



WMUD

ST HELIER

URBAN CHARACTER APPRAISAL

REVIEW: 2021

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WILLIE MILLER URBAN DESIGN

Willie Miller
Ines Triebel

BENTON SCOTT-SIMMONS

Janet Benton
Gordon Urquhart

NICK WRIGHT PLANNING

Nick Wright

ICECREAM ARCHITECTURE

Desmond Bernie
Jim Bevington
Charline Roussel

YELLOW BOOK

John Lord

WILLIE MILLER URBAN DESIGN

20 Victoria Crescent Road Glasgow Scotland G12 9DD
wim@williemillerurbandesign.com
+44 141 339 5228 +44 7799 066100
<https://www.williemiller.com>

ST HELIER URBAN CHARACTER APPRAISAL

REVIEW



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Introduction: scope of work, specification and structure of report

In June 2019, the Government of Jersey appointed a consultant team led by Willie Miller Urban Design (WMUD) to review the St Helier Urban Character Appraisal 2005 for the Island Plan Review. The WMUD team includes Yellow Book, Benton Scott-Simmons, Nick Wright Planning, Icecream Architecture and Gordon Urquhart.

This work is required to refresh the current understanding of the urban character of St Helier. The previous assessment of the town's urban character requires review, and the spatial extent of the work expanded to embrace St Helier's suburbs and the relationship with its immediate seascape.

The results of the study provide an evidence base which informs decisions that will affect the town. The study will help the Government of Jersey to develop a coherent spatial strategy for the location of new development, the content of planning policy within the urban environment and specific site locations.

Jersey faces several trends and issues which have implications for the environment of St Helier. These include:

- an increasing population which has grown by 10% in ten years and is continuing to grow at an increasing rate

Fig 1.1

Recent office development at Castle Street, St Helier



- the demand for development has focused on urban areas, particularly St Helier, evidenced by:
 - growth in the provision of grade A office accommodation primarily on St Helier's reclaimed waterfront
 - new large-scale high density flatted residential developments on the sites of former hotels and light industrial uses
- the island's tourism industry is evolving, but the quality of the St Helier's environment has raised concerns

The Brief

The brief issued by the Government of Jersey for this study was demanding and comprehensive. The specification states that the study will deliver:

A) A review of the urban character of St. Helier, involving primary and desk-top research to review, validate and update the character areas defined in the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal. This review should:

1. include suburban character of those areas forming part of the Town of St. Helier, as defined in the Island Plan.
2. review the key factors already identified as contributing to the character of St. Helier and identify new ones where relevant. Use these factors to provide a revised objective assessment of the nature of the town and its various character areas based primarily on historical and morphological data but also related to the public realm, movement systems and social/cultural infrastructure.
3. identify where the character is strong and requires conservation to protect and maintain it but also identify where the character is weak and requires restoration or more radical measures.

Fig 1.2

Recent residential development at Westmount on the site of a former quarry



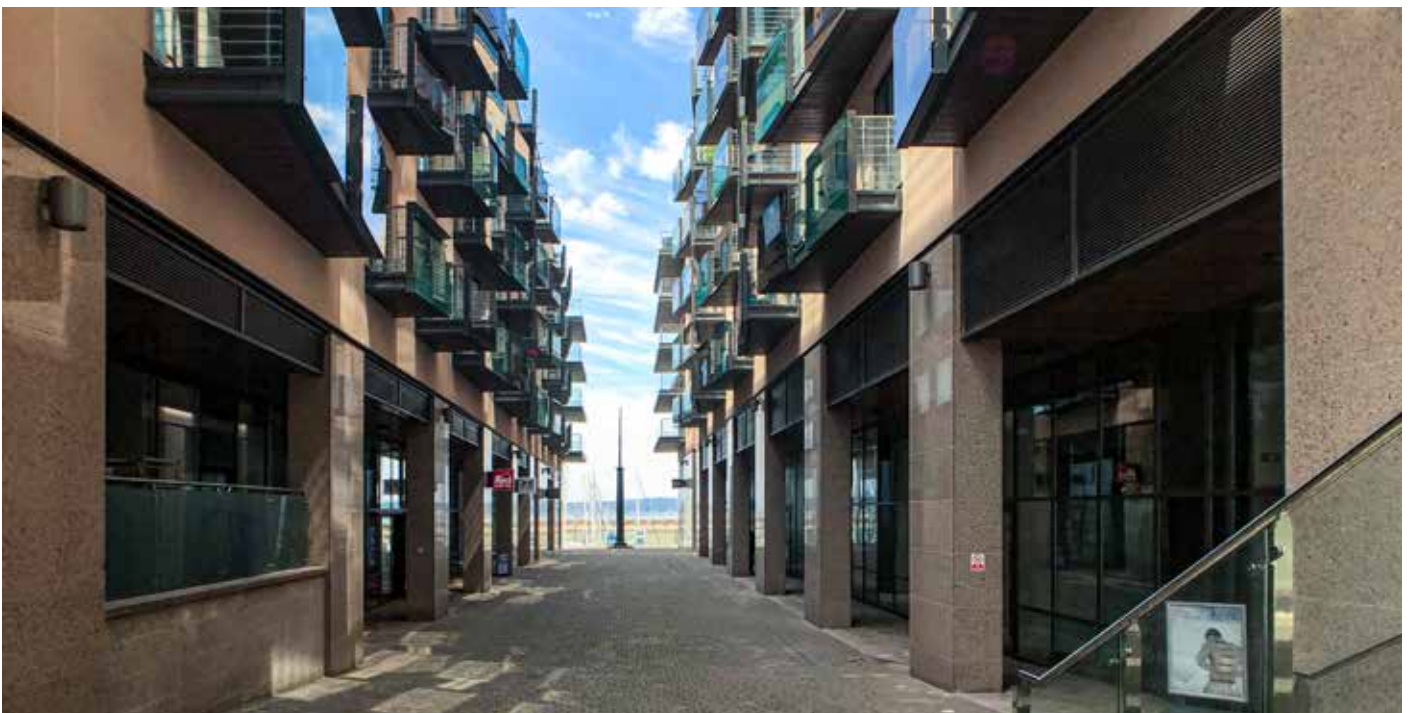
4. review the proposed boundary of proposed Conservation Areas in the 2005 study to determine the robustness and cohesiveness of heritage character.
5. provide a policy base for management, protection and enhancement in different character areas including, amongst other things, areas of particular and vital heritage character; and the identification, assessment and safeguarding of critical views, skylines and landmarks.
6. provide the basis for supplementary planning guidance for different parts of the town to assess the impact of future land use proposals to help inform development control decisions.
7. help identify the capacity of different areas to absorb new development and help ensure that any proposed interventions are appropriate to the area's distinctive character and its ability for change.
8. assess the sensitivities and vulnerabilities of different character areas to the forces of change, in particular, the potential to absorb more significant levels of new development, denser layouts and taller buildings.

B) Based on the above, this work should include:

1. the identification, definition and description of character areas within an agreed boundary of St Helier
2. defining key townscape characteristics, including heritage character, and the relationship between public and private space, including the green environment within the town
3. the identification of land-use patterns and their effect on the character of the area both in terms of building form and the social characteristics of the public realm, obtaining and analysing perceptions of the selected character areas, and identifying how this might impact upon future proposals

Fig 1.3

*Castle Quay waterfront development
just off Rue de L'Etau*



4. the identification of the constraints and main elements of potential change and opportunity within each character area, with particular regard to the potential to accommodate more development, more dense forms of development and taller buildings
 5. a determination of the relative levels of protection and enhancement required within each character area and between adjoining character areas
 6. establishing the relative capacity of the various character areas to accept new development, without undue detrimental impact on their character, or with potential to support, enhance or establish a new character
- 2.) An assessment of the inter-visibility between the townscape of St. Helier and the seascape character of St. Aubin's and St. Clement's Bays to inform:
- a. the identification, assessment and protection of critical views, skylines and landmarks, to help protect and enhance valued seascapes
 - b. the sensitivity to and the capacity for change in each character area where inter-visibility applies

The methodology to be employed to deliver this aspect of the work should draw on existing best practice, but consider its appropriateness and applicability to Jersey.

Fig 1.4

*The west end of the Esplanade:
a diverse range of styles*



3.) The outcomes from this work should help to:

- plan positively to meet the island's economic and social needs, including the demand for homes and the associated community infrastructure; and land and development opportunities to support the financial future of the island, to ensure that St. Helier is a desirable place to live, work and visit
- plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure
- conserve and enhance the historic environment, including historic landscape character, where appropriate
- inform criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting character areas might be assessed and judged

The main outputs of the urban character appraisal should include:

- a report which sets out the purposes of the study and its context, and which defines, explains and justifies the chosen assessment methodology(s) and known limitations for the research, in a manner that is clear and accessible.
- the report should include maps and individual descriptions of all character areas with maps showing key patterns of inter-visibility between the town and the adjacent coast.

Fig 1.5

the western boundary of landscape and town from Fort Regent



Structure of the Review

The review is in nine sections:

Chapter 1	the introduction to the study, the specification, brief and structure of the report
Chapter 2	strategic context - the underlying issues of population growth and the associated development requirement
Chapter 3	engagement - the results of the team's workshops, on-street interviews and online activities
Chapter 4	built heritage appraisal - a review of successes, losses and the current position of heritage work in St Helier
Chapter 5	character area review - a reassessment of the original character areas of St Helier with proposals for change
Chapter 6	the development dilemma
Chapter 7	design guidance
Chapter 8	public realm appraisal - building on the work of the past 15 years in improving public spaces
Chapter 9	conclusions and recommendations

Fig 1.6

Millennium Park - notable regeneration through new landscape and public realm



Strategic context: new homes and land for housing

Introduction

The Island Plan Strategic Issues and Options paper (2019) sets out six strategic spatial options:

- Option 1: increasing density within St Helier
- Options 2a and 2b: outward expansion of St Helier
- Option 3: increasing the density of other built-up areas
- Option 4: outward expansion of the other built-up areas
- Option 5: new settlement or expansion of an existing settlement
- Option 6: development in the countryside.

These options represent a range of responses to the planning challenges facing Jersey which include population growth; demand for housing, especially affordable homes; economic growth and diversification; climate change resilience; and the protection of the Island's built, natural and cultural heritage. With a land area of just 120 km² and an estimated population (2019) of 107,800, achieving the goals of economic, environmental and community sustainability over the plan period will require careful and sensitive judgement.

This review of the 2005 St Helier Urban Character Appraisal report will form part of the evidence base for the forthcoming Island Plan. It will help decision-makers and communities to make informed judgements about the

Fig 2.1

3-4 storey residential refurbishment on Pier Road circa 2005



capacity of St Helier to accommodate further growth, and whether such growth should be achieved through densification, expansion of the urban area or some combination of the two. By revisiting and updating the analysis contained in our earlier report we will offer an updated critical commentary on the character and essential qualities of St Helier and its character areas, assess how the town has changed in the last 15 years, and provide guidance and direction on development, regeneration and placemaking through the plan period.

We will also consider how, in the period 2021-2030, development in St Helier might contribute to the priorities set out by the Council of Ministers in the Common Strategic Policy 2018-22:

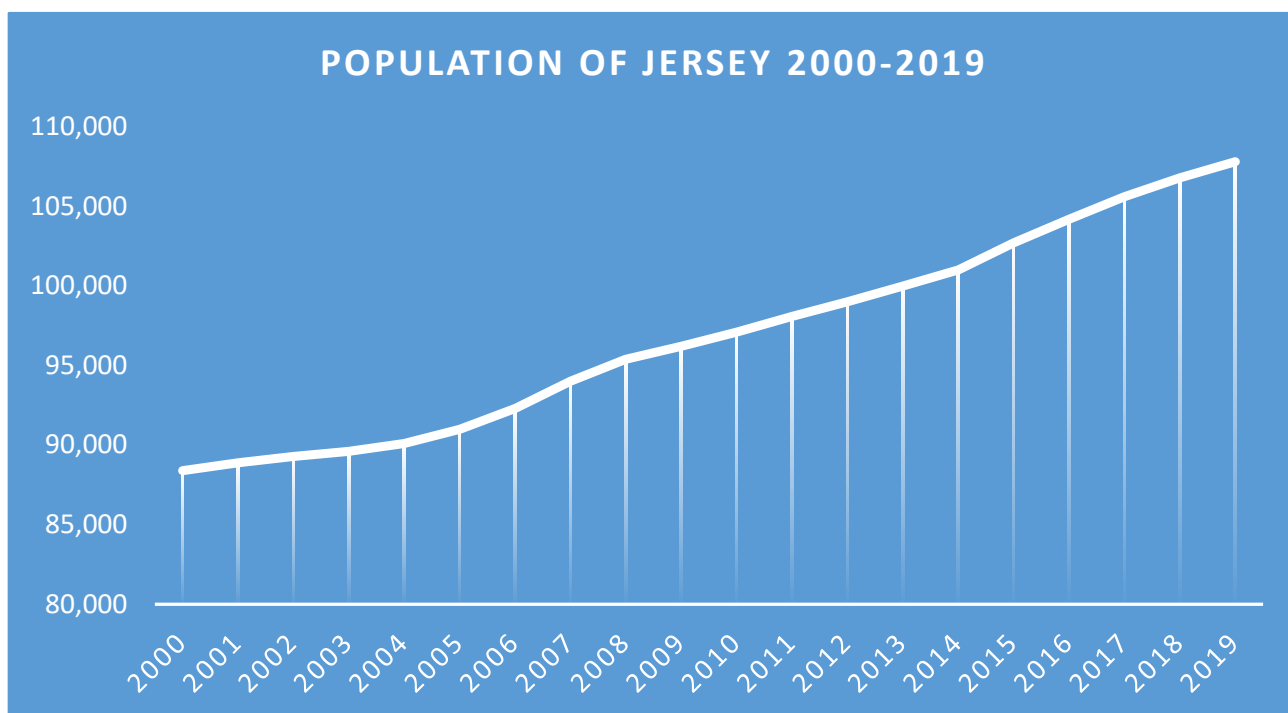
- putting children first
- improving wellbeing and health
- creating a sustainable economy and skilled workforce
- reducing income equality
- protecting and valuing the environment.

Estimating demand for new homes and land for housing

This section considers the potential demand for additional dwellings in St Helier between 2021 and 2030 and the associated land requirement. These issues are subject to considerable uncertainty, but a range of scenarios are set out which can be used to test the capacity of St Helier to accommodate housing growth, and to devise strategies for managing change.

Fig 2.2

Population of Jersey 2000-2019



This section addresses the following key questions:

- how much will the population of Jersey increase between 2021 and 2030?
- how many additional homes will be required in Jersey?
- how many of those homes will be in St Helier?
- what assumptions can we make about housing density?
- how much land will we require to deliver these additional homes?

1) The population of Jersey

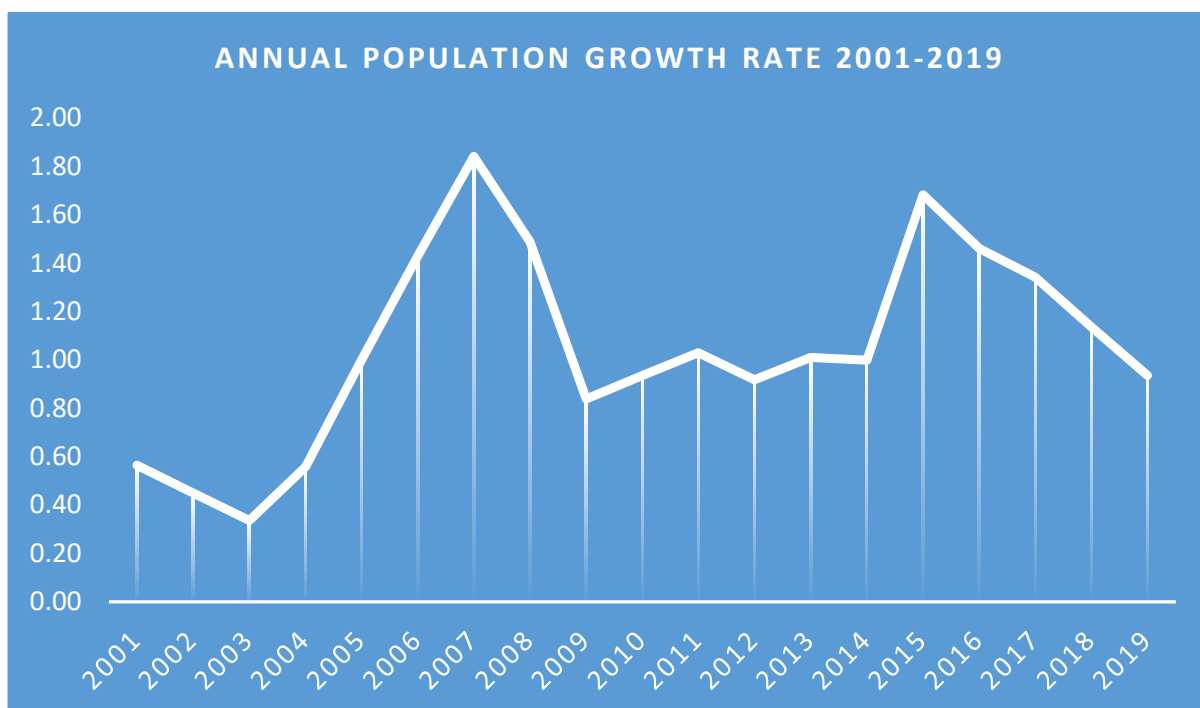
The population of Jersey increased by 21.9% between 2000 and 2019, from 88,400 to 107,800 (Figure 2.2). Figure 2.3 shows that year-on-year population growth was uninterrupted throughout the period, although some peaks and troughs reflected the economic cycle.

Except for one year (2003) the level of net inward migration has exceeded natural growth throughout the period. Net inward migration has exceeded 1,000 every year since 2014-15. Demand for Jersey has remained strong, even in the aftermath of the financial crash.

Government of Jersey population projections indicate that, if net inward migration continues at a rate above 1,000 a year, the resident population of the island will increase to 115,700 by 2025 and to 122,300 by 2030.

Fig 2.3

*% annual population growth rate
2001-2019*



2) Housing needs assessment: Jersey.

Fig 2.4 shows the outcomes of the Government of Jersey housing needs assessment for a range of migration scenarios. If net migration reduces to zero, there would still be a requirement for 2,230 additional homes by 2030; this figure would rise to 6,700 if net migration continues at 1,000+ per annum.

Fig 2.4

Housing need at different net annual migration levels

Objective assessment of housing needs (dwellings), Jersey 2021-2030				
Category	Housing need at different net migration levels			
	Nil	325	700	1000
Non-qualified	-1,750	-830	+250	+1,100
Owner-occupied	+3,040	+3,280	+3,570	+3,800
Qualified rent	+50	+340	+670	+930
Social rent	+890	+910	+910	+920
Total housing need	+2,230	+3,700	+5,400	+6,760

3) Housing needs assessment: St Helier

How much of this demand for additional housing will need to be met in St Helier? The 2011 Census (when the population of the Island was 98,000) reported that 33,500 people (34% of the total) lived in St Helier parish. There were 45,000 dwellings in the Island, of which 17,500 (39%) were in St Helier. The population density of St Helier was 3,541 people/km², compared with an island average of 819 people/km².

Using these figures as benchmarks, we have calculated the housing need

Fig 2.5

Recent residential development at 1-2 Minden Place - 437 dwellings per hectare



in St Helier during the plan period based on the objective assessment of housing need and two key variables: the level of annual net migration and the proportion of new housing to be delivered in St Helier. For the latter, we posit three spatial scenarios:

- redistribution (only 30% of additional dwellings located in St Helier)
- steady-state (40%)
- urban concentration (50%).

Fig 2.6 summarises the outcomes of this exercise. It highlights the degree of uncertainty facing planners at least pending critical decisions relating to migration policy and spatial strategy. If migration is constrained to net zero, the housing needs requirement in St Helier would be in the range 700 – 1,100 by 2031, depending on the spatial strategy. But, if the present trend (net inward migration of 1,000+) continues, St Helier would need to accommodate at least 2,000 new homes and potentially up to 3,400.

Housing needs scenarios, St Helier 2021-2030			
	Housing need in St Helier: 3 spatial strategies		
Net annual migration	Redistribution 30% of total	Steady state 40% of total	Concentration 50% of total
Nil	669	892	1,115
325	1,110	1,480	1,850
700	1,620	2,160	2,700
1,000	2,028	2,704	3,380

Fig 2.6

*Housing needs scenarios,
St Helier 2021-2030*

Fig 2.7

*Town houses and flats at Halkett Place
and James Street - 17 dph*



4) Housing density in St Helier

The States of Jersey Housing Strategy (Strategic Housing Unit, 2016) addresses the issue of density, which “is closely linked to the regeneration of St Helier and is an important consideration in making a constrained land supply go further”. The strategy states that “the Island Plan seeks to protect the most valuable natural assets of the island and this means that most new developments will be in the existing built-up areas and in particular, the town of St. Helier. This clear policy direction ... must be accompanied by good design to avoid overdevelopment and poor living environments. Density policies will need to be developed in the context of neighbouring buildings and the local area in terms of scale, layout and accessibility ... the strategic goal for better standards of urban living, (including access to more green spaces and public realm improvements ... will be a challenge”.

Almost all UK towns and cities are seeking to achieve a balance between higher housing density and quality of life. We have reviewed several studies, including one by Bristol City Council’s City Design Group (2018), which looks at new higher density schemes in the city. The report looks at a range of projects which have achieved densities above 75 dwellings per hectare (dph) for suburban developments, up to 350 dph for one “hyper density” city centre scheme. This range is broadly in line with recent developments in Jersey some of which achieved even higher densities. This is surprising given Bristol’s much larger scale and apparent capacity for high-rise and substantial developments. The actual range of recent developments in St Helier is as follows:

Fig 2.8

Residential development at Wesley Street - 285 dph

- suburban developments and family housing: 50 dph
- urban sites with a mix of housing by type and tenure: 17-170dph
- waterfront locations and apartment buildings: 173-437 dph.



The average density for 18 recent completions is 231 dph. Fig 2.9 below posited three scenarios: if the balance of development leans towards lower density it will provide an average of 169 dwellings per hectare; a medium density mix will deliver 225 dph, and a higher density mix 280 dph. We consider all of these to be ambitious outcomes.

Housing densities for a range of development scenarios in St Helier: optimistic			
Urban development mix			
Residential density (dph)	Lower Density	Medium density	Higher density
Low (50dph)	50%	35%	20%
Medium (200dph)	30%	30%	30%
High (420dph)	20%	35%	50%
Average density	169	225	280

Fig 2.9

*Housing needs scenarios,
St Helier 2021-2030
Ambitious*

A more cautious assumption is that the densities achieved will be 40 dph for low-density development, 150 dph for medium density and 250 dph for high density. In that case, the average overall density would fall to 115 dph for a lower density mix, 147 dph for medium density mix and 178 dph for a higher density mix (Fig 2.10).

Housing densities for a range of development scenarios in St Helier: realistic			
Urban development mix			
Residential density (dph)	Lower Density	Medium density	Higher density
Low (40dph)	50%	35%	20%
Medium (150dph)	30%	30%	30%
High (250dph)	20%	35%	50%
Average density	115	147	178

Fig 2.10

*Housing needs scenarios,
St Helier 2021-2030
Realistic*

5) Housing land requirement in St Helier

We have used the housing need and housing density scenarios set out above to generate a range of estimates of the housing land requirement in St Helier between 2021 and 2030. The estimates are illustrative, and they demonstrate the wide range of possible outcomes and the associated uncertainties. We have shown three housing need scenarios, based on the calculations in Figure 2.6. We have discounted the nil net migration scenario as unrealistic and assumed that (depending on immigration levels and the preferred spatial strategy) St Helier will require between 1,000 (lower estimate) and 3,000 (higher estimate) additional dwellings by 2030.

Figure 2.11 applies these estimates to the ambitious density scenario set out in Figure 2.9. It shows that the lower estimate of 1,000 additional homes would require between 3.6 ha and 5.9 ha of housing land, depending on the density mix. At the higher end, the land needed for 3,000 homes would range from 10.7 ha to 17.8 ha.

Fig 2.11

*Housing needs scenarios,
St Helier 2021-2030
ambitious*

Housing land requirement, St. Helier 2021 - 2030 ambitious density scenario				
Housing land required (ha)				
Housing need St. Helier 2021 - 2030	Dwellings required	Lower density (169 dph)	Medium density (225 dph)	Higher density (280 dph)
Low-end estimate	1,000	5.9	4.4	3.6
Mid-range estimate	2,000	11.8	8.9	7.1
High-end estimate	3,000	17.8	13.3	10.7

Figure 2.12 shows how the land requirement increases if the density achieved is at the more realistic level shown in Figure 2.10. In this case, the lower estimate of 1,000 homes would require between 5.6 ha and 8.7 ha of housing land, while 3,000 homes would require between 16.9 ha and 26.1 ha.

Fig 2.12

*Housing needs scenarios,
St Helier 2021-2030
realistic*

Housing land requirement, St. Helier 2021 - 2030 realistic density scenario				
Housing land required (ha)				
Housing need St. Helier 2021 - 2030	Dwellings required	Lower density (115 dph)	Medium density (147 dph)	Higher density (178 dph)
Low-end estimate	1,000	8.7	6.8	5.6
Mid-range estimate	2,000	17.4	13.6	11.2
High-end estimate	3,000	26.1	20.4	16.9

6) Strategic Options and Character

Of the six options set out in the Island Plan Strategic Issues and Options paper (2019), only Option 1 (increasing density within St Helier) and to a more limited extent, Options 2a and 2b (outward expansion of St Helier) have direct relevance to the scenarios outlined here and to the St Helier Urban Character Areas.

The prevailing development densities at which much new housing is built in the town suggest that the total land requirement may be less than anticipated. The question is how to accommodate this new development in St Helier without damaging the essence of the town and to construct appropriate design guidance which works for the Government, the town's communities and the development industry.

Engagement: establishing the views of the town's communities on the character of St Helier

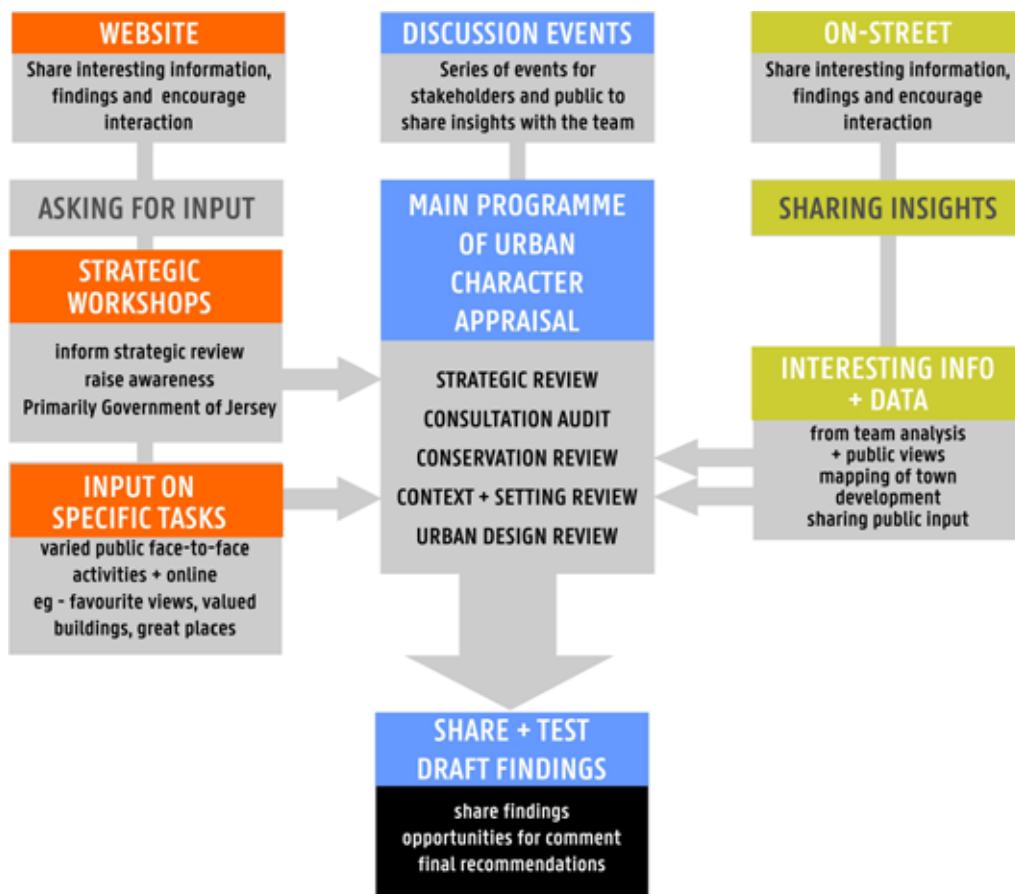
We believed it was essential to gauge the views that various users of the town have of the place and its character. That includes residents, businesses and the financial sector, community organisations, visitors and public agencies.

The challenge, from the outset, was to engage people meaningfully in a study which is focused on a specialist theme, but which does not produce proposals that people can react to (that will come with the new Island Plan which this work feeds into).

To respond to that challenge, we developed a five-element engagement plan which used a range of online and face-to-face channels to share insights from the team and ask for people's responses. As the work progressed through Autumn 2019, the nature of the engagement shifted from asking people about the town's character to testing initial ideas about how to manage that character in the future.

Fig 3.1

Engagement Plan



1. **A dedicated project website** (www.revealsthelier.org/) with a complementary social media campaign was initiated. 76 web users viewed or contributed responses during the project. The website included an interactive map with space for web users to geo-locate and leave positive and negative comments.
2. **On-street engagements** were held across St. Helier for four days immediately before and during the Autumn Half-Term holidays. 'Moment cards' and 'Plaque boards' encouraged conversation with passers-by and allowed them to leave their opinions. Over 100 people participated at various locations across the town centre and beachfront.
3. **Initial workshops** in October 2019 with public bodies, businesses and third sector organisations. These were designed to enable these key stakeholders to understand and contribute to the work. Participants were asked a series of discussion questions about the changing character of St Helier, how to manage the pressures facing St Helier, and where there are opportunities or capacity for change. A wide range of public, private and third sector organisations was invited from covering heritage, communities, business, utilities, infrastructure, digital, property, housing, public services, special needs and education sectors. 22 people attended.

Engagement

A stall set up on the seafront just off Victoria Avenue



4. **Targeted one-to-one discussions** with relevant third sector bodies and critical agencies such as built heritage organisations and members of the Chamber of Commerce. These discussions explored the town's changing character, the pressures it faces, and opportunities or capacity for change.
5. **Final public workshops** in December 2019 which explored those same issues – the town's changing character, the pressures it faces, and opportunities or capacity for change – and also put forward initial ideas on how to manage the town's character in the future. The workshops were promoted publicly using the press, radio and online, as well as invitations being sent to public, private and third sector organisations. The morning session had 36 participants, and the evening session had 11 participants.

Overall, the range of activities proved an effective way of understanding different perspectives on the town's changing character from a variety of people. These included individuals who may not have been involved in this kind of work before, to organisations with a particular interest whether that be heritage conservation, property development or community life.

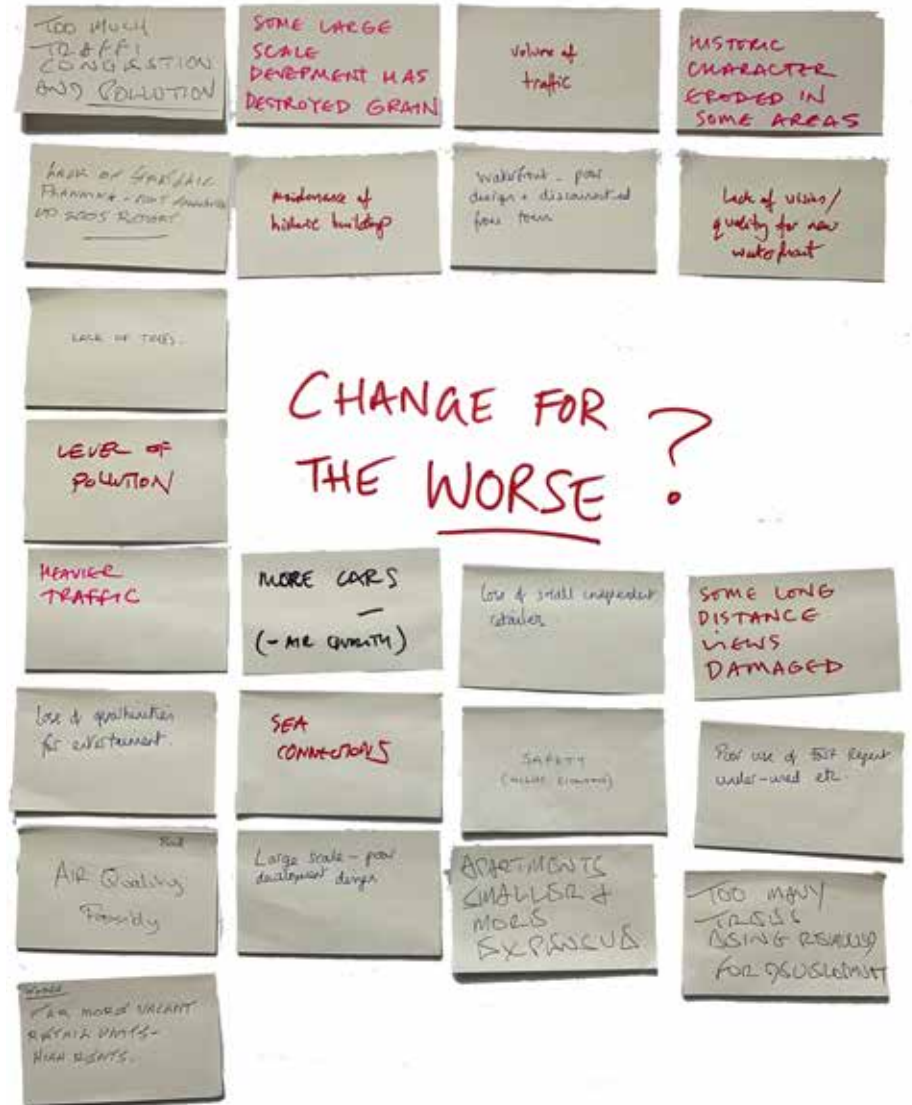
Engagement

Getting views from the public at Liberty Wharf



Engagement

October workshop results from the event held in the St Paul's Centre



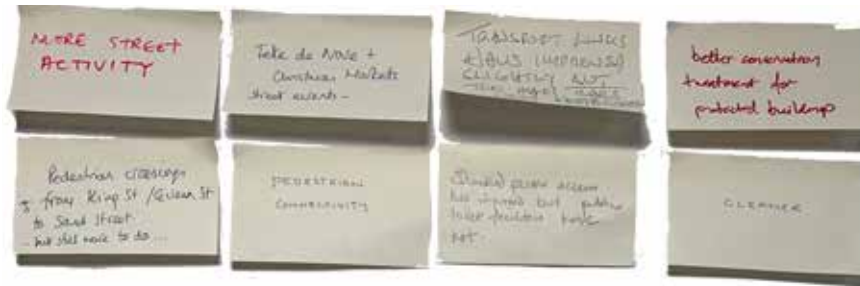
Engagement

October workshop held in the St Paul's Centre



Engagement

October workshop results from the event held in the St Paul's Centre



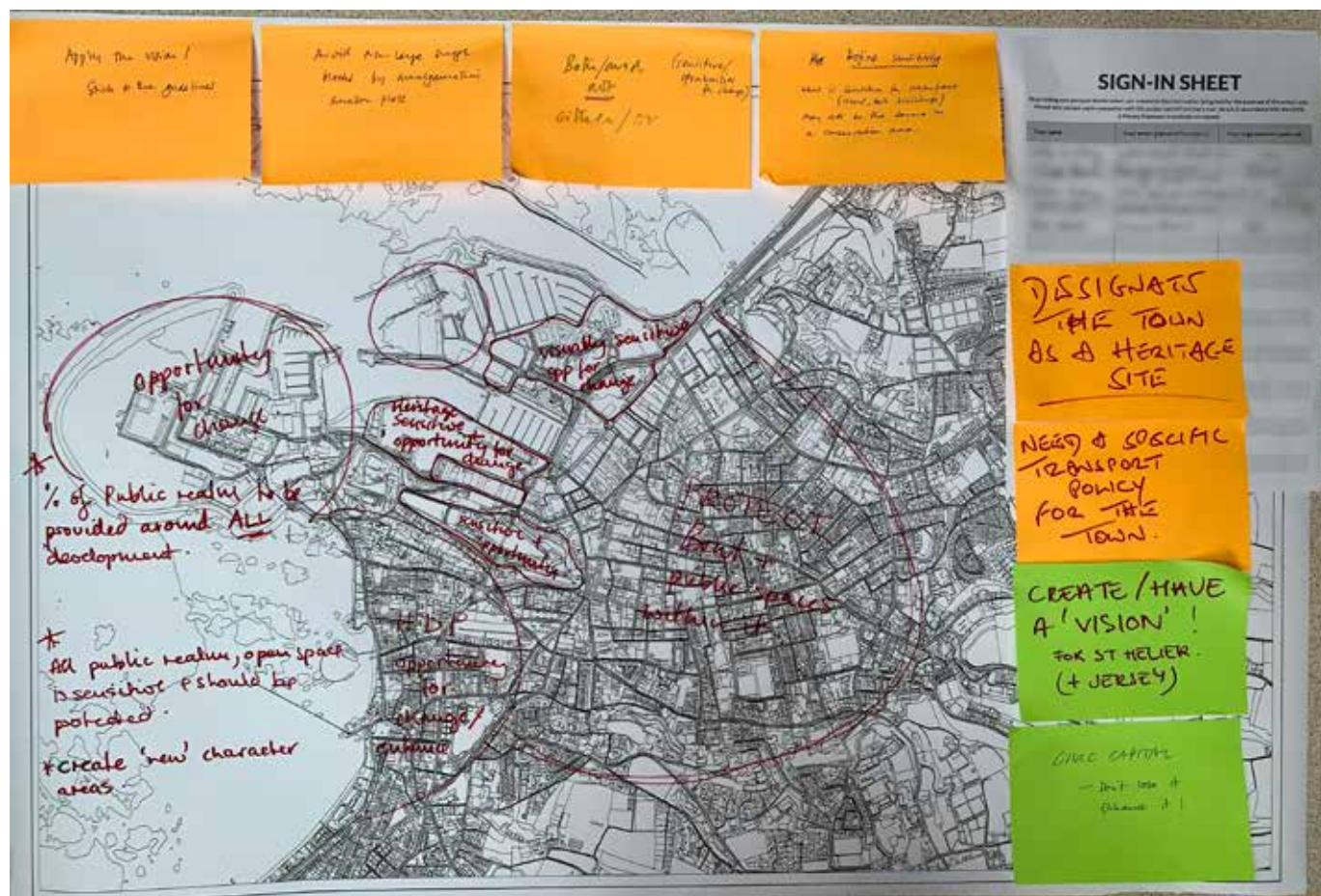
Engagement

December workshop held in the St Paul's Centre





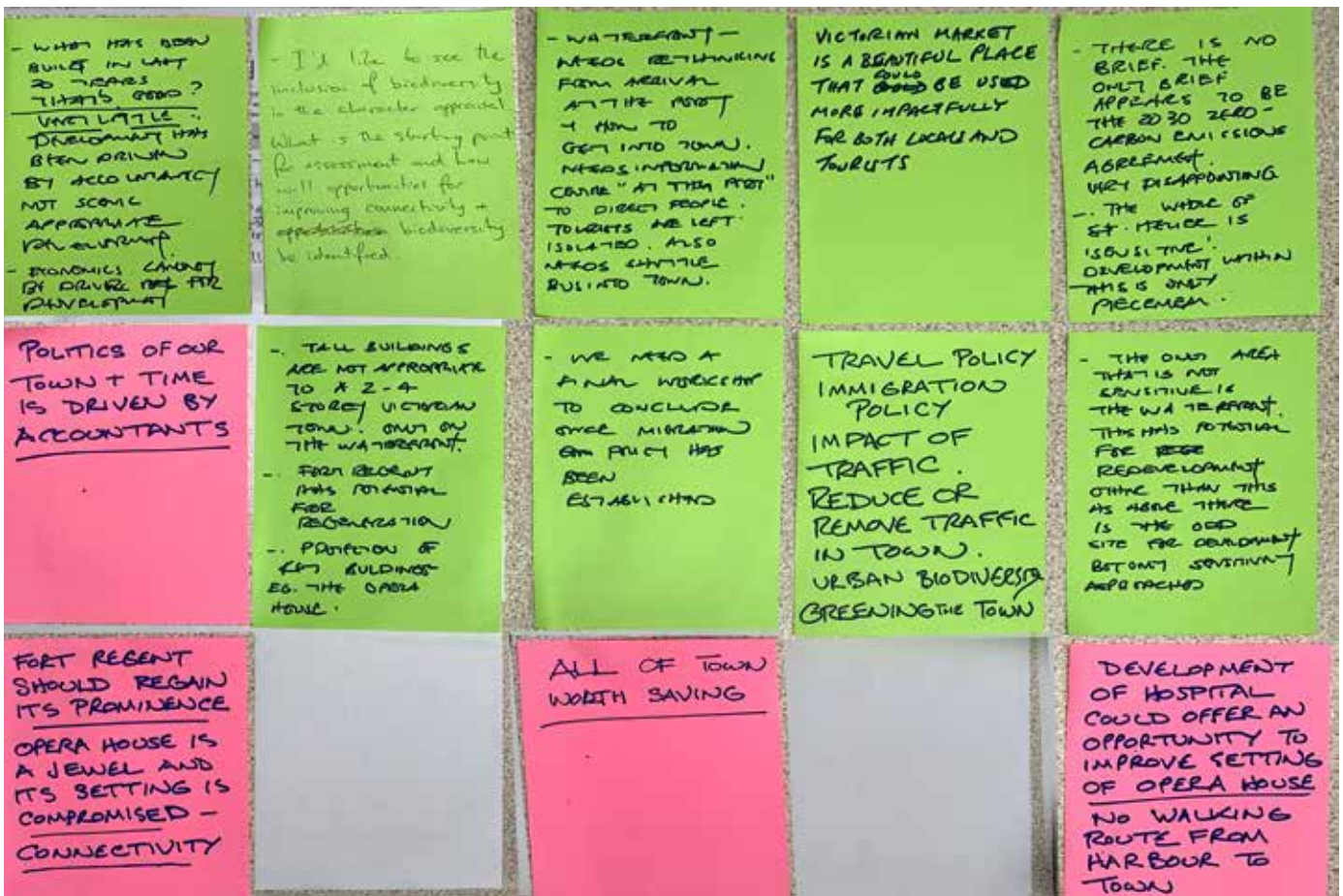
*Output from the December workshop
held in the St Paul's Centre*

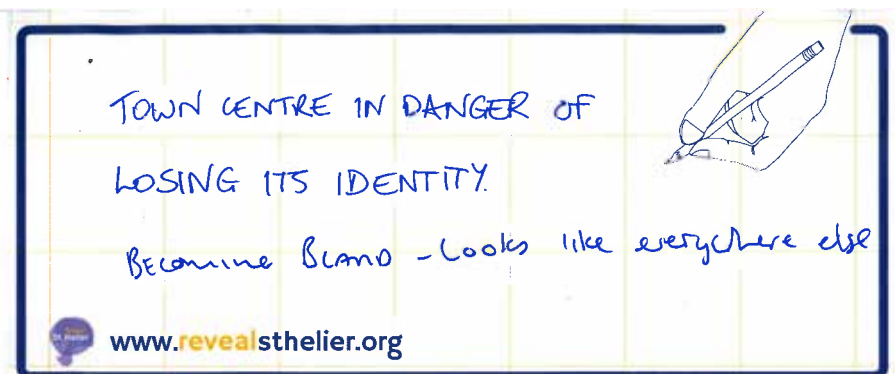
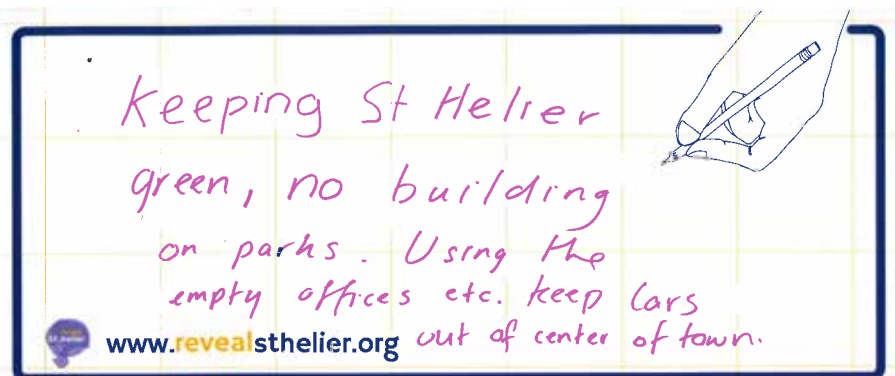
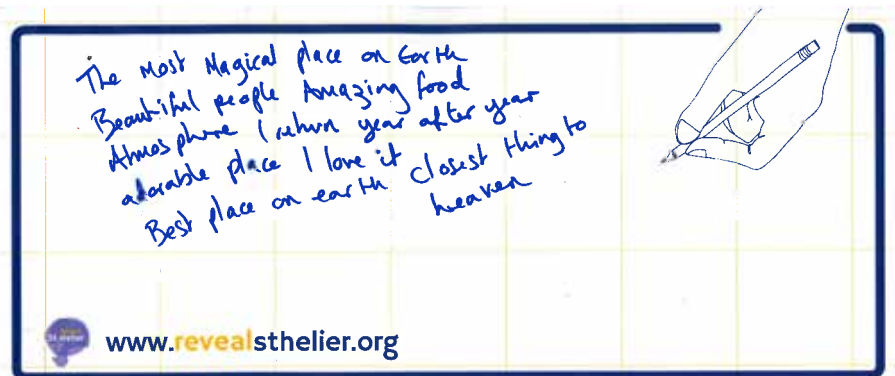




Engagement

Output from the December workshop
held in the St Paul's Centre





KEEP HISTORIC CHARACTER

Encourage

~~ALLOW~~ ACCESS TO ALL PARTS
OFTOWN by offering Destination Features

Improve the tired feel of our surroundings



www.revealsthelier.org

St. Helier has the capacity to be more
than it currently is.

I think designers of the Island need to
consider creating vistas that are up lifting
and raise the soul and joy



www.revealsthelier.org

Horrible developments / Office Blocks
More attention given to restoring some older
building / like the way the library wing
has been treated. Rarely come here
due to ugliness. (St Helier)



www.revealsthelier.org

"Don't get me wrong,

it all looks lovely and clean
but St. Helier has lost its Jersey charm.

The new buildings don't retain the same quality
and interest - they could be from anywhere. Guernsey
has retained much more charm"



www.revealsthelier.org

Negative Comments from the Engagement - clockwise from top

Tall buildings placement and design need care to avoid overwhelming narrow streets and lower buildings

Poor quality developments at the New Waterfront, the Radisson is a disgrace

Fort Regent's deterioration - worn out and neglected, second rate facilities

Traffic congestion and pollution especially the La Route de la Liberation but generally throughout the town centre





Positive Comments from the Engagement - clockwise from top left

*Much more street life than ten years ago
- good to meet people at outdoor venues*

*The town centre feels prosperous, stylish
and cosmopolitan*

*The old harbours are gems - they need
care, attention and protection from new
development*

*Good food, especially seafood - although
you have to look for it as it might be
hidden away*



Negative Comments from the Engagement - clockwise from top

Town centre in danger of losing its identity. Becoming bland - looks like everywhere else

The new waterfront is poorly designed and disconnected

Cars everywhere - spoiling beautiful streets. We should have more pedestrianisation

Horrible developments - office blocks. Rarely come here due to ugliness



Positive Comments from the Engagement - clockwise from top left

Many examples of people looking after their old buildings and keeping interesting features

Some stylish new buildings that fit well with what we think St Helier is all about

The Millennium Park is just lovely - just shows how popular well-designed green spaces can be

Central Market is great - well worth a visit



Ten of the best-balanced quotes

"Don't get me wrong. It all looks lovely and clean, but St Helier has lost its Jersey charm. The new buildings don't retain the same quality and interest - they could be from anywhere. Guernsey has retained much more charm."

"The waterfront is an eyesore. More of a presence for other cultural communities (French festival, Normandy markets, Portuguese fans...). Cobbled streets. Introduce commuter/tourist bikes. Liberation Station needs to adapt more to young people; outside dining and cleaner toilets."

Some positive moments collected:

*Walking the breakwater in the morning.
Quiet. View to Elizabeth Castle, relaxing.
Evenings throughout the summer.
Scenic and relaxing.*

*Having a picnic at the green of Fort Regent.
Beautiful view of Jersey. Lovely views.
Could be any time, season or day.
Happy moments.*

*Sitting in the Liberation Square.
Liberation square/liberty wharf.
In the summer it's nice to sit on the stairs for lunch.
Summer, the warmth of lunch hour.*

"St Helier - nice place. Great venue for playing Petanque! Enough open space + parking. Concerned about the number of shops that are struggling at present - I would like to see more being done to help encourage businesses."

"More pedestrianisation. Why do vans, cars, have shortcuts - Conway Street, Broad Street, Charing X - to Parade. They should use the Ring road!"

"Places to sit and have lunch - possibly sheltered. Space to enjoy the street. We walk up and down looking for space."

"Keep historic character. Encourage access to all parts of town by offering destination features. Improve the tired feel of our surroundings."

"Attractive town centre, easy access to transport networks and pretty waterfront."

"Town centre in danger of losing its identity. Becoming bland - looks like everywhere else."

"Keeping St Helier green, no building on parks. Use empty offices etc. Keep cars out of the centre of town."

"Everything here is so relaxed and as long as we keep it this way."

St Helier from Bel Royal



What we discovered

The nature of the consultations was conversational - to explore and understand people's views on three related questions:

1. What is the distinctive character of St Helier?
2. How has it changed over the last 10-15 years, since the previous similar study?
3. How should the town's character be managed over the next ten year Island Plan period, particularly given pressures for new homes, employment space, leisure and other uses?

As we progressed through the study and the engagement plan, we were able to share the team's emerging thoughts on the future management of the town's character to inform the discussions around question 3.

The main points from across the various consultation channels are summarised below, using the three questions as headings. The information proved useful to the team in informing the content of the report.

1. What is the distinctive character of St Helier?

- Historic town centre:** fine-grained narrow street layout | mix of English and French influences | Regency, Victorian and Edwardian architecture, scale and proportion
- Centre of the island:** a varied mix of uses | leisure, recreation, business, transport hub | local and national business centre
- Compact:** walkable | easy to get about | small scale | very dense
- Maritime and military heritage:** the sea | Elizabeth Castle | Fort Regent
- Inconsistent townscape quality:** high quality in the heart of town centre | low quality around waterfront | bland modern design | disjointed
- Public realm:** not enough greenspace | little opportunity for 'theatre.'

2. How has the character changed over the last 10-15 years since the previous similar study?

+ve

- more town centre pedestrian areas and street activity, like Charing Cross and Liberty Wharf
- Millennium Park
- suburban housing in better condition
- some new stylish buildings
- more cosmopolitan
- more variety of shopping and leisure
- appears to be more prosperous

-ve

- traffic, congestion and air pollution
- the waterfront is poorly designed and disconnected

Describe your moment in St Helier

Location of your moment
Liberation Square/Liberty Wharf

Why there?
In the summer it's nice to sit on the stairs for lunch.


When would it happen? (Season, day, time)
Summer, lunch hour

How does it compare to another location?
Open space, outdoors, sunshine

PLEASE PIN HERE

Set the scene of your moment with words and/or drawings...

Warm in the summer



- poor design of new development
- historic character eroded in some areas by the scale and design of new development
- Fort Regent is underused, deteriorating and increasingly isolated
- poor maintenance of historic buildings
- town centre housing is increasingly down-market
- increasing tensions between St Helier and the rest of the island
- tourism is not considered as important anymore, and this has an impact on the look and feel

3. How should the town's character be managed over the next ten year Island Plan period, particularly given pressures for new homes, employment space, leisure and other uses?

- Coherent plan/vision needed. Objectives: low carbon, integrate with transport planning, give greater focus to St Helier, focus on placemaking, design quality and heritage conservation, lead/guide rather than be reactive, carefully consider sensitive opportunities at Fort Regent and Waterfront.
- car reduction in the town centre - repopulate the town centre
- more natural walking, more relaxed cycling and better public transport
- reduce pollution: noise, light, air
- conserve historic character especially in Georgian and Victorian areas, Havre des Pas, Fort Regent and the old harbour: Conservation Areas often suggested
- higher design quality to respect existing plot size, scale and massing, more harmony between existing and new developments and an appropriate scale of new development on narrow town centre streets - less demolition and more re-use
- tall buildings placement and design need care to avoid destroying green backdrop and overwhelming narrow streets and lower buildings; some suggested only appropriate on the waterfront/port areas
- more public open space, trees and greenery
- increase seating and pleasant areas to rest, eat lunch and enjoy the character of the town
- low carbon: planning and development must be more sustainable.
- character areas with most opportunities for change: La Collette, Esplanade, the Port, Fort Regent and Hospital
- Waterfront and Fort Regent also seen as opportunities: improve connections, make more of the potential and the opportunities to do something special but care is required – prominent and sensitive - new development needs to be more appropriate scale - future port infrastructure is important
- Havre des Pas: opportunity to enhance
- reduce pressure on St Helier by expanding other communities

Engagement

*On-street engagement during
December 2019 in central St Helier*



Built heritage review: major issues and trends, attitudes, pressures and threats, action proposals

1. Introduction

The built heritage of any town, city or place is never static. Owners and users come and go over time, each leaving their mark in some way. External forces such as economic cycles, natural disasters or only the passing of time and the harmful effect of the elements, often intervene – often to the detriment of the cultural significance and physical integrity of a site. Buildings in urban areas and marine environments often suffer more than their fair share of threats and damage. In places like St Helier – where an expanding population requires more housing and a pervasive business mindset holds that all development is desirable – there is an inevitable conflict between heritage conservation and the proponents of unhindered urban expansion.

Fifteen years have passed since the built heritage of St Helier was surveyed as part of the Urban Character Appraisal undertaken by Willie Miller Urban Design. As one might expect, the upheavals of the Great Recession and the town's recent economic resurgence have affected the integrity of the town's historic townscape in several ways. Economic decline can lead to benign neglect – a sort of inadvertent stasis – while a subsequent boom period can be detrimental on many other levels. In 2011 one prominent Jersey preservationist noted with regret that,

“In a recession, the need to stimulate the economy is always the justification for knocking down listed buildings. In the boom times, it is the shortage of office accommodation and housing which is the justification for the same sort of destruction.”

This review of the condition of St Helier's built heritage is based on a detailed street-by-street survey undertaken over five days in September 2019, replicating the investigation conducted in 2004, and recorded in c.1,300 photographs. Formal interviews with planning officers and heritage organisations supplemented the street-by-street survey. These activities were undertaken by the design team, augmented by informal ad hoc discussions with St Helier residents and reviews of planning applications/ reports and articles in the local press dating back to 2005.

Fig 4.1

After generations of dereliction and mortal threats, a favourite St Helier landmark has been re-born - a model of persistence, compromise and investment in conservation.



2. Summary of findings

The September 2019 survey revealed that the condition of the existing fabric of St Helier's historic environment is generally sound. Still, with current housing and redevelopment pressures, it remains exceptionally vulnerable in places.

Also, the overall integrity of the town's built heritage has suffered from the loss of a dozen or more listed buildings in recent years, and several more listed buildings in prominent areas are presently at risk of demolition. Suggestions that an increase in tall residential blocks or general densification of available sites around St Helier may be necessary to mitigate the current housing crisis does not bode well for the town's historic built environment. Overdevelopment of nearby land and increases in the scale and massing of new buildings can impact on the significance of a historic structure. Over-scaled adjacent development can be as significant and damaging as an unsympathetic alteration or improper repair.

Survey observations indicate that maintenance and repair of historic buildings have improved since the early years of this century. The 2004 UCA survey recorded many more instances of neglect and shoddy repairs and alterations, with many prominent buildings recorded as being in unkempt or dilapidated condition. Proper maintenance requires constant attention, action and investment to avoid significant repairs and to protect the physical integrity and cultural significance of sites are to be protected. The 2019 survey (also undertaken during the "shoulder" tourist season) identified more scaffolding in place around the town, suggesting that repairs and maintenance are more common than in the early years of this century.

Fig 4.2

Dumaresq Street's collection of historic buildings is seen in its derelict state in 2004, when their fate was still very much in doubt.



2.1 Recent heritage successes, losses and compromises

There have been several well-known success stories in recent years attributable to the tenacity of heritage officials and heritage organisations, namely the Foot building development at the corner of Dumaesq and Pitt Streets and the restored Georgian townhouse at 16 New Street. These prominent schemes attracted substantial private investment, have been widely acclaimed, and now generate income for the National Trust for Jersey. The latter example has created an additional tourist destination for the town.

Commercial schemes have also contributed to an improvement in the overall state of the historic environment, notably the retail and leisure development in the Liberty Wharf onversion of a historic abattoir. Lesser-known successes for the town include the refurbishment of several properties empty or derelict in 2004 such the Grade 4 interwar building at 18 Hill Street, an 1850 semi-detached villa in Upper Kings Cliff (Grade 3) and the 1845 Le Seilleur Workshop (unlisted and at risk at the time of the 2004 survey) at the foot of Common Lane.

2.2 Major townscape losses – and compromises

By all accounts, more than a dozen listed buildings in St Helier have disappeared in recent years. Most famously, to achieve the broader commercial aims of the project, two of the six derelict buildings at the Dumaesq/Pitt Street development were lost.

Outright demolition of most of these listed buildings took place. In other cases, retention of just the front facades took place (eg Southampton

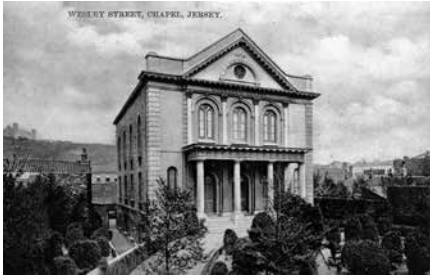
Fig 4.3

The monumental Jersey College for Girls has been a landmark in Rouge Bouillon since 1888 yet had been derelict for many years prior to its recent reconstruction to residential use. Regrettably, the condition of the fabric and nature of the conversion led to a significant loss of the building's interior. In addition, it is arguable that the overall site was overdeveloped, but fortunately the new blocks to the sides and rear impact only minimally on the grandeur of the building's original setting.



Fig 4.4

St Helier's built heritage has suffered wins, losses and veritable draws over the past fifteen years. Only the facade of the Wesleyan Chapel survived fire and subsequent development, but it is diminished by its new neighbours.

**Fig 4.5**

More positively, the National Trust for Jersey's villa at 16 New Street was painstakingly restored to represent an authentic view of a traditional merchant's house



Hotel, Wesley Street Chapel) with new structures added behind or alongside. These facade-retention schemes represent Pyrrhic victories for the heritage sector. While the greater townscape appears relatively intact to passers-by, destruction of considerable historic fabric has occurred, and arguably the cultural significance of the site as a whole has been forever compromised.

There has also been a piecemeal loss of unlisted historic buildings since the 2004 survey. An example of this is the mixed row of 19th-century townhouses in Clarence Road since replaced by a plain white block of flats with a staggered, balconied frontage projecting well forward of the building lines of its older neighbours. Though the increase in mass and scale of this new development may not be as dramatic as that of the Hotel Metropole development at Havre-des-Pas, it still impacts on the historic built environment as building footprints, and heights begin to increase incrementally around the town.

Most of the listed buildings demolished in recent years have succumbed to significant housing developments, such as the Hotel Metropole site mentioned above and the on-going Ann Court scheme. Also on the ground at present is the redevelopment of the 1960s La Collette Flats complex (listed Grade 4 in 2014), where the 14-storey point block is to remain. Denser modern blocks will replace most of the low-rise buildings.

3. Trends and issues arising since 2004

There are many reasons why St Helier's historic environment – demolitions notwithstanding – appears to be in generally sound condition. Still, the most likely driver is the strength of the current property market and the high

demand for housing in the island. In many cases, these positive economic forces oblige sensible owners to keep their buildings in good condition for rental or sale purposes, to maximise the potential return on investment.

A more empirical cause of improved conditions in some areas is the conversion of lodging houses and the creation of refurbished self-contained flats or homes for sale or rent. Anecdotal reports suggest that at least fifteen lodging houses – generally with single bedrooms and shared facilities – have been closed and redeveloped to house fewer but larger flats. In conjunction with these internal improvements, the external envelopes of these buildings – often located in Regency or Victorian terraces – have been similarly upgraded to reflect the building's newly rekindled upmarket status.

The demand for housing in recent years has also led to the conversion of doctors' and dentists' surgeries, and many historic buildings used for years for office, hotel or other commercial purposes have reverted to residential use. The fact that buildings are being used for their original purpose once again is a welcome development. It has been, however, a challenge for the planners to convince developers of the benefit of creating fewer, larger flats in these buildings rather than their standard approach of creating more numerous, smaller units. Of course, the creation of bigger homes is generally less demanding on the historic fabric of the building as there is less wear and tear from fewer users.

On an equally positive note, the Government's Heritage section has reported a pattern of increased numbers of enquiries in recent years from owners of listed or historic properties seeking advice on appropriate repairs or guidance on the undertaking of sympathetic alterations. This increased



Fig 4.6

When historic buildings (above) are replaced with non-descript white residential blocks it arguable that the character of an area is diminished, such as in Clarence Road



Jersey Evening Post

Former hotel could be turned into homes

[News](#) | Published: Nov 14, 2017

NINETEEN homes could be built on the site of a former town hotel, if plans are approved.



Under the proposals, two 19th century Grade II listed town houses which make the front of the former Colesburg Hotel on Rouge Bouillon would be refurbished to create seven apartments.

A 1970s extension along Roussel Street would be demolished and replaced with nine apartments and three maisonettes.

The Colesburg last operated as a hotel in 2000 and has been empty since 2015.

As part of the plans, a small section of the listed building would be demolished, and the existing and new development would be linked by a glass box.

The homes in the new building would have floor-to-ceiling windows, at least one private balcony and coloured panels on their facade.

Fig 4.7

Over the past fifteen years, there has been a considerable increase in the numbers of former boarding houses, hotels and commercial properties reverting to private residential use as St Helier developers seek to benefit from the intense demand for housing. The conversion of the former Colesburg Hotel was on site during the 2019 survey.

awareness of the intrinsic value of heritage assets and the apparent benefits of maintaining, enhancing or reinstating their character is welcome and significant. It is also a testament to the hard work of current Heritage section staff as they engage with building owners to seek compromises conducive to the best interest of the building and the wider townscape.

One minor but noteworthy trend observed during the recent re-survey has been the reinstatement of historic features such as cast iron lamps, historic signage and traditional shopfronts. One of the defining characteristics of the historic townscape of St Helier is the wealth of these small architectural details, be they timber shutters, lead rainwater hoppers, date-stones or terracotta ridge tiles. Therefore it is encouraging to see more of these minor elements restored, reinstated and generally more recognised than they were fifteen years ago. Along with the more contemporary, creative initiatives such as mural painting on blank gable walls around the town, these incremental improvements add a variety of visual interest to the historic townscape, enhance the amenity of streets and neighbourhoods and should continue to be encouraged.

As with all townscapes with painted elevations, buildings are in perpetual need of redecoration. In the case of St Helier, it seems that there has been a trend away from a muted polychromy across facades to a more pervasive dominance of white and magnolia, with an occasional burst of vivid or discordant colour. This “whitening” of St Helier is an unfortunate tendency that encourages a monotonous streetscape, rescued only by more attractive colours used for architectural details, railings, doors, shopfronts and the like.

As discussed in the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal, and the subsequent 2013 Design Guidance document, the use of traditional colours can add



charm and interest to the townscape of St Helier. However, specific rules of harmony and the appreciation of local context should apply. Specifically, set-piece architecture – such as Regency or Victorian terraces – should have elevations of a single hue to reinforce and celebrate the uniformity and grandeur of the original design and to avoid clashing colours in shared features such as columns, porches, pilasters and name plaques. Standalone structures, such as the Freemasons' Hall or the Methodist Church in Halkett Place, are more suitable for more creative use of the colour palette.

Adherence to the 2013 colour guidelines would also be advantageous for the many new-build flatted developments emerging around the town in recent years. Almost uniformly a harsh, bright white, these new blocks – along with the tendency to paint older buildings white/magnolia – have contributed to this increasingly monochrome townscape creeping across St Helier. Wherever possible, more variety in paint colours – as promoted in the design guidance – is to be encouraged and resistance to the bleaching of the urban palette in a town with such a characterful historic environment should be strong.

Fig 4.8

Colour palette from the UCA 2005

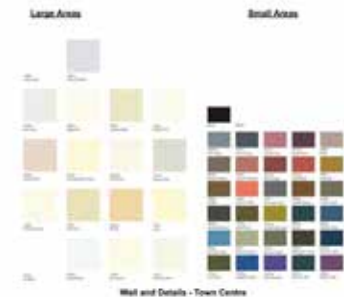


Fig 4.9

Views in James Street in 2004 (opposite, left) and 2019 (opposite, right) show how a building can be transformed from an oppressive object in the streetscape to a more respectful neighbour through the selection of more restrained paint colours.

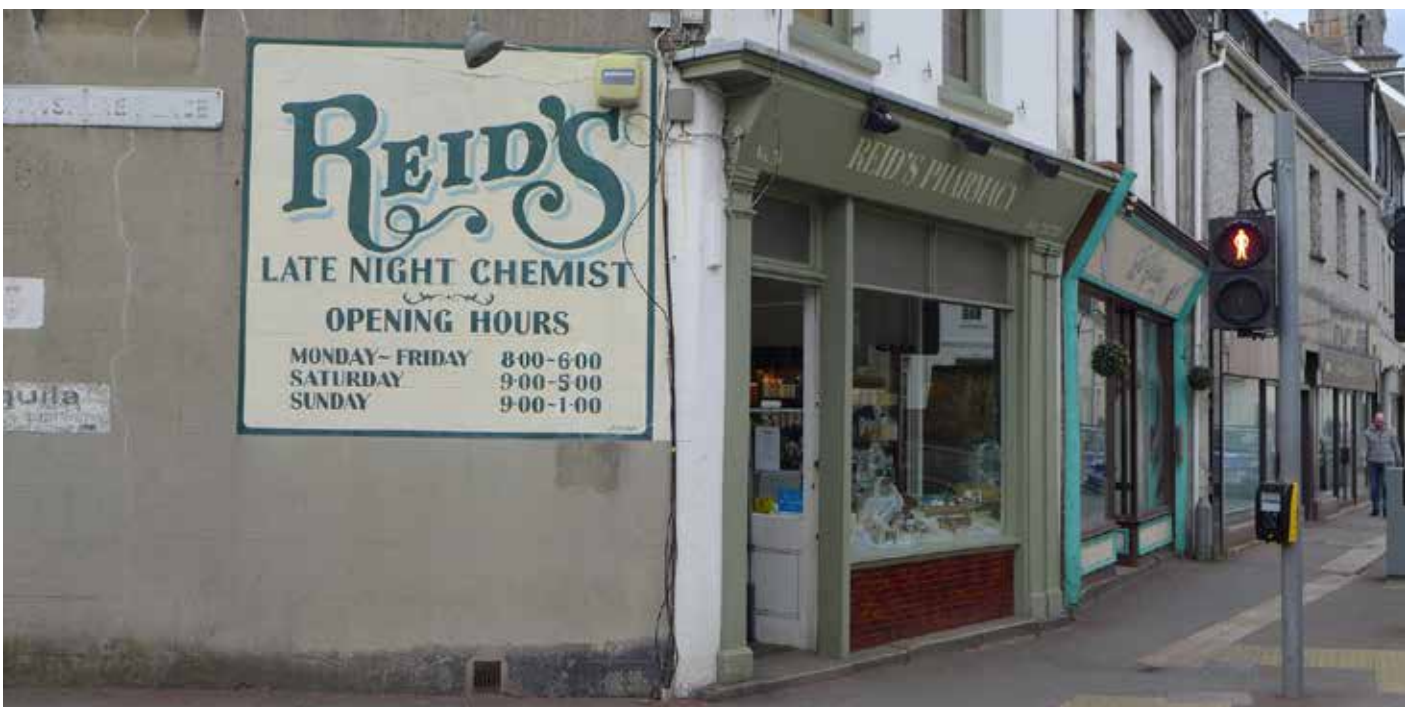


Fig 4.10

Cast iron lamp standards at the Beresford Club - pictured redundant in 2004 (below) and recently restored (right) - are indicative of many small but noteworthy improvements to St Helier's townscape since the UCA survey fifteen years ago.

**Fig 4.11**

Street signage (Reid's Pharmacy in New Street (below) adds immeasurable character to St Helier's historic townscape. Since the 2004 UCA survey, there is a noted increase in the presence of painted signage of all description around the town



**Fig 4.12**

Singular monumental buildings such as the Freemasons' Hall (left) are eminently worthy of dramatic colour schemes (within the parameters of the 2013 Design Guidance).

**Fig 4.13**

More respect should be given to set-piece terrace designs of the 19th century (below, Stopford Road), where communal paint schemes should be encouraged to avoid inappropriate demarcations between properties. Dissonant decoration such as the Green Rooster in Minden Place (above) contravenes guidance and has arguably no place in a historic streetscape.





Fig 4.14

Historic signage abounds in St Helier, though rarely is it as prominently on display as at The Blue Note in Broad Street (right). More often it is more subtle such as at De Faye's in David Place (top) or almost imperceptible such as Le Sueur's in La Motte Street (below).





Fig 4.15

In the 2004 UCA survey, the only notable mural in St Helier was the gloriously vivid facade of Pets Paradise in Peirson Road. This local landmark has now been joined by a collection of works of public art in Clearview Street (below), La Colomberie (above) and Minden Place (left)





Fig 4.16

St Helier boasts a superlative and diverse array of historic decorative or structural features that often escape statutory protection. Period shopfronts (below, Val Plaisant), cast iron railings (above, West Park Avenue) and stone boundary walls (right, St Clement's Road) make important contributions to the historic townscape but not all are protected by listed building legislation.



4. Attitudes towards St Helier's built heritage

Anecdotally, as noted by the heritage lobby and recorded in the pages of the Jersey Evening Post (JEP), there are still staunch views among residents, politicians and the business community regarding the listing of buildings and much disagreement as to the best ways to maintain or upgrade them.

Property developers and some others in the business and political communities often seem indifferent - or even antithetical - to St Helier's built heritage. They aim their fire not only at the listing process in general but channel invective specifically at the planning officers whose statutory responsibility it is to manage change in the built environment on behalf of current (and future) Jersey residents. Typically, these critics refer to "questionably qualified experts" and "pettifogging fanatic(s)" implementing a "dictatorial and doctrinaire" process with such "vindictiveness ... [that] no dissenting voice is heard."

Such strident opinions do not, however, reflect the opinion of Jersey's general public as noted in recent opinion surveys with some 83% of residents agreeing that historic buildings are an asset to the regeneration of St Helier. Recent increases in the number of members of the island's heritage organisations (up by 17.5% between 2014 and 2017) also indicate a steady growth in appreciation for Jersey's historic environment.

Despite this, there is still an intransigence in some sectors in Jersey society who regard historic buildings and places as obstacles to development, progress and the economic well-being of the island. These sectors view such obstacles as readily surmountable. This point of view, especially in the



Fig 4.17

Landmark structures such as the Jersey Brewery (above) and Commercial Buildings (below) are the subject of development pressure.



property development industry, is a significant threat to the town's historic environment.

"How many examples of old buildings in an original condition do we need?" asked one Deputy in 2013. *"We already have far more listed buildings on this island than is necessary to reflect our changes in history."*

Such sentiments seem anachronistic to the visitor from the UK or the European mainland. In the European and UK context, debates on the intrinsic value of the built heritage have moved on from postwar attitudes favouring comprehensive redevelopment. Conventional wisdom suggests that historic townscapes are an asset worth preserving, admiring and even employing for the common good.

At the same time, Jersey has seen its tourist industry struggle to maintain its viability amidst a generation of changing travel habits among UK holidaymakers. Jersey must offer more to attract visitors, and it was recognised as far back as 2010 (by the JEP), that *"it is simply not possible these days, and at this end of the visitor market, to sustain a tourism industry that does not depend heavily on cultural uniqueness."* Interpretation of this "cultural uniqueness" can happen in many ways, but the historic built environment is certainly a core element. The JEP continued: *"Jersey's heritage is also what underpins the Island's increasingly important efforts to establish a stronger international identity, an aim vital to both our cherished political independence and, more pragmatically, to the future health of the finance industry."*

Fig 4.18

With the demolition of the pool, the current physical state of the sports complex and the continuing issues of accessibility, the future of Fort Regent as a central focus of St Helier's historic townscape is now in question. Below, Fort Regent is shown in 1969, just prior to the site's redevelopment.



Despite general antagonism towards heritage in some quarters, Jersey's heritage organisations view the value of the historic environment more holistically. One prominent preservationist stated, *"if we ... lose the historic fabric of our town we lose its identity and its core. It is about the erosion of what makes Jersey unique."* In contrast, one leading island developer told the JEP in 2017, *"while you can appreciate some listings, others don't make any sense to me whatsoever."*

Yet, even in such a complex and emotionally-charged debate, there is always a balance to be struck. One erstwhile Environment Minister explained that while *"most islanders value Jersey's historic environment, but do not realise that preserving its unique character can sometimes mean difficult decisions."* To this end, this particular Minister believed his officers ensured *"consistency and fairness"* in applying policy to planning applications and encouraged residents to seek advice and guidance from the planners. Unfortunately, there are some in the pro-development lobby who only see an *"autocratic approach"* in their interaction with these planners, whom they believe *"would rather see an old property crumble into ruin than entertain the notion of compromise."* The path to real compromise, of course, is by necessity a two-way street.

Managing change in such a polarised environment is undoubtedly a challenge for planners. Statistics demonstrate that 40% of planning applications received by the Planning and Building service have a heritage element (up in number by 38% from 2014 to 2017). Yet, analysis of planning decisions indicates that around 85% of applications are approved. It

Fig 4.19

Finely preserved streets such as West Park Avenue (below) – only really marred by the occasional unsympathetic dormer and some unfortunate decorative schemes – exemplifies the rich character of St Helier's architecture and townscape.



seems that planners work very hard – particularly in encouraging pre-application discussions – to engage with applicants to find a “mutually agreeable” solution. The aim is to protect or enhance the site’s character and significance while allowing the owners to adapt or alter their buildings to suit their particular desires and circumstances. It also demonstrates that planners are not autocratic and reluctant to compromise. It is worth noting that the listing system as adopted and developed across the British Isles over the past 70 years has always sought to manage change for the common good – not to prevent it at all costs.

Part of the Government’s drive to improve the transparency of the listing system – as supported by the heritage sector in Jersey – has been the undertaking since 2010 of a re-survey of the island’s 4000+ buildings and places of architectural and historical significance. This survey data – in the form of an online searchable database with maps, reports and photographs – has dramatically improved public access to an invaluable baseline of information on their local heritage. This Historic Environments database, along with the Planning Register database of recent planning applications, is a welcome advance on the amount of practical information available fifteen years ago.

Fig 4.20

The street frontage of St Helier’s Esplanade was notable in 2004 for its collection of poor 20th century buildings. Since then, the street has been changed, with the construction of several large office blocks that dominate the few remaining heritage properties in the street.

For the planning system, it is an important step forward in enabling St Helier’s property owners and residents to understand why individual buildings are deemed to be significant and therefore worthy of protection. The system also aims to help applicants to negotiate their way through the planning system to achieve a beneficial outcome. This initiative is to be applauded – and should be developed further over time.



5. Current pressures and future threats

A historic environment is always vulnerable. Inappropriate or unsympathetic alterations or repairs, fire, flood or other force of nature, redundancy or a lack of sustainable use, or merely the unfortunate circumstance of being located in the wrong place – say, in the path of new public infrastructure – can all have a devastating effect on old buildings, streets or spaces. Jersey's current housing needs require action. With St Helier the likely host to a majority of the new homes envisioned, there will undoubtedly be consequences for the town's historic environment. New development will inevitably affect not just the stock of listed buildings but also the significant unlisted structures and the open spaces that provide surrounding context, amenity and character.

Other developments on the drawing board or under discussion at present, such as the development of a new hospital (and the subsequent redevelopment of the existing General Hospital site) and potentially significant changes to Fort Regent also present potential threats to buildings of considerable significance to St Helier's history and townscape. It is encouraging that the future of these critical sites has generated much comment in the local press.

There are also threats to individual listed buildings and the wider townscape emanating from commercial schemes – the many new office buildings along the Esplanade constructed since the 2004 survey are testimony to this pressure. There have been some recent moves from the commercial sector away from small office properties in the town's older properties in favour of new business premises on the waterfront (and the former's conversion

Fig 4.21

With mounting pressure to provide for St Helier's growing population, the historic environment is at risk from change both incremental and dramatic. Listed Building protection is usually a useful mechanism for managing major changes such as demolitions or sizeable alterations, but the establishment of one or more Conservation Areas would protect the broader aspects of the town's architectural and historical significance.



back to residential). Oversized and inappropriate developments will have a devastating effect on the character of certain parts of town that have so far maintained their historic scale and grain.

There are several potentially vulnerable listed buildings around St Helier, in addition to those now demolished or currently with consents approved for demolition such as the Le Masurier site next to the Odeon Cinema and those buildings in the way of the J1 scheme at Commercial Street/Broad Street in the old town. The Victorian hospital buildings, the former brewery sites and Commercial Buildings alongside the harbour are all potentially at risk of demolition or unsympathetic redevelopment. Also, as large redevelopment sites tend to ratchet up the scale and massing of the street blocks (both in terms of height and building hard to the pavement line, such as at the Hotel Metropole site), the scale of different neighbourhoods will soon begin to change. Older two or three-storey traditional buildings – be they elegant terraced houses or modest but attractive (and unlisted) service buildings – will seem overshadowed by their overbearing neighbours. Inevitably, these changes will diminish some of their street presence and character. The localised impact on the town's historic character wrought, in previous decades, by Hue Court, Cyril Le Marquand House and other high-rise blocks is very much in evidence. With pressure from some quarters to “go tall” to mitigate the current housing crisis, it is not surprising that the island's heritage lobby regularly express grave concern for the future of St Helier's townscape.

Fig 4.22

Overbearing developments around Devonshire Place including the Magistrates Court and Cyril Le Marquand House

St Helier's historic environment is not only vulnerable to current economic forces but, as described in the 2005 UCA report, the incremental change suffered by individual buildings can lead to a broader degradation of the



historic townscape. In the same way that improper repairs can mar the character of a single building, alterations or the removal of critical decorative elements over time can be detrimentally over a more extended period when there are incremental changes to a large number of different buildings. These relatively minor changes – such as paving front gardens or removing unifying features such as granite walls or cast iron railings – can radically change the appearance of an area over time. Even the loss of historic shopfronts in an unlisted building can dramatically and negatively impact on the appearance and character of a local area, particularly in the quiet residential side streets of the Town Centre North character area. These traditional shopfronts are a particularly exciting and valuable component of St Helier's townscape and should be better recorded, protected and preserved through the designation of conservation area status.

6. Action

6.1 Changing perceptions

To preserve and enhance the architectural and historic significance of St Helier, it is incumbent upon the Government to make the case – particularly to the pro-development business community – that St Helier's listed buildings are assets to be valued rather than being obstacles impeding progress. The current planning policy, a leading developer told the Evening Post in 2017, was *"often holding up the regeneration of St Helier. ... You are constrained at times by listings."*

Some in the pro-development camp occasionally preface their anti-

Fig 4.23

Traditional shopfront deteriorating at Burrard Street and Waterloo Lane.



heritage remarks by saying, *"I am in favour of preserving the best of our built heritage, but it's simply wrong to preserve for the sake of preservation."* Yet, any pragmatic preservationist will argue not for "preservation at all costs" but instead will encourage recognition of the variety of building types worth protecting. Managing change can ensure that the broader cultural significance of the built environment is not compromised.

As outlined in the Conservation section of the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal, and echoed in a raft of regular studies undertaken by the UK's heritage agencies and professional institutes in the fifteen years since historic buildings and places are appreciated and enjoyed by a vast majority of the population, attract tourists and inward investors, and provide a "sense of place" that promotes community cohesiveness and civic participation. Also, historic buildings are eminently environmentally sustainable – notably if improved by energy efficiency measures – owing to the embedded carbon of their materials. And in an island community such as Jersey's, reducing demolition and waste and limiting exports of newly manufactured materials must be considered to be advantageous.

A review of English Heritage's annual Heritage Counts survey is particularly edifying on matters of the social and economic benefits of architectural conservation and townscape management (<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts>).

Fig 4.24

Fort Regent and the domed roof of the Leisure Centre rises above Aquila Road - recent heritage but no less valuable in St Helier's townscape and character

St Helier has a considerable patrimony of elegant historic buildings, streets, parks, urban spaces and townscape views that would be the envy of many similarly-sized towns around the UK. And in St Helier's historic buildings is a



considerable financial investment from previous generations – as described in the UCA – responsible for a townscape which should be considered the cornerstone and inspiration for good design and enlightened development going forward. *“In retaining the old, we emphasise the new,”* stated one correspondent to the Evening Post. No thoughtful conservationist wishes their town to be “preserved in aspic.” Instead, most will welcome sensitive and sympathetic new architecture that complements the integrity or character of nearby heritage assets.

Demolition of numerous listed buildings post-2000 suggests to many in the heritage lobby that the Government is always on the side of developers.

Regarding recent development approvals in the town’s historic core, the *“objections of heritage bodies have clearly been completely ignored,”* wrote one correspondent to the Evening Post in 2011. This writer believed that St Helier is the receptacle for all new developments mooted to solve the housing crisis:

“It seems that St Helier just cannot win here, that somehow the town’s historic fabric is regarded as second rate or less valid than that of the country parishes. Or maybe the plan to cram all future Island growth into the town effectively takes priority over St Helier’s cultural identity: St Helier is to be destroyed, to preserve the rural parishes.”

Given the current housing crisis, the Government should demonstrate openly and forcefully to the pro-development lobby and the wider Jersey public that the town’s heritage matters. Consequently, new residential

Fig 4.25

The whitening of St Helier - 15 new residential units at Belmont Court off Ann Street



developments should always respect, and not negatively impact upon, the historic built environment of St Helier. The Government must also ensure that regulations and resources are appropriate and suited to the task of protecting this invaluable asset, such as enacting legislation to establish Conservation Areas.

The Government should robustly support the Heritage section of Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance so that it can engage early and often in the development process and be suitably resourced to undertake the scale of work that is required not only in St Helier but also island-wide. A fair, consistent and transparent planning process should be the aim for all parties concerned. As stated, there have been many successful applications for listed building consent achieved through close consultations between applicant and planner. But applicants can only be encouraged to undertake these discussions if there are sufficient staff resources available.

Recommended courses of action:

- The Government should liaise with Jersey's heritage organisations on initiatives to promote appreciation of the built environment, with particular reference to engaging with the business community.
- The Government should ensure that appropriate resources are available to the Heritage section of Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance to enable a robust island-wide service with particular reference to St Helier
- The recent survey of listed buildings should be regularly reviewed and updated as and when necessary
- Urgency should be attached to the designation of a Conservation Area

Fig 4.26

An incredible story told in brick, masonry, render and paint (and UPVC) - residential property on Byron Lane



or Areas for St Helier

- There is a need for the promotion of initiatives on best practice in maintenance and repair of the built environment
- Reinstatement of the repair grant should complement enhanced technical guidance and robust statutory protections

6.2 Conservation Areas

A high proportion of the island's listed buildings are in St Helier and so already enjoy protection but the wider area character and the need to protect that is also important. Progress on the establishment of Conservation Areas across the town is a priority, and perhaps across Jersey. Since the 1960s, the establishment of some 10,000 Conservation Areas has been invaluable to towns and cities across the UK not merely in protecting historic properties and places but also in terms of economic vitality and social investment and well-being. Countless studies over the past several decades – such as the annual Heritage Counts reports by Historic England – have shown that protected historic areas attract inward investment, have increased footfall in commercial districts, garner higher rents and property values and are appreciated by and attractive to residents and visitors alike. Conservation Area status engenders a specific identity to an area, makes it seem special and thus worthy of care, consideration and protection.

The importance of this special identity should not be lost to those keen on promoting St Helier to the outside world, whether they wish to attract inward investors or holidaymakers. In an increasingly competitive global marketplace, it is essential that a place is recognisable for its own particular qualities and is able to market them. As noted by Nobel Prize-winning

Fig 4.27

Axial view along Halkett Place terminated by the facade of the Wesley Grove Methodist Church



economist Robert Merton Solow, “Over the long term, places with strong, distinctive identities are more likely to prosper than places without them. Every place must identify its strongest, most distinctive features and develop them or run the risk of being all things to all persons and nothing special to any.” Conservation Area status for St Helier can play a part in establishing that special character and protecting it for generations to come.

As the concept of Conservation Area controls requires to be understood and accepted by all sections of the community, there may be a case for the designation of smaller and more manageable areas of Gorey and St Aubin as pilots before St Helier’s final status is determined.

Whether a large, single Conservation Area for St Helier is preferable to having four or five smaller areas designated for discrete parts of the town is a debate worth having. The driving force for Conservation Area designation is the protection of the wider (i.e. unlisted) townscape character and therefore with St Helier’s distinct “character areas” it might be sensible to draw the boundaries around smaller and more precisely defined districts.

Still, given the town’s topography and the importance of views both outside and within the built-up area, it would be important that multiple small conservation areas are interconnected and not considered in isolation. The termination of axial views with churches, the views from the eminence of Mont de la Ville and the escarpments surrounding Le Marais de Saint Helier are interconnected issues that would be pertinent if smaller Conservation Areas were designated.

Any Conservation Area designation(s) must, of course, be predicated upon a

Fig 4.28

Iron railings at St Saviour’s Hill - currently there is nothing to prevent the removal of these and similar features throughout St Helier



robust, comprehensive and timely survey of the fabric of St Helier's historic environment. Such a study will not only inform the determination of area boundaries but will form the cornerstone of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy by identifying those characteristics contributing to the significance of the area(s) and also those sites or architectural/townscape features most at risk. In addition, policies for protection and enhancement follow should naturally from the identification of the area's character assessment.

Depending on the nature of the legislation drafted, Conservation Areas controls are useful to protect the character of the wider (i.e. unlisted) townscape. Removing permitted development rights regarding paint



Fig 4.29

*a proposed single Conservation Area
for St Helier?*

colours, the removal or alteration of decorative features such as ironwork or the erection of structures in back gardens are all critical components of area character.

Most importantly, careful consideration of the impact of new developments would need to take place to ensure that they do not negatively impact upon the character or significance of the protected area as identified in the CA Appraisal. A further step in managing overall change and condition of a conservation area over time would be to establish the regular undertaking of an “Authenticity Matrix” as a means to measure any erosion in the overall condition of the historic environment.

This methodology was piloted in Bradford in 2005 and highlighted in the 2011 English Heritage report, “Valuing Places”:

“The condition of roofs, chimney stacks, walls, windows, doors, shopfronts and boundary walls for each pre-1956 building was assessed, and given a score based on the number of original features retained. This was then used to calculate the overall level of authenticity for each conservation area. Information can also be compared within and between areas, allowing comparisons of rates and patterns of change.”

Fig 4.30

Convent Court off David Place - a charming shortcut to Val Plaisant but in need of care and maintenance

This tool - although labour-intensive to establish in the first instance, and intended to be repeated on a quinquennial basis - was deemed to be “invaluable” to the city’s planners in their management of nearly 60 conservation areas in Bradford as a simple and straightforward way to monitor any small changes to their character.



On balance, the recommendation of this review is for a single Conservation Area for St Helier.

6.3 Outreach and Education

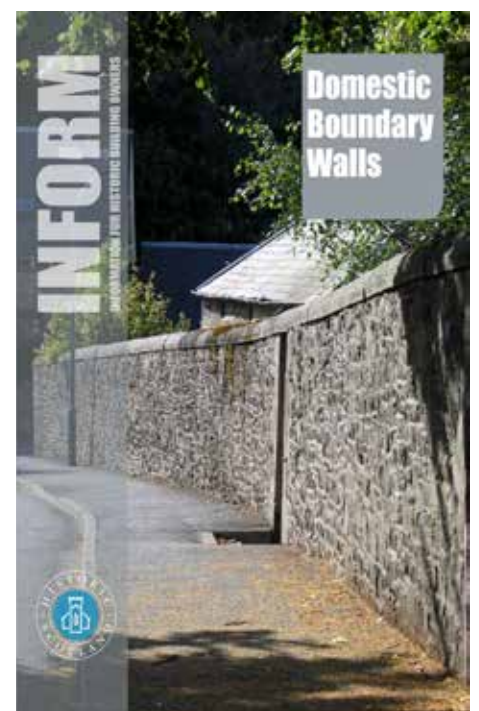
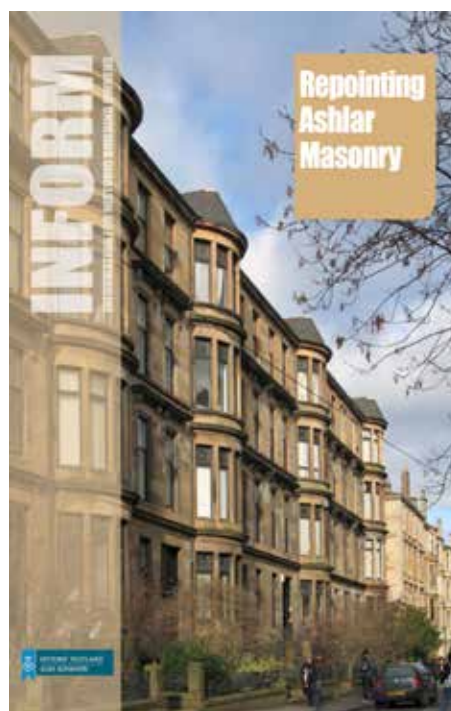
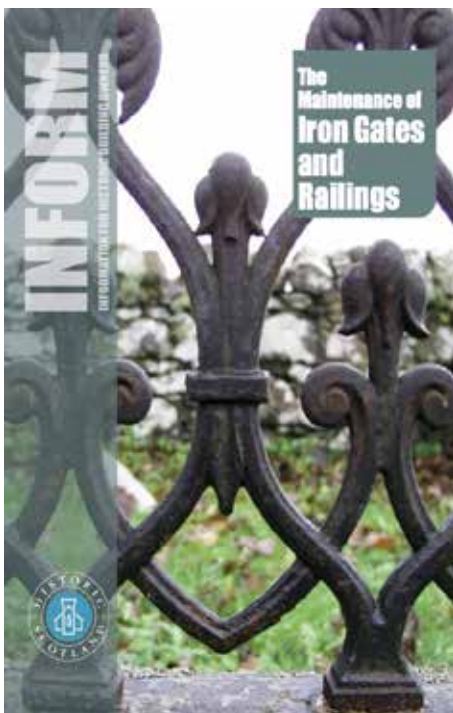
An essential aspect of the Government's promotion of good stewardship of the historic environment will be outreach projects involving the broader community of commercial and residential property owners. Information is key to understanding the character and value of a heritage asset and is equally essential in the dissemination of guidance on best practice for maintenance and repair. In short, the right information is the starting point on the road to sound decision-making.

Outreach can also win over heritage sceptics to the cause of conservation by showing why these assets are culturally significant. Explaining why building retention and proper management are essential to the broader aspirations of Jersey residents as well as maintaining St Helier's attractiveness to visitors and investors is critical. The Government's Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance should engage with the island's heritage organisations to expand and coordinate their online presence to supplement and broaden the amount and types of information on the Government's website.

Given the wealth of archival material in the collections of the Société Jersiaise, Jersey Archive and other organisations, it would be useful to architects, historians, planners, owners, residents and all other stakeholders to have a single web portal. The newly launched Historic Environment Record System contributed to by all heritage groups and hosted by Jersey Heritage at <https://her.jerseyheritage.org/> provides an online portal for all

Fig 4.31

Practical advice on repairing traditional buildings and associated feature - Historic Environment Scotland



archive material. All materials might not necessarily need to be in a single database, but could function like [Historic Environment Scotland's web portal](#) containing information pertinent to a site's designation (i.e. listing report) but also provides a link to Canmore, Scotland's most significant architectural and archaeological archive.

Another key goal of community outreach is to engender pride in a place's heritage, with (hopefully) a subsequent enhancement in the care and maintenance of the heritage assets themselves. It is undoubtedly a challenging task for a government alone to foster an evolution in public opinion, and any initiative promoting appreciation would certainly require major input from Jersey's heritage bodies. To this end, it may be worth pursuing straightforward projects such as:

- an enhanced Doors Open Day programme every year
- participation in the annual Maintenance Week scheme operated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
- an enhanced conservation awards scheme for residential, commercial or institutional buildings (perhaps based on improved scores on the Authenticity Matrix scheme mentioned above, an innovative conversion/alteration of a historic property, or a successful energy-efficient retrofit, shopfront restoration) which includes a Conservation Craft Award
- a special heritage-themed programme aimed introducing schoolchildren to the importance of St Helier's built environment.

Fig 4.32

Rouge Boullion



6.4 Technical guidance

On the practical side, outreach is also essential to the dissemination of technical guidance for best practice in repair and maintenance. To this end, the States of Jersey published two versions of its windows and doors guide (latterly in 2008) and other basic advice can be found in its Supplementary Planning Guidance note, "Managing change in historic buildings." As planning advice, it does not pretend to provide detailed technical information for the contractor, architect or property owner. However, in the manner of the windows and doors guide, it would be advisable if Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – in association with Jersey's heritage groups – produced a series of simple, basic advice notes to ensure that there is a baseline of understanding of conservation do's and don'ts. For example, energy efficiency advice and guidance on routine maintenance would undoubtedly be the two areas of most relevant interest to homeowners.

If provided as downloadable pdfs, these need not be expensive to publish once drafted. A good model might be the popular INFORM series of leaflets produced by Historic Environment Scotland and its predecessor bodies over the past twenty years. Although technical, these HES leaflets remain accessible to all. They are well-illustrated, and the text is concise with examples of best practice. For those seeking more expert information, the INFORM guides always contain references for further reading.

In order to make the technical guidance most effective, its production and dissemination should be prioritised by the findings of a conservation area appraisal survey of the town's historic environment (and perhaps further informed by an Authenticity Matrix). Of course, priority should be given to any guidance involving the protection of the building from the weather, such as roof coverings and rainwater goods, but there will also be "quick wins" available for the overall enhancement of the St Helier townscape such as:

- improvements in energy efficiency for heritage properties (see below)
- promotion of heritage colour schemes as outlined in the 2004 UCA, with special reference to SSIs and set-piece terraces/crescents
- repair and refurbishment of traditional timber windows, doors, surrounds and ornamentation
- reinstatement of decorative elements such as window shutters, iron finials, window awnings, chimney details
- reinstatement of traditional render where appropriate
- improved management of satellite dishes and TV aerials

As a longer-term objective, guidance for major improvements to St Helier's townscape might cover:

- improvements to the settings of key terraces/crescents and other set-piece buildings, such as rationalised car parking, improved tree management, reinstatement of garden railings or other boundary treatments
- good quality design for major alterations and extensions, particularly for areas visible from the street such as roof dormers, side extensions, outbuildings etc.

In all instances, the technical guidance should emphasise the importance of using robust traditional materials, not merely for aesthetic reasons, but more so for reasons of longevity (i.e. whole-life costs, and thus value for money) and, of course, for sustainability purposes. It is well-established that the building sector is a major contributor to global carbon emissions (the third largest contributor in the UK) and therefore it is incumbent upon all parties - building owners/architects/managers, contractors, developers, planners, elected officials - do their utmost to reduce the carbon footprint of the sites for which they have a direct responsibility.

Since the energy crises of the 1970s, much attention has rightly been paid to enhancing the energy efficiency of existing buildings, and the technical literature on these interventions has steadily improved - both in terms of efficacy of the recommendations but also in fine-tuning the aesthetics as they related to historic fabric. The value of good insulation, appropriate window refurbishment/draughtproofing and even the use of domestic solar panels has been well documented and promoted over the past half-century. Only relatively recently, however, have whole-life carbon costs for buildings been exhaustively studied and quantified. Among the best new reports on this topic have been published by Historic England (Planning

Fig 4.33

Rouge Boullion - Egerton Terrace



responsible retrofit of Traditional buildings, 2015; Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings, 2018; Heritage Counts - Re-Use and Recycle to Reduce Carbon, 2019).

The key takeaway from these reports, beyond the oft-repeated importance of energy efficiency in structures in current use, is that the retention and enhanced life of existing building permits major savings in terms of whole life-cycle energy emissions. The embodied carbon in an existing building is a commodity of great value when compared to energy required for its demolition and replacement by a new-build structure.

The vast amount of carbon required for new-builds (from the extraction, transport, processing of raw materials, to the transport of finished materials and their on-site construction) – let alone the energy used to demolish a building, clear/prepare the site and transport debris to landfill) makes the case for retention, adaptation and re-use of older properties worthy of much more nuanced debate. Such waste goes to form part of the land reclamation at La Collette as there is no traditional land fill on Jersey. Other waste goes to the Energy From Waste plant at La Collette. The 2019 Heritage Counts report, for example, estimated that the construction of a new home of the same size as a demolished property produces up to 13 times more embodied carbon than refurbishment.

Fig 4.32

West Park Avenue



Therefore, it is recommended that all future technical guidance issued for St Helier should be produced within a carbon neutral framework not merely governed by the Government's goals for energy efficiency – important as undoubtedly they are – but also with a view to retaining and preserving historic fabric as comprehensively as possible to reduce the need for the importing of new replacement materials and limit unnecessary construction waste on the Island.

6.5 Grant programme

Another practical initiative to encourage better standards and use of appropriate materials and techniques would be for the Government to reinstate its historic buildings grant programme. The grant programme could be a vital tool for seed corn funding on major projects or to assist owners wishing to restore a lost feature that contributes to the character of the wider townscape, such as timber shutters, cast-iron railings or finials, or terracotta ridge pieces. There would be staffing implications if a grant system was introduced.

As explained in great detail in the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal, even a small budget of public money for repair grants can lever upward of five times that sum in private sources. Also, the role of Heritage Officers in approving grant aid requests can facilitate closer monitoring of repair works and ensure quality, best conservation practices and the use of appropriate materials.

Character Area Review: analysis, evaluation and proposed changes

Introduction

The 2005 Urban Character Appraisal identified ten distinct character areas in St Helier. In 2020, most of these character areas still describe zones of the town that have individual qualities that separate them from their neighbouring areas. In some cases, the character of an area is unchanged, in some cases, the character has improved while in others, there is an erosion of the 2005 character or a negative change in character. [Fig 5.1]

The 2005 report also included several zones with a more ambiguous character labelled as interstices. These included areas in transition, areas where other character areas converged or areas that were substantially different from surrounding established character areas but not considered significant enough to be distinct character areas of their own. This review examines the current utility of these interstices.

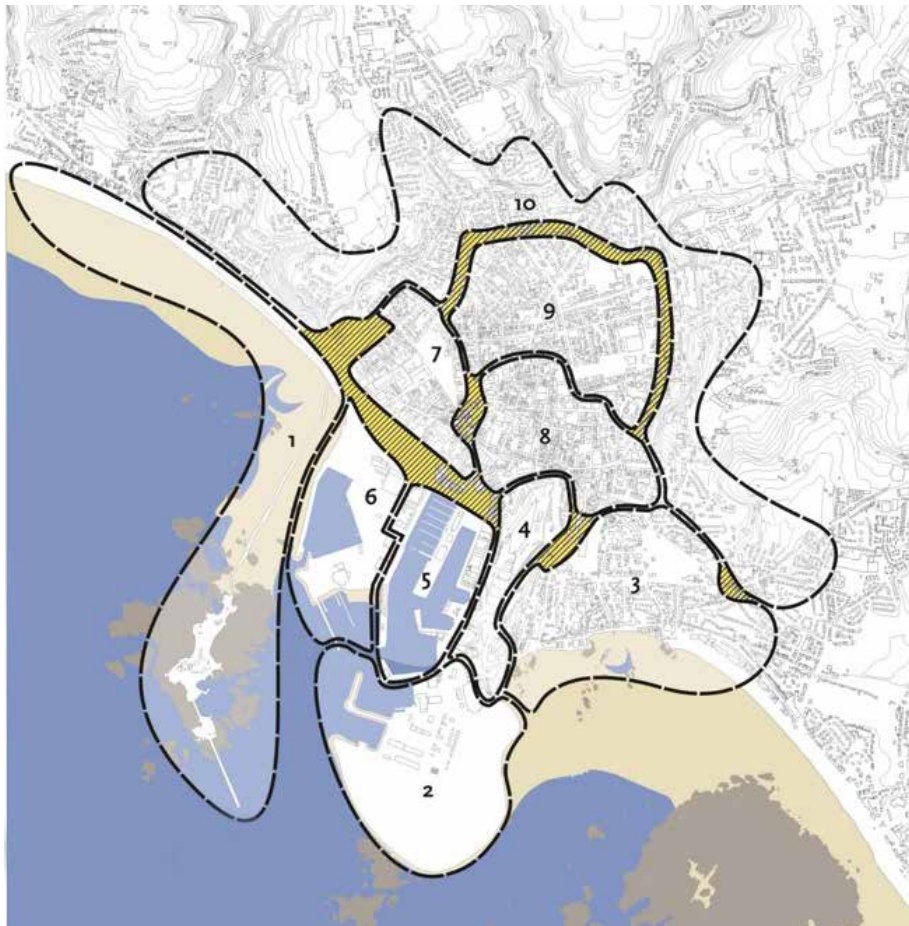


Fig 5.1

The ten character areas defined in the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal with Interstices in yellow hatch

The Quality of the Character Areas

CA1 Esplanade/Elizabeth Castle - loss of character

Elizabeth Castle is one of the stand-out gems of the St Helier townscape and is a tourist attraction as well as a historic place and a Jersey icon. The 2005 UCA study classified the Castle and much of its setting as a distinct character area.

Since 2005, developments on the northern and eastern edges of the Elizabeth Marina have altered the setting of the Castle. The Radisson Blu Hotel in particular and also the New Waterfront developments on La Rue de L'Etau have diminished the stature of the Castle.

This clash of old and new is less evident from the Bel Royal area. From this viewpoint, the Castle maintains a separateness from the New Waterfront. However, on the approaches to St Helier at West Park, the People's Park and the west end of the Esplanade, the separateness of the Castle is lost.

The conclusion is that this character area has suffered some loss of character through adjacent development despite retaining its internal cohesiveness. Looking ahead, it is likely that Elizabeth Castle will outlast the Radisson Blu. However, a major redevelopment scheme for the waterfront with 1,000 residential units and buildings up to 11 stories may continue to challenge this sensitive setting in the longer term.

Fig 5.2

The Radisson Blu Waterfront Hotel and Elizabeth Castle

Design guidance for the New Waterfront [Chapter 8] seeks to produce a more sympathetic outcome for the edges of CA1 and CA6 when redevelopment of the Radisson Blu eventuates.



CA2 La Collette - no change

Apart from the striking Energy-from-Waste building completed in 2011, there has been very little change at La Collette since 2004. The character of the area is entirely industrial and utilitarian. The chimney of La Collette Power Station is the most distinctive feature of the area, marking the entrance to the harbours.

La Collette's role may change in the future to embrace a broader range of uses. In theory, the 54 hectares of mostly reclaimed land could help to resolve demand for land, particularly for residential use but this would require current uses to relocate and considerable decontamination.



Fig 5.3

*The Energy-from-Waste complex
at La Collette*

Fig 5.4

La Collette from Elizabeth Castle



CA3 Havre des Pas - loss of character

Recent refurbishments and redevelopment have brought some welcome modernisation to this area, but several of these interventions have had the effect of overwhelming the quirky character of the surrounding area.

New large-scale developments have tended to lose the finer grain and intricacy of the original townscape. The height and massing of new buildings are more substantial than previously, and the pared-back range of textures, colours and architectural details have replaced the distinct Havre des Pas character with a more global style which is less rooted in the place. These large developments bring with them issues of loss of privacy and sunlight for adjacent older buildings.

Havre des Pas also suffers from the impact of heavy traffic flows and noticeably more on-street parking than in 2005. The route along Havre des Pas (A4) through the area is much busier and less pleasant than before, and the narrowness of footways makes for a negative pedestrian experience.

Fig 5.5

Dicq Road, Havre des Pas



Fig 5.6

Hotel de Normandie, Rue de Fort, Havre des Pas



CA4 Fort Regent - loss of character

Fort Regent is one of St Helier's most iconic landmarks, but new development on the western approaches to the town, most notably along the Esplanade, partially obscures views to it which has had the effect of reducing its apparent scale. Views of the Fort from the town centre and from the east are generally unaffected by recent developments. Views towards Snow Hill from Bath Street and Halkett Street remain impressive and should be protected. The declining condition of facilities in the Fort casts doubt on its longevity both as a public leisure facility, and the existing character of this area is under threat. The loss of the swimming pool and viable use for the office buildings at South Hill makes a significant impact on the previous character of the Fort Regent hilltop. It is appreciated that these buildings were very much of their time but the question of their architectural merit is not relevant. They created the character of Fort Regent for the past 55 years, and that character is now under threat - although there is opportunity to revive the use of the site. This would be the most significant test of architectural sensitivity and creativity in the island.



Fig 5.7

Fort Regent Leisure Centre



Fig 5.8

Fort Regent Swimming Pool prior to demolition

CA5 Old Harbours - some enhancement

This character area has improved since 2005, and the majority of the buildings appear to be in good condition. The recent addition of the Royal Yacht Hotel extension, although rather overscaled, combined with the public realm improvements and the creation of Weighbridge Place have improved the area. These changes have produced a new sense of place from what was an area dominated by vehicles and parking.

The Commercial Buildings remain untouched and create one of St Helier's most recognisable frontages. They overlook a rich and attractive environment with distinctive qualities derived from robust materials with traditional materials and evident craftsmanship. The piers and harbour structures retain much of their 19th-century industrial marine qualities.

The potential for improvement is undeniable. Ameliorating the impact of traffic along Commercial Buildings (A16) and extending the good work carried out at Weighbridge Place to link south would be a positive move.

Fig 5.09

Commercial Buildings



Fig 5.10

Weighbridge Place



CA6 New Waterfront - new directions

A significant quantity of new development has taken place around the Elizabeth Marina, to the extent that the dominant character has become less obviously linked to that of historic St Helier. Instead, the area has taken on a more global commercial style.

There is less vacant land here than in 2005, which is a positive factor and Waterfront Gardens are considerably more mature and pleasant. The landscaping along the northern part of La Route Du Port Elizabeth has also matured, but there is a sense of emptiness and lack of activity in most pedestrian areas.

The objectives set for this character area in 2005 included raising the quality of development, establishing a quality business district and building a network of streets that link easily with the traditional streets of the centre of St Helier. These objectives are still relatively remote aspirations but there are still opportunities for change in the undeveloped areas.



Fig 5.11

Ground floor offices and showrooms overlooking Elizabeth Marina



Fig 5.12

Waterfront Gardens

CA7 Parade and Esplanade - new directions and old values

Historically, The Esplanade represented the built edge of the town facing the sea, but that interface has long gone. In 2005 the Esplanade was a strange collection of buildings with each new development seemingly trying to outdo its neighbour for individuality in style and materials. Today that has changed. New developments have settled into a commercial global style rather than something rooted in St Helier. In doing so, the Esplanade now has more in common with the New Waterfront than with old St Helier. In many ways it is more successful - it has street activity, a range of uses and a certain buzz about it.

The Parade area has also shown improvement but in this case it is through small increments of improving the old, adding to street life, better maintenance of green space and new public art installations.

On the negative side, it suffers from traffic and parking issues which tend to run against the area's positive characteristics.

Fig 5.13

Esplanade



Fig 5.14

The Parade



CA8 Town Centre - positive changes

There are numerous examples of recent infill in the town centre. These have tended to retain the street edge condition found historically and are sympathetic to the broader grain and massing. Where unattractive vacant and 'soft' sites once undermined the urban quality, new infill development has begun to reinforce the complex and dense structure of the heart of the town. Examples of infill developments that have had some positive effects include the new block at Charing Cross/Dumaresq Street/Pitt Street, townhouse developments on James Street and around Millennium Park.

The town centre, especially the food offer, seems more modern, cosmopolitan and sophisticated than in 2005. The old-fashioned seaside resort feel of the place has given way to something which is now unmistakably a place for business. At the same time, traffic and parking is more intrusive than is either necessary or tolerable in 2020. Also, the quality of larger new development is generally bland and overscaled, and this tends to undermine what are genuine improvements in the area.



Fig 5.15

Central St Helier at dusk

Fig 5.16

Broad Street, St Helier



CA9 Town Centre North - positive change

The transformation of the car park at Gas Place into the very popular Millennium Park has had a significant, positive impact on the surrounding area. By providing a space for a range of recreational uses, it has become a focal point for the community that now cements a convivial residential character in the northern part of the town centre. It is a model of successful regeneration.

Elsewhere in the area, there is evidence of building repairs and renovation, albeit on a small scale, but there is a sense that the shabbiness of the area which was evident in 2005, and is still present in some streets, is gradually changing.

However the area is negatively affected by inappropriate large scale developments and at least three of these are present on La Rue le Masurier. It is worth repeating that small and sensitive suits the St Helier character and larger developments are rarely, if ever, entirely successful.

Fig 5.16

St Mark's Road



Fig 5.18

Gas Place and Common Lane



CA10 Town Edges and Slopes - no change

Although there has been some infill development on the town slopes, it is by-and-large discreet and has not appreciably altered the character of this area. As noted in the 2005 UCA, this area contains few instantly recognisable places, and there is little formal public open space. Greenery is very important and the distinctive statuesque trees on sloping ground and on the ridgelines are important.

Buildings are predominantly 20th-century and often undistinguished although there are stand-out examples of set-piece terraces such as Almorah and Victoria Crescents.

In the past fifteen years, it has been possible to protect this topographical frame of the town by maintaining the landscape of the slopes as part of new development proposals. This has ensured that the setting of landmark buildings is protected. It also ensures that important entry points to the town are given adequate protection.



Fig 5.19

Queen's Road area



Fig 5.20

Almorah Crescent

Proposed alterations to Character Area boundaries

This review of St Helier's character areas has highlighted several factors related to their current boundaries, namely:

- instances where the character has changed to the extent that boundary alterations are necessary and sensible
- resolving the zones covered by interstices
- where wider geographical coverage of the town is necessary

Expansion of CA6 New Waterfront north and east

The build-out of the New Waterfront area over the past fifteen years has changed the character of the area. New development has adopted a commercial global style rather than something which is rooted in St Helier. The Esplanade area has also adopted a similar style and it seems logical to unite these similar areas into an expanded New Waterfront zone.

This leaves an undeveloped void south of La Route de la Liberation but this will undoubtedly be filled in the next five years. The development format for this area will be of a similar style and height to existing buildings.

The New Waterfront should also be expanded east to embrace Victoria Place (La Route du Port Elizabeth) which has more in common with the New Waterfront in 2020 than it had in 2005.

Fig 5.21

the expanded New Waterfront character area

There is now a critical mass of higher density, taller and commercial architecture on both sides of La Route de la Liberation (A1) which now dominates the wider character area.



Expansion of CA7 The Parade to the west

The expansion of the New Waterfront character area into the Esplanade reduces the extent of The Parade area to the south. However it is proposed that The Parade should be expanded to the west to take in the People's Park.

The Park naturally relates more to the frontages of Peirson Road, and to an extent the lower levels of Westmount Road, than to the upper reaches of CA10 - the Town Edges and Slopes. With an increased focus on green space, this character area could provide the impetus for a better western gateway into the town which de-prioritises traffic and parking along St Aubin's Road and establishes a more sensitive pedestrian and cycle orientated environment. The area could also frame views of Elizabeth Castle from improved green space.

Expansion of CA8 Town Centre to the west and south

New mixed-use developments at the west edge of Charing Cross have reinstated the urban grain in what was previously an eroded area which was also an interstice. By rebuilding robust frontages and active uses along street edges the surrounding area is now much more similar to the rich, dense and complex urban pattern typical of CA8. CA7 and CA8 now abut each other, replacing the interstice.

With the creation of new development and public realm at Weighbridge Place, it seems appropriate to unite this area with the Town Centre. Again, this area was an interstice between the CA8 Town Centre and the CA5 Old Harbours. With the improvements, the Weighbridge is now more than merely a transition zone between the town centre and harbour.

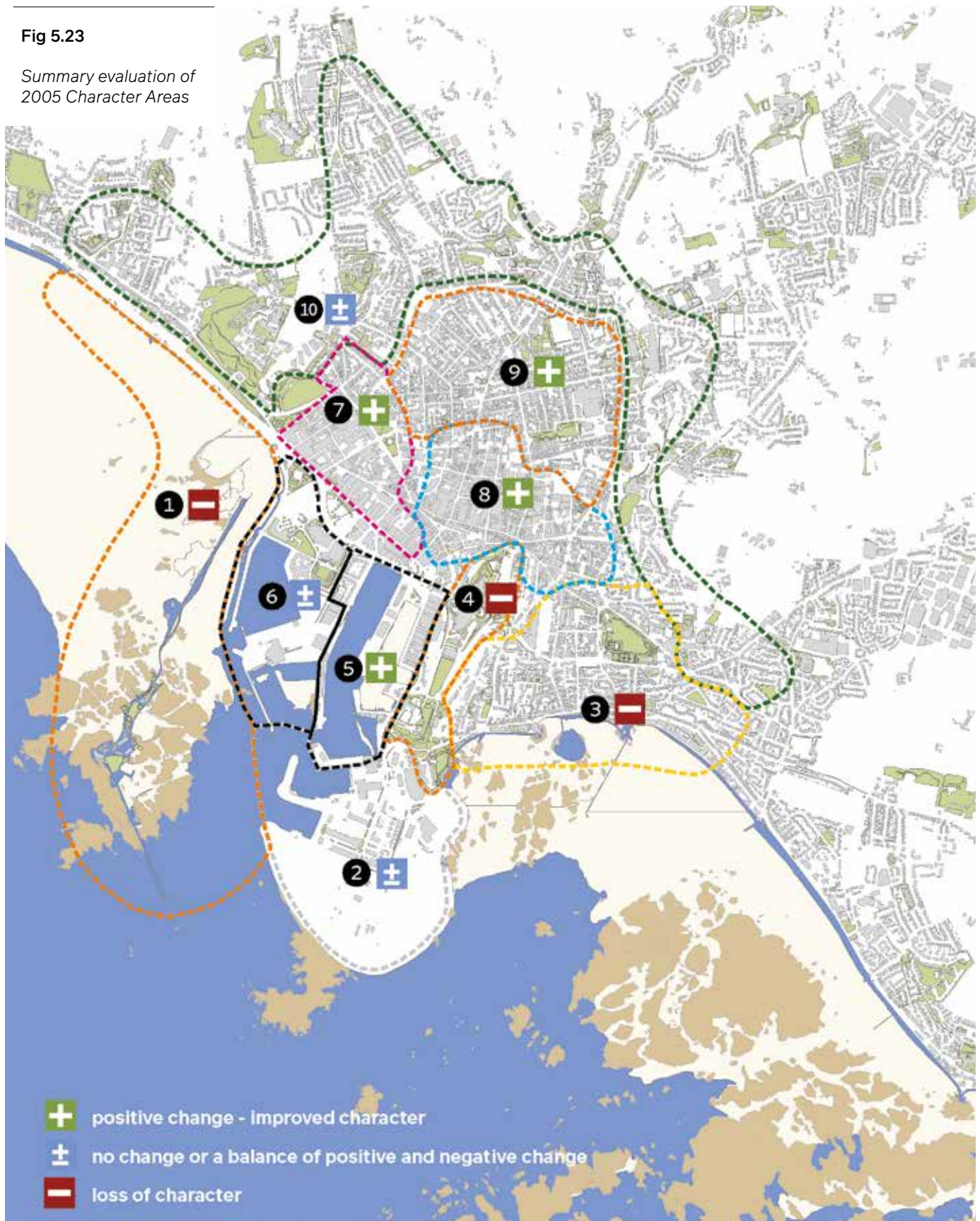
Fig 5.22

Expansion of the Town Centre character area into Liberation Square and Weighbridge Place



Fig 5.23

*Summary evaluation of
2005 Character Areas*



Zones covered by Interstices

This review shows that the character in many of the interstice areas has become better defined. In 2020, interstices that remain as ambiguous and without a distinct sense of place include La Route de la Liberation and Rouge Bouillon. At the same time, their value seems to have been limited and there are no examples of them being particularly useful. In some cases, the fact that they affected land that was not covered by a character area seems to have been confusing.

On balance, it is considered that the boundaries should be redrawn to exclude the interstices. This is shown overleaf in Fig 5.25.

Wider geographical coverage

The brief for this work included a requirement to expand the coverage of character areas to the west to First Tower, to the north to Mont à L'Abbé and in the east to Grève d'Azette. This has resulted in the expansion of CA10 Town Edges and Slopes to First Tower and Mont à L'Abbé and CA3 Havre des Pas to Grève d'Azette. These extensions are shown overleaf in Fig 5.25.

An area of concern

As a final note in this chapter, it is worth recording some concern about the rate and scale of change in a zone covering parts of CA3, CA8 and CA9. At the moment, this does not affect the assessment of the character areas but if the pace and scale of change were to continue, there would be substantial changes in these character areas. The area is shown in Fig 5.24.

Fig 5.24

Area of concern - hatched in yellow

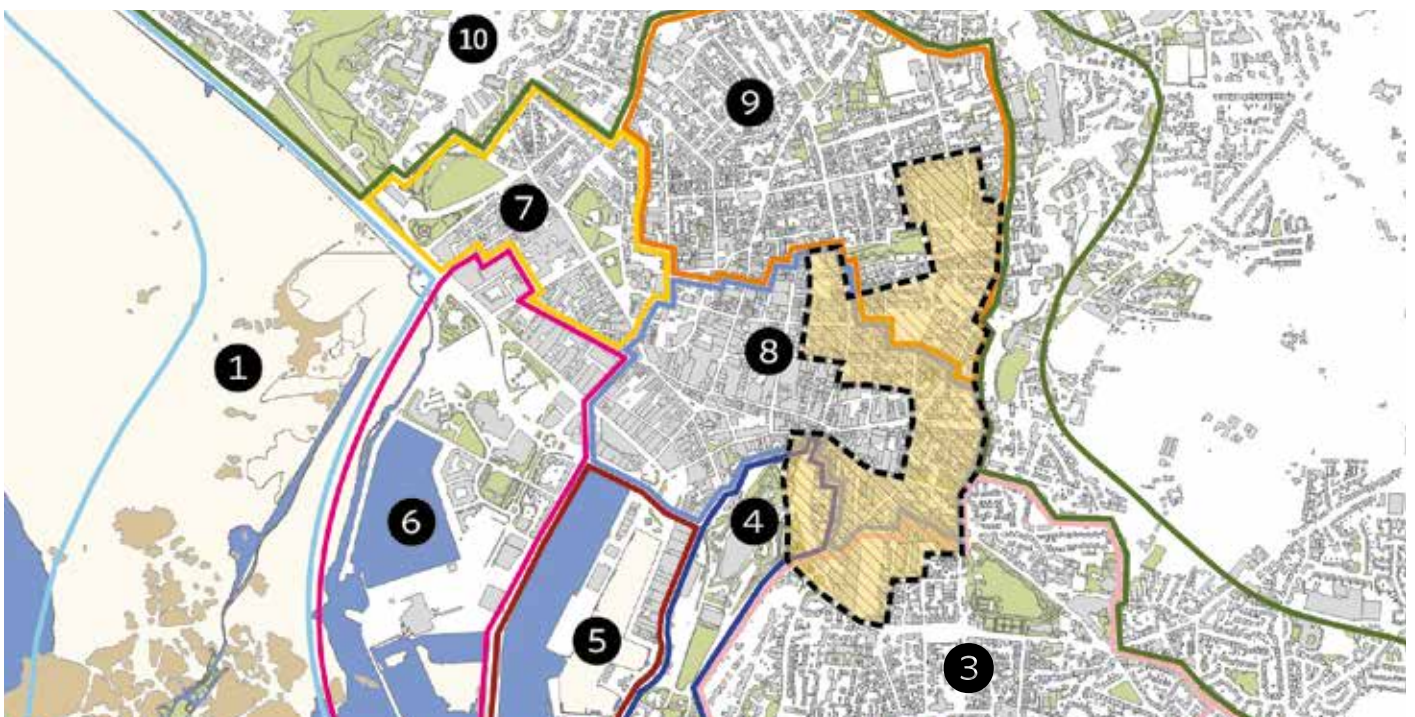
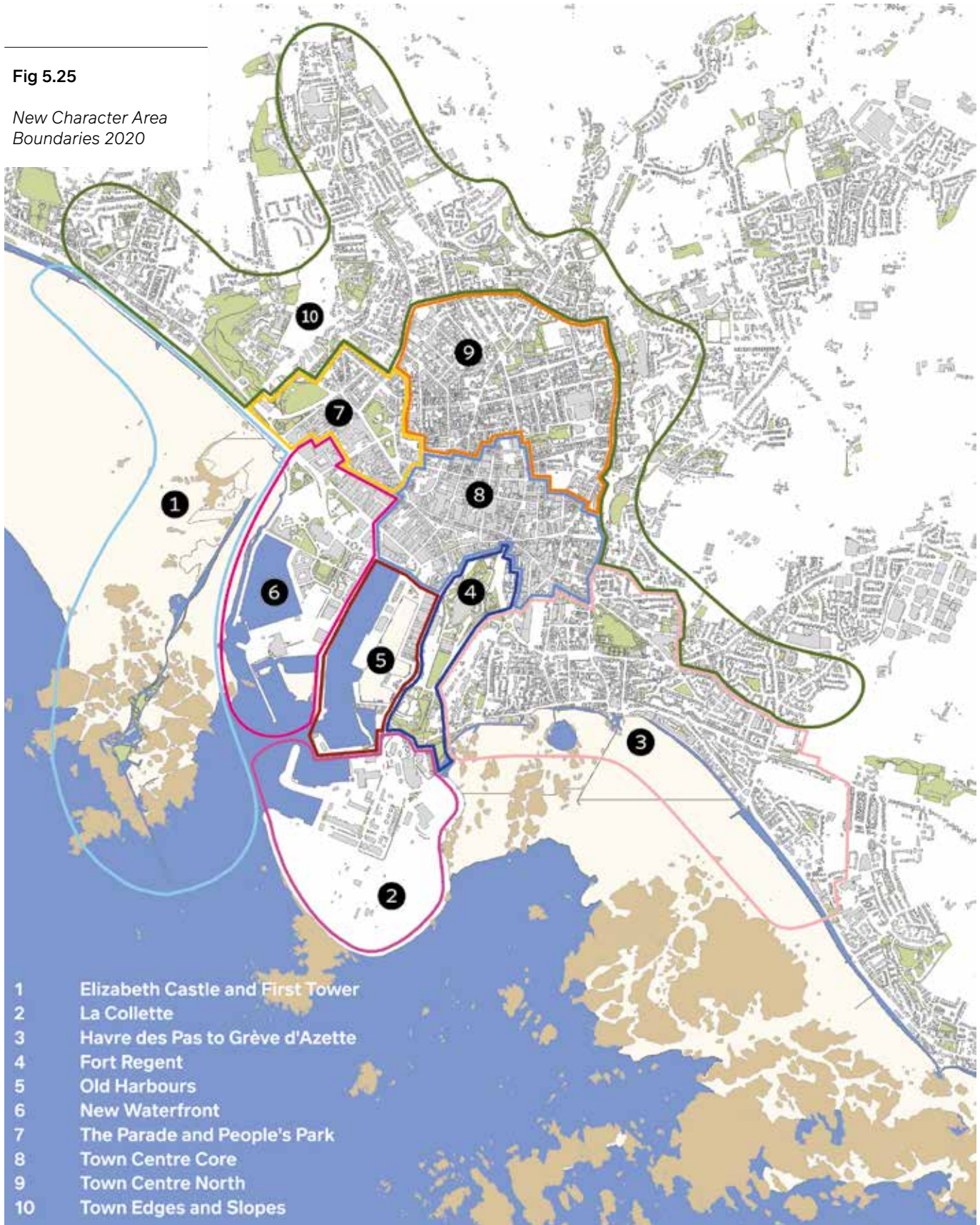


Fig 5.25

*New Character Area
Boundaries 2020*



The development dilemma: capacity, sensitivity and built form in a unique setting

Introduction

This section examines the issues involved in accommodating the demand for new housing in St Helier over the next decade. There are several issues at stake, including:

- the value placed on the character of the town
- the sensitivity of different parts of the town to new development
- the location and availability of developable land
- the quality of placemaking in new residential development, and
- the form of new development, particularly its height and density

1.0 HIGH DENSITY

If inward migration is to continue at the projected pace and a substantial proportion of the housing demand focuses on St Helier, the limited supply of developable sites suggests that the majority of new housing will inevitably be high density.

However, while attempting to meet the demand for housing in St Helier by increasing the density of dwellings, the ultimate aim must be to provide a wide range of high quality places to live for all sectors of the community, suitable for all stages of life. After all, it is only if there is a wide choice of different types of accommodation and comfortable and attractive places

Fig 6.1

Uneasy neighbours - St Thomas's Church and the Convent Court Tower with the new blocks to the rear of the former Jersey College for Girls School. The foreground two and three storey blocks are the traditional image of St Helier



to live, for all family types - single people, families and the elderly - that people will choose to settle in St Helier, and this is what is needed to sustain a properly balanced, mixed, vibrant community with its roots in the town.

1.1 Does density require height?

Advocates for building taller than the established baseline height argue that tall buildings are valuable for increasing development density, and that very tall landmark buildings are important as symbols of confidence, ambition and international status.

They claim that tall buildings can act as catalysts for investment and regeneration.

Opposing voices state that tall buildings are detrimental to the distinctive character of places (especially in historic locations), undermining conservation efforts, spoiling the context of treasured buildings, and adding incongruous elements to admired scenic views.

Fig 6.2

Proposal for a 'landmark' tower block in central St Helier from 2015. A reader poll in the JEP overwhelmingly rejected the proposal 79% : 21%

They note that at their worst, tall buildings can reduce privacy in adjacent buildings or spaces, cause glare or overshadow neighbouring properties, and feel overbearing or intrusive from street level. They can also create microclimate issues, such as high winds around entrance areas.



Tall buildings can 'overheat' dense urban areas by stressing parking requirements, increasing traffic congestion and overloading public transport if sufficient infrastructure is not in place.

Achieving higher densities is a common argument in support of tall buildings. Yet, there is a long-established body of evidence that high density residential and commercial development can be delivered with compact low and medium-rise developments and does not require tall buildings.

International exemplars provide useful evidence of this:

Location	form	storeys	dph
UK (ubiquitous)	terraced (wide frontage)	2-2.5	45
Berlin, Friedrichshain Kreuzberg	perimeter block	4	80
Barcelona, Sant Andreu	perimeter block	4	90
Madrid, Tetuan	perimeter block	4	121
Paris, 15th arrondissement	perimeter block	4	149
London - NE	courtyard	7-13	300-400

Fig 6.3

International exemplars of residential block formats and densities derived

References:

<https://www.building.co.uk/technical-case-studies/housing-density-does-it-stack-up/5092832.article>

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/project_2_3_lessons_from_higher_density_development.pdf

These exemplars of efficient, sustainable and popular housing formats illustrate that medium-rise developments can provide high-density housing while being much less likely to harm neighbouring buildings or the historic townscape than tall buildings. They are also more likely to deliver better amenity for residents and provide a human-scale environment. They can offer a sense of intimacy and family-friendly environments that tall buildings cannot. Consequently, the proposition here is that St Helier can achieve very dense development without necessarily resorting to tall buildings.

'Destiny' is a multi dimensional concept influenced by many variables and when used as a metric in development briefs, needs to be approached with caution. When aiming for lower rise, high density development, it is important that the quality of the accommodation being built influences the scale and nature of the development too, rather than focusing efforts on simply maximising unit numbers. The advantages of mid to low rise structures over high-rise will be negated if, for example, buildings are crammed with minimum standard one bed room apartments simply to achieve unit numbers.

1.2 Is dense and tall appropriate for St Helier?

Given the challenge represented by the demand for new housing, this is a reasonable question to ask. The desire for very tall landmark buildings in St Helier comes up frequently in the local press although usually in connection with offices rather than residential. Tower blocks are a form of building that is promoted by the property development industry with occasional support from 'elected representatives' or 'States Members' but not welcomed by the wider St Helier community. (Fig 6.2)

1.3 Existing tall buildings in St Helier

The historic organic streets and the vibrant collage of buildings of different styles give St Helier its unique character. The height limit for the historic town was a consistent 3-3.5 storeys, but 20th Century additions have grown much taller in places, up to 14 storeys in a few notable locations.

Some of the 20th-century developments have been built on high land and have added height to landmarks, and contributing positively to the uniqueness of the town – the most remarkable example being the landmark Fort Regent leisure centre and swimming pool buildings - but there are many more that have not. Discreet, modest or even sub-optimal interventions in the urban matrix generally do not detract from the overall quality of place. Where they are tall and stand out from the background, their impact is more pronounced.

Arguably, many of St Helier's tall 20th-century buildings do not serve the character of the town well.

Fig 6.4

Marmalade Lane, Cambridge; an example of terraces, 45dph, designed for mixed, intergenerational living



Fig 6.5

top left - Apartments, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, Berlin

top right - Apartments Place d'Aligre, Paris

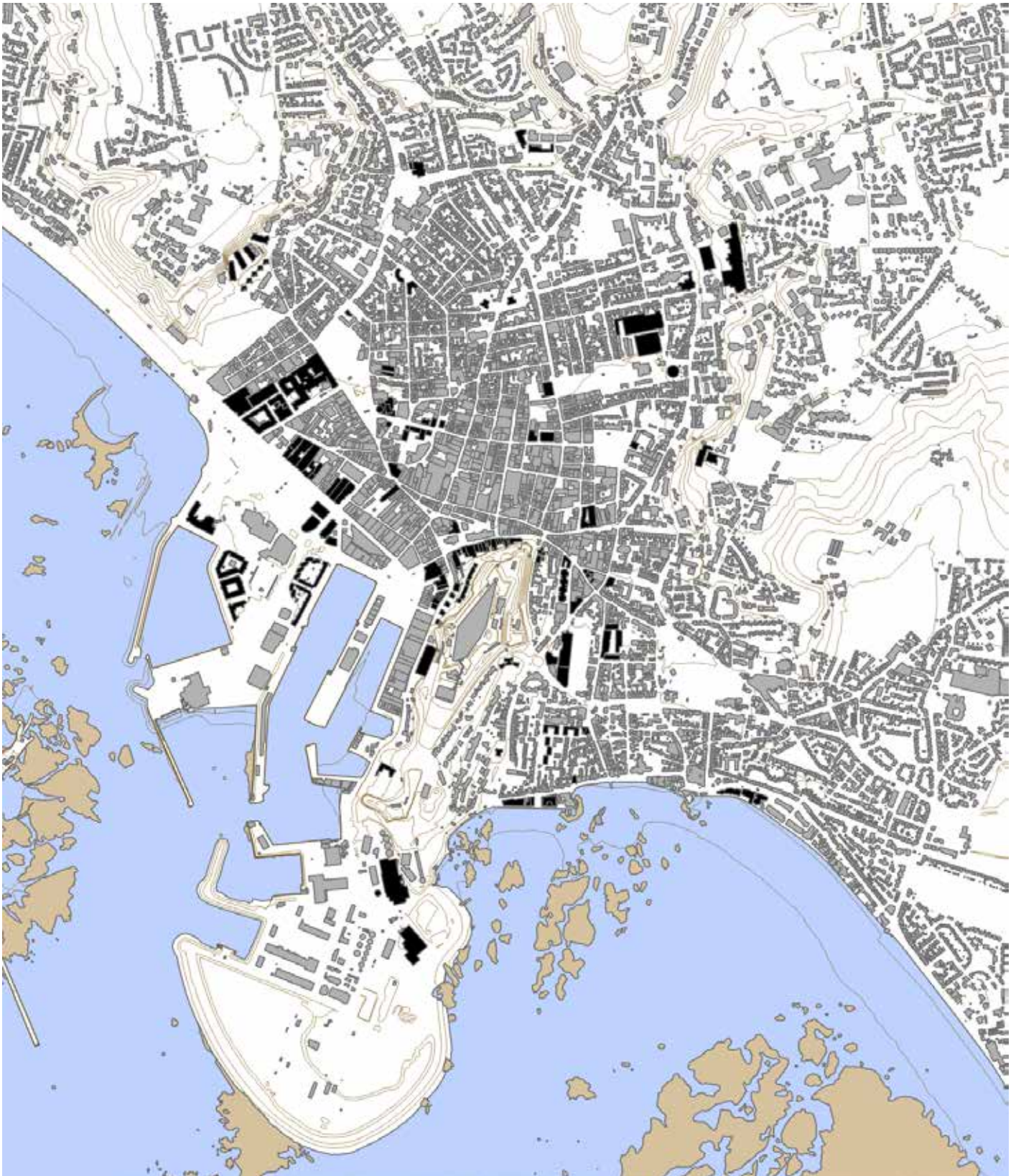
bottom - apartments, San Andreu, Barcelona

NB - these are typical new developments in the areas referred to in Fig 6.3



Fig 6.6

Tall buildings in St Helier 2020 (over 4.5 storeys or equivalent - shaded black)



1.4 Defining 'tall' in St Helier

The term 'tall building' is relative, and the most useful indicator of the extent of the 'tallness' of a building within a specific townscape is the ratio of the height of a tall building to the prevailing contextual height. So, it is vital to be clear about what 'tall' might mean in the specific context of St Helier.

The predominant height in the historic part of St Helier is 2.5-3.5 storeys (or equivalent). Using this as a baseline height, any buildings that are 4.5-6 storeys are 'medium-tall', 6-8 storeys are 'tall', and 8 storeys plus are 'high-rise'.

'Medium-tall' buildings may form a local high point in a street or on a block but if they retain the grain and massing of adjoining sites would usually be perceived as part of the surrounding context. In an area where building heights are very consistent and closer to the baseline height of the town, a medium-tall building will stand out and could be useful as a marker at a critical location. Where surrounding roof heights are more variable, it may be less noticeable.

There are areas of St Helier where medium-tall buildings have become sufficiently numerous that they have formed a new local norm, including the Weighbridge, the new waterfront and the Esplanade.

This review assumes that new development will generally stay below 4.5 storeys in historic areas except for landmark locations or civic buildings which may be 'medium-tall'. Where medium-tall is the new normal, individual buildings up to 6 storeys are possible.

A 'tall' building, at 6-8 storeys, would be much more prominent in the

Fig 6.7

Jersey General Hospital, Cyril Le Marquand House and the Hue Court blocks - four high-rise buildings close to the Parade



townscape and would be a local landmark. Context would be an important consideration, but in certain circumstances, a tall building could still integrate with the surrounding townscape or landscape.

This review assumes that development of 6-8 storeys should only be acceptable:

- a) where there are particular mitigating landscape or townscape features
- b) where medium-tall or tall buildings have already become a norm, for example, at the new waterfront and the Esplanade

Where the proximity to sensitive historic features or landmarks makes a site especially sensitive, a more conservative approach to height may be vital.

High-rise buildings over 8 storeys will always be in stark contrast to their neighbours and will be conspicuous landmarks rising above neighbouring buildings. At over twice the height of the historic baseline height, high-rise buildings will dominate the street and skyline of St Helier and have the effect of undermining the cohesive historic character.

Since high-rise buildings are likely to be detrimental to the unique character of the town, this review assumes that development over 8 storeys will not generally be encouraged anywhere in St Helier.

2.0 IDENTIFYING LOCATIONS FOR TALLER BUILDINGS

It is neither necessary nor wise to introduce very tall buildings in St Helier. However, if somewhat taller buildings in St Helier are part of the solution to housing demand, which areas of the town can accommodate taller buildings without undermining the town's place qualities?

The context is key to determining the impact of adding height, including the nature of the local topography, the presence or otherwise of other tall buildings in the vicinity, the form, scale and roofscape of surrounding buildings, the location of the tall element within a street and block, and the prominence of the site in critical views. Some parts of St Helier would be more sensitive to taller forms than others, and the sensitivity analysis below explores this.

2.1 The sensitivity of key views to St Helier

The approaches to St Helier from the east, south and west show the town in its unique landscape setting. There are no open views of the town from the north because the landform and tree cover on the escarpment effectively screen the town below from view.

Views from the sea

There are dramatic long-distance views of the town in its setting from the south for people arriving by boat, especially those on ferries coming from

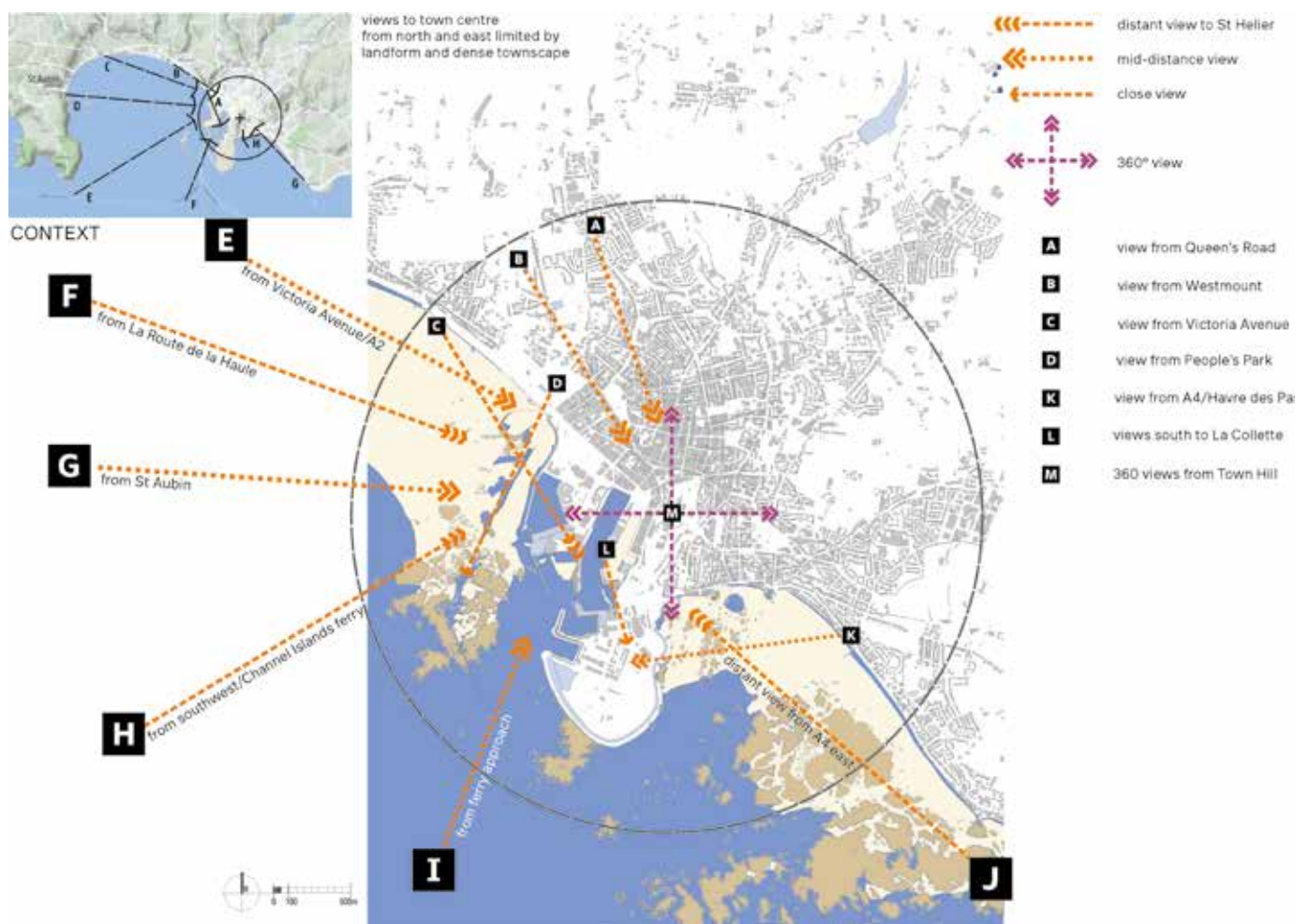
the south of England, Guernsey and France (viewpoints H, I). The entire unique setting of the town can be visible from the south. The wooded escarpment to the north forms a backdrop to the historic town sitting in a low lying bowl below, while the dramatic outcrop of Mont de la Ville topped by Fort Regent projects southwards towards the sea. Flat areas of reclaimed land and the convoluted outline of harbours and marinas extend west and south. At the same time, two landmarks frame the view - Elizabeth Castle to the west and the chimney of La Collette Power Station to the east. The large-scale industrial features of La Collette are very significant when approaching from the south, and indeed, are key to first impressions for people arriving by boat.

Views from St Aubin and the west

The town is visible from the west across the open expanse of St Aubin's Bay. (viewpoints E, F, G). There are views from St Aubin itself, as well as from the Victoria Avenue/Route de St Aubin approach along the edge of the bay. These views have added significance as the route is the primary approach for visitors arriving from the airport and therefore influential in forming first impressions of the town.

Fig 6.8

Key views of St Helier



From the far west, the town appears in silhouette, with Elizabeth Castle, La Collette chimney and Fort Regent being conspicuous features on the skyline. The southern elevation of the town is visible, but the historic core and more northerly parts of the town are screened from view by an intervening bluff of wooded high ground at West Park.

Closer to St Helier, on Victoria Avenue (viewpoint C), Westmount again shields much of the town centre. The wooded slopes of the bluff attractively frame the view on the left while Elizabeth Castle is a prominent feature to the right; the southern part of the town lies between these features. The west edge of the new waterfront and Esplanade is prominent in this view, with the impact of Fort Regent and the chimney at La Collette becoming less noticeable and more of an integral part of the larger mass of the town centre built-up area. Elizabeth Castle is a much more significant feature seen from here, as it is separated from the town by open water and forms its own very distinctive silhouette against the sky.

Views from the east

From the east, on the La Grande Route de la Côte (viewpoint J), views west are frequently interrupted by built development and bluffs of higher ground. Where there are open views to the west, Mont de la Ville (Town Hill) conceals the town centre. The buildings of Havre des Pas cover the lower slopes of Mont de la Ville (Town Hill) while the distinctive white roof and dome of the leisure centre on Fort Regent rise above a line of trees to form a notable feature on the skyline. To the south, the power station chimney and Energy from Waste plant at La Collette appear against the sky.

From the waterfront at Havre des Pas (viewpoint K), buildings in the foreground hide the view towards St Helier town centre, leaving only glimpses of the wooded west flanks of South Hill. La Collette is visible as it projects well beyond the original shoreline to the south. The over-scaled industrial structures of the power station chimney and Energy from Waste plant are prominent features of the view west. They are a marked contrast to the human scale and seaside town character of the foreground, although not without merit in their own right.

Panoramic views from above

The most comprehensive view of St Helier is from the high point at Mont de la Ville (Town Hill) (viewpoint M). It is possible to see the entire town from vantage points around the ramparts of Fort Regent and on South Hill. The historic town nestles below the escarpment that curves around from the north to the east. The town core appears to form a generally unified, fine-grained mass, but there are a few notable tall features and blunt point blocks which stand out as exceptions. The port functions around the old harbours and the boats and paraphernalia of the new marinas spread out to the west and south below. Havre des Pas stretches uninterrupted eastwards, following the low ground along the shore, the view east concluding towards the end of the bay at the four 14 storey tower blocks at Le Marais.

Fig 6.9

*top: view from St Aubin towards St Helier
middle: view north over the town centre
bottom: view south over La Collette*



It is possible to look directly down onto the La Collette industrial area from South Hill and from here, it is possible to see and appreciate the power station chimney from height, at close quarters. [Fig 6.9]

Views to La Collette from the town

There are distinctive views southwards to La Collette from the south edge of the town centre and the waterfront areas (viewpoint K).

Foreground buildings and other features obscure long views of the low lying and level nature of La Collette, but tall structures on the site are still very conspicuous since they appear against the open sky.

2.2 The potential visual impact on the urban setting

The unique combinations of landform, tree cover and existing built form in different parts of the town mean that some character areas are more capable than others of absorbing taller buildings without a detrimental visual impact.

Mapping the sensitivity of different parts of the town assessed:

- if tall buildings would be prominent in key views to the town
- if the setting of Elizabeth Castle or other landmarks - or views to them – would be diminished by adding tall buildings there
- where tall structures would be especially prominent because they would appear against the sea or sky
- where a new tall building(s) would have an impact on the composition of a principal, visible town 'frontage'
- whether a tall building would be especially prominent because of elevation or rising ground (rather than partially embedded within the matrix of the town)

From this analysis, the **most visible and sensitive parts of the town** include the following:

The ridge to the north and east of the town and Fort Regent, where significantly taller buildings would be sky-lined. Buildings in these locations would be very prominent in virtually all significant views towards the town. They would fundamentally alter the quality of views to St Helier in its unique landscape setting.

The western edge of the New Waterfront, the historic harbour area and Commercial buildings are especially sensitive to contemporary interventions. This area is the historic heart of the waterfront with many valuable traditional architectural and townscape features. It has a unique character that should be protected and developed as a distinct character area and visitor destination; new developments should be encouraged to integrate with and enhance the existing character rather than supplant it.

La Collette, although it does not have delicate historical or architecture features that need to be protected, is potentially the most visible part of St

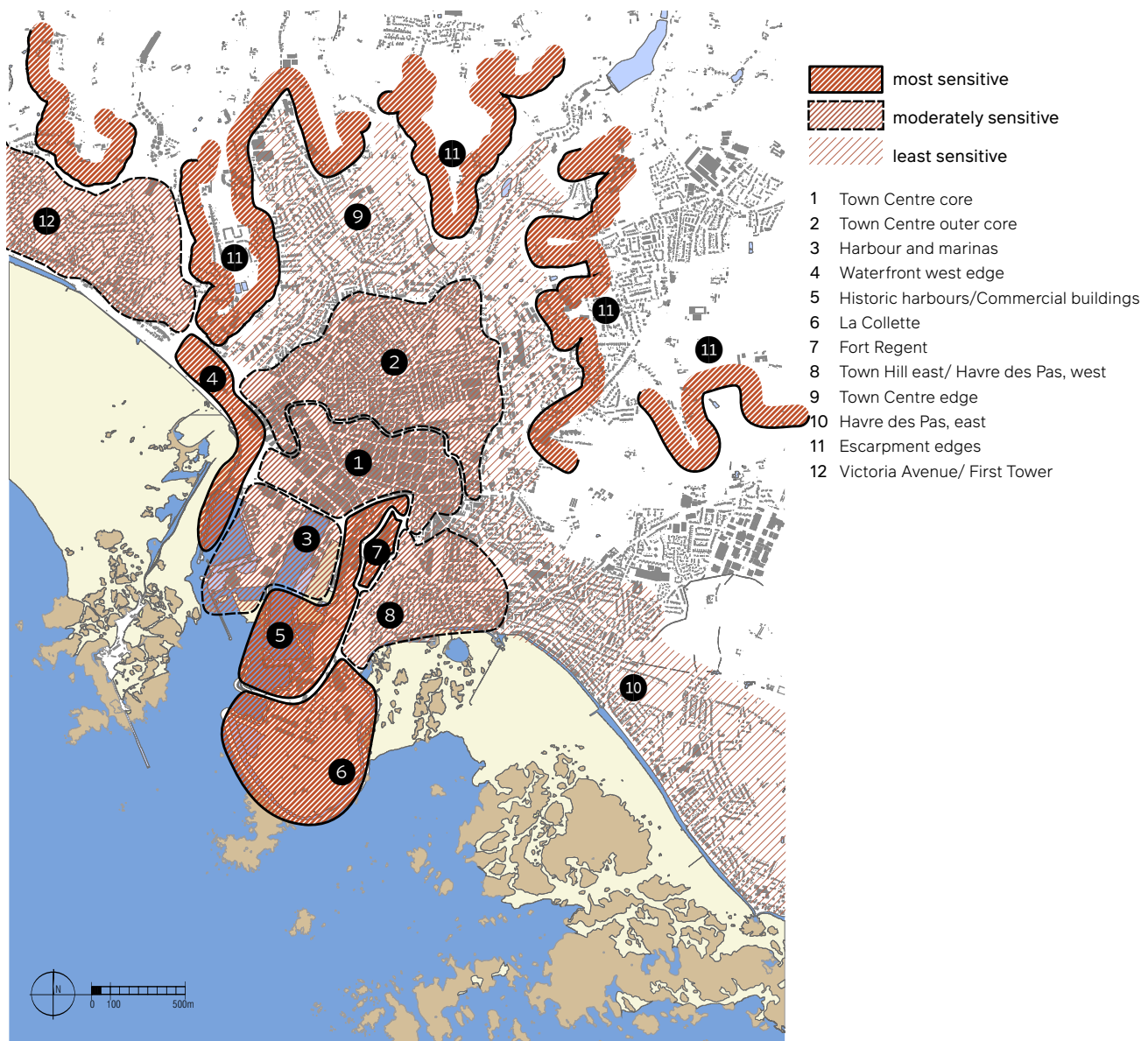
Helier. It is conspicuous in all long-distance views to the town as well as from close quarters, from the sea approaches, from South Hill and Havre des Pas. The existing tall chimney is a good indicator of how prominent tall buildings would be here, particularly as they would commonly appear as silhouettes against the sea or sky.

Moderately sensitive and visible areas include:

The town centre lies in a low-lying bowl and taller buildings here would be largely screened from view by intervening landform or foreground buildings. Taller buildings would be most visible from high points around the town and even then, would mainly be seen against a backdrop of other development or rising ground. At the same time, the town centre is one of the most sensitive parts of the town because of its historical significance; the town centre townscape is inherent to the character of St Helier as a whole and therefore warrants special protection from insensitive new development.

Fig 6.10

Sensitivity to the impact of increases in storey heights



The harbour and marinas areas have a 20th/21st century character and are already predominantly 4-7 storeys in height, so the context would not be sensitive to the introduction of more moderately tall contemporary structures. At the same time, the new waterfront areas are very prominent in many critical town approaches and have a formative impact on visitors' first impressions of St Helier. The proximity of Elizabeth Castle and the historic harbours also increases sensitivity here, and there is a need to be especially respectful of the wider setting and particular iconic views.

The east flanks of Town Hill are already the site of two very tall towers so arguably could accommodate more tall structures. Unfortunately, one of the existing 14 storey towers extends above the crest of Town Hill and South Hill and rises against the sky when viewed from areas far to the west of the town. This intrusion diminishes the impact of the extraordinary silhouette of the structures on Town Hill. Structures on the east flank are also evident from Havre des Pas and along the coast to the west, so although there is a precedent set for tall buildings here, the impact of adding more tall buildings would not be negligible.

The mixed and modest townscape of the **First Tower/Victoria Avenue** area suggests the area would not be overly sensitive to the introduction of new structures. Still, it is primarily suburban and dominated by low-rise buildings so not a natural location for taller buildings. The open coastal shore means this area is widely visible from the south and the west across St. Aubin's Bay, and is also very visible from the key landmarks of Elizabeth Castle and Town Hill. A new structure significantly taller than its neighbours located here would inevitably jar.

The least sensitive areas include:

The outer edges of the town centre occupy the slopes of the escarpment encircling the town centre. Although there are sites of historic importance here that are sensitive and would require special consideration, there are other areas that have been substantially eroded by 20th-century interventions. In theory, there is an opportunity in the future to repair and improve the urban fabric by going beyond the baseline height of the town centre. The rising escarpment to the north provides a backdrop for taller buildings which helps to absorb the visual impact of development. There are several recent examples of high-density development in the 6-8 storey range in this zone which partially integrate with the wider townscape and landscape. The new residential blocks at Westmount Road set into an old quarry are a useful precedent. The overdeveloped site at College Gardens sitting behind the former Jersey College for Girls less so.

The mixed and modest townscape of **Havre des Pas east of Howard Davis Park**, suggests the area would not be overly sensitive to the introduction of new, somewhat taller structures. Although the area is low lying, it is densely built up and rises slightly ground to the north, which helps to provide a backdrop for development. Taller structures here would not have a direct impact on the character of the historic town.

3.0 OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 Available sites and sensitivity

The Government of Jersey keep a database of available sites and are undertaking detailed calculations of potential future capacity. In general terms, the opportunity for more extensive sites is limited. Still, the most significant of these are at the new waterfront or, more sparsely, at old industrial or greenfield sites on the escarpment ridge. The town centre, by contrast, has fewer sites, and those that do become available tend to be significantly smaller than elsewhere. Overlaying the opportunity for sites over the sensitivity zoning allows judgement of where there are opportunities to accommodate higher density, taller development with less impact on the character of St Helier.

Fig 6.11

Sensitivity to the impact of increases in storey heights overlaid with opportunity areas

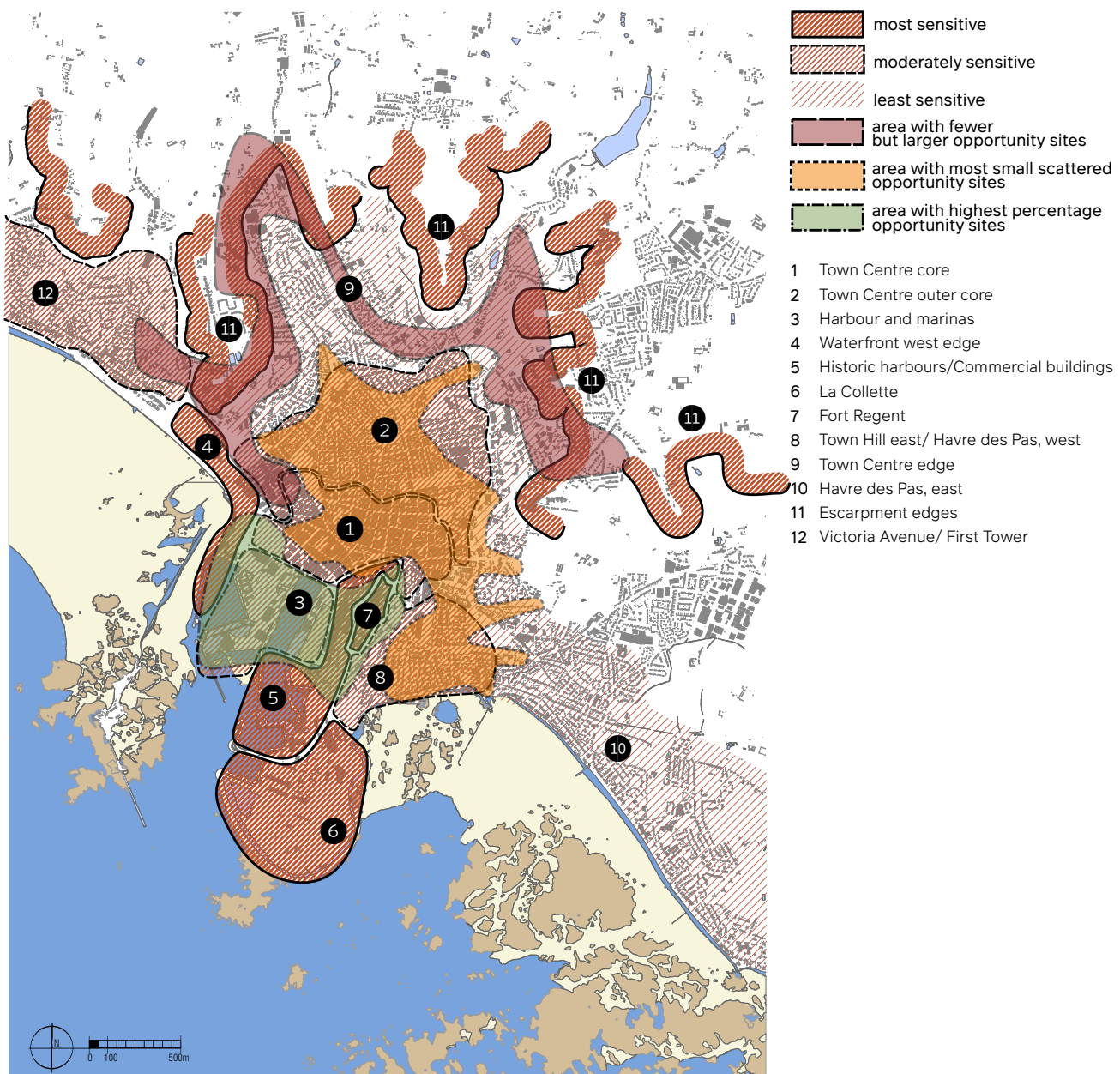
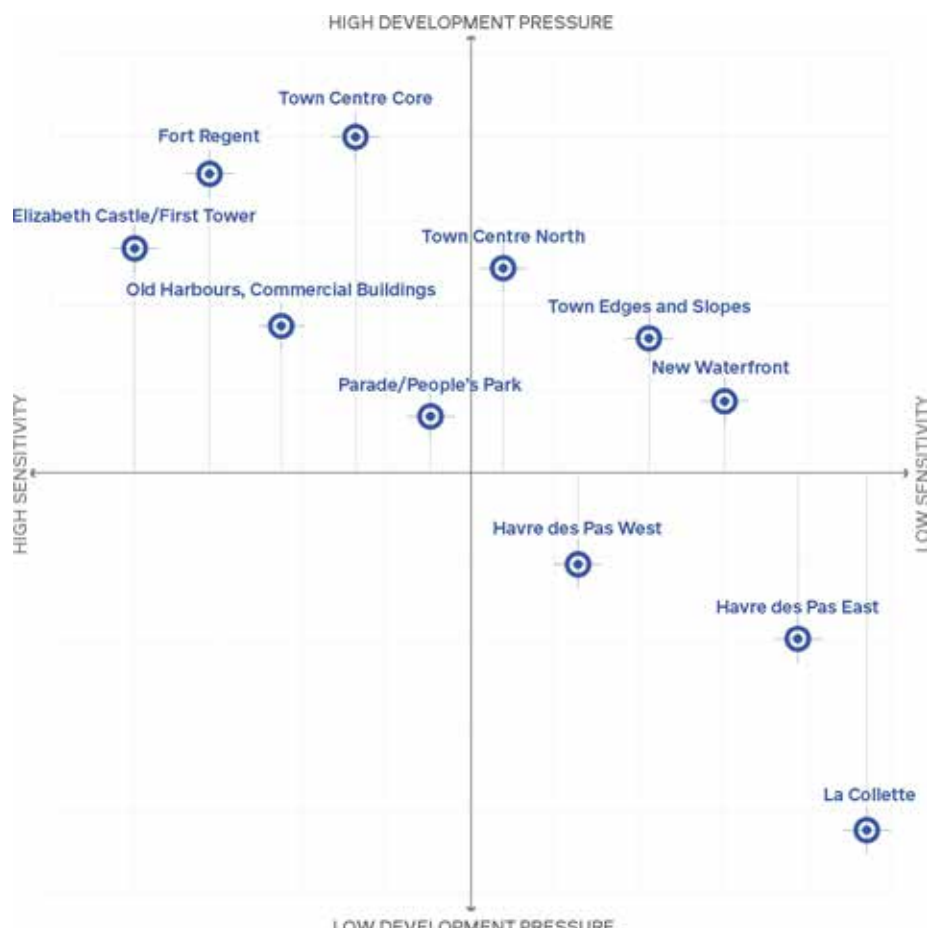


Fig 6.12*Sensitivity and Development Opportunities Matrix*

3.2 Updating the guidance on building heights

The 2005 Urban Character Appraisal and the subsequent 2013 Design Guidance for St Helier recommended that new development should observe the 4-storey limit except at the new waterfront, the Esplanade and the town edges/slopes, where the recommended maximum was 6 storeys. Exceptions could apply for taller individual buildings where the context was conducive.

The more detailed analysis carried out for this Review suggests that this guidance can be relaxed somewhat, without undermining the character and quality of the original Character Areas, as set out in Fig 6.13:

Fig 6.13*Building Heights: proposed revisions
to current guidance*

CHARACTER AREA	EXISTING HEIGHT (2020)	HEIGHT RECOMMENDATION	
		2005	2020
CA1 Elizabeth Castle/ First Tower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a to castle predominantly 2-2.5 examples of 4-5 storeys set into the hillside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> single storey above sea walls keep below building outlines as seen from shore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enlarged character area west to First Tower no change to Elizabeth Castle
CA2 La Collette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent very tall landmark structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a (large scale structures could be effective) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no change
CA3 Havre des Pas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent taller on water's edge 2 high-rise blocks up to 14 storeys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5-3.5 storeys or eaves no more than 1m above or below neighbour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enlarged character area east to Greve D'Azette no change west of Howard Davis Park East of Howard Davis Park - up to 4.5 storeys or 5 where the context permits landmark group of 15 storey towers at La Marias
CA4 Fort Regent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistently 3 storeys along harbourside 2.5-7 storeys along Pier Road 3-4 storeys on South Hill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-4 storeys max on west flank, 3 storeys max on east flank silhouette not to project above line of natural land-form or the historic fort structure when seen from harbour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no change
CA5 Old Harbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent taller buildings on northern margins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> max 3 storeys (accepting existing 6 storeys on west side of marina) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no change
CA6 New Waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-8 storeys facing Esplanade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> subject to separate supplementary planning guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> up to 8 storeys
CA7 The Parade/People's Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5-3.5 storeys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> up to 3.5 storeys
CA8 Town Centre Core	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent rising to 5.5 between retail core and harbour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 storeys max 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5 storeys unless otherwise specified in a design brief
CA9 Town Centre North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent scattered small groups of taller buildings including 3 high-rises up to 13 storeys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5-3.5 storeys unless otherwise specified in a design brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5 storeys unless otherwise specified in a design brief up to 5 storeys as accents, at corners or other landmark locations
CA10: Town edges/slopes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> predominantly 2.5-3.5 storeys equivalent scattered groups of taller buildings up to 7 storeys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 storeys max unless otherwise specified in a design brief on ridge line - no taller than 15m/3 storeys on the ridgeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extended character area to include Mont-a-L'Abbé no change

3.3 Density and character

There is a genuine desire to maintain and enhance the character areas of St Helier. At the same time, there is a need to accommodate substantial numbers of new dwellings in the town. Logically, development in the most sensitive areas should be subject to stricter controls than less sensitive areas. Referring to Fig 6.13, the five character areas to the left of the vertical axis are the most sensitive. These are Elizabeth Castle, Fort Regent, the Old Harbours and the Town Centre Core and Parade/People's Park.

The table below shows the density per hectare (dph) of several recent residential developments in St Helier.

Fig 6.14

Recent residential completions in St Helier: dwellings per hectare

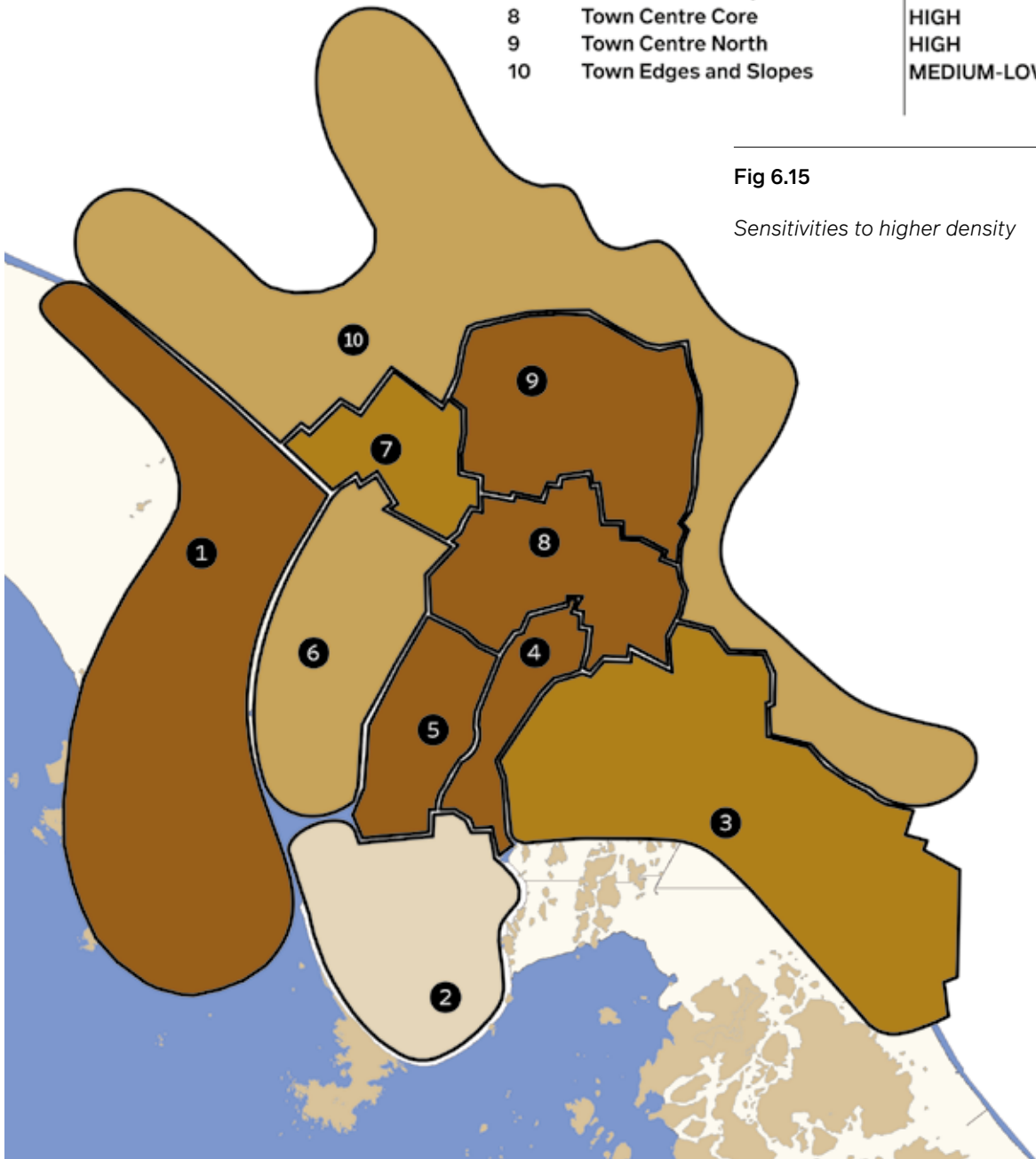
ADDRESS	DWELLINGS	AREA (HA)	DPH
25-29 St. James Street	11	0.4	289
15-16 The Parade	17	0.06	247
1-2 Minden Place	31	0.07	437
West House, West Centre	48	0.13	369
12-14 David Place	10	0.03	333
Waverley House, 59-63 Bath Street	15	0.05	300
Block A, B, C and D, Wesley Street	57	0.20	285
Westmount Quarry	245	0.91	269
Queens House, Templar House	40	0.16	250
Brooklyn Court	23	0.09	246
Hotel Metropole, Roseville Street	179	0.73	245
Westaway Chambers, 37-39 Don Street	15	0.07	227
Colesberg, 31-33 Rouge Bouillon (The Cube)	19	0.10	197
Maison de Ville	47	0.26	184
Hotel de France, East Wing	124	0.72	173
Belmont Court, 58 -60 Ann Street	15	0.27	56
Clos de Paradis, La Pouquelaye	30	0.86	35
Uplands Hotel, St. John's Road	16	0.47	34

The table shows a wide range of approaches to new residential developments. Some of these developments have successfully maintained the character of their surroundings while others have not. Densities above 200dph are less likely to be in tune with their context. Still, an exception would be the Westmount Quarry development which is a good fit for the site.

The table demonstrates that density alone is too blunt a method of control. It is but one of a range of rules that in combination, can ensure the successful integration of new with old. Fig 6.15 suggests densities for the character areas.

CHARACTER AREA		SENSITIVITY
1	Elizabeth Castle and First Tower	HIGH
2	La Collette	HIGH
3	Havre des Pas to Grève d'Azette	MEDIUM -HIGH
4	Fort Regent	HIGH
5	Old Harbours	HIGH
6	New Waterfront	LOW
7	The Parade + People's Park	MEDIUM -HIGH
8	Town Centre Core	HIGH
9	Town Centre North	HIGH
10	Town Edges and Slopes	MEDIUM-LOW

Fig 6.15

Sensitivities to higher density

3.4

The New Waterfront and the Old Town

The growth of the New Waterfront and the Esplanade is in marked contrast to issues around development in the Old Town. In 2005, the Esplanade had many different architectural styles and materials - perhaps over twenty contemporary variations. Today that collection of disparate styles still exists, but it is no longer the main event. The International Finance Centre offers an upscaled, sleek and global take on the 21st-century office. So too does No 39 on the Esplanade. These buildings were not a component of St Helier's 2005 character. Still, they set a new tone for this part of St Helier in 2020 that is reasonably positive.

In 2005, it was apparent that there might be difficulties in establishing the Waterfront as an attractive and engaging place. Since its inception, the Waterfront has tried to overcome difficulties in attracting an appropriate scale of buildings, positive uses and good placemaking. The New Waterfront's sensitivity to change is now only low. The upside of this is that the area can act as a safety valve for development that would be too damaging in other character areas. The downside of this is the effect that further development could have on the setting of Elizabeth Castle. It is worth noting however that much of the remaining land has been consented or committed and there is less development potential than might be thought.

[The Southwest St Helier Planning Framework](#) (Supplementary Planning Guidance, December 2019) sets out a constructive template for the future of the area.

Fig 6.16

The New Waterfront - residential blocks overlook transport yards



3.5

Building in the Old Town - building in context

The brief for this review makes it clear that retaining and enhancing the character of St Helier is Government of Jersey policy. The findings of the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal have been embedded in several documents since then including development control guidance. However to make the most of the guidance, especially at a time when pressure to develop and achieve housing numbers is high, there has to be a shared sense - between developer, architect and planning department - that the intention is to design proposals that work in context.

Establishing a relationship between density and character is one of several useful ways in which new development proposals can integrate seamlessly into the built environment. Other measures include height, building line, form, content and colour. But a holistic view of these measures is more important than one measure alone.

Recently completed residential developments in central St Helier give the impression that building in context is perhaps less important than obtaining development. Many of these proposals and developments share similar characteristics, such as:

- site cramming
- inappropriate bulk and building heights
- loss of privacy, overshadowing and amenity of surrounding buildings
- bland colour palette and materials

Fig 6.17

*Halkett Place/Rue de Funchal
development - sensitive and well-
scaled*



The character of St Helier lies in the different scales and the enormous range of styles, materials, colours and development formats that enable very different buildings to coexist. When these characteristics are not present in new development, the character of the town is eroded.

In sensitive locations in European countries, building in context is normal and expected. From the earliest days of Modernism, architects such as Asnago e Vender in Milan and Fernand Pouillon in Marseille and Le Havre used timelessness and craft to construct low-cost offices and housing in context. Today, this tradition continues with practices such as Miller + Maranta, Monadnock, and Hans van der Heijden. Respected exemplar projects in Germany such as Rieselfeld and Vauban in Freiburg are mixed-use, human-scaled, and both are co-owner developments. In England, award-winning residential schemes like Goldsmith Street in Norwich and Marmalade Lane in Cambridge are the new housing models. They are both examples of co-housing and public sector-led development.

Perhaps in St Helier, the current developer-led housing model with very few players is never going to produce results that are appropriate for the most sensitive areas of the town. What is needed is a new approach that embraces better standards of housing provision, together with more appropriate models for delivering the volume of housing required.

Fig 6.18

*Timeless building and a UNESCO
World Heritage Site
Auguste Perret with Fernand Pouillon
Le Quartier du Perret, Le Havre*



Design guidance: retaining and enhancing St Helier's character

1) INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with how the character of St Helier can be maintained and enhanced through Island Plan policies and the process of development control. The guidance updates the 2005 and 2013 guidance and consists of three parts:

1. overarching design principles that should apply during the design and development control process
2. an updated set of guidelines – character area design guidance – for each area
3. advice on the deployment of the design guidance and how it should be monitored and adapted over time

Taken together, these provide the basis for a targeted and practical assessment of the design aspects of planning applications and future development. Their purpose is not only to maintain and enhance the quality and character of the built environment of each character area but also to provide advice on public realm enhancement where appropriate.

Previous chapters of this review have identified several factors that are relevant to how guidance is administered. In the 15 years since the launch of the original Urban Character Appraisal, there have been substantial improvements in some areas but less successful changes in other areas.

Fig 7.1

a range of styles in central St Helier



Much of the original guidance has worked, particularly at a small scale, where there are relatively few examples of negative changes. The essence of much of St Helier lies in the sheer variety of built form, use, colour and materials at a plot level. In this context, small scale changes are a good fit for most of the character areas.

Larger residential developments are generally not a good fit in the more sensitive character areas. Difficulties have arisen where the scale of new development has not followed the 2005 guidance and where heights exceed recommendations: this is especially the case with several new residential schemes.

At the same time, there have been successful larger-scale developments, for example, at the west end of the Esplanade in the financial quarter. Although these exceed the original height guidance, their impact is generally favourable. This positive outcome is a result of context, land use and the low aesthetic value of the previous buildings on the site.

This 2020 Review proposes alterations to the boundaries of the character areas, so changes to the guidance are necessary. The character area Sensitivity Analysis and Development Pressure Analysis are also updated.

A new development context

The pressures for change in St Helier in 2020 are more significant than they were in 2005. There is a high demand for new residential developments and a sense, for now, that St Helier is the preferred location for these. The forthcoming Island Plan may suggest other areas for residential expansion, for example, growth of the town into the countryside or the expansion of existing settlements. In St Helier, the lack of appropriate sites produces a situation in which very high densities and

Fig 7.2

Gaspé House on the Esplanade



increased building heights are the norm. These developments inevitably change the character areas in which they occur.

As described in Chapters 5 and 6, some character areas are sensitive to change. In contrast, others are less sensitive and could potentially accommodate substantial changes. The guidance is updated to accommodate these factors.

The approach to design guidance

The consultant team has a distinct philosophy of design guidance, design briefing and the respective roles of planners, developers and their architects in the planning process. In general terms, the purpose of urban design and planning guidance concerning urban character is to set out broad directions which maintain or enhance the features which contribute to local character. There is also an assumption that the Government of Jersey consider that the character of St Helier is worth promoting and enhancing.

The purpose of guidance should not be to try and control the detail of new building design. Designing buildings is not a planner's job. Similarly, developers and their architects should not dictate how parts of St Helier should evolve. Their aspirations and agendas are often narrow and not necessarily aligned with the broader public good. The intention of this guidance is, therefore not to provide a straightjacket for development but to:

- set out simple principles to protect and enhance genuinely significant urban characteristics
- give architects and developers flexibility to respond in a positive way
- create conditions that encourage the development of sensitive and creative urban outcomes

Fig 7.3

The Esplanade looking east to Fort Regent and the roof of the Leisure Centre



- improve communication and participation among developers, designers, planners and residents in the design development process

Design Principles

Good design in towns is about creating 'places' where every building and space contributes in a positive way to the character and function of the wider townscape.

Development can be said to have been successful when:

- site planning and massing has responded to the broader context of the town's built environment
- existing communities surrounding the new development have not suffered a loss of amenity through increased traffic congestion, parking intrusion, loss of privacy, denial of daylight and sunlight by overshadowing or denial of significant views
- design expression relates to the neighbourhood context and townscape
- the street facade creates a safe and interactive pedestrian environment
- public amenities and activities enliven adjacent streets and open spaces
- arrangements for vehicular access and parking have a minimal impact on the pedestrian environment

New development in St Helier requires assessment not only on its merits but also in terms of the contribution it makes to the town and the quality of its townscape. Specifically, new development should:

Fig 7.4

Regent Road from Fort Regent



Minimise environmental harm

Buildings and landscapes should be designed, constructed and operated in an environmentally responsible manner. Sustainable design and construction reduces energy and water use, reduces solid and hazardous waste, prevents indoor and outdoor pollution, and uses materials efficiently. From conserving water and energy to recycling and reusing construction materials, sustainable design considers the costs and benefits over the entire life of the building, landscape and infrastructure. It is necessary to assess development proposals not only in terms of their environmental impact but also in their ability to adapt to future change.

Contribute to distinctiveness and integrate with surrounding townscape

It is essential to establish the role of the development site within the urban structure of the town.

Developments should help to shape distinctive neighbourhoods and reinforce local identity. Where possible, new buildings must embrace natural and built features and develop synergy with them. New developments should not cause unsympathetic change but should emphasise, retain or enhance the image and identity of the relevant character zone. The use of landmarks, vistas, focal points and existing landscape or built features give urban areas a unique character and memory.

Improve first impressions and legibility

Developments should enhance the appearance and maintain the character of arterial routes. New building along approaches and at entry points to the town should be of exceptionally high-quality urban design, including the proper consideration of the setting of the development.

Fig 7.5

New Street frontage



Protect important views

Views to and from established landmarks, hills and skylines should be protected and enhanced. A careful assessment of the visual impact of new development on the character areas and their backdrops is necessary. Also, an examination of the potential implications for strategic views from major access routes and public vantage points is required.

Make coherent layouts

New development should form an integral part of a clear and coherent spatial structure and create robust connections with the surrounding urban area. It should address adjacent development forms and character. New development should reinforce the indigenous block, grain and street pattern.

Contribute to the vitality of the town

A range of uses, building types and tenures give vitality and create attractive places that contribute to the safety and vibrancy of the town. A variety of activity and built form helps to create balanced communities. Thoughtful co-location of uses can also reduce the need for commuting and car usage.

Make positive relationships with public spaces

New development should enhance existing streets and spaces. It may provide new open space as an effective means of integrating and linking old and new development and creating a shared community focus. Open spaces should provide visual interest and encourage activity. Buildings enclosing public space should have active and transparent frontages which provide surveillance and promote a range of activities.

Fig 7.6

rich detailing on Clarence Road



Strengthen and extend the network of routes and spaces

Development should aim to maximise the extent and quality of the existing street and public space network. The network should provide a choice of routes to maximise connectivity and linkages and aim to link areas of amenity, recreation and environmental interest.

Reducing the impact of car parking

The level of parking provision and its location has a significant influence on the form and quality of new developments, and on the mode of transport which people choose for their journeys.

Development proposals should discourage travel by car and promote more sustainable transport choices such as walking, cycling and public transport. Designs should help to promote greater efficiency by reducing the amount of valuable land taken for car parking. In parallel, new developments should achieve good urban design by reducing the negative visual impact of parked vehicles, minimising conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists, and providing more scope for amenity space, planting and public realm improvements.

2) CHARACTER AREA GUIDANCE

The 2005 Urban Character Appraisal set out specific guidance for each of the ten character areas identified during the analysis phase of the study. The format for the guidance for each character area included:

- a summary description of the area's characteristics
- the aspirations for each character area and potential future directions
- the means of achieving the ambitions - a plan showing the controls applied with brief narrative under each building characteristic

The 2005 design guidance was intentionally simple and straightforward. Its purpose was not to unduly constrain development but to provide a springboard which architects and developers could use creatively while ensuring that urban character is maintained or enhanced.

The assessment criteria comprised of 12 building characteristics which were distinct, definable and able to be applied as guiding principles. They incorporated: horizontal/vertical emphasis, whether or not the building turns a corner well, the colour and materials used in the development, the massing of the building, its building line and envelope, the relationship of the building to its neighbours, co-ordination, frontage proportion, the scale of detail, roof characteristics, the interface with the street and what happens on exposed gables.

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, much of the original guidance has worked, particularly at a small scale, where there are relatively few examples of negative changes. On that basis, there seems to be no reason to change the guidance significantly.

The need for new measures

However, there are noticeable issues around the treatment of larger-scale developments, and these relate to problems of massing and height. Ironically, of all the measures set out in the 2005 Guidance, height is perhaps the simplest to control. Yet, it is the measure that has been ‘put to one side’ in the overall assessment of several applications that have consequently diminished the quality of three character areas.

The design guidelines for the St Helier character areas is but one of several factors taken into account in the assessment of planning applications. Setting aside the character area guidance occurs if there appears to be sufficient overall merit in a particular development proposal. The result of this is that developers and their architects may then become confident that their proposals will be approved, despite not meeting design guidance criteria. From conversations with developers’ architects, not meeting UCA Guidance is not considered to be a stumbling block in obtaining planning permission.

New criteria are required to deal with circumstances in which waiving of height restrictions takes place. These should include controls affecting denial of daylight and sunlight, overshadowing and loss of privacy between buildings.

A more detailed explanation of these aspects follows:

1 HORIZONTAL/VERTICAL

The first characteristic refers to features of a building’s elevation that contribute to the rhythm of a façade or the whole street. A vertical or horizontal emphasis derives from the predominant direction and proportion of the main building elements (eg windows, doorways, panels, string courses, ornamentation etc). Creating a dominant emphasis one way or the other can help a building blend with or stand out from its neighbours.

Buildings characterise most of the urban townscape of St Helier with a distinctively vertical emphasis. Still, there are some notable exceptions, especially parts of the waterfront and on the rising ground to the north of the town centre.

A reference to neighbouring properties and the wider street will usually provide the necessary evidence for the appropriate treatment for new elevations. Planning applications must include accurate visualisations of the proposals in context, having specific regard to the treatment of adjacent or nearby elevations.

2 TURNS THE CORNER

Corners are essential elements of the townscape as they define nodal points and can be significant factors in the overall legibility of the town. The intricate, organic street pattern of St Helier means that corners are

often prominent landmarks. Their significance has traditionally been recognised and reinforced through the use of embossed date plaques, elaborate plaster sculptures and distinctive window treatments. Other corners are more subtly celebrated, especially on buildings dating from the 1930s onwards with their more straightforward, streamlined architectural styles.

The treatment of new corners does not always have to be overtly 'showy', but it is often an opportunity for visual emphasis and the introduction of height or skyline features.

3 COLOUR

Historically the predominant colours found in towns were characterised by a palette of colours derived from indigenous natural materials and locally available pigments. The original colour palette for St Helier may derive from the browns, yellows and pinks of the local stone combined with the white, orange/pink ('salmon yellow') and green ('sea-green') of traditional stuccoes.

The development of synthetic paint colours and the increased availability of paints over the last hundred years have allowed opportunities for a far greater diversity of colour and the introduction of intense accent colours. These developments have proved to be immensely popular in holiday seaside locations like St Helier. However, they have not always been used sympathetically to the intrinsic colours and character of the place.

Colour treatments can produce harmony, diversity or disharmony. The use of colour on a single building, particularly in an urban setting, can be discordant if it does not consider its neighbours and the street scene as a whole. A limited palette will tend to produce a more coherent, harmonious townscape.

There is a slightly varied approach to colour in different parts of St Helier. For new developments, the recommended colour palettes described later in this section are helpful. St Helier is arguably less colourful than it was in 2005. The suggested palettes reflected conditions in 2005, but there is no reason to change them now.

There are no powers to compel developers to use these colours except perhaps on Listed Buildings, and even then only when surfaces are previously unpainted. In the absence of a Conservation Area(s), choice of colour is a matter of gentle persuasion, good taste and goodwill.

4 MATERIALS

Stone and stucco were traditionally the primary materials for St Helier building facades. Indigenous stone dominates the old harbours, various fortifications and large scale retaining walls, notably in elaborate mosaics of massive blocks.

Other materials such as timber (eg for utilitarian buildings), concrete (especially for 1930s Deco buildings) and brick supplement stone and stucco.

The choice of materials for a building can produce harmony, diversity or disharmony within a single elevation or between adjoining buildings, depending on colour, texture, the manipulation of the material and its unit size.

Today, stone and stucco (or modern equivalents) are still often the most sensitive choice of material in St Helier. The fluidity of concrete can be surprisingly successful (as evidenced by the Havre des Pas pool), as can glass and metal finishes. Generally, small unit materials such as brick do not complement the character of St Helier.

It is the case that small-scale variety suits St Helier and has given the town its character. Often, it is counter-productive to try to control materials on small developments. However, it is the case that choice of materials is crucial for larger building forms.

5 MASSING

The mass of a building is a reflection of its height and footprint proportions. Modern buildings can easily clash with older neighbours, either through being over or under scaled relative to context.

The scale of buildings affects the scale of streets and spaces and is a strong determinant of urban character. Much of St Helier is of a markedly human scale, comprising a general matrix of buildings between 2.5 and 3.5 storeys in height. Discrete clusters of buildings up to six storeys and the very occasional high rise block punctuate the matrix.

Cues should be taken from the immediate context to determine the appropriate height and massing of new development. The specific Area Design Guidance sets out the height ranges for each character area. In each case, developers will be required to produce data on the extent of overshadowing, loss of privacy, loss of views and denial of sunlight created by their proposal.

Where a proposed development is at the waterfront, there will be a Taper-down-to-Shoreline requirement. Planning applications must include accurate visualisations of the proposals in context having regard to the issue of massing.

6 BUILDING LINE

The building line defines the edges and scale of the street, and a consistent building line has a pronounced influence on the street's sense of cohesion. The vast majority of St Helier streets have very consistent and uninterrupted building lines that can be easily identified and adopted in new development.

There are some examples of setbacks from the building line which have created attractive 'incidents' in the street. This device should be only occasionally and very judiciously used. Exceptions might include instances where a setback building is being redeveloped but has potential for the new building to embrace an attractive public space.

7 DIVERSITY/HOMOGENEITY

Some parts of the St Helier townscape are more consistent and homogeneous than others. Areas of Havre des Pas, for example, are highly coordinated, with consistent scale, style, detail and colour. Other parts of the town are inherently more diverse, with a mix of individualistic architectural approaches.

Where new development is taking place in a conspicuously coordinated area, new buildings must adopt elements of significant local architectural themes - or contemporary interpretations of them. Where diversity is typical, a less contextual approach is acceptable.

8 FRONTAGE PROPORTION

The proportions of a building frontage are a function of plot width and building height. The dimensions of frontage contribute to the underlying pattern of urban grain and visual rhythm along the elevation of the street. This rhythm reflects the articulation of the frontage through the spacing of door and window openings and the subdivision of gardens (or in rear lanes, yards and outbuildings)

In many parts of St Helier, there are strong and consistent patterns of plot widths and building heights which make fundamental contributions to the urban character. An assessment of typical frontage proportions adjacent to a development site will help guide the design treatment – and where necessary subdivision – of the frontage.

Planning applications must include accurate visualisations of the proposals in context, having regard to the issue of frontage proportion.

9 SCALE OF DETAIL

The details on a building elevation provide visual interest and give it scale and character. Specific architectural approaches favour elaborate or decorative detailing whilst in other cases, details are minimal, and the design approach is more straightforward and utilitarian.

There are several distinctive approaches to this in St Helier. There are many parts of the town, such as in the harbour areas, for example, where simple, robust detailing is typical. In other areas, delicate detailing, decorative additions and ornamental flourishes are the norm. Where there is an observable pattern to the scale of the detail, new development should respect and complement that pattern.

Planning applications must include accurate visualisations of the proposals in context, having regard to the issue of detailing.

10 ROOF SHAPES AND FINISHES

The treatment of eaves lines, roof planes and roofline silhouette, are all critical in St Helier. There are several important vantage points from which to look down onto the roofscape of the town.

Pitched roofs, flat roofs and mansards are all typical in St Helier. Hence, it is difficult to make blanket rules about what is appropriate. In general, a reference to immediate neighbours indicates the most suitable approach. There are some locations where a consistent eaves line is a significant characteristic of a street. In these areas, adjacent eaves lines should not be more than half a storey above or below the norm.

In several particularly visible locations, such as along the waterfront or on the ridge above the town, roof silhouettes are highly visible. Although no particular guidelines are offered, the overall composition requires careful consideration, especially the impact on the skyline. This includes the visual impact of plant on roof tops.

Planning applications must include accurate visualisations of the proposals in context, showing roofline treatments.

11 ACTIVITY AND STREET INTERFACE

The treatment of the ground floor of development has a profound impact on the character and animation of the street. The more transparent and active the ground floor, the safer, more interesting and attractive the street feels.

In the case of larger developments, the deadening impact of undercroft parking should be minimised. The incorporation of other uses helps create hubs and nodes of activity that benefit the street scene. For example, an extensive residential development might include a creche, small office facilities, a cafe or a local shop.

Proper consideration of these factors will ensure that new buildings make a suitable contribution to the vitality of adjacent streets and the wider area.

12 FLANKS

'Flanks' are rear or side elevations of buildings that become important where they – often unintentionally – become particularly conspicuous. They can be as crucial as corners in some places, especially where they terminate a vista or mark a significant junction. The articulation of the exposed elevation through the organisation of form, materials or details is vital to avoid a blank or over-scaled appearance.

Where flanks are a factor, planning applications must include accurate visualisations of the proposals in context.

3) DEPLOYING THE GUIDANCE

The purpose of this review has been to assess the character areas for St Helier set out in the 2005 UCA. One of the reasons for this work was a realisation that increasing development pressures on sensitive areas could undermine the character of the town. The review proposes, where necessary, revised policies and design guidance proposals which will maintain and enhance these areas.

The preceding sections set out positive action to improve the quality of design submitted through the planning application process.

The planning application process is often a source of some tension between those who approve or refuse applications, and developers, architects, businesses and individuals who wish to obtain planning permission. This is the case not just in Jersey but throughout the United Kingdom. Some of the complaints about the planning application process include:

- a lack of certainty about what will be approved or refused
- the time taken to deal with applications
- poor quality results

Design guidance can improve these matters by:

- encouraging the planning authority to set out their visual policies for areas and sites in a form that can be included in development plans or supplementary planning guidance
- enabling the planning authority to influence the designer during the conceptual stage of the proposal before time and money have been spent and before attitudes have hardened – this can lead to fewer abortive submissions
- allowing the planning authority to concentrate on those aspects of design which they consider to be most important – and spend less time on minor applications

Adoption of design guidance could be considered, because it will appeal to developers and their architects who value a higher degree of certainty about what is acceptable and what is not.

Design guidance and its accompanying mechanisms of design guides, design briefs and development briefs do require planners to do more work on strategy and less on dealing with day-to-day applications. To be successful, it requires a degree of 'letting go' of the application process, but this will require the development industry to embrace the principles of this guidance. If applications meet the design guidance parameters, they should be approved – all other matters being satisfactory. This will not apply to Listed Buildings or, once designated, applications in Conservation Areas.

4) MONITORING THE CHARACTER AREAS

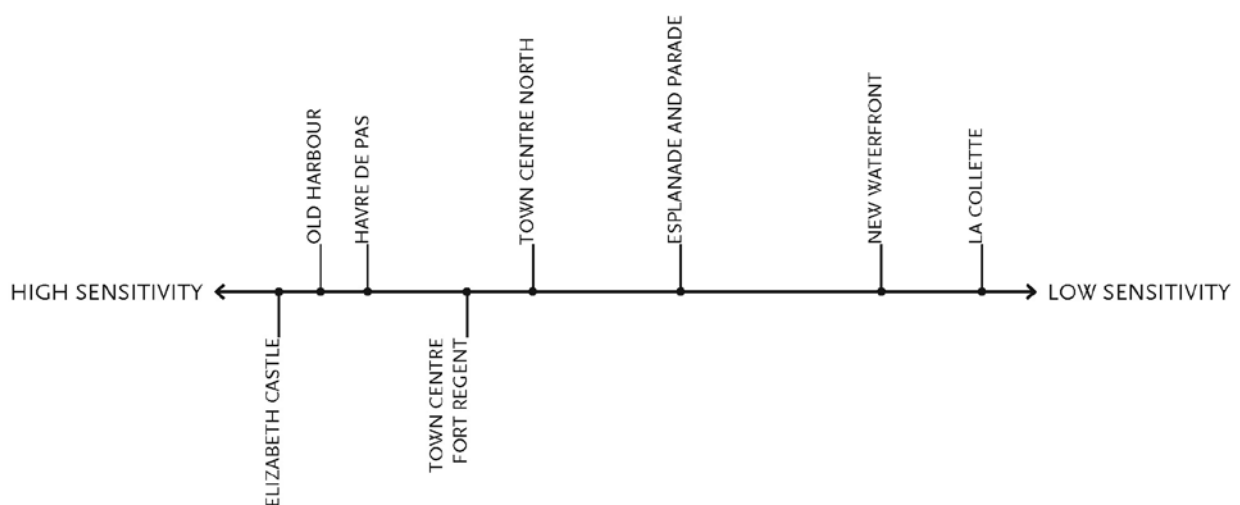
The design guidance proposed in the 2005 study was a carefully compiled response to St Helier as it seemed in 2004-2005. Of course, thriving towns are dynamic places, and it would be surprising if the guidance laid out 2004-2005 was appropriate in 2020. The guidance reflected then current development pressures and an assessment of area sensitivity in the town in 2004. The original Character Area Sensitivity Analysis and the Character Area Sensitivity Analysis versus Development Pressure are in Fig 7.7 and Fig 7.8.

The 2020 update of the diagram suggests that La Collette, Havre des Pas East and West, the New Waterfront and the Town Edges and Slopes are the areas where new development could be most easily accommodated without undermining the character of the areas.

The current relationships between the character areas, development pressure and development sensitivity is shown on the diagrams opposite. Monitoring of these factors and change in the parameters of the design guidance from time to time will be central to success. The design guidance should not be frozen in time.

Fig 7.7

*St Helier Character Area Sensitivity
Analysis 2005*

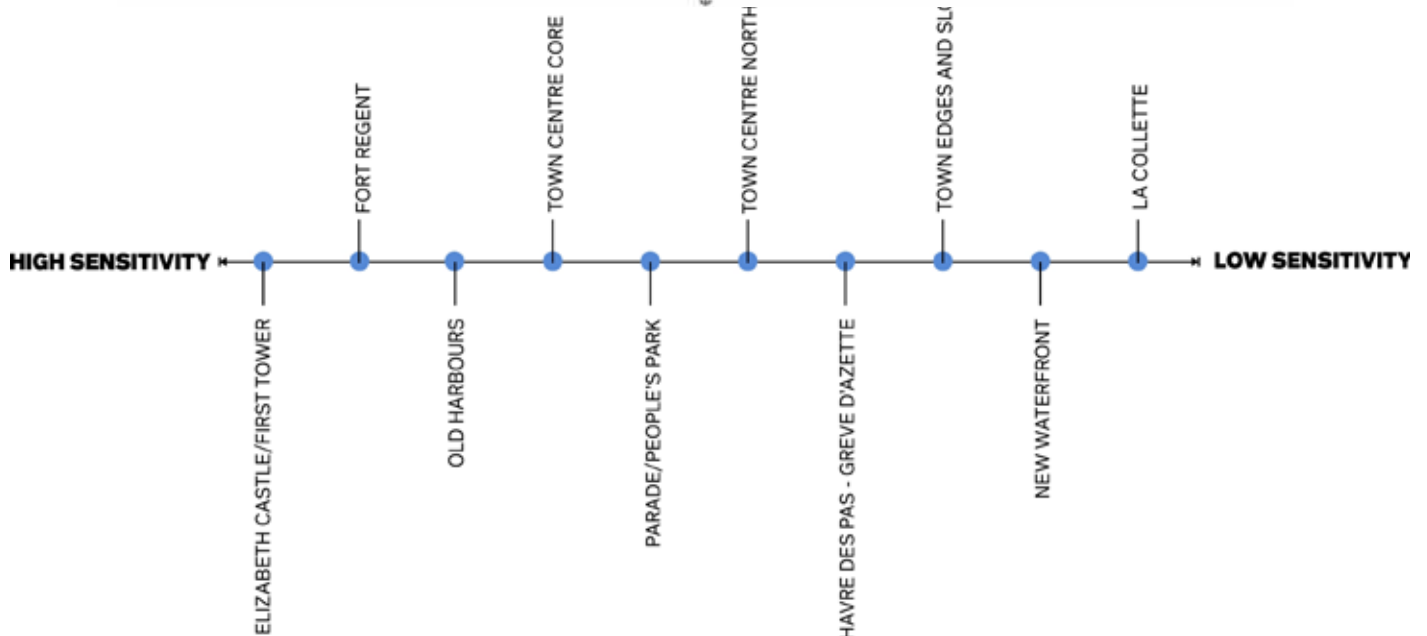


2020

HIGH DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE



Fig 7.8

St Helier Character Area Sensitivity
Analysis 2020

Character Area 1

Elizabeth Castle and First Tower



DESCRIPTION

Context

- occupies the low-lying, level coastal edge; the large tidal range gives a deep sandy beach at low tide; Elizabeth Castle occupies a rocky outcrop linked to the shore by a causeway that is passable only at low tide
- the area is defined by extensive scenic, panoramic views across St Aubin's Bay and southwards to open sea
- the sea wall represents an abrupt and significant edge
- the area marks the western edge of St Helier and there is an important inter-relationship between this area and the New Waterfront (Character Area 6) and the Parade and People's Park (Character Area 7)
- the boundaries between St Helier and First Tower are blurred by continuous development – the Town Edges and Slopes (Character Area 10) has a marked effect on this area
- Elizabeth Castle is an 'iconic' landmark, one of the most memorable and important landmarks in St Helier

Grain, Scale and Texture

- the character of the area is dominated by the natural features - open expanses of sea and sky
- the natural features contrast with manmade sea walls, the causeway and the cluster of structures that make up Elizabeth Castle and the Hermitage

Use and Activity

- activity is predominantly leisure-related, especially walking and cycling along the waterfront
- ramps and steps give access to the beach
- activity is predominantly leisure-related, especially walking and cycling along the waterfront
- it is an important starting point for tourists walking or being ferried to Elizabeth Castle

Spatial Issues

- Elizabeth Castle is a significant, recognisable place
- the Esplanade forms part of the wider St Aubin's Bay water's edge open space and part of the historic waterfront of St Helier
- there is a distinct promenade character created by the robust sea wall, with evenly spaced lighting columns strung with coloured lights and traditional timber shelters at regular intervals

Built Heritage

- the castle and related buildings are significant historical structures
- the Castle and Hermitage are significant cultural sites, having played a role from the earliest origins of St Helier through to the Second World War

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES




- to protect the high sensitivity and outstanding visual qualities of Elizabeth Castle and St Aubin's Bay
- to enhance first impressions of St Helier at this important arrival point from the airport and the west of the island
- to manage the transition between the coastline of the bay and the edge of the town



Character Area 1 - Area Design Guidance

Elizabeth Castle and First Tower



-  character area boundary
-  proposed conservation area boundary
-  specific control focus - any development triggers design brief

CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	no new build
2	turns the corner	not applicable
3	colour	waterfront palette
4	materials	concrete, granite, glass
5	massing	single storey above existing sea walls below existing building outlines as seen from shore
6	building line	not applicable
7	coordination	not applicable
8	frontage proportion	not applicable
9	scale of detail	robust, maritime
10	roof shapes and finishes	flat
11	activity and street interface	should contribute to promenade activity
12	flanks	not applicable

Character Area 2

La Collette



DESCRIPTION

Context

- occupies reclaimed ground that extends the natural promontory that divides St Aubin's Bay from St Clement's Bay; surrounded on three sides by the sea
- La Collette power station chimney is an iconic landmark visible from throughout St Helier and beyond
- views to La Collette are more significant than views from La Collette to the surrounding area
- the coastline represents a strong edge between land and water

Grain, Scale and Texture

- industrial estate and harbours to the west, storage areas to the east and south
- industrial buildings are predominantly utilitarian - usually large scale structures designed for storage and industrial processes;
- buildings and roads are laid out to facilitate vehicle movements and industrial processes; there are no 'streets' as such
- buildings are usually set back from road and external open areas are used for storage, parking and deliveries etc
- conventional storey-height delineations or references are often absent

Use and Activity

- designed specifically for industrial/business uses
- daytime business activity only; little other public activity, except for coastal walkway/cycleway cutting through

Spatial Issues

- an area defined by its function
- physically and functionally distinct from the rest of St Helier

Built Heritage

- identifiable as a major post war industrial/public utility development on reclaimed land

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- in the short to medium-term, to manage the industrial character of the area
- in the medium to long-term, to seek change through regeneration potentially including changes in function and overall aims (subject to removal/relocation of current functions)



Character Area 2
La Collette

Character Area 2 - Area Design Guidance

La Collette



character area boundary



proposed conservation area boundary

CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	both
2	turns the corner	not applicable
3	colour	not applicable
4	materials	utilitarian: concrete, concrete block, glass, steel, cladding
5	massing	not critical but large scale structures become town landmarks and therefore require detailed assessment
6	building line	not applicable
7	coordination	not applicable
8	frontage proportion	not applicable
9	scale of detail	robust, industrial
10	roof shapes and finishes	not applicable
11	activity and street interface	not applicable
12	flanks	not applicable

Character Area 3

Havre des Pas - Grève d'Azette



DESCRIPTION

Context

- occupies low-lying, level coastal land; a large tidal range creates a deep beach at low tide studded with extensive ranges of rocky outcrops
- the coastline of the bay represents a significant edge between land and water
- the distinctive architecture and location of the Havre des Pas bathing pool makes it a major local landmark and focal point in the bay
- there are sweeping views across St Clement's Bay and southwards to the open sea
- views of the sea along key north-south streets bring a seaside flavour well inland

Grain, Scale and Texture

- a medium density built-up area mostly comprised of terraces and semi-detached villas
- mixture of wide and narrow plot widths
- buildings are predominantly set back from the street with small gardens in front
- buildings are predominantly 2 1/2 - 3 1/2 storeys with a cluster of tall buildings on the water's edge and two high-rise residential blocks (La Collette Flats and The Cedars)

Use and Activity

- uses are predominantly residential and tourism or leisure related
- the waterfront, beach and bathing pool are magnets for visitors and residents in the summertime
- the moderately dense residential population increases significantly during holiday periods

Spatial Issues

- Havre des Pas is an identifiable, named neighbourhood
- it is part of the wider St Clement's Bay water's edge open space
- the public realm is predominantly simple and functional but with a characteristic promenade and "seaside town" treatment along the water's edge; there is an example of a contemporary themed 'pocket park' on the waterfront
- Howard Davis Park is a well-used formal public green space that has an additional role as a venue for events

Built Heritage

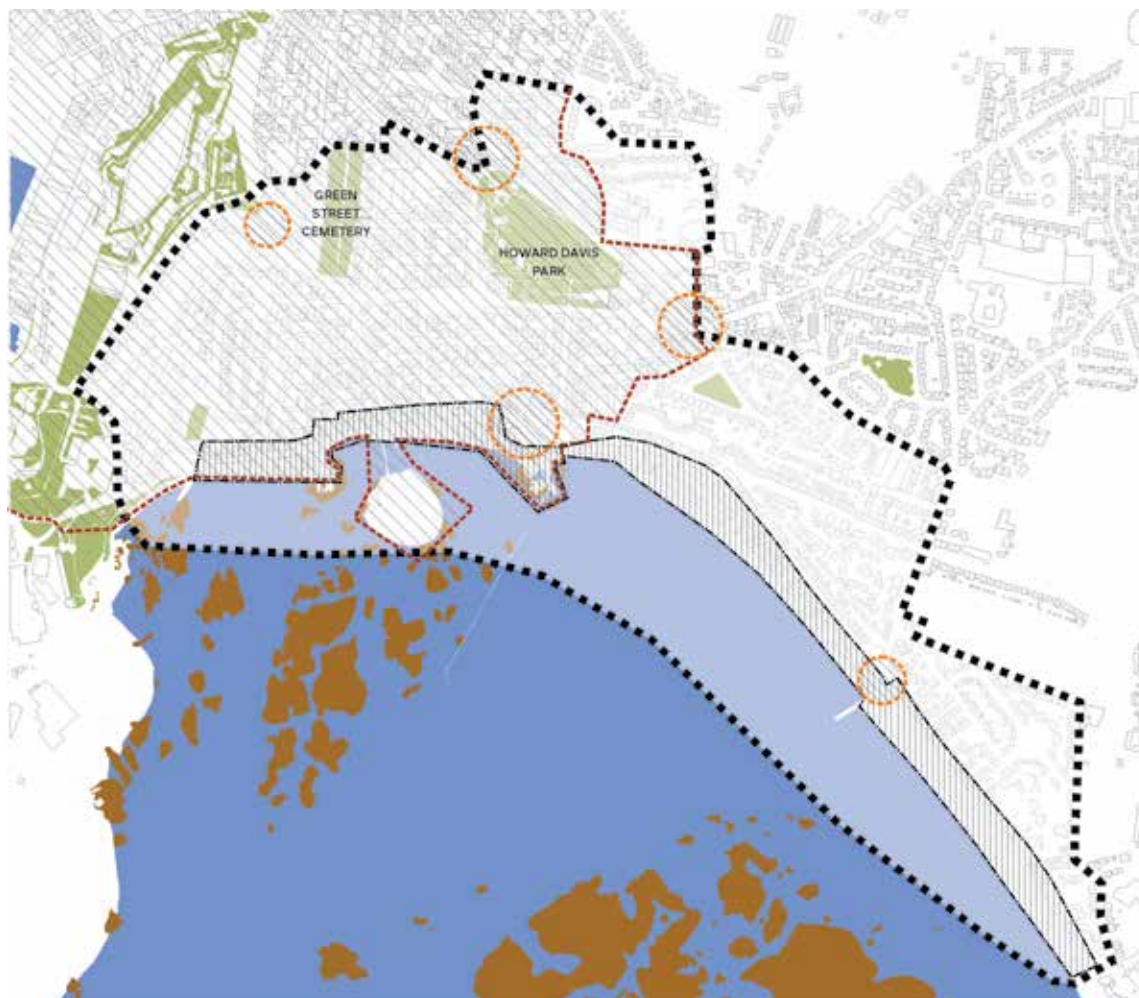
- this is a predominantly historic area with its origins in the early part of the 19th century
- there is a high proportion of High Victorian middle class residential buildings; there are numerous streets where there is a high proportion of original fabric that is extant
- the decorative Victorian guesthouses and hotels on the waterfront give a particularly strong and identifiable character to the whole area

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to retain and enhance this seaside suburb as a discrete and distinctive urban quarter and to ensure the survival of the period feel and flavour of the area
- to maintain the predominantly residential character of the area but to accept that part of this is a diversity of use including garages, workshops, small shops, business space as well as tourism, cafes and bars
- ensure that new development or redevelopment of sites is carried out in a manner sympathetic to the character of the area, respecting the privacy, views and sunlight of neighbouring properties.

Character Area 3 - Area Design Guidance

Havre des Pas



character area boundary



corner sites trigger design briefs



proposed conservation area boundary



proposed developments on seafront trigger design briefs

CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	vertical
2	turns the corner	opportunities for corner emphasis as shown
3	colour	waterfront palette
4	materials	concrete (in certain circumstances), glass, granite, stucco, slate
5	massing	2.5 - 3.5 storeys in proposed conservation area (5.0 m to 7.0 m) or eaves no more than ± 1 m to neighbour, redevelopment proposals for sites over 0.25ha trigger design brief: up to 4.5 or 5 storeys outside proposed conservation area
6	building line	should be consistent with street context and respect historic context and layout
7	coordination	match to street context - can be high or low levels of variety or conformity
8	frontage proportion	match to street context - existing large hotel plots trigger design briefs
9	scale of detail	robust, maritime at waterfront - intricate, residential to north
10	roof shapes and finishes	should protect historic context - avoid lumpen mansards - slate
11	activity and street interface	a consideration along seafront and around shops and focal points
12	flanks	minimise blank side elevations of seafront buildings

Character Area 4

Fort Regent



DESCRIPTION

Context

- a large, steep-sided rocky outcrop, topped with historic fortifications and a 20th century modernist roof structure
- the rock outcrop creates a series of edges that are important in separating the main part of St Helier from the Havre des Pas area
- Fort Regent is an iconic landmark, its silhouette being one of the most recognisable images of the town
- it is an important vantage point; 360° views can be gained to the sea, St Aubin's and St Clement's Bays, into the town centre and north to the countryside beyond

Grain, Scale and Texture

- a unique monolithic landmark structure covers the summit

Use and Activity

- Fort Regent is a community leisure facility but the limited and discreet nature of the access to the Fort means that very little visible activity is generated in surrounding areas
- since the closure of Government offices at South Hill, the Leisure Centre and the Pier Road car park generate only limited street activity

Spatial Issues

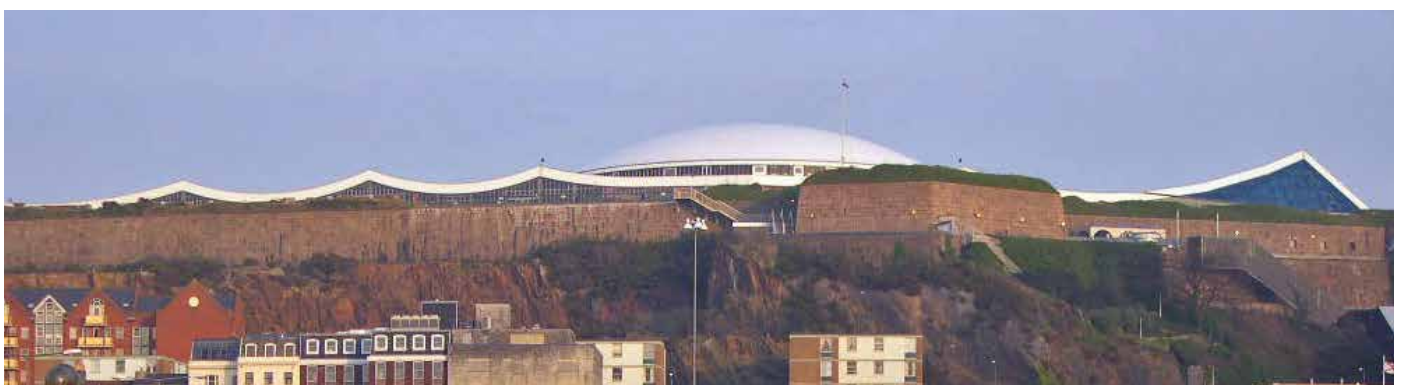
- Fort Regent is an identifiable and named 'place'
- it is a significant green feature in the town and an environmental resource; it accommodates a variety of recreational open spaces

Built Heritage

- the Fort Regent and South Hill Battery is a Listed Building Grade 1; the Fort Regent Leisure Centre Roof is a Listed Building Grade 2

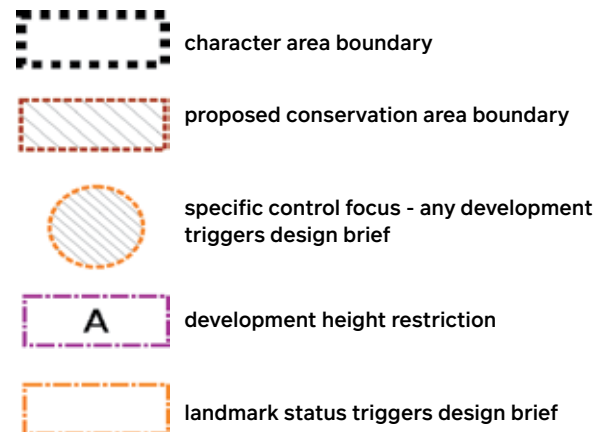
CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to protect and enhance the iconic nature of this important St Helier edifice
- to promote architecture of distinction for the town's most visible location
- to promote better public access and a more vibrant range of uses
- to protect the natural landform, greenery and outstanding views
- to encourage business and cultural use
- to ensure conservation and interpretation of the historic fort
- retention of significant areas of public open space
- to improve pedestrian access



Character Area 4 - Area Design Guidance

Fort Regent



CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	vertical
2	turns the corner	not applicable
3	colour	topographical palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, glass, steel, granite
5	massing	limit new build to areas a - 4 storeys max and b - 3 storeys max. Silhouette not to project above line of natural landform or the historic fort structure - when seen from harbour and the east
6	building line	the Pier Road building line is significant - not applicable to other areas
7	coordination	not applicable
8	frontage proportion	areas a and b - take from context
9	scale of detail	robust, large
10	roof shapes and finishes	areas a and b - flat or pitched
11	activity and street interface	not applicable
12	flanks	not applicable

Character Area 5

Old Harbours



DESCRIPTION

Context

- the harbours occupy the low-lying, level coastal land; there is a backdrop to the east of steeply rising ground
- the water's edge is now entirely manmade and represents a strong, indented edge defining the southern limits of the town; a major road now separates the harbours from the historic town edge and Esplanade
- views into and across the various harbour basins provide important visual reminders of the historic role of St Helier as a harbour town
- the Old Harbours have potentially strong, if under-developed links with adjoining character areas, especially the Town Centre

Grain, Scale and Texture

- the area contains a strip of dense development set back from the harbour edges
- there are a significant number of broad plots containing large scale industrial or warehouse buildings
- frontages are always flush with the pavement
- the area is predominantly 2^{1/2} - 3^{1/2} storeys with taller buildings on the northern margins at the interface with the town centre and on the rising ground of South Hill

Use and Activity

- uses are mostly industrial, with some commercial activity and a small number of residential properties; the various harbours are used for both leisure and commercial purposes; the harbour edge itself is used for storing equipment and boat maintenance
- northern and eastern areas are busy public areas during working hours
- it has an active, colourful, living water's edge

Spatial Issues

- the area has a distinctive identity as an historic harbour area
- the harbour edges provide attractive informal public open space looking out over the boats moored in the water and to the sea beyond
- the area also includes examples of contemporary public open space at the Steam Clock
- the harbour-side is a rich and attractive environment with distinctive qualities that arise from the use of especially robust materials, with traditional detailing and evident craftsmanship

Built Heritage

- distinctive early 19th century maritime/industrial buildings have a strong presence, especially where they create an uninterrupted frontage along the east side of the harbour; the impact of this elevation is exaggerated in places by strong colour treatments. The range of buildings known as Commercial Buildings contain 26 separate listed items of Grade 2 through to Grade 4
- New North Quay Warehouses contain the Maritime Museum and Listed Buildings Grade 2. Albert Pier is also listed Grade 2 as are the English Harbour and French Harbour - both Grade 1. Victoria Pier is listed Grade 2 and the New North Quay Level Luffing Crane - also Grade 2




CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to maintain and enhance the area's charm, grain, texture and authenticity
- to retain genuine maritime uses wherever practical
- to limit the over-commodification of the area by leisure uses and to ensure positive range of uses
- to encourage animation of the water
- to recognise the large scale engineering set against the domestic scale of much of the architecture

Character Area 5 - Area Design Guidance

Old Harbours



-  character area boundary
-  proposed conservation area boundary
-  proposed design guide

CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	vertical
2	turns the corner	limited opportunities but nevertheless important
3	colour	waterfront palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, glass, steel, granite
5	massing	maximum 3 ^{1/2} storeys across the whole area - note that the majority of buildings and structures are listed
6	building line	must adhere to existing street configuration or quayside setbacks
7	coordination	strong level of variety
8	frontage proportion	take from context
9	scale of detail	robust, large for engineering and new - domestic for infill of traditional environments
10	roof shapes and finishes	the existing historical height limit must be respected
11	activity and street interface	very important along quaysides and links to town centre
12	flanks	important to ensure that blank side elevations are minimised for large new build

Character Area 6

New Waterfront



DESCRIPTION

Context

- the new waterfront occupies mostly reclaimed land which has extended the low-lying, level coastal strip
- the new coastline has created a new edge that has widened the distance between the town and the water
- new buildings and open spaces have created a series of landmarks
- there are views internally to the new marina but also externally to St Aubin's Bay/Elizabeth Castle

Grain, Scale and Texture

- the development of the area is largely built out but key areas remain along the La Route de la Libération - these future development sites will be crucial to making a success of the New Waterfront and giving the area a unifying structure
- the plot width is not readily identifiable
- buildings tend to be set back from the street edge, often with planting between the road and the building
- buildings are 4-8 storeys tall

Use and Activity

- the area is now focused around the Elizabeth Marina, the Waterfront Gardens and the older leisure development with pool, cinema and eating and drinking facilities; it is a focal point for night time activity
- activity is mostly internal to the leisure development although there is some walking and cycling along the water's edge
- the new developments around Elizabeth Marina and Waterfront Gardens do not generate much street activity: ground floor units are large and dominated by offices and showrooms rather than the smaller grained uses that would increase footfall.
- industrial and transport-related activities take place on the water's edge to the south around the ferry landing point
- the boundary of the New Waterfront has been extended to include the Esplanade, (from Castle Street to Kensington Place back to Seaton Place and Newgate Street) including the International Finance Centre 1 (IFC1):

Spatial Issues

- the new waterfront is distinguishable from the rest of the town by its contemporary architecture and street layout
- vacant areas remain but are intended to be developed
- there are examples of contemporary public open spaces at Waterfront Gardens and adjacent to the pool
- extensive public areas are paved with palettes of manmade materials; this has established a unique streetscape character for the new waterfront

Built Heritage

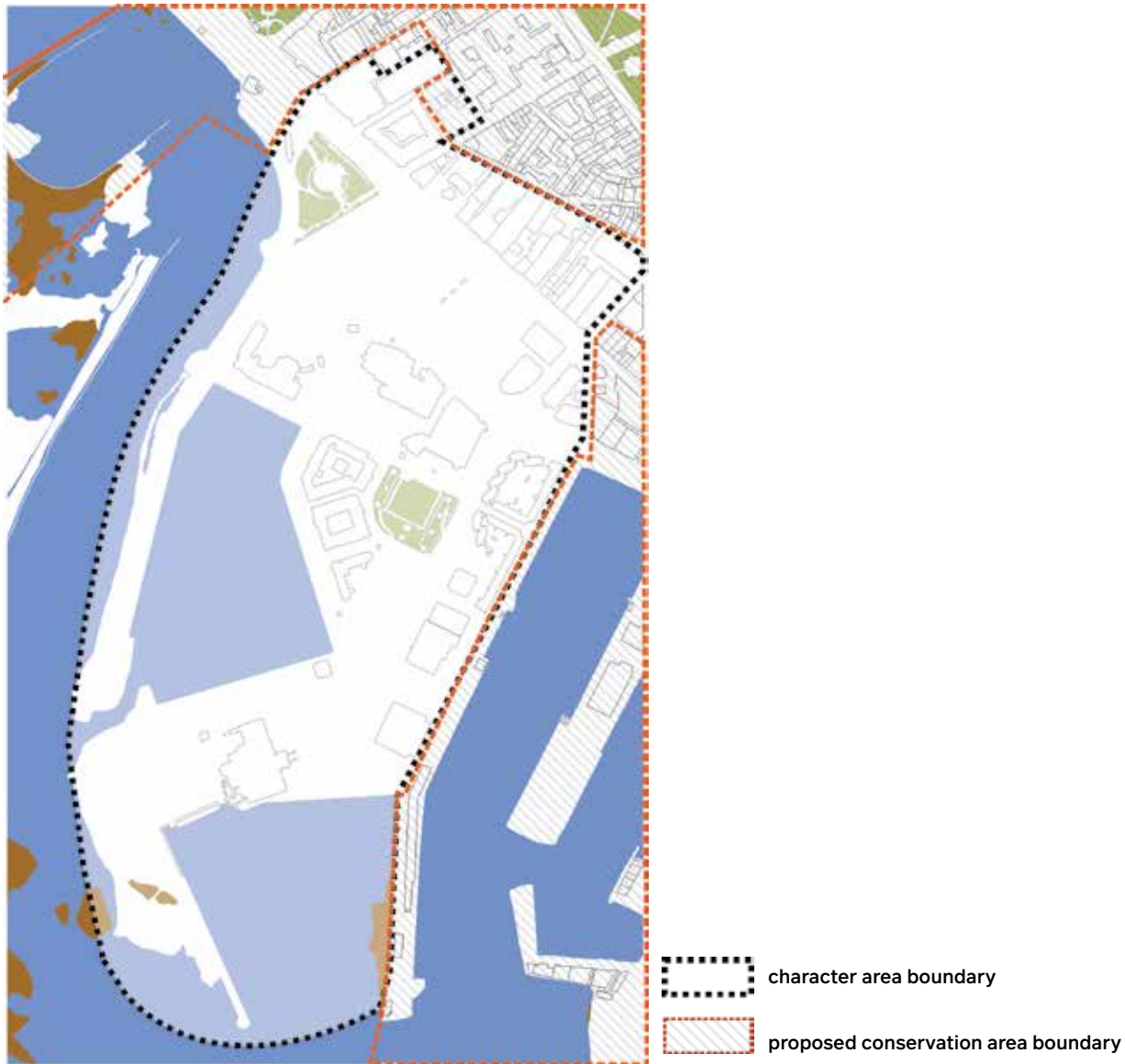
- exclusively recent development of varied quality and architectural merit
- remnants of built heritage represented by the historic sea wall and esplanade
- one fragment of potato warehouse
- limited plots widths of former warehouses

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to raise the quality of development in the new waterfront area
- to establish a quality business district
- to build a network of connected streets and places that link easily to the traditional streets of the old town without culs-de-sac, dead vehicle service areas or underused pedestrian areas
- to ensure a positive combination of uses within a human scale design framework, particularly, breaking down the sizes of ground floor retail and commercial units
- to build on the distinctive St Helier character rather than importing alien street, waterfront and building forms from world cities
- to seek opportunities to moderate and adapt development and associated public realm into more attractive places for people to develop a plan for the improvement of the ferry landing area and the route north to the old town
- to protect views to Elizabeth Castle to develop more attractive walking and cycling infrastructure throughout the area with an emphasis on destinations, social hubs and circular routes

Character Area 6 - Area Design Guidance

New Waterfront



CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	both
2	turns the corner	opportunities throughout development area
3	colour	waterfront palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, glass, steel, granite
5	massing	up to 8 storeys throughout but should step down to waterfront edge
6	building line	a consistent building line is needed on new streets; the setback should be narrower and contrast with the quayside setback
7	coordination	strong level of variety
8	frontage proportion	reference examples from the historic Esplanade
9	scale of detail	robust, large for engineering and small for residential development
10	roof shapes and finishes	not important to exercise too much control over this
11	activity and street interface	very important along quaysides and links to town centre
12	flanks	important to ensure that blank side elevations are minimised for large new build

Character Area 7

The Parade and People's Park



DESCRIPTION

Context

- situated on low-lying level land in the western part of the town
- the hospital acts as a major local landmark, both as a large scale and recognisable building but also as an important public facility; the Opera House is a minor local landmark
- there are attractive open views across the formal green space of the Parade
- People's Park forms the western boundary of the revised character area

Grain, Scale and Texture

- the area around the Parade park is densely built up on an historic street pattern
- it comprises a mix of narrow and wide plot widths
- frontages are virtually always flush with the pavement
- most buildings in the area are 2^{1/2} - 3^{1/2} storeys but there is a sizeable zone of 4-6 storey offices and civic buildings between the Parade and Seaton Place and Patriotic Place and along eastern edge of The Parade

Use and Activity

- the hospital is a key land use; it is surrounded by a mix of residential and commercial uses; business and office use predominates in the east; its future is uncertain
- the area is busy during working hours; small focal points for night time activity occur where there are clusters of restaurants or bars especially Kensington Place and Cheapside
- there is a relatively small but growing residential population
- People's Park is well used as a showground for events but is perhaps less well used as a formal park. It has enormous potential as a green urban space: links to Pierson Road and the de-prioritising of traffic and parking on St Aubin's Road could dramatically improve the area

Spatial Issues

- the Parade represents an identifiable 'place' that lends its name to the wider area
- the Parade is the only significant public green space near the town centre
- the character of the park stems from the formal arrangements of street trees around areas of lawn, augmented with seasonal ornamental flower displays
- there is a hard paved space at the south, partially used for café terraces; several key town memorials are located within the park which gives it a civic and cultural significance

Built Heritage

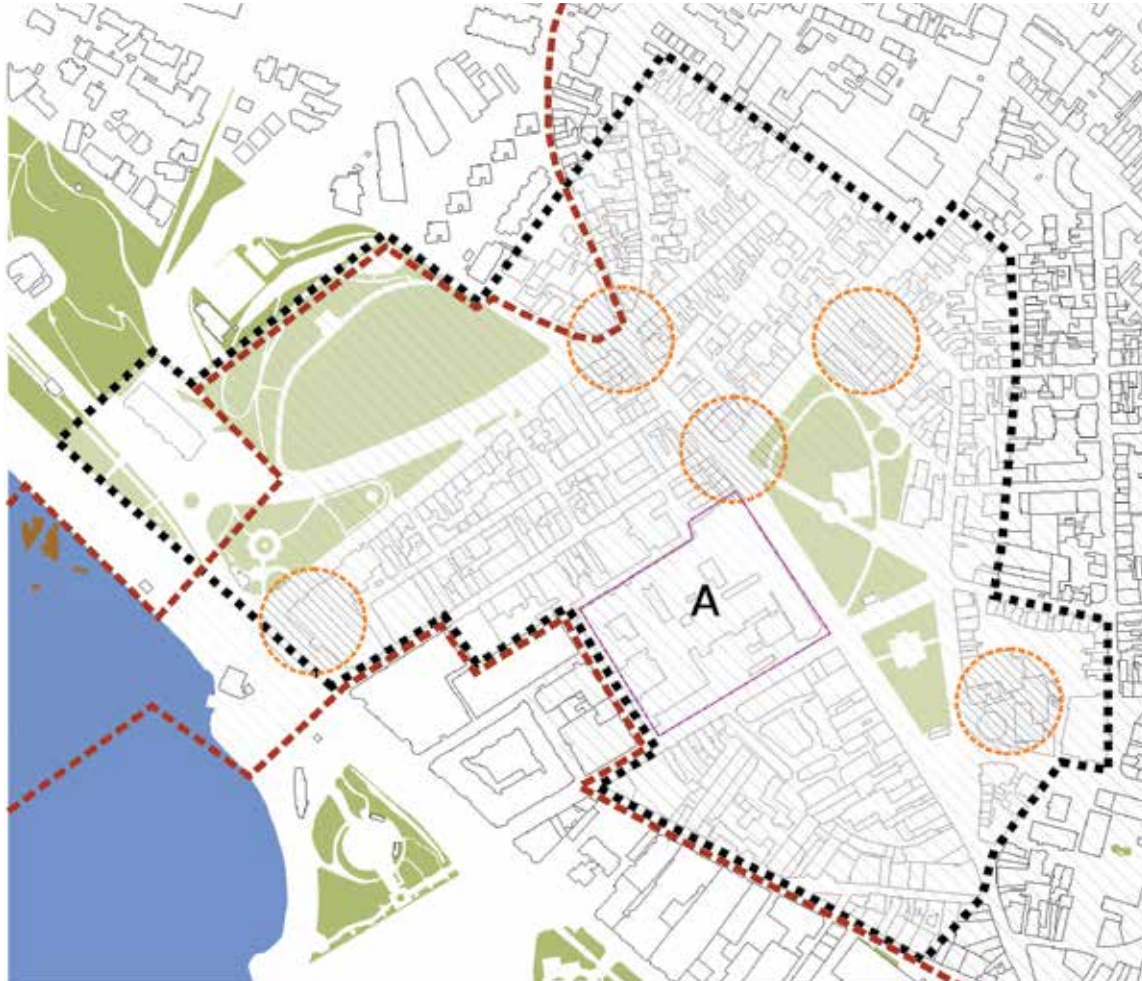
- parts of this area originated in the late 18th century and some of the original street and block pattern is retained
- the area includes some of the earliest St Helier buildings many of which are listed
- there is a mix of Victorian middle and working class residential buildings to the west and north with early 19thc maritime/industrial buildings to the south
- there are significant areas of post-war redevelopment, especially between Gloucester Street and Kensington Place

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to create better links between the Parade, the Town Centre and the New Waterfront
- to achieve a higher standard of new development
- to protect the street pattern of the area
- over time, to remedy the impact of uncoordinated overscaled architecture
- to support developments that foster mixed use, active frontages and that focus on the Parade as a high quality urban green space
- in the People's Park area, to manage the transition between urban character and the more open character of the coastal Character Area 1 at this important entry point to the town

Character Area 7 - Area Design Guidance

The Parade and People's Park



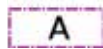
character area boundary



corner sites trigger design briefs



proposed conservation area boundary



height control

CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	vertical
2	turns the corner	opportunities throughout character area - important sites trigger design brief
3	colour	central palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, glass, steel, granite
5	massing	2.5-3.5 storeys except Area A (maximum 6 storeys) and sites subject to design briefs
6	building line	retain existing street pattern and setbacks
7	coordination	more uniformity than variety
8	frontage proportion	take from context - historic proportions
9	scale of detail	small, intricate around Parade - can be larger scale on Esplanade
10	roof shapes and finishes	flat or pitched - minimise mansards
11	activity and street interface	very important along links to town centre, the Parade, Esplanade and linking streets
12	flanks	important to ensure that blank side elevations are minimised

Character Area 8

Town Centre



DESCRIPTION

Context

- the town centre lies in the centre of the low-lying, bowl-shaped basin where St Helier originated
- the States Buildings, Parish Church and Central Market are all major civic landmarks; Wesley Grove Church is a distinctive building that acts as a major local landmark
- tightly framed views defined by narrow streets are typical; distant views to the east and south often terminate in the vegetated and partially built rising ground that surrounds the town especially Mont de la Ville and Fort Regent
- there are examples of dramatic axial views terminating at landmark buildings, most notably: Halkett Place to Wesley Church

Grain / Scale / Texture

- the town centre core is the most densely built-up part of town: some historic narrow plots remain but many have become amalgamated to create larger, more commercially valuable sites
- building frontages are virtually always flush with the pavement

Use and Activity

- the northern part of the core area is consistently 2.5 - 3.5 storeys; areas of taller buildings lie between the retail core and the harbour area
- this is the town's retail core and includes key civic functions and commercial activities; it is therefore the primary focus of daytime activity and a vibrant, colourful place during business hours
- there is a small proportion of residential uses
- clusters of bars or restaurants attract people to localised parts of the town centre at night

Spatial Issues

- the town centre core contains a series of distinctive places that link to create a complex network of streets and spaces of varying scale and character incorporating the civic heart of St Helier (Royal Square)
- the pedestrianised streets and other incidental spaces are important components of the public open space of the town, being popular as places to pause, people-watch and socialise
- the public realm is of a relatively high quality throughout the area; local granite has historically been used for kerbs and footways; more recent decorative stonework in the pedestrianised areas has created a new and distinctive streetscape character for the central area

Built Heritage

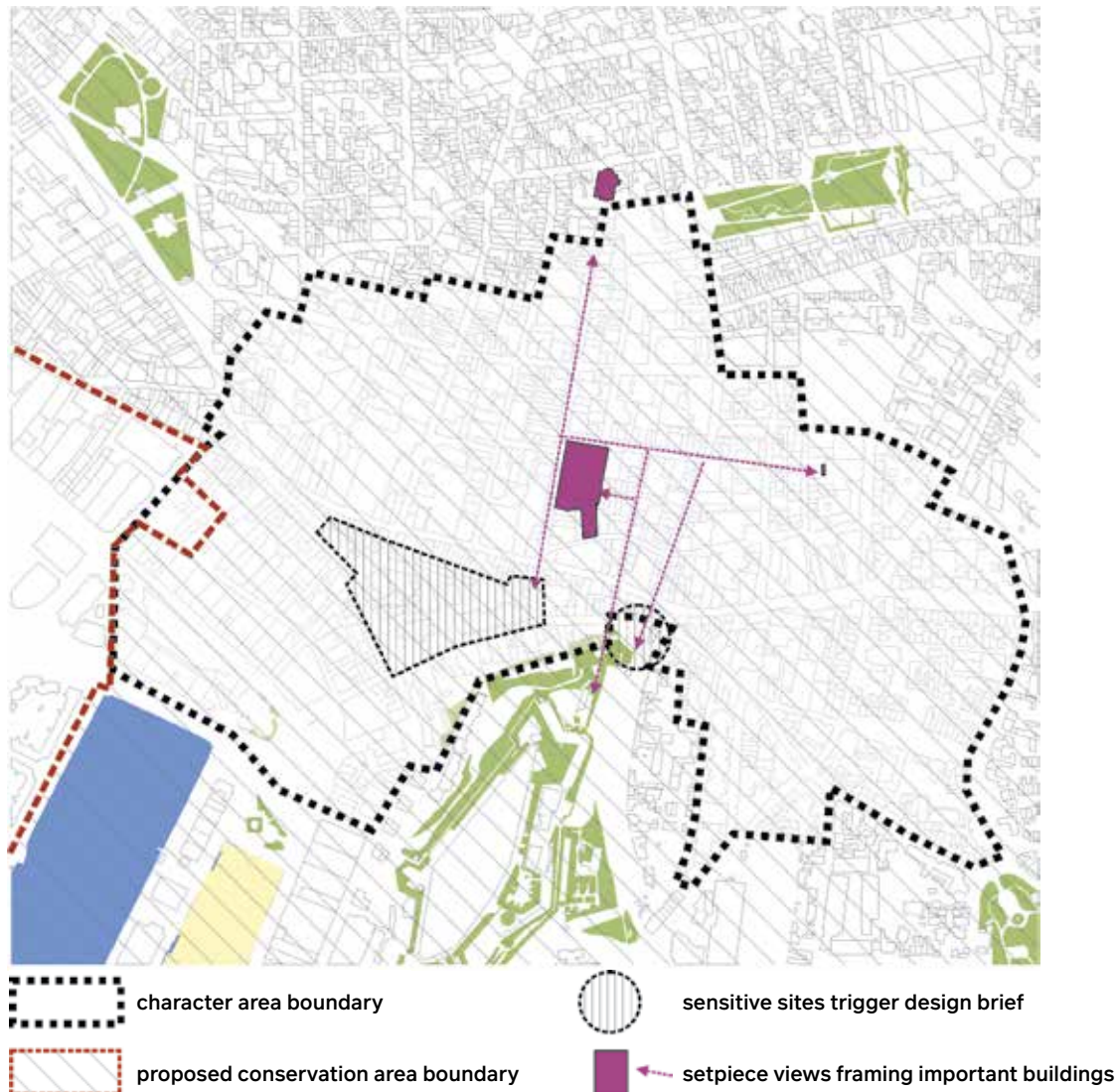
- the town centre core is the historic heart of the town; many of the streets, spaces and block patterns were shaped during the earliest days of St Helier's development; these characteristics provide a visual consistency that overrides the diversity of architecture in the central area
- there are many listed buildings
- the historic buildings are predominantly Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings but they are now heavily interspersed with a variety of 20-21st century buildings

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES:

- to maintain and create a repopulated and distinctive urban core, with a lively mixed economy of shops, markets, cultural and entertainment venues; new workplaces; and city living apartments
- to reconnect the town centre with the waterfront
- to nurture the town's distinctiveness and authenticity through conservation and new development
- to animate streets and public spaces

Character Area 8 - Area Design Guidance

Town Centre



CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	vertical
2	turns the corner	opportunities throughout character area - important corner sites trigger design brief
3	colour	central palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, glass, steel, granite
5	massing	generally up to 4 or exceptionally 4.5 storeys
6	building line	retain existing street systems and setbacks - but can be altered through design briefs or historic accuracy or historic green space
7	coordination	between varied and uniform - neutral
8	frontage proportion	take from context
9	scale of detail	small, intricate
10	roof shapes and finishes	generally pitched - eaves no more than $\pm 1\text{m}$ to neighbour - consider appearance from above
11	activity and street interface	very important along ground floors and main streets including those linking to waterfront
12	flanks	important to ensure that blank side elevations are minimised
13	other	important setpiece views to be protected + important sites trigger design brief

Character Area 9

Town Centre North



DESCRIPTION

Context

- the town centre north area lies on low-lying level land, defined to the north by the escarpment slopes
- the Ring Road represents a significant boundary or barrier around the area's northern flanks
- St Thomas's Church is an iconic landmark for St Helier; other significant landmarks include St Mark's Church, the brewery on Ann Street and the Masonic Temple on Stopford Road
- axial, framed views along streets laid out in an orthogonal pattern are common in this area; there are distant views to the west, north and east of the vegetated and partially built up slopes of the escarpment

Grain, Scale and Texture

- this area is moderately densely built up
- there is a variety of plot widths but a relatively high proportion of narrow plot widths compared to adjacent areas
- frontages are predominantly flush with the pavement in southern parts of this character area; setbacks become more common further north - shallow hard or soft spaces between the road and building elevation are important features of certain key streets
- the area is predominantly 2^{1/2} - 3^{1/2} storeys with scattered small groups of taller buildings; there are three high rise residential blocks

Use and Activity

- the area is predominantly residential in the north; there is a higher proportion of commercial and retail uses in the south
- there are scattered, isolated examples of leisure, civic and industrial uses
- street activity is generally minimal although Springfield Stadium becomes a major generator of activity during key events and Town Park is busy after school
- this area contains the highest density residential population in the town; it becomes less dense towards the margins

Spatial Issues

- notable 'places' include Springfield Stadium and the Millennium or Town Park
- most open space is private; there is very little public open space besides the Stadium and the Town Park - both are therefore important and the recent Town Park is well used
- basic utilitarian materials are used for streetscape

Built Heritage

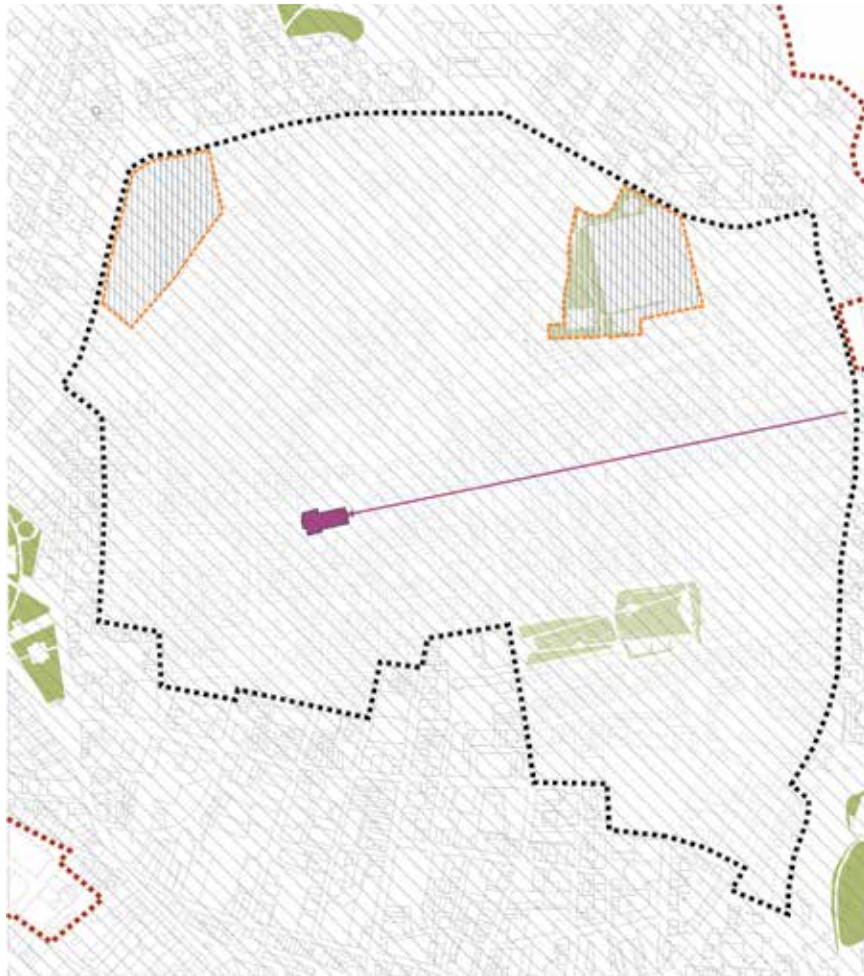
- several streets comprise a high proportion of original fabric that is extant
- west of Bath Street Victorian working class residential buildings predominate; middle class Victorian residential buildings are more common in the east and Regency buildings are found in northern areas
- there are many listed buildings in the area

CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to maintain and enhance the residential scale and character of the area
- to ensure the retention of historic environments, buildings and artefacts together with the street pattern
- to accommodate a range of uses which ensures the future use of a wide range of small to medium sized non-residential properties that contribute to the character of the area - this would include nurseries and other community facilities, cafes, small work-spaces and retail uses
- to ensure that new development helps to provide a range of community and non-residential uses and is not mono-use - this could include home-work space, crèches, small serviced office space
- new development should contribute where practical to the public realm through reclaiming road space and traffic-calming and other spaces that support social activity

Character Area 9 - Area Design Guidance

Town Centre North



character area boundary



proposed conservation area boundary



sensitive sites trigger design brief



setpiece views framing important buildings

CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	vertical
2	turns the corner	opportunities throughout character area
3	colour	north central palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, granite
5	massing	2.5 - 4.5 storeys unless specified in design brief: accents to 5 storeys
6	building line	generally, either smallsetback (1 - 2.5 m) or building line at heel of footway with no setback but more important to control by context and neighbouring developments
7	coordination	more uniformity than variety
8	frontage proportion	take from context
9	scale of detail	small, intricate, domestic generally
10	roof shapes and finishes	flat or pitched - eaves no more than ± 1 m to neighbour
11	activity and street interface	important at nodes and junctions
12	flanks	important to ensure that blank side elevations are minimised
13	other	important setpiece views to be protected + important sites trigger design brief

Character Area 10

Town Edges and Slopes



DESCRIPTION

Context

- this character area centres on the steep slopes curving around the north and eastern margins of the town
- the steeply sloping ground represents a significant boundary that defines the most densely built up part of the town
- several iconic landmark buildings perch on the slopes or the ridge above the town and are visible from over a wide area – eg Victoria College and Almorah and Victoria Crescents
- the rising ground forms an important green backdrop to many town centre street-scenes
- there are important views from the higher ground down to the town roofscape as well as to the coast and sea beyond

Grain, Scale and Texture

- the grain is more dispersed than in central areas; it comprises mostly villas or apartments set into gardens or other green space
- plots are generally larger and often encompass sizeable gardens
- buildings are usually set back from the pavement, often with significant front garden space
- most buildings are 2 1/2 - 3 1/2 storeys although there are scattered groups of taller buildings, including a number of conspicuous tall landmark structures

Use and Activity

- this is a predominantly residential and low density area
- street activity is minimal except where public facilities (eg schools) draw large numbers of people at key times

Spatial Issues

- this character area contains few instantly recognisable 'places'
- there is little formal public open space; most open space is private or part of the landscape setting; some important semi-private resident's gardens form part of the setting for formal building arrangements (eg Almorah and Victoria Crescents)
- there is important greenery and some distinctive statuesque trees on the sloping ground and ridge (although tree cover is becoming significantly eroded in places)

Built Heritage

- buildings are predominantly 20th century and often undistinguished; however, there are some examples of important registered buildings, including set-piece terraces such as Almorah and Victoria Crescents

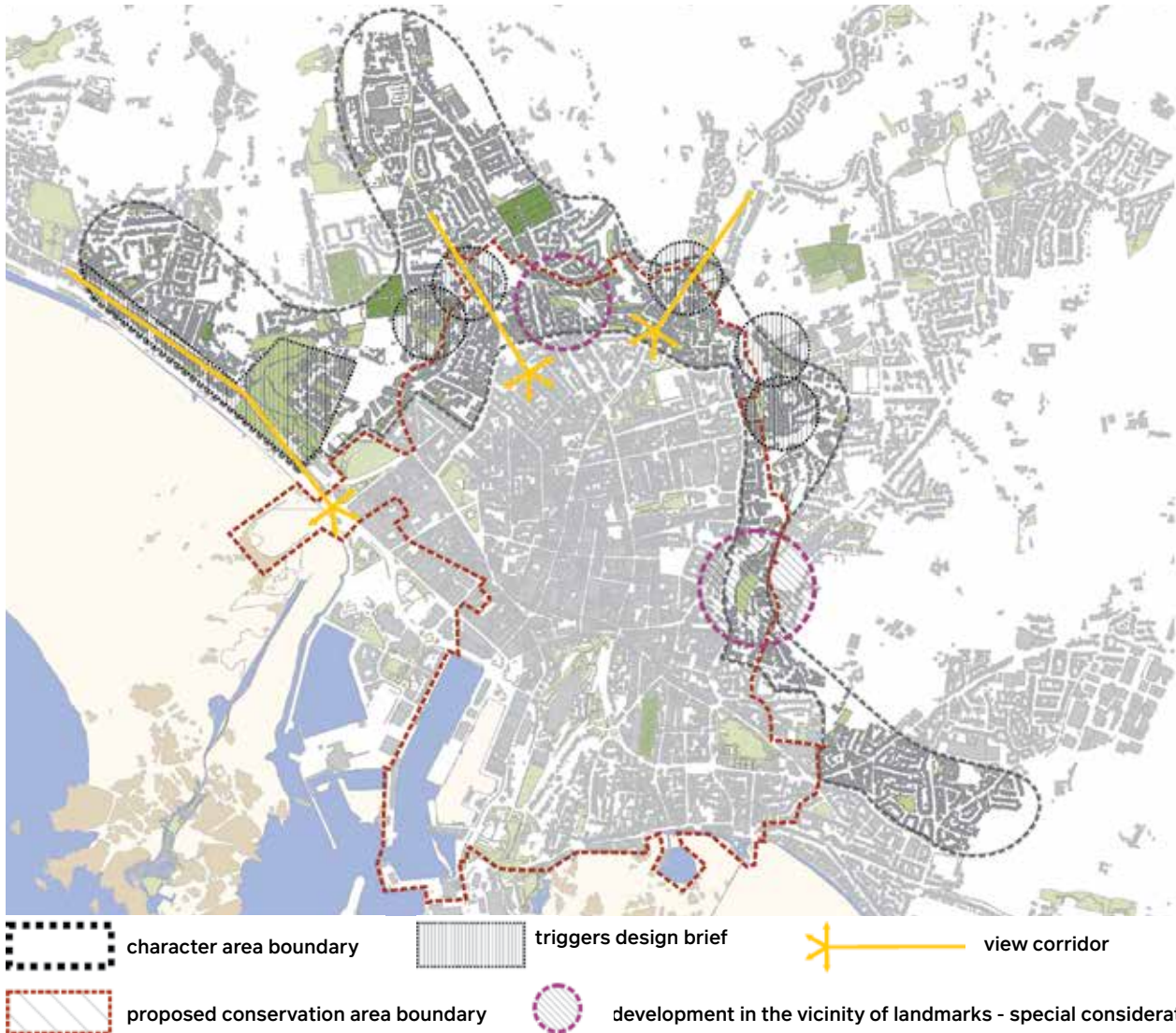
CHARACTER AREA OBJECTIVES

- to protect the topographical frame of the town by maintaining and strengthening the landscape of the slopes as part of any new development proposals
- to ensure that the setting of Victoria College, Almorah and Victoria Crescents is protected
- to protect important views across St Helier from significant approaches to the town
- to ensure the improvement of some of St Helier's important entry points



Character Area 10 - Area Design Guidance

Town Edges and Slopes



CHARACTERISTIC		CRITERIA
1	horizontal / vertical	both
2	turns the corner	opportunities throughout character area
3	colour	topographical palette
4	materials	concrete, stucco, granite, glass, steel - garden walls and property boundaries important
5	massing	maximum 6 storeys unless specified in design brief - no taller than 15m/3 storeys on the ridgeline
6	building line	use context
7	coordination	variety
8	frontage proportion	not applicable unless along established garden less streets
9	scale of detail	small, intricate, domestic generally
10	roof shapes and finishes	flat or pitched - not critical
11	activity and street interface	less important than in other areas
12	flanks	important to ensure that blank side elevations are minimised
13	other	landscape + retention of trees on slopes important - proposals should have external works and landscaping plans submitted for approval - maintain focus of long views from centre

The Colour Palettes

A photographic survey and analysis of the ten character areas in 2005 revealed a wide variety of colours and colouring techniques throughout the town. The analysis suggests that while there is a general St Helier range of colours that are popular as well as appropriate, the maintenance and enhancement of character throughout the town could be enhanced by limiting the scope of colour to particular palettes which relate to particular areas.

Four palettes were proposed:

- **waterfront palette** - for all waterfront areas including Character Areas 1, 3, 5 and 6
- **topographical palette** - for Fort Regent and the escarpment slopes which enclose the town
- **town centre** - for the broader town centre including the Parade and Esplanade areas
- **town centre north** - for the predominantly residential areas north of the central core

These palettes have seen only limited application, presumably because the colours cannot be enforced on developers or property owners. The reliance on gentle persuasion does not seem to have worked. Nevertheless, there is no reason to change the proposed palettes in 2020.

The adoption of these palettes is not to overly constrain the choice of colours that can be used but to maintain and enhance the character of the ten areas.

These palettes have been divided up into general pastel colours for walls, and colours for smaller areas especially details such as timber work, doors, windows and decorative features. There is a tradition in the town of using two pastel colours to paint larger areas of walling and this is generally to be encouraged.

The British Standards Colour Range (BS) has been used as the basis for the palettes - the colours are general recommendations and could differ by shade. While the BS Colour range provides a degree of certainty, it is not necessarily the best solution in all circumstances - for example, specialist manufacturers produce ranges of heritage paints which offer degrees of subtlety that is absent from the BS range (for example Farrow and Ball, Paper and Paints, and Real Paint and Varnish Company).

It is also noted that in the case of Listed Buildings, there is a case for proper research into the original range of paints used in the town.

Fig 1.2

Repainted property in Havre des Pas meets the specification of the Waterfront Palette





Fig 7.10

Waterfront palette
left - large areas
right - small areas and details



Fig 7.11

Town centre palette
left - large areas
right - small areas and details





Fig 7.12

*Town Centre North palette
left - large areas
right - small areas and details*



Fig 7.13

*Topographical palette
left - large areas
right - small areas and details*



Design Brief Template

This is a typical structure for a design brief but it is important to note that not all of the issues outlined below are relevant to any given site. In particular, when setting out the site-specific guidance the only topics that should be included are those that are considered to be essential to the eventual successful integration of the development.

The amount of detailed guidance should be kept to a minimum so that critical design parameters are established early in the design process whilst still giving designers flexibility and opportunities for the creative resolution of the client's brief.

SECTION HEADINGS		EXPLANATION
1	Introduction	
	Purpose of the brief	
	Background	
	Key background documents	
2	Description of the site	
	Site boundary/extent	
	Historical development	
	Site sensitivity	Which site characteristics have triggered a design brief?
3	Planning context	
	Relevant planning policies/objectives	
	Environmental, heritage or landscape designations	In or near the site
	Planning history	Previous, consents, refusals, appeals
4	Consultations	Where these have already taken place/if consultation is required
	Bodies consulted	
	Outcomes and implications of consultation	
5	General urban design objectives	
	Key urban design challenges/objectives	Government of Jersey objectives for urban quality, for example
	Vision for the site/area	for example, reference the Character Area Objectives
	Short/medium/long term issues affecting the site/area	Land use, planning or property dynamics, for example
6	Character area description	Relevant extract from the Urban Character Appraisal
7	Character area design guidance	Relevant extract from the Urban Character Appraisal
8	Site-specific guidance	
Not all of the issues below will be important for every site but this list can be used as a checklist of potentially relevant topics		
a	views/visual issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will the development be especially visible? if visible, does this requires a sensitive approach or should it be exploited? are there existing views in or around the site that should be protected or exploited?
b	landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are there natural features that should be protected? is there a landscape type/character that should be maintained in the new development?

c	topography/levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will level changes affect the development? • is there a preferred way of designing with the topography?
d	traffic/vehicle circulation/parking/servicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what are existing traffic circulation arrangements? • are there preferred arrangements for access and principal circulation? • are there preferred arrangements for dealing with parking and servicing?
e	pedestrian circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are there rights of way/existing pedestrian access points? • are there key desire lines that should be accommodated? • is there a need for innovative traffic management techniques? • is there a need to give particular consideration to people with special needs, the elderly or children?
f	public space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is there a specific requirement for open space on the site? • what type of space is required, for what use/user group? • is it public or private?
g	public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is there a need to relate to public transport eg create pedestrian links to bus stops?
h	distinctiveness/diversity/integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should this development aim to integrate seamlessly into the adjacent context or can it stand out?
i	vitality/animation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is this development exclusively private or should it have public uses? • are there preferred locations on the site for public uses? • is there a particular requirement for active ground floor uses anywhere on the site?
j	boundaries/edges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are any of the site boundaries especially sensitive? • how should those boundaries be treated – open/enclosed, soft/hard, large scale/low?
k	horizontal/vertical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is there a case for the development to have a vertical or horizontal emphasis to the elevation, or could either be justified?

l	corner treatments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should the corner be celebrated as a landmark feature, kept simple and elegant, or could a case be made for either? if it is to be a landmark, is there a preference for how that might be done eg tower, setback, projection?
m	colour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is there a need to specify a certain palette or recommend an especially striking, subtle or contextual colour choice?
n	materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is there a need to specify certain types or colours of materials to stand out or blend with the immediate context?
o	massing and frontage proportions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is there a need to specify the height, width and bulk of the building envelope or main elevations? are there particular parts of the site where the scale of the development needs to be controlled?
p	building line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should the building adhere to a prescribed building line? should setbacks or projections be considered?
q	scale of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are there specific issues about the richness of detail in surrounding buildings that should be taken into account?
r	roofs/roofscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is the roofscape especially visible from above? is there a case for precluding a particular roof shape? is the height of eaves line a significant design issue? is there a case for recommending a specific material or colour?
9	Next steps	
a	Submission requirements	
b	Approvals process	

The public realm: current status, future potential and distinctiveness

The brief for this review included a requirement to review St Helier's public realm in the context of Jersey's tourism industry, the relationship between character and public realm (building form and social space) and the relationship between public realm, movement systems and socio-cultural infrastructure.

This chapter of the review is in three parts:

1. **Current status:** what is the current state of St Helier's public realm? Has there been progress with the proposals suggested in 2005?
2. **Future projects:** how could St Helier's public realm be improved over the next 15 years?
3. **St Helier's distinctiveness:** how can St Helier's public realm become more 'Jersey-like' rather than English or global?

1 Current Status and Review

The apparent increased use of St Helier's public realm is one of the earliest findings of this review and one of the most striking differences between the town centre in 2005 and 2020. Increased pedestrian use of streets has been typical of many towns in the UK over the past 15 years as cultural changes and the rise of coffee culture have normalised sitting out. This change of lifestyle, coupled with the investment in streets and spaces, has

Fig 8.1

One of the gateways to Royal Square - the heart of the town's civic realm



paid off for St Helier as the pedestrian and semi-pedestrian areas of the town centre have great appeal.

The 2005 St Helier Urban Character Appraisal identified four main types of public space:

- green spaces
- the waterfront(s)
- hard spaces and squares
- street network and connections

The 2005 Appraisal concluded that there was a reasonable range of areas of different scales and types, but there were some noticeable weaknesses. Certain types of open space were unrepresented, and other elements were not well connected. The Appraisal proposed clarification of the roles of the spaces and reinforcement of the network of links between spaces. The following is a 2020 update:

Green spaces:

- The Parade - **improved**
- Town Park - **built**
- Howard Davis Park - no change
- Secondary spaces - Stadium, Green Street Cemetery - no change

The Parade feels like a much more active and attractive place in 2020. It has lost much of its dreary and dated character although it is somewhat overwhelmed by car parking. The new World War I memorial is a striking, if sombre, addition to the area, adding an element of cultural interest.

Fig 8.2

The recent World War 1 memorial on the Parade - a striking if sombre addition to the area



The Town Park (aka Millennium Park) was just a proposal in 2005, but its implementation is a great success. It has brought about a revival and regeneration of not only the immediate site but also the surrounding area. Repeating the Town Park model elsewhere in the town could produce more excellent results.

Other Green Spaces: there has not been a significant change in Howard Davis Park, Springfield Stadium or Green Street Cemetery. All these spaces look a little tired and in need of investment. The Springfield Stadium complex, in particular, could be the subject of transformative proposals.

Waterfront spaces:

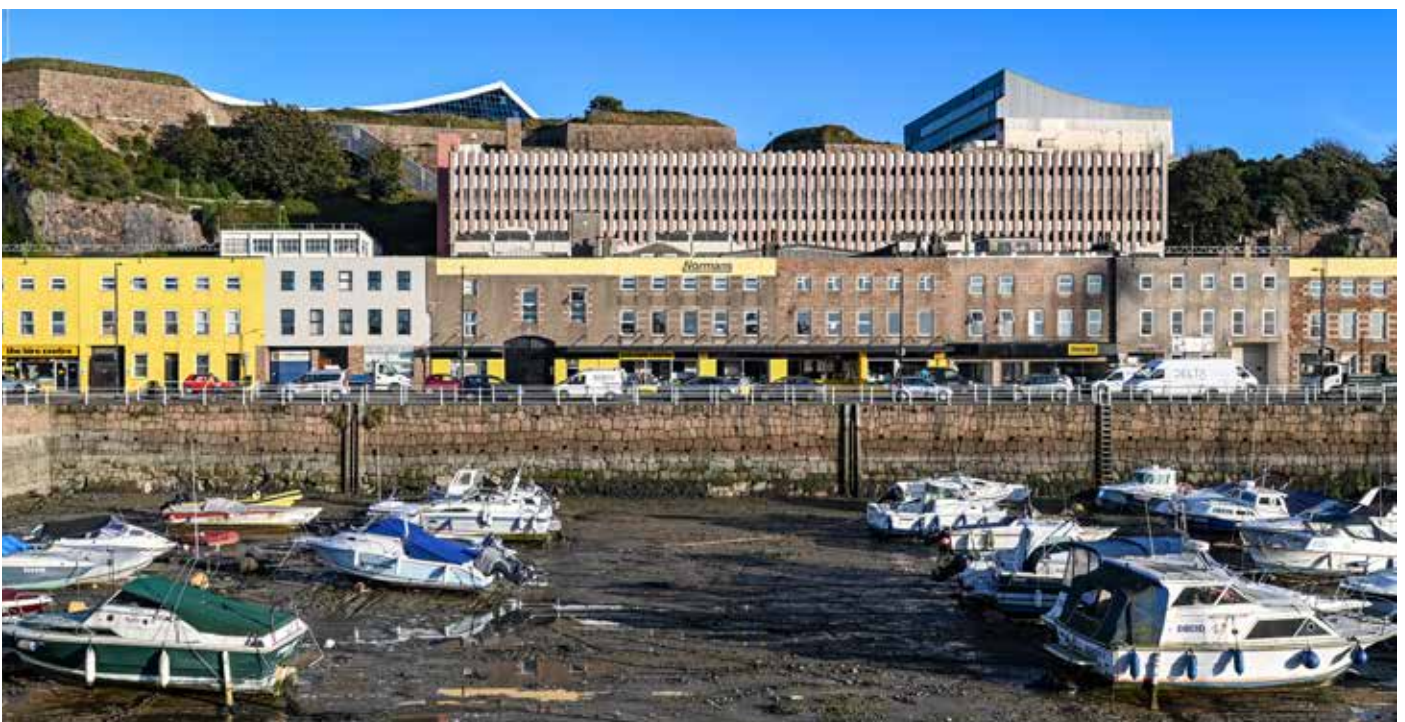
West Esplanade/St Aubin's Bay may have been the subject of minor improvements. Still, the intrusive car parks on the seafront detract from the quality of the area.

The Old Harbours have seen little or no change although their potential is enormous. Change of use of the Commercial Buildings and securing a future for the La Folie Inn would both provide opportunities to transform the area into a bustling specialist quarter. A 'distinctive, independent, retail offer with plenty of places to eat and drink and a vibrant atmosphere'. This how Visit Jersey described one of their ideas for improving the visitor offer of Jersey in a 2017 report by Colliers International. The Old Harbours have the potential to be just that, providing less intrusion from vehicles and a better standard of pedestrian space.

Havre des Pas waterfront has seen change through the redevelopment and upgrading of the Carlton Hotel. Although the building is somewhat

Fig 8.3

Commercial Buildings dominated by the Pier Road car park and Fort Regent - enormous potential for change



overscaled, it has had a beneficial on the quality of the waterfront promenade.

Hard Spaces and Squares:

Royal Square and its surrounding network of pedestrian spaces is the centrepiece of St Helier's public realm and its civic core. It is a pleasant place to be - busy and comfortable. Other linked pedestrian areas provide a range of active or quiet spaces. All these spaces feel busier and more pleasant than in 2005.

The Weighbridge area, identified in the 2005 Appraisal as a significant hub is now a contemporary event area and is much improved. Weighbridge Place is a significant improvement, but the negative impact of the intrusive La Route de la Liberation requires mitigation. This action would make it possible to have stronger connections between the civic core of St Helier and the Old Harbours. At the same time, Weighbridge Place needs a more generous pedestrian link to Royal Square. Creating a clear and easy route along Mulcaster Street and Hill Street, at least to Church Street, would be a positive step.

Connections

Connections to Green Space:

The 2005 Appraisal recommended that there should be better connections between the following areas:

- The Parade to the Civic and Retail Core
- Howard Davis Park to Colomberie
- Town Park to Civic and Retail Core

Fig 8.4

*Carlton Hotel and the promenade,
Havre des Pas*

The connection between The Parade and the Civic and Retail Core has improved, but there is no improvement in the other two routes. The link



between the Town Park and the Civic and Retail Core is particularly significant. It should have priority, especially once the Premier inn development takes place.

Waterfront Connections:

The 2005 Appraisal recommended that there should be better waterfront connections between the following areas:

- West Esplanade to The Parade - no change
- West Esplanade to Elizabeth Castle - no change
- West Esplanade to the Old Harbours - built but unattractive
- Old Harbours to Havre des Pas - no change
- Havre des Pas to Colomberie - no change
- Fort Regent to Havre de Pas via Rope Walk - no change

Connections to Hard Spaces and Urban Squares:

The 2005 Appraisal recommended that there should be better connections between the following areas:

- Civic Heart to the Weighbridge (see above under Hard Spaces and Squares)
- Weighbridge to the Old Harbours (see above under Waterfront Spaces)
- Snow Hill to Fort Regent

Snow Hill to Fort Regent: Chapter 6 discussed the former cable car connection between Snow Hill and Fort Regent (p68-69). It concluded that attractive as the cable car was, to make economic sense, it needs to connect two significant and busy places. At the moment, neither Fort Regent nor Snow Hill meets these requirements. As long as Fort Regent is in decline as a community facility, there will be no need for a 'people-mover' connection. But that could change, and the following three scenarios sketch out a range of possibilities:

Fig 8.5

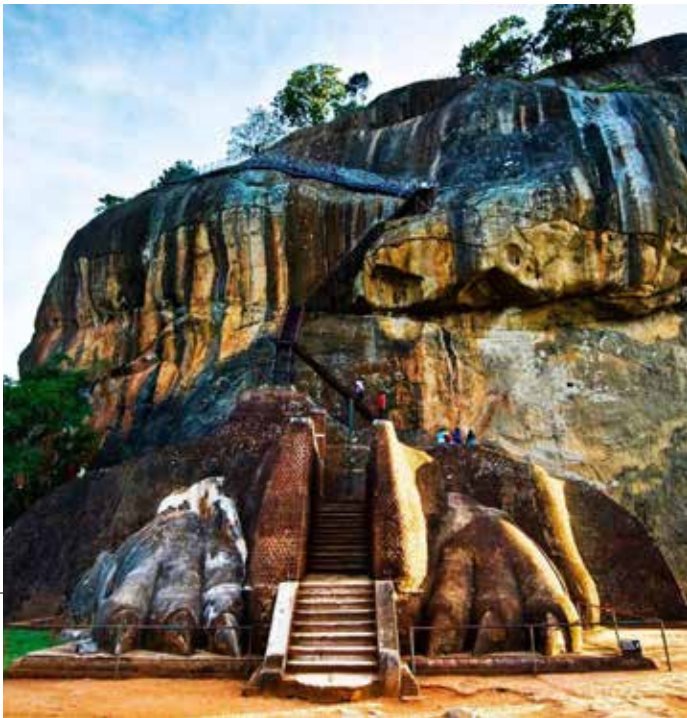
Weighbridge Place - a positive addition to this important area



Fig 8.7

top left - Lion Rock, Sri Lanka
top right - Spanish Steps, Rome
bottom - Neues Museum, Berlin

1. Fort Regent as a properly conserved and promoted historic fort without any additional facilities except perhaps for a restaurant and cafe - genuine heritage without the tat - see Colliers International's Jersey Tourism Audit 2017. Pedestrian access from Snow Hill up a flight of steps cut into the rock - a feature in its own right. Exemplars would be Lion Rock in Sri Lanka, Scalinata di Trinità dei Monti in Rome or Parc Guell in Barcelona.



2. Fort Regent as a properly conserved and promoted historic fort, including a dedicated convention/conference facility, restaurant and cafe - see Colliers International's Jersey Tourism Audit 2017. Pedestrian access from the existing escalator at Pier Road car park. Exemplars would be David Chipperfield's Neues Museum in Berlin or Vlad Sebastian Rusu's Convention and Conference Centre in Blaj, Romania.
3. The introduction of new uses at Fort Regent complete with hotels, casino, fun rides and executive housing - representing a developer-led approach, would offer little to benefit the character of St Helier. Such a proposal would need a people-mover. Examples would be any Disneyland or Parc d'Atraccions Tibidabo in Barcelona.

Fig 8.8

top - Conference Centre Blaj, Romania
bottom - Tibidabo, Barcelona



Of course, there is no immediate need to do anything about this link, and it should have a low priority pending a decision about the future of Fort Regent.

2 Future Strategy and Projects

The 2005 Urban Character Appraisal set out a public realm strategy for connecting places and spaces in St Helier. [Fig 8.9] Some critical elements of the plan are in place in 2020. Still, others seem a long way off, partly due to budgetary limitations and perhaps also because the perception is that they have limited value. Long links to Havre des Pas or expensive access to Fort Regent may fall into this category.

Fig 8.9

2005 Public Realm Strategy

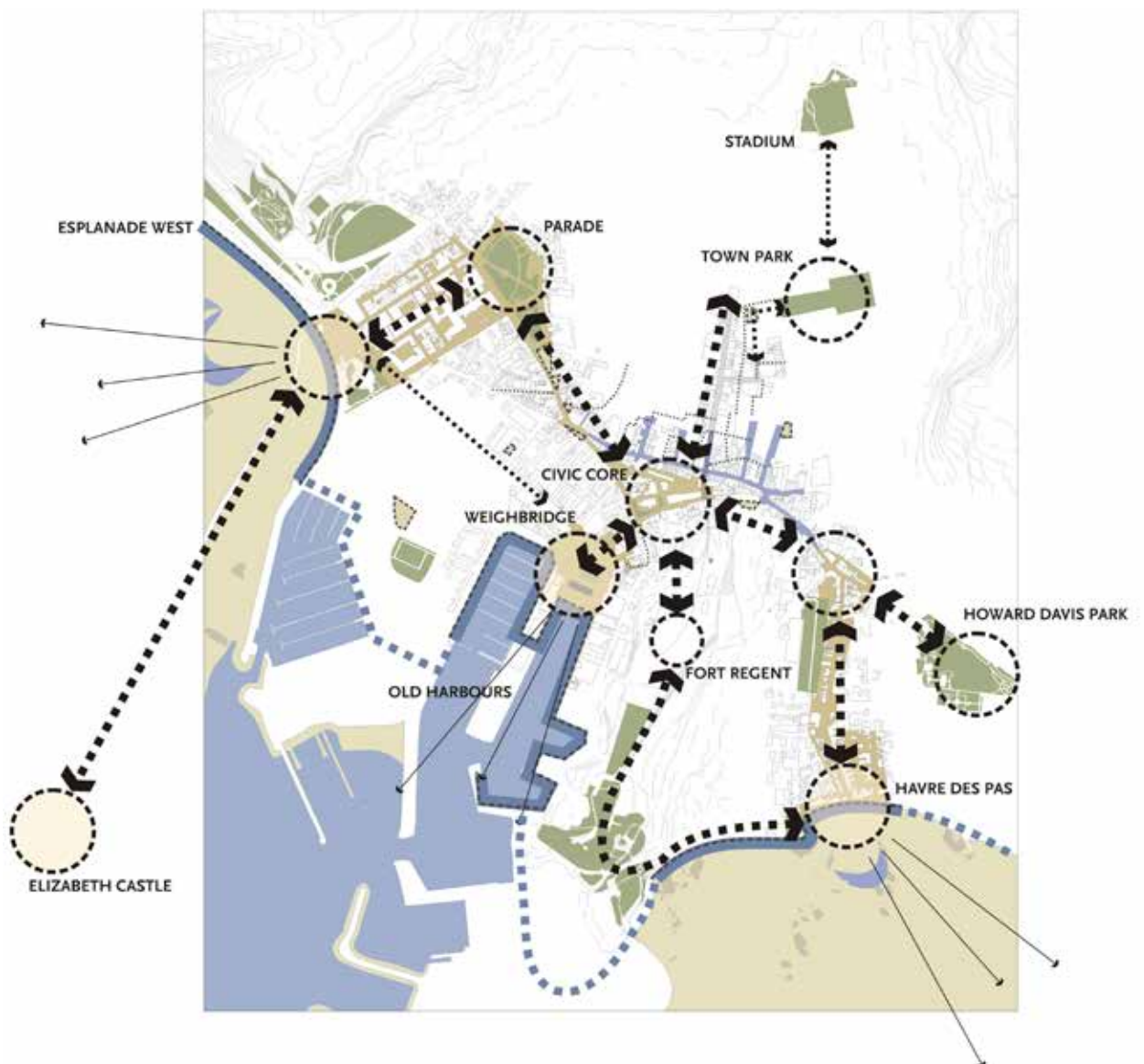


Fig 8.10 shows an evolution of the 2005 Public Realm Strategy. The strategy has eleven components, namely to:

- develop a network place strategy with a hierarchy of projects and actions
- formulate plans for special area projects that are public sector-led rather than by arms-length organisations and unsuccessful models of property development - particularly for the Old Harbours (Commercial Buildings) and Fort Regent

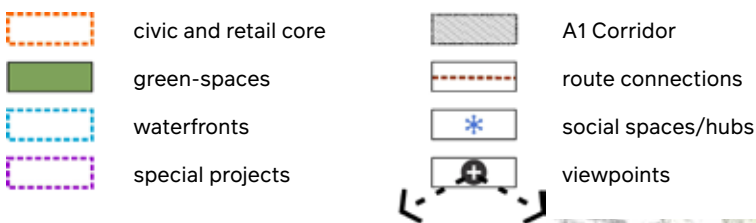


Fig 8.10

2020 Public Realm Strategy

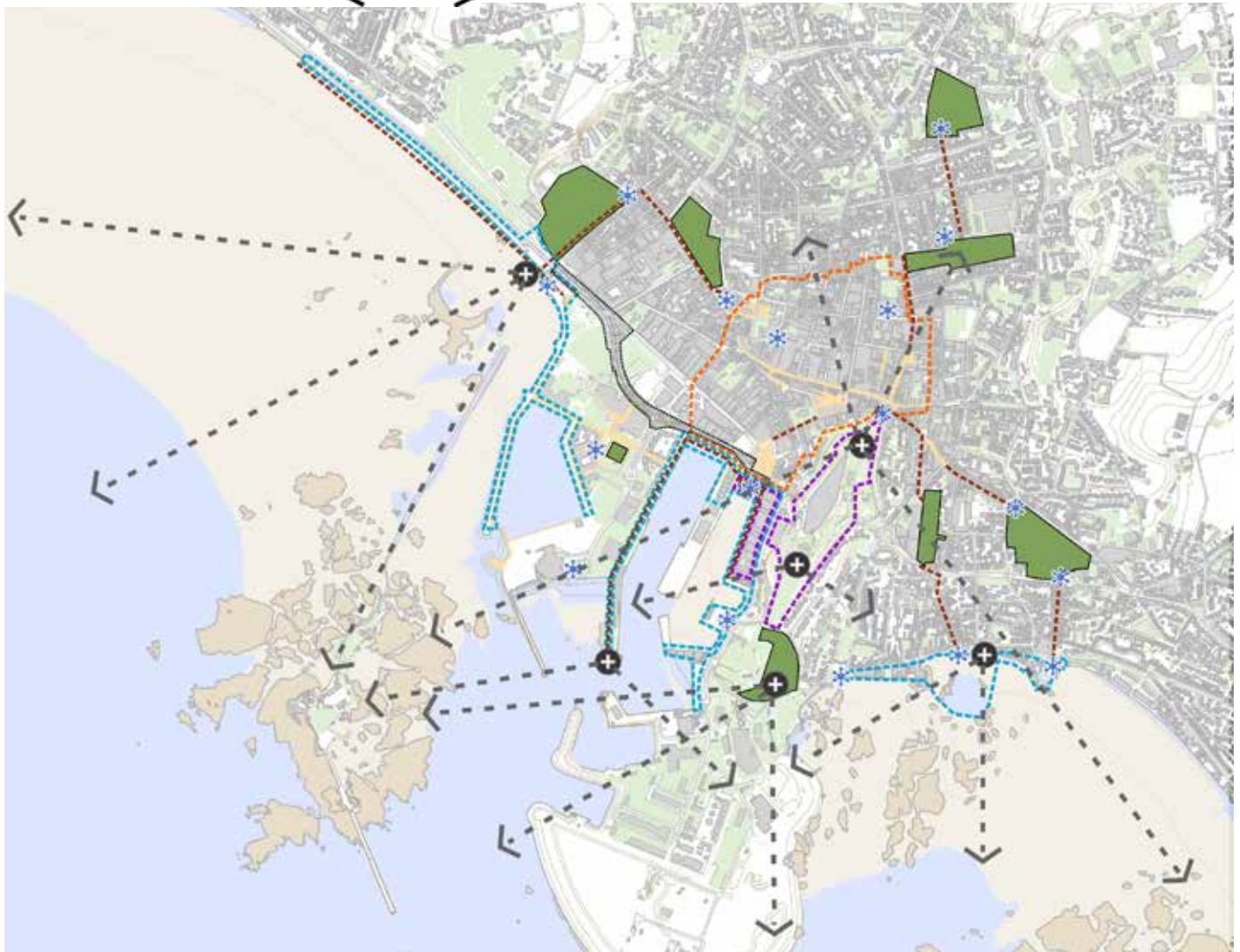


Fig 8.11

*forgotten but fascinating public walk along Albert Pier
top left and right - looking north
bottom - looking south*



- implement capital-funded regeneration projects as pump-primers for wider area regeneration
- improve conditions for pedestrians throughout central St Helier by expanding car-free areas and allocating pedestrians more pavement/footway space where possible
- improve conditions for cyclists throughout central St Helier by assigning them their own road-space space where possible
- reduce the impact of traffic throughout central St Helier but particularly in the civic and retail core and the La Route de la Liberation corridor
- develop a realistic plan to unite the Old Harbours and New Waterfront areas with the civic and retail centre by mitigating the divisive effects of the La Route de la Liberation
- limit areas for on-street parking in central St Helier and develop plans for the co-use or reuse of existing surface car parks
- allocate funds for the improvement of valuable green-spaces that are lacking investment
- work with businesses, especially retailers, to establish social spaces and micro-spaces in areas where large scale public realm interventions are unlikely
- work with businesses, charities, clubs and other organisations to build event programmes for urban spaces that are underused and sterile - for example, at the New Waterfront.

Fig 8.12

Albert Pier: art installation of a vintage valve radio



3 St Helier's distinctiveness

This review of St Helier's character areas has revealed many different views about the distinctiveness of the town. Opinions recorded during the public engagement were consistently positive about the historic town centre, its compact layout, the variety of uses and the maritime and military history. Opinions were less positive about the new waterfront and its bland modern design. Social media tends to be nostalgic about St Helier's 'good old days' and frequently condemns the 'concrete and glass' of the waterfront and emerging financial quarter.

The 2017 report by Colliers International for Visit Jersey contains several useful insights about Jersey and St Helier's distinctiveness. Some conclusions from the report are mentioned earlier in this chapter. One of the most interesting and challenging was how to, "*develop a sense of being 'in Jersey' rather than in the UK...*". The 2017 report by Save Jersey's Heritage entitled '*This Realm of Ours*' is also focused, in part, on the unremitting Little England-ness of traffic and transport signage, road markings and infrastructure. All of the above asks the question, "*how can St Helier's public realm become more 'Jersey-like' rather than English or global?*"

Unfortunately some recent interventions in St Helier lack a distinct sense of belonging and arguably would not look amiss in the Caribbean, the Costa del Sol or St Petersburg. Most St Helier street furniture is exactly what you see in England. St Helier street signs are the same as those found in London as are the road traffic signs, pedestrian railings and bollards. The typefaces are those found in England too. Things that are distinctive and not 'England' include wooden shutters on houses, large scale rough stone walls and spectacular sculptural pines.

Fig 8.13

left - New Street
right - Wall details in Havre des Pas



Looking at La Rochelle, Granville and some Normandy towns, all the street signs are continental. Materials seem to be local, robust, natural and handcrafted. There is less generic commercial plastic in the street scene compared to English towns. There often seems to be a contrast of the simple and the ornamental – for example, plain walls or floors but with panels of contrasting texture or juxtaposed with wrought iron or ornate signage. To summarise, the public realm of nearby French towns is distinctive because of:

- Maritime pine trees
- Hand-painted signs on plaster, on gable walls and above shops
- Enamelled, white text on blue street name plaques
- Traditional style lighting - wall-mounted
- Street furniture - contemporary, many bollards, a few seats and bins, not from UK catalogues
- Shutters
- Canopies over shop windows
- Wrought iron embellishments - balconies, grilles, railings
- Homogeneous colour palette
- Paving: consistent use throughout of cream stone on footways with asphalt carriageways. Occasionally painted kerbstones

St Helier, of course, has a strong French tradition visible today through street names, districts and particular ages and styles of architecture. It also has used local paving stones for public realm work. There are apparent geographical, geological and climate reasons why many French features are common in Jersey. Still, Frenchness seems to have found its limits. It

Fig 8.14

The global architecture of the New Waterfront



is unclear if it is fading away through lack of interest, laziness, accidental sequences of events or a genuine desire to be English rather than French.

It is not the role of this review to lobby for one approach or another - England or France - but there is merit in St Helier playing to its natural strengths and roots by developing its own style - rather than just importing things from England. For example, developing a clear identity and distinctiveness based on traditional building style could create new industries, skills and craft-based employment. A landscaping industry based on local geography, climate and local species rather than imported plant material could be incredibly positive for St Helier.

However, developing local styles would not take root in the property development sector, which does so much to undermine the identity of the town. It is interesting to examine the urban character of many financial centres across the world and to come to a conclusion quickly. London Docklands, the Cayman Islands, Bermuda and the British Virgin Islands do not value urban quality. In St Helier's New Waterfront, there is an opportunity to better reflect local character.

There is much to value in the traditional urban core of St Helier. The architecture and street layout, the dominant Fort Regent, the surrounding landscape setting and the traditional relationship with the sea are enormously positive for the town. It is worrying to see the erosion of this - partly through globalisation but mainly through new developments which are not in tune with their surroundings.

Fig 7.15

*entrance gateway
Green Street, Havre des Pas*



Conclusion: a summary of the findings of the review

A blend of introductory remarks from consultees and the team

St Helier has changed, in many respects for the better, since the original Urban Character Appraisal was carried out in 2005. In general, the town seems more modern, cosmopolitan and sophisticated. This may reflect the inflow of high earning young professionals in the intervening years: the old-fashioned seaside resort feel of the place has given way to something which is now unmistakably a business place. The retail offer is way ahead of what would be expected in any UK town of similar size.

All this said, the contrast between the centre of the town and its inner-urban neighbourhoods – often quite shabby, with lots of housing in multiple occupation/bedsits – is remarkable. That was true in 2005 but is even more striking now. One incredibly encouraging thing is the lovely, high-density neighbourhood of new and refurbished old properties around the Millennium Park. At the same time, it was surprising to find from attendees at workshops that hardly any of them lived in St Helier.

In 2005, stakeholders described a worst-case scenario for St Helier in which the town fails to respond to challenges. It then “*drifts into anonymity and provincialism: sub-standard waterfront development would suck the life out of the traditional town centre, without creating an attractive new place*”, and the flight to the countryside – by residents and visitors – would continue.

Much of this still applies, and – with a few notable exceptions – the quality of new development is generally bland. One observation is that the Liberty Wharf development – though a mixed bag – has drawn the town across the Esplanade and given that area a busier, more urban feel. The natural next step would be to develop the site of the surface Liberation car park. Maybe a pointer that, as some of the leisure developments on the reclaimed land approach the end of their lives, it might be possible to increase density and strengthen connections with the town.

Some of the strategic aspirations set out in the 2005 report included:

- a world-class waterfront, comprising a dynamic central business district; quayside cafes, restaurants and shops; visitor attractions; and apartments in a high-quality, high-density urban setting
- a revived, repopulated and distinctive urban core, with a lively mixed economy of shops, markets, cultural and entertainment venues; new workplaces; and city living apartments
- a sweep of stylish, civilised and sought-after city suburbs, including the regeneration of Havre des Pas as a seaside gem

These still feel like good messages, but there would now need to be a point made specifically about the medium-long-term re-purposing of La Collette, and – in the light of what was said above – the inner-urban neighbourhoods (some of which are thriving while others seem to be distressed) would be a good topic in their own right. The demographic trends mean that doing high-density (but not high-rise) well will be a central theme.

The 2005 report developed some urban design guiding principles for St Helier, which included:

- reconnecting the town with its waterfront
- integrating waterfront development with the form and character of the town centre
- creating a sense of arrival and welcome at points of entry
- overcoming severance and environmental impacts of traffic
- nurturing the town's distinctiveness and authenticity through conservation and new development
- encouraging diversity and cosmopolitanism
- animating streets and public spaces.

Some of this sounds a bit dated in 2020 but is probably sound enough. Traffic remains a huge issue, though: the historic core of the old town is no place for cars and, as far as is practically (and culturally) possible they should be excluded.

La Route de La Liberation remains a divisive fixture – it runs along the back of the superb beach to the west, then separates the town from the waterfront. Given the islanders' perceived dependency on cars, changes would be highly controversial. Still, it should be possible to try to redress the balance by de-engineering the road, reducing traffic speeds and reclaiming road space for pedestrians.

Strategic context:

The big change – in terms of strategic context – is the scale and urgency of the demographic challenge facing Jersey. 21% population growth between 2000 and 2018 is extraordinary. Even if net migration is capped at 1,000 a year (significantly less than it has been in recent years) the population is projected to increase by another 15% by 2030.

It poses questions (not for us to address, but certainly for us to be aware of) about how immigration will be managed in the future, but even a (highly unlikely) nil migration scenario generates significant housing need in the period to 2030. Net migration of 1,000 generates a need for 6,760 dwellings – huge bearing in mind that total island housing stock in 2011 was 45,000.

This is why the options set out in the Island Plan 2021-2030 are all about managing development. They fall into 2 broad groups: Options 1, 2a and 2b are all predicated on development being directed to St Helier (possibly with

settlement expansion); Options 3-6 are all predicated on different models for the redistribution of development.

Engagement

On-street engagement, web-based surveys and workshops provided the review with many contrasting views about the St Helier environment. There was a great attachment to the historic town, Fort Regent and its maritime and military history. Concerns about traffic congestion, parking and the new waterfront contrasted with aspirations for a zero-carbon future, integrated public transport and active travel initiatives.

Built heritage

The September 2019 survey of the existing fabric of St Helier's historic environment found that is generally sound. Still, with current housing and redevelopment pressures, it remains vulnerable in places. There have been significant success stories but also losses of more than a dozen listed buildings in recent years. Most of these losses have been due to new residential developments.

The headline issues arising from the review are:

- increased numbers of enquiries in recent years from owners of listed or historic properties seeking advice on appropriate repairs
- a trend towards the reinstatement of historic features
- the overdue need for designation of Conservation Area(s)
- lack of adherence to 2005 recommended colour palettes - though this is not surprising since currently, implementation can succeed only by persuasion
- better technical guidance requirement
- need for a repair grant programme to encourage better standards of reinstating historic buildings
- outreach and education needed to counter anti-heritage opinions and to make explicit the need to acknowledge the role of heritage in underpinning the character and identity
- the need for acceptance that the Jersey tourism industry depends on the island's historic environments of which St Helier is the most significant

Character area review

The management of development and placemaking interventions in the Town Centre Core (CA8) and Town Centre North (CA9) areas have been generally positive and represent an enhancement of these areas. The restriction of development to small plot sizes and heights that are within limits set by the 2005 Urban Character Appraisal is beneficial. However, there have been exceptions that breach height and material recommendations from 2005.

There has been an overall balance of change in La Collette (CA2), the Old Harbours (CA5), the Parade and Esplanade (CA7), and the Town Edges and Slopes (CA10).

There are four areas which have seen change or erosion of character since 2005. These are Elizabeth Castle (CA1), the New Waterfront (CA6), Fort Regent (CA4) and Havre des Pas (CA5).

Small and sensitive has suited St Helier well over the past twenty years while large-scale interventions have harmed the town's traditional character and placemaking. If the town values its traditional character, sensitive, human-scaled mixed-use developments are the best approach to maintaining that character.

At the same time, large scale developments have not been entirely unsuccessful. The International Finance Centre and other developments on the Esplanade have given the area a sense of buzz and has animated the surrounding streets and public realm.

Development dilemma

This section examined the issues involved in accommodating the demand for new housing in St Helier over the next decade. There are several issues at stake, including:

- the value placed on the character of the town
- the sensitivity of different parts of the town to new development
- the location and availability of developable land
- the quality of placemaking in new residential development, and
- the form of new development, particularly its height and density

Based on the sensitivity of the character areas, the conclusion is that large residential developments in the town are best suited to the less sensitive areas: these are the New Waterfront, Havre des Pas-Greve d'Azette, and the Town Edges and Slopes are the preferred locations for new residential developments.

Design Guidance

At the same time, there will inevitably be a demand to build on sites in more sensitive areas. The difficulties that arise from new residential development in these locations are almost always related to height, massing, the scale of buildings and their effect on the surrounding area. Height is one of the most straightforward measures to control, yet it is the measure that is regularly 'put to one side' in the overall assessment of new residential developments.

In framing design guidance to help with these issues, the 2005 advice is supplemented by controls on privacy, overlooking, loss of views and sunlight.

Public realm and identity

The apparent increased use of St Helier's public realm is one of the earliest findings of this review and one of the most striking differences between the town centre in 2005 and 2020. Very positive new works include the Town Park, extensions to pedestrian and pedestrian priority areas, Weighbridge Place and the new World War I memorial at the Parade.

The Public Realm Strategy dating from the 2005 Report will be updated to include new ideas for greenspace, connections, social spaces, active travel and special projects.

A section on St Helier's identity and distinctiveness draws on a variety of sources. It sets the value of local styles against the drive to global architecture and off-the-shelf signage and materials, mainly from England. There is much to value in the traditional urban core of St Helier. The architecture and street layout, the dominant Fort Regent, the surrounding landscape setting and the historic relationship with the sea are enormously positive for the town.

Conclusion

St Helier has improved remarkably in the past 15 years. In many ways, it is a beautiful, unusual and thriving place, but it faces challenges that could destabilise some of the recent successes. Finding the best way to accommodate growth and its associated housing provision is a significant challenge. This review has sought to use the character areas as a positive regulator of future development. The Government of Jersey must lead rather than react to development pressure. The guidance in this review, if implemented, would ensure that the character of St Helier is maintained and enhanced while offering opportunities for the provision of new housing and associated facilities in appropriate locations.

