

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

2nd Issue

1. RESIDENTIAL

1.1 Density is applied to residential development. In the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and the United States of America the yardstick used for measuring density is either the number of habitable rooms (or persons) to the acre, or the number of dwellings to the acre. Generally in these countries the average occupancy of dwellings is one person per habitable room, and, as a planning authority cannot ultimately control occupancy, it is now usual to quote habitable rooms rather than persons.

1.2 Types of Density Standards

The standard of 'habitable rooms to the acre' is normally used in respect of flats and mixed development - particularly development in and around the town centre. 'Dwellings to the acre' is normally used in the case of housing development (detached, semi-detached and terraced) where each dwelling has its own plot. The reason for this is that, except possibly where the Housing Authority is undertaking a scheme, it is impracticable for the Planning Authority to regulate exactly the number of rooms in an individual private dwelling. Thus if an acre of land was zoned for development at a maximum of 40 habitable rooms it would be possible for the area to be divided up into eight plots of which the first seven built could be six habitable rooms each thereby already exceeding the proposed density.

The use of the acre is understandably not entirely familiar in Jersey. However, the vergee is a somewhat small unit to use and although it is possible in relation to habitable rooms it is somewhat impracticable in the case of dwellings where one might be forced to quote a broken figure, for example, of 2.7 dwellings per vergee.

1.3 Factors Affecting Density

(a) Location: It is universal practice to permit higher residential densities in and immediately adjacent to a town and built up suburban areas than in the countryside and more rural areas. Basically this is because land in and near the town is more expensive and must be utilised economically, there is a greater demand for people to live in and near their place of work, and main sewers, community facilities and public transport are generally readily available.

(b) Type of development: This affects the maximum permissible density and it is only with flats or a mixed development of flats and houses that high densities can be obtained. Generally speaking flats are only acceptable, particularly in Jersey, in the urban area. In the rural areas the majority of people wish to have detached dwellings, and this is in sympathy with development in

the countryside. Moreover the present trend is for bungalow type development which inevitably requires rather more space than a two storey dwelling.

1.4 Actual Standards

The maximum density generally for the town of St. Helier is 100 habitable rooms (or persons) to the acre. This density is permitted, subject to certain other considerations, within the inner core. However in the case of sites of over half an acre, where it is possible to build a higher building and provide more open space, the Island Development Committee has agreed that the density may be extended to a maximum of 120 habitable rooms to the acre, and on sites more than one acre in extent to 140 habitable rooms to the acre - provided there is no prejudice to adjoining properties or the area generally and that traffic and other planning factors are satisfied.

In the outer ring of the town a density of 70 habitable rooms to the acre is normally permitted with, in special cases, an increase to 85 or a maximum of 90 on large sites.

In the calculation of density areas half the width of any roads adjoining the site, to a maximum of 20 ft. may be included.

Whilst 'rooms per acre' is the basic standard used for town density certain other factors have to be taken into consideration to prevent physical overcrowding and to provide adequate amenities and privacy for the occupants of the dwellings. These are set out in the memorandum entitled "Residential Density in the Town Area" and they involve open space around the building of 200 sq. ft. per habitable room and a plot ratio (which will be explained subsequently) not in excess of 1.

Outside the town development is more frequently in the form of houses rather than flats or mixed development, and as has already been stated the type of development considerably affects the maximum possible density. Density is therefore normally designated by the number of dwellings per acre. Twelve dwellings per acre can, in most instances, be achieved with semi-detached houses: in the case of terrace houses this can probably be increased, on certain sites, to fourteen dwellings to the acre. However, if detached houses are involved then density is reduced to about eight to the acre, and possibly in the case of bungalows to about six.

Habitable rooms include Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Studies, Bedrooms, Kitchens (over 90 sq. ft. in area), and all other rooms over 70 sq. ft. Rooms of 250 sq. ft. and over count as two habitable rooms with every extra 100 sq. ft. one additional habitable room..

A summary of the above are included in Appendix I.

1.5 Hotel Development

For Hotel development the Committee has for some time been operating a standard based on the residential density standards set out above, because an Hotel is largely a residential building. However there has been a considerable relaxation of standards on the basis that the guest accommodation is by and large only temporary accommodation in that particular persons do not live in their rooms for any length of time and have no need for individual living and storage facilities such as are required in a dwelling.

The scheme that has been adopted is best explained by an example:-

On an acre site in the main town centre an Hotel (subject to other planning considerations) would be permitted 120 habitable rooms. Any staff or manager's rooms required would be calculated at one person per habitable room as in the case of permanent residential accommodation. On the assumption that 20 staff were to be housed there would remain 100 habitable rooms available for guests, but whereas in the case of normal residential accommodation this would be calculated on the basis of one person per habitable room, in Hotels two persons per habitable room are permitted. In other words the Hotel would be able to take a maximum of 200 guests. In addition, and this is a further relaxation on the normal residential standards, all public rooms required for the running of an Hotel of this size would be ignored. In practice, therefore, this would give an overall density of 220 persons to the acre, which even on the basis of temporary occupancy is quite a high one when one considers the need to make provision for car parking and other tourist amenities for the guests.

2. COMMERCIAL

2.1 Types of Standard

Plot ratio and floor space index are used for commercial development. There is little essential difference between these two and for convenience here in Jersey, as in many other countries, plot ratio is now always used. Plot ratio is the proportion of total floor area of a building* (all floors added together) to the net site area, i.e. the site area within the boundaries and not including half the roads. * measured to external faces of walls.


2.2 Actual Standards

The Committee has adopted, and indeed for many years has operated, a maximum standard of 2.5. Mr. Barrett in Part II of the Jersey Development Plan recommended a ratio of between 2.5 and 3, although he envisaged only about 2:1 in the general use zone with a four storey building. Where a very large area of town redevelopment warrants it consideration may be given to increasing the plot ratio to 3 as

(a) this would make for a far more economic development; (b) other amenities would at the same time be provided, such as road widenings, off street parking etc.; and (c) the size of the site would probably allow for higher buildings and larger open spaces.

3. MIXED DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

It not infrequently happens in town development or redevelopment that a mixed development of commercial and residential is required, usually with commercial on the lower floor(s) and residential above. Such cases must be dealt with on their merits based on the proportion of each type of development. Some schemes have already been successfully negotiated by reducing the net residential density on primarily residential schemes or the plot ratio on primarily commercial schemes to offset a small amount of the other type of development. In practice such schemes can normally be fairly easily negotiated, and it is suggested that it is not practicable or desirable to lay down fixed rules.


States' Planning Officer

SUMMARY OF RESIDENTIAL DENSITY STANDARDS FOR JERSEY

<u>Location</u>	<u>Maximum Density</u>	<u>Type of Development</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Central Town Core	100 habitable rooms per acre on sites less than half an acre.	Mainly flats or mixed development.	Subject to open space of 200 sq. ft. per habitable room, a maximum plot ratio of 1 and normal planning criteria.
	120 habitable rooms per acre on sites of half an acre or more.		
	140 habitable rooms per acre on sites of one acre or more.		
Inner Town Ring	70 habitable rooms per acre on sites of less than half an acre.	Multi-storey flats	
	85/90 habitable rooms per acre on sites of half an acre or more.		
Outside Town Area	Detached dwellings - 8 dwellings per acre.	Mixed flats and houses.	
	Semi-detached houses - 12 dwellings per acre.		
	Terrace houses - 14 dwellings per acre.		
	Mixed development - 60 habitable rooms per acre.		

Subject to review regarding the position of the zone boundary.

For calculation purposes half the width of adjoining roads may be added to site area.

Countable rooms include Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Studies, Bedrooms, Kitchens (over 90 sq. ft. in area), and rooms over 70 sq. ft.