



Draft Development Brief for the Former Victoria Road Prison Site

**A Consultation Document
February 2014**



**Isle of Man
Government**

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Ministerial Introduction

I am pleased to introduce this Consultation Paper on the 'Draft Development Brief for the Former Victoria Road Prison Site', which aims, pending the preparation of the Area Plan for the East, to provide interim planning guidance to developers and the public alike on our vision for the site.

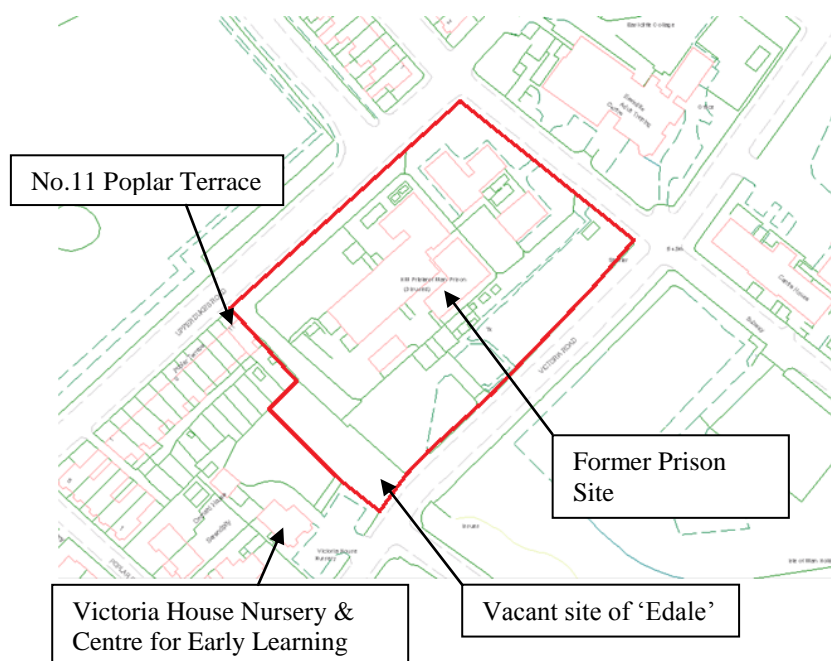
I would therefore urge everyone who has an opinion about the future of this site to respond to this consultation document.

David Cretney MHK

Minister for Infrastructure

1.0 The Site and Existing Situation

- 1.1 The redevelopment site is formed by what was the Victoria Road prison and an adjacent vacant site to the south west also in Government ownership. In total these 2 sites have a total site area of approximately 0.89ha, which the Department believes should be redeveloped in a cohesive way as a single site. The site is situated on a corner plot facing onto Victoria Road, Victoria Avenue and Poplar Terrace.
- 1.2 The former prison was the first purpose-built prison to be constructed on the Isle of Man, and held prisoners from April 1891 to August 2008. The prison was demolished in early 2013 and the site has recently been cleared and levelled.
- 1.3 The vacant site to the south west of the former prison site previously contained a residential property, which was called 'Edale'.
- 1.4 Adjoining the site to the south west is the residential property of No. 11 Poplar Terrace and a pre-school nursery (Victoria House Nursery & Centre for Early Learning). No.11 Poplar Terrace fronts onto Upper Dukes Road. Victoria House Nursery & Centre for Early Learning fronts onto Victoria Road. To the north west of the site is the public highway of Upper Dukes Road. On the opposite side of Upper Dukes Road is Noble's Park. To the North East is Eastcliffe Adult Training Centre and to the South East is the public highway of Victoria Road.





Note: Aerial photograph taken in March 2012.

2.0 What is a development brief?

- 2.1 A Development Brief provides guidance on how a site should be developed. It provides an indication of the kind of development the Department would encourage and support. It may include general development principles as well as any specific requirements. The brief is not intended to be exhaustive (for there may be other requirements necessary at the planning application stage) or replace the requirements of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan or the Douglas Local Plan 1998.
- 2.2 Development Briefs are usually contained within Development Plans for a wider area; however, in exceptional circumstances for instance where an unusual site becomes vacated outwith the Development Plan process it is prudent for the Department to set out any constraints/opportunities for applications relating to a particular site. The aim in these circumstances is to provide sufficient detail for those interested in the redevelopment of the site to understand:
- i) the background of the site;
 - ii) the site's current situation; and
 - iii) what government expectations are for the site in the future.

3.0 Key Objectives of Development Briefs

- 1) To set out clear guidelines that will assist in how any scheme could be developed.
- 2) To set strong design principles, which will be vital in both the preparation of schemes and the successful delivery of the development.

- 3) To provide guidance that will be used as a material consideration by those determining Planning Applications and if necessary any subsequent Planning Appeals.

4.0 Planning Policy background and Site Planning History

4.1 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2007 and the Douglas Local Plan 1998.

4.2 In respect of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2007, Strategic Policy 1 states that:-

“Development should make the best use of resources by:

- (a) optimising the use of previously developed land, redundant buildings, unused and under-used land and buildings, and re-using scarce indigenous building materials;
- (b) ensuring efficient use of sites, taking into account the needs for access, landscaping, open space and amenity standards; and
- (c) being located so as to utilise existing and planned infrastructure, facilities and services.”

4.3 This draft development brief will assist in meeting the aims of this policy by providing guidance on how the site could be redeveloped to its full potential.

4.4 The Douglas Local Plan 1998 zones various sites with the Borough of Douglas for different land use types. The existing land use designation for the former prison site is set out by the Douglas Local Plan as an “Area of Buildings for Civic, Cultural & Other Special Uses”, with an annotation stating that it is a prison. This land use designation now needs to be considered within the context of the subsequent closure and demolition of the former prison.

4.5 It is important to set the site into the context of the area. The site is surrounded by the following land use zonings - offices, community site, public open space and residential, as identified on the Douglas Local Plan 1998.

4.6 The vacant site of ‘Edale’ is zoned as predominantly residential. This site was subject of a planning application in 2006 for the erection of a building for tourist related and respite care accommodation together with on site car parking. Planning approval was granted; however, it has since lapsed.

4.7 This draft development brief is being produced in advance of any work on the Area Plan for the East. It will provide interim planning guidance for the site, which will eventually be incorporated within the Area Plan.

5.0 Aim

- 5.1 The aim of the proposed Draft Development Brief for the former Victoria Road prison site is:

To encourage and influence the redevelopment of a vacant former prison site in Douglas for purely residential use, which may incorporate some residential/day care uses.

6.0 The Development Brief for the former Victoria Road Prison site

The paragraphs 6.1 to 6.5 form the Draft Development Brief for the site.

6.1 Development Opportunities

- a) The use of the site shall be limited to the creation of a residential development which may also feature residential / day care uses.

6.2 Affordable Housing

- a) Affordable housing must be provided in accordance with Housing Policy 5 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2007 or its replacement.

6.3 General

- a) There is a need for a high quality design on this prominent site.
- b) The siting, height and mass of buildings will need to be carefully considered and schemes should be mindful of the impact on the street scene. Any application for development must include cross section drawings to allow the understanding and appreciation of the proposed height and massing, and any impact on nearby buildings.
- c) The former prison gatehouse was a three storey building, which sat well back from the public highway of Victoria Road. The building did not appear to be a dominant or an overbearing feature within the street scene. It is considered that any building greater than two storeys abutting the back of the footpath on Victoria Road would appear too dominant within the street scene and would look out of place, it would therefore not be advisable to design a scheme with more than two storeys in this area of the site.
- d) Proposals will have to demonstrate consideration of the surrounding land uses.
- e) The siting of any building close to the residential property of No.11 Poplar Terrace will need to be carefully considered so as to ensure that the development does not impact on the residential amenity of No.11 Poplar Terrace. Proposals will need to

demonstrate that the development will not result in demonstrable harm to the residential environment of No.11 Poplar Terrace in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy and visual intrusion.

- f) Proposals must include a full breakdown of the proposed uses and any proposed phasing.
- g) In addition to the above, all proposals must be accompanied by a Design Statement which shall:
 - i) demonstrate how the development has been designed to a high quality and will contribute positively to the visual amenities of the locality. This should incorporate an assessment of the character of the site and the area. Also, this should include how the development relates to the three road frontages of the site.
 - ii) include an assessment to identify the key views into and go of the site.
 - iii) include drawings/illustrative material to clearly indicate scale and massing and retention/enhancement of identified key views.
 - iv) include a statement regarding materials and finishes to be used within the development.
 - v) demonstrate a scheme based upon the principles of energy efficiency in terms of minimal use of energy in construction and use. In doing so the design of the building should make use of building width, depth and orientation to maximize the active frontage, daylight and ventilation etc.
- h) The development must provide public open space either on site or a mix of on-site/off site provision in accordance with Recreation Policy 3 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2007 or its replacement.

6.4 Transport and car parking

- a) Proposals must:
 - i) promote different transport uses – e.g. visible cycle parking close to building entrances and evidence that end users will be able to utilise public transport.
 - ii) include an assessment of the car parking and servicing needs of the development. This must assess any access/road implications and detail any required improvements. The car parking provision must be in accordance with Appendix 7 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2007 or its replacement.
 - iii) show the main vehicular access for the site being off Victoria Road.

6.5 Area Plan for the East

- a) There must be an awareness of the Area Plan for the East (whatever stage it has reached)

7.0 How to Respond

- 7.1 The Department welcomes representations by anyone who wishes to comment on this document and to assist the consultation questions are set out in Appendix 1. We would encourage the submission of clear and concise responses using the online survey at <https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=139099814565>. It is also important to take into consideration that making a representation does not necessarily mean that the Department will make a change in response.
- 7.2 Arrangements will be put in place for those who do not have access to the internet to submit paper copies of their responses to the address given below. Submissions should be marked clearly 'Consultation on Draft Development Brief for the former Victoria Road prison site'.
- 7.3 Comments can be either sent electronically to planning@gov.im or by post to:

Department of Infrastructure
Planning and Building Control Division
Murray House
Mount Havelock
Douglas
Isle of Man
IM1 2SF
- 7.4 An electronic version of this consultation document can be found at <http://www.gov.im/consultations.gov>. The online questionnaire can be found at the following web address: <https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=139099814565>
- 7.5 It should be noted that all comments and information will be made available for public viewing.
- 7.6 Information provided in responses will be dealt with in accordance with access to information regimes – 'Guidance on the Code of Practice on Consultation' and 'Code of Practice on Access to Information'

This consultation begins on 28th February 2014, lasting for 6 weeks and will close on 11th April 2014.

8.0 Next Steps

- 8.1 After the close of the consultation on this paper the Department will:
- Publish on the Department of Infrastructure (DOI) website a summary of matters raised in the consultation;
 - Make amendments as a result of the consultation where appropriate; and
 - Arrange for the final version to be approved by the Department, and published as a development brief.

Appendix 1 – Consultation Questions

Aim

"To encourage and influence the redevelopment of a vacant former prison site in Douglas for residential or a mixed use scheme involving residential with residential/day care uses".

Question 1 - Do you agree with the aim for the former prison site? Yes/No

Any Comments?

Development Brief

Question 2 - Do you agree with the Development Brief, as identified detailed in paragraph 6.0? Yes/No

Any comments?