



WMUD



APRIL 2021

ST BRELADE

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Recommendations

St Brelade Character Appraisal Recommendations

April 2021

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Introduction: Recommendation

In September 2020, the Government of Jersey appointed a consultant team led by Willie Miller Urban Design (WMUD) with Benton Scott-Simmons and Nick Wright Planning to carry out a Character Appraisal of St Brelade with a particular emphasis on St Brelade's Bay, the rising ground that visually encloses the Bay and the plateau lands beyond.

These Recommendations constitute the third publication related to the Character Appraisal, following the publication of two earlier reports in December 2020:

1. A Baseline Report which outlines the historical development of the Bay, and landscape and townscape analysis. The report also identified twelve Character Areas for future policy interventions (see Figure 3.2).
2. A report of public engagement which was undertaken in September/October 2020 to complement and inform the landscape and townscape analysis. Over 500 people participated, including residents of all ages and local businesses. The main messages were that:
 - People love the beach, the Bay's natural beauty; the activities, facilities and amenities focused on the beachfront, and the picturesque charm especially around the church and harbour.
 - For the future, people would like to see the beachfront made more attractive and accessible for everyone to enjoy, far stronger control of new development, and improvements including access to the Bay, nature conservation, quality of buildings and spaces, water/beach safety and antisocial behaviour.

As the Baseline Report explains, the character of St Brelade's Bay has evolved over the decades. The current character comprises the natural environment, built form, and the uses and activities that take place on land, beach and sea, as the many responses to the public consultation in September-October 2021 made clear. The public consultation also revealed that many people feel that the Bay's character is at a tipping point.

We have therefore developed two sets of complementary recommendations:

Section 2: Improvement Plan - This section recommends that an Improvement Plan for the Bay be prepared and implemented and outlines a brief for development of that plan.

Section 3: Planning policy - These recommendations are intended to manage future development in the Bay so that they contribute positively to the Bay's character. The policy recommendations are intended to be taken forward as part of the ongoing Island Plan Review.

Fig 1.01

*St Brelade's
Parish Church
on the west side
of the Bay*



Section 2: Improvement Plan

This section recommends that an Improvement Plan for the Bay be prepared and implemented, and outlines a brief for development of that plan.

The need for an Improvement Plan reflects the findings of the Baseline Report and public consultation that the current character of the Bay is comprised of the natural environment, built form, and cultural uses and activities that take place on land, beach and sea. These elements combine to create the Bay's unique character. All are equally important.

The varied elements of the Bay's character mean that its future conservation will require not only more enhanced management of development proposals (as explained in section 3 of this report), but also proactive interventions by the Government of Jersey, the Parish and the local community to enhance the Bay. Those interventions form the basis of the proposed Improvement Plan.

Geographically the Improvement Plan should encompass three components, as shown in Figure 2.01:

- **Core area:** the main beachfront area from near the church to Point le Grouin, together with the area around the beach access and public car park at Ouaisné to the east. This would be the focus of improvement proposals.
- **Context area:** the visual envelope of the Bay when seen from the beach, which any plan must also consider, because of the importance of the surrounding townscape and landscape to the character of the Bay.
- **Connecting corridors:** the main public access routes and paths to and from the Bay.

The objectives of the Improvement Plan should be to enhance the character of the Bay through targeted interventions. Key aims are to:

- Protect the delicate balance between the natural landscape and setting on the one hand, and the built up components of the Bay on the other.
- Improve the environmental quality and public experience in key public areas of the Bay, particularly the beachfront area (including the beach, promenade, Route de la Baie, public car parks and Churchill Park).
- Create a more comfortable and welcoming environment for families, visitors and residents to enjoy their time in the Bay's public spaces, including enjoying healthy outdoor spaces and activities.

The Improvement Plan should be developed through a consultative “co-design” process with the local community, not least because the Plan will

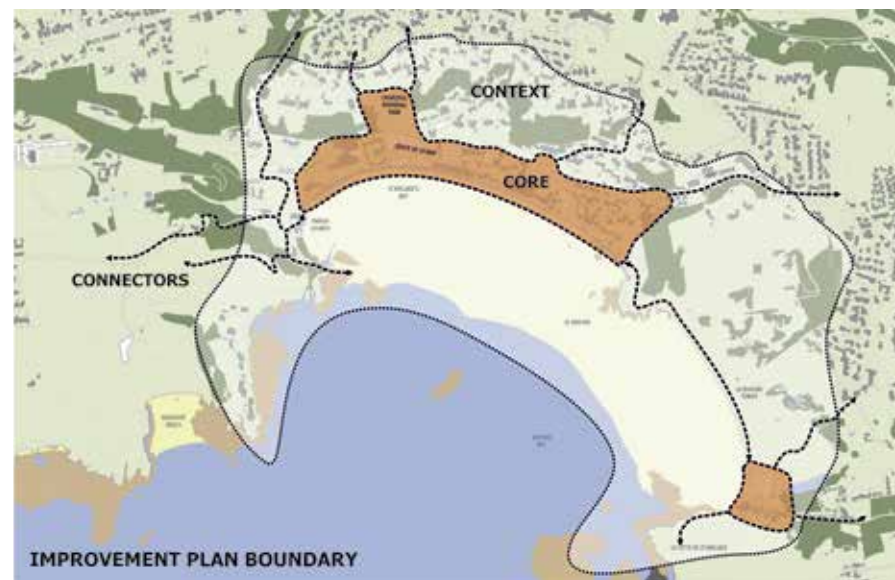


Fig 2.01

Extent of
Improvement
Plan

ideally create opportunities for local businesses and residents to deliver elements of the Plan.

The brief for that “co-design” process should ensure that the Plan includes:

- 1. Beach and sea** – with the primary aim of supporting safe non-motorised recreational activity including restricting access to the beach and shallow water by powered vehicles to the minimum required.
- 2. Streets, footways, paths and car parks** – including ensuring that:
 - Pedestrians have safe and easy access to and around the Bay.
 - The balance between pedestrian and vehicular traffic is adjusted so pedestrians enjoy greater priority and can move about the Bay with greater confidence, safety and comfort.
 - The network of pedestrian routes is attractive and well-connected. Consideration should be given to accessibility and the night-time experience. The network needs to be well maintained and an appropriate level of street furniture and signage provided.
 - Buses and ‘Blue Badge’ vehicles are prioritised over other private vehicular traffic
- 3. Public greenspace network** – Opportunities to reconfigure and improve the design and management of the greenspace network should be tested, with a view to improving:
 - Pedestrian and bike connections throughout the Bay
 - The visual appeal, design quality and comfort of greenspace
 - The versatility of public spaces and their usefulness for recreation, play and culture, including for participatory activities
 - Their contribution to community health, wellbeing and education
 - Their contribution to biodiversity

- Potential for innovative uses of greenspace such as sensory gardens, community gardening and fruit trees and shrubs.
- Opportunities for public participation in decision-making and the implementation of projects in greenspaces

- 4. Design guidance** – more detailed design guidance for Character Areas 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 (see section 3), which should include:
 - New development – more specific guidance in these Character Areas on building height, scale, massing, materials and colour palette, and also accompanying planting and landscaping (to complement the proposed planning policy recommendations in section 3 of this report).
 - Trees – identification, protection, management and a replacement planting programme for specimen trees or tree groups which make an important contribution to the Bay’s character.
 - Views and vistas – identification and conservation of significant public views and vistas.
- 5. Proposals for management** – this could include recommendations for refinements to:
 - Management and maintenance of the greenspace network and key connecting routes
 - Organisation of sports and leisure activities on the beach and in the water
 - Management of a public events and celebrations programme

The brief for the Improvement Plan should refer to the more detailed aspirations for each of these elements that are contained in the consultation report and Baseline Report published in December 2020.

Finally, the recommendation to prepare and deliver the Improvement Plan should be included in the Island Plan Review as a Proposal.

Section 3: Planning Policy

This section contains recommendations for future planning policy in the Bay, with the aim of enabling decision-making on planning applications to more robustly conserve the character of the Bay in the future.

These recommendations have been designed to inform the island-wide review of planning policy that is currently taking place in the form of the ongoing Island Plan Review. Public consultation on the recommendations outlined below is of course essential; this should take place through the medium of forthcoming public consultations on the Island Plan Review.

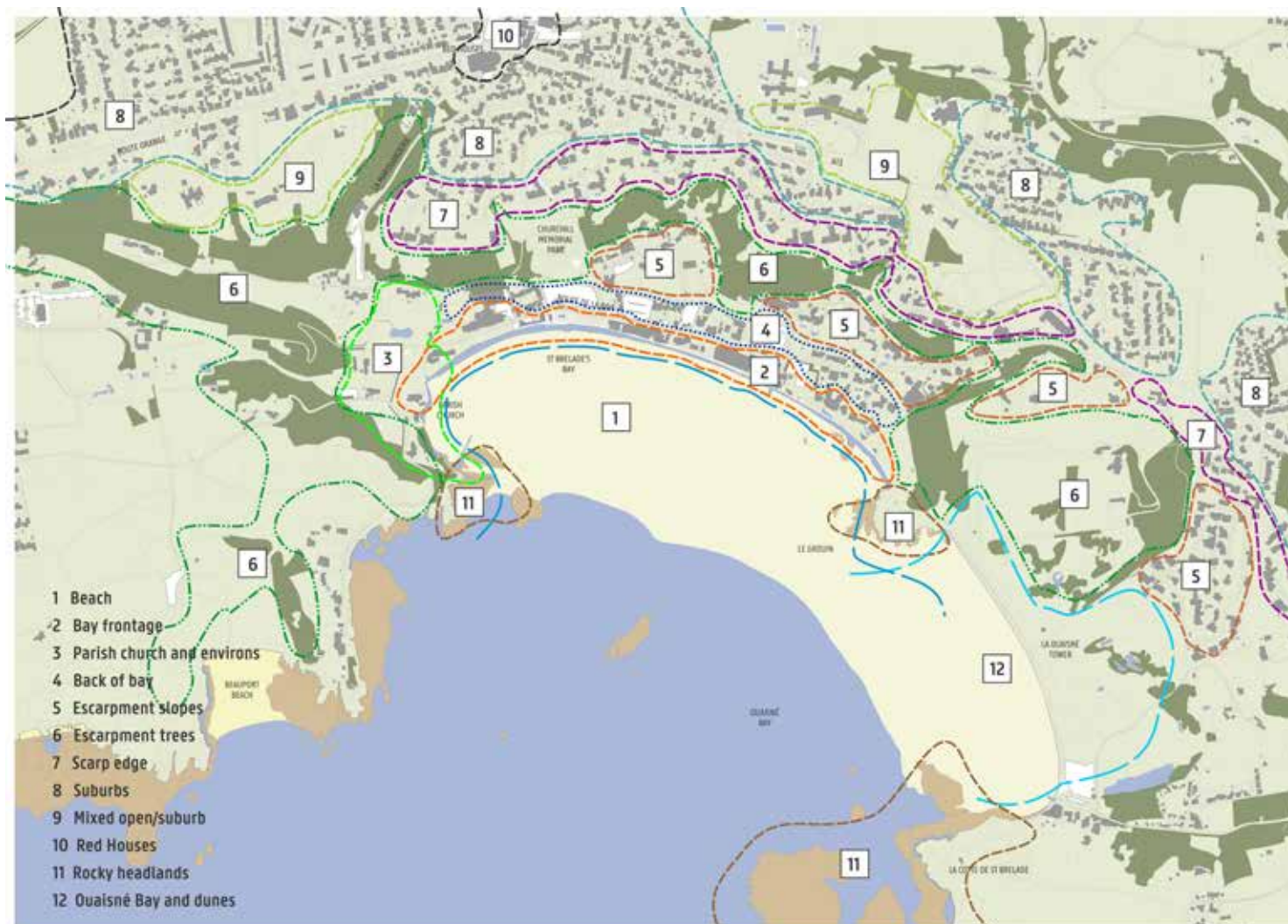
The recommendations use the Character Areas identified in the Baseline Report as a means of ensuring that policy is targeted only on those specific areas where it is relevant. These are shown in Figure 3.02.



Fig 3.01

*View across
the Bay from
the south-west*

Fig 3.02

Character
Areas

	Aim	Justification	Summary of actions	Character Areas (* = in part)
3.1	Prepare and implement Improvement Plan	To enhance the Bay's character	Include the proposed Improvement Plan (see section 2 of this report) as a Proposal in the Island Plan.	1-7*, 11*-12
3.2	Prevent new development in natural areas	To conserve the natural setting of the Bay	No new development, although redevelopment of existing buildings will be permitted subject to compliance with policy recommendations 3.6, 3.7 and 3.9.	1, 6, 11, 12
3.3	Increase protection of the Bay's natural environment	To conserve the natural setting of the Bay	Extend the Coastal National Park as recommended in the Boundary Review (January 2021).	1, *2, *3, *5, *6, *9, 11, 12
3.4	Protect and enhance tree cover	To conserve the natural setting of the Bay	<p>Identify significant specimen trees and tree groupings through the Improvement Plan, and add them to the List of Protected Trees.</p> <p>On publicly owned land, audit trees and their condition, and implement a management plan to maintain their good health and renewal in perpetuity.</p> <p>Tree surveys and landscaping plans should be submitted with any planning applications where development proposals will impact on existing trees, including affecting their root systems, trunks or canopies. Such plans should include proposals for enhancing existing tree cover, and should be assessed by an appropriate professional.</p> <p>The Government should consider appointing a landscape architect specifically to provide a source of advice for prospective planning applicants and advise on retention and future management of the landscape and woodland resource.</p> <p>Development proposals which will impact on existing mature trees, including affecting their root systems, trunks or canopies, should be referred to Jersey Architectural Commission for consideration. When considering such proposals, the Commission's panel should include a landscape architect.</p>	2-7

3.5	Retain tourism enterprises	To retain visitor-related activity as an essential part of the Bay's character	<p>Create presumption against loss of land from employment use by removing the 'tourism accommodation' exemption from existing Island Plan Policy E1.</p> <p>Consider an additional policy specifically for the Bay to prevent loss of tourist-related activity in the widest sense, including accommodation, cafes, restaurants, shops, beach concessions, watersports activities and other enterprises. This could relate to restricting changes of use away from these uses where they currently exist.</p>	All Character Areas
3.6	Control scale and design of replacement homes	To ensure that new development is in keeping with the Bay's character	<p>Replacement homes should not exceed the footprint or height of the existing homes that they would replace.</p> <p>New development should adhere to a palette of preferred materials and colours (to be created as part of more detailed design guidance through the Improvement Plan, see sections 2 and 3.1 above).</p>	2, 5-7
3.7	Avoid development breaching the skyline when viewed from the beach	To ensure that new development is in keeping with the Bay's character	Any proposals that might breach the skyline when viewed from the beach should be referred to Jersey Architecture Commission for additional scrutiny.	7 (and elsewhere if proposals might breach the skyline)
3.8	Increase protection of the Bay's built heritage	To conserve the history and built heritage of the Bay	Designate a Conservation Area focussed on the Parish Church, St Brelades Bay Hotel and designed landscapes at the west end of the Bay	2*, 3
3.9	Development proposals should take account of the visual composition of the Bay and the wider context	To ensure that new development is in keeping with the Bay's character as a whole	<p>Development proposals in specific Character Areas or which affect Listed Buildings should be referred to Jersey Architecture Commission for additional scrutiny.</p> <p>Such proposals should be accompanied by drawings and 3D modelling which show the proposal in context from different locations around the Bay and its impact on the composition of the Bay as a whole and its wider context, not just the site and immediate environs.</p> <p>When considering proposals for St Brelades's Bay, Jersey Architecture Commission panel members should include specialist urban design and landscape architecture expertise, in order to address issues of wider composition and context.</p>	2-7

