

Phase 2 Land Use Plan Review Call for Sites Assessment

Reference: PA/100

Site name: Bibette Head

AY Parcel(s): AY 1936

Submission Type: Protection/enhancement

Source: Private



Proposals

Summary of respondent's proposal: Protection of Bibette Head, reflecting its role in the occupation of the Island during WWII and in particular the suffering of forced labour. Protection should provide long term preservation and sensitive interpretation.

Planning history and other context: N/A

Accordance with the Land Use Plan Evidence Base

Does the proposal accord with the Vision Statement?	Yes	Protection of the site would accord with the vision, which seeks to value and protect the Island's unique cultural environment. It also accords with the guiding principle which seeks to value, protect and sustainably manage the Island's built and cultural heritage.
Does the proposal accord with the Housing Strategy?	N/A	The Housing Strategy does not relate to the proposed use.
Does the proposal accord with the Economic Development Strategy?	Yes	The Economic Development Strategy recommends that the Land Use Plan should support a range of types of tourism, particularly supporting niche tourism (Recommendation 27). The Strategy identifies that heritage tourism, and particularly military heritage, is a niche market which is currently operating on Alderney, but for which more could be done to support the market. The proposal to provide protection for the site (in combination with protection afforded to other sites of significance) would therefore accord with the Economic Development Strategy.

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Does the proposal accord with the Natural Environment Strategy?	Yes	The site contains open dunes, which falls under the EC Habitats Directive and so under the international tier of the hierarchy of environmental designations set out in the Natural Environment Strategy (see Map F.4 in the Natural Environment Strategy). The site also contains several terrestrial and intertidal habitats which fall under the regional (see Map F.5) and local (see Map F.6) tiers. Protection of the site for its heritage value would need to align with the protection of these habitats, and may provide opportunities for joint protection and management.
Does the proposal accord with the Built Environment and Heritage Strategy?	Yes	<p>The Built Environment and Heritage Strategy recommends that additional heritage assets should be added to the Register of Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments (see for example Recommendation 13). The Strategy recognises the value of Strongpoint Biberkopf (MH/043), and recommends that it is added to the Register.</p> <p>The Strategy does not make reference to the site's importance as a location of forced labour suffering. Recommendation 19 states that the Building and Development Control Committee should continue to engage with relevant stakeholders who hold research and other evidence to support an improved understanding of the importance of sites of war time relevance. It also recommends that further consideration should be given to the need for additional protection, policies and procedures that might be required for such areas, to ensure that these assets are afforded the same level of protection and reflect best practice from other jurisdictions (Recommendation 22).</p> <p>The site also falls within, and contributes to, Area of Landscape Value LV02 (North east corner of Albert, Bibette Head, Saye Beach, north-east of Lager Norderney to the west front of Chateau L'Etoc).</p> <p>The proposed use therefore aligns with the recommendations of the Built Environment and Heritage Strategy.</p>

Assessment of Suitability, Availability and Achievability

Is the site suitable for the proposed purpose?	Yes	<p>Bibette Head was a well-sited, well-armed and well-camouflaged defence work that was the most powerful coastal strongpoint on the island, commanding the entrance to Braye Bay. Bibette Head has a wide range of bunkers, which the submission states were constructed using a large amount of forced labour with mass loss of life.</p> <p>Bibette Head includes a number of noteworthy features, including an armoured turret located in the main bunker to the northern end of the site. The Built Environment and Heritage Strategy also notes a number of other important features, including Tobruk pits for machine guns, several personnel shelters, a unique observation bunker of an earlier type (the only example in the Channel Islands) the strongpoint's mess (including hut base, small kitchen, water tanks and wash basins), and a unique left- and right-flanking searchlight bunker.</p> <p>Given the historical importance of the site (in relation to both the role of forced labour and the wider occupation of the Island) and the good condition of the assets, it is considered that protection of the site is justified. Pending registration on the Register of Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments, interim policy protection will be afforded through the Land Use Plan.</p>
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Is the site available for the proposed purpose?	Yes	<p>The site is in the ownership of the States of Alderney. Recommendation 5 of the Built Environment and Heritage Strategy stated that the States should act as a 'leader' in expanding the Register, by registering their own assets first.</p> <p>The site is in part currently used as a visitor/recreation attraction, with some parts of the battery open to the public with interpretation boards etc. It is not anticipated that protection of the site would materially impact on the current use of the site.</p>
Is the site achievable for the proposed purpose?	Yes, with mitigation	<p>The site could be protected through inclusion on the Register of Historic Buildings, subject to the consultation and publication processes set out in the Building and Development Control (Alderney) Law, 2002 (this would be undertaken outside of the Land Use Plan review process).</p>

Any other comments	
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Conclusions

Does the proposal accord with the emerging Land Use Plan?	Yes, with mitigation	<p>Inclusion on the Register of Historic Buildings is subject to the consultation and publication processes set out in the Building and Development Control (Alderney) Law, 2002. The description included in the Register should include reference to the importance of the site in relation to the suffering of forced labour. In the interim, the site will be afforded policy protection through the Land Use Plan.</p> <p>Any works required to ensure the long term preservation of the heritage assets should be undertaken with regard to the important habitats present on the site.</p>
Indicative development capacity (if applicable)	N/A	