

3. Part Three



Vision

Within the context of the planning policy framework for the town, as set out in the 2002 Island Plan and with reference to the historical development and physical characteristics of the area, the following vision for its future evolution has been developed as part of this Development Brief.

“That the Parade area becomes a dynamic and thriving location close to the town centre. The area will retain its essential character and become a distinctive, attractive, and safe place to live and work, and will make an important contribution to the urban regeneration of the town.”

DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND POLICES

There follows a set of design principles, justification and related policy which aim to achieve this vision.

1. Life and vitality

Design principle

Encouragement will be given to a range of appropriate, complementary uses which introduce life and vitality into the area.

The future character of the area will be shaped by the variety and location of the different land uses within it. The activity at street level is particularly important for it is here that the prospect of increasing variety and social interaction can contribute to significant revitalisation of the area. In this respect retail uses, cafes and restaurants are all regarded as appropriate land uses in that they have the potential to generate a flow of people into and through the area.

There are also opportunities for uses that are complementary to nearby and adjoining uses, which may include health clinics and surgeries, or cultural activities.

It is possible that a new hotel might fit many of the characteristics needed provided it aligns some of its ancillary components such as cafes or restaurants to the developing character and appearance of the area.

It is unlikely that large new areas of office accommodation would meet the objectives of increasing variety and vitality but some limited form of office/studio space may have a role to play in providing a broad base of lively and compatible uses.

POLICY PAA 1 - LIFE AND VITALITY

In considering development proposals in the town of St. Helier, the Planning and Environment Committee will take the following matters into account, as appropriate:

- The context of the development and its contribution to built form, townscape, public realm and amenity open spaces;
- The protection of local historic character by limiting adverse impacts upon historic and cultural resources;
- The protection of open spaces and trees which make an important positive contribution to the character and quality of the town;

Proposals which encourage and contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of the area, particularly at street level, will normally be supported. In considering development proposals in the area, the Committee will seek to:

- Resist the loss of ground floor retail units to non retail use and encourage new retail opportunities, where appropriate

POLICY PAA 1 - LIFE AND VITALITY

- Support proposals for new retail uses, restaurants, bars and cafes and encourage alfresco activities, subject to there being no unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring uses or unacceptable public safety issues
- Support the provision of new residential units to meet an identified need
- Support those uses which have a complementary role to those existing within and adjacent to the area and which might relate specifically to the Opera House, Town Hall or General Hospital.
- Support the use of small studio units of office accommodation where they would not detract from the vitality of the area.

In every case the Committee will have regard to matters relating to personal safety and security and the needs to design out crime, in accord with Policy G9 of the 2002 Island Plan.

Schemes which involve large areas of office floorspace will not normally be permitted.

2. Heritage and character

Design principle

New development must recognise and respond to the historic buildings in the area by seeking to safeguard their appearance and setting.

There are some important landmark buildings in the Parade Action Area, including the Opera House (fig 21), the Town Hall (fig 22), the Adelphi and the former Seaton Youth Club (fig 23) whose quality and uniqueness give a distinctive character to the area. Within the area's core, Somerset Place has less intrinsic value though it does reflect the line of the Faux Bie town brook. The Planning and Environment Committee is keen to maintain this historic aspect of the area through sensitive development and interpretation. Indeed, the regeneration of the Parade Action Area may provide opportunity to repair the historic fabric of buildings, where appropriate, or to interpret the area's history through design.

In accord with the overarching policy framework of the 2002 Island Plan (Policy G13), there is a presumption in favour of the preservation of the architectural and historic character and integrity of registered buildings and the Planning and Environment Committee wishes to encourage a positive attitude towards their retention and reuse.

Fig 21



Fig 22



Fig 23



Fig 24



There is also a presumption in favour of the preservation of significant archaeological remains. The Planning and Environment Committee will require provision to be made for archaeological evaluation, investigation, and recording of sites as part of any development proposal.

POLICY PAA 2 - HERITAGE AND CHARACTER

There will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of the architectural and historic character and integrity of registered buildings, in accord with Policy G13 of the 2002 Island Plan. In considering development proposals in the area the Committee will seek to-

- Sensitive incorporate historic buildings as part of any new development;
- encourage an interpretation of the area's history and character through design, where appropriate, and;
- Instigate a process of archaeological evaluation, investigation and assessment as part of any new development application in accord with Policy G12 of the 2002 Island Plan;

Permission may be granted for partial demolition or for the removal of inappropriate additions to the buildings where the works would not damage their character or appearance.

3. The built form

Design principle

A scale of development that relates to its surroundings, with appropriate massing, rhythm and use of materials will be encouraged.

In assessing the appropriateness of new built forms of development, their context is significant. The Parade Action Area and adjoining streets contains a range of buildings and spaces of varying scales, which will determine an acceptable scale and mass of new development.

On Gloucester Street it is appropriate to consider replacement buildings which reflect the height of those which currently exist. The street presently accommodates buildings ranging from three floors to five floors in height. Other schemes in close vicinity currently under construction at the former Jackson's Garage and the former Sydney Horman Warehouse extend to between six and seven storeys. The General Hospital accommodates a range of buildings ranging from five to six storeys high. Gloucester Street also includes buildings of a larger scale generally, with dominant and wide frontages.

The buildings that have a frontage onto the Parade display a very different character (fig 24). The scale is smaller in terms of the height of the buildings and the comparatively regular and narrower frontages of these

buildings present a much finer built rhythm to the street. New development here will need to be carefully assessed so that any increase in massing respects its established character.

Within the interior of the Parade Action Area where the buildings range from two storeys (the former warehouses and Somerset Place) to five storeys (the height of the former hotels) opportunities exist to reshape the present layout and increase scale. In each case careful consideration will need to be given to the relationship of building height to the width, scale and nature of adjacent spaces.

In view of the strength of architectural character of the built edges of the Action Area, it is considered appropriate that new development here is sympathetic and seeks to complement the existing built form. Given the strength and dominance of the landmark buildings which define the corners of the Parade Action Area it is considered that the design of buildings, particularly along the Parade and Gloucester Street frontages, should be robust and of high quality without being landmark buildings. Within the core of the Action Area, there is considered to be greater scope for innovation in terms of creating an identity for the Action Area through design, whilst paying heed to the local characteristics of the area represented by the Faux Bie town brook, the existing and proposed route layout and historical associations.

POLICY PAA 3 - THE BUILT FORM

A high standard of design that respects and contributes positively to the townscape, character and identity of the Parade Action Area will be required of all new built forms of development. In particular;

- new development in Gloucester Street should reflect the height of the existing buildings, and respect the rhythm and mass of existing buildings along the street;
- new development in the Parade should not exceed a height of three and a half storeys, and respect the rhythm and mass of existing buildings along the street;
- new development in the core of the Parade Action Area should seek to respond the historical associations and physical characteristics of the area and should seek to create a sense of place and identity through design;

All new development must provide the highest standards possible in terms of amenity by taking account of aspect, orientation, natural light and materials.

Proposals that fail to take account of the above criteria, as appropriate, will not normally be permitted.

4. Permeability

Design principle

Increase permeability and pedestrian movement through the area by creating new routes which are legible and integrated with the existing network and which provide new public open spaces and views into and out from the area (figs 25 & 26).

The provision of new routes through the area and the extension of existing links is a key aspect and is fundamental to the future success of the area and in generating life and vitality.

The nature and scale of the links and spaces is important in order that they can achieve a high degree of visibility to provide both interest and natural surveillance. The physical dimensions of the links and spaces needs to reflect the scale and massing of adjacent buildings. Daylight, scale, aspect and amenity all need to be carefully considered when the dimensions and lines of new route are considered. It may be possible to consider

Fig 25

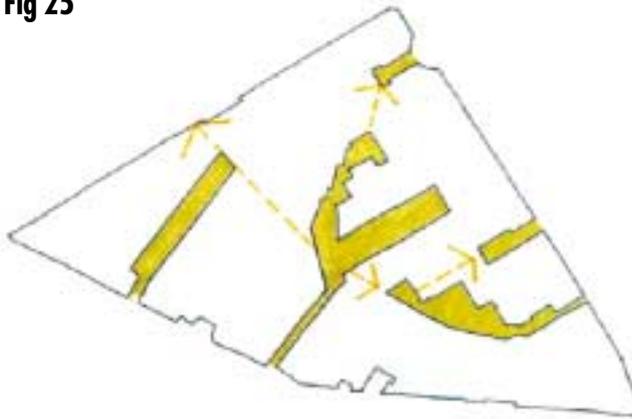
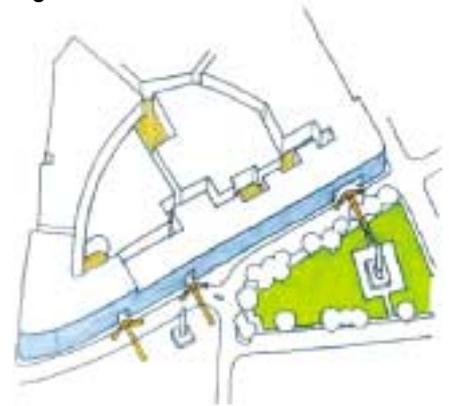


Fig 26



narrow links to the Parade where the buildings are lower in scale. However where the scale of new buildings is likely to be greater along Gloucester Street the links and paths and entrances may need to be more substantial in order to give them presence and to make them attractive to the pedestrian.

It is considered that public art has a role in helping to provide a coherent pattern of new pedestrian routes with its own character and identity. The creation of new public routes and spaces provides a great opportunity for the provision of distinctive hard and soft landscaping which reflects the special character of the area and the townscape that is being created.

Some of the new routes will need to be part of the public domain whilst others might be restricted to use by new residents. This balance of public and private use will need to be carefully considered and respond to the new layout and design and the balance and location of new uses.

POLICY PAA 4 - PERMEABILITY

Development proposals must, where appropriate, make provision for the extension of existing, or the provision of new routes through the area. In every case the new routes and links should be designed and constructed within a clearly stated landscaping scheme. These schemes must -

- Give priority to the pedestrian and cyclist
- Respond to the special character of the area
- Address issues relating to hard and soft landscaping, street furniture and lighting
- Address issues relating to the protection and expansion of urban biodiversity
- Provide access to meet the needs of those with mobility difficulties
- Make provision for public art opportunities
- Protect important views and exploit new views
- Protect and create landmarks, gateways and spaces to reinforce the legibility of the area
- Have regard to the wider implications of building design including the treatment of street corners and entrances.

Proposals that fail to take account of the above criteria, as appropriate, will not normally be permitted.

5. Accessibility

Design principle

Priority for accessibility within the Parade Action Area will be given to pedestrians, including those with mobility impairments, cyclists, and for servicing and other essential vehicular access to encourage pedestrian movement and to ameliorate, as far as possible, the adverse impact of vehicular traffic.

New development and the introduction of new land uses in the Parade Action Area will generate a requirement for vehicular access for both the private car and commercial vehicles. In seeking to achieve a greater priority for pedestrians and cyclists along new and existing routes within the Parade Action Area, however, there is a requirement to manage issues of essential vehicular access, servicing and parking.

It is anticipated that the solution to the issues of servicing and providing parking facilities for new residential development lies in the provision of limited surface access and an innovative approach to parking, which may involve some underground provision.

Developers will be required to demonstrate how their proposals can be adequately serviced. They will also be required to demonstrate how a sufficient level of car parking can be provided within the Area to serve their development, having regard to the overall urban design objectives established by the Parade Action Area and the objectives for sustainable forms of development set out in the 2002 Island Plan. The Planning and Environment Committee will support and encourage schemes which demonstrate an efficient use of land and which does not encourage undue reliance on the private car, having regard to other transport options. The Committee is committed to a revision of its existing car parking guidelines, as set out in Planning Policy Note No. 3 Parking Guidelines (1988) but in the interim, will consider the parking provision flexibly against the context of these guidelines and the objectives of the 2002 Island Plan, having regard to the merits of individual proposals.

While the Committee recognise that extensive areas of surface car parking are a constraint to good urban design there is a concern that excavation for basement car parking carries with it implications for the Island landfill sites. The Committee will require that facilities which require excavation are appropriately justified and that the waste material generated can be dealt with in an acceptable manner in accord with Policies WM1 and WM2 of the 2002 Island Plan. It is hoped that innovative solutions to the provision of parking are examined so that the twin objectives of minimising waste and maximising urban design opportunities can be achieved.

Having regard to the local road network and hierarchy, the creation of new and the use of existing vehicular access points to and from the site along the Seaton Place and Gloucester Street frontages are preferred. The creation of new and intensification of existing vehicular access points along The Parade frontage is considered to be potentially prejudicial to pedestrian safety and the flow and management of vehicular traffic in this area..

POLICY PAA 5 - ACCESSIBILITY

The Planning and Environment Committee seeks to encourage development proposals which give priority to pedestrians including those with mobility impairments, and cyclists. Development proposals which do not reflect this prioritisation of access will not normally be permitted.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate that provision has been made to enable the proposed development to be adequately serviced with provision made for other essential vehicular access, having regard to the prioritisation of access provision. Development proposals which fail to demonstrate satisfactory servicing arrangements will not normally be permitted.

POLICY PAA 5 - ACCESSIBILITY

The Planning and Environment Committee will support and encourage schemes which demonstrate an efficient use of land and which propose an innovative approach to the provision of an adequate level of parking. Against the context of existing parking guidelines (as set out in PPN3 (1988) and the strategic objectives for transport set out in the 2002 Island Plan (Policy G1 and TT1) the Planning and Environment Committee will consider the level of parking provision flexibly, having regard to the merits of the individual proposals.

Development proposals which seek to provide underground car parking facilities will require appropriate justification relative to the management of waste as required by policy WM1 and WM2 of the 2002 Island Plan.

Proposals involving vehicular access and the provision of parking must accord with the general requirements related to traffic generation and access as set out in Policy G2 of the 2002 Island Plan.

4. Part Four



Implementation

The strategy proposed in this report relies upon the control of development proposals through the determination of planning applications to deliver the stated aims. It, therefore, requires a partnership between public and private interests to deliver the desired regeneration to this part of St Helier and is dependent upon the generation of private sector proposals. In this sense, it is one of the purposes of the Design and development Framework to assist and encourage the private sector to bring schemes forward for this part of the town. This partnership will be fostered through the normal process of critical review associated with the consideration of development proposals.

Following an amendment to the Island Planning (Jersey) Law, 1964, the Planning and Environment Committee is now empowered to enter into legally binding planning obligations with developers to secure planning gains where required as a direct result of the proposed development, which provides greater scope to realise urban improvements through development.. There may also be an opportunity or role for the States to “pump-prime” redevelopment although, against the context of limited capital funds, this is not envisaged as being extensive..

For practical purposes it is suggested that projects that accord with the proposed policies should be approved and those which do not should be rejected or renegotiated. Clearly there may be schemes that accord with some of the objectives but not with others and in such cases the Committee will be obliged to take a view on the balance of the scheme. The Committee will need to be mindful that the redevelopment of the area may be phased and different owners may choose to advance their schemes at different times. In such cases the Committee need to be aware of the likelihood of change taking place over a period of time and that their objectives may not be achievable in the short term, but that they fall within part of a long term strategy for reinvigorating this part of St Helier, which will combine with work on other ‘Action Areas’ in the town.

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