



**Isle of Man**  
**Government**

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# Area Plan for the East: Preliminary Publicity Site Assessment Framework

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# Contents

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	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1
Purpose of this Report	1
Steps in the Assessment Process	1
Table 1: Site Assessment Framework Steps and Outcomes	2
The Issue of Housing	3
Table 2: Net Density assumptions for different types of sites	3
Previous Versions of the Site Assessment Framework	4
Step 1: Preliminary Screening	5
Step 2: Critical Constraints	6
Statutory Designations	6
Step 3: Detailed Criteria	8
Explanation	8
Table 3: Detailed Criteria Scoring	8
DC1. Compatibility with adjacent land uses	9
DC.2 Prioritising previously developed land	10
DC.3 Ensuring sites are accessible via the existing road network	11
DC.4 Encouraging the use of public transport	12
DC.5 Maximising access to community services and facilities	13
DC.6 Ensuring there is sufficient provision of open space	14
DC.7 Maintaining Landscape Character	15
DC.8 Protecting Visual Amenity	16
DC.9 Protecting valued wildlife habitats and species	17
DC.10 Maintaining the historic built environment	18
DC.11 Protecting archaeology and Ancient Monuments	19
DC.12 Protecting Trees	20
DC.13 Protecting high quality agricultural land	21
DC.14 Minimising the risk of flooding	22
DC.15 Hazardous land uses and contamination	23
Step 4: Consideration of whether the site is developable	24
Figure 1: The components of a developable site	24
Availability	25
Viability	25
Appendix 1: Changes since the Call for Sites	26

# Introduction

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## **Purpose of this document**

- 1.1 The Site Assessment Framework (SAF) is intended to provide a transparent and consistent methodology for assessing development sites. This is the latest version and will be the basis for initially assessing sites for development as part of the Area Plan for the East. Earlier iterations were used for a number of projects, including the Area Plan for the South.
- 1.2 The SAF will help to identify potential development sites, and inform the draft Area Plan. However, the overall approach to site assessment will also include consideration of the overall pattern of growth and the impacts brought about by environmental and other constraints as well as infrastructure capacity.
- 1.3 The SAF was initially designed primarily to assess possible housing and employment sites. However, through its practical application it is now apparent that the assessment criteria set out are useful in the assessment of any type of site and so the framework will be used as far as it is relevant for each site.
- 1.4 A separate report will be made available which sets out the process for identifying those sites which should be assessed using the framework.

## **Steps in the Assessment Process**

- 1.5 The SAF is part of the process for deciding which sites should be proposed as part of the Area Plan for the East – initially as part of the draft Plan. The general SAF process has four broad steps which are summarised in Table 1 below.
- 1.6 It is envisaged that for each site, a summary report of the performance of the site at each stage (as relevant) and an explanation will be provided. This will also provide an opportunity to fully consider all aspects of a specific site within the wider context of the Strategic Plan Policies. This may include high-level issues (such as the need to avoid the coalescence of settlements) and points of detail which, if the site were to be allocated, may need to be considered as part of a design brief (e.g. any footpaths crossing the site or any important boundary features).

**Table 1: Site Assessment Framework Steps and Outcomes**

Step	Explanation	Outcome
1: Preliminary Screening	This step is used to identify sites which are in clear conflict with the policies of the Strategic Plan and so are removed from further consideration.	Sites are screened out which are unsuitable due to their location.
2: The application of Critical Constraints	The concept of Critical Constraints is used as a trigger to identify those sites where the impact of development on the site, or the impact of the site's characteristics on potential development, is such that development would be hindered (and mitigation or compensation is not possible or appropriate). In the interests of clarity, criteria identified as Critical Constraints have been separated into a discreet step which can be used to screen out sites prior to detailed consideration.	Sites are screened out which are unsuitable due to the presence of Critical Constraints which cannot be overcome.
3: Detailed Consideration	The consideration of sites using a combination of site scoring and report writing enables the relative merits of sites (in relation to the policy aspirations set out in the Strategic Plan) to be clearly identified	The relative planning merits of sites which are potentially acceptable in planning terms (i.e. which have passed steps 1 and 2) are understood. No sites will be screened-out as part of Step 3.
4: Consideration of whether the site is Developable	Those criteria concerned with the availability and viability aspects of whether a site is developable are combined and placed into Step 4, to allow an overall judgement about whether or not a site is developable (these terms are defined in Section 5).	Consideration is given to whether or not a site is developable. Where sites are taken forward, this consideration may influence <i>how</i> sites are taken forward (for example sites not deliverable during the plan period may be suitable as strategic reserve sites). In some circumstances, concerns about whether a site is developable may be such that the site is not considered appropriate for further consideration.

1.7 The overall output from the SAF will therefore be a long-list of sites:

- which 'pass' the Preliminary Screening;
- which are not affected by Critical Constraints;
- where the detailed pros and cons are understood; and
- are, on initial assessment, considered potentially developable (or are identified as potential Strategic Reserve Sites).

1.8 This long-list will therefore comprise realistic options which can inform further stages.

## The Issue of Housing

1.9 The Area Plan for the East will be a comprehensive document which will set out a spatial vision for Douglas and the East and examine specific issues in the Plan area including housing, the built and natural environment, employment land, retail and tourism, infrastructure and transport as well as sports and community facilities, open space and minerals and waste.

1.10 Housing will, however, be fundamental and many of the sites submitted as part of the Call for Sites are for housing (which if allocated are likely to be referred to as "Predominantly Residential Use"). Table 2 below is taken from the Site Assessment Framework 2008 which remains the base document for the Framework even though it has been refined. The density figures shown within it will form the basis for any assessment of site potential and it has been repeated here for convenience.

**Table 2: Net density assumptions for different types of site**

Density Level	Dwellings per hectare	Location and development type examples
Very High	100 - 450	Promenade or very centre of town development. Typically apartments.
High	40 - 100	Town centre development. Typically development which is apartments or terraced housing. Also could be development on smaller sites.
Medium	15 - 30	Larger sites close to the settlement centre, typically estates incorporating different dwelling types including some apartments and terraced housing.
Low	5 - 10	Larger sites towards the edge of settlements, consisting of mainly houses and bungalows with relatively few apartments or terraces.
Very Low	2	Houses set in parkland surrounded by substantial grounds.

- 1.11 These assumptions are indications of net density and should not be taken as targets. In reality, the development which takes place may be of a higher or lower density. Including this information in the database of sites will ensure that the final selection of sites meets the estimated number of new dwellings required for each Area Plan. The term 'net density' generally includes housing and directly associated uses and excludes major distributor roads, primary schools, open spaces serving the wider area and significant landscape buffer strips.

### **Previous versions of the Site Assessment Framework**

- 1.12 The Site Assessment Framework (SAF) was first produced in 2008. It designed as a question-based set of criteria which allowed sites to be identified which best met the objectives of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan and accorded with best practice for sustainable development. The original Framework was used to assess sites for both residential use and employment use. The overall aim of this approach was to bring a more robust methodology to the site selection process generally.
- 1.13 In light of experience gained from the practical application of the SAF for the Area Plan for the South, updated SAFs were produced and published for employment land in August 2015 as part of the ongoing Development Order Project, and for housing sites in October 2015 as part of the ongoing Castletown Housing Land Review. This SAF for the East draws on the original Framework published in 2008 and the refined versions recently published. Further refinement has taken place where opportunities have been identified for improvements to the quality of assessment or the clarity of the framework, or where necessitated by changes to related supporting documents and information.
- 1.14 A draft SAF was published alongside the Area Plan for the East Call for Sites and has now been updated in light of comments and advice received during and in response to the Call for Sites (these are summarised in appendix 1).

# Step 1: Preliminary Screening

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S1.1 Strategic Policies 1 and 2 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 aim to concentrate development in existing towns and villages, in part to make the best use of existing transport infrastructure and community facilities and to reduce the need to travel. This is tested in more detail in Step 3.

S1.2 Sites will be considered against the two questions below. If the answers to both questions are 'no', the site fails this first Step. The site proposer (i.e. the person who submitted the Response Form) will be notified of the decision around this time. The exception to this will be if, in considering PSQ.2, the site is connected to another site which passes either PSQ.1 or PSQ.2 then the site can progress to Step 2.

- **PSQ.1** - Is the proposed site located within a town or village as identified in the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 (Spatial Policies 1 to 4)?
- **PSQ.2** - Does the proposed site abut the outer edge of a town or village as identified in the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 (Spatial Policies 1-4)?

S1.3 The following points should be noted.

- Answers to the above will be determined using the existing Settlement Boundary Maps (which are in draft). The 'outer edge' referred to in PSQ.2 shall be taken to mean the line which represents the settlement boundary.
- Potential residential development sites within "Groups of Houses in the Countryside" (Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016, Paragraph 8.6.3) will be assessed separately.

## Step 2: Critical Constraints

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S2.1 Sites will be considered against the Critical Constraint questions below. If the answers to any of the questions are 'yes', then site fails this Step. The site proposer (i.e. the person who submitted the Response Form) will be informed of the decision. This may lead to dialogue between the Department and the site representative on matters such as mitigation.

- **CCQ.1** - Are existing uses on surrounding land highly incompatible and cannot be made compatible through mitigation measures?
- **CCQ.2** - Would the development not fit the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, resulting in the total loss of or major alteration to one or more key features?
- **CCQ.3** - Is the site or adjacent area a nationally or internationally designated site (RAMSAR, Area of Special Scientific Interest), Marine Nature Reserve, National Nature Reserve, Emerald Site, Bird Sanctuary or Area of Special Protection?
- **CCQ.4** - Is development of the site is likely to have a major effect on a Registered Building (including its setting), or a Conservation Area?
- **CCQ.5** - Is the site an Ancient Monument?
- **CCQ.6** - Is the site outside the existing settlement boundaries and inside either the Fluvial or Tidal Flood Zones?
- **CCQ.7** - Is the site hazardous/contaminated (or has the potential to be hazardous/contaminated) and cannot be satisfactorily addressed as part of the development (i.e. mitigation/remediation)?

### Statutory Designations

S2.2 The Island contains "Ramsar Sites" which are areas of wetland of international importance and are designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

S2.3 The Island also applies:

- the Berne Convention on European Wildlife and Natural Habitats;
- the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; (including the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
- the Eurobats Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats;
- the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels;
- the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas); and
- the Ospar Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic.



- S2.4 Nationally important wildlife species and habitats are protected under the Wildlife Act 1990 and also under the Manx Museum and National Trust Act 1959. These include:
- Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI);
  - National Nature Reserves (NNR);
  - Areas of Special Protection for Birds (ASPB) and Bird Sanctuaries; and
  - Manx National Heritage or National Trust Land.
- S2.5 In relation to heritage, the Island currently has 250 Registered Buildings and 19 Conservation Areas. There are also a number of other buildings and areas that are unscheduled or unidentified but may be afforded protection under section 17 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1999 (Building Preservation Notices). There are approximately 140 Scheduled Ancient Monuments under Section 7 or Section 13 of the Manx Museum and National Trust (MMNT) Act 1959 or included under a Preservation Order through Section 11 of that Act.
- S2.6 The Isle of Man is a signatory to the Valetta Convention (The European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage 1992) and therefore has a range of international obligations in relation to the identification, recording, protection, conservation and management of archaeological heritage.

# Step 3: Detailed Criteria

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## Explanation

- S3.1 Sites which reach this Stage will be considered against each of the Criteria set out within this section.
- S3.2 For sites which go through to Step 3, individual assessments will identify the relative merits of each site but it is not envisaged that sites will 'pass' or 'fail' this step. Instead, the Detailed Criteria Step will follow a colour based scoring system (see Table 3 below). This will allow a clear visual representation and summary of the 'pros and cons' of each site. The number of sites expected to have to be assessed as part of the Area Plan for the East is expected to reach into the hundreds; a simple and effective assessment process will be essential in selecting the most sustainable development sites.

**Table 3: Detailed Criteria Scoring**

Category	Broad Interpretation
Green	Positive Impact
Yellow	Minimal Impact (positive or negative)
Orange	Negative Impact
Red	Significant Negative Impact
Critical Constraint	See Step 2

- S3.3 Previous versions of the framework used a numerical score for the Detailed Criteria of 4 to 0 (4 being highest and 0 being a Critical Constraint). However it is felt that the use of a colour code system (see Table 3) will more clearly show how sites measure up/perform in terms of being considered 'positive' or 'negative'.

## DC.1 Compatibility with adjacent land uses

S3.4 It is important to consider compatibility of adjacent land uses in order to avoid allocating sites for residential or employment use in areas where pollution and disturbance issues from employment uses are likely to affect the local community. This includes effects such as noise, air and light pollution which are addressed by Policies of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan. When assessing a proposed employment use against this criterion, it could score lower if it is close to existing housing. When assessing a proposed housing site against this criterion, it could score lower if it is close to an existing employment site.

S3.5 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	The site would not result in residential uses being in close proximity to uses which are not compatible (without mitigation) with residential areas
<b>Yellow</b>	Not used
<b>Orange</b>	The site would result in residential uses being in close proximity to uses which are only compatible with residential uses with mitigation, and such mitigation is realistic
<b>Red</b>	Not used
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

S3.6 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.1, "Are existing uses on surrounding land highly incompatible and cannot be made compatible through mitigation measures?"

## DC.2 Prioritising previously developed land

S3.7 The first part of Strategic Policy 1<sup>1</sup> sets out 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 reusing scarce indigenous building materials...”.

S3.8 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	The site is comprised entirely or predominantly of previously developed land <sup>2</sup>
<b>Yellow</b>	Not used
<b>Orange</b>	Not used
<b>Red</b>	The site is comprised entirely or predominantly of greenfield land
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

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<sup>1</sup> Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016, Paragraph 4.2.1.

<sup>2</sup> As defined in Appendix 1 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 (Glossary of Terms)

### DC.3 Ensuring sites are accessible via the existing road network

S3.9 This Criterion seeks to make best use of the existing road network, in particular to avoid:

- the creation of new junctions onto key routes outside existing settlement boundaries; and
- inappropriate traffic movements taking place on smaller roads.

S3.10 The scoring system refers to the Department of Infrastructure's new document called 'A Manual for Manx Roads' which sets out the concepts of Place Status, Link Hierarchy and Place Level, as summarised in the tables below which have been extracted from the manual. As stated in the manual,

*"The Department supports the design principles of MS1 & MS2 in integrating Link (movement) and Place (function) of roads and streets to inform design choice. The Department has established a matrix to help designers balance the competing user requirements resulting from place status and link status at locations on the islands highway network".*

S3.11 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	<p>Nature and location of site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will not require a new access to a Primary or District Link; and</li> <li>• will not result in a significant increase in the volume (or nature) of vehicle traffic movements on Local or Local Access Roads.</li> </ul>
<b>Yellow</b>	<p>Nature and location of site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will not require a new access to a Primary or District Link outside existing settlement boundaries; and</li> <li>• will not result in a significant increase in the volume (or nature) of vehicle traffic movements on Local or Local Access Roads.</li> </ul>
<b>Orange</b>	<p>Nature and location of site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• would require a new access to a Primary or District Link outside existing settlement boundaries; or</li> <li>• will result in volume/nature of vehicle traffic movements on Local or Local Access Roads that would be inappropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Red</b>	<p>Site is not located on the existing road network and would require a significant access route (relative to the scale of the proposal) to be constructed to link to the existing road network</p>
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	<p>No Critical Constraint applies</p>

Notes:

- 'Settlement' means a town or village referred to in Spatial Policies 1 - 4 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016
- For the purposes of applying the above, the use of an access which currently only used for agricultural use (e.g. access into a field) to serve built development (e.g. a new housing estate) will be considered a new access
- See tables 4.2 – 4.4 of the Manual for Manx Roads for more details on the Link and Place hierarchies
- Consideration of the implications for new development in relation to the TT course will take place separately to the SAF process.

## DC.4 Encouraging the use of public transport

S3.12 This Criterion assesses the potential to travel by bus and thereby reducing car usage and resulting greenhouse gas emissions as well as local environmental and social impacts associated with car use and road construction. The distances used are based on advice from Bus Vannin (DOI). When assessing a site which is large enough to accommodate a spine road which could be designed and function as a bus route, the distances should be measured from the edge of the site nearest the bus route. For smaller sites the distance should be measured from the middle of the site.

S3.13 The following points should be noted.

- The need for a site to have an internal bus route on completion of a development scheme or a new bus stop added to the existing highway network close to the site will be considered as part of any Assessment Report.
- At present, the rail network on the Island is primarily a tourism and leisure facility and is therefore excluded from the assessment.
- It is assumed that the option to cycle or walk is widely available and would therefore not help to distinguish between sites. It should also be noted that this Criterion does not consider proximity to community services and facilities; this is covered within Criterion DC.5.

S3.14 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	The site is within 200m of a bus route with a peak time service every 30 minutes
<b>Yellow</b>	The site is within 400m of a bus route with a peak time service every 30 minutes
<b>Orange</b>	The site is within 400m of a bus route with an at least hourly peak time service
<b>Red</b>	None of the above apply
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

## DC.5 Maximising access to community services and facilities

S3.15 The following points should be noted.

- This Criterion only applies to housing sites.
- Community services and facilities are, for this exercise taken to include: a school, a shop, a Post Office, GP surgery/health centre, a public park/outdoor sports facilities, indoor sports facilities, a community centre/hall, library or place of worship.

S3.16 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Site is located within 1 km walking distance of 4 or 5 of the services/facilities listed above and is within 1 km of a school bus route
<b>Yellow</b>	Site is located within 1 km walking distance of 2 or 3 of the services/facilities listed above
<b>Orange</b>	Site is located within 1 km walking distance of 1 of the services/facilities listed above
<b>Red</b>	Site is more than 1 km walking distance from all of the services/facilities listed above
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

## DC.6 Ensuring there is sufficient provision of open space

S3.17 Open space is defined in the Strategic Plan 2016 as land used for recreational purposes, both formal and informal, including amenity space whether privately or publicly owned.<sup>3</sup> It includes sports pitches, children’s play space and amenity space.

S3.18 The scoring system to be used for this Criterion is based on Recreation Policy 2 of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016. This includes a presumption against development that will result in the loss of open space unless alternative provision can be made or an overall community gain would result and the effect on open space would not be significant. Areas where there is limited existing open space should be prioritised for open space provision.

S3.19 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Development would not result in the loss of open space
<b>Yellow</b>	Not used
<b>Orange</b>	Development would result in the loss of open space in an area that is currently well-served
<b>Red</b>	Development would result in the loss of open space in an area where there is limited existing open space
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

### Notes

1. *For the purposes of this exercise Open Space shall be taken to be:*
  - *land laid out as a public garden or amenity space or used for the purposes of public recreation. Can include playing space for sporting use (pitches, greens, courts, athletics tracks and miscellaneous sites such as training areas in the ownership or control of public bodies including the Department of Education where facilities are open to the public);*
  - *areas which are within the private, industrial or commercial sectors that serve the leisure time needs for outdoor sport and recreation of their members or the public; and*
  - *land used as childrens playspace which may contain a range of facilities or an environment that has been designed to provide opportunities for outdoor play, as well as informal playing space within built up areas.*
  
2. *For the purposes of this exercise Open Space shall not be taken to be: Verges, woodlands, the seashore, Nature Conservation Areas, allotments, golf courses, water used for recreation, commercial entertainment complexes, sports halls and car parks.*

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 10.3.2 Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016



## DC.7 Maintaining Landscape Character

- S3.20 Development should respect the character of the landscape by ensuring that high quality landscapes are maintained and development is compatible in scale and design.
- S3.21 Areas of High Landscape or Coastal Value and Scenic Significance are shown on the 1982 Development Plan. This designation identified those parts of the Island with particular landscape and coastal quality and value. The full extent of this landscape designation (as originally identified) is shown diagrammatically on the Strategic Plan 2016 'Key Diagram' and on some extant Local Plans. The Area Plan for the South does not show these areas and instead reflects the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2008.
- S3.22 The Landscape Character Assessment (2008) provides an Island-wide landscape and coastal quality assessment and has identified landscape character 'types' and 'areas' and determined their sensitivity to development. This classification has been used to inform Criterion DC.7 as it is a more recent Study and will eventually supersede the designation of high landscape/coastal value areas across the whole Island as new Area Plans are approved.
- S3.23 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Development of the site would improve the landscape character, for example by redeveloping a significant derelict site or by screening existing negative features
<b>Yellow</b>	Development of the site would fit with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape
<b>Orange</b>	Development would have some impact on the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, but the proposal (including potential mitigation) would not result in the partial loss of any key features
<b>Red</b>	Development of the site would not fit the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, resulting in the partial loss of one or more key features
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

- S3.24 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.2, "Would the development not fit the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, resulting in the total loss of or major alteration to one or more key features"?

## DC.8 Protecting Visual Amenity

S3.25 Decisions in respect of development sites should be sensitive to the impact on views from valued landscapes, urban areas, footpaths and recreational areas. Ideally, new development should be compatible with surrounding buildings and avoid obstructing prominent views.

S3.26 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Development would have no adverse impact on visual amenity as viewed from adjacent land uses such as residential areas, public footpaths or recreational areas
<b>Yellow</b>	Development would have limited impact on visual amenity as viewed from adjacent land uses such as residential areas, public footpaths or recreational areas but could be mitigated through design and layout
<b>Orange</b>	Development would have an impact on visual amenity as viewed from adjacent land uses such as residential areas, public footpaths or recreational areas and could not be easily mitigated through design and layout
<b>Red</b>	Development would have a significant impact on visual amenity as viewed from adjacent land uses such as residential areas, public footpaths or recreational areas
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

## DC.9 Protecting valued wildlife habitats and species

S3.27 The Strategic Plan gives protection to the countryside and ecology for its own sake. Statutory designations will be identified on the final constraints map and are considered in Step 2. The final constraints map may also identify sites which do not have a statutory designation or are recognised by law, but are which are considered to have high wildlife value. Sites may also be identified which have the potential for 'interest' but have not yet been surveyed in detail.

S3.28 In developing the Area Plan, a precautionary approach will be adopted when assessing sites and considering their nature conservation interest, including using available information and considering existing designations.

S3.29 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Site and adjoining area is unlikely to have any nature conservation interest
<b>Yellow</b>	Not used
<b>Orange</b>	Adjacent land (but not the site) has potential nature conservation interest - including designation in an existing Local Plan or the 1982 Development Plan.
<b>Red</b>	Potential nature conservation interest has been identified on the site – including designation in an existing Local Plan or the 1982 Development Plan.
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

S3.30 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.3, "Is the site or adjacent area a nationally or internationally designated site (RAMSAR, Area of Special Scientific Interest), Marine Nature Reserve, National Nature Reserve, Emerald Site, Bird Sanctuary or Area of Special Protection"?

## DC.10 Maintaining the historic built environment

S3.31 Whilst there is a general presumption against the demolition of Registered Buildings, new development can affect the historic setting to varying degrees. The effect of new development on historic buildings and Conservation Areas will be dependent on the importance of the setting of each building related to the function that it performed historically and the particular impact on the Conservation Area. Deciding on the magnitude of the effect will inevitably involve a degree of judgement.

S3.32 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Development of site will have no adverse effect on a Registered Building and its setting or a Conservation Area
<b>Yellow</b>	Not used
<b>Orange</b>	Development of site likely to have a minor effect on a Registered Building and its setting or a Conservation Area
<b>Red</b>	Development of site likely to have a moderate effect on a Registered Building or its setting or a Conservation Area
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

S3.33 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.4, "Is development of the site is likely to have a major effect on a Registered Building (including its setting), or a Conservation Area"?

## DC.11 Protecting archaeology and Ancient Monuments

S3.34 Archaeology is an important part of the Island's national heritage and needs to be protected against damage or disturbance that could result from new development.

S3.35 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	There are no Ancient Monuments on site and there is very low potential for archaeological interest (for example due to previous disturbance or demonstrated through investigation)
<b>Yellow</b>	Not used
<b>Orange</b>	Not used
<b>Red</b>	There is potential for archaeological interest on the site (which may include some evidence of past 'finds' on the site or in the general area)
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

S3.36 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.5, "Is the site an Ancient Monument"?

## DC.12 Protecting Trees

S3.37 The assessment of this impact is based on the categorisation system of BS5837:2012 (*Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations*). The British Standard provides a categorisation system for trees, designed to differentiate between trees which are a material consideration and trees which are material constraints. The British Standard describes 4 categories as set out below.

BS5837 category	Example	Quality
A	Large mature/veteran tree without defect	High
B	Large tree or potential to become large with minimal intervention	Moderate
C	Small trees/trees of poor health, form/trees that are likely to become a nuisance	Low
U	Tree in irreversible decline, tree causing structural damage	Low

S3.38 The possible scores are as set out below:

<b>Green</b>	Site does not contain any category A or B trees
<b>Yellow</b>	Site does not contain any category A or B trees that cannot be satisfactorily accommodated within the development
<b>Orange</b>	Not used
<b>Red</b>	Site does contain category A or B trees that cannot be satisfactorily accommodated within the development
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

## DC.13 Protecting high quality agricultural land

- S3.39 The policy framework of the Strategic Plan recognises the importance of agriculture to the rural economy and society and aims to protect its commercial viability and the principle of self-sufficiency in food production.
- S3.40 The Agricultural Land Use Capability map shows how the quality of soils varies across the Island, using a classification system of 1 to 5. The best and most versatile agricultural land falls within classes 1 and 2 and there is a general presumption against its release for development, as reflected in Environment Policy 14 of the Strategic Plan (loss only permitted where there is an overriding need).
- S3.41 The above takes into account the publication, 'Agricultural soils of the Isle of Man, Centre for Manx Studies' (2001).
- S3.42 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Non-agricultural land with limited agricultural value
<b>Yellow</b>	Soil in the area supports low levels of crop production/agricultural use/soil quality falls into Classes 4 and 5
<b>Orange</b>	Soil in the area supports moderate levels of crop production/agricultural use/soil quality falls into Class 3
<b>Red</b>	Soil in the area supports high levels of crop production/agricultural use/soil quality is Class 1 and 2
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	No Critical Constraint applies

## DC.14 Minimising the risk of flooding

S3.43 The Strategic Plan indicates development will not be supported on land subject to unreasonable risk of erosion or flooding (General Policy 2). It seeks to: prevent the loss of natural flood plain, guide development away from areas at risk of flooding and ensure that development that does take place is safe. It notes that the development of sites which may flood can lead to problems not only for the new development itself, but also for adjacent land.

S3.44 Flooding maps are available in relation to tidal, fluvial and surface water flooding and will be shown on the Constraints Map. The tidal and fluvial maps are well established and were used to inform the preparation of the SAF. The surface water flood maps indicate a large area at risk - they will be used to highlight the need for separate more detailed assessment at a later stage. For the purposes of applying the SAF, the Tidal Flood Zone is the area at 1 in 200 risk and Fluvial Flood Zone is defined as 1 in 100 risk (both plus Climate Change).

S3.45 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Brownfield or Greenfield Site inside the existing settlement boundaries and outside the Fluvial Flood Zone (irrespective of whether inside the Tidal Flood Zone)
<b>Yellow</b>	Brownfield site inside the existing settlement boundaries and inside the Fluvial Flood Zone (irrespective of whether inside the Tidal Flood Zone)
<b>Orange</b>	Brownfield or Greenfield Site outside the existing settlement boundaries and outside both the Fluvial and Tidal Flood Zones
<b>Red</b>	Greenfield site inside the existing settlement boundaries and inside the Fluvial Flood Zone (irrespective of whether inside the Tidal Flood Zone)
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

S3.46 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.6, "Is the site outside the existing settlement boundaries and inside either the Fluvial or Tidal Flood Zones"?

S3.47 Tidal Flooding does not result in lower scores for sites within existing settlement boundaries, as this reflects the nature of settlement patterns and also that Tidal Flooding can more easily be mitigated without displacing the impact. Brownfield sites within Fluvial Flood Zones within existing settlement boundaries are scored 'yellow', and so higher than sites outside existing settlement boundaries which are not within Fluvial or Tidal Flood Zones. This is on the basis that redevelopment of existing buildings brings opportunities to review the use and move to a less vulnerable use, improve the standard of defence for occupants and/or reduce the rate of run-off and discharge from the site (e.g. through SuDS) to reduce the existing impact on surrounding properties.



## DC.15 Hazardous land uses and contamination

S3.48 A number of installations and existing land uses on the Island represent a constraint on development in the vicinity because of health and safety considerations. These are essential Island facilities and include LPG and petroleum storage. In addition, some land is known to be contaminated by previous use. It may be possible to remediate the land to make it suitable for some forms of development.

S3.49 In accordance with Strategic Plan Environment Policy 26 (and supporting text) successful remediation is where the development site is free of contamination which may constitute a hazard to occupiers or potential users of the development or land, and precautions can be taken to ensure that contaminants cannot escape from the site which may cause airborne or waterborne pollution or pollution of nearby land.

S3.50 The possible scores are as set out below.

<b>Green</b>	Site and surrounding land is contaminated and could be successfully remediated through development for the proposed use
<b>Yellow</b>	Site and surrounding land was either: previously hazardous or contaminated but has been successfully and fully remediated; or unlikely to be hazardous or contaminated.
<b>Orange</b>	Not used
<b>Red</b>	Not used
<b>Critical Constraint</b>	Critical Constraint applies – see below

S3.51 The presence or absence of Critical Constraints is assessed in Step 2. One of the Critical Constraints is CCQ.7, "Is the site hazardous/contaminated (or has the potential to be hazardous/contaminated) and cannot be satisfactorily addressed as part of the development (i.e. mitigation/remediation)?"

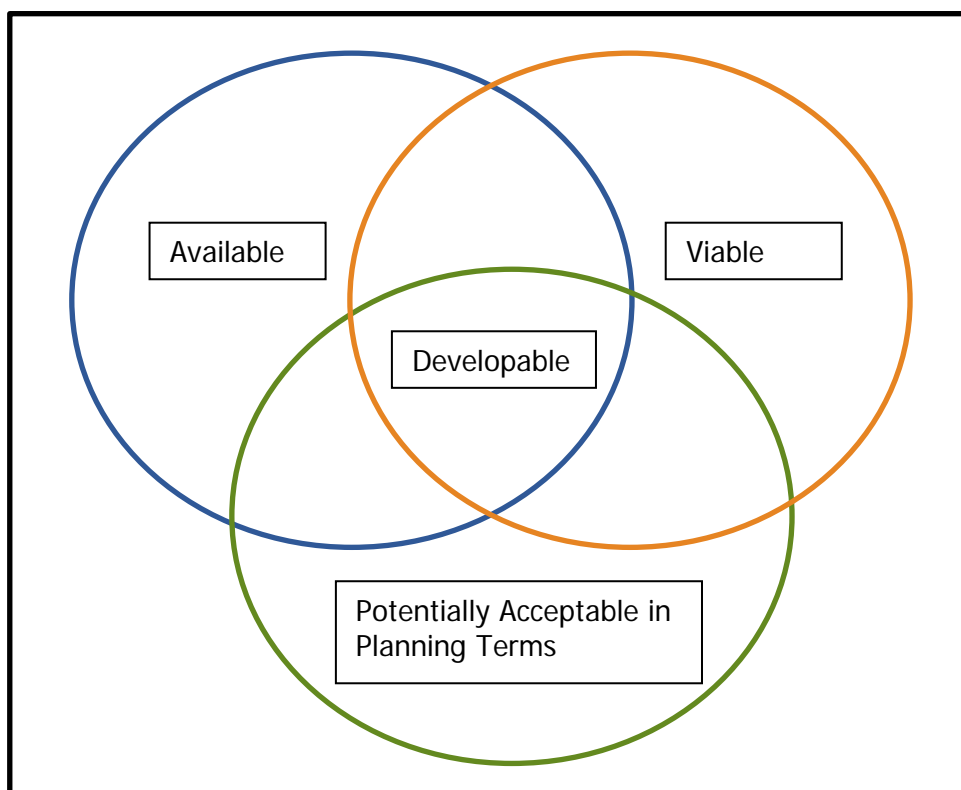
## Step 4: Consideration of whether the site is developable

S4.1 It is important to understand whether a site is developable within the plan period.

Developable sites are those sites which are broadly acceptable in planning terms and there is a reasonable prospect that, at the point envisaged, they will be available and viable. For the purposes of this assessment, the definitions set out below are used.

- **Potentially Acceptable in Planning Terms:** Where no fundamental objection to the principles of the Strategic Plan have been identified (i.e. sites which pass stage 1 and have no critical constraints)
- **Available:** Where there is a landowner willingness to develop and no existing uses which cannot cease
- **Viable:** Where there are no serious barriers to delivery in terms of the cost and practicality of issues such as: ground-works/remediation; access, services and other infrastructure; and any necessary developer contributions in relation to affordable or social housing/open-space etc.
- **Deliverable:** Developable sites that could be brought forward in the short-term (sites with planning approval will normally be considered to be Deliverable)
- **A Strategic Reserve Site** is considered suitable for development but is held 'in reserve' until a time when there are compelling reasons to release it. This could include sites which are currently considered likely to become Developable after the end of the current Plan Period, but where these circumstances could change and/or where additional allocations are considered appropriate in order to provide flexibility to maintain supply beyond the current Plan Period.

Figure 1: The components of a developable site



S4.2 Steps 1-3 will inform whether a site is broadly acceptable in planning terms. Steps 1 and 2 will screen out sites with a fundamental objection, whilst step 3 considers relative merits of sites which are potentially acceptable in planning terms. Step 4 is intended to add the remaining two aspects of whether a site is developable i.e. whether they are available and could be viably developed within the plan period (i.e. by 2026). Therefore, professional judgement will be used to assess these having regard to various issues which could include:

- whether the site is in multiple or split ownership;
- the current use of the site;
- infrastructure issues (including green and social infrastructure);
- the level of physical works required within the site; and
- information provided by the site proposer in relation to delivery.

S4.3 Sites may not be allocated if they are considered to be undevelopable. However, where there are doubts about a site being (or becoming) deliverable during the plan period (i.e. by 2026) it may be considered for allocation as 'Strategic Reserves'. The overall total of sites proposed will need to have regard to maintaining a supply of housing land throughout the Plan Period.

## **Availability**

S4.4 Questions in relation to site ownership are included on the Call for Sites Response Form. Where sites are in multiple/split ownership, information may be required to confirm that all necessary landowners are supportive of the development. Where the site is currently in use, it will be important to understand the intentions for how and when that use could cease/relocate.

S4.5 Strategic Policy 1 (point c) in the Strategic Plan aims to make best use of existing and planned infrastructure. This could include sewerage, water, gas and electricity supply and telecommunications. Some infrastructure issues (such as access to community facilities and public transport) are also referenced in Step 3, but may also be relevant in this Step.

## **Viability**

S4.6 Physical works may include actions such as site clearance (including demolition), site remediation for contaminated or hazardous material (either improvement of or mitigation for), ground stabilisation, piling, cut and fill works, site access/junction works/boundary works internal road construction and landscaping. Works may also be linked to drainage/sewerage works, other utility and telecommunications infrastructure and landscaping, and so relate to the point above.

S4.7 The site proposer may be able to provide additional information which helps to confirm the site is developable - this may include demonstration of market interest/demand, master-planning work, site surveys or responses to specific issues/concerns.

# Appendix 1: Changes since the Call for Sites

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The Area Plan for the East Call for Sites included the publication of a draft Site Assessment Framework. In light of discussions during the Call for Sites, and general comments made, the following amendments are proposed.

- Various presentational/editorial changes to improve the clarity of the document.
- Add definition of Deliverable/Developable/Available/Viable and make consequential changes (including updating Section 5).
- Remove CCQ4 (biodiversity covered by separate Critical Constraint and trees better considered as a DC informed by a site visit than relying on desk based assessment of the Registered Trees Layer).
- Amend CCQ6 in light of discussions with MNH.
- Corrections and clarifications to text (including in light of comments from MUA).
- Update DC3 (Road Network) to reflect new Manual for Manx Roads (and add reference to impact of sites on TT course being considered separately).
- Amending DC7 (Landscape) to make the scoring more graded (this was mentioned informally by some site promoters but not included formally in any reps).
- Amending DC9 (Wildlife) to reflect that ongoing discussions are taking place about how to identify and designation non-statutory wildlife sites in the final map, and although related to site assessment, this is a separate process.
- Adding a DC in relation to trees.



**The information in this leaflet can be provided in large print or audio**

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