



**LAND USE
CONSULTANTS**

ENVIRONMENTAL
PLANNING, DESIGN AND
MANAGEMENT

**JERSEY COUNTRYSIDE
CHARACTER APPRAISAL
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT:**

**ISLAND-WIDE POLICIES
AND
PRIORITIES**

by
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ISLAND-WIDE POLICIES AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Countryside Character Appraisal of Jersey¹ has provided an integrated characterisation of Jersey's environment covering the whole of the Island's terrestrial area, the intertidal area and the offshore reefs and islets which lie within its jurisdiction. The characterisation delineated eight broad character types, which have been further subdivided into detailed character areas. The latter are clearly defined geographic areas each with their own distinct local identity. The characterisation does not seek to identify landscape/environmental quality; its purpose is to distinguish differences between areas and highlight their relative importance. It is these differences and their juxtaposition within a small island which create the essence of Jersey and its strong sense of place.
- 1.2. A robust evaluation framework using the new environmental capital approach was used to assess environmental importance and identify - levels of protection, the health and condition of each character area and their capacity for change. The evaluation was used as the basis for developing the overall policies.
- 1.3. This short paper describes how the proposals and guidance for each of the character areas can be developed as Island-wide policies and priorities for action. It puts forward recommendations for generating character-based policies as part of the review of the Island-plan. The policies are divided into two types: (i) protection and (ii) landscape character. The character appraisal does not negate the need for the definition of detailed development control zones and special environmental designations.

2. EXISTING POLICIES

- 2.1 It is important that the proposals arising from the Countryside Character Appraisal are set in the context of the existing Island Plan policies. (IDC. 1986. **Jersey Island Plan**. Volume 2: Plan and Policies). The plan contains a very strong set of development control policies, relating to the:
 - The Green Zone
 - The Green Backdrop Zone
 - The Agricultural Priority Zone
 - Sensitive Landscape Area of the Agricultural Priority Zone
- 2.3 These policies have on the whole served the Island well in terms of protecting it from inappropriate development. The Countryside Characterisation aims to strengthen and support these policies and does not dilute the existing levels of protection.

¹ Land Use Consultants. 1998 Jersey Countryside Character Appraisal. Final Report prepared for the States of Jersey Planning and Environment Committee

3. PROTECTION

- 3.1 All development in Jersey's countryside areas should be informed by and be sympathetic to local character (as described in the Countryside Character Appraisal) and should contribute to the conservation, management, enhancement or restoration of character as appropriate. The Countryside Character Appraisal should be referred to for more detailed criteria governing the type, scale and location of development within the individual character areas.
- 3.2 For any individual development proposal a detailed assessment of its merits and will be required before a decision can be reached. This will need to assess local landscape context and visual impact.
- 3.3 The following general policies only apply to the Jersey's countryside areas and do not cover urban areas, urban edge or the areas within village envelopes. It is likely that these locations will always be the first consideration for new development. It is recommended that a more detailed 'urban edge' assessment is undertaken to fix the limits of these areas and determine their capacity for change. The detailed urban edge assessment should be undertaken in the context of the Countryside Character Appraisal.
- 3.4 The proposed levels of protection are shown on Figure 1.

Levels of Protection

Absolute: These are unique areas of natural/cultural environments of the greatest importance at the national/international level that deserve the absolute highest level of protection. There is a presumption against all forms of new development, apart from sympathetic refurbishment of existing buildings within the current development footprint.

Character Areas

Terrestrial

A1: North Coast Heathland

A2: South-west Headlands

B4: Quennevais Dunes

Intertidal

F1: North and South West Cliffs

G1: St. Ouen's Bay

G2: St Brelade's Bay

G3: St. Aubin's Bay

G4: South East Coast

G5: St. Catherine's and Anne Port

Offshore Reefs

H1: Les Écréhous

H2: Le Plateau des Minquiers

Note: In the case of the intertidal bays there may be some exemption for certain types of development associated with fisheries. Any such proposal will require a full environmental impact assessment. This will need to recognise not only the individual effect but also the potential cumulative impact of small scale developments. Long monitoring will be required to

ensure that such activities do not have an adverse effect on environmental quality.

High:

These areas contain an important range of environmental features and have an intact countryside character. They also include areas of particular sensitivity ie. the escarpment along the south, east and west coasts and the inland ridges where any development could have a very high visual impact. The only developments that can be justified are small scale renewals, extensions or conversions to the existing built fabric or new buildings with proven agricultural need. Even these minor developments could have a significant impact and careful attention to scale, design and siting will be essential to ensure that landscape character is conserved and enhanced.

Character Areas

Terrestrial

- A3: North East Low Wooded Edge
- B5: St. Ouen's Bay – Coastal Plain
- C1: Grouville – St. Saviour Escarpment
- C2: South Coast Escarpment*
- C3: St. Ouen's Bay Escarpment and Valleys
- E1: North West Headland (St. Ouen)
- E3: North East (St. Martin)
- E4: North Coast Agricultural Land
- D1: Main Interior Valleys
- D2: Eastern Plateau Valleys
- D3: St. Brelade's Valleys
- D4: North Coast Valleys
- D5: St. Martin's Valleys

*Note: In some areas along the south coast escarpment which are already heavily built up, there is some scope for infill development provided this is well located to existing urban areas and strategic open gaps are maintained.

Intermediate: In these areas there is a presumption **against all** development that could not contribute significantly to the conservation and enhancement of local character. Within this area, there are zones of particular sensitivity in terms of the potential visual impact of development (eg. the prominent narrow ridges of land between the main valleys). Individual planning applications will require a more detailed study to assess the visual impact of the development and to ensure that existing environmental assets are conserved and enhanced. Any new development will generally need to be well located in relation to existing villages/settlement areas and should not be in 'open countryside' (excepting some developments where there is proven agricultural need).

Character Areas
Terrestrial
 B1: Grouville Coastal Plain
 E2: South west Headland
 E5: Central Plateau: Ridges
 E6: Central Plateau: Valley Heads
 E7: Eastern Plateau
 E8: Western Plateau

Low: These areas may have some capacity for further development, providing that it is carefully located and existing valued environmental features are conserved and enhanced and important environmental thresholds are not breached.

Character Areas
Terrestrial
 B2: St Clement – St. Saviour
 B3: South Coast Urban*
 * Note: there is very limited remaining capacity and existing open spaces are important

4. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER POLICIES

- 4.1 The distinctive and varied countryside character is one of Jersey’s most important assets. The previous policies have identified levels of protection for the countryside. In addition to protection from development, positive policies are required to conserve and enhance local landscape character. The following policies suggest the appropriate landscape strategy to be followed to ensure diversity and distinctiveness are maintained. Four levels are identified to provide a means of prioritising and targeting resources.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the four landscape strategy/policy areas are different to those identified for levels of protection. The fact that an area is identified as being in a poor condition where the overall policy is for restoration or enhancement does not mean that it is an appropriate for the location of new development.
- 4.3 The proposed landscape character policy areas are shown on Figure 2.

Conservation:Character areas of the highest quality including unique natural habitats and cultural heritage of international/national importance. **Their conservation is crucial to the conservation of the character of the Island as a whole.** In some areas (eg. intertidal/marine habitats) lack of knowledge about the resource means that research is a priority to direct and inform conservation effort. **These special areas are also a priority for the targeting of resources and provision of management to ensure that this character is conserved and enhanced for the future.** Environmental monitoring will be required to assess change and the effects of conservation management.

Character Areas
Terrestrial
 A1: North Coast Heathland
 A2: South-west Headlands

- B4: Quennevais Dunes
- Intertidal
- F1: North and South West Cliffs
- G1: St. Ouen's Bay
- G2: St Brelade's Bay
- G3: St. Aubin's Bay
- G4: South East Coast
- G5: St. Catherine's and Anne Port
- Offshore Reefs
- H1: Les Écréhous
- H2: Le Plateau des Minquiers

Management: Character areas of very high quality which have an intact countryside character but which are potentially at risk/under threat from land use change. Changes in farming practice are a particular cause for concern. These areas are a **priority for management to ensure that the existing countryside character is maintained.** Positive management incentives can be provided to landowners via a variety of mechanisms such targeted woodland management\tree planting programmes and ideally through a island-wide agri-environment scheme eg. to promote maintenance/repair of the characteristic field boundaries or lower intensity management in key environments. In some areas it may be appropriate to restore or recreate character such as heathland restoration on agricultural land at the coastal edge or linking areas of heathland on the St.Ouen's Bay escarpment. There is a particular need for vigilance to monitor change within these sensitive areas; on their own small scale incremental changes can appear insignificant but cumulatively can erode countryside character.

- Character Areas**
- Terrestrial
 - A3: North East Low Wooded Edge
 - B5: St. Ouen's Bay Coastal Plain
 - C3: St. Ouen's Bay Escarpment and Valleys
 - E1: North West Headland (St. Ouen)
 - E3: North East (St. Martin).
 - E4: North Coast
 - D1: Main Interior Valleys
 - D2: Eastern Plateau Valleys
 - D3: St. Brelade's Valleys
 - D4: North Coast Valleys
 - D5: St. Martin's Valleys

Enhancement These areas have suffered some erosion of character both through the visual impact of insensitively located development and changes in agriculture such as loss of boundaries and the pattern of small fields and abandonment of cõtils. Here the **policy is for enhancement to ensure that countryside character is retained and re-inforced.** These will generally be small scale enhancement projects including tree and woodland planting/management and restoration/management of field boundaries, repair of archaeological sites and maintenance of the hydrological regime for wetland sites. In some areas it may be appropriate to restore or recreate a new character such as woodland regeneration on areas of former cõtils. Ideally, agri-environment schemes

working with existing landowners will generally be the most appropriate mechanism for achieving enhancement measures.

Character Areas

Terrestrial

- B1: Grouville Coastal Plain
- B3: South Coast Urban Coastal Plain
- C1: Grouville - St.Saviour Escarpment
- E5: Central Plateau: Ridges
- E6: Central Plateau: Valley Heads

Restoration These are areas where the countryside character has changed as a result of development and/or intensive agricultural practice. The aim here will be to **restore landscape character**. This includes:

- conservation/restoration of key environmental sites which now lie encapsulated within development;
- restoring the surrounding landscape framework of hedgerows and field boundaries to recreate the countryside context;
- restoration of key habitats such as woodland, wetland and heathland in appropriate locations.

Restoration should driven by biodiversity and landscape targets.

Character Areas

Terrestrial

- B2: St. Clement- St Saviour Coastal Plain
- C2: South Coast Escarpment
- E2: South West Headland (St. Brelade's)
- E7: Eastern Plateau
- E8: Western Plateau

5. CRITERIA

5.1 Detailed criteria are identified for each character area in the Countryside Character Appraisal. These cover:

- capacity for change;
- the location, scale and design of new development;
- management priorities.

5.2 The character area descriptions should be referred to as the context for development control decisions. The granting of permission for any development should, wherever possible, be integrated with measures to conserve/enhance/restore local landscape character.

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Figure 1a: Levels of protection, Jersey and the Offshore Reefs

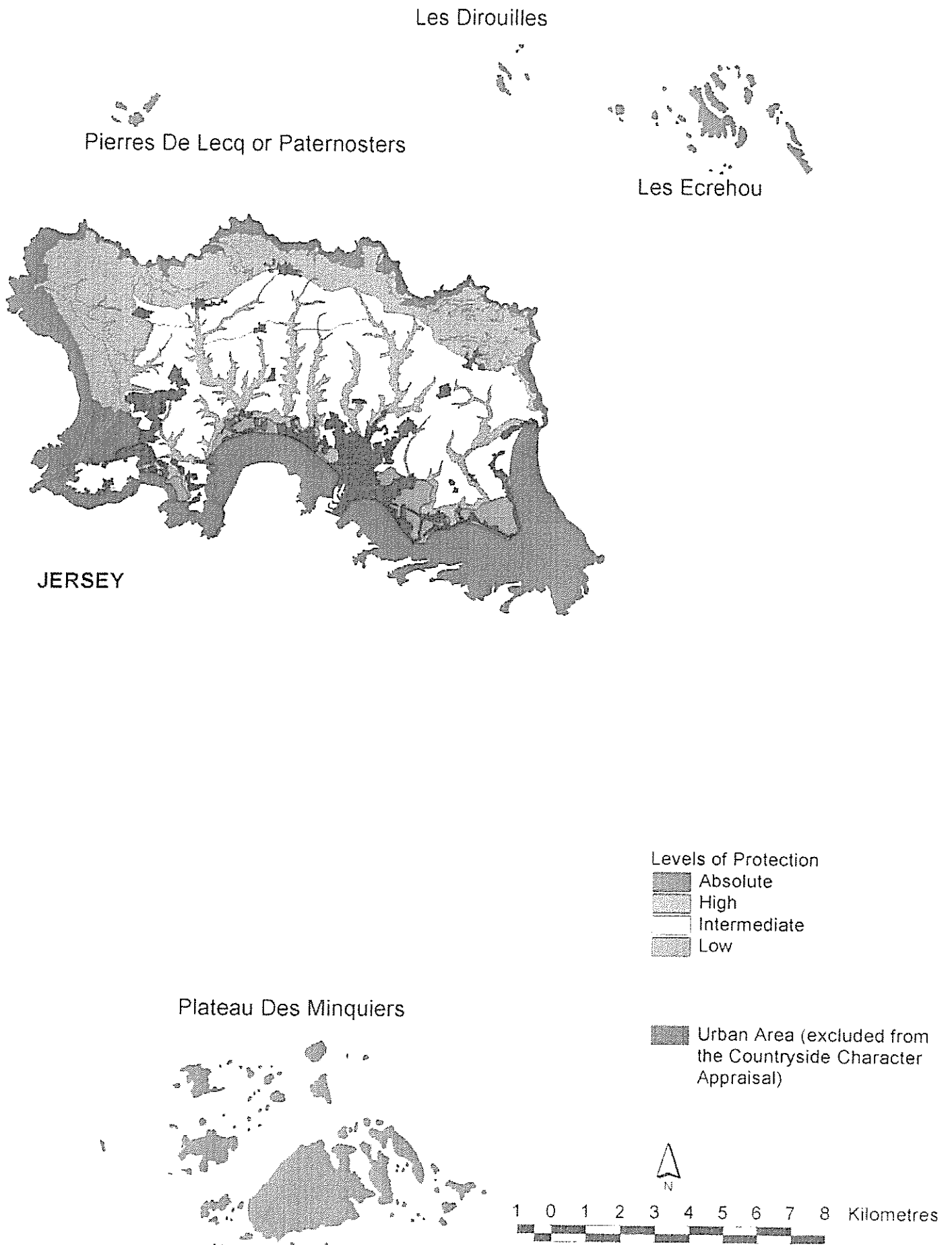


Figure 2: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER POLICIES, MAIN ISLAND

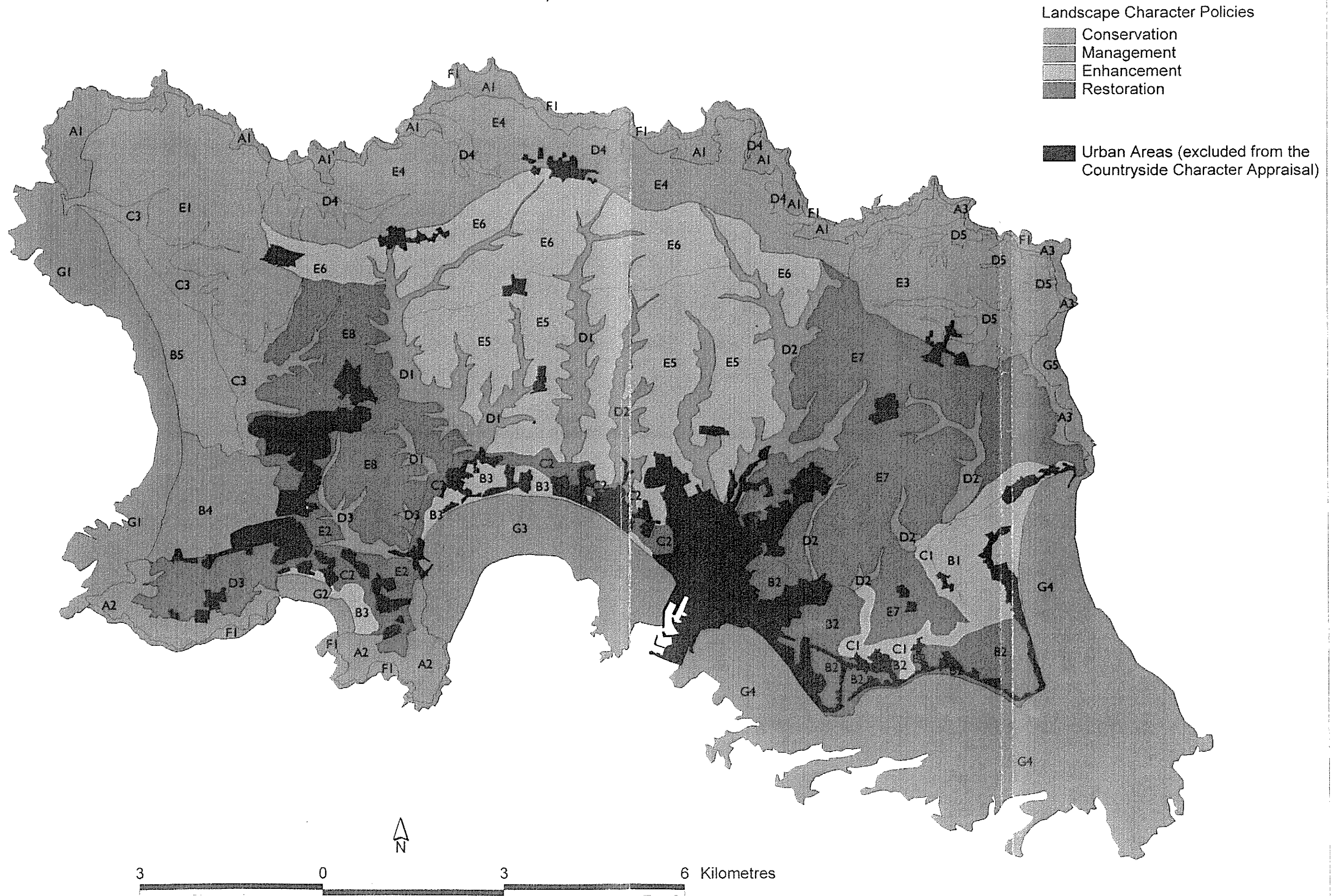


Figure 2a: Landscape Character Policies, Jersey and the Offshore Reefs

