



**Isle of Man  
Government**  
*Reiltys Ellan Vannin*

# Built Environment Reform Programme

The Built Environment Reform Programme was launched in July 2022 and in the first year has achieved a number of positive changes to improve the planning process in order to better support development.

## Achievements so far include:

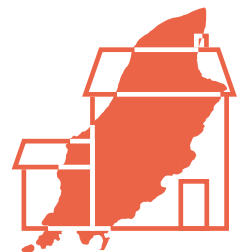
- ✓ Implementing the process for Major Planning Applications
- ✓ Launching the Island Infrastructure Scheme
- ✓ Carrying out a customer survey and engaging with developers and stakeholders in order to target future changes to the planning process
- ✓ Amending public counter and Duty Planner times as informed by the survey
- ✓ Engaging with Planning Application consultees
- ✓ Developing a Concierge Service
- ✓ Publishing refreshed Planning Application validation guides
- ✓ Initial Review of the Section 13 process
- ✓ Publication of the Planning and Building Control Customer Charter
- ✓ Launching Neighbour Notification & Planning Committee referral alerts service
- ✓ Developing new processes for condition discharge, pre-application advice, and permitted development queries
- ✓ Improvements to the planning website at Gov.im
- ✓ Ongoing engagement with stakeholders to develop an approach to delivering Biodiversity Net Gain
- ✓ Preparation of updates to the Town and Country Planning Act

We have taken the opportunity to refresh the programme to ensure it is focused on Government's Economic Strategy to deliver the most impact towards achieving the following Island Plan objectives:

- **+1,000 additional homes occupied**
- **2 key brownfield sites to be developed with private sector leverage**

An overview of the updated plan including details of the expected outcomes and timelines are outlined below.

**Set Policy Direction      Incentivise Investment      Improve the Planning Process**





# Set Policy Direction

## Built Environment Reform Programme

### Objective 1: Create a strong evidence base

Expected Delivery early 2024

- Create Housing and Economic Needs and Land Assessments; taking into account demographic issues and understanding the deliverability of land to meet identified needs
- Carry out an Infrastructure Needs Assessment to identify infrastructure requirements to deliver the growth aspirations in the Island Plan and Economic Strategy
- Map Environmental Constraints and Opportunities to inform decision making and prioritisation

### Objective 2: Create a fit for purpose Development Plan

Expected Delivery early 2025

- Update Strategic Plan to align with the Island Plan; providing a long term strategic approach to spatial planning which gives a level of certainty and confidence for the future
- Update area plan(s) to align with Island Plan to ensure all of the island is covered by fit for purpose area plans
- Produce National Policy Directives (such as Environmental Impact assessment and Flooding and/or Planning Policy Statements)

### Objective 3: Adopt a Town Centre First approach

Expected Delivery end 2023

- Carry out Town Centre First Quality Audits to understand the current situation and issues related to our town centres
- Publish a Regeneration Strategy and ongoing monitoring mechanisms to develop a response to audits considering regeneration, retail, and leisure
- Review and report on the potential suitability of applying the Town Centre First model





# Incentivise Investment

## Built Environment Reform Programme

### Objective 1: Provide a supporting financial framework

Expected Delivery early 2024

- Make a decision on whether to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), including investigating its use as a policy tool to promote brownfield sites and provide clarity for the development industry on the way forward
- Review the impact of the Infrastructure Grant Scheme and develop future actions
- Investigate and report on the creation of one or more urban enterprise/investment zones in light of the above and consider a range of options for deployment in specific areas

### Objective 2: Implement a co-ordinated activity for Lower Douglas

Expected Delivery mid 2024

- Publish an Investment Prospectus and vision for Lower Douglas presenting the existing opportunities in the area and support a coordinated approach to future development (due end 2023)
- Carry out an assessment of the cumulative infrastructure and environmental considerations (such as traffic or flooding etc.) of key sites within Lower Douglas and develop options for responding to these to coordinate activity
- Explore and report on how Government could help to unlock undeveloped sites, potentially including the production of site specific survey packs for Government owned sites. Site surveys could consider issues such as contamination or flooding to provide more clarity to potential investors on the development opportunities and costs

### Objective 3: Bring vacant building and sites back into beneficial use

Expected Delivery end 2023

- Review and propose a framework for resolution of specific properties and sites including Derelict Property Orders to ensure an appropriate range of interventions and statutory powers exist to ensure sites and properties do not remain derelict or unused in the long term
- Investigate options to discourage building and sites being left vacant/dilapidated; promote bringing properties back into beneficial use; discourage temporary uses where this is at the expense of a permanent, beneficial redevelopment; and review taxation and other financial tools, such as VAT, that could support the achievement of this goal





# Improve the Planning Process

## Built Environment Reform Programme

### Objective 1: Develop faster and more proportionate planning process Expected Delivery mid 2024

- Prioritise Major Applications. Review the role of consultees and the timely completion of legal agreements, and the efficiency of the referral process for applications of general importance
- Ensure a proportionate appeals system, better quality applications and appropriate fees. This will include consideration of the pre-application advice service and validation requirements, the planning appeals process and the fees structure
- Carry out targeted amendments to Planning Legislation to increase the small scale/ routine activity that can be undertaken without a planning application

### Objective 2: Provide a modern and responsive service

Expected Delivery early 2024

- Procurement and implementation of Planning Software to enable working efficiencies and better communication with customers and consultees
- Launch new customer focused website for planning and building control ensuring it is easy to use, has the correct information and maximise opportunities for self-service where appropriate
- Implement measures to provide excellent customer care in response to the recent customer survey, to deliver meaningful change for day-to-day customers

### Objective 3: Proactively respond to Climate Change

Expected Delivery early 2024

- Develop a plan for implement the planning obligations within the Climate Change Act so they add value but avoid unnecessary bureaucracy
- Map out what will be required to implement the Climate Change Act commitments in relation to maximising carbon sequestration; minimising greenhouse gas emissions; maintenance and restoration of ecosystems; biodiversity net gain; sustainable drainage systems; and the provision of active travel infrastructure

