

A vision for Guernsey's future

Your island, your views, your choice

Frequently asked questions

Long Port has welcomed the extensive media coverage given to our east coast vision and wish to answer the questions and alleviate the concerns that the islanders have raised.

Economical and Political

Q. You say the plans are sustainable but will they not risk overheating the economy?

A. No. This is a 10 – 15 year, long term project that will feed the construction industries with up to £50m annual spend, which is equivalent to the amount needed to fund the new secondary school at Les Nicolles. It is up to the States to decide the phasing.

Q. Where is the money going to come from for funding and maintaining the sewage and household waste to energy plants?

A. Either the States (the people's pocket!) or in partnership with the private sector. Our vision is to offer a cross subsidy of £10m from the adjoining development. It will be for the States, as the owners, to decide how they will fund and run the facilities.

Q. If your plans are accepted by the public, then surely their future is still uncertain with elections in 18 months time.

A. Yes. It is up to the States to decide when and how many of these proposals are promoted and implemented.

Q. Could a new States overturn the current growth strategy and put a more sustainable policy in its place?

A. Yes. We believe these proposals can be incorporated into any sustainable growth policy for Guernsey. An integrated long term approach needs to be adopted by the States to meet the needs of the island. The States has a duty to use its assets for the benefit of the community.

Q. Where will the income from these projects go?

A. The States of Guernsey will receive £100m in stamp duty, revenue and capital receipts and income tax. It is up to them to use the money in a way that they see fit. The £100m could cover the entire cost of the sewage and refuse waste to energy plant or provide capital for the many cash-strapped, essential States programmes including housing, health, education, waste management infrastructure, St Peter Port car parking and sustainable growth.

Q. Is the calculated £500m cost not remarkably low?

A. No. £500m is our estimate for the first three phases of the vision, but with any large scale project it is impossible to calculate the exact costs without further analysis and investigation. It is important to note that the longer the States delays, the higher the costs will be.

Q. The original look of the island and its historical appearance is what attracts cruise liners. If this is lost won't we wave goodbye to another section of our tourist industry or do you think that there is enough demand for a cruise liner berth?

A. The proposals made would only serve to enrich the tourism industry within Guernsey. It would provide facilities for the liners to moor and also enhance existing facilities for the passengers disembarking. This would only encourage more liners to visit the island, creating a larger footfall of tourists onto the island and into the town. This would have a virtuous effect on St Peter Port – increasing sales in both shops and restaurants alike and injecting money into the economy. It is up to the island and the States to decide whether this is something that they want.

Q. Will Long Port run the hotel and is there the demand for it? Surely the space could be used as public gardens instead?

A. Long Port is not a hotel operator. We have a number of leading hotel operators who have expressed interest in this opportunity. The plans are only at the public consultation phase and nothing is confirmed. We recognise that public areas have been ignored by the States and are desperately needed within St Peter Port and so the vision includes many areas both inside and outside for people to enjoy. This is not about destroying the east coast but enhancing it.

Environmental

Q. How can you justify the destruction of a marine environment?

A. While we appreciate that some people may have environmental concerns, there will be full Environmental Impact Assessments and the results will be made available for the public to comment on and for the States to determine. Polluted environments like Belle Greve Bay allow some species to thrive and dominate at the expense of others, thus reducing diversity. If the States stops pumping raw sewage into Belle Greve then the marine environment would dramatically improve to such an extent that it would be safe to swim in it and to eat the fish and shellfish caught there.

Q. Will the development be environmentally friendly?

A. Yes. The first phase of the vision is to solve the island's sewage and refuse crisis which at the moment is damaging our already fragile environment. It will also generate energy which will be put into the local grid. Modern buildings are already very energy efficient and we believe this development could turn Guernsey into a centre of excellence for sustainable development. We are now working with Professor Peter Smith on the tidal energy opportunities that the project presents.

Improved traffic flow will cause less pollution. We have also taken into consideration rising sea levels to protect the east coast from the inevitable storm and flooding threats.

The States have a duty to solve all of these problems for the community on a timely basis.

Q. Can the sewage and waste plant not be built on existing land such as Belgrave Vinery?

A. No. Belgrave Vinery is closer to major residential areas and existing schools than the proposed sewage and waste plant at Longue Hougue. Belgrave Vinery is being promoted by the States for essential social housing.

Q. Why are you trying to change the size and shape of Guernsey?

A. Our suggestion is to do this as sympathetically as possible to meet the needs of the island as our forefathers did when they constructed The Bridge, linked Castle Cornet to Castle Emplacement and reclaimed North Beach and the QEII Marina etc.

Belle Greve Bay will not be filled in and will comprise a series of attractive islands with views between to Herm and Sark. A series of inland tidally swept lagoons will be created which will provide a permanent beach and safe area for sailing and watersports. It is for the people and the States to decide what they want.

Social

Q. What is the Housing mix?

A. It is up to the States to decide the mix.

Q. Will this development benefit the locals?

A. Yes. Locals will benefit from better town facilities, a town beach, safe sailing and water sports and the £100m return to the States for it to use as it sees fit. Everyone will benefit.

Q. Will it provide housing and space for the influx of people needed to fuel the expanding finance industry?

A. We hope that this vision will encourage the finance industry to stay and grow because without it the island would be a very different place. The States needs to invest in our infrastructure for the way of life to continue or the island will decline. The Guernsey finance, tourist and marine industries need to have a world class shop window to maintain and enhance their positions in the future for the benefit of the community.

Q. Why do the public only get a proportion of the parking spaces proposed and will they be included in the paid parking plans?

A. It is up to the States to decide whether they are charged for and at what rate. Our vision is to put all of the parking underneath the Model Yacht Pond and North Beach which we believe will improve the look of our seafront. We recognise that public parking spaces are needed and it will be for the States as the owners to decide on the paid parking issue.

The remainder will be taken by the commercial properties with the user paying a rental for their commercial property and for the car parking. We have committed to the States receiving 10% of this. The properties and car parking will return to the States as freeholder at the end of the leasehold term.

Q. Will our taxes pay for the upkeep of the land on the islands or will those who live there pay a service charge?

A. No. The new islands will be part of Guernsey and therefore the common areas will be like any other within Guernsey and will be maintained by the Douzaine and paid for by the occupiers. The owners and occupiers will obviously also contribute through rates and income tax to the States.

Q. Do you not think that people have had enough of development with the Royal, the Markets, Marina Court and Admiral Park?

A. We accept that development can cause some temporary disruption. By delaying this kind of project, it essentially places Guernsey in a stagnant position, which will be to its detriment in economic terms. In its initial stages the Markets development faced great opposition, but now that it is taking shape people are beginning to accept the change and recognise that it is a step in the right direction. The local construction industry is also forecasting a dramatic reduction in work in 2009. The States needs to consider the economic impact of this and take appropriate action.

Architectural

Q. The designs for the buildings are hideous. Why do developers want to have all these modern buildings?

A. It is important to stress that our proposals are not confirmed, they are suggestions. If the States agreed to any one of the phases, it would be

their duty to formulate a design brief as to what the built environment, houses and the other buildings would look like. The States would certainly consult with the public. However, as with any design it is impossible to satisfy the desires of every individual. Our preferred option is to emulate the Guernsey vernacular and incorporate several outstanding landmark buildings to add interest and not create a bland waterfront.

Q. Will the owners of properties along the east coast lose their views and see their properties devalue?

A. Some of the views will inevitably change however the new islands and lagoons are designed to add interest, retaining views through to Herm and Sark between them. It is our belief that the properties along Les Banques will rise in value by up to 25% as it is a well-known fact that marina-side properties attract premium prices. We understand that home owners on Les Banques are concerned and would propose a combination of buy-back should people wish to move, or promote allocating one marina berth to each waterfront homeowner for them to either use or rent out. Again these ideas have to be considered by the States.

Q. Will we be doing what Jersey are doing and make a mess of our waterfront?

A. No. We are not seeking to imitate the Jersey Waterfront. Many mistakes were made by Jersey in promoting their development and we must learn from their mistakes. Our objective with this public consultation is to get the community to tell the States what they want.

Q. Are you proposing something grandiose in the hope that Guernsey will settle for something on a reduced scale?

A. No. We believe that this vision shows what could be done and we believe this to be achievable. However once again it is up to the people and the States to decide what they want.

Questions to Long Port

Q. What is in it for you?

A. We would expect as anybody would, including the States, a return on our investment.

Q. What is the ulterior motive and hidden agenda and why does it have to be Long Port?

A. We have a passion for quality regeneration and have the experience and access to funding to deliver this should the people and the States decide that this is what they want.

There is no ulterior motive, we want to enhance Guernsey and secure its future. Communities must move forward, they have to develop, regenerate and change. If they don't, they face decline. There will never be regeneration without an impact, we are providing something for all. It does not have to be Long Port but we are seeking to invest money into Guernsey. So far we are the only organisation, including the States, who have stepped forward to offer investment, an integrated approach to east coast land use and solutions to the problems of sewage and refuse treatment.

Q. Have you got the capacity to complete the projects when you have not yet finished the Royal?

A. Yes. The Royal is scheduled for completion in 2008 and in reality it is unlikely that any of these projects will be started before then given that we have changes due within the States in 18 months time.

Q. Does a public private partnership mean that more of our money will be handed over to departments and individuals who do not have to account for how they overspend it?

A. No. The complete reverse. Long Port is offering to fund 100% of the investment with a zero contribution, development and construction risk to the States. We will also provide a return to the States of over £100m in the first 10 years through stamp duty, income tax, rents and capital receipts. A continuing growing income will follow for the life of the commercial leasehold assets.

We have a vast amount of experience of public private partnership in the UK and there is no doubt that it benefits the community.

Your island, your views, your choice. Speak to your Deputy.