the Environment Scrutiny Panel's commission to investigate the broader aspects of the regeneration debate takes into consideration the following:

#### TOWN PLANS:

- Lack of Planning consistency in town areas
- Need to provide town areas people can identify with
- Resurrection of the successful EPIA concept-expand onto the countryside
- Need to keep people informed
- Need to have local settlement plans
- Long overdue physical model
- Need to build and expand upon

#### THE CHARACTER AREAS

Three major town areas have been scrutinised as possible exciting and innovative residentially led regeneration areas:

1. Convent and Caesarea Court
2. Royal Crescent
3. St Mark's Road

In each study innovative and sustainable ways have been suggested to improve the residential potential and capacity of each area.

Increased density can and should be pursued in various ways e.g. taller buildings, utilising waste or under developed land, undergrounds or covered secure parking without any loss of amenity space.

All round the world there is an increase in successful green, sustainable hybrid buildings which combine retails, commercial and residential uses either in a horizontal or more usually a vertical built form.

Clearly with the forthcoming pressure on St Helier to physically absorb future Island Growth such many innovative and sustainable concepts must be explored to continue the regeneration and renaissance of the town.



## **10.4 APPENDIX 4 – Design of Homes Report Executive Summary and recommendations.**

### **Design of Homes Report Executive Summary**

This report is based around two separate themes critical to the success of homebuilding – community and design. It draws on many influences external to the island, as well as taking evidence from local residents and developers.

The findings of the report are mainly positive with many examples of existing good practice in Jersey. The Panel has sought to build on this solid base with a number of innovative suggestions.

The first theme to be explored is that of community. First and foremost, people need their home to be part of a community. Planning practices over the years have not always encouraged community development with large housing estates built with no regard to leisure activities or shopping facilities.

Rural sites in Jersey should only be developed if they are close to existing developments and can provide residents with a range of amenities. Urban and suburban sites should also pay attention to local facilities. Communities work best where there is a variety of residents, both in terms of age and income level. The island plan required new housing sites to be developed as a mix of first-time buyer and social rented housing. Developers have been allowed to separate out the mix on particular sites, undermining the principle of mixed tenure. Recent suggestions of developments specifically aimed at the elderly in rural locations are unlikely to provide residents either with sufficient amenities or with a mix of neighbours to interact with.

Combining commercial and residential developments often provides an attractive development with good facilities for residents. The value of this type of development can be further improved by providing an ownership structure in which the residents take shares in the commercial activities, enabling them to influence both the type of commercial venture and its management.

Involving the public in developments at an early stage ensures that local considerations are taken on board and that new houses and flats meet the residents' needs. The parish authorities can play a valuable role here - coordinating residents' groups and ensuring that developers and residents work together. Recent technological developments include an IT system that allows both planners and residents to add suggestions to a set of working plans and the ability to produce 3-D models quickly and easily.

High quality design is not just a matter of looking good, form and function are both important and sustainability is a key issue for building today. The report does not address the details of solar panels, grey water systems and the like as these are adequately referenced in the Department's Planning Advice Note.

However the Panel would like to see the Department sponsor the building of an "eco-house" – this would provide an opportunity for builders and suppliers to experiment with new materials and techniques. With an increasing awareness of environmental issues, an

“eco-house” could be used for a variety of purposes, as well as trialling of building techniques. For example, local school children could conduct a project to compare the effectiveness of various types of insulation material in wall construction.

Modern technology has provided us with the opportunity to increasingly work from home and for older people to remain at home independently, even when quite frail. Building design needs to adapt to the variety of uses required from a living space. The Lifetime Homes Standard is a useful tool in this area but designers also need to consider the use of configurable spaces, to allow buildings to change during the lifetime of the occupier.

Motor vehicles are a dominant factor in many residential areas at present, with a large proportion of external amenity area dedicated to traffic circulation and parking. The concept of “home zones” has been adopted by many European countries – residents still use their cars but priority is given to pedestrian access and to creating areas for play and recreation. There are many ways to create parking facilities that are still convenient, yet allow a “car free” area around residential developments.

Jersey is a small island and unspoiled countryside is a precious commodity. Good quality design combined with high building standards should be insisted upon so that existing built up areas are used to their full potential, ensuring that rural areas remain available for everyone to enjoy. Modern designs should be used to complement our traditional vernacular architecture.

With the prospect of an increasingly erratic climate, it is important that new building does not create additional problems at times of heavy rainfall. Products are now available that allow surface water to soak through the surface treatment into the ground below. Green roofs also help to reduce the impact of rainfall on the drainage systems as well as providing other environmental and design advantages.

Internal design is also important – the use of steel framed buildings allows much larger windows to be incorporated into modern designs. Open plan living areas can be provided, leaving the occupant free to choose their own layout. As household sizes reduce, and more and more people live on their own, many people will be living in small flats and houses. Design features to enhance small spaces, such as large windows and double height rooms need to be incorporated whenever possible.

The Panel has drawn extensively on its two visits, to London and to Vienna, to understand these issues and to help identify many of the solutions suggested in the report.

There is an ongoing requirement to monitor progress in design and building techniques and the Panel will continue to address specific areas in more detail in the future.

## **Design of Homes Summary of Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

Greenfield development should only be considered where the site is contiguous to an existing nucleated settlement and where the improvement of the neighbourhood amenities is an integral part of the development brief.

### **Recommendation 2**

Distinct “village neighbourhoods” should be designated within the main built-up areas and a long term development plan drawn up for each over the next five years. The development plans should seek to create sustainable nucleated communities through the provision of appropriate local amenities.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Panel recommends that to avoid social polarisation, development schemes should, wherever possible, be mixed in tenure (including shared equity), income levels, family types and age-groups and incorporate good design to promote lifelong homes.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Panel recommends that developers be encouraged to provide for ownership structures that allow the owners of residential properties to be able to own a share in the commercial elements forming part of the same building or development.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Panel believes that all opportunities to engage the public and communities in the process of development should be taken. Software tools and 3-D modelling should be used whenever possible

The Panel further recommends that parishes should take the lead in coordinating events to allow residents of a defined neighbourhood to participate in the planning or redevelopment of local areas

### **Recommendation 6**

The Panel recommends that the planning department maintain its interest in good design and take further steps to promote high design principles amongst local architects and developers

The Panel further recommends that the Department and Minister should keep themselves informed of developing design policies in other jurisdictions

### **Recommendation 7**

The Panel recommends that the department sponsor the building of an eco-house to provide a showcase for sustainable techniques and materials for local builders and developers.

### **Recommendation 8**

The Panel recommends that the Department investigate the introduction of the Code for Sustainable Homes to be applied to new residential developments

## **Recommendation 9**

Building techniques which allow for easily reconfigurable spaces should be encouraged as an efficient way of providing true “lifetime homes” for people at all stages of their life.

The Panel further recommends that the Planning and Environment Department adopt the Lifetime Homes Standard for all new buildings as soon as is practicable

## **Recommendation 10**

The Panel recommends that the ‘home zone’ approach adopted by many United Kingdom authorities should be supported locally

## **Recommendation 11**

The Panel recommends that prefabricated building techniques should be promoted as these can reduce costs of building, particularly where labour costs are high.

## **Recommendation 12**

Given high quality design, modern and traditional building form can complement each other and local architects and designers should be encouraged to draw on the best of modern design with minimal restriction.

## **Recommendation 13**

The Panel believes that developments in the built up area should focus on improved design and increased amenity space whilst maintaining and, where appropriate, increasing, the level of density.

The Panel further recommends that alternative measures for density should be included in guidelines, in addition to the standard definition of habitable rooms per acre

The Panel further recommends that the current practice of regarding large rooms as two or more habitable rooms should be withdrawn

## **Recommendation 14**

The Panel recommends that landscaping plans should be fully integrated into the main building development, not just seen as an “add-on” and that the planting of mature and semi-mature trees should be encouraged.

## **Recommendation 15**

The Panel recommends that all developments consider the use of porous membranes and other design features to reduce the amount of excess water entering the drainage system.

## **Recommendation 16**

The Panel recommends that all new developments should seriously consider providing parking at basement or semi basement level or under a pedestrian platform.

The Panel further recommends that the requirement for parking attached to a unit of accommodation should be further relaxed to provide for increased living space and amenity space and that this change of emphasis should be linked to improved public transport links and services.

## **Recommendation 17**

The Panel recommends that the Department promote the use of green roofs in appropriate developments and that, in general, flat roofs should be seen as a positive design feature, providing amenity space in the form of roof gardens or terraces for residents.

## **Recommendation 18**

The Panel recommends that an increasing use of glass should be encouraged in residential designs

## **Recommendation 19**

The Panel recommends that where residential developments are built to minimum size standards, the department should impose high design standards on the overall development and ensure that a generous amount of amenity space is provided throughout the development.

The Panel also recommends that developers be encouraged to emphasize volume within a development by increasing ceiling heights and providing double height rooms in developments, wherever appropriate.

## **Recommendation 20**

The Panel recommends that the department should encourage developments to include some open plan living units and accommodation shells

## **Recommendation 21**

The Panel recommends that the use of sliding doors should be encouraged in the design of small residential units