

**Plémont
Holiday Camp
Jersey**

Redevelopment proposal

30 new residential units

Site Specific Landscape & Visual Assessment

for

Plémont Estates Ltd



Issued for planning
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Michael Felton Ltd
in association with

LEITHGOE

URBAN & LANDSCAPE PLANNING, CHARTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Contents

1 Context	Page 3
2 Assessment Methodology	Page 4
3 Existing Conditions	Page 5
4 The Proposal	Page 22
5 Impacts – Capacity & Sensitivity	Page 29
6 Mitigation	Page 35
7 Management	Page 37
8 Summary & Conclusion	Page 38

Appendices *see separate pdfs*

Appendix One	- BDK Site Plan & Architect's Drawings
Appendix Two	- 1980s Photograph
Appendix Three	- States of Jersey Countryside Character Types/Areas
Appendix Four	- States of Jersey Island Plan 2002
Appendix Five	- Aerial Photograph
Appendix Six	- Photographs 1-39
Appendix Seven	- Photoviewpoints and Visual Boundary Plan 1a & Plan 2a
Appendix Eight	- Photomontages
Appendix Nine	- Landscape Architect's Drawings
Appendix Ten	- Photomontage preparation –Technical Note

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1 Context

- 1.1 This report accompanies a planning application by Plémont Estates Ltd for the redevelopment of the existing holiday camp at Plémont, Jersey. The proposal is to demolish the existing holiday camp and replace this with 30 residential units.
- 1.2 This report has been compiled in response to a request by States of Jersey Planning & Environment Ministry, Environment Division, for an Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statement to be prepared. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will accompany the planning application for redevelopment of the site. The Environment Division of the Planning and Environment Department of the States of Jersey advised, in their EIA Scoping Opinion and Checklist (issued 1st May 2009), that Landscape and Visual Assessment forms a topic to be incorporated into the wider Environmental Impact Assessment, which has been prepared by Michel Hughes Associates.
- 1.3 The redevelopment for residential use should be seen, both in the context of an existing tourism and leisure facility, which has occupied the site for over 70 years, and the nearby hamlet of Portinfer. There are local landscape designations and a long distance footpath along the clifftop in the locality. This passes across land owned by the applicant over which they entered into a Licence with the States of Jersey for establishing the North Coast Footpath, which expires on 31.12.2016. This report considers the redevelopment and the effect this might have on the quality of the landscape, and views from the surrounding locality.
- 1.4 A design by BDK Architects, for 30 new houses, as positioned in the location shown on the architect's site plan (Appendix One), has formed the basis of this assessment.

2 Landscape Assessment Methodology

- 2.1 This study conforms with the guidance set out in Dept for Communities & Local Government Circular 02/99, and with the DCLG consultation paper “Environmental Impact Assessment: A guide to good practice and procedures (June 2006).
- 2.2 The Study also conforms to the Supplementary Planning Guidance issued by The States of Jersey in July 2008 – Environmental Impact Assessment: A Guide to Procedures.
- 2.3 The States of Jersey commissioned an Island wide landscape assessment (Jersey Island Plan Review – Countryside Character Appraisal) which was published in 1999. Reference is made to this report in our site specific study of Plémont.
- 2.4 The methodology is constantly being refined and the assessment of landscape capacity and landscape sensitivity, as a means of determining the impact of development, is an emerging topic within landscape planning.
- 2.5 As yet there is no definitive national guidance, available to the States of Jersey Planning & Environment Ministry Environment Division, as to how such an approach might be of assistance in the planning process. However, the capacity of a landscape to accept change is specifically referred to in the 1999 Countryside Character Appraisal.
- 2.6 Meanwhile our site specific study acknowledges the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) “Topic Paper 6:Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity [2004]”.
- 2.7 Our study is also based on the methodologies contained in “Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment” published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Assessment and Management. 2nd Ed 2002.
- 2.8 The site has been visited on three occasions, at differing times of the day and in different seasons. A tour of the local lanes has been undertaken. The Cliff Path has been walked, both in the vicinity of the site and at extremes of visibility; to the west at Les Landes/Grosnez and to the east at Sorel Point. A photographic record has been kept of each site visit.

3 Baseline Conditions-Existing Conditions

3.1 History

3.1.1 The land at Plémont has been developed for over 100 years. In the 19th century a hotel was built on the site. It was located immediately to the east of what is currently the car park near the cliff path. The following description is from the architect's Design Statement which accompanies this planning application :-

3.1.2

The site has been used as a visitor or holiday resource since 1874 with the opening of the Plémont Hotel, in proximity to the headland. It was still used as a hotel until at least 1934 but the buildings (then used for storage and as a hostel) were destroyed by fire a few years later (an aerial photo seen by the author dated 1947 shows the building destroyed). In 1935 the 'Jubilee Holiday Camp Hotel' was built on the site of the present buildings. The facility was considerably damaged by fire in 1937 but was rebuilt and re-opened in 1946 as the Parkin's Holiday Camp, after the hiatus of the war years. In 1961 the site was acquired by Pontin's and re-developed in the late 1960s. Although such 'holiday camp' venues started falling out of fashion in the late 1970s-early 1980s, it struggled to continue, was re-branded as the 'Plémont Bay Holiday Village' in 1998, but finally closed in September 2000.

(1980s Photos-Appendix Two)

The holiday village has been disused as a public facility since its closure, although the bungalow remains occupied by a site manager and the grounds and buildings have at times been used for training Jersey police dogs.

3.2 Landscape Designations

3.2.1 There are two landscape designations which are relevant to the site. Firstly, the Jersey Island Plan Review – Countryside Character Appraisal 1999 identified Character Types and Character Areas throughout the Island. The countryside and coast of Jersey has been divided into eight broad character types, based on common, uniform, physical and natural features and attributes. These have been further

broken down into constituent, discrete character areas, each with a distinctive local identity. (Appendix Three)

The site lies within Character Type E “Interior Agricultural Land”, the Character Area is designated E1: Northwest Headland (St Ouen)

3.2.2 Secondly, the landscape character boundaries were carried forward into the Island Plan Review 2002. This refined the boundaries of earlier Plans to establish three Countryside Planning Zones. The site lies within the Green Zone. (Policy C5) (Appendix Four)

3.2.3 In addition, because of the intervisibility between the two, it is relevant to acknowledge the landscape designation adjacent to the site. The 1999 Countryside Character Appraisal identified The Island’s Cliffs and Headlands as Character Type A, with the area around the site being Landscape Character Area A1 “North Coast Heathland”. In the Island Plan 2002, the North Coast Cliffs are designated as being within The Zone of Outstanding Character. (Policy C4) - (Appendix Four)

3.3 Site Specific Landscape Character

3.3.1 The essential character of Area E1 is described in the Character Appraisal as being :-

- exposed, upstanding plateau on the north-west headland of St Ouen;
- underlain by the hard rocks of the north-west granite with a very thin soil cover derived partly from the bedrock with deeper loess solids on the central part of the headland;
- characteristic field boundaries formed by low granite faced earth banks, often topped with a low cover of wind sculpted gorse or bracken;
- a diverse mix of field patterns including small rectangular fields adjacent to Les Landes, parts of the Medieval open field system and later (post1800) enclosures;
- the intact Medieval open field system of La Campagne near St Ouen’s Church is of great importance and a proposed Ancient Monument SSI. A whole historic landscape survives including earth baulks between strips, lanes running along the headlands and the mill where corn grown in the open fields would have been ground;
- the fields are almost entirely in arable production with thin soils being quick to warm up in springtime providing some of the earliest land for potatoes;

- characterised by sparse settlement with groups of low granite farmhouses sheltering in hollows on the plateau top. Settlement groups are connected by winding narrow lanes bordered by high stone faced earth banks.

3.3.2 Character Area E1 extends over a wide area to the west and to the south, and most is not visible from the site. Not all of the characteristics apply to the proposals at Plémont. Moreover we have noted that the character within Area E1 changes, as one moves from west to east. The wind swept coastal fields near Les Landes are different in character to those lying on the more sheltered, undulating land, adjacent to the site. This level of detail is not described in the 1999 Appraisal.

3.3.3 Although the site is designated as being within Character Area E1 it is situated on the northern extremity and is visible, in part, from the adjacent landscape which is designated Character Area A1.

The essential character of the neighbouring Area A1 is described in the Character Appraisal as being :-

- high rugged cliffs of pink, orange and grey granites and other igneous and volcanic rocks dropping steeply to a deep sea and enclosing several protected bays;
- cliffs are distinguished by a variety of slopes, outcrops, gullies and platforms, and headlands, and provide magnificent coastal views. Geologically, of great interest with eleven proposed geological SSI;
- northfacing and consequently in the shade and cooler and more moist compared to the cliffs of the south-west, with the notable exception of Les Landes which faces to the west;
- clad with a narrowband of heathland, bracken and bramble and dissected by narrow, lush, wooded valleys. On Les Landes, wind pruned maritime heathland extends over the headland. Les Landes has been designated as a biological SSI. Two further heathland sites, on the north coast, are proposed Biological SSI;
- the richest archaeological zone on the Island, with a continuity of sites dating from the Paleolithic and including all phases from the Neolithic – Post Medieval. Nine sites are identified as proposed Ancient Monument SSI;
- six sites along the north coast heathlands have been designated as Important Bird Areas for their range of heathland birds. The whole of the cliffs are of value for breeding seabirds (Channel Islands Importance);
- open, exposed windswept character, highly valued for special qualities of remoteness, wilderness and peacefulness.

- 3.3.4 The Countryside Character Appraisal of 1999 specifically comments on development adjacent to Character Area A1, (but within Character Area E1) including the shooting range at Crabbé, the holiday camp at Plémont, and the model aircraft site at Les Landes and their potential to impact on the wildness of Character Area A1. These sites involve human activity and are, at least in part, related to the tourism on which the Island's economy depends. In a compact and multi-faceted place, such as Jersey, the simplistic division of land into character areas and zones has its limitations, when being translated into best practice in considering planning issues.
- 3.3.5 It is however important to acknowledge the surrounding landscape character, and all its facets, when preparing a development proposal. Reconciling them completely can sometimes be an impossible task, especially when two Character Areas may have conflicting constraints, and a balanced judgement must therefore be made when considering the merits of a proposal.

3.4 Cultural Heritage

- 3.4.1 There is a former wartime observation gun post within the site, on the clifftop in the north east corner. There is a relic of a 19th century fort on Plémont headland - La Tête de Plémont promontory fort. Although the area generally is the richest archaeological zone of the Island, there are no other Ancient Monuments in the immediate locality. The name of the settlement of Portinfer, on the approach to Plémont, is said to be derived from the "Iron Gates", a reference to a long vanished historical defence of the surrounding area.
- 3.4.2 A number of cultural influences are described in the 1999 Countryside Character Appraisal. These comprise Archaeology and Past Land Use, Patterns of Enclosure, Settlement and Building Character and Current Land Use Management. The following passage is particularly pertinent to the 30 house proposals :-

Settlement and Building Character: Settlement in this area has traditionally been sparse with low granite farmhouses, often clustered in groups, set into hollows on the plateau top.

3.5 Public access to the countryside and views towards the site

The Coastal Cliff Path passes to the north of the site. There are lateral/oblique views of the existing buildings from this path, but the interior of the site remains out of view from directly adjacent viewpoints. A more detailed description is given in the Photostudy.

3.6 Landform

3.6.1 The site lies adjacent to the north coast of the Island. The landform is generally flat with gentle undulations, which in some instances become valleys running towards the coast. Such a valley passes by the site to provide access to the shore at Plémont.

3.6.2 The landform around the site forms a mostly level plateau. The highest point is currently occupied by the Amenity Building (77m AOD). From here the land falls to the south west with the bus stop and car park lying at 69m AOD. The interior levels of the site step down to follow the general fall in the landform.

3.6.3 In the surrounding district beyond Plémont, the landform rises again, away from the site, to 77m AOD m at Portinfer, to 85m AOD at Les Landes, and 86m AOD m around Les Pallières.

3.7 Existing Vegetation

3.7.1 The site has been used as a holiday camp since the mid 20th Century. Since it ceased to operate commercially, in 2000, the grounds have become unkempt. There is boundary vegetation on the western and southern sides which partially screens the buildings. The cliff face comprises mostly bracken and some gorse; the heathland having diminished as a consequence of changing management and maintenance. A detailed assessment of the habitat is given in the Ecological Statement, prepared by Michel Hughes Associates. The surrounding fields are cultivated. There is some scrub woodland and hedging, comprising mostly Sycamore and Privet, with outlying conifer groups in the more sheltered folds in the landform. The vegetation and field pattern can be seen in the aerial photograph (Appendix Five)

3.8 Existing Buildings

- 3.8.1 The current buildings mostly date from the 1960s and comprise eight accommodation blocks and two staff blocks, arranged around two courtyards. The western courtyard contains a swimming pool which has been in place for over 60 years. The eastern courtyard has been reduced in size by increments over the years as the main amenity building has been extended. This building, with its highly reflective sheet clad roof, is the dominant element on the skyline and is out of scale, even with the bulk of the accommodation blocks. This building, and a fenced tennis court on the crestline of the cliffs, is particularly visible from the Cliff Path. There is also a shop and two bungalows, together with the various outdoor leisure facilities scattered around the development. Owing to the uncertainty of the future of the site, the condition of the buildings has deteriorated through lack of use. Whilst the facilities are increasingly in need of repairs and renovations, the essential structure remains intact.
- 3.8.2 The main car park is situated on the eastern side of the development. A site plan of the existing layout is contained in the Design Statement prepared by the project architects.
- 3.8.3 The site is approached along the C105 lane which provides the principal access to the beach at Plémont Bay. The site and the tourist facilities around Plémont Bay are served by a bus route, which terminates adjacent to the SW corner of the site.

3.9 Photo Study – Existing views

Offshore views & Seascapes

- 3.9.1 In the summer season there are pleasure craft passing by. The housing site lies beyond the clifftop and will be hidden behind the cliff face, when viewed from inshore. From further offshore the ambient light usually makes it difficult to observe any detail; the entire coastline tends to appear as a unified landmass, in which only very tall structures such as church spires and radio masts are landmarks. The views from Sorel Point illustrate the combined effect of light and distance, in reducing the degree of visibility across a seascape. The view from a passing boat would bear some similarity to views from Sorel Point.

Onshore views

3.9.2 A series of site visits was made, at varying times of the day and in varying atmospheric conditions, to assess the visibility of the site. From the tour during which these photographs were taken it has been possible to define the visual boundary to the site. The receptors (those having a view of the site) will mostly be walkers along the Cliff Path, local residents, and passengers in passing cars.

The photostudy comprises the following ;-

Coastal Views and Seascapes

Main Road Views

Local Views

Site Views

Interior Views

Photomontages

These are recorded in the following photographs

(Appendix Six and Appendix Seven - Plans 1a and 2a)

Coastal Views and Seascapes – easterly

The most distant points which can be seen from the site were noted and these locations were visited to establish if there is a reciprocal view. The most distant location, from where the site can be seen, is Sorel Point 4.7km to the east along the coast.

3.9.3 Photo 1a – 1b

From Sorel Point there is a broad panorama across the northern coast and northwards to Guernsey and Alderney. The buildings on the site are hardly visible in most lighting conditions, but sunlight sometimes highlights the roof of the existing Amenity Building to draw attention towards Plémont. Later in the day, as the sun passes over, the backlighting merges the outline of the existing development into the surrounding landscape.

3.9.10 Photo 2a - 2b

Moving closer to the site, along the Coastal Path, the area known as Devils Hole is a popular tourist destination. Around this location there is a similar view of the north coast and across to the other Channel Islands. The eye is drawn seawards to the offshore reef known as The Paternosters and towards Guernsey and Sark. The site again appears indistinct in many lighting conditions. The roof of the existing Amenity Building is the most prominent feature, which reflects the sunlight. At this distance, around 4km, the buildings coalesce into a low strip on the coastal horizon. This view is the subject of a series of photomontages prepared by BDK Architects - see CP 21 & CP 22-23.

3.9.11 Photo 3

The Coastal Path continues to meander westwards, but vehicular traffic must use the inland lanes. From Devils Hole to La Grève de Lecq, the road passes La Houge Mauger, from where there is a broad prospect across the north of the island and across to Guernsey. The site can be identified in this vast panorama, but the view for motorists is brief and the scale is such that it creates no significant intrusion. (distance = 3.9 km)

3.9.12 Photo 4

At Crabbe, it is possible to return, by car, to near the Coast Path, and The National Trust owns land which is accessible by walkers and motorists via La Rue des Huriaux. Again the view is of the wide panorama of the north coast and the other Channel Islands. Again the lighting conditions generally preclude any clear identification of the site or any intrusion into the wider landscape setting. All along the Coastal Path there are seats provided for walkers. The Landscape Assessment of 1999 recommended that these seats should be removed, as they suggest the creation of a managed parkland rather than the wild scenery. This was presumably considered to be too purist a stance and, ten years later, they remain in place. Where possible our photographs have been taken near these seats, to replicate a pause in a journey where contemplation of the view is more likely. (distance = 3.4 km)

3.9.13 Photo 5a - 5b – 5c – 5d

There is no view of the site from the coastal hamlet, and popular tourist location, at La Grève de Lecq. Moreover, there is also no view from the inland roads and lanes in this part of the Island. On the Coastal Path, the next view of the site is from the headland at Le Grand Becqüet. The Coastal Path undulates extensively along the cliff top, resulting in a discontinuous prospect, and interrupted vistas. There are some intermittent views towards Plémont. As the Path passes around Le Creux Gros, the site is not visible but there are views inland towards the houses at Portinfer. (5c & 5d)

3.9.14 Photo 6

At close distance (around 120 metres) to the site along the Coastal Path, there is another view of the existing buildings on one of the higher ridges of the route. From here the eyesore of the WW2 German bunker is visible. This building has been doubled in size, to provide storage during the operational life of the Holiday Camp. The new proposals show the later additions to the buildings demolished to leave a much reduced impact on the scenery. BDK Architects have prepared a photomontage (AL 1) to illustrate the changes which are discussed in Section 4. Beyond this viewpoint the path climbs down the cliff face, to pass by Plémont out of view.

Coastal Views and Seascapes - northerly**3.9.15 Photo 7**

The reciprocal view along the Coastal Path, from the west, is similarly marred by the impact of the WW2 bunker and the rooftop tank, and will be similarly altered by the redevelopment. Again, BDK Architects have prepared a photomontage (AL 2) to illustrate the changes which are discussed in Section 4.

3.9.16 Photo 8

La Tête de Plémont, marks the northerly landward point of the Northwest corner of Island. It can be accessed, with great difficulty, via a narrow steeply sloping rut, hardly a path, passing through the cliff-top vegetation. There is a wide panorama of

the cliffs and the bay across to Sorel Point from the headland. The northern elevation of the existing buildings is visible from this viewpoint and the WW2 bunker and the roof of the Amenity Building creates a negative impact on this view. BDk Architects have prepared a photomontage (AL 3) to illustrate the new proposals.

Coastal Views and Seascapes - westerly

3.9.17 Photo 9

There are more distant views towards Plémont from the Coastal Path to the west of the site. There is no view of the site from the ruined chateau at Grosnez, or from the lighthouse on the point at Les Cappée. However, there are intermittent views from the cliff top and coastal path as one travels eastwards towards the site through Les Landes. The houses at Les Landes are visible on the skyline.

3.9.18 Photo 10

By walking inland from the car park at Grosnez/Les Landes, there is an intermittent view across the bay to La Grève au Lançon and towards the existing development. In the wider scene the existing development is seen in the context of the racecourse at Les Landes and the small cluster of houses on the skyline near the entrance.

3.9.19 Photo 11

By walking eastwards from the car park at Grosnez/Les Landes there is an uninterrupted view towards the site, across the bay. To the landward side there is a cluster of houses at Les Landes. This view is the subject of photomontages – CP 27 & CP 28.

Main Road Views

La Rue du Val Bachelier passes to the south of the site from Les Landes to Vinchelez. This is the main road around the north western corner of the Island. It passes some 550 metres to the south of Plémont. The road is narrow and is flanked by hedges, walls and banques. A driver on this road will see very little of the site as the view is directly ahead. Passengers may have intermittent views across the countryside towards Plémont. There is no view of the coast or the sea beyond. Photomontages taken along this road are not typical of the experience of driving along La Rue du Val Bachelier, as they are taken from static viewpoints. Moreover there is no footpath along this road and there are no pedestrian viewing points in the

locality. The photomontage viewpoints are taken as the best compromise, in representing a more general view of Plémont from the few properties in the locality, and for those moving about the district.

3.9.20 Photo 12

There is a cluster of properties at the entrance to the racecourse at Les Landes. Although there is no view of the site from the roadside, it is anticipated that these properties will have a view towards the northern coast from some 1st floor and north facing rooms.

3.9.21 Photo 13

Travelling towards Portinfer, there is a bungalow/smallholding which blocks the view towards the coast, which is followed by a tall hedge which also restricts the view.

3.9.22 Photo 14

Further along La Rue du Val Bachelier there is a more open prospect available for passengers in buses or cars. However the road is narrow and drivers are likely to be concentrating on the road ahead. There is no verge along this road. There is a track to the farm at La Val Bachelier and three adjacent properties on way down to Plémont Bay. These properties have their access from the C105 which passes by the site.

3.9.23 Photo 15

This view is taken from the verge of La Rue du Val Bachelier, and offers a prospect across the agricultural which lies to the south of the site. The photoviewpoint is mirrored in photomontages by BDK Architects. (CP 25 & CP 26)

3.9.24 Photo 16

This view is a taken from a short distance away along the same road, and for which there is a corresponding photomontage.

3.9.25 Photo 17

The view towards the site from La Rue du Val Bachelier at Portinfer is masked by tall trees in the fields to the north. The view is opposite the road junction of La Rue des

Pallières. There is also no view of the site from the main crossroads in Portinfer, at La Rue de la Porte. There is a signpost to Plémont from this location.

Local Views

Thereafter, to the east, the road becomes La Route de Vinchelez, turning inland to St Ouens. There is a local lane (La Rue de la Croute) from Portinfer towards La Gabourellerie and surrounding farmsteads, leading to the Dolmen des Géonnais. There is no view of Plémont from this historic site. The views from the lanes around La Gabourellerie are masked by intervening vegetation and hedgerows, with the existing properties being domestic and residential in character.

3.9.26 Photo 18

Along La Rue de la Croute there is view northwards across the farmland towards the site. A photomontage of this locality has been included at CP 24.

3.9.27 Photo 19

Most of the boundary verges of La Rue de la Croute are formed by low hedgebanks, which restrict the view. There are a few field gates and openings which offer a prospect across to Plémont. Photo 19 shows a panorama of the landscape in this location, showing the scale of the existing site, in the wider context. There are very few private residences in the locality but it is anticipated that, from the rear bedrooms of the house “Le Glayo”, there would be a direct view to the north, beyond “La Place”.

3.9.28 Photo 20

La Gabourellerie is a working farm with large outbuildings, typical of the working landscape of the agricultural interior of the Island. There are similar farms along La Route de Vinchelez. On approaching Portinfer, along La Rue de la Gabourellerie, the site is visible across the field but it is the farm buildings which dominate the scene.

3.9.29 Photo 21

The land rises very gently, to the south of La Rue du Val Bachelier, and forms a local skyline on the broad plateau of farmland. The view southwards from the site

terminates with the roofscape of the properties along La Rue de la Devisé. There is no reciprocal view from the road itself but it is anticipated that the site can be seen from the first floor rear rooms of these properties.

In terms of public viewpoints, the most southerly view of Plémont is therefore obtained from along Rue de la Pointe, a narrow lane running across the plateau, east of La Ville La Bas. It can be said that the plateau along this lane forms a visual boundary to the site.

3.9.30 **Photo 22**

There are varying viewpoints towards the site along this lane, from which walkers and car passengers might have a distant view of Plémont. In the summer months the hedgerow vegetation will screen off much of the view.

3.9.31 **Photo 23**

The cluster of houses between Les Pallières and Portinfer, will have the same distant view northwards towards the site. In the summer months the hedgerow vegetation will screen off much of the view.

Site Views

3.9.32 **Photo 24**

The site is approached from Portinfer along the C105 secondary road, La Route de Plémont. There is vegetation in the form of hedgerows and isolated clumps of trees along the lane, from where the first view of the development is from 400 m distance, along this lane. The holiday camp is seen as being a large scale, densely compact, development with the cream and white painted Amenity Building dominating the view.

3.9.33 **Photo 25**

The road passes through the field boundaries, at repeated right angle bends, on the approach to the site and down to Plémont Bay. There are remnants of hedgerows and low walls. In the summer months the hedges are in leaf and the view is masked.

3.9.34 Photo 26

Approaching closer to the site, the micro change of character, within Landscape Character Area E1, is evident. To the south and east of the site the farmland becomes more enclosed and sheltered than to the west at Les Landes. There is a hedgerow/shelterbelt, which is typical of the field boundaries to the east of the site. In the summer months the hedges are in leaf and the view is masked in the lane, when approaching Plémont Bay.

3.9.35 Photo 27

The road down to Plémont Bay passes along the southern site boundary. The site boundary is partially defined by a remnant of a hedgerow, with the surrounding fields being open and offering a broad setting to the development.

3.9.36 Photo 28

To the south west of the site there is a public car park and bus stop facilitating access to the beach. The car park is at a lower level and there is extensive scrub vegetation on the bank rising up towards the holiday camp, which screens off any view of the existing buildings.

3.9.37 Photo 29a – 29b

The lane along the western boundary ends at small car park overlooking La Tête de Plémont. From this lane the site is almost completely screened by a change in level and by boundary vegetation, which will be retained in the redevelopment.

Interior Views

The existing development comprises mostly two storey buildings set around courtyards and there are no views of the interior from surrounding lanes and paths. The following photographs, taken in September 2008, are included as a matter of record to illustrate the current situation. The existing vegetation on the edge of the layout can be seen.

3.9.38 Photo 30

The private road approaching the entrance to Holiday Camp is bounded by low banques with an open view of the currently disused activity area to the left and an open arable field to the right. The manager's bungalow is still occupied.

3.9.39 Photo 31

There is a perimeter track around the complex, from which the height of the existing vegetation, and its screening potential in relation to the buildings, can be noted. The former staff bungalow can be seen to the right.

3.9.40 Photo 32

There is a tennis court on the cliff top in the north west corner of the site. The fencing is currently in disrepair with invasive exotic vegetation detracting from the natural setting.

3.9.41 Photo 33

The site has evolved and been redeveloped in the past, but a swimming pool has been the main feature of the western courtyard since WW 2.

3.9.42 Photo 34

The eastern courtyard contains an Amenity Building which has been considerably extended, both in area and volume since the 1980s. This building is the tallest on the site and its pitched roof is the most noticeable and intrusive element in the view towards Plémont.

3.9.43 Photo 35

The WW2 observation post has been extended, for use as a store. The reinforced concrete walls of the original are to remain.

3.9.44 Photo 36

From the grounds of the holiday camp there are views back towards Portinfer and Les Landes. From the eastern car park there is a view of the properties in Portinfer.

3.9.45 Photo 37

This view is southwards along the access drive and shows the size achieved by trees which are growing in the local hedgerows.

3.9.46 Photo 38

There is a view towards Les Landes, where the cluster of houses by the entrance to racecourse can be seen as feature of the local scene.

3.9.47 Photo 39

A new property has recently been constructed on the road down to the beach at Plémont. Some design elements, such as the use of natural materials and colours could be seen as an example and a precedent in agreeing design details for the 30 house scheme.

3.10 Visual Boundaries - Plan 1a

3.10.1 When undertaking a visual assessment there is often pressure to provide an absolute and definitive boundary, from beyond which the site cannot be seen. In practice a site usually has several visual boundaries, depending on from where it is being viewed. In addition to the type, form and colour of buildings, other factors such as landform, intervening vegetation and structures, and the weather/atmospheric conditions can influence the relative visibility of a proposal. In a coastal situation in particular, the view of a site is influenced by the weather.

3.10.2 At Plémont the site is mainly viewed from the adjacent agricultural interior of the Island, but two longer distance views have been identified; from the far west and to the east along the Coastal Path. In fine weather the site can be more noticeable from these locations, particularly as the roof of the Amenity Building reflects the sunlight, drawing the eye towards Plémont. In many weather conditions the site is not visible from distant viewpoints. If the site is being viewed at varying times of the day it can

also be difficult to discern. For example the view from the west is reduced by the morning sun and, vice versa, from the east in the afternoon and evening.

3.10.3 The principal visual boundary of the existing holiday camp at Plémont extends from around Les Landes in the west, to around La Gabourellerie in the east. This is not an absolute definition, as the boundary can vary slightly depending on the particular viewpoint. The visual boundary comprises an arc of around 3 km in length, extending no more than 1 km inland, as shown by the locations of the photoviewpoints on Plan 1a.

3.10.4 The principal impacts are twofold. Firstly there is the appearance of the relatively large scale group of buildings currently on the site, when viewed from within the agricultural interior of the Island, together with the reciprocal view towards the properties in the locality. Secondly, and closer to the site, the physical appearance of the façade of the built form is visible, in more detail, from the surrounding lanes and paths. (Viewpoints shown on Plan 2a.)

4 The Proposals

4.1 The proposal comprises total demolition of the holiday/leisure facilities and replacement, elsewhere within the site, with 30 new private residential properties. These will be arranged in three clusters of varying configuration and size. To the south east there is a cluster of 16 houses. To the west there is a cluster of 11 houses. To the north east there is a cluster of 3 houses.

4.2 The design drawings by BDK Architects, referred to by this report are as follows :- *(BDK have submitted a full schedule as part of the planning application)*

Layout Plan

Typical Elevations

Schedule of accommodation

Building Heights & Levels

4.3 Copies of the internal layouts have also been made available, as part of the planning application.

4.4 A full description of the new proposals is given in the documentation submitted by BDK Architects. In terms of visual impact the follow key points are to be noted.

- a) The new homes will be situated away from the cliff face/headland. That part of the site will be restored to landscape and maintained as such in perpetuity. In particular the existing Amenity Block will be demolished, thus removing the major visual eyesore from the long distance views along the coast.
- b) The scale and incongruous colour of the existing holiday camp are the most intrusive elements in this landscape. Their removal and replacement with smaller buildings, clad with natural materials and set back from the coast, will offer a major improvement in the view.
- c) There is a Second World War German observation post in the north east corner of the site. This is a reinforced concrete structure and is of historical

interest. Unfortunately it has been doubled in size and used as storage during the operational life of the Holiday Camp, and a tank has been added to the roof. The eyesore of these later additions will be removed as part of the redevelopment.

- d) The new buildings are to be clad with natural stone and render using colours which will be sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the surroundings. The ridge heights are generally lower overall than existing and the pitched roofs of the new houses will be more in keeping than the monolithic flat roofed holiday units.
- e) An important point to note, when assessing new proposals, is the effect of foreshortening when looking towards a site. In plan view the new proposals at Plémont appear to be spread out over the southern half of the site. However, reference to the photographs (15 & 16) and the Photomontages (CP 25 & CP 26), show that the site appears foreshortened and hardly visible in the wider landscape. Moreover the view of the buildings is simply that of the height of the southern elevations, giving no indication of the footprint of the layout. The existing holiday camp buildings are to be replaced by the new houses, clad in natural coloured materials. The two existing residences on the site are replaced, over the same footprint, by new properties. No 17 will replace the existing manager's bungalow. Nos 27 & 28 will be built on the site of the existing staff bungalow.

4.5 Photomontages - Appendix Nine

- 4.5.1 BDK Architects have prepared 11 photomontages, based on their photographs, to illustrate the appearance of the proposals. A note on how these photomontages have been prepared is included at Appendix ten.

Each photomontage in turn shows :-

Distant Easterly Views

4.5.2 CP 21

This view is from the headland at La Touraille (Devil's Hole). It shows the typical atmospheric and lighting conditions which tend to prevail on the North Coast. The

darker tones of the buildings on the site merge with the adjacent landscape. This montage is therefore based on a telephoto view, in order to show the site.

4.5.3 **CP 22 & CP 23**

The Coastal Path meanders around valley at Devil's Hole and re-emerges to the west of the hamlet.

The view is similar to that at CP21, with the buildings on the site being barely discernable. CP 23 is also taken with a telephoto lens but shows little more clarity than the standard view, owing to the prevailing light. For comparison, the wider coastal vista is shown in our own Photo 2b

Easterly View

4.5.4 **AL 1**

This view mirrors photograph 6 and represents the improvement to the view which will occur following redevelopment of the site. The entire complex of existing buildings will be demolished, with the exception of the WW2 German bunker. The core of the building to be retained and restored is less than 50% of the existing. The elevated roof of the existing Amenity Building creates a landmark at present. The most northerly of the new houses (No 17) will just be visible from the crests in the undulating Coastal Path. Moreover, once the new landscape proposals become established, then the view of the house will be further reduced. The height of the new vegetation will eventually match that of the existing clifftop vegetation which can be seen to the right of the photograph.

Local views

4.5.4 **CP 24**

This photomontage corresponds with photograph 19. The difference in visual impact is most noticeable in the absence of the roof of the existing amenity block. By comparison the new buildings will appear, in low relief, behind the intervening hedgerow. There are a few existing trees in the locality which have grown to some height, despite coastal winds. (Photo 37) In the photomontage these are seen to the left of the housing cluster. The roof of the property "La Place" can be seen in the middle distance. The new houses will echo the colour and materials of local building.

4.5.5 CP 25

Montage CP 25 compares to the photographs (15 & 16), taken along La Rue du Val Bachelier. Currently the existing development is out of scale and intrusive on the distant horizon. The use of materials and built form in the new proposals, can be seen to be lower and less noticeable than the existing holiday camp

4.5.6 CP 26

This view also compares with the existing situation, as shown in Photos 15 & 16. The broader vista has been included because there is no view across to Plémont from further eastwards towards the cross roads at Portinfer, as shown in Photo 17.

4.5.7 AL 2

This mirrors the viewpoint of Photograph 7 and represents the improvement to the view which will occur following redevelopment of the site. The entire complex of existing buildings will be demolished, with the exception of the WW2 German observation post. The core of the building to be retained and restored is less than 50% of the size of the existing. The elevated roof of the existing Amenity Building which creates a landmark at present, will be removed. "Development" will effectively be removed from the viewpoints along this section of the cliff path.

4.5.8 AL 3

This view mirrors photograph 8 and represents the improvement to the view which will occur following redevelopment of the site. The impact of the view from this location must be heavily discounted owing to the difficulty in reaching the headland from the Coastal Path. As with the views from the Coastal Path, the entire complex of existing buildings will be demolished, with the exception of the WW2 German observation post. The elevated roof of the existing Amenity Building which creates a landmark at present, will also be removed. Only the upper parts and roof of the most northerly house will be visible from the headland.

Distant Westerly Views

4.5.9 CP 27

There is no direct view towards Plémont from the ruined castle at Grosnez. By walking around the clifftop in the locality it is possible to see across the bay towards the site. This photomontage shows the roofscape of the clusters of new houses. Existing vegetation will be retained to act as a setting/screen. This will be supplemented by new planting, which will be managed as informal scrub to reflect the character of the locality. The informal paths, found at Grosnez, will be replicated at Plémont. The colours of the new buildings are shown to be more in sympathy with the surrounding landscape.

4.5.10 CP 28

On reaching the cliff edge there is a view across the bay to the Holiday Camp. A comparison can be made between the existing photograph 11 and the depiction of the proposed redevelopment, showing the reduced visual impact of the new houses. The informal clusters of roofscapes replicates the rugged scenery. The tonal value and colours of the elevations matches the terrain.

4.6 A comprehensive landscape study and an accompanying design have been prepared by landscape architects, Michael Felton Ltd. The design of the layout has been informed by the visual assessment and the design principles, which have been incorporated into the landscape scheme, are based on the conclusions of this Study. The proposals for the redevelopment show that the boundary vegetation on the western side will remain largely undisturbed by the refurbishment/rebuilding works. Six key points have influenced the design and are set out in the Landscape Statement within the Landscape Management Plan (Dwg 1456-202)

Landscape Statement

- New setting responds to both coastal influences and land use patterns of the interior
- Scheme aims to restore and extend existing network of 'banques' and drystone walls
- Emphasis is on typical headland vegetation i.e. thicket forming species of Gorse, Blackthorn and Broom managed as a mosaic of differing layers.
- Informal paths mown into grassland
- Tree planting is limited to small informal groups within the courtyards and protected areas of scrub away from the coast.
- Proposal incorporates waste water treatment comprising two reed beds and natural living soak-away planted with Willow and Flag Iris.
- Habitat enhancement on areas of development to be achieved by restoration and better management of maritime/acid grassland.

The following is taken from the CEMP, published elsewhere within the Environmental Statement.

3.12.1 Generally

During the construction period the Landscape Masterplan must be implemented as shown on Michael Felton Ltd. Drwg Nos. 1456 / 201/P1 and 202/P0 (together with related subsequent detail drawings) including full planting scheme identified on Michael Felton Ltd. Schedule of Proposed plants. The appointed landscape Sub-Contractor will be employed for a period of 10 years following completion of construction to undertake management and maintenance of the Landscape as listed in Michael Felton Ltd. Schedule of Works and shown on their Landscape Management Plan Drwg No. 1456 /202/P0.

3.12.2 Translocation of existing Grassland

Further to discussions between Michael Felton Landscape Architect and the Environment Department there may be a requirement to save existing grassland in the southern Fields for translocating onto the Nature Conservation Land. Dependant upon the outcome of these discussions in the event it is decided the existing grassland will be translocated the final CEMP must incorporate details of this requirement and procedure for undertaking this work.

3.12.3 New Boundary enclosures around Housing Clusters

All new boundary enclosures will be either constructed in open jointed granite dry stone walling or hedging, as shown generally on BDK Architects Drwg. No. 1871/8/02D together with related subsequent detail drawings, to provide enhanced habitat conditions for reptile and other species. The granite dry stone walling must be built using traditional techniques without any mortar and left with open joints.

Landscape Proposals prepared by Michael Felton Ltd - Appendix Nine:-

Landscape Siteplan 1456 - 201

Landscape Management Plan 1456 - 202

Landscape Cross Sections 1456 - 203

Landscape Management Matrix

5 Impacts - Capacity and Sensitivity

The following analysis considers the landscape and visual impact of the proposed redevelopment and compares this with the existing situation.

5.1 Landscape Capacity

Capacity is taken to mean the ability of a landscape to accommodate a level of change caused by a development of a specific type. In this instance, it will be a redevelopment of the site involving complete demolition of the holiday camp and the construction of 30 residential properties. Changes to Landscape Character and Visual Sensitivity are discussed below. The degree of change is directly related to, and establishes, the capacity.

5.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

Natural England in their Topic Paper 6 [ibid] suggests that determination of Landscape Character Sensitivity requires consideration of three factors

- the individual elements that form the character
- the overall quality and condition of the elements
- the aesthetic/scenic quality of the landscape

5.2.1 Comparison

Existing Situation (Holiday Camp 1999-2000 site last used)

Existing habitats unmanaged

Existing vegetation on cliff face unmanaged

Existing buildings in decline and in need of extensive maintenance

Broad scenic character unchanged

Continuing Impact on Zone of Outstanding Character
(irrespective of whether it is brought back into use)

Current Proposal - 30 Residential Units

Existing on-site habitats managed as to be agreed with States of Jersey

Existing vegetation on cliff face retained with minimal management
In order to encourage natural appearance

Adequate space provision for infrastructure and new planting

Re-use of a degraded site

Broad scenic character improved

Impact on Zone of Outstanding Character reduced

5.2.2 Conclusion

- the individual elements that form the surrounding landscape character will be retained
- the overall quality and condition of the landscape setting is good and can be managed appropriately in the future
- the aesthetic/scenic quality of the landscape is improved

The Landscape Character of the locality falls into two distinct types. The northern side of the redevelopment is dominated by the coastline. From the south the cliff edge is not visible and the redevelopment forms part of the agricultural interior. Both landscape settings are considered to be sufficiently robust to absorb the development.

5.3 Visual Sensitivity

Natural England in their Topic Paper 6 [ibid] suggests that visual sensitivity depends upon

- the probability of change in the landscape being visible
- the numbers of people likely to perceive the changes
- the likelihood that change could be mitigated

5.3.1 Comparison

Existing Building

The existing buildings currently dominate the site. The camp at Plémont is visible from very few adjacent properties and therefore the number viewing is low.

Current Proposal - 30 Residential Units

The development will appear as a replacement for the existing former holiday camp. The site is currently dominated by this building so any redevelopment of a lesser size will reduce the impact, subject to detail design and new landscape proposals. Moreover the location of the new development will be set back from the cliff edge. Though visible from the adjacent properties, the number viewing is low. Landscape management would further mitigate assimilation into the surrounding landscape.

5.3.2 Conclusion

- In the locality around Portinfer there is a high probability of change in the landscape being visible
- The number of people likely to perceive the changes is low
- The likelihood that change could be mitigated is high

The visual sensitivity of the locality varies depending on the viewpoint. From the majority of viewpoints the development will not be visible, or its appearance can be mitigated by layout and design. The capacity of the locality to absorb the development is considered to be high. Once the new houses have weathered, and any new planting becomes established, there will be even less impact on the locality.

5.4 Visual Impact of the proposal - See Plan 1a & Plan 2a

Having identified the site as a prominent location, which is in view of the wider panorama of the Coastal Cliff Path, it is possible to assess the more local impact of the proposal. This is undertaken within the parameters set out at para 5.3.

- the probability of change in the landscape being visible
- the numbers of people likely to perceive the changes
- the likelihood that change could be mitigated

5.4.1 The probability of change in the landscape being visible

By reference to the locations of the photoviewpoints, Plan 1 shows the visual boundary at Plémont. It is defined by the landform and surrounds the site. The site is visible from near Grosnez to the west and, in some atmospheric/lighting conditions, from Sorel Point to the east. To the south, and inland there are hedgerows and tree groups which block any view of the development.

The house known as Le Glayo and others in Portinfer, are situated along La Route de Vinchelez, with a rear aspect towards the coast. "La Place", a property to the east of Route de Plémont, is set a lower level. The northerly facing windows of these properties have a view of the site.

There is a public beach, adjacent to the site.

5.4.2 The numbers of people likely to perceive the changes

It is anticipated that the occupiers of the properties which lie immediately adjacent to the site will have a view of the new development. Members of the public, using the beach, will have a view of the site as they pass by. The site is intermittently visible from the Coast Cliff Path.

5.4.3 The likelihood that change could be mitigated

There is a presumption that change is always for the worse. However there are circumstances where changing the status quo actually improves the situation. The proposal is to replace the existing holiday camp which, in architectural terms, is of

little merit, being an assemblage of ad hoc extensions to the original building. The new proposal is a well considered, holistically designed entity. The new houses will acknowledge the design of traditional buildings in the locality, by having traditionally sloping roofs and being constructed of local materials. (See BDK proposals) The perceived change; primarily the removal of the overlarge amenity building and the cliff top tennis court, together with the removal of the additions to the WW2 German observation post, will improve the view for walkers using the Cliff Path. In the wider locality the removal of the amenity building will reduce the visual impact of the site.

The setting of the Cliff Path will be improved. In a very short time the new development will become the new status quo. For those using the beach, there will be an obvious sign of change in location, layout and use, and appearance of the new houses. Members of the public, particularly those viewing from around Portinfer, will note the improved outlook.

The new landscape proposals, once established, will further screen the elevations and provide a setting in the local landscape.

5.5 **Construction period - Temporary landscape and visual impacts**

5.5.1 There will be no impact on the surrounding landscape as a consequence of this redevelopment. Vegetation will be retained and the character of the landscape will remain unchanged. Once completed, the setting of the site will be in keeping with the designated Landscape Character Areas.

5.5.2 There will be a view of the construction site during the demolition and rebuilding. There will be site traffic passing through the locality and cranes will be visible for some of the construction period. These views will be limited to within the area defined on Plan 1a.

5.6 **Operational period – Residual landscape and visual impacts**

5.6.1 There will be some positive beneficial impact on the surrounding landscape as a consequence of this redevelopment. Vegetation will be retained and the character of the landscape will remain unchanged. Once completed, the setting of the site will be in keeping with the designated Landscape Character Areas. It will be maintained

according to the scheduled prepared by Michael Felton Ltd, or as amended following discussion and negotiation with the officers of the States of Jersey Environment Dept.

- 5.6.2 Once completed the development will appear to be smaller and less extensive than the existing buildings. The use of natural cladding materials will further integrate the buildings into the landscape. The removal of the untidy and infrequently maintained buildings with a managed, natural, landscape setting will improve the appearance of the locality and create a positive beneficial impact.

6 Mitigation

6.1 The primary tool in landscape mitigation is correct site selection. Above all else, this minimises negative landscape impacts. An enclosed site, with limited or no visibility from beyond the boundary, will obviously have the least visual impact. Where a site is more visible, then the form, massing, density, design and landscape setting all play a part in determining how well a development will be integrated with its locality. The following principles apply.

6.2 Site selection

The redevelopment will appear as an element within the broad landscape of the north west coastline. The scale of this local landscape setting is large, and is considered to be capable of absorbing the redevelopment. There are no major changes required to the existing infrastructure to enable this redevelopment. There are therefore no indirect or cumulative effects, off site or around the site.

6.3 Form

The site is visible from the Coastal Path. It is only partially visible from the viewpoints around Portinfer. It is the existing buildings which draw the eye rather than any element of the land itself. Currently the broader character, beyond the Site, is gently undulating farmland and countryside adjacent to the vast sweeping panorama of the coastline. It is this character which the redevelopment seeks to acknowledge and into which, together with the nearby coastal fringe, the redevelopment would fit.

6.4 Massing & Density

In appearance, the new development has no similarities, in size and profile, to the property currently on the site. The site is predominantly viewed from viewpoints some way inland and along the coast. The new proposals show the post WW2 building additions to be demolished and with the original German WW2 observation post retained and restored. The new houses are positioned on the landward side of the site. As such it is the reduction in the outline of the overall redevelopment which will be most noticeable.

6.5 Design

In Jersey the traditional buildings, in the surrounding villages and countryside, are mostly constructed of local stone with grey slate roofs. Later buildings are sometimes constructed of brick or with rendered or slate hung elevations. Many Modern (post war) buildings around the Island have been almost exclusively rendered, and painted in light colours with tile or slate roofs. In terms of visibility and incongruity in the landscape, light coloured, rendered buildings are much more visible. By default, or by fashion, this has now become the norm in most villages. At Plémont, the elevations of the redeveloped site will match the tonal value of traditional buildings, and the roofing materials will be of a darker tone, to blend in with the surroundings. The window glass will appear as dark grey or black.

6.6 Landscape

The new development will be set into the landform. The existing vegetation on the western side will be maintained and managed to produce an appropriate boundary to screen the redevelopment. The new design will incorporate structural planting, to provide a broad setting reflecting the vegetation pattern in the surrounding field boundaries. The new landscape within the interior will take the form of low mass planting, using some native species, and those tolerant of the maritime location. There is evidence that trees can become established inland from the cliffs. Whilst these never achieve any great height, being windswept and sculpted, they can nevertheless be a worthwhile addition to the new habitats around and within the development.

7 Management

- 7.1 Long term management of the surroundings of the site will be by private contractor as described in the submission by Michael Felton Ltd. There are no proposals to alter the landscape setting of the surrounding land.

8 Summary and Conclusions

- Although the site is set against the vast panorama of the northwest coast it is not visible from much of the interior of the Island.
- The view from the Coastal Cliff Path and the Zone of Outstanding Character will be significantly improved by the relocated redevelopment.
- The removal of buildings closest to the cliffs will eliminate nearby inshore views. From further offshore the new houses will merge with the surrounding skyline which already contains groups of similar residential dwellings.
- Redevelopment, adjacent to the site of long standing leisure facility, provides a familiar setting for users of the local lanes.
- If redeveloped, the site would appear in the context of the adjacent tourist facilities, namely the car park, cafe and public beach at Plémont. There is also a number of residential properties on track down to the beach.
- The proposed building has a smaller footprint and outline than the existing, and would be less intrusive, being a designed entity rather than a series of piecemeal extensions.
- The architect's schedule of existing & proposed heights shows the ridge heights of the majority of new houses will be lower than the existing holiday camp, and will be of a form which is typical of the local vernacular.
- The site is capable of accommodating this development, which will provide an integrated landscape layout, with the benefit of wildlife conservation.
- The site is partially screened by vegetation around the western perimeter, and particularly from the public car park. It is further contained, when walking along the Cliff Path, by the rugged and steeply undulating landform, which repeatedly forms local skylines, blocking a continuous view towards Plémont.

- The new landscape setting of the development will be designed to reflect the rural character of the wider locality. It will provide further screening when established.
- The local landscape setting is robust. Its vast scale, incorporating off shore views and seascapes, has the capacity to absorb the proposed development.
- There are no negative indirect or cumulative effects, off site or around the site.
- Overall the redevelopment is considered to have substantial positive impact on the existing physical landscape setting.
- Overall the redevelopment is considered to have substantial positive impact on the existing visual setting in the locality.

9 **Appendices** *see separate pdfs*

- Appendix One - BDK Site Plan & Architect's Drawings
- Appendix Two - 1980s Photograph
- Appendix Three - States of Jersey Countryside Character Types/Areas
- Appendix Four - States of Jersey Island Plan 2002
- Appendix Five - Aerial Photograph
- Appendix Six - Photographs 1-39
- Appendix Seven - Photoviewpoints and Visual Boundary Plan 1a & Plan 2a
- Appendix Eight - Photomontages
- Appendix Nine - Landscape Architect's Drawings
- Appendix Ten - Photomontage preparation –Technical Note