



In accordance with the Loi (1804) au Sujet des Assemblées Paroissiales an Assembly of the Principals and Electors of the Parish will be held in the Parish Hall on Thursday 10 March 2022 at 7.30pm.

Parishioners are asked to take into consideration a Requête (lodged on Monday 28 February), the subject matter being the rezoning of fields in the Parish of Grouville being submitted and debated in the States Assembly relating to the Bridging Island Plan, and if deemed advisable.

- 1) To request the Connétable to relay to the States Assembly their concerns with the process adopted for the Bridging Island Plan and in particular their dissatisfaction with the shortness of time available for parishioners to consider carefully the amendments lodged in relation to Grouville.
- 2) To request the Connétable to relay to the States Assembly their strong objections, on environmental and other grounds, to the proposed rezoning for affordable homes of the following fields in Grouville, and their opposition to proposed amendments to the Island Plan 2022-25 (P.36/2021) as follows –
 - (a) Amendment 66 in the name of Deputy SM Wickenden in relation to Fields G403C, G403D, and part of G432A, Grouville;
 - (b) Amendment 67 in the name of Deputy SM Wickenden in relation to Fields G508, G508A, G526, G526A and G521A, Grouville;
 - (c) Amendment 71 in the name of Deputy SG Luce in relation to Field G355, Grouville;
 - (d) Amendment 72 in the name of Deputy SG Luce in relation to Field G358A, Grouville;
- 3) To request the Connétable to withdraw Amendment 70 to the Island Plan 2022-25 (P.36/2021) or, in the event of the Connétable declining to do so, to request the Connétable to relay to the States Assembly their strong objections, on environmental and other grounds, and their opposition to Amendment 70 which seeks to insert Field G234, Grouville within the list of sites to be zoned for affordable homes, in the name of the Connétable of Grouville.
- 4) To request the Connétable to relay to the States Assembly their strong support, on environmental and other grounds, for Amendment 62 to the Island Plan 2022-25 (P.36/2021) in the name of the Deputy of Grouville in relation to the withdrawal of Field G392A, Grouville from the list of sites to be zoned for affordable homes.

Due to the large numbers expected to attend please contact the Parish Hall in advance to pre-register by telephone 852225 or email parishhall@grouville.je by 3.45pm Wednesday 9 March. The Connétable advises Parishioners to take a lateral flow test before attending and to follow current Covid-19 Government guidance.



The Connétable opened the meeting of 84 parishioners in the Parish Hall and 115 in the Parish Church. It was also live streamed through the Parish website.

The Connétable explained that when the requête was raised he asked Sir Philip Bailhache and 3 members of the signatories if they were comfortable if he chaired the meeting. They agreed as long as he declared his interest. Therefore, the Connétable explained that one of the field proposed is his brother's field and item 3 on the agenda.

The Connétable explained the format of the meeting.

- The proposer will speak first on all of the items and then questions will be taken from the floor addressing all items collectively as all items are interlinked.
- The Connétable invited Mr Pilley from the Government Department of Strategic Planning who will explain the reasons behind the Bridging Island Plan
- The Connétable will explain how the Parish plan fitted in with the Bridging Island Plan
- Deputy Labey has also asked to address the Parish meeting and as an elected member the Connétable thought it was appropriate for her to do so.
- The Connétable will put forward his views on the various proposals
- Then over to the floor for members in the Parish Hall and the Church to speak through a microphone only so that all in both locations can hear.
- Once all have had their say then a vote will be taken by show of hands. If close, then ballot papers will be used. You will have each been given a ballot paper on arrival to be completed and posted in the ballot box on exit of each building. This should take place around 9pm or 9.30pm.

The Connétable asked the Parish Secretary to read the Requête Convening Notice which was signed by 15 Parishioners.

The Connétable welcomed all those listening at home as this assembly is being livestreamed. The law does not permit interaction. Therefore, he advised parishioners are welcome to express views by email and he will read them all but won't promise to reply to them all.

Sir Philip Bailhache Proposer

Sir Philip addressed the Connétable and said that having made his (Connétable) position clear he is sure he speaks on behalf of everybody here we have absolutely no objecting to you presiding. He is pleased to see so many in attendance at this important Parish Assembly not just because of the rural environment it also reflects democracy.

There are 4 resolutions that he and fellow signatories are asking to consider:

1. "The process - Bridging Island Plan. He is not criticising the Planning department. He believed the department did an excellent job by consulting with islanders enabling islander to get the facts of the Bridging Island Plan. He is complaining about the process that allowed the lodging of a host of rushed last-minute amendments to the plan after the Inspector and the Minister had given their decisions. Converting so far as Grouville is concerned that a proposal of 1 field being given



up for development to at least 12 fields being given up. This is a completely different proposition and will have a significant effect upon the rural character of our Parish. Furthermore, it would involve significant encroachments upon environmentally sensitive areas of the island. It is in my view quite wrong that Grouville should be bounced into considering the implications of all these amendments with so little time to go before the States debate on the Island Plan.”

2. “Relay strong objections to the rezoning of several fields included in the amendments of Deputies Luce and Wickenden. Deputy Wickenden has now withdrawn his amendment relating to fields owned by our own deputy and paragraph 2a of the Requête now falls out of the picture. Sir Philip accepts the need to find sites for affordable housing but that imperative needs to be carefully balanced with the equally pressing need to protect our fragile environment. Sir Philip knows that young people struggling to buy affordable homes is dire and we must help. He accepts that some fields need to be given over for development, but where? And the answer to that question is not in the wrong place. The environment is hugely important to everyone in Jersey and that is why the issue must be looked at holistically in the context of the island. Deputy Wickenden’s remark that Grouville has a poor record in contributing sites for affordable housing is sadly misconceived. Finding sites for housing is not a zero-sum game where each Parish must provide an equal number of verges that would be frankly ridiculous. I feel equally passionately about preserving valuable open spaces in St Ouen and other Parishes. Not long ago I fought very hard to save Plemont from development.

The Question is what will cause the least environmental damage in our over crowded island? We must look at the island as a whole and this is where the approach of the planning department is correct. The planning inspectors looked at everything in the round, they took a balanced view, and they reached their conclusion. I am not saying they were always right, but they were at least logical. Planning does need to be looked at holistically. All these fields listed in the 2nd resolution are environmentally valuable. Some are agricultural, some are on flood planes and are important for wildlife, and some are valuable open spaces. In my view the field covered in the 2nd resolution none of which was recommended for development by the inspector should not be given over for housing.”

3. “Concerns fields G234, G234a and G230 which lay behind the Coop running down to Grouville Marsh which is one of Jerseys important sights of special interest. It is true that there are services and shops available in the vicinity but developing this in my view would be environmentally hugely damaging. I will leave others who are more knowledgeable to speak of these fields. What I will say is that we have few wetlands here in Jersey and they and the land adjacent to them are hugely important. The Connétable says in his report that the Parish is keen to be involved in the development of these fields. What I think he means is that the Parish is keen to help with affordable housing, everybody will go along with that. We do not yet know what the parish thinks about the development of these fields, this Parishioner would certainly not agree that the development so close to the marsh, would be appropriate. It seems to me that already there has been environmental damage from the existing houses and encroachment. Jersey’s biodiversity has been seriously damaged over the last few decades, and we should be determined to do what we can to protect. There are now only 2 wetlands left in Jersey, one is in St Ouen and there other is in Grouville. I hope that an overwhelming vote of this assembly in favour of this resolution may persuade the Connétable to withdraw his amendment.”
4. “Support to Deputy Labey to remove field G392a from the list of sites for affordable development. This was the only field recommended by the inspector for development in



Grouville but I do understand the environmental arguments against development. It would be the beginning of a creeping advance into the marshy areas nearby and I look forward to hearing what others have to say on that subject.

Connétable, I propose all 4 resolutions subject to the omission of paragraph 2a because as we have heard that States amendment has been withdrawn.”

Mr Pilley from The Island Plan Review Team

The Connétable asked Mr Pilley to provide some information about the process by which the island plan has been prepared, how we got to this stage and to provide you with a bit of context in terms of how the island plan is looking to meet the islands housing need. Also, to look at the approach that has been taken in terms of looking at how housing needs might be met and how that has been addressed across the island. I am here very much to talk about the process and to provide you with context, not to go into the merits of particular sites so you will have an opportunity to go into the detail of that once I have spoken about the process.

The process of the island plan is bound in legislation to go through the various stages of the island plan.

Consultation Period 19 April 2021 – 12 July 2021

- I. Consultation between 19 April 2021 – 12 July 2021 webinars and visited Grouville 27 May 2021 Field G392a was proposed by the Minister
- II. 19 April 2021 – 12 July 2021 Evidenced based Housing Land Assessment of sites report published. Sites submitted in the ‘Call for Sites’. 300 submissions made across the island for housing and development.
- III. Sites were put forward in Grouville and were assessed against a whole range of planning criteria – All information was in the public domain.
- IV. Consultation period was open to public and States members. Public could lodge representations and States Members could lodge amendments (April – July). Also received representations from landowners who wanted planning to look at their own site again. It is important to note that all the sites before this evening were representations.

Consultation Response

- I. When the representation period closed the Minister looked through 700 of them and 2000 comments and provided a response to each of them. This was published on 1 September. The Minister considered representations to field G392a but was still minded to keep the site in the plan. The Minister was minded to resist all other fields in Grouville.
- II. Representations were received by land in other Parishes. It was clear to the Minister that meeting the need for the affordable housing need was under challenge. The Minister then returned to the ‘Call for Sites’ list and looked at the next tranche of sites that he thought were potentially suitable alternatives – Plan B sites. None included in Plan B were Grouville fields. This was published.



Independent Planning Inspectors

- I. Engaged by the Minister and charged to review the draft plan and looking at all the representations received. Also, to test the views put forward by the Minister are robust.
- II. Examination in Public – process held in a public forum where the inspector examined all the key issues by the representations made especially proposed housing sites. They also read all representations and Ministers comments.
- III. Identified all items to be discussed and published a hearings program. Set out all the key issues to be examined. This included all the sites put forward in Grouville and the Ministers suggestion G392a.
- IV. Examinations took place over 2 weeks in November 2021. It was live streamed from the Societe Members Room.
- V. 16 November examined sites in the east of the island which included all Grouville sites.

Inspectors Report Published 26 January 2022

- I. Report to the Minister
- II. Changes to the process meant there was another opportunity. This was for States Members to lodge further amendments – Can only lodge amendments that related to an issue that had already been raised in the Island Plan review process.
- III. States Members could only focus issues on those that had already been raised
- IV. The sites in Grouville had been raised in the process so it was legitimate to lodge amendments.

Lead Up to the Island Plan Debate

- I. Debate commences 14 March 2022 for 2 weeks
- II. The Island Plan is approved by the States Assembly and the Minister of the Environment takes that to the Assembly, but it is the Assembly that approve it. There are just over 100 amendments and States Members will consider all. Members will vote and at the end of the process we will have an approved Island Plan.

Presentation 2 Provision of Island Homes

- I. Meet the island's need for homes – Sir Philip has already touched on the issue of sustainability. It is also part of the key elements in the in the island plan review in fact it's a purpose of the law that the minister must bring forward and delivers the most sustainable development of land in the island. This is what the plan seeks to do.
- II. The island Plan is seeking to provide 4300 homes. This is made up of a mixture of what we call affordable homes and that's affordable as defined by a process of assessing eligibility to access those homes through the housing gateway.
- III. The 4300 is made up of just over 1600 affordable homes and 2650 open market homes over a 5-year plan period. Normally it is a 10 year plan but because of Brexit and Covid it is a shorter plan period.



Spatial Strategy

- I. The plan seeks to meet most of the island's development needs from within the existing built-up area from within the island.
- II. The use of greenfield is only proposed to help meet the need for affordable homes so there is a greater focus of meeting that development need. The Minister reluctantly brings forward proposals to develop greenfield land for housing. However, given the challenge that we have got in terms of meeting the islands housing need the Minister feels he has very little choice than to consider some sites some Greenfield sites for the delivery of affordable homes.

Proposed Delivery of Homes

- I. Of 4,300 planned homes around 3700 proposed mostly in island's built-up areas (86%).
- II. Around 600 on rezoned sites – modest amount.
- III. Rezoned sites are proposed for affordable homes only based on eligibility assessed through the housing gateway. They will remain affordable in perpetuity.

Proposed Distribution of Rezoned Sites for Affordable Homes

- I. Strategic extensions – edge of St Helier, 80 homes
- II. Suburban extensions – edge of St Saviour and Grouville over 200 homes G329a=26 homes
- III. Rural extensions – rural parish centres i.e. St Martin, St John, St Mary, St Ouen and St Peter 337 homes

Mr Pilley stated that that was the end of his presentation and he hoped it served to give a flavour of the housing challenges. He hoped it gave more information about the process and also provided a bit of context about the overall issue of housing supply that the plan is seeking to make.

The Connétable presented a PowerPoint presentation to parishioners explaining how the Parish housing committee put forward fields G355, G358a and field G392a

- I. Collating Evidence- January 2020 - The Parish sent flyers to 2,200 households to better understand the housing need in the Parish
- II. Banners were placed in all four corner locations in the Parish advertising questionnaires to be collected at the Parish Hall or downloaded from website

The Anonymous Survey

- Demonstrated the need for – housing for older people, first-time buyer, social rented housing, Grouville connections and community minded

Media Attention

- Press releases, TV interviews with the Connétable

Call for Sites- February 2020

- I. Parish engaged an Architect to prepare detailed maps of all sites
- II. The Field annotated red sites for consideration, orange sites declined by landowner and green for proposed protected amenity space
- III. All sites in red and green were submitted to planning
- IV. The survey evidence was not required at this stage



March 2020 to May 2021 COVID 19

- All work on the plan stopped including in the Parish

Parish Timeline Recommenced

- I. 27 May 2021 the Planning Roadshow came to the Parish Hall
- II. Connétable invited Procureur Rebours to form a Committee
- III. 2 June 2021 the Committee had their first meeting
- IV. All field locations analysed as per the advice from the Planning Roadshow
- V. Considered: services, shops, bus route, school, doctors surgery etc.
- VI. Chose 3 fields – G358, G355, G234* (*G234a & G230)

Results of the Housing survey

- I. 58 Units required for the over 55's
- II. 27 Units for first time buyers
- III. All have close links to the Parish

Autumn 2021

- Procureur attended the Public Hearing supporting the fields the Parish identified

14 March 2022

- States Assembly Bridging Island Plan Debate

Deputy Labey was invited to the Podium

Good evening I would like to firstly start by thanking the organisers of the Requête it is a brilliant turnout this evening and a good example of grassroots democracy in action. I am here to listen to your views in preparation of the mammoth States Sitting which starts on Monday. Before I do, I need to say that this past week has been hugely difficult for me and especially my extended family, and in the interests of clarity I confirm I no longer own any of the fields in this island plan debate and will be playing a full part in it. I really hope that this evening we can focus on the sites their merits or otherwise. The need for housing has come forward from the parishes themselves, the constable as you have heard has a list of young people who want to live work and bring up a family in the island and also a list of elderly people who want to vacate large family homes, downsize but remain in their community. Grouville does not have many brownfield sites if any at all, and we are being asked to consider what we if anything can provide for our community and we have some options on the table before us today, and to be honest I do not like any of them. During the course of this process, I have met with many parishioners especially those living around the Ministers chosen field G392a, which received the Planning Inspector's approval. Now while I do not claim to have the experience or the qualifications of the Planning Inspector, I do know this area well and have a placed attachment to it which Dr Jonathan Renouf spoke about in today's JEP. The field to my mind is one of the last remaining spaces along Rue des Sablons and where the public have a view to open countryside and the escarpment beyond. If developed, I believe would have an enormously detrimental visual impact to the area. I recognise that the Jersey Farmers Union have said the field would not be a great loss to agriculture as the soil is poor, but I do know it harvests a crop of potatoes every year. Over recent decades there have been a substantial amount of development along the small country lane of Rue des Fonds. I fear that putting another housing development in such close proximity to Clos des Fonds



would make for a high density of housing down this very small country lane, without offering any breathing space and that is without adding the field 355 and 358 to the mix. It is for these reasons that I decided to lodge my amendment to seek to remove the Ministers chosen field 392a from the Bridging Island Plan and I am grateful to the signatories of the Requête for supporting my amendment. I understand parishioners concerns about many of the fields in Grouville, and I will represent you. As many of you already know I have always been prepared to take on planning with my various fights over Kepple Tower, the Pottery site, Chemin des Maltieres, Seymour Car Park, and others. So, if you want me to hold the line on this and reject all the sites in Grouville as the agenda suggests then that is exactly what I will do, but I will be interested to hear your views as to the alternatives for our community. I would like you to consider the following: looking at the situation holistically there are plans to deliver 1100 plus homes on brownfield sites across the island by 2025, and another thousand more homes on the waterfront, providing enough amenities space to development so children have room to play and residents are able to enjoy some tranquil outdoor space is also important. The question of height of buildings height is also up for debate. Housing and population controls were approved last month with the aim of balancing the need of community environment and economy, but I fully acknowledge more needs to be done. We have full employment in Jersey, in fact most businesses complain that they can't get enough staff. The medical profession who are working at capacity cannot attract new recruits because of the housing shortage. Housing costs are putting a lot of people off coming to the island. My two sons live in London and are wondering whether to ever come back. Jersey is in the common travel area which means people can come and go within the British Isles as they wish. A question to be asked is would you want border controls and the introduction of visas to travel to the UK? People are healthier and living longer that is cause for celebration surely. In Grouville alone 40% of our population are 70 or over yet we need to maintain a vibrant economy and a skilled workforce to support the needs of an increasing population of pensioners. This is in sheer contrast to a country I have just visited Zambia where the average age is 19. I know that the housing and communities minister is committed to increasing overall supply of homes to meet the needs and aspirations of young Islanders. This will be the most significant means of helping to stabilise house price levels, mechanism such as shared equity and Community Land Trust will also play a part. In these very uncertain times, we have got to work towards a sustainable model but it's not going to be easy or happen overnight there is not a big tap to turn off, but together we need to look for solutions. I will sit down and look forward to hearing your views.

Connétable Le Maistre

Thank you, Deputy Labey.

I would like to explain my position. With regard to process of the first item I accept that generally people were not aware that fields had been put forward at the core site stage could be reintroduced as amendments, once the Minister and Planning Inspector had rejected them. States Members were aware of that and knew that that was the case and the deadline for submissions was early February this year. It did not give much time for people to react to these amendments, but I think as this meeting is proven, there was enough time. I would therefore suggest that despite the pandemic and the content which caused the condensed time frame, this meeting has gone ahead and people have had time to express their views. I am fairly relaxed about reporting this to the States Assembly but I think the explanation from Mr Pilley did show the process is as good as it can be. The proposer of



the Requete tonight has withdrawn item 2A so it is now outside this meeting, and I shall not comment further.

Item 2B Fields G508, G508a, G526a and G521a which are the fields that all the eastern end of the Holme Grown property I am already opposed to. I was asked to propose them and I declined. I am a retired farmer and I worked this land and by Jersey standards the fields of good size and it is easy to work, they are low lying so over wintering crops cannot necessarily be grown such as winter cauliflowers, but you could have it in grazing all the year round. It would be perfectly good land for summer crops also can be grown on that land and thrive. The land and the Environment Department Control Officers have said that it is good agricultural land. The Farmers Union have categorised land into four categories:

1. no development
2. last resort for agriculture for development
3. less important agriculture
4. if the land is not being worked now

This was described by the Farmers Union also in there in their top category for protection. In my view the proposed development is too large and will spread out into the countryside. It will have a serious impact on the visual space of the area, and like all the fields proposed tonight they are environmentally important. As I have explained I have a conflict of interest with items 2c and d, so I will not make no comment on those. Item 3 that is the amendment is put forward by me I feel most strongly about. From a land use officers point of view they have decided it is a significant loss to agriculture but the Farmers Union disagree and have categorised as number 3 on their grading system of less important to agriculture. I have also worked these fields or part of the ones that are in use, and I would agree with the Farmers Union they are low lying, face north and not an easy shape. Part of the site was a glasshouse before the new development was completed. Sir Philip says has everything going for it, good bus routes, supermarkets, dual purpose cycle path and walkway all the way to Gorey which is less than 10 minutes' walk away and even has a pub nearby. It is a built-up area and will have the least visual impact of all the sites put forward. One big downside of course and I appreciate this is the proximity to the marsh, and that is why my amendment proposes a 15 metre buffer zone that would be managed to provide as much protection as possible. While retaining enough area to make the development worthwhile. Water runoff has been mentioned by some, but developments such as this have to provide soakaways that will allow the water to seep into the subsoil at an appropriate rate, apart from this big downside it is the best option by far. It also affects the fused number of people of all the sides recently I have been involved in and proposed this site is the parish had been in discussions with the owner for four years or more, and sometime before the Bridging Island Plan commenced. We were hoping to get involved with the newly committed completed development but could not do so, the owner did agree to alter the plans for the new development so that there could be access to the extension of the site. I should add that one of the reasons that Sir Philip did mention he was keen on this site was that we are confident that we will have input into who lives in those homes. We will not be so confident that the parish will have input into who will live in houses in the other sites. I am keen that at least some of the houses that are built in Grouville are offered to Grouville parishioners. My Procureurs and I have known that there is a need for affordable housing and our survey confirmed that. It is tragic that people living on lower incomes simply cannot afford to live in Jersey and some have already moved, and some are planning



to move for that very reason. That cannot be right. I would be interested to hear from people that if all of the votes against all of the fields in grouville tonight, does that mean I should vote against all Greenfield sites that have been proposed throughout the island? Is it right that Grouville does not provide any sites for affordable homes where we know there is such a need? The people needing these affordable homes are a minority within our community, and do not have strong voices. I represent them as much as I represent anyone here tonight. If the vote tonight requests me to pull this amendment, I will have to do some soul searching over the weekend because if I do pull it, I will have to let those people who really need these homes down. The fourth item I had not my mind up and I will be very interested in the views of people here tonight. I think it will have some visual impact and it is not as good for agriculture as some of the other fields. But it will affect a lot of people in that area, I appreciate that.

I will now open the floor to speakers either in the church or here in the parish hall if you could raise your hand and somebody will come to you.

Speaker: Peter Le Maistre – He is the President of the Farmers Union. I've not discussed with him the merits of these fields it's not the same brother who rents the field thank you very much.

“Mr Constable, the Farmers Union has been mentioned a couple of times so I thought I would speak at the beginning to clarify the situation. Firstly, I should say obviously I am a parishioner and ratepayer, I am also by trade a farmer apart from 392A which I shall call for clarification ‘the Verona Stores field’ I have farmed every one of these fields and so when it came to analysing whether they had value for agriculture I think I was in a very good position to say yes or no.

As president of the Farmers Union, I actually got a lot more knowledge about this whole bridging island plan than probably many of you in the room and the reason for that is that I was invited by the planning inspectors as a representative of the agricultural industry. I sat for six of the eight days listening to all the sites across the island being put forward and the merits of all of them. It is quite wrong to suggest that our Connétable should go to the States and say that parishioners or any other Islander did not have the full information to consult about any of these sites. I have got the list here it's over 100 sites anybody and I mean anybody could have gone made a representation to the planning inspectors, could have followed it online, could have put in objections then and it's obvious that at the time certainly no one turned up when I was there and if representations were made the planning inspectors didn't think they were important enough to stop the ‘Verona Stores field’. So I think on the first part of the Requete I personally would not support that because I think there is been plenty of time for consultation.

With regard to the fields yes my predecessors at the Farmers Union have been very clear other island plans, previous island plans ,they have always said sorry we are not going to have any building on any Greenfield sites as you will know that's never worked sites have been taken all around the island and so this time myself the officers and the council that farms unions decided to take a more pragmatic view and that is we know there's a desperate housing shortage. We know people are leaving the island because they can't find affordable housing. So we knew that fields were going to be taken and what the change of approach was we've said to states members but firstly to the planning officers and the Planning Minister, look there are fields that are really important there are



critical fields and I am delighted that the Minister listened and withdrew the fields at Mont a l'Abbe which form part of the organic dairy farm. We made representations about other fields which we were disappointed are still on the ministers list but at the end of the day we have to accept and be pragmatic that we are going to lose some land. We took the field in Grouville 392a as one of those that's less important to agriculture. Farmers Union does not support the building on Greenfield sites but if we have got to lose land let's lose land that is of the worst agricultural value. So that is why there are a couple of sites on the list and sadly a couple of sites that Deputy Labey owns that now have been withdrawn that I think could have been built on as well that were less important to agriculture.

When it comes to the environment, the agricultural industry in the last 10 years has changed dramatically and every leading grower and every leading dairy farmer follows strict Agri environment schemes. If we take the field at 'Verona Stores' today of course there is a lot of wildlife down there, that field has been over sown during the winter months to feed for birds. Now we can do that in other fields that are in grass because at the moment sadly we have really only got the dairy industry and the Jersey royal potato industry. We choose as potato growers what we put in those fields and if we want to put winter feeding for birds in other fields we can do it. I think that it is unrealistic as a parish when the island needs 600 plus affordable homes that we cannot give up one field. So, I would urge you to support the original proposition that we build in 392a because I think it's the least valuable agricultural field in our parish, thank you."

Connétable - I think Sarah Howard at the front would like to speak.

Speaker: Sarah Howard

The real issue here tonight is a much bigger global issue and that is the existential threat to the environment and humanity from pouring concrete and tarmac over these important, food producing ecological carbon sinks.

The 12 fields in Grouville are ecologically sensitive and turning them from green zones will be one step closer to missing a rapidly closing window to secure a safe and liveable future for people and nature on the planet. We are hugely undervaluing our greenfields as affordable housing they are much more valuable as carbon sinks and play a fundamental part in the communities achievement of carbon neutrality. It is scientifically accepted that soil has a tremendous potential for regulating the atmospheric carbon content by sequestering carbon and thus mitigating climate change for the benefit of climate action. Furthermore, effective biodiversity conservation and management can lead to higher levels of carbon sequestration and hence climate change mitigation. I believe not enough due consideration has been placed on ecological and climate aspects in the process of responding to the very evident and present needs of our populations housing crisis. Our government has failed us on a population policy and now they need to take drastic action to provide basic human needs. We need transparency around the real short, medium and long term need for housing development sites and the questions we need answers to are: Is population expected to fall in the next 10 to 20 years? What are the short, medium and long term needs for housing in our island? Have we filled all our vacant housing stock? Why 11 of these precious 12 Green Zone fields in Grouville have been put forward when they were dismissed by the independent inspector? Whether Grouville has other locations where rezoning will have less of an environmental impact?



If our parish takes away another Greenfield site it will never revert, and we are taking another step closer to breaching our critical 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold, ending life on earth.

Connétable – invited speakers from the church, no one came forward.

Speaker from the Parish Hall: Bob Tompkins

“Now I recognise that as a result of a continual failure to curb population growth extra housing is required and it should never be at the expense of environmental sensitive and ecologically important habitats. If you take the time to study a map of Jersey, you will note that there are two very clear low lying and relatively under developed areas shown on it. One is St Ouen’s Bay with large areas carrying environmentally protected areas. Then take a look at the Southeast coast between La Rocque and Gorey that apart from Grouville marsh has no Environmental Protection whatsoever. Although it is as equally important ecologically as the West Coast. If it were not for the maintained drainage ditches that crisscross the whole of the South East coastal field systems the land would revert to marsh within a few years. Even now during the key winter months many of the fields are waterlogged some to the extent that they become ponds. The ecosystems contained within them draw in thousands of migratory birds from a wide range of species such as Brent geese herons egret, red shanks, glossy Ibis, avocets and even Finch species such as brambling chaffinch and goldfinch. Because of the comparatively low house housing density the fields all act as interlinking green corridors to and from feeding areas in the marine and terrestrial habitats added to which these wetlands and marshes are recognised as important carbon capture sink areas.

I would like to point out at the stage as well that although there is an awful lot of talk going on about how important or less important these fields are as far as fields farming fields, we do have to look at other options, other potentials for these fields, other than the fact that they are no good for agriculture anymore. I must draw parishioners’ attention to the fact that Jersey is a signatory to both the Bonn and Burn Conventions, which require the protection of the wide-ranging habitats contained within the area, the prevention of disturbance to wildlife throughout the season variations and recognise the intrinsic value of the flora and fauna contained within them to be passed on to the benefit of those in the future.

The first set of fields submitted by Deputy Wickenden on the eastern Fauvic nursery section form a major green corridor between the maritime feeding areas, the wet fields running parallel with La Rue du Puits Mahaut and Rue de la Sente Maillard lying to the south and Marais a la Cocque and the wet fields to the north. Now, I note on the map here that Marais a la Cocque is shown as a proposed amenity space. Effectively it's a wet Meadow come marshland, alright, and you can see on this map here that as far as I am concerned everything that runs this way should be green, these are all interlinking fields with regard to wildlife. So, Deputy Wickenden's other fields proposed lay north of Pre au Portier and stretching to Sente des Fonds and the Verona stores area that all these fields at some time or other are wet. But the area around the farmhouse itself on the southern side which is and has not been farmed for some considerable time. It is for all intents and purposes marshland. The section of field to the north of the farm itself is little better, it does flood, and it is very difficult on occasions for tractors to be operating within that field system. The other important thing with this area is that there is a large drainage ditch which separates the two field sections themselves and



a further one that runs along to the west along the what used to be the old railway embankment and of ecological importance is the fact that (Connétable interjected) - these fields are now no longer on the agenda) I do appreciate that John, but I am just trying to paint the picture of how important all these interlinks are.

All these drainage ditches contain species known as the common eel and the common eel is critically endangered. So, any disturbance within these areas, building or otherwise could drastically affect that species existence.

Finally, but not least of all the fields submitted that lay behind the modern housing estate and Co-op on the Rue a Don, the field slope down to the very edge of Grouville marsh which in the Constable's own words is recognised as an SSI which stands for site of special interest. Therefore, carries a protected status despite his affirmations that ways could be found to limit the surface water runoff from any development including soakaways.

He does not mention how this will be achieved, well he did tonight but given that the water does not flow uphill and contaminated water surface run off does, it will have a direct impact on the marsh. He also stated that the development of the fields would end no closer a distance than 15 metres from the marsh edge. Whereas the minimum permissible distance to any development near a similar site in the UK would be 100 metres. The marsh has already suffered degradation as result of surrounding development over recent years as well as the effect of noise disturbance and the very damaging impact from domestic animals that will inevitably follow, leading to the decline of already endangered bird species such as the water rail. Under no circumstances must any of these fields be developed, as the impact would be devastating to the ecology of the eastern marsh and coastal wetlands. These submissions are nothing more than a knee jerk reaction compounded already to a failing approach to the islands housing needs. Thank you."

Connétable -Is there anybody in the church that would like to ask a question?

Speaker Parishioner from the Church

"Sorry I can't talk as articulately as some of the previous speakers especially on the environmental issues, so I do not intend to. To the Constable's brother what I would say is I did turn up to the Parish Hall when we first talked about the fields and none of the answers were given to me by the planning department on the questions and the concerns that I raised about field 392a. I just like to kind of let everyone know I have lived in that area for all my life. I can remember driving from La Rocque through to Gorey and having green space on my left. If we take away this field, we have got urban creep we will have very, very little green space to our left and I agree with Deputy Labey when you say the visual impact that we have around that area. I do want to talk about logistics, Constable you talked about some of the logistics and the ease of access, so I just want to talk about that field. That field is proposed to have 26 homes on it I would hazard a guess looking at the state of vehicles in this island that will be 52 cars. If anyone knows that road particularly well it is on a difficult and dangerous bend. I actually live in one of the lanes off it and there have been frequent accidents in the past, they call it an easy access for children when I spoke at the Parish Hall, easy access for children to get to the school. If anyone has tried to walk from that bus stop to Grouville School, they would understand



there are no pavements. You have to cross the road at least twice or three times to get to the school. You are also coming out of an access on La Rue des Fonds which is tiny. I hazard a guess that will become a little rat run that goes all the way back from that field all the way back to the main road up to the Parish church. That in itself will cause an absolute nightmare for traffic. I am sorry but I for one will be proposing that we do not use any other fields in this parish at the moment. I think it would be far better to go back to square one and have a look at other options. I do not think the parishioners have actually had enough time to have a look at all the proposals that were put forward. I think it was a difficult time for a lot of people to attend some of the parish meetings because of the Covid situation. I am just putting forward my view that 392a should not be used for all the environmental reasons we've discussed and for logistic reasons. I think all the fields should be taken off at this point in time."

Connétable- Thank you, I think there was another hand up in this room

Speaker Parishioner from the Parish Hall

Thank you very much indeed, I wanted to pick up the point about due process because I do agree with Sir Philip that in looking at the way in which the planning department followed this through and planned it from the very beginning, I could not really but commend the fact that they did go through a very, very, long and very detailed process. I don't however believe that what happened in terms of Grouville was quite as well followed. Suddenly we were faced with a situation where one field that had been supported and presented, suddenly became 11/12 fields.

Well, I am sorry but we didn't really have enough time to look at that and think it through and that really wasn't on. I have to say too, and I might not make myself popular for saying it and I am sorry in advance, but the whole situation was not really helped by a lack of transparency and a lack of communication amongst those who were really looking to be our representatives on the island and in this parish. I say it warily because I know these people and I like these people and I think they have done tremendous work for us in the past and will do no doubt later on. But I have to claim, and have to state that there was a lack of communication and really when you look at it I do not know if one lot were speaking St Martinais and the other lot were speaking Grouvillais but somehow they just simply weren't communicating between the two and that does not bode well for this new super constituency that we are supposed to be having in the future.

The problem too is certainly looking at the way in which things have developed and grown over last years, and yes we do, there is no doubt have a real problem in terms of housing. And also agricultures, Peter rightly and he knows better than I do, has developed, has changed, and altered, into something that those of us who were originally from a farming heritage would almost not recognise anymore. But having said all of that I have to say to you that I still hear from the depths of my heart, generations past who are calling out and saying now hold on, we left you wonderful ground we left you ground that was warm, it was fertile and in which you could grow almost anything that you wanted to grow. We left you a landscape and fields that people wanted to come and see. People were rejoicing in coming to Jersey to see this landscape. We left you a culture that was Anglo Norman, it was different, it was unique, you couldn't find it anywhere else. And they are saying in



addition to that: What are you doing with it? What on earth are you doing with it? The irony too of course, is that this massive debate which will take place next week and for some time thereafter I suspect. Whatever is decided there, will be implemented by a house after June 22nd which bears little relation to the house that we have now, and I am afraid many of us would say, please God."

Connétable – Thank you is there anybody else in the church would like to say anything? In the hall?

Speaker in the Parish Hall

After following all these eloquent speakers, I'll be quite blunt when I have to say the trouble is people, it is a big trouble around the world is people. There are too many of us. Anybody who has been in the states for the last 20 years has something to answer for. We should have capped population about 20 years ago whatever the number was then. Another thing I would like to say is we're talking about building housing, but people will have children build a school first because they're not going to get into Grouville school, thank you.

Connétable – Is there anybody else that wants to make a comment?

Speaker in the Parish Hall

"Can I just ask if Deputy Luce is here?" Connétable – "No"

"Can I ask if Deputy Scott Wickenden is here?" Connétable – "No"

Speaker responding to an audience member, "You can turn up to Parish Assemblies – You cannot vote, you can turn up".

Connétable said "to be fair I did restrict it because of the numbers to Parishioners and those eligible to vote, they were aware.

Speaker said, "I think Constable it would have been better if you had asked them to turn up rather than tell them not to turn up."

Connétable said "I did not tell them not to turn up I wanted to say that they were invited but they declined."

I think that the problem with the politicians today they don't want to listen to the public. This whole process although Mr Pilley said that there was correctly monitored, it was not correctly monitored its two-piece meal and to find out that while two Parish representatives were conflicted in the way they are, is not acceptable. Although you brother turns up and says they went through the process it must have been a very tough process deciding which farmers were going to make millions out of rezoning. Now the problem is that the public does not have enough of the say in this and the problem is we don't have a population policy and we should do the island plan after we have a population policy, because without a population policy we don't know how many people are going to be living in this island in 10 or 20 years and we may well develop sites that we do not need to develop. We put the environment at risk and we're not looking after this island for our children and quite frankly



I am disgusted at the representation in this Parish. I love Grouville. I am new here, but I love Grouville and I do not want to see it ruined and I do not want to see my island ruined either.

Connétable -Thank you. Is there anyone else who has any comments?

Speaker in the Parish Church

“Hello, I just like to address part one of the Requete and I'm not sure that everybody in the Parish Hall or the church recognises that historic event that we have got here in having this assembly called as part of a Requete. A Requete is not usual, I think in the last 20 years there is probably been less than 10. Somebody will correct me on that so it is a very, very, unusual course of events, and therefore, I would counter what the Connétable has said in terms of the parishioners having adequate time to consider. The only reason we're all here tonight is that a group of very committed environmentalists have forced the Constable's hand to call this event this evening. So please use that vote to register that this has not given the parishioners time. I am sure there are a lot of people maybe listening to the live stream that would have liked to have been here in person but to call a parish assembly with less than two weeks' notice only because realistically you were forced to do so, does not represent that we have had enough time to consider all the courses of actions that have been open to us tonight.”

Connétable – I think there are some other hands up

Speaker in the Parish Church

I think it was mentioned that 40% of the population in our parish are 70, I am coming up to that myself soon but that does actually mean that the population, if it represents the island, could very easily drop. You are also telling us that people are leaving the island and I am not quite sure we are going to be living longer, the way things are going. I do not know if other people feel the same way as I do, but I think it has been mentioned it was quite a shock to find this out as it happened. I only heard about this a couple of weeks ago. I found out a lot of information that I was quite appalled about very quickly, so I presume there is a lot more information I have not heard yet or found out about, some of it going on a short walk. I was told that we were part of the Bonn treaty and I hear a Berne one which I don't know about yet. At the short talk we were told that we are part of the Bonn treaty was part of a European or perhaps even further for all I know, I'm new to this, but it was part of a treaty where Finland for example, has agreed with us that we will have areas for migratory birds. If Jersey is not part of this, as we have promised we will be, there will be no steppingstones for these birds. They cannot land on helicopter pads you know we talk about a buffer zone 15 metres. They need food these birds. I saw those hundreds of thousands of finches nesting where are they going to get the food from? The marsh is already being used by birds. Whenever you walk through you see those people enjoying it all the time because of its natural beauty which is essential for people's mental health. Where are all these other little birds going to go? We are also told that we will have a 15-metre buffer, but these houses are going to have children are they not going to be playing in these trees? The population, the variety of animals are dropping which means our ecosystem also is very fragile. We don't have other creatures which will take the brunt. If there's less creatures around



less variety chop out a couple more of this and that and the whole thing crumbles. We know this, we have been told this, we were told that perhaps we've got 10 years on this planet. Do you know why we are thinking of building houses? Making sure we are not going to exist at all. I am just really worried about so many things that I am just beginning to find out about, and I think other people in this Parish are probably feeling the same, I do not want to presume but I think they probably are.

Connétable -Is there somebody else in the Church?

Speaker in the Parish Church

Mr Constable I don't want to be one of those not in my backyard and I think we have heard a lot about the environment, we've heard a lot about the need for housing. I think there's probably a lot of people in this room, both rooms, similar to me is they are looking at what impact that each particular site is going to have on their property, their view and of the value of their house. I do not think anybody's touched upon that, and I guess people are a little bit concerned about that but equally I'd like to just talk about G355 the field owned by your brother. I know your brother personally and I don't have any issue with him. Equally, I think what's happened with this particular field the gentleman referred to earlier on to G392A and his issue with that field and the fact that the getting to and from the school along the main road would be an issue. 355 to my mind has been put in there to negate that, and that's going to be a corridor to the school. I live at the end of that field and next to G304 which is the marsh that the school use and which is again very environmentally friendly. They have just built a pathway there so the kids can actually use it. Now, that end of this field is a very wet end. I really do not see that if they build some houses in 355 the impact of the runoff of that field, our house and I guess the marsh will probably end up underwater, I do not really see how it will not. I believe that's the only reason that 355 has been included it is farmed every year along with the field next door. It wasn't included initially, and you know, I do not think it should be. I am against all the other sites as well thank you.

Connétable – Are there any further questions in the Parish Hall?

Speaker in the Parish Hall

Constable, I feel, sorry I am not used to talking but I do feel like I am let down by the States. They have not brought in a policy for immigration into the island I really feel let down with that. I feel let down that basically that the way things are going I do not think we have got proper representation. All I am asking is please listen to your Parishioners and go forward. I consider the Constable as father of our parish and the Deputy mother of our parish for many years, and all I ask you is please listen to the Parishioners and go forward and represent us thank you.

Connétable- Another question in the Church

Speaker in the Parish Church

My cousin in Gorey Village says she remembers when the village was badly flooded. I do not, this is a question, but I do not know how that has been solved and how building on wetlands may affect that in the future. We have also got the problem that wetlands in particular, are a good carbon sink



more than drylands and being that they also filter water running off concrete can flow much more easily rather than sinking through grasslands and roots and being held. The pollution is running off into the marshland and other areas, how will that affect wildlife and ourselves and flooding thank you.

Connétable -Thank you.

Speaker in the Parish Hall

Good evening everyone I just want to speak in particular about field G392a I speak in favour of Deputy Labey's resolution to drop the rezoning of that field. The reason I am saying this is that that field should not be seen in isolation. In fact none of the fields should be seen in isolation because Deputy Luce from St Martin suggested that we should rezone 355 and G35a because they were adjacent to 392A and if we're having 392a we can have the lot. Actually, those two fields stand on an incredibly lovely very narrow road, Sente des Fonds. The secret is in the name, Sente des Fonds means something like the narrow road in Grouville, the Sente are a place name in Grouville and Fonds means the bottom of the valley, marshland. It is completely inappropriate that they be tarmacked over. The main reason for me, lots of reasons for it for backing Deputy Labey's amendment to withdraw 392a from being rezoned, but the idea we were told apparently in Bailiwick Express that by Luce if Deputy Labey's amendment was successful in not having 392a rezoned. Then he would drop the rezoning of those two other fields and actually that seems to be a very strong reason for not wanting 392a be rezoned.

Connétable- Are any further comments from either the church or the Parish Hall?

Speaker in the Parish Hall

It is just a question on the quantity of housing in the parish. Does the parish actually know how many houses sit empty within the parish? And how many houses in the parish are second homes that sit empty, often for a whole year at a time? Or, used for tax purposes where someone only has to be there for a very, very, short period of time to keep their tax status with Jersey? I am certainly aware of a lot of properties that appear empty in the parish. As a second point nowhere in the plans were mentioned of two huge plans for housing and development going on in the parish which is separate to this. We have got Home Grown with huge building project plans and the same at Homefields which will take in twice as many houses we are actually looking at in the whole of this plan and how that fits into the equation.

Connétable – I will take one more question from the Church and one from the hall.

Speaker in the Parish Hall

I would just like to clarify something that I think Mr S owes me an apology. Firstly, apart from the fields in St Peters I would be interested to know with all the sites put forward by the Minister I cannot think of any apart from St. Peters that are owned by farmers. These are landowners they are not farmers, it is a completely different thing. Secondly, if he wishes to look at the Planning Inspectors briefings on day one the Farmers Union were the only people to question where the strategy was to



make sure these houses were going to be affordable, in other words that the sites were going to be sold at a fee that you could build affordable houses on them. So, I just want to make those two points and the final point is: When it comes to your brother Mr Constable and my brother, I hope the Procureur will inform the audience that he was approached by the Parish, not the other way round. I was approached as well. I turned down a site because it's a good agricultural field. We have never approached anyone to sell any of our land. we were asked by the parish if we could help out. Thank you very much.

Speaker in the Parish Hall

I am happy to apologise if that is the case. I am also aware in some jurisdictions that when housing land is rezoned it is sold at agricultural rates by law and not at inflated rates. Thank you.

Connétable - Mr Rebours you were asked to comment.

Procureur Rebours

We did approach the Le Maistre family for various sites and they did say yes in some cases and no in others so the orange sites on the map shows we did approach those landowners.

Connétable – Could you also confirm that I was not involved.

Procureur Rebours – Yes, yes, I can confirm that. We did this as a survey and looked at these particular fields and yes, we approached those people.

Connétable - thank you. If there are no further comments in the church or in the Hall, I will now bring the meeting towards its conclusion. I said at the beginning what I intend to do is take a vote by show of hands. Should the vote be close then you have got ballot papers which we could use if necessary. I will take each item individually. I would just like to tell any parishioner that if they ever want me to hold a meeting I am prepared to do so. It's quite right that I have to call this meeting because it was called in the form of a Requete but at times I've called other meetings just because people have asked me to do so. Indeed, the climate change initiative that was led by Sarah Howard was originally going to be a Requete and I said we will simply put it on the on a parish assembly agenda. So, if any parishioner ever wants to discuss anything I'm quite happy to hold meetings with a Requete or without.

Voting

1. To request the Constable to relay to the States Assembly their concerns with the process adopted for the bridging island plan and in particular their dissatisfaction with the shortness of time available for parishioners to consider carefully the amendments lodged in relation to Grouville.

Can I have a show of hands for those in favour of this proposal, result overwhelming. Those against: none.

What about the church? I can't see the church, but the officer down there will report to me afterwards, but it looks overwhelming. **Result of both locations – Unanimous.**



2 a) item has been **withdrawn**

2. b) is Deputy Wickenden's and these are the fields that form part of Holme Grown all those in favour of agreeing to the proposal, please show. Unanimously in favour. Those against, none.

Result: Unanimous

2. c) Which is G355 in the name of Deputy SG Luce. All those in favour of the proposition received, unanimously in favour. Those against none. **Result: Unanimous**

2. d) Is the field that is almost adjacent to the field proposed by the Minister again in the name of Deputy SG Luce. All those in favour unanimous. Those against none. **Result: Unanimous**

3. The request to withdraw amendment 70 which is in my name. Those in favour, overwhelming Those against – 6. **Result: Passed Overwhelmingly.**

4. The request by the Deputy of Grouville or the proposal by the Deputy of Grouville for the Minister to remove G392A. All those in favour, overwhelming. Those against – 19

Result: Passed Overwhelmingly.

That brings the meeting to a close thank you all very much for coming, it's been very useful meeting for your States representatives here. Thank you for your views and I now declare the meeting closed. Meeting closed at 8.52pm.