

# **2011 Island Plan: Interim Review (1)**

H2 – Reply to Minister’s response

**Field 1248, La Pouquelaye, St. Helier**

November 2013



The owner seeks the Inspectors' recommendation to rezone Field 1248 for Category A housing.

The Inspectors' report May 2011 stated:

*'There is a housing crisis in Jersey' and 'deferring the problem will do nothing to solve it and indeed will only make it worse'.*

Field 1248 would help satisfy this need.

The Minister's response (Vol 2) is, we believe, incorrect in stating that sufficient land is available for the provision of affordable housing, for the reasons stated in the last submission, and for the reasons discussed during the first day of the EiP. For this reason it matters not whether the loss of other re-zoned sites provides justification for Field 1248 to be rezoned, as additional housing sites will be required.

It is ironic the Minister should reject this site given it was secured for housing development by Policy H3 (2002 IP) that stated 'There will be a presumption against development that will prevent the future use of these sites for Category A housing'. Now the Minister holds the opposite opinion, despite the affordable housing crisis having worsened.

It is no more than political expediency to continue to state (as was the case in the last EiP and the previous IP Review) that there is sufficient land available. The Minister and the States of Jersey in general, has consistently failed to provide sufficient housing.

The appropriateness spatially of Field 1248 for housing is demonstrated by the Minister's own assessment, scoring 'high' on two of the four criteria. The final criterion (Use Rating) is deemed to be 'low' because it is agricultural land but this is no different to other sites put forward by the Minister for re-zoning.

A key issue is potential landscape impact.

The Minister claims the landscape sensitivity of the area is high.

However, the Inspector has previously commented that this is 'no more serious than in many other places', albeit its greenfield status means it is understood to be less favourably considered than already developed land.

However, public views of the site are extremely limited:

1. Vallee des Vaux to the east does not afford any views of the site.
2. Trinity Hill to the east does not afford any views of the site.
3. Very long distance views are limited, most probably only from the Grainville area which is not an area of public amenity and is situated some 1.5km away
4. Where long distance views are possible the development of Field 1248 would be seen against a backdrop of the Main Urban Settlement, and in particular the existing commercial building that abuts the western boundary of the field.

These four factors mean the sites landscape impact is not, in reality, high as claimed by the Minister.