

STATES OF JERSEY



ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL IMPACT IN GREEN BACKDROP ZONE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Lodged au Greffe on 9th February 2026
by Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade
Earliest date for debate: 10th March 2026

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Minister for the Environment to –

- (a) take the necessary steps to ensure that all planning applications for sites within the Green backdrop zone (GBZ), and likely to have visible impact on the GBZ, include both a text and pictorial assessment of the visual impact of the application on features requiring protection and enhancement, in accordance with Policy GD9 – Skyline, views and vistas, in the [Bridging Island Plan 2022-2025](#); and
- (b) publish draft guidance, no later than the end of 2026, to support the application of Policy GD9 as set out in (a), including, but not limited to –
 - (i) identification of those features requiring protection and enhancement as set out in (a);
 - (ii) maps of the GBZ that include sight lines from each viewing location that takes in features identified in (i); and
 - (iii) photographs illustrating sight lines identified in (ii).

DEPUTY M.R. SCOTT OF ST. BRELADE

REPORT

The intention of this Proposition is to provide clarity for those seeking to develop any sites in the scenic Green Backdrop Zones (GBZ) identified in the [Bridging Island Plan 2022-2025](#) (BIP) while assisting in protecting the visual amenity of these coastal areas from over-development.

Owing to their 'low density residential development', GBZ are distinguished in the BIP from Protected Coastal Area to which Policy NE3 offers 'the highest level of protection'. This is notwithstanding that the BIP describes GBZ as 'part of the landscaped escarpment around the east, south and west of the Island and is particularly prominent from the coast and the sea' (p. 98). It also describes them as providing 'a green backdrop and setting to much of St Helier, St Aubin, Gorey and St Brelade's Bay' (p. 98).

Their locations are shown in Figure GD3 (p. 99) of the BIP copied below.

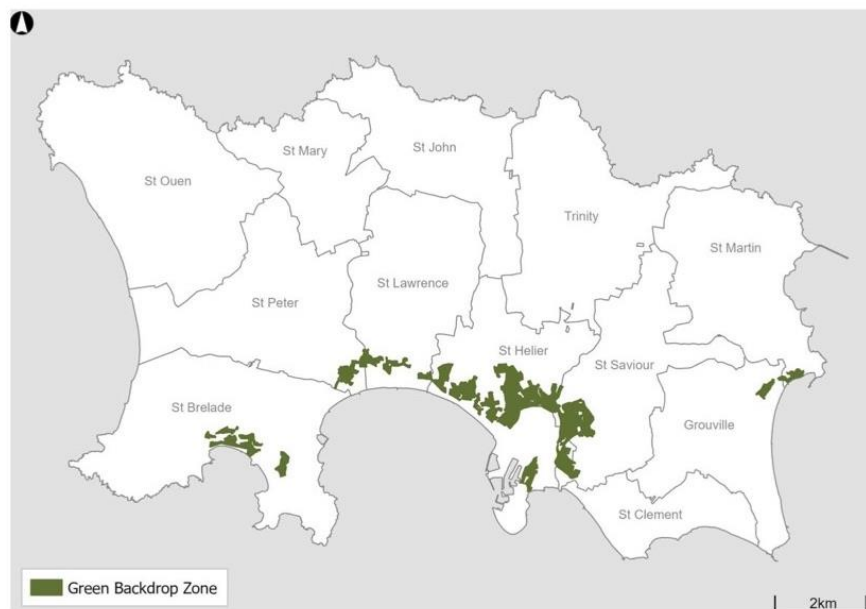


Figure GD3 – Green backdrop zone

The BIP has noted that '[d]evelopment on the slope and crest of the escarpment, particularly in locations around St Aubin's Bay and St Brelade's Bay, has led to some adverse impact on the green backdrop and coastal views the effect of which has been exacerbated by associated tree removal from the seaward side of the development and the skyline' (p. 99). With respect to GBZ, it refers to the [Jersey Integrated Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment](#) (JILSA) as setting a framework for its management.

However, the [Validation Requirements for planning applications and other applications pub Oct 23](#) makes no reference to GD8 in its reference to the JILSA and only mentions its relevance in the context of Policies NE3 and GD9

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment/ Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment	Applications Or, where there is a potential adverse impact on the character and distinctive features of the Island's landscape from the proposed development.	The Landscape Design Guidance (Part 5 of the Jersey Integrated Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment) provides a methodology for understanding the implications of a proposal on views and visibility. For further advice please contact the Planning Department's Landscape Officer.	BIP Policy GD9, NE3
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(p. 15)

While the JILSA provides information, including a stage guide (p. 231) to consider views and visibility and some visibility maps, a greater focus on specific features, as set out in Policy GD9, to be protected in GBZ, would contribute to a more standard approach.

The JILSA refers to a need for planning officers to ‘identify key viewpoints within the extent of visibility’ and ‘to check whether your site is within the setting of the three historic landmarks of Mont Orgueil, Corbière Lighthouse and Elizabeth Castle’ (p. 232). It does not mention other landmarks in GBZ such as Conway Towers nor identify views of skyline in the GBZ from public viewpoints such as the public roads, coastal paths, beaches and breakwaters.

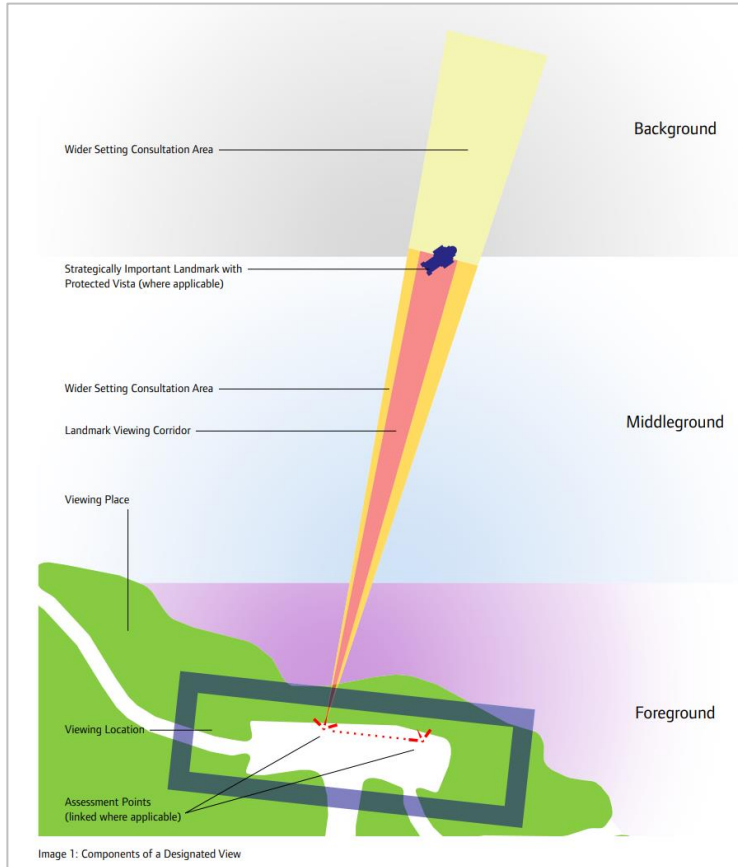
The provision of more detailed information, both textual and visual, relating to specific elements of Policy GD9 to the public and planning officers would reduce the subjectivity that currently exists when assessing the visual impact of any proposed development in a GBZ. It also would provide transparency, consistency and clarity for applicants and planning officers.

In addition, the publication of assessments of the visual impact of planning applications for sites in the GBZ on the Jersey planning application register would increase public knowledge of the process and the potential impact on features in these Zones that are of significance to the Island.

An example of supplementary planning guidance designed to manage impacts on scenic views in London is illustrated by the [London View Management Framework: supplementary planning guidance](#) which provides some useful guidance on a designated view which comprises the following –

- *A Viewing Place, containing one or more specific Viewing Locations*
- *One or more Assessment Points each defined with a 120 degree field of interest*
- *A foreground, middle ground and background as described in each Management Plan (p. 20)*

including relevant illustrations (example below)



(p. 21)

as well as specific maps and photo views –



Image 2: Map of Protected Vista, annotated to show indicative threshold heights

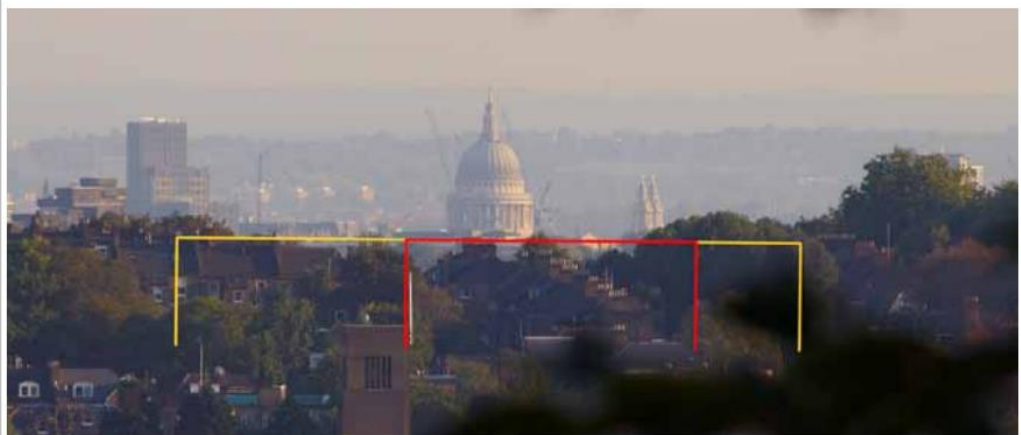


Image 3: Telephoto view from Assessment Point showing Protected Vista thresholds

(p. 23)

Further reading

[Islington Local Plan: Strategic and Development Management Policies](#) (September 2023) – see Appendix 5

Financial and staffing implications

This information has been sought from the Minister for the Environment. Currently, it is anticipated that the work can be carried out using existing resources as it largely records and makes more transparent current working practices of officers.

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment

I consider that this proposition has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022.