

SECTION 11: TOURISM AND RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

- 11.1 Tourism and recreation are vital to Island life. Tourism supports a wide range of local facilities and services (such as shops, restaurants, leisure and transport facilities), which could not be supported by residents alone.
- 11.2 Tourism is an important sector of the economy, responsible for some 24% of GDP in 1996. Hotels, restaurants and bars in the Island accounted for 6,000 jobs in September 2001. Advertising and promotional material produced by the Tourism Committee play an important part in further raising the profile of the Island overseas and thereby encouraging more visitors.
- 11.3 Tourism numbers in the Island have been in decline since the mid-1980s and have decreased sharply since 1988. No longer can it rely upon long-stay visitors from the UK, who have been the bedrock of the industry since the Second World War. As the market has declined so hotels have been sold for other uses thereby reducing the number of beds by approximately 7,500 (27%) between 1980 and 1999. A further 1,600 bedspaces were lost for the 2000 season. The majority of Jersey's hotel stock is quite old, with no new hotels having been built in the Island in the past 30 years. Although the loss has mainly been confined to the lower quality hotels and guesthouses, the pressure remains, with competing uses (such as residential) preferring those sites that are also favoured sites for tourist accommodation.
- 11.4 Events may stimulate a visit to Jersey for some but others may come if they feel the product is good and it is increasingly recognised that the most important part of the product is the Island's natural beauty. It is also true that the quality and range of the product may influence whether visitors come back or recommend Jersey to others.
- 11.5 In the 1950s there was a waiting list to come to Jersey. Today the story is very different and the Island competes with the UK and Europe for short break holidays and with long-haul resorts for long-stay holidays. Jersey is also combating a perception that it is an expensive destination, a perception fuelled by the current strength of sterling and the relative high cost of transport to the Island.

- 11.6 Tourism in Jersey is being forced to compete and the signs of change are visible as the Island seeks to restructure its industry, whilst at the same time attempting to support its traditional core business. Encouragingly, the Island is beginning to show potential to gain market share from both the business/conference sectors and the short break activity/sport/recreation tourism and cultural tourism markets, by promoting its natural qualities. These are growing sectors and because they are relatively high value, are more sustainable sectors of the industry both economically and environmentally. Relying on the traditional UK visitor means that Jersey's season is short. The problems of increased traffic, for instance, are concentrated in a few summer weeks and the opportunity for tourist attractions to make money is limited. Economically, the long stay visitor is a low spender, which means that a tourism (and transport) operator needs to attract high volume to earn enough money to make the business viable.
- 11.7 In contrast to the changing demand for tourism in the Island, the demand for recreation and cultural activities has been steadily growing over recent years as people increasingly desire 'value for time', greater self improvement and a healthier lifestyle. There are Island-wide benefits to be gained from the provision of recreational facilities: better health, social benefits (by providing a sense of personal and community well-being) and the provision of dual facilities for schools. This allows the Island's young to enjoy organised team sports, which are important for their physiological and social development.

Relationship to the Vision and Objectives

- 11.8 The Vision for the new Island Plan sees Jersey as 'a distinctive place where everyone is able to enjoy a high quality of life' and as an Island with a visually pleasing environment 'that has a clear sense of identity and place in the UK, Europe and the World'. Objectives of the new Island Plan of particular relevance to tourism and recreation include to:
- protect the character of the coast and countryside;
 - protect and promote the built, cultural and archaeological heritage;
 - protect and enhance the local character of urban and rural communities and the identity of the town and local centres;
 - encourage a balanced and more diverse economy and assist all sectors of the economy to adapt to change in the market place; and
 - support the development of appropriate tourism, cultural and leisure activities and facilities.

Approach

- 11.9 The new Island Plan supports the development of tourism, recreation and cultural resources through the general protection and improvement of the existing facilities and where appropriate, enabling new facilities to be developed. It also recognises that, for some, recreation involves enjoying Jersey's natural areas.

- 11.10 Tourism in Jersey is in transition from a high volume destination to lower-volume but higher-yield. The restructuring needs to take into account rising visitor expectations, changes in social structure and international changes in the nature of the industry and travel patterns. It must be balanced against the needs of local people, the economic benefits and the protection of the environment (a key asset for tourism in Jersey).
- 11.11 For Jersey to meet the challenges of its tourism industry, it will have to be able to compete on product price, product quality and product range. Although product price is not an issue for the new Island Plan, facilitating necessary changes to the quality and the range of the Island's tourism product to allow the industry to compete will have obvious land-use implications. It is said by some that the use of UK-type road signs and street furniture has detracted from the idea of Jersey as a special place. The Planning and Environment Committee will look for quality design in tourist facilities and the introduction of a 'Jersey style' that has been lacking. It is this emphasis on quality that is likely to attract discerning holidaymakers, in line with the Tourism Committee's recently published strategy. The Committee is working on a 'Seaside Code' which will inform the future treatment of beach kiosks, facilities for those using the beach and the renewal of the seaside bordering Victoria Avenue.
- 11.12 Meeting the expected continued growth in demand for sport and recreational activities will also have obvious land-use implications. As tourism has its formal and informal sides, either being highly packaged or of an independent nature, so does sport and recreation. Jersey caters for an extremely wide range of sporting and recreational pursuits and boasts an impressive array of formal facilities to service them. In the majority of cases these are built to international standards. Informally, Jersey's countryside and coastline provide a quality recreational arena and the use of the countryside and marine environments will need to be assessed against the impact upon the loss of important habitats and environmental quality and character.
- 11.13 Over the Plan period, there will be a need to extend, upgrade and replace outworn facilities to meet health and safety standards, rising consumer expectations and the need to accommodate new activities for which there is a strong unmet demand.
- 11.14 Cultural resources are also very important to the well-being of the people of Jersey. In this section, specific facilities are referred to, whereas the conservation and improvement to the quality of the built environment as well as social and community facilities are also important to Jersey's cultural identity. These are dealt with intrinsically in Sections Six and Nine.
- 11.15 In order to achieve the objectives of the new Island Plan that are of relevance to tourism, recreation and cultural facilities, the following aims have been developed:
- support and assist the growth of the tourism industry;
 - protect the quality and character of Jersey's natural and built environment and cultural identity, as a key asset on which tourism and recreation are based;

- support high quality development and further improvement of tourism accommodation and attractions;
- provide or encourage the provision of new recreational opportunities (both formal and informal) for which there is unmet demand or which fulfils an identified need;
- support the recreation needs of the community, education and tourism sectors;
- favourably consider the enhancement/improvement or replacement of outworn resources; and
- protect existing recreation and cultural resources (facilities and spaces) from other uses.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

Development of New Tourist Accommodation

- 11.16 A strong and quality visitor product is a key ingredient of a successful tourist destination. In order for Jersey to compete in the future, it will have to ensure that its product grows and changes to meet changing expectations. It is in this task that the Island Plan has a rôle to play by supporting and enabling the tourism industry to compete sustainably for the benefit of the Island. In design, it is important that the Island secures greater quality and distinctiveness.
- 11.17 For tourism to be able to compete successfully over the Plan period, the industry will need to be able to respond to ever increasing consumer expectations and the needs of its target markets and market segments. Jersey will find it hard to compete effectively in the market place with its existing accommodation stock because it is not sufficiently diverse or modern in the facilities it provides.
- 11.18 In certain cases, refurbishment or extensions to existing properties will not be able to provide the required standards or configurations. It is likely that there will be a need to consider new hotels, guesthouses, self-catering and camping sites (excluding caravans) during the Plan period.
- 11.19 The tourism industry has suffered the loss of almost a third of its hotel stock since the mid-1980s to pressure from competing land-uses. There is concern in the industry that this loss cannot be sustained indefinitely and that if the industry is to address the decline in existing markets and compete for a share of new markets, the quantity, range and quality of accommodation needs to be addressed.
- 11.20 The Planning and Environment Committee will recognize that over the last few years many tourism related properties have been converted to residential use. Often this will be the reverse of the practice of converting residential homes to hotels and guesthouses in the days of greatest tourist demand. The Committee will not regard the loss of residential units per se as a problem when considering applications for new or extended tourism accommodation.

- 11.21 The Planning and Environment Committee recognizes the dilemma between policies to protect and enhance the countryside and policies which seek to facilitate developments in the tourism industry to enable visitors to enjoy our unique environment. That dilemma can be resolved within the policies set out if proposals for new tourist related accommodation recognize the sensitivities of the separate zones established in the countryside policies.
- 11.22 The Planning and Environment Committee has set out the criteria for development in each of the zones and the presumptions against development, including those related to tourism, exist to protect and maintain those areas. There remain, however, prescribed opportunities for proposals to be submitted to the Committee and increasingly demanding standards to be met to satisfy the Committee within the hierarchy of countryside zones.

POLICY TR1 – DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Proposals for new tourist accommodation (both serviced and self-catering) within the built-up area will be favourably considered provided the proposed development:

- (i) will not unreasonably affect the character and amenity of the area;**
- (ii) will not have an unreasonable impact on neighbouring uses and the local environment by reason of noise, odour, visual intrusion or other amenity considerations;**
- (iii) will not have an unacceptable impact on a Site of Special Interest, Building of Local Importance or a Conservation Area;**
- (iv) will not lead to unacceptable problems of traffic generation, safety or parking;**
- (v) is accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users including those with mobility impairments;**
- (vi) makes use of existing buildings where possible;**
- (vii) is appropriate in scale, form, massing, density and design to the site and its context;**
- (viii) takes into account the need to design out crime and facilitate personal safety and security; and**
- (ix) is in accordance with other principles and policies of the Plan.**

In the Countryside Zone and the Green Zone, extensions to existing tourist accommodation or the conversion of existing buildings will normally be permitted, where the proposed development satisfies the above criteria.

There is a presumption against new and the extension of existing tourist accommodation in the Zone of Outstanding Character.

Tourist Destination Areas

- 11.23 There are a number of components that make a successful visitor destination within the Island. These include a good range of accommodation and attractions, good transport links, a high quality built or natural environment, a good range of events and activities and strong visitor support facilities.
- 11.24 The support facilities are very often visitor attractors in their own right – a quality restaurant, cultural and recreational facilities, a good public house or a scenic coastal promenade, for example, are an important part of the overall ambience of a visitor destination. They bring an extra vibrancy to an area, help retain visitors and support the accommodation and attractions. They can also have a key service provision rôle for local residents. Very often their cumulative loss can have a detrimental effect on an area's tourism identity, as witnessed at Havre des Pas, which has lost some of its tourism resort feel by the loss of facilities and their replacement by housing.
- 11.25 There still remain a number of destinations in the Island which have a concentration of visitor support facilities and are a draw to a high percentage of Island visitors and residents alike. The areas are also important for leisure for local residents as well as tourists. Within these destinations, it is advantageous to protect existing and help facilitate new visitor support infrastructure. In order to limit the effect of a further gradual erosion of tourist support facilities from existing locations which are considered to be of a strategic importance to the Island's tourism industry, the Island Plan designates the following locations as Tourist Destination Areas. These locations are illustrated on the Island and Town Proposals Maps, with the precise boundaries to be defined by the Tourism Committee:
- St Aubin;
 - St Brelade's Bay;
 - Havre des Pas; and
 - Gorey.

POLICY TR2 – TOURIST DESTINATION AREAS

Within the Tourist Destination Areas noted on the Island and Town Proposals Maps:

- **environmental enhancements to the public realm will be supported;**
- **there will be support for proposals for al fresco activities associated with restaurants, bars, cafes and outdoor performances, subject to there being no unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring uses or unacceptable public safety issues; and**
- **improvements to accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users generally will be supported.**

Proposals for new tourist accommodation and support facilities will normally be permitted in the Tourist Destination Areas provided that the development:

- (i) will not unreasonably affect the character and amenity of the area;**
- (ii) will not have an unreasonable impact on neighbouring uses and the local environment by reason of noise, odour, visual intrusion or other amenity considerations;**
- (iii) will not have an unacceptable impact on a Site of Special Interest, Building of Local Importance or a Conservation Area;**
- (iv) will not lead to unacceptable problems of traffic generation, safety or parking;**
- (v) is accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users including those with mobility impairments;**
- (vi) makes use of existing buildings where possible;**
- (vii) is appropriate in scale, form, massing, density and design to the site and its context;**
- (viii) takes into account the need to design out crime and facilitate personal safety and security; and**
- (ix) is in accordance with other principles and policies of the Plan.**

11.26 The Planning and Environment Committee will consider proposals for tourism related developments in Tourism Destination Areas in accordance with the advice appropriate to the zoning of the site. Where there is a presumption against development, the Planning and Environment Committee will require clear evidence of the benefits of the proposals and how the development will enhance or mitigate the impact on the location.

New or Extended Tourism Attractions

11.27 Tourism attractions form a central part of the visitor experience. The provision of new attractions helps a destination to retain or grow its market share and remain competitive in the face of changing consumer expectations and innovations. Similarly, the ability of an existing attraction to upgrade, re-invent itself or extend the operation is important to the continued viability of that attraction and the overall success of the visitor destination. The Planning and Environment Committee will consider proposals for new or extended tourism and cultural attractions in accordance with the advice appropriate to the zoning of the site. Where there is a presumption against development, the Planning and Environment Committee will require clear evidence of the benefits of the proposals and how the development will enhance or mitigate the impact on the location.

POLICY TR3 – NEW OR EXTENDED TOURISM AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

Proposals for the development of new or extensions to existing tourism and cultural attractions within the built-up area will normally be permitted provided the proposed development:

- (i) will not unreasonably affect the character and amenity of the area;
- (ii) will not have an unreasonable impact on neighbouring uses and the local environment by reason of noise, odour, visual intrusion or other amenity considerations;
- (iii) will not have an unacceptable impact on a Site of Special Interest, Building of Local Importance or a Conservation Area;
- (iv) will not lead to unacceptable problems of traffic generation, safety or parking;
- (v) is accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users including those with mobility impairments;
- (vi) makes use of existing buildings where possible;
- (vii) is appropriate in scale, form, massing, density and design to the site and its context;
- (viii) takes into account the need to design out crime and facilitate personal safety and security; and
- (ix) is in accordance with other principles and policies of the Plan.

In the Countryside Zone and the Green Zone extensions to existing tourism and cultural attractions will normally be permitted, where the proposed development satisfies the above criteria.

The development of new tourism and cultural attractions may be permitted within the Countryside Zone and the Green Zone where the proposal is directly related to an existing tourism, leisure or recreation facility and where the proposed development satisfies the above criteria.

There is a presumption against new and the extension of existing tourism and cultural attractions in the Zone of Outstanding Character.

Protection of Recreational and Cultural Resources

- 11.28 The ability to undertake recreational pursuits is dependent in many cases upon the provision of suitable, purpose-built facilities and playing pitches or fields that meet the relevant standards for that activity. The protection of existing facilities and pitches is vital to meet a strong demand for a wide variety of activities from many sectors of the population including residents, schools, clubs and tourists. Recreation spaces also have an environmental rôle to play, particularly in those locations where they are the only sizeable area of green space in a built-up area.

- 11.29 There are also facilities that are important to the cultural life of Islanders which may include theatres and the arts centre as well as buildings that are used for both cultural and recreational purposes. It is important that such facilities are retained where possible to support and develop cultural activities.

POLICY TR4 – PROTECTION OF RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

There will be a presumption against the loss of existing recreational and cultural resources.

Development involving the loss of existing recreational and cultural resources will normally only be permitted where the Planning and Environment Committee is satisfied that:

- (i) the loss will have no unreasonable impact on Island-wide provision; or**
- (ii) alternative replacement provision has already been developed or will be developed within an agreed timescale; or**
- (iii) the proposal will be of greater community or Island benefit than the existing resource.**

Development of Recreation Resources

- 11.30 The provision of recreation resources is vital in ensuring that the Island's facilities and playing pitches/fields:
- meet current health and safety and other guideline standards and do not become unacceptably outworn;
 - meet identified unmet needs;
 - give the Island the opportunity to compete in sport and to host its own sporting events; and
 - provide high quality resources for the Island's population and its visitors.

POLICY TR5 – DEVELOPMENT OF RECREATION RESOURCES

Proposals for the development of recreation resources will normally be permitted provided that the development:

- (i) contributes to an existing or latent local or Island-wide demand;
- (ii) will not unreasonably affect the character and amenity of the area;
- (iii) will not have an unacceptable visual impact;
- (iv) will not have an unacceptable impact on a Site of Special Interest or Building of Local Importance;
- (v) makes use of existing buildings where possible;
- (vi) is appropriate in scale, form, massing, density and design to the site and its context;
- (vii) will not lead to unacceptable problems of traffic generation, safety and parking;
- (viii) is accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users including those with mobility impairments; and
- (ix) is in accordance with other principles and policies of the Plan.

In all cases the primary consideration will be the protection and conservation of the environment.

There will be a general presumption against the development of recreational resources in the Zone of Outstanding Character except for minor improvements to enhance public enjoyment of the coast and countryside.

Land for Recreation

11.31 The following sites have been identified as having opportunities to provide new recreation facilities within the Plan period:

- The Parish of St Martin is intending to provide land for recreational opportunities opposite the school and proposals are likely to include playing fields and possible indoor facilities.
- The Town Park will create a substantial formal public park in the heart of a densely built-up area as part of wider renewal and environmental enhancements. The proposal will also help improve links between residential and commercial areas.
- Mont de la Ville Park will provide an essential recreational link between Fort Regent, South Hill Park and La Collette Gardens and Walk, not only tying together these currently stand-alone recreation resources to form a network, but providing another link between town and coast.
- Within the approved planning framework for La Collette 2 there is an area of land for:
 - a major landscaped feature and public open space; and

- access to the water at all states of the tide and for associated facilities for small marine leisure craft.
- A St Helier Circular Walk has received support from the Sport, Leisure and Recreation and Public Services Departments. It is considered that such a walk could provide essential links between a series of separate green spaces within and on the periphery of the town and could strengthen the town's links to the coast and to the countryside on its edge. The site zoned for housing at Mont a L'Abbé could form an integral part of this recreational opportunity and the provision of footpaths and cycle-routes to help facilitate this circular walk should be a requirement within its Development Brief. A detailed study of the feasibility and potential routeing for this walk will be required.
- Following the relocation of the bus station to a transport centre at the Island Site, the Weighbridge site is proposed to be developed as a public open space.
- Land at Goose Green Marsh lies to the south of land proposed for housing (Policy H2). It is an important open space of community, landscape and possible ecological value. There is potential for improved public access and informal recreation uses as a public amenity, whilst respecting the special environment and landscape character of the site.

POLICY TR6– LAND FOR RECREATION

The following areas are identified on the Island and Town Proposals Maps for recreation purposes:

- (1) Field 388, St Martin;**
- (2) The Town Park;**
- (3) The linear Mont de la Ville Park;**
- (4) La Collette 2;**
- (5) The Weighbridge; and**
- (6) Goose Green Marsh, St Lawrence.**

There will be a presumption against development that would prevent the future use of these sites for recreational purposes.