

SEPTEMBER 2008

JERSEY DESIGN GUIDE



The Jersey Design Guide is a living document. It will change and evolve as new buildings are designed.

Updates will be available from:
www.gov.je/PlanningEnvironment/PlanningAndBuildingDivision

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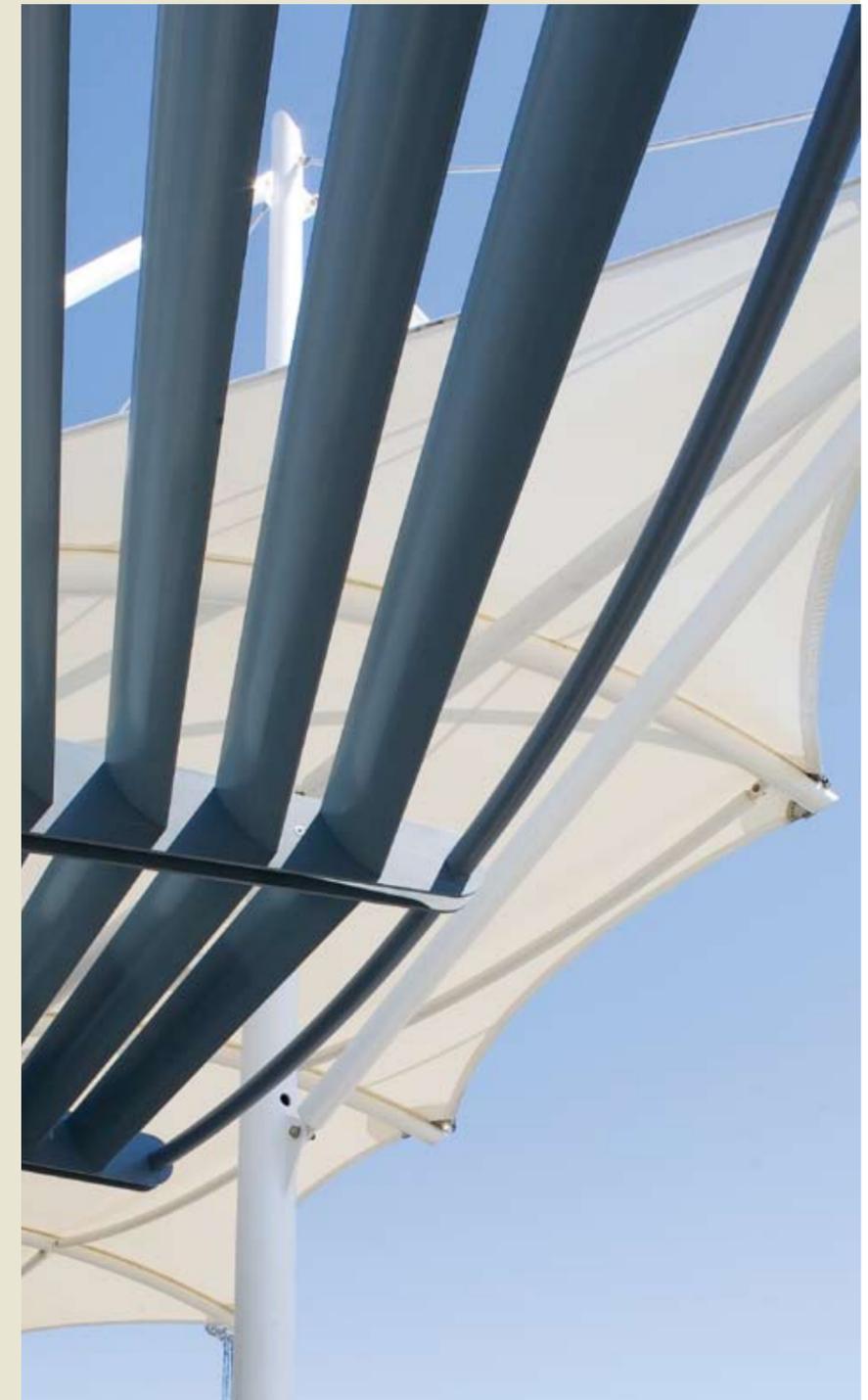
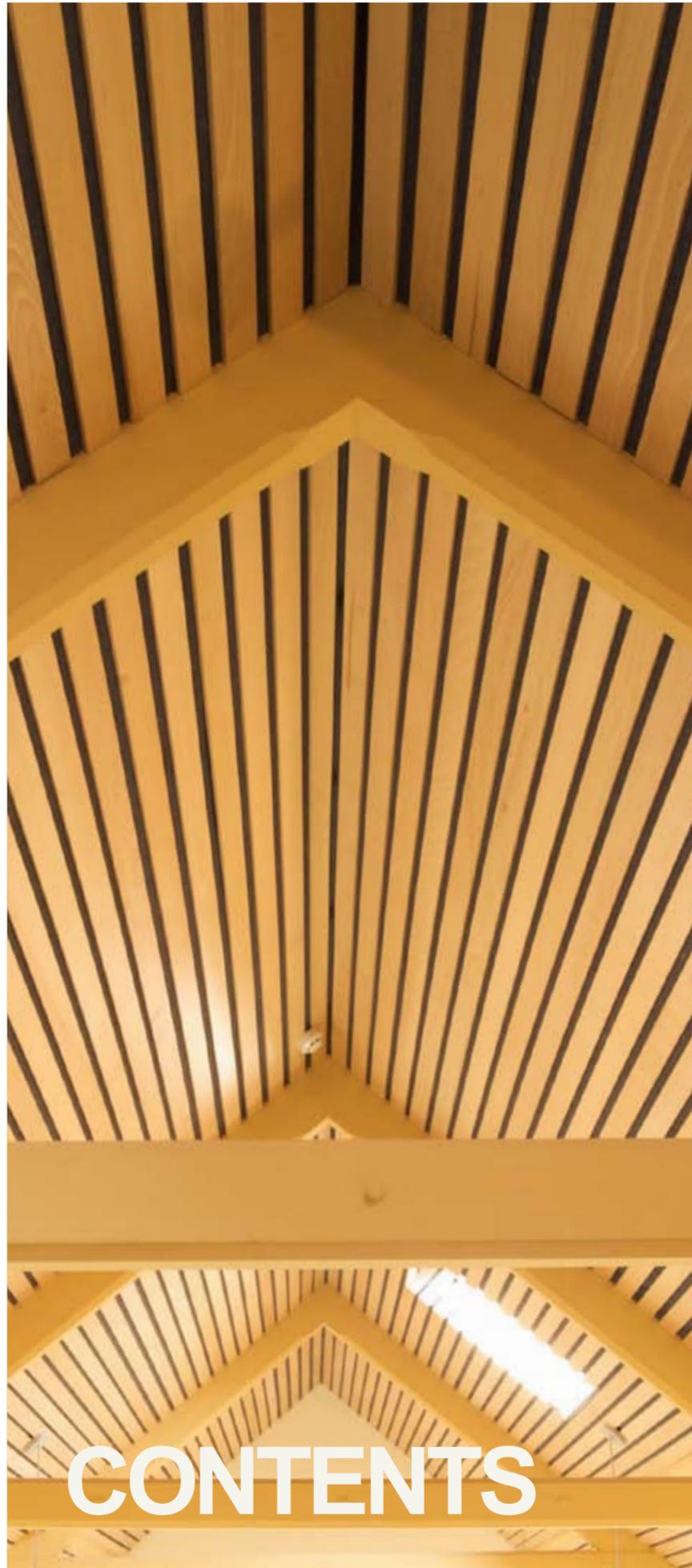
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- All the architects, developers and owners whose buildings are featured in this Guide.

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FOREWORD

Jersey is a unique and beautiful Island. It deserves the very best architecture.

This Guide aims to deliver that by expanding on the Design Principles I first issued in 2006 and explaining how we can achieve excellence in architecture.

It focuses not just on the architecture of a building but also on the building's relevance to its setting, addressing issues such as how a building should contribute to its surroundings and take reference from vernacular traditions.

I want Jersey to rejoice in its architecture. To replace mediocrity with exceptional architecture that combines local

The ancient Roman architect Vitruvius insisted that 'firmness, commodity and delight' were essential to architecture. This still holds true today, although perhaps 'clarity, integrity, proportion and delight' are more understandable 21st century terms.

All good architecture, whether traditional or modern, should reflect these values. Is the building clear to understand, legible even? Do you need a sign to show where the entrance is, or does the architecture do this for you?

Good architecture will have integrity. Its details will be both practical and beautiful. Well-mannered proportions are the key to elegant facades, window

relevance with the very best of 21st century design together with exquisite detailing.

This Guide will help achieve this by creating a common understanding between architects, planners, developers, applicants and the community. I believe the Jersey Design Guide is a positive step towards creating a better built environment that does justice to our magnificent natural environment.

**Senator
Freddie Cohen**

**Minister
Planning and
Environment**

rhythms or roofscape and massing compositions.

But the real difference between a good building and a great piece of architecture is the quality of 'delight'. The best architecture has the power to move us emotionally, to surprise us or, more simply, to make us feel comfortable that it complements its surroundings.

Delight is the magic ingredient that characterises all the best pieces of architecture.

Good architecture is critical in ensuring that we keep Jersey special. This applies not only to the regeneration of St Helier, but also to our coastal and rural sites which need either vernacular buildings that are sustainable and

nestle into their surroundings, or more spectacular buildings that enjoy and make the most of Jersey's world-class panoramic views.

Good local architects understand what high quality design means and, more importantly, what it means in the Jersey context. This unique blend of off-Island professional training and on-Island experience puts Jersey architects in a unique position to deliver the very best architectural services.

Mike Waddington

**Chair
Association of
Jersey Architects**

In 2006 the Minister for Planning and Environment issued a set of Design Principles that reflected his determination to significantly raise the standard of architecture in Jersey.

The Principles form part of the Design Statements Supplementary Planning Guidance (Note 4, issued December 2006) and are given consideration by Officers when determining planning applications.

The ultimate aim of the Minister's Principles is to achieve excellence in architecture, and the purpose of this Guide is to support all those involved in the design and planning process to deliver those Principles by illustrating and explaining how excellence can be achieved.



THE MINISTER'S DESIGN PRINCIPLES



THE MINISTER'S PRINCIPLES ARE:

- 1/ We should aim for the highest standards in the design of new developments in Jersey.
- 2/ High standard traditionally designed schemes, modern interpretations of traditional schemes and modern architectural schemes should all be encouraged. The emphasis must be on quality.
- 3/ New buildings should generally be designed having regard to their context. They should be appropriate to their surroundings, from which they should draw reference, in terms of building form, mass, height, materials and so on.
- 4/ New buildings should reflect their relevance to Jersey. This may be achieved in a number of ways, including:
 - The modern interpretation of familiar or traditional architectural details;
 - Form;
 - The proportion of windows and doorways and the relationship between solid and void on elevations;
 - Colours;
 - Materials used.
- 5/ In the residential sector in particular, the Minister would prefer to see developments that are reasonably spacious and will be amending the existing Design of Homes guidance to this effect, following consultation with the Environment Scrutiny Panel.
- 6/ Proposals for larger schemes should be properly and accurately illustrated, within their context, and represented by physical models, 3D computer models, and photo montages.

DELIVERING THE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The Minister's Design Principles ultimately aim to achieve excellence in architecture. Excellence can be achieved through:

- INTEGRATION
- RELEVANCE
- SUSTAINABILITY
- CONNECTION
- ENRICHING AND DELIGHTING
- ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND QUALITY

EXCELLENCE IN ARCHITECTURE



Buildings must demonstrate an understanding of their context. They must be mindful of it and respectful of it.

New buildings will be considered in terms of their own merit and their ability to place-make. Successful buildings start with a critical assessment of the proposed site and its features. The site's character, appearance and context should be recorded, understood and interpreted. Whilst new designs do not need to follow the form of what already exists, systematic and creative responses to the site's context will result in better buildings.

A planning application should be supported by a written appraisal of the physical context of a site. This should include photographs, sketches or other materials that explain how the local character has been interpreted and how the design of the building responds to that character.

Appendix 2 provides information on the criteria for site appraisals and further information is included in the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design Statements (December 2006)

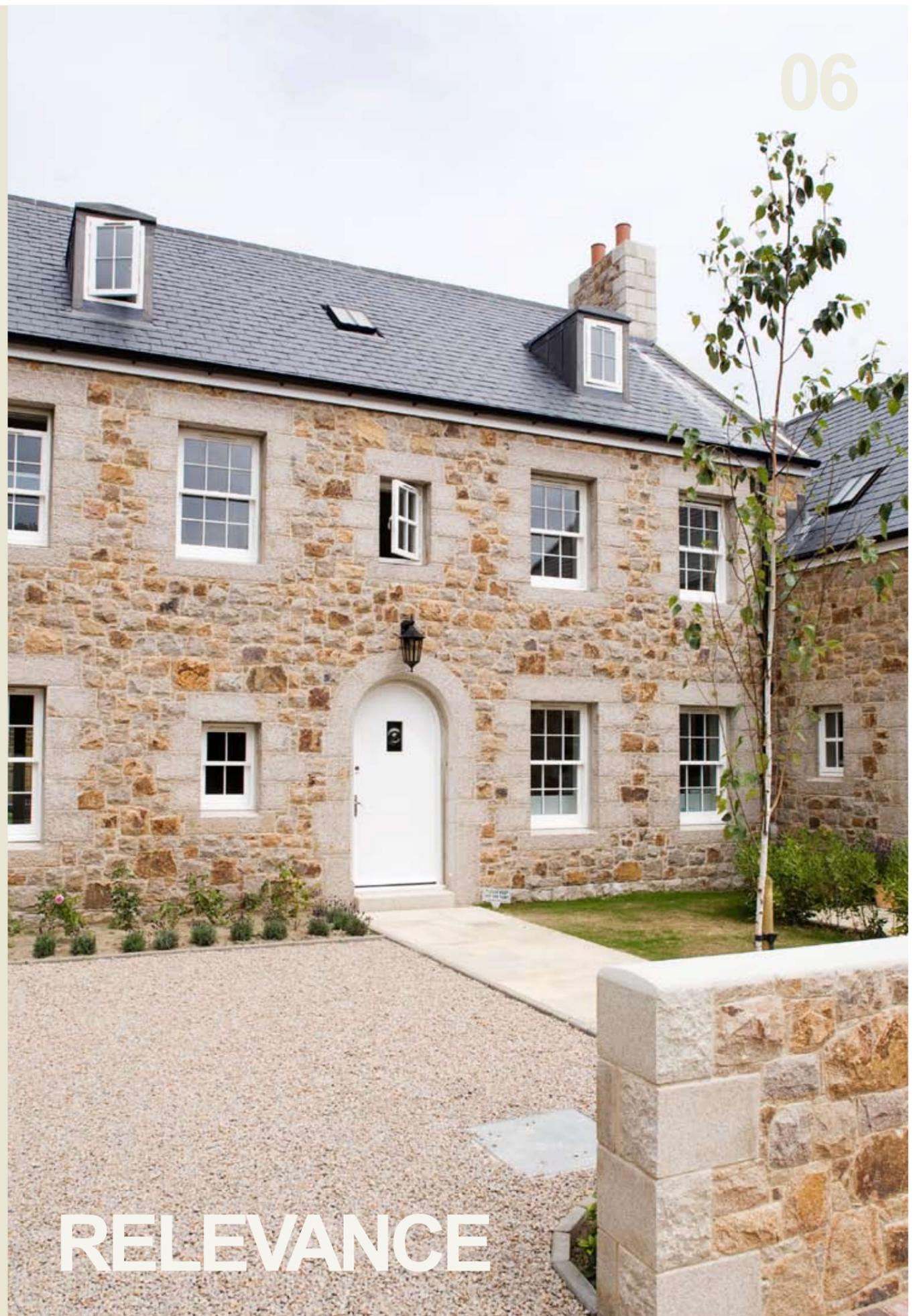
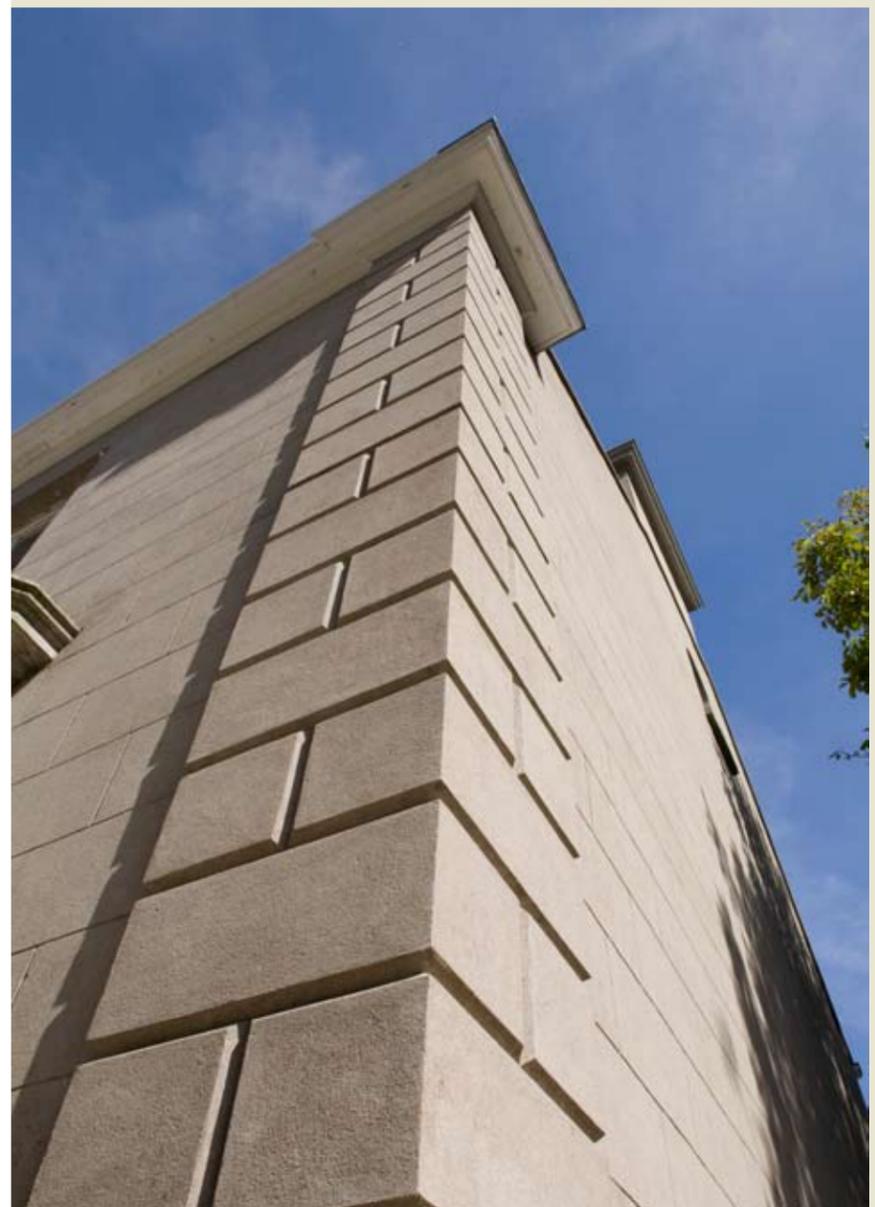
Buildings must reflect and celebrate the distinctiveness of Jersey in their form, materials, function and finishes.

When assimilating new buildings into a tightly knit and largely historic environment the use of traditional shapes, features, materials or details can provide a reassuring sense of familiarity and continuity. Traditional elements can be interpreted in a modern way, but this must be sensitively carried out in order to provide continuity and comfort, without resorting to pastiche.

In traditional building facades, the relationship between the areas of solid masonry and window and door openings is a fundamental ingredient of the architectural composition. It can give clues as to the nature and use of the building. The patterns created by windows and doors can be informal and organic or follow more regular arrangements. These relationships and the typical sizes of door and window components have become more or less standardised for many building types, such as houses. New buildings that significantly depart from the expected norms can attract attention and seem discordant. How these expectations are met is an important factor in inserting a new development among established buildings.

A new building should respond to its surroundings. This can be achieved by settling into the background or by creating a contrast. The use of a limited palette of materials, reflecting those prevalent in the locality will help a building settle. Where the materials proposed have no particular association with the Island's character, their use will need to be justified.

Where a building is designed to be prominent, it must be exceptional in its design and execution to justify that prominence.



RELEVANCE

All new developments should be environmentally responsible and sustainable.

Buildings constructed today will last for decades to come and their environmental impact - both during construction and on-going occupancy - must be considered at the outset. New developments can significantly contribute to a sustainable future through their design, orientation, construction methods or applied innovations.

Building Bye-Laws seek to improve the environmental performance of buildings but these represent a minimum standard and it is not unreasonable to aspire for more.

When planning a development there are opportunities to include design elements and features that encourage behavioural changes, such as increased recycling or reduced car usage.

Environmentally sustainability technologies and techniques are evolving rapidly and both developers and designers should seek to be at the forefront of their implementation. Where consent is sought for a building which is exceptional in its design, height or mass, the building must be to the very highest standards in terms of sustainability.



SUSTAINABILITY

All developments should engage with, contribute to, and include the surrounding spaces, buildings and activities.

No building sits in isolation and the more it acknowledges what is happening around it the more successful it will be. A building that turns its back on its surroundings isolates people. A building that allows for pedestrian access and has an active frontage at street level will achieve a sense of connection. Design elements such as these give a sense of scale that, even with the largest of projects, can make comfortable, successful and intimate spaces.



CONNECTION

Buildings are a form of art. They are available to both their users and those who simply pass by. They surround most of our activities and define how we work and live.



When something has such a fundamental role in everything we do it is inconceivable that we should not want to make these elements of our lives joyous.

The designer should strive to make each individual building, and the places it creates, both comfortable and emotionally fulfilling.

Through architectural order, expression and integrity buildings can achieve a sense of rationale and purpose that is pleasing to both the user and the observer.



**ENRICHING
& DELIGHTING**

All developments in Jersey over a certain size are encouraged to invest a percentage of their total build costs into art.

Incorporating high quality sculpture, or other works of art, will significantly enrich a building and its surroundings.

Wherever possible, the developer should plan their Percentage for Art contribution at the outset to ensure it forms an integral part of the building or its surroundings.

For further information see Supplementary Planning Guidance on Percentage for Art (June 2008).



**PERCENTAGE
FOR ART**



**ATTENTION TO
DETAIL & QUALITY**



Each building should illustrate a simple, single design philosophy in which all details are executed to the highest standards.



Attention should be paid to:

- The landscape which should complement the design and add value to both users and passers-by.
- Ensuring the building's exterior is not littered with functional elements. Roof lines should be clean (see Supplementary Planning Guidance for Roofscape issued May 2008)
- The materials and construction which must be of the highest quality.
- All these details should be considered and agreed at conception stage. Consideration should also be given to retaining the originating architect, as this will help ensure attention to detail throughout the design and building process.



**APPENDIX 1:
JERSEY TRADITIONS**

THE RURAL TRADITION

The following is a brief introduction and overview of Jersey's architectural traditions. An understanding of these traditions will help support the development of good, relevant design, regardless of whether the proposed building is a modern interpretation of a traditional scheme or a modern scheme in its own right.

Jersey's early rural buildings were derived from vernacular traditions and influenced by domestic architecture in Brittany and Normandy.

Houses were often irregular in appearance - with considerable variation in the size and placing of windows - and modest in height. Their span was limited by the length of available timbers for floor and roof beams.

The windows were initially small as their size was dictated by the weight of the granite lintels that could be easily man-handled, although openings were later increased in depth to accommodate vertical sliding sashes.

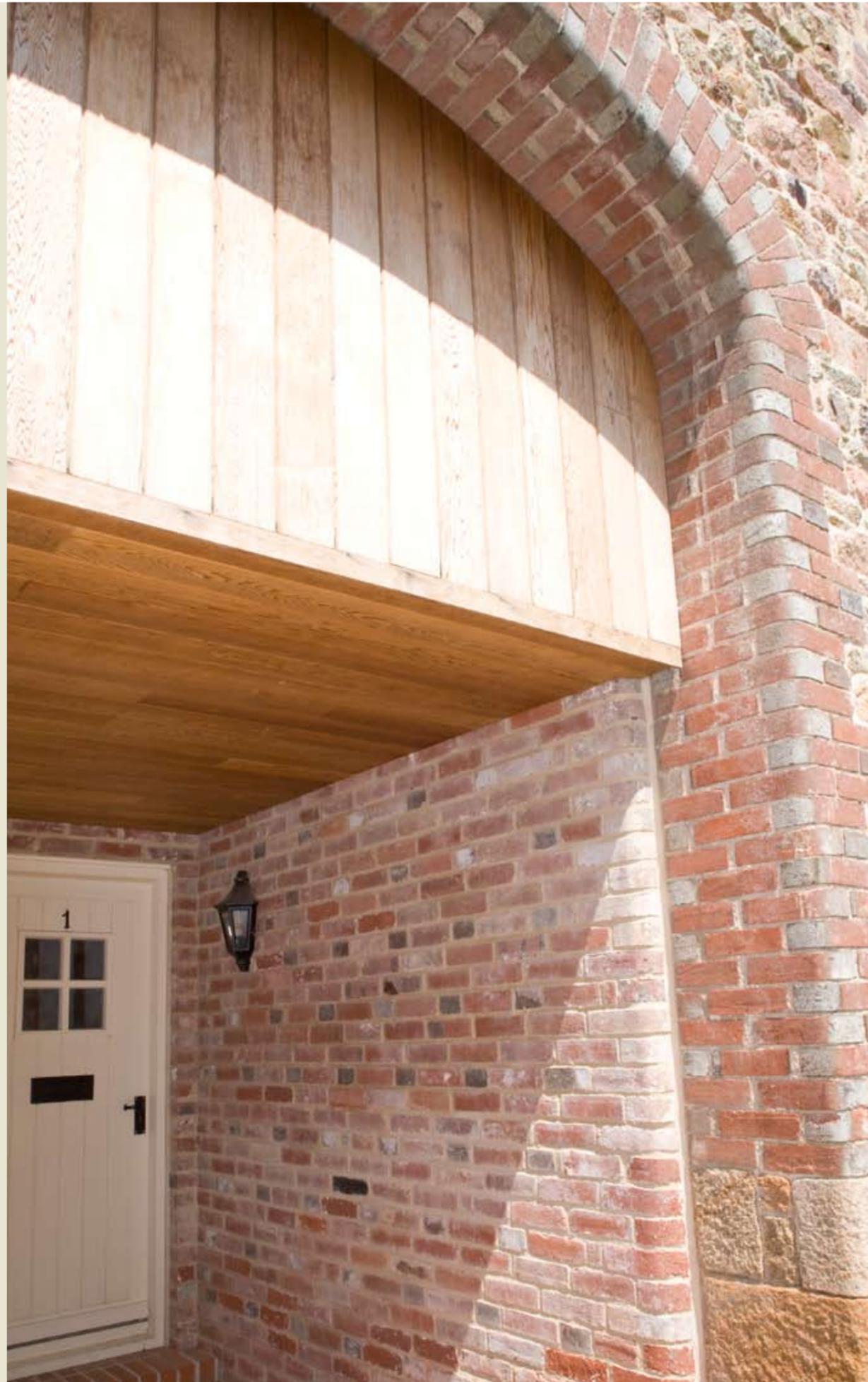
Openings in gable walls are unusual and a blank gable wall, especially along the roadside, is a distinctive local Jersey image.

Dormers were initially unknown and were first introduced when slate, as opposed to thatch, became available. Dormers were modest in size and virtually unknown on the rear roof pitches.

The form of masonry evolved over the centuries gradually becoming more regular and precise before being covered in render. The use of external timber was minimal to avoid regular maintenance.

Granite is a difficult stone to work so decorative date stones and quoins are often the only external ornamental features.

Materials were originally limited to locally sourced stones such as granite, diorite, shale and conglomerate. Thatch was used for roofs. The palette of materials was later extended to include brick, slate, pantile and render.



THE JERSEY FARMHOUSE

A familiar and iconic Jersey image is the three or five bay, two storey, granite farmhouse. The early farmhouses tended to be just one room deep with one room to each side of a central hall and staircase. The roof pitch was usually around 45 degrees with gable chimneys at each end. Room heights were low. The fenestration of the main façade was symmetrical with a central door whilst the rear façade had only an off-centre door and a staircase window above it.

Dower extensions were often added to the gable walls and these were subservient in height and size to the main house. Rear additions, incorporating sculleries and other service rooms were usually cat-slide extensions with the roof of the main house carried over, often at a reduced pitch.

Jersey farmhouses were often part of a larger group of farm buildings - stables, cowsheds, pig sties, barns etc - that were generally lower than the farmhouse and utilitarian in appearance.

Jersey farmhouses are pleasing in appearance as a result of their use of natural, local materials, their solidity and satisfying proportions. It is not difficult, with care, to recreate convincing re-interpretations as long as the basic rules governing their appearance and construction are understood and appropriately applied. Buildings which are too long, too deep or too high, or where important features like chimneys are omitted, appear unsatisfactory.

LATER RURAL DEVELOPMENTS

By the end of the 18th century narrow, one room deep houses were gradually replaced with houses which were two rooms deep and roughly square on plan. In addition, room heights were increased so buildings were substantially larger than the earlier granite houses.

Granite gradually became unfashionable and was replaced with rendered and lined façades with distinctive render quoins. These were usually unpainted. Façades were symmetrical and a new feature emerged, the glazed porch. The differences between rural and urban houses were becoming harder to distinguish and local vernacular building forms were regarded as outmoded and inferior.

This new English-influenced house type frequently formed an additional element in an established group of farm buildings, the earlier house being relegated to agricultural uses. Many older granite houses were re-faced with render to keep abreast of fashion and the windows on main facades were altered to enable vertical sliding sashes to be introduced.

THE URBAN TRADITION

GEORGIAN

Early town buildings, like their rural counterparts, were influenced by domestic architecture in Brittany and Normandy. By the 18th century however, architectural fashions from mainland Britain were being adopted - albeit with some French influence still in evidence - and the order and symmetry of Georgian era design soon became the predominant architectural style of St Helier.

Large, multi-paned sash and casement windows replaced small casement windows whilst the formal grouping of windows and the "lining through" of lintels added order and restraint. Ornament was simple and unpretentious, such as delicate arched fanlights over doors.

Overall, strong and regular fenestration of front elevations became a typical feature of local buildings.

Whilst town buildings, like their rural counterparts, combined coarse granite rubble for walling material with finely dressed granite for door and window openings, the palette of building materials broadened to include bricks, French or English lime, Dutch pantiles, Welsh slate and other high quality materials.

Another development was in the design of working class cottages surrounding internal yards. Rows of one-storey cottages were built fronting the street, with a passageway that led to the yard and a parallel row of cottages at the back. Sometimes a passageway through the front row would access the yard and rear. From this original pattern, workers' cottages would later develop in different ways, either as rows of parallel two-storey houses set perpendicular to the street, or single rows of cottages with a small garden at the rear.



REGENCY

The Regency style coincided with a building boom. The burgeoning middle classes demanded new houses, resulting in elaborate set-piece terraces.

Two distinct approaches to Regency design soon appeared in St Helier. One simply enhanced the strict Georgian classicism by adding devices such as Doric porches or Corinthian pilasters to their compositions. The other was much bolder and imitated

mainland fashion. Villa and terrace compositions, although still respectful of classical proportions, were more highly decorated with canopies, balconies, shutters, deep projecting eaves and delicate cast ironwork.

The use of cast iron railings, balconies and verandahs altered St Helier's townscape, as did the increasing use of fine stucco work. The use of soft lime putty gave a flexible, malleable stucco that

could be used for ornament. This ornament, ranging from simple column capitals and terrace-name plaques to more exuberant embellishment, changed the nature of St Helier's architecture and prompted the extravagant decoration of the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

VICTORIAN

The simple and elegant buildings of the early 19th century gradually gave way to the elaborate and highly decorated structures that reflected the Victorians' passion for architectural eclecticism. It is difficult to identify a "typical" Victorian building in St Helier because they range from the gothic to classical, with some making extensive use of exotic details such as stucco tree branch or bark-like mouldings.

The eclecticism of the era - and the importing of new ideas and technologies - resulted in the use of a wider range of materials. Cast iron and plate glass enabled the development of larger buildings with bigger openings and bricks became more common, with brickworks opening up on the island. Local granite became popular once again although often in the form of squared, coursed stonework. Polished granite was used for the first time in 1886 for the public library in Royal Square.

During the second half of the 19th century a shortage of available land led to increased pressure on existing built-up areas and the gaps left between Georgian and Regency developments were gradually built on. This pressure for development has continued and builders have amalgamated plots to create larger land parcels for contemporary office and residential developments. This has dramatically altered traditional building patterns. Respecting or echoing traditional plot widths is a way in which developers can restore building patterns and rhythm to the streetscape.

The following is a brief explanation of the role that site appraisals can play in helping the architect and developer to assess the character of their proposed site and establish how their development will integrate within it.

Site appraisals support the development of Design Statements, which are required for most planning applications (see Design Statements Supplementary Planning Guidance December 2006).

Some development sites allow considerable freedom of architectural expression and the use of new materials. Others, because of their position in a more visually coherent setting, will offer less opportunity for innovation without risking visual discord. Conducting a site appraisal will help the developer to understand this and will ensure the most appropriate building is developed from the outset.

The following areas of enquiry are for guidance only. Not all matters will be relevant to all sites.

- How do existing buildings respond to the underlying topography? Do they follow or cross land contours? Do they take advantage of views and break the skyline? Or are they in sheltered locations against a natural backcloth or against other buildings?
- What contribution does existing planting make? Does it soften architectural forms; define boundaries; provide privacy or create shelter and enclosure? What effect will any new proposed planting or landscaping have?
- How does the use of existing land and buildings, and vehicular and pedestrian routes affect character? Is the proposed building and land use in keeping with the area? Is there an existing, or proposed, access route? If so, what will the impact of these things be on the character of the area? How does that differ from neighbouring areas which are architecturally similar but with different access routes or land use?
- What is the contribution to the public realm? Will the development border directly onto streets or public spaces? If so, will it contribute to the vitality and appeal of these spaces, or operate in a negative way by turning its back and creating dead frontages?
- What is the relationship between the built form and undeveloped open space? What is the pattern or ambience generated by the relationship between the buildings, their private spaces, neighbouring streets and public spaces?
- How will the proposed development sit within the existing building line? The relationship with neighbouring buildings can be variable depending on their proximity, their orientation and on whether the building line is broken. Are the resulting forms flat and continuous or serrated and irregular? Will the introduction of curves or changes in direction in the building line create a beneficial sense of enclosure when looking along a street or space?
- How does the proposed development respond to existing façade and roof modelling? What is the character of existing facades and rooflines? Are they flat, undulating or heavily modelled by recesses, porches, windows or other features?
- What proportions, patterns and rhythms do the existing elevations have? What shape are the existing architectural elements such as doors and windows? Are existing façades divided by columns or other vertical and horizontal features, whether structural or applied? Should the rhythms extend along the whole street or can a break in the rhythm be introduced?



APPENDIX 2: SITE APPRAISALS



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Jersey Design Guide aims to provide information and guidance only. It does not act as formal Supplementary Planning Guidance and it does not replace planning law or the policies of the Island Plan.

The Island Plan is the framework of policies and proposals against which planning applications are determined.

The Jersey Design Guide builds on the Minister's Design Principles which were included in the Design Statements Supplementary Planning Guidance issued in December 2006 (Advice Note 4). This is one of a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes which provide detailed advice about the ways in which the planning law and the Island Plan are likely to be interpreted and applied.

Other Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes referred to in the Jersey Design Guide include:

- Guidance for Roofscape (May 2008)
- Percentage for Art (June 2008)

They can be viewed at:
www.gov.je/PlanningEnvironment/PlanningAndBuildingDivision

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USEFUL CONTACTS

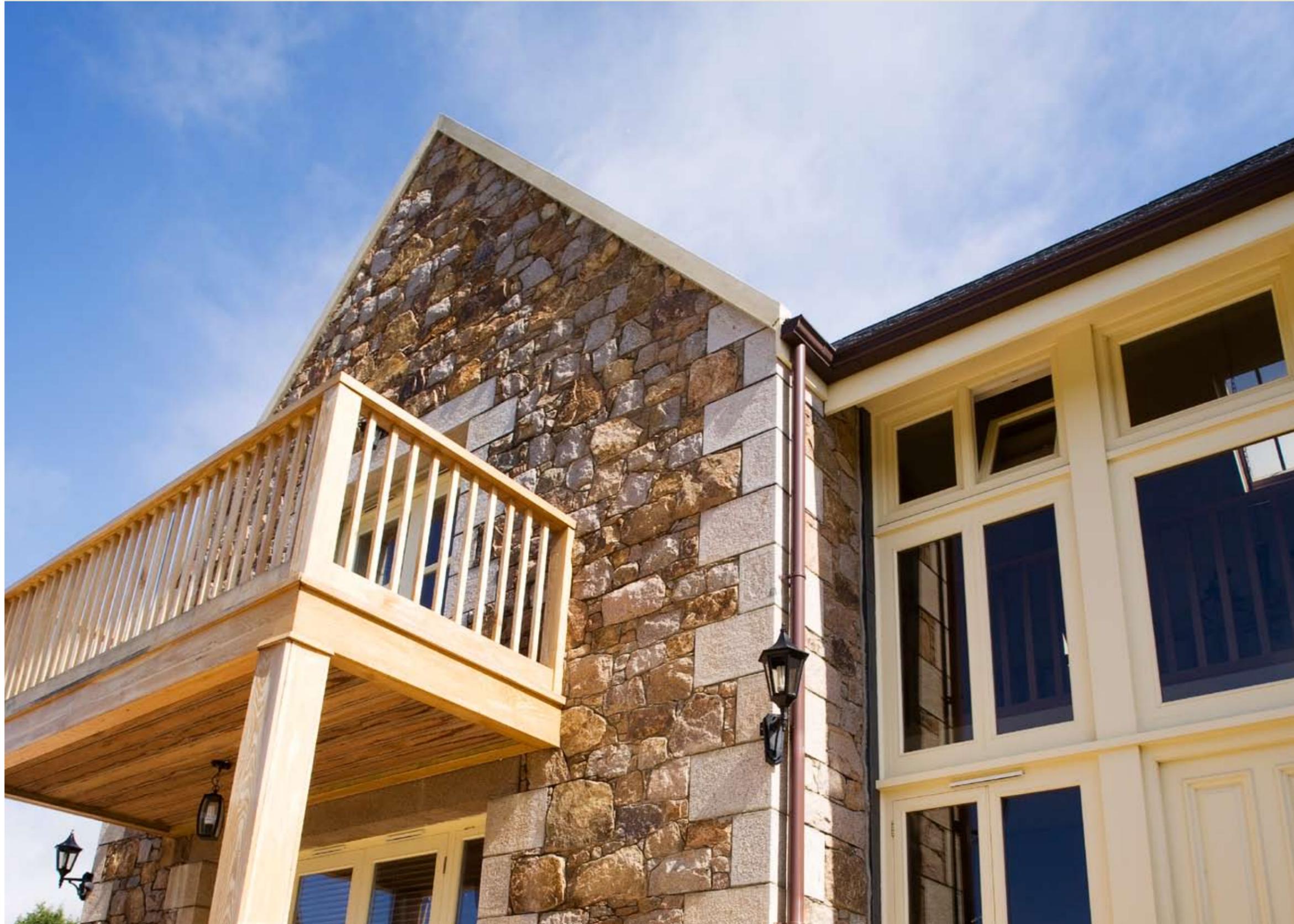
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