



Cabinet
Office

Planning services reform **Changes to plan-making: consultation**

SUMMER 2025

Government of Jersey

Subject of this consultation:	<p>Jersey has a plan-led planning system, where the island plan is of primary significance in planning decision-making. It is of fundamental importance to meet the community's development needs and to deliver the Government's priorities.</p> <p>This consultation discusses changes that could be made to the way in which development plans are created in Jersey, together with the form of development plan that might be used in the island.</p>
Scope of this consultation:	<p>Views are invited on whether Jersey should continue to use a singular development plan; or whether this should be split in to different levels of plan-making which, together would provide the island with a development plan.</p> <p>Associated with this is the need to consider whether changes should be made to the process by which the island plan, or plans, are produced. This will influence when and how islanders can interact with and influence the plan-making process; and the time it takes to create or change a plan.</p> <p>Consideration is also given as to whether provision should be made to alter part of a plan during its plan period, without revision to the whole plan.</p>
Who should read this:	<p>We would like to hear comments from all islanders, including those who may have engaged with the plan-making process before, including elected members, planning agents, architects, developers, landowners and other stakeholders who have an interest in the sustainable development of the island.</p>
Duration:	<p>The consultation will run for eight weeks from 15 July to 09 September 2025.</p>
Lead official:	<p>Kevin Pilley, Head of Place and Spatial Planning, Cabinet Office</p>
How to respond:	<p>You may respond in a variety of ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• by completing the online survey: changes to plan-making• by email to islandplan@gov.je• by post to Place and Spatial Planning, Cabinet Office, Government of Jersey, Union Street, St Helier, JE4 8PF
Next steps:	<p>All consultations responses will be reviewed and assessed. A summary of the responses and the key issues arising from them will be presented to the Minister for the Environment in order that the Minister might consider the potential for change.</p>

In the event of the Minister wishing to pursue specific changes, the Minister may undertake further consultation. This may require change to the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law, which would need to be lodged and debated by the States Assembly before the end of this political term in 2026.

Contents

1. Introduction..... 5

2. Background..... 6

 2.1 Principles..... 6

3. Areas of potential change..... 8

 3.1 Plan form 8

 3.2 Making changes to the plan..... 10

 3.3 Plan review process..... 11

4. Questions..... 13

 Plan-form 13

 Making changes to the plan..... 13

 Plan-review process 13

 Any other comment 13

1. Introduction

This consultation seeks your views on possible changes that could be made to the way in which development plans are created in Jersey, together with the form of development plan that might be used in the island.

The Government has committed to reform the island's planning service.

Jersey has a plan-led planning system, where the island plan is of primary significance in planning decision-making. It is of fundamental importance to meet the community's development needs and to deliver the Government's priorities.

As part of this work the Minister for the Environment wants to explore whether changes to plan-making might provide opportunities for beneficial change. Potential change to plan-making has been considered from two perspectives including: the process by which a plan is made, and the product itself.

It is important to note that this work does not include a review of the current policy framework provided by the bridging Island Plan. This will only be delivered by the next island plan review, which will take place under the provisions of a potentially changed plan-making process that may arise from this review.

2. Background

A high-level comparative review of plan-making practice and plans has been undertaken, focusing on improvements to the planning system made or being made in other administrations within the British Isles including England, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man and Guernsey. Consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches has helped to inform the considerations of potential for change to the system of plan-making in Jersey.

Regard has also been had to the experience of producing the bridging Island Plan which was developed under a modified procedure, set out in Covid-19 (Island Plan) (Jersey) Regulations 2021¹ and the associated Planning and Building (Covid-19 Bridging Island Plan) (Jersey) Order 2021², compared to the process of island plan review previously employed in respect of the making of earlier island plans.

2.1 Principles

The principal objective of the planning service reform programme is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system. Given that Jersey has a plan-led planning system, plan-making is of fundamental significance. Any review of plan-making, to deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness must, however, have regard to the principles of plan-making.

A planning system exists to regulate land use and development in a way that balances economic, social and environmental needs. It is a primary purpose of the island's planning legislation '*to ensure that when land is developed the development is in accordance with a development plan that provides for the orderly, comprehensive and sustainable development of land in a manner that best serves the interests of the community*'³.

The principles which underpin the development of an island plan, and which need to be considered in relation to any change to plan-making, might include the following.:

- **Promote sustainable development:** ensuring that development meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations.
- **Provide a framework for growth:** supporting the economy by enhancing an environment where investment, infrastructure, and housing are attractive, resilient and achievable.
- **Protect and enhance the environment:** protecting and enhancing natural landscapes, heritage sites, and biodiversity.
- **Enhance quality of life and wellbeing:** creating well designed, accessible, and inclusive places for people to live, work, and experience.
- **Ensure fair and transparent decision making:** providing clear frameworks for development while engaging communities and stakeholders in the process.

A planning system's primary purpose is, therefore, to provide a level of clarity and certainty while remaining adaptable to change, ensuring that land is used efficiently and fairly. Accordingly, any development plan should be:

¹ [Covid-19 \(Island Plan\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2021](#)

² [Planning and Building \(Covid-19 Bridging Island Plan\) \(Jersey\) Order 2021](#)

³ Article 2(2)(a) [Planning and Building \(Jersey\) Law 2002](#)

- **Strategic and progressive:** dealing with the “now” whilst anticipating future needs and aligning planning with long term goals.
- **Clear and useable:** providing a level of certainty to developers, communities, and investors through strong policies.
- **Flexible and adaptive:** able to respond to emerging trends, climate change, economic shifts, and demographic changes.
- **Efficient and balanced:** balancing due diligence with decision making.
- **Inclusive and participatory:** engaging communities and stakeholders meaningfully.
- **Delivery-focused:** moving beyond policy creation to ensure implementation, monitoring, and enforcement.

Planning systems and the plans that are created within them, therefore, need to evolve in order to be responsive to:

- **Changing societal needs:** which might include the development of appropriate responses to population changes, ageing demographics, and planning for housing and other community needs to create better places that support individual and societal health and wellbeing, and.
- **Environmental challenges:** the need to adapt to and mitigate for climate change, including policy objectives which strive for carbon-neutrality and the reversal of biodiversity loss, necessitating planning responses.
- **Economic shifts:** evolving economic circumstances requiring new approaches to planning and regeneration where it affects the use of land and buildings, to better enable investment and to encourage entrepreneurial endeavour.

Because planning is inherently about balancing needs and managing change, it must continuously adapt to remain relevant, effective, and fair. Balancing stability, in the form of key principles of good planning and adaptability, remains a consistent challenge and planning systems across jurisdictions are required to adapt to the need to change.

It is against this backdrop that the comparative analysis and consideration for change to Jersey’s system of plan-making has been made.

3. Areas of potential change

3.1 Plan form

The island plan is required, by law, to be a sustainable development plan that can be used to determine all forms of development and other activity. Because of this, it is inevitably extensive and comprehensive in its scope, size and complexity.

Since 1987, when the first island plan was approved by the States, the island plan in Jersey has taken the form of a singular written document (the plan) dealing with strategic island-wide planning issues and objectives together with matters of specific detail in relation to both sites and thematic policies; and a map (the proposals map).

Plan coverage has extended across all of the bailiwick since 1987, and the island plan has been reviewed, in its entirety, in 2002; 2011 and in 2022. Interim reviews of the plan, where parts of it have been changed, have taken place in 2008 and in 2014.

Jersey is unusual within the British Isles in maintaining a single-tier plan-making system. Other jurisdictions have various multi-tiered planning structures:

- **England:** features multiple layers of plan-making, including a national planning policy framework (NPPF), proposed spatial development strategies (strategic plans at a regional/sub-regional level), local plans, and neighbourhood plans. The NPPF is not a statutory part of the development plan framework.
- **Scotland and Wales:** these both feature multiple levels of plan-making including the National Planning Framework in Scotland and the National Development Framework in Wales alongside local development plans, offering national direction with local flexibility. The national frameworks in these administrations are both statutory development plans, making them a key consideration in decision-making.
- **Isle of Man:** this system includes an island-wide Strategic Plan (adopted in 2016) supported by a number of local area plans. Work is being undertaken to explore the consolidation of multiple area plans into one island-wide area plan that will align with a new strategic plan that is currently under review.
- **Guernsey:** the States of Guernsey adopt a Strategic Land Use Plan, setting out strategic land use objectives for the island, which guides and directs the Development and Planning Authority in the preparation of a development plan for the island (the Island Development Plan). Guernsey's SLUP was adopted in 2011; and the IDP was adopted in 2016 and replacing the Urban Area and the Rural Area plans. The Development and Planning Authority (DPA) is currently undertaking a focused review of certain policies within the Island Development Plan (IDP).

A multiple-plan system typically consists of two main components:

- **Strategic plans:** these generally set the long-term vision, infrastructure needs, and spatial strategy, offering overarching guidance for growth and development across the entirety of an administration (i.e. national or island-wide). They are mostly statutory and form part of the development plan used in planning decisions.

Scotland's latest national planning framework (National Planning Framework 4: Feb 2023) includes both strategic spatial principles and also a range of national planning policies to be used in the determination of planning applications.

- **Local development plans:** these provide more detailed policies and site-specific allocations, helping local authorities address community specific needs. They usually embrace the entirety of a local authority area. In England, Scotland and Wales they are produced by local planning authorities and in Guernsey and the Isle of Man they are produced by the respective government island-wide planning authorities.

The content of local development plans is required to align with the direction and objectives set in strategic plans. This principle holds in both larger and smaller administrations, notwithstanding differences in governmental structures.

Advantages of a multi-tiered approach might include a reduced requirement to review the plan in its entirety (i.e. all parts of a planning framework including strategic and island-wide local plans) when a plan is reviewed. It may be that strategic plans, setting out an overarching set of policy objectives and national or island-wide direction, require less frequent review.

It is evident that the strategic principles of planning in Jersey – including the protection of the countryside and generally focusing development activity within the island's existing built-up areas – have endured through successive island plans.

Local development plans, providing more detailed policies and site allocations across a local authority area or an island, with a focus on delivering change, might be reviewed more frequently, in response to changed circumstances and local needs.

The planning services reform programme affords an opportunity to review the form of the island plan in Jersey. It is considered that there are two options that might be considered.

- **Option 1: a singular plan**

Jersey's island plan, containing both strategic and detailed policies, is currently presented as a single tier plan, and has been since 1987.

This ensures the alignment and integration of strategic and detailed planning policy; and clear access to all relevant policy considerations in one place. By necessity, the document is comprehensive but large.

Notwithstanding the ability to change part of the plan (see later), the review of one whole plan may be considered more onerous and less flexible than a review of a plan where its contents are disaggregated into more than one part.

- **Option 2: a multi-tier plan framework**

A multi-tiered planning framework may reduce the requirement to review the entire policy framework provided by the island plan so frequently, particularly if strategic policies and strategic direction is enduring.

Reviews of the more detailed thematic and site-specific policies may be less onerous, and might happen more frequently, as required, in response to changing needs.

Ease of access to and use of the planning policy framework may be made more complicated if more than one part of the development plan framework is required to be used in decision-making. All parts of the planning framework would remain relevant and applicable to decision-making. Similarly, the development plan framework, as a whole, would be required to remain comprehensive.

There would be a greater need to ensure that changes to the detailed level plan remained aligned with strategic objectives. Procedures would also need to be established to determine whether a comprehensive review (of both the strategic and island-wide local plan) was required in respect of any proposed review or change.

Note: This paper also contains an option to consider the ability to change part of a plan (as opposed to a requirement to review all of it), which may help to ensure that whatever form a plan is in, it can remain adaptable to change (see 3.2 below. **Making changes to the plan**).

3.2 Making changes to the plan

Jersey's current planning law does not allow for amendments to be made to an island plan once it has been adopted: it cannot be amended in part and can only be revised by embarking on the process that is prescribed for a comprehensive island plan review.

Jersey's planning framework previously allowed amendments to part of an island plan. Interim reviews of the 2002 Island Plan were undertaken in 2008; and the 2011 Island Plan was revised, in part, in 2014.

Other jurisdictions allow partial plan amendments, providing flexibility while maintaining stability in the planning system.

The ability to amend planning frameworks and local development plans varies across jurisdictions, reflecting differences in legal structures, policy approaches, and administrative processes.

Scotland is introducing formal mechanisms for amending the National Planning Framework and local development plans (LDPs) as part of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019⁴. Under this reform, LDPs will operate on a ten-year cycle, with statutory amendment processes being developed to allow for targeted updates without requiring a full plan review, using modified and proportionate procedures. While the exact mechanisms are still being refined through secondary legislation, this shift marks a significant departure from traditional fixed-term plan reviews.

The States of Guernsey has similarly recently approved the principle of enabling amendment of existing development plans, during the plan period, to deal with various types of amendment, using modified procedures, to ensure a more proportionate and streamlined approach (as opposed to that required for full plan review) depending upon the nature of the amendment proposed⁵.

In contrast, Wales and the Isle of Man do not currently have statutory mechanisms for amending plans. The Isle of Man's Strategic Plan is rarely updated, and while area plans are periodically reviewed, any revisions require a formal review rather than incremental amendments. Wales relies on annual monitoring reports (AMRs) to assess the need for reviews, but this is not a statutory amendment process comparable to Scotland's.

⁴ [Proposals for Regulations to Amend National Planning Framework and Local Development Plans](#) (Scotland)

⁵ [P.2025/35 Development plans - amendment process \(Guernsey\)](#)

England's Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) introduces provisions aimed at speeding up and simplifying plan-making, including a process for Local Plan 'updates'. The exact legal weight and scope of these updates are still being defined through secondary legislation.

Introducing the ability to amend plans, in part, during the plan period would allow Jersey's planning system to be more adaptive to emerging trends and unforeseen external influences, such as economic changes or societal events (such as pandemics) or to address a new policy matter that reflects a new issue or ambition. Enabling amendments could streamline the plan-making process by only addressing the necessary changes rather than requiring a full review, ultimately saving both cost and time.

A more flexible system could enhance responsiveness and ensure policies remain relevant but should only do so where change does not compromise the overall integrity of planning objectives. It is expected that any provision to amend part of an island plan would, therefore, be used very sparingly. Proposals to amend an island plan would need to be soundly justified and considered on their merits. An established and consistent policy framework ensures confidence in the planning system over the long term, which should only be subject to interim change where there is sufficient justification to do so.

The process for amendment would need to be defined through legislative change and procedures developed to set out what forms of amendment might be considered and how a more responsive and streamlined version of the plan review process might operate, whilst balancing the need for due process, including appropriate justification, consultation and examination of the proposed amendment.

3.3 Plan review process

It is generally acknowledged that the plan-making process is lengthy to complete. It can be a complex, time-consuming and expensive area of work particularly as it seeks to enshrine and uphold the principles of openness, transparency and accountability, and provides the principal mechanism by which communities are able to shape the development of their areas.

The process typically spans several years, involving stages such as evidence gathering, drafting, public consultations, independent examinations, and final adoption.

Planning reforms in many places generally aim to speed up this process, to ensure that there is full plan coverage with up-to-date plans, while maintaining robust community engagement and adherence to planning principles.

Most of Jersey's development plans have involved the production of an initial draft island plan which is the subject of consultation and independent examination; before a further revised draft plan is produced and then lodged in the States Assembly for consideration, amendment and approval by States Members.

The bridging Island Plan was produced using a modified and more streamlined procedure, involving the preparation of just one draft plan, against which both the public and States Members were able to submit representations and amendments. These representations and amendments were all then considered at an independent examination.

States Members were able to lodge further amendments, once the inspectors had presented their report to the Minister following the examination in public, but this was limited to matters that had already been raised and considered during the plan-preparation process.

Compared to the previously established process of plan review, this is considered to be a more efficient plan-making process.

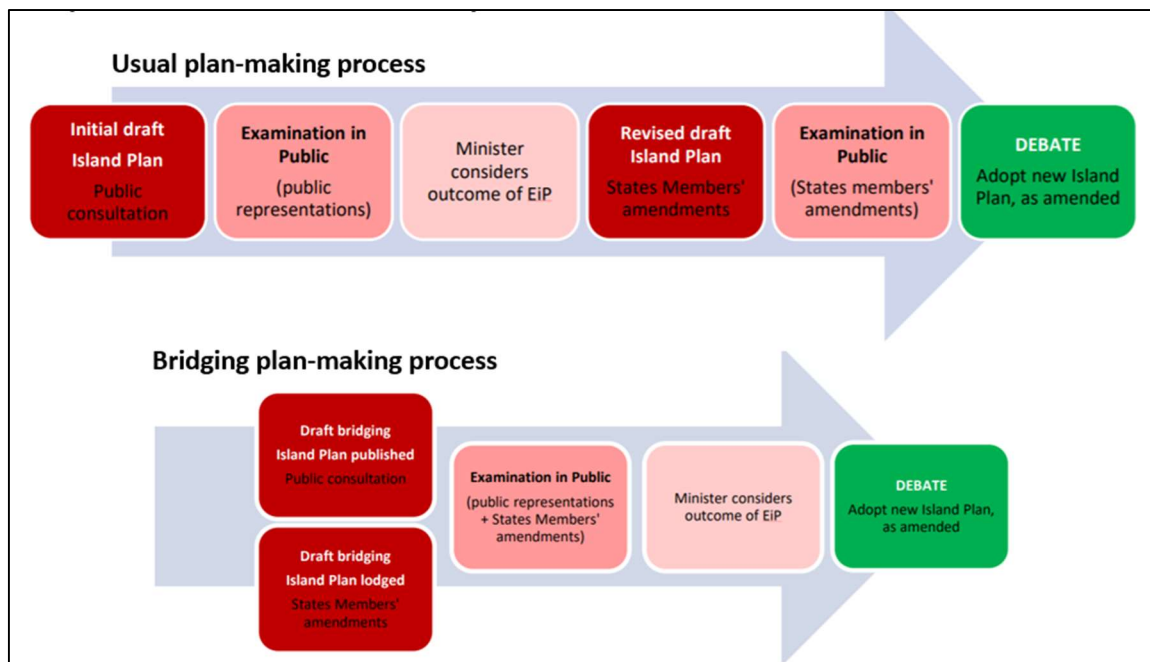


Figure: comparison of island plan review processes.

If the process used for the bridging Island Plan is to be adopted, closer consideration would need to be given to the time for public consultation, particularly in advance of the examination in public, to ensure adequate publicity and engagement of islanders.

Any streamlined timeline process needs to balance efficiency with thorough due diligence and public participation. Implementing clear milestones, allocating sufficient resources, and leveraging digital platforms for engagement can facilitate a more transparent and expedited process, ensuring that planning objectives are met without compromising quality or community trust.

4. Questions

You may respond to specific questions or provide your own views in a variety of ways.

- by completing the online survey: changes to plan-making
- by email to islandplan@gov.je
- by post to Place and Spatial Planning, Cabinet Office, Government of Jersey, Union Street, St Helier, JE4 8PF

Plan-form (see section 3.1)

1. Should the current singular form of the island plan, containing both strategic and detailed polices and proposals, be retained?
Strongly agree/agree/don't know/disagree/strongly disagree
2. Should the form of the island plan should be changed, separating out strategic policies (in a strategic plan) from more detailed thematic and site-specific policies (in an island-wide local plan)?
Strongly agree/agree/don't know/disagree/strongly disagree

Making changes to the plan (see section 3.2)

3. Should provision be made to enable the interim review of part of an island plan during its plan period?
Strongly agree/agree/don't know/disagree/strongly disagree

Plan-review process (see section 3.3)

4. Should the process of reviewing the island plan should be changed to reflect that used to create the bridging Island Plan (i.e. involving the production of one draft plan)?
Strongly agree/agree/don't know/disagree/strongly disagree

Any other comment

5. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make about the process of making or changing Jersey's development plan?

END