

Phase 2 Land Use Plan Review Call for Sites Assessment

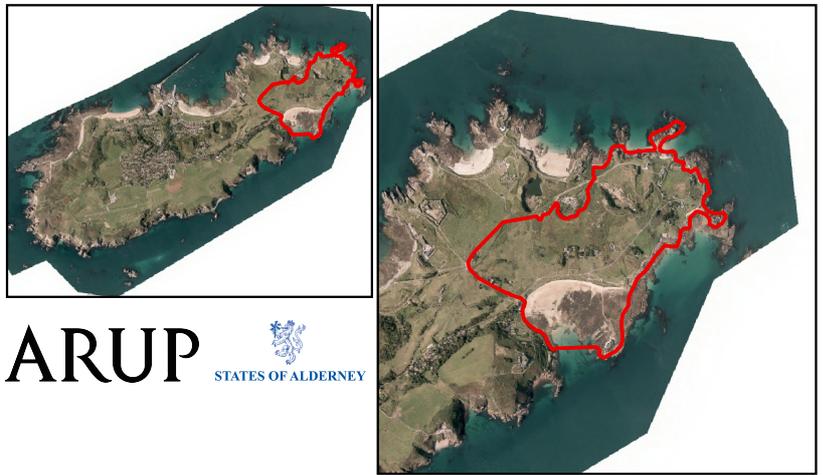
Reference: PA/089

Site name: Longis Nature Reserve

AY Parcel(s): Various

Submission Type: Protection/enhancement

Source: Private



Proposals

Summary of respondent's proposal: Formalisation of the existing Longis Nature Reserve as a planning criteria, plus proposed extension of the reserve.

Planning history and other context: Permission to erect a new bird hide was given on 11th November 2016 (PA/2016/106).
The site overlaps with a number of Call for Sites 2016-2017 since it covers a substantial proportion of the Island.

Accordance with the Land Use Plan Evidence Base

Does the proposal accord with the Vision Statement?	Yes	Protection and extension of the Longis Nature Reserve would accord with the vision, which seeks to protect and sustainably manages its land and marine environment and maintain access to the Island's natural environment.
Does the proposal accord with the Housing Strategy?	Yes	The submission proposes to extend the Longis Nature Reserve to include a number of houses and gardens. The Housing Strategy recommends that the Land Use Plan policy in relation to expansion of existing residential units within the Designated Area is reviewed to enable buildings to remain in active use (Recommendation 22). It also recommends that additional material planning considerations including the natural environmental be taken into account when determining the appropriateness of an extension. This proposal is therefore considered to accord with this part of the Strategy.
Does the proposal accord with the Economic Development Strategy?	Yes	The Economic Development Strategy states that niche markets are currently operating on Alderney including wildlife tourism, including bird watching and marine tourism. The protection and expansion of the Longis Nature Reserve accords with this part of the Strategy.

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Does the proposal accord with the Natural Environment Strategy?	Partial	<p>The existing Longis Nature Reserve falls under a local tier of the hierarchy of current and future sites of biodiversity importance set out in the Natural Environment Strategy (see Table C.1 of the Natural Environment Strategy). Within the Nature Reserve, there is a range of terrestrial and inter-tidal, current and potential future habitats of biodiversity importance, falling within the international, regional and local tiers of identified habitats of biodiversity importance. The continued protection of the existing reserve extent is therefore consistent with the Natural Environment Strategy. Recommendation 10 which states that the Land Use Plan should be updated to reflect the hierarchy of designations and associated sites and habitats identified in Tables C.1 and C.2 of Appendix C.</p> <p>The submission proposes the extension of the Nature Reserve into three new potential zones. The proposed extension area to the south east of the Island does not currently contain any habitats of biodiversity importance where the location is known (see Maps F.4, F.5 and F.6), though it should be noted that some designations could not be applied due to gaps in existing information. The extension area to the south west of the Island contains dune grassland and improved grassland which fall under the regional tier of the hierarchy of environmental designations (see Map F.5). Furthermore, the extension area to the north of the Island contains open dune which falls under the international tier of the hierarchy of environmental designations (see Map F.4) and coastal grassland which falls within the regional tier (see Map F.5).</p>
Does the proposal accord with the Built Environment and Heritage Strategy?	Yes	<p>The submission states that the new extension areas proposed to the Longis Nature Reserve are important given the cultural landscape is representative of the Anglo Saxon open field system. Furthermore, the Reserve as a whole should be recognised as an important heritage site containing a mix of human occupation, from the Neolithic to modern times including a number of buildings of heritage interest. The existing spatial extent of the Longis Nature Reserve as well as the extension areas, contain a range of heritage assets, including buildings of merit, areas of archaeological interest and World War II areas of significance. A proportion of the proposed extension area also fall within and contribute to Longis Common Conservation Area, as well multiple Areas of Landscape Value. Protection of additional areas of biodiversity importance within the Longis Nature Reserve would need to align with the protection of these identified heritage assets, and may provide opportunities for joint protection and management.</p>

Assessment of Suitability, Availability and Achievability

Is the site suitable for the proposed purpose?	Yes, with mitigation	<p>The existing boundary of the Longis Nature Reserve is identified within the Longis Nature Reserve Management Plan which includes the species and habitat status. It is therefore considered that the site should be protected through the Land Use Plan.</p> <p>The submission states that the proposed extensions to the site meet similar criteria set out in the Longis Nature Reserve Management Plan. The Natural Environment Strategy identified a number of important habitats within the proposed extension areas. The Strategy also states that due to resource constraints it had not been possible to review data relating to all known sites, habitats and species on the Island and that in parts of the Island insufficient survey work had been undertaken to determine potential sites, habitats and species which may require protection. As such, the suitability of the sites for such protection has not been demonstrated.</p>
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Is the site available for the proposed purpose?	Yes, with mitigation	The submission has not been made by or on behalf of the landowner. The availability of land is not required for recognition of the existing Reserve in the Land Use Plan. However, expansion of the Reserve may require landowner permission as it would include several houses and gardens. Expansion of the reserve falls outside the Land Use Plan review process.
Is the site achievable for the proposed purpose?	Yes, with mitigation	Policy protection of the existing reserve is achievable through the Land Use Plan. Expansion of the reserve falls outside the Land Use Plan review process.

Any other comments	
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Conclusions

Does the proposal accord with the emerging Land Use Plan?	Yes, with mitigation	Inclusion of the existing extent of the Longis Nature Reserve within the hierarchy of environmental designations as a local tier site. Policy protection will be provided through the Land Use Plan policies. Expansion of the reserve should be undertaken outside of the Land Use Plan review and, following additional survey work being undertaken to confirm the presence of habitats and species, added to the hierarchy of environmental designations as appropriate.
Indicative development capacity (if applicable)	N/A	