

I refer to the application P/2010/1717 for development of Field 622, St Ouen and wish this document to be considered by Mr Bushby in advance of the public inquiry set for 2 July 2013.

This document concentrates primarily on the 2011 Island Plan and particularly the section regarding the Natural Environment. I set out below a number of factors:

| Section reference | Requirement | Relevance to Field 622 |
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| NE2.1 | Character and quality of the Island's natural environment is a crucial part of the Island's identity whilst recognising that the economy of the island must be supported via agriculture and tourism. | As a general rule any development on Green zone will adversely affect the natural environment whilst development on an agricultural field also damages the economy of the rural environment. |
| NE2.7 | Jersey has the responsibility to protect and promote its unique biological heritage. This is a morale responsibility and one formally established through the Island's ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity agreed at the Earth Summit in 1992 and adoption of the Island's own Biodiversity strategy. | Development of the Green Zone is in direct contravention of the Commitment the Island has made in this regard. |
| NE2.9 | This section refers to some of the adverse implications of development such as loss of small fields and meadows; loss of trees and hedgerows; intrusion of industrial style building and materials; the pollution of water courses and damage to food chains. | The proposed development will cause an adverse impact to the natural environment in respect of all of these threats. |
| NE2.11 and ERE1 | The rural economy strategy sets out to protect agricultural land and is opposed to the loss of good agricultural land. There is a presumption against the permanent loss of good agricultural land for development or other purposes. | Field 622 is a square gently sloping actively farmed agricultural field of 9 verges 23 perch. The proposal is to utilise 5 verges 22 perch. This will result in the ruination of the entire field for agricultural purposes. |
| NE2.15 | Public attitude has hardened against further development of housing on green field sites as set out in Imagine Jersey 2035 and the Island Plan Strategic Options Green Paper. | Such a development in the green zone directly opposed such public opinions and thus Jersey political will. |

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| <p>Policy NE1</p> | <p>Permission will not be granted for: Development which would seriously affect biological diversity.</p> | <p>Development of the site would adversely affect hedgerows, trees, flora and fauna, historical banques, fosses and enclosures, potential drainage onto the marsh areas and adverse impact on agriculture.</p> <p>I am not aware that an Environmental impact study has been commissioned. Without such a study the Planning and Environment Minister and indeed the Inspector will not be able to accurately determine the extent of adverse environmental impact.</p> |
| <p>NE1</p> | <p>The above issue was supported by the Head of Historical Buildings for Jersey Heritage.</p> | <p>In a letter he advised that the banques and fosses enclosing field 622 represent historic clearance from surrounding land and could be medieval or earlier in date. In 1994 States of Jersey recognised the importance of roadside walls, fosses and banques. See NE2.42</p> |
| <p>NE2.76</p> | <p>The Island recognises a number of general areas of particular environment significance. One of which is 'E1 North West Headland (St Ouen).</p> | <p>This forms an important part of the green zone and any incursion into it specifically mentioned as a threat to the natural environment.</p> |

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| <p>2.85</p> | <p>New dwellings and other buildings in the Green Zone can only be justified where there is strong justification related to essential development requirement for a countryside location and where alternative provision cannot be made or found within the built up area.</p> | <p>There is no benefit to the rural economy, either agriculture or tourism in exchange for the loss of agricultural land.</p> <p>The Parish of St Ouen submitted a report concerned with the rejection of alternative sites. It is my contention that the report was wholly inadequate in terms of rigour and serious consideration. The loss of a prime field is deserving of a more professional and comprehensive feasibility study.</p> <p>In my opinion the site was selected more on the basis of potential convenience regarding ownership and thus cost rather than Natural Environmental impact and loss to agriculture.</p> <p>In relation to demand for the sheltered homes I furthermore believe not enough independently verifiable research was performed in terms of demand for the sheltered homes. I would also ask the Parish to demonstrate to the Inspector that all of the current homes are always fully occupied.</p> <p>To my knowledge the Parish of St Ouen in 2007 did not identify a need for further homes for the elderly and consequently did not identify a need for rezoning of land. Indeed no such sites were included in the States of Jersey proposition titled 'Rezoning of Land for Category A and lifelong dwellings for the over 55's.' – 14 May 2007.</p> |
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| | | Paradoxically following the bequest from Mrs Coulter later in 2007 the Parish, in 2008, identified a pressing requirement for such accommodation (36 applicants). |
| 2.85 | <p>States of Jersey report 'Residential Land Availability' – extract from the report states the following:</p> <p>2. Summary of findings</p> <p>The evidence available on housing supply suggests that the Island is in a good position to meet overall demand for new homes during the next 5 years up to the end of 2016. Current outstanding housing commitments and other identified sources of housing supply considerably exceed the overall requirement for some 1,600 homes during the period (i.e. by nearly 900 homes). This is largely down to an excess in land availability for private Category B development. Nevertheless, the evidence also suggests that the existing and potential overall supply for Category A homes at this time will exceed identified requirement for 500 homes up to the end of 2016 by approximately 170 homes.</p> | <p>Under policy 2.85 justification for building in the Green zone cannot be said to have been achieved when there is currently a surplus of land zoned for development.</p> <p>Such development land was identified following demand based research prepared for the Island Plan 2011 and as a result of the report mentioned in the section above. I reiterate that St Ouen did not identify a demand for such units at that time.</p> |
| Policy NE7 | <p>The policy sets out a number of potential developments that may be considered.</p> <p>However, the general concept of NE7 is that applications for the permanent loss of good agricultural land for development or other purposes will not be permitted in accordance with Safeguarding Agricultural Land.</p> | None of the potential types of development mentioned in NE7 relate to this application and thus it should be rejected under this policy. |
| Policy SCO3 | Should the development be deemed of social benefit and the proposed development is not specifically mentioned as such; there will be a presumption against the alternative development of community facilities that do not lie in the built up area. | Much more concerted effort should be made to find a brown field or ex glass house site for the development. |

Finally I would refer to the rejection of planning application number P/2008/0540 for a small 1½ storey pitched roof extension to the rear of Haut du Marias, Rue de la Croute. Part of its refusal under point2, was as follows:

'The existing structure is positioned on the roadside edge of an area of open and natural land within an environmentally sensitive location; it is not presently enclosed within a residential curtilage. The creation of a new residential curtilage around the structure would result in the creeping

domestication, and permanent loss, of an area of this open land which would be harmful to the natural character of the immediate vicinity. For this reason, it is considered that the application fails to satisfy the requirements of Policies G2 and C5 of the Jersey Island Plan, 2002.'

The loss of 5 verges 22 perch will have an exponentially more significant impact on the natural environment than the very modest extension rejected above.

Conclusion

Thank you for reviewing my submission and trust you will agree that the proposed development does not accord with the 2011 Island Plan. The proposed site is far too large for the proposed development and will result in a tragic loss of green zone land and agricultural field. As stated by Mr Peter Thorne formerly of the Planning and Environment department at the previous Examination in Public there is a danger that should the development go ahead the remainder of field 622 and field 623 will fall to development as an 'infill' site, thus causing further losses to the natural environment and agriculture.

In my view not enough verifiable research has been conducted in relation to the demand for the homes, alternative sites or the environmental impact of the proposed development. A decision of such importance must be made with good quality information to hand which currently is lacking.

Jason Lees-Baker