



Review of Planning Services (2023) Improvement Plan



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Introduction

In January of this year, I commissioned a review of the Government of Jersey's Planning Services in accordance with my Ministerial Priorities for 2023:

4. Promoting flexibility, responsiveness, and efficiencies in the way that we work to best meet the needs of our customers by ensuring the planning system is responsive to key priorities; and developing a new Island Plan review process that is agile, efficient and easily accessible

The review analysed the functions of planning in Jersey (the way in which planning applications are dealt with, from start to finish) and made recommendations about how to deliver a better public service. It included issues such as customer experience, performance measures, resources, consistency, pre-application advice, post-decision services, and digital services.

In May I published the Review of Planning Services (2023) report alongside my Action Plan. In the Action Plan I committed to publishing an Improvement Plan by the end of June.

Since publishing the Action Plan in May I am pleased to report that a new Head of Development and Land has been appointed and a Senior Regulatory Improvement Officer has begun managing and developing the team of Technical Support Officers. A Planning and Building Control Duty Officer service has been launched at Customer and Local Services, La Motte Street. Officers from Regulatory Improvement have facilitated the development of the Improvement Plan and temporary staff support and additional training for the Technical Support Officers has been implemented.

In September the new Head of Development and Land will join the Regulation Directorate and in October the development industry will be invited to take part in a series of Engagement Sessions related to the key actions set out in the Improvement Plan.



Deputy Jonathan Renouf
Minister for the Environment

Review of the Planning Service Improvement Plan

The recommendations from Mr Mackinnon’s report and the Minister’s Action Plan and Improvement Plan are as follows:

Improving the application process

Recommendation Top priority is to introduce efficient, effective, and sustainable processes for validating and registering planning applications. The new process must be supported by robust IT systems, intensive staff training and clear communication with stakeholders.

Minister’s Action Plan Recruitment for the new Head of Development and Land is underway, and a replacement supervisor for the team is currently being advertised.

A review of processes and the team structure will also be undertaken to maximise efficiency of processing applications, including support from the planning officers in the validation of applications.

Time Scale for Delivery 3rd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Additional Technical Support Officers to support the processing of planning applications	May 2023	Two additional Temporary Technical Support Officers appointed on a 3-month contract to support Technical Support Officer Team.	Completed
Appointment of Technical Support Officer Team Supervisor to maximise efficiency of processing applications	June 2023	Technical Support Officer Team Supervisor appointed and in-post	Completed
Training for Technical Support Officers	June 2023	Training Updates for existing Technical Support Officers and training for new Technical Support Officers delivered	Completed
Appointment of a new Senior Regulatory Improvement Officer to manage the Technical Support Officer Team	June 2023	Senior Regulatory Improvement Officer appointed and in-post	Completed
Appointment of a new Head of Development and Land to provide strategic direction	Sept 2023	Head of Development and Land appointed and in-post by early September.	Completed

A review to be undertaken to maximise the efficiency of validating and registering applications	Oct 2023	Senior Regulatory Improvement Officer to review existing processes to maximise efficiency	In Progress
A review of the team structure to be undertaken to maximise efficiency of validating and registering applications	Oct 2023	Senior Regulatory Improvement Officer to review of the team structure to maximise efficiency	In Progress
A review of planning officer support for validation of planning applications (for validation of significant applications)	Oct 2023	Planning Manager and Senior Regulatory Improvement Officer to review planning support for validation	In Progress
Stable software system and removal of duplicate processes through introduction of IT systems	Jan 2024	Current technology project to achieve go live milestone	In Progress
Reporting of planning application validation and registration statistics on gov.je	Mar 2024	Planning application processing wait times published on gov.Je	Under development

Validation checklist

Recommendation Developing new processes must reflect a rigorous evaluation of the information requirements in the draft validation matrix.

Minister's Action Plan The Minister accepts the need for a validation checklist or matrix to be published which provides the public with clear guidelines on what level of information is required to be submitted for each type of application. This will be developed over the next few months, with the aim of publishing by the end of Q3.

A review of processes and the team structure will also be undertaken to maximise efficiency of processing applications, including support from the planning officers in the validation of applications.

Time Scale for Delivery 3rd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Review of the validation checklist / matrix against Bridging Island Plan and other requirement (content check)	July 2023	Planning Manager to review and confirm content is correct	In progress
Develop validation matrix into a customer friendly, web format	Oct 2023	The web team have been contacted regarding this – initialising next steps	In progress
Validation checklist or matrix published on gov.je	Oct 2023	Web team to consult with officers and publish	In progress
Review feedback from customers	Dec 2023	Use customer feedback system to gather and record feedback from customers on validation matrix	Under development

Monitoring Performance

Recommendation	An integrated set of data to monitor the performance of the planning service should be introduced.
Minister's Action Plan	<p>The existing legacy computer system is unsupported and over 20 years old. This significantly limits the ability to extract performance monitoring data. Project RIDA is an investment in new technology to support a stable, effective and efficient platform for improvements to the planning service. This new system will be designed to report on service performance statistics as well as key information about housing units and land use, critical to inform key decision-making policies.</p> <p>The Minister will publish a list of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be monitored by the end of Q3, although monitoring these KPI's will only become fully possible with the deployment of RIDA in Q1 2024. The report highlights that the current investment for Project RIDA is aimed at stabilising the existing system. To develop a fully integrated system that can produce the efficiencies described in the report, an additional investment is required which has been put forward as a proposed bid for consideration in the draft Government Plan 2024-2027.</p>
Time Scale for Delivery	1st Quarter 2024

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Secure the additional investment necessary to complete the IT project RIDA and secure the ability to effectively report Key Performance Indicators in 2024	Jun 2023	Submitted business justification case for Government Plan 2024-2027.	In progress
Publish a list of Key Performance Indicators (this will be the list of KPIs, but the data may not be available until the new IT system is implemented in Q1 2024)	Sep 2023	Publish a list of indicators to be reported on in the 1st Quarter 2024	In progress
Publish Key Performance Indicators data	Mar 2024	Reliant on introduction of IT software system introduction	In progress
Build the data fields in the new system necessary to report on the published KPIs	Mar 2024	IT software updates implemented	Underdevelopment

Pre-Application Advice

Recommendation For a trial period, the Planning Applications Team should offer pre-application advice in the form of a meeting(s) with senior staff as an alternative to written advice.

Minister's Action Plan As part of the recommendation to re-introduce a duty officer service at Customer and Local Services, La Motte Street, customers will be able to book appointments with officers for pre-application advice. The officer will record the verbal advice given at the meeting in writing, which is given without prejudice to any formal decision.

Time Scale for Delivery 2nd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Customers able to book appointments with officers for pre-application advice.	Jun 2023	Opening of duty services at Customer and Local Services, La Motte Street.	Completed
To develop a service level agreement and guidance for pre-application advice meetings and publish on gov.je	Oct 2023	Develop and publish pre-application advice guidance	In progress

Planning Processing Agreements

Recommendation Planning Processing Agreements should be offered for all applications falling within Policy GD2 of the Bridging Island Plan and other applications which contribute to the Common Strategic Policy 2023 to 2026, with particular priority to proposals which will address the housing needs of Jersey.

Minister's Action Plan Planning Processing Agreements (PPA) improve transparency in the process through a project management tool for major and complex applications. PPAs are widely used in other jurisdictions and are fully supported by the Minister in bringing a more effective planning service.

Bringing PPAs to the Jersey system will require research into best practice and what kind of PPA is most appropriate in the context of Jersey. Consultation with stakeholders and industry will be required before Improvement.

Time Scale for Delivery 4th Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Research into best practice from other jurisdictions, and what Planning Processing Agreements is most appropriate for Jersey.	Aug 2023	Conduct research into some examples from the United Kingdom and other jurisdictions	In progress
Industry engagement sessions to develop a Planning Processing Agreements	Oct 2023	Deliver the Industry engagement sessions	Underdevelopment
Improvement of Planning Processing Agreements	Jan 2024	Planning Processing Agreements implemented	Underdevelopment

Concordat with Industry

Recommendation Consideration should be given to drawing up a concordat with the development industry to support sustainable economic development on the island.

Minister's Action Plan The Minister's priority is to align business, community and planning interests through a responsive and effective planning service. The creation of a concordat will define what the Minister is seeking to achieve and how this can be achieved through priorities, performance management and reporting. This will need to be achieved through consultation with customers, industry and other States Members.

Time Scale for Delivery 4th Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Research into best practice of Industry Concordats	Aug 2023	Produce review of research to present to Industry engagement sessions in Oct 2023	In Progress
Industry engagement sessions to develop a Concordat with Industry	Oct 2023	Deliver the Industry engagement sessions	Underdevelopment
Publish an Industry Concordat	Dec 2023	The publication of the Concordat on gov.je	Underdevelopment

Customer Service Charter

Recommendation A Customer Service Charter should be introduced to include, inter alia, performance targets for registering and validating planning applications and responding to inquiries, for example returning phone calls.

Minister's Action Plan The Minister is keen to introduce a Customer Service Charter which includes performance targets and service level agreements across all aspects of the planning service. This Customer Service Charter should include feedback from customers and industry on expected levels of services and as such will need consultation prior to publication. This engagement on a Charter will couple with the recommendations of industry engagement sessions and the development of the concordat.

Time Scale for Delivery 4th Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Research and draft Customer Service Charter	Jul 2023	Draft Customer Service Charter	In progress
Industry engagement sessions to gather feedback on a Customer Service Charter	Oct 2023	Deliver the Industry engagement sessions	Underdevelopment
Develop Performance targets for a Customer Service Charter	Dec 2023	Agree performance targets	Underdevelopment
Develop Service level agreements for a Customer Service Charter	Dec 2023	Agree service level agreements	Underdevelopment
Publish the Customer Service Charter	Jan 2024	Publish the Customer Service Charter on gov.je	Underdevelopment

Customer Reception

Recommendation An important element of making the Planning Service more visible, accessible and customer focused should include the re-opening of a front office and reception area.

Minister's Action Plan The Government of Jersey's 'One Front Door' is the Customer and Local Services building at La Motte Street. Prior to Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, planning and building officers maintained a duty officer service for pre-application advice and queries to customers. Since then, officers have been meeting customers on a 'by appointment' basis. In future, customers will be able to meet with planning officers in the new Government Office Headquarters from 2024. In the interim until the move to the new HQ, the planning and building duty officer service will be reinstated at the CLS building in La Motte Street.

Time Scale for Delivery 2nd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Reinstate the Planning and Building duty officer service at Customer and Local Services	May 2023	Planning and Building duty officer service at Customer and Local Services available between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday	Completed
Publish visitor engagement quarterly	Oct 2023	Publish as part of the Improvement Plan update	In progress
Review of the Planning and Building duty officer service at Customer and Local Services	Dec 2023	Review of service published in Q4 Improvement Plan update	In progress
Plan for Planning and Building duty officer service at the new Government Headquarters	Mar 2024	Service level agreement in place for new Government Headquarters customer reception	In progress
Planning and Building duty officer service transferred from Customer and Local Services to the new Government Headquarters	Jul 2024	Duty officer service operating from the new Government Headquarters	In progress

Customer Experience

Recommendation A system of customer feedback should be introduced to obtain balanced feedback on customer service.

Minister's Action Plan The Minister fully supports the need for obtaining customer feedback and taking action as a result of that feedback. Promoting customer experience feedback is crucial and will be actioned as a priority. By using the Government of Jersey Customer Feedback Policy and management system, feedback will be recorded and managed, reported quarterly to managers and an action plan put in place for Improvement of learning.

There will also be staff training to recognise and record customer feedback and leadership meetings will review all feedback and actions. This will be reported in the industry forums established under the recommendations below.

Time Scale for Delivery 2nd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Government of Jersey Customer Feedback Policy and management system, feedback will be recorded and managed, reported quarterly to managers	May 2023	Customer feedback collated and available to Extended Leadership Team	Completed
Leadership meetings will review all feedback and actions	Jun 2023	Quarterly meeting of the Extended Leadership Team dedicated to Customer Service	Completed
Training for Planning and Technical Support officers to use Customer Feedback Management System (CFMS) to report individual complaints	Sept 2023	Training sessions completed	In progress
Feedback and actions reported in industry forums	Oct 2023	As part of Industry engagement recommendation	Underdevelopment

Industry Engagement

Recommendation A step change in the quality of engagement with the development industry is required to ensure planners are better known.

Minister's Action Plan The Minister is keen to establish an Industry Partnership Board, which would meet quarterly with the new Head of Development and Land, and others as appropriate, to improve relationships with industry and planners and create a forum for discussion of key issues and changes.

Time Scale for Delivery 3rd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Industry engagement sessions to establish an Industry Partnership Board	Oct 2023	Deliver the Industry engagement sessions	Underdevelopment
Establish an Industry Partnership Board	Dec 2023	First meeting of the Industry Partnership Board	Underdevelopment

Industry Forums

Recommendation Regular short forums with the industry, involving consultees where appropriate, for explaining and receiving feedback on key issues and planned changes, should be introduced.

Minister's Action Plan Engagement with the industry and consultees on key issues and planned changes will be introduced through a series of forums, breakfast bites, and online seminars. First topics for discussion will be a customer feedback agreement, concordat, training opportunities, linking the other recommendations together. This would couple with the recommendation for an Industry Partnership Board.

Time Scale for Delivery 3rd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Regular short forums to inform and gather feedback on key changes within the industry.	Oct 2023	To hold an initial short forum.	In progress

Training & Professional Development

Recommendation There should be a more focused training programme with priority given to subjects which will provide planners with the knowledge and skills to discharge their duties and responsibilities more effectively. Consultees have indicated their willingness to assist with delivering an on-island training programme.

Minister's Action Plan A training programme for planners will be prepared which will include opportunities for job-related training, formal education, conferences and seminars, and consultee lunch and learns, all of which will aim to address subjects in which planners feel their understanding is lacking. The programme will combine offers from on-Island consultees, industry professionals, as well as professional bodies such as the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Time Scale for Delivery 3rd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Review training programme for Continuing Professional Development for Planning professionals	Jul 2023	Training programme of Continuing Professional Development for planners to be connected to performance objectives.	In progress
Permitted development training	Jul 2023	Training delivered to Technical Support Officers, Trainee Planners on 14 July. Training delivered to Minister and Assistant Minister in the week of 20 July. Planning officer refresher to be arranged for within the planning team in July.	In progress
Develop lunch and learns with consultees to provide planners with subject-specific training.	Oct 2023	Organise once a month with each of the different consultees, e.g. natural environment, public health, drainage	Underdevelopment

Celebrating Success

Recommendation A system of Planning Awards should be introduced to celebrate successes, for example in pre-application discussion, design statements and place making.

Minister's Action Plan The Jersey Architectural Design Awards are a celebration of excellence in architecture and design in Jersey. The Awards are a collaboration between the Association of Jersey Architects and the Government of Jersey. The Minister supports this celebration and working with the Association of Jersey Architects, will explore the expansion of award categories to include place making, design statement and community consultation.

Time Scale for Delivery 1st Quarter 2024

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Planning Design Tour in celebrating success, identify areas of learning, developing the strengths of the Planning Application Team, and to be part of the process for embedding new starters to the team	Jun 2023	To be held on 30 June 2023	Completed
Work with the Association of Jersey Architects to explore the expansion of award categories to include place making, design statement and community consultation, promising professional, knowledge sharing	Jan 2024	Agreement to expand the awards	Underdevelopment

Compliance Strategy

Recommendation An Enforcement/Compliance Strategy should be drawn up to explain the approach to compliance.

Minister's Action Plan The Comptroller and Auditor General Report of 2019 into the Use of Enforcement Powers recommended the publication of a compliance strategy across regulation, which aligns with this recommendation. A Regulator's Code and a Compliance Strategy will be prepared with publication by the end of the year.

This is an important step towards a more transparent and accessible service and is supported by the Minister.

Time Scale for Delivery 4th Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Publish a Regulator's Code and Compliance Strategy	Aug 2023	<p>Presentation to the Minister to be conducted for publication in August 2023.</p> <p>Publish a Regulator's Code and Compliance Strategy</p>	In progress

Early intervention

Recommendation A potential role for Building Control in the early stages of construction should be explored.

Minister's Action Plan The Minister is keen to explore how a joined-up planning and building service can support each other. Improved technology through Project RIDA will assist with information sharing between the teams, enabling more effective collaboration in the service. Working together as a team will be a priority for the new Head of Development and Land.

Time Scale for Delivery 1st Quarter 2024

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Explore how a joined-up planning and building service can support each other.	Oct 2023	Head of Development & Land reviewing working practices	In progress
Improved systems for Information sharing between the teams, enabling more effective collaboration in the service	Jan 2024	Software improvements as part of the technology project	In progress

Improvement Plan

Recommendation An ambitious but deliverable Improvement Plan - supported by a Communications Strategy – should be drawn up based on the Minister for the Environment’s conclusions on the recommendations of the Review

Minister’s Action Plan The Minister accepts all recommendations in full and has outlined his high-level action plan in this document. Some of the recommendations require consultation with internal teams, customers, the industry and other States Members before a detailed Improvement Plan (IP) is agreed with actions, responsibilities, measures and review dates. This detailed IP which will be updated regularly and shared across Government, industry and the public will be in place within 3 months.

Time Scale for Delivery 2nd Quarter 2023

Key Action	Target	Key Milestones	Status
Publish a high-level Action Plan	May 2023	Publish a high-level Action Plan	Completed
Establish Improvement Plan delivery working group	Jun 2023	Meetings established to review progress and delivery against the Improvement Plan	Completed
Publish the Improvement Plan supported by a Communications Strategy	Jun 2023	Publish Improvement Plan	Completed
Seek feedback from customers and Industry on the Improvement Plan	Aug 2023	Feedback collected and reviewed	In progress
Publish an Improvement Plan update quarterly	Oct 2023	Publish the 3 rd Quarter Improvement Plan Update	Underdevelopment

Communication Strategy

As officers work to fulfil the actions outlined in the Improvement Plan, a communications strategy will be followed to ensure Islanders are kept aware of the progress and that key milestones are clearly communicated.

As part of the communication strategy, officers from the Regulatory Improvement team will be reaching out to stakeholders to seek feedback on the Improvement Plan and to invite stakeholders to the engagement events scheduled for October.

In the meantime, to provide feedback or to contact the team about the Review of Planning Services Improvement Plan (2023) Islanders can email planningreview@gov.ie

Stakeholder Map

