Outline Planning Scheme for Moka Flacq District Council Area

Approved Version

September 2006
(as subsequently modified November 2011)

Prepared by the Planning Division of the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands on behalf of the Town and Country Planning Board
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1 Purpose of the Outline Planning Scheme

1.1 Boundaries of Moka Flacq District Council Area

This Outline Planning Scheme covers Moka Flacq District Council Area (DCA). The boundaries of this Scheme which are illustrated in Figure 1.1 have been drawn in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 (as subsequently amended by Proclamation No 25 of 2001).

Figure 1.1 Moka Flacq DCA Outline Scheme Boundaries

1.2 Functions of the Outline Scheme

This Outline Planning Scheme has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1954. Section 11 of the Act places an obligation on the Town and Country Planning Board (TCPB) to prepare an Outline Planning Scheme (OPS) for each declared planning area. The area under the administrative jurisdiction of the Moka Flacq District
Council has been declared as Planning Area No. 9 as per Government Notice No. 111 of 2005. It is shown in Figure 1.1.

There are three functions of this revised OPS:

- To provide guidance to project promoters, developers and individuals contemplating a development project and the subsequent submission of a building and land use permit application;
- To assist Government officers at Ministry and local authority levels when offering advice to developers and when subsequently assessing permit applications; and
- To provide the spatial development framework for the coordination and implementation of national and local programmes and projects of development.

The 1954 Act provides for approved Schemes to be used as the main reference against which building and land use permit applications are judged. Moreover, the provisions of an approved Scheme should be key factors when considering appeals against refusal to grant a building and land use permit.

1.3 Timeframe of Outline Planning Scheme

This Outline Planning Scheme is principally concerned with development up to the year 2015. However, modifications can be effected under Section 24 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1954.

1.4 Planning and Development Act 2004


Because the new Planning and Development Act has yet to be fully proclaimed and changes will occur to the 1989 Local Government Act through the Local Government Act 2003 once it is also fully proclaimed, existing Acts and terminology prevail and thus the terms District Council and Outline Planning Scheme have been retained for use in this document.

1.5 Strategic Environmental Appraisal and Monitoring

A Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) is required under the Environment Protection Act 2002 for an Outline Planning Scheme.
For this Outline Planning Scheme, given the database, resources available and timescale for completion, a modified version of the SEA process has been adopted.

1.6 Implementation

Moka Flacq District Council is the main agency responsible for implementation of this Scheme through the development control provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1954 and the Local Government Act 2003.

The Planning and Development Act 2004 once fully proclaimed will provide for the transfer of building and land use permitting powers to the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands for state-significant developments, as well as some other forms of development as prescribed under s.25 of the Act. The District Council will retain responsibility for processing non-state-significant permit applications. The Local Government Act 2003 also makes District Councils (and Municipalities) responsible for processing all building permit applications.

Other Ministries such as those with responsibilities for Environment, Agro-Industry and Fisheries, Public Infrastructure and Public Utilities, as well as the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands will also have an important role to play in the Scheme’s implementation.

1.7 Planning Policy Guidance

In this context it should be noted that the Planning and Development Act 2004 also makes provision for the introduction of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) which shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency, over a development plan. PPG therefore has the status of state (national) planning policy and will be a material consideration in assessing applications for building and land use permits.

The first PPG issued covers Design Guidance which replaces the Planning Guidelines on Residential Development, Industrial Development and Coastal Zone Development which were previously bound into the Outline Planning Schemes.

It should be understood however that the granting of a building and land use permit by a permit authority does not override obligations under any other legislation relating to the proposal or its site.
1.8 Structure of the Outline Planning Scheme

The Outline Planning Scheme is in two parts:

The Text Section which includes:

- The Development Context for the Scheme which outlines key development trends, constraints, issues and objectives
- The Policies and Proposals, which are written in bold, followed by their reasoned justification. The policies are grouped together according to particular subject matter or by land use type; and

The Map section which includes:

- The Development Strategy Map, covering major proposals for the whole of the District; and
- The Development Management Map, which shows settlements and zones where development is likely to be permitted and other areas where there are various constraints to development.

If there are any discrepancies or omissions between the Maps and the text of the Policies and Proposals, then the provisions of the Policies and Proposals should prevail.
2 Development Context

2.1 National Development Trends

The National Development Strategy (NDS) was approved by Government in March 2003. The NDS comprises a range of policies for nationally significant development and provides guidance for developing residential, tourism, a range of employment uses and major transport and infrastructure proposals. The NDS also provides guidance on where land should be protected or where caution should be exercised when determining if strategic development should go ahead. It covers the period up to 2020.

The NDS identified the following broad trends:

- Major changes in primary and secondary sectors of the economy due to rationalisation in the sugar and textile industries, in response to pressures from global competition and trade liberalisation;
- Significant land use changes as a result of a variety of Government-inspired and sophisticated land conversion and land redistribution schemes, including the 1:2 and 1:3 Sugar Industry Efficiency Act (SIE) deals, the related Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) and Sugar Investment Trust (SIT) schemes;
- Growing demand for quality residential morcellements (sub-divisions) involving provision of higher standards of amenity and the adoption of cahier des charges, as consumers demand better environments and quality of life;
- More complex tourism projects as the Mauritian resort market continues to evolve and respond to global trends for increasingly specialised tourism products, for example, Integrated Resort Schemes (IRS) which may include housing, golf courses and/or marina facilities, on attractive and sensitive coastal sites; and
- Government-led diversification into knowledge-driven industries such as Information and Communications Technology (ICT)/High Tech/Research and Development (R&D) which usually include well-landscaped business parks, often with waterside settings or features and new forms of building technologies to attract multi-national organisations and regional headquarters offices.
2.2 District Development Characteristics-Moka

2.2.1 Land Use, Population and Housing

The population of Moka increased by less than 10% from around 59,000 in 1990 to 63,000 in 2000. This rate of growth was the lowest of any District in the country and was significantly lower than the national and rural area growth rates for the same period (see Table 2.1). Households and housing units increased by 23% and 29% respectively over the same period – again lower than the national rates.

Households and housing units increased faster than population due to decreasing household size, reduced household/ housing unit ratios and increases in the number of unoccupied dwellings. Vacancy rates are lower than those prevailing nationally and in other Districts.

Table 2.1 Population and Housing Trends, Moka 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rates (AGR) 1990-2000</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moka</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>58,630</td>
<td>63,325</td>
<td>4,695</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>12,862</td>
<td>15,815</td>
<td>2,953</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units</td>
<td>11,741</td>
<td>15,101</td>
<td>3,360</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy Rate</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

NB. Some changes have been made to NDS population and housing data to ensure consistency with the district areas envisaged under The Constitution (Amendment) Act 2003.

Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, CSO.

Most of the settlements Within the District experienced below average growth in population and in the number of housing units. Only in the settlements including Quartier Militaire and Lalmatie did growth exceed the national average (Table 2.2). This lack of growth, despite its proximity to the conurbation, arguably indicates the existence during the 1990s of an over-strict approach to development control and the availability and release of land for housing, probably mainly due to ownership patterns. The major population centre is Moka/St Pierre; because of their strategic locations, Moka/St Pierre, Quartier Militaire and the proposed Highlands growth cluster were all identified as growth zones (Rural Regeneration Zones) in the NDS.
Table 2.2 Sub-Areas: Population and Housing Trends, Moka 1990-2000

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<th>Population</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moka, St Pierre, L’Avenir, La Laura Malenga</td>
<td>25,527</td>
<td>27,026</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dagotière, Verdun, Esperance, Quartier Militaire, Providence</td>
<td>16,256</td>
<td>18,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripailles, Camp Thorel, Lalmatie, St. Julien</td>
<td>4,663</td>
<td>5,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp de Masque, Melrose, Mt. Blanche, Dubreuil</td>
<td>12,184</td>
<td>12,367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moka District</td>
<td>58,630</td>
<td>63,325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. 1990-2000 comparisons are not exact due to changes in Enumeration District boundaries. Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, CSO.

2.2.2 Employment and Economic Activity

Just under 44% (27,700) of the population of Moka are employed. The unemployment rate (9.8%) is slightly higher than the overall rate for rural areas (9.2%) as shown in Table 2.3 and Figure 2.1.

The most striking feature of the distribution of jobs in Moka is the high proportion of those related to health and education demonstrating the importance of the University of Mauritius as a major employment generator. Agriculture, with just under a quarter of all jobs, is also well above the all-District average, while manufacturing is slightly so, reflecting the importance of Export Processing Zone (EPZ) establishments to the overall employment situation. The corollary of this situation is the very low proportion of tourism related jobs in hotels and restaurants; this too is unsurprising as it is the only landlocked district in the country.

The area contains large areas under sugar cane within the Mon Desert Alma (MDA) Sugar Estate. The MDA sugar factory is still operating but may close as part of the rationalisation of sugar milling under the Sugar Sector Strategic Plan. Most of the agricultural land around Moka/ St Pierre, Quartier Militaire and Montagne Blanche is classified by MSIRI as highly suitable to moderately suitable agricultural land. Tea estates and factories in the higher altitude areas including the Belle Rive, La Chartreuse and Dubreuil areas are however no longer in production.
Over the last eight years, only 8% of new non-residential floorspace has been constructed in Moka – the lowest proportion of any District except Grand Port-Savanne. This is corroborated by the absence of any recently-constructed or ongoing major development projects. However this situation is likely to change with the strategic developments proposed for the areas to the north and east of Cyber city, around the M1 Motorway including the Réduit cultural triangle and the proposed Highlands cluster.

Table 2.3 Employment Structure, Moka 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Sector</th>
<th>Moka</th>
<th>Mauritius</th>
<th>All Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agric./ For. / Fishing</td>
<td>5,738</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining/ Manufacturing</td>
<td>8,066</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction (incl. EGW)</td>
<td>1,945</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>2,246</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels/ Restaurants</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance/ Business</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Admin./ Defence</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/ Education</td>
<td>3,030</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24,147</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Derived from 2000 Census.

Figure 2.1 Employment (Workplaces) Structure, Moka 2000

Source: Derived from 2000 Census.
Like many Districts and especially those close to the conurbation, Moka has a significant level of out-commuting – around 9% of resident workers are employed outside the District, the great majority of who are likely to work in Port Louis/Plaines Wilhems. This pattern is not however consistent across the District: in the western part, where the university as well as the key settlement cluster of Moka/St. Pierre are located, there is significant in-commuting, as shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Commuting Levels by Sub-Area, Moka 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT SUB-AREAS</th>
<th>Resident Workers</th>
<th>Workplaces/ Jobs</th>
<th>Balance</th>
<th>Net Commuting Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moka, St Pierre, L’Avenir, La Laura Malenga</td>
<td>11206</td>
<td>14139</td>
<td>2,933</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagotière, Verdun, Esperance, Quartier Militaire, Providence</td>
<td>7920</td>
<td>4468</td>
<td>-3,452</td>
<td>-44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripailles, Camp Thorel, Lalmatie, St. Julien</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1719</td>
<td>-190</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp de Masque, Melrose, Mt. Blanche, Dubreuil</td>
<td>5149</td>
<td>3469</td>
<td>-1,680</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moka District</td>
<td>26184</td>
<td>23795</td>
<td>-2,389</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, CSO.

2.2.3 Environment

Moka is the only land-locked rural District in Mauritius. It is surrounded by protected Mountain Reserves on its northern, western and southern boundaries. To the west and north the Port Louis and Calebasses Ranges including Mount Ory, Le Pouce, Pieter Both and Deux Mamelles separate the District from the conurbation areas and Pamplemousses. To the south the protected Mountain Reserves along the Lagrave and D’Hauvillard Ranges provide a scenic and natural boundary to Grand Port and Savanne Districts. The main rivers consisting of Grand River South East, Rivière Cascade, Rivière Terre Rouge and Rivière Françoise cut through the District which, along with smaller rivers, are also protected from development along their banks. These rivers supply local reservoirs which are important national potable water supplies.

2.2.4 Highways and Transport

The A7 trunk road provides the main access spine through the District eastwards from the M1at Réduit via Quartier Militaire to Centre de Flacq. The road has a single carriageway and passes through a number of settlements, with significant frontage development. The route is heavily used as the main link between the conurbation (and the southern entry to Port Louis) and the Eastern Tourism Zone coastal areas. Access from the District, specifically the main settlement cluster of
Moka / Saint Pierre to Port Louis, the conurbation and much of the remainder of the island is limited to the Réduit junction on the M1 Motorway.

The western portion of the District is becoming urbanised with the development of the Cyber city, the cultural triangle at Réduit and the Moka/St Pierre cluster. Many of the transport issues and policies relating to the conurbation also apply in this area. Within the District the commitment to develop Highlands for a range of uses will have implications for traffic generation and motorway access.

There are a number of strategic highway proposals that affect the road network in Moka District: these include two potential new connections northwards from Moka/St Pierre to link (a) via Verdun and Notre Dame towards Terre Rouge; and (b) with the proposed Port Louis Ring Road at Pailles. Additionally proposals have been prepared for B6 upgrading and a northern by-pass for Quartier Militaire on the A7.

2.2.5 Infrastructure and Utilities

The District is important for national water supply as it contains two existing reservoirs that supply water for human consumption via the Midlands and Piton du Milieu dams. It could also contain the new Bagatelle Dam. In the east the La Nicolière Feeder Canal runs south to north and transfers water from Midlands Dam and several rivers that flow through to the Nicolière Reservoir, from which water is also treated for potable purposes.

Moka is well served with water supply, power and telecommunications infrastructure but, despite its importance as a water catchment area, there is yet practically no sewerage provision.

2.2.6 Summary of Development Constraints, Opportunities and Issues

In the western part of Moka, significant land use changes are likely to be experienced as urban activities encroach onto the rural landscape. These changes largely result from the District’s favourable strategic location adjacent to the M1 Motorway, the Port Louis-Plaines Wilhems conurbation and the Cyber city/Rose Hill cluster. By 2020 it is projected that there could be a requirement for 12,100 more dwellings in the District to accommodate the population increase and changes in household structure.

With the completion of Cyber city west of the M1, the development of the Réduit cultural triangle and the expansion of the University and next to these, the future development of Highlands on the motorway’s east side, employment is likely to be generated in non-agricultural sectors including services such as
high-tech/R&D offices, ICT and in university–related jobs, during the plan period.

In planning for the long term future of Moka, other key issues relate to:

- The impact of major new growth on the national and local highway networks over the plan period, especially on the capacity of the M1 motorway and the need to improve strategic access
- The impact this growth could have on the area’s essentially rural and village character and on land values and housing affordability for the surrounding areas and local communities
- The conservation of important water catchment areas in the centre of the District and the possible safeguarding of a large site for the Bagatelle Dam which whilst constraining some forms of development, could also offer attractive sites and opportunities for new growth.

2.3 The Vision for Moka

The vision for Moka aims to acknowledge and plan for the transition from an agricultural and rural way of life to an increasingly urbanised one, in which Cyber city, the University and future Highlands growth are likely to play prominent roles. New land uses such as high tech/R&D and ICT business park campuses, Tertiary Education and Government institutions and strategic recreational uses are likely to emerge, where new forms of development, building technologies and community lifestyles could be the norm. The potential of this strategically-located area to offer attractive land-extensive sites for some relocation out of the Greater Port Louis area should also be explored, which in turn could ease traffic congestion pressures into the capital.

Requirements for strategic highway improvements and motorway access linking the growth zone areas east of the M1 and in particular the proposed University/Highlands and Moka/St Pierre development clusters are a priority consideration and have already been identified for further study in the National Development Strategy.

Through the creation of a development strategy and management framework the revised Scheme should aim to show how land can be developed whilst respecting and enhancing the amenity and quality of life of the area and its inhabitants ensuring that development evolves in a sustainable and integrated way. Pressures for development will need to be balanced with sustaining local economies and the natural character and ambience of much of the area, so that new opportunities for existing communities as well as newly located or relocated businesses and industries can be created.

By providing planning and design guidance on future action areas and priorities for development, the Scheme can also assist in focusing initiatives
which promote socio-economic development in accordance with Government and private sector objectives and which fosters effective public-private and community partnerships.

2.4 District Development Characteristics- Flacq

2.4.1 Land Use, Population and Housing

The population of Flacq increased by around 12% from about 109,000 in 1990 to 123,000 in 2000. This rate of growth was similar to the national and rural growth rates achieved during the same period (see Table 2.5). Households and housing units increased by 29% and 33% respectively over the same period – similar to the national rates but lower than the all-District average: these increased faster than population due to decreasing household size, reduced household/housing unit ratios and increases in the number of unoccupied dwellings. Vacancy rates are lower than those prevailing nationally and in other Districts.

Table 2.5 Population and Housing Trends, Flacq 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Annual growth rates (AGR) 1990-2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flacq</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>All Districts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>109,181</td>
<td>122,723</td>
<td>13,542</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>23,145</td>
<td>29,913</td>
<td>6,768</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total housing units</td>
<td>21,235</td>
<td>28,329</td>
<td>7,094</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy Rate</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. Some changes have been made to NDS population and housing data to ensure consistency with the district areas envisaged under The Local Government Act 2003.

Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, CSO.

There are some variations in growth rates between different parts of the District but there are no discernible trends. The fastest growth, especially in terms of housing, has been in the Quatre Cocos/Post de Flacq area. Conversely the lowest level of growth was in Centre de Flacq, despite its extensive settlement boundaries within which development is generally permitted. This low growth is possibly due to the lack of suitable land for development on account of land ownership/values and other constraints such as agricultural suitability (see Table 2.6).

The major population settlement is Centre de Flacq although there are other concentrations of population around Bel Air/Rivière Sèche and Bon Accueil. Centre de Flacq however is, by some way, the major commercial, business and administrative centre in the District. Centre de Flacq, Bel Air/Rivière Sèche and Bon Accueil have been designated as growth zones, specifically Rural Regeneration Zones in the NDS, whilst the village of Trou D'Eau Douce
has been identified as a tourism development focus within the Eastern Tourism Zone.

Table 2.6 Sub-Areas: Population and Housing Trends, Flacq 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lalmatie/ Bon Accueil</td>
<td>24,249</td>
<td>28,042</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>4,436</td>
<td>6,252</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Julien/ Camp de Masque</td>
<td>15,202</td>
<td>17,832</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2,927</td>
<td>4,042</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre de Flacq</td>
<td>18,470</td>
<td>18,601</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>3,775</td>
<td>4,411</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poste de Flacq/ Quatre Cocos</td>
<td>10,107</td>
<td>11,950</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2,082</td>
<td>3,293</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Ithier/ Ecroignard</td>
<td>9,734</td>
<td>11,257</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1,777</td>
<td>2,469</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bel Air</td>
<td>19,356</td>
<td>21,236</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>3,841</td>
<td>4,720</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trou D’Eau Douce/ GRSE</td>
<td>6,392</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>1,882</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebastopol</td>
<td>5,671</td>
<td>6,276</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1,004</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flacq District</td>
<td>109,181</td>
<td>122,723</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>21,235</td>
<td>28,329</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. 1990-2000 comparisons are not exact due to changes in Enumeration District boundaries.
Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, CSO.

2.4.2 Employment and Economic Activity

Under 40% of the population of Flacq District are employed: this low proportion reflects the unemployment rate which at nearly 11% in 2000 was almost 20% higher than the rate in all rural areas. Table 2.7 and Figure 2.2 show the distribution of employment (i.e. workplaces) in Flacq by sector and compares this to the national and all-district distributions.

Table 2.7 Employment Structure, Flacq 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Sector</th>
<th>Flacq*</th>
<th>Mauritius</th>
<th>All Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing</td>
<td>9,317</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining/ Manufacturing</td>
<td>9,690</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction (incl. Elect, Gas &amp; Water)</td>
<td>3,912</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>3,696</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels/ Restaurants</td>
<td>5,152</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>2,042</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance/ Business</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Admin./ Defence</td>
<td>1,158</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/ Education</td>
<td>3,193</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>1,560</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>40,349</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data refer to the old district of Flacq and thus include Quatre Soeurs VCA; this will not however significantly affect the results.

Source: Derived from 2000 Census.
Almost half the employment in Flacq is provided by agriculture and manufacturing; however perhaps the most noticeable feature is the above average proportion of jobs in hotels and restaurants (a proxy for tourism) – around 1 in 8 jobs compared with a national average of 1 in 20 and 1 in 12 in other Districts. Conversely, the proportion employed in manufacturing is significantly lower. In other respects, the employment structure in Flacq differs little from those in other Districts.

The area still contains large amounts of land under sugar cane mostly within the FUEL and Constance Sugar Estates’ ownership. The Constance sugar factory has already closed as part of the rationalisation of milling in the sugar industry. Most of the agricultural land around Médine, Bon Accueil, Centre de Flacq, Bel Air and Sebastopol is classed as suitable agricultural land by MSIRI with some land in the District noted for being the best quality in Mauritius.

Hotel development has clustered around Poste de Flacq, Belle Mare and Trou D’Eau Douce - primarily those sections of the coastline with sandy beaches.
A series of islets is found within the lagoon with two of the largest being Ile de L’Est and Ile aux Cerfs, the latter catering for tourist day trips and containing a recently constructed golf course.

Over the last 8 years, 13% of new non-residential floorspace built outside the conurbation has been constructed in Flacq. This is much lower than its proportion of the rural population (20%); furthermore the proportion has decreased in the last 4 years to 11%. This is corroborated by the absence of any recently constructed or ongoing major development projects, although a new golf course at Pointe de Flacq-Belle Mare Plage links has recently been completed and one of the hotels has undergone a major refurbishment.

In common with most Districts, Flacq has a significant level of out-commuting – around 16% of resident workers are employed outside the District, with the conurbation and the north coast hotels accounting for most of them. This pattern is not however consistent across the District: the commercial centre of Centre de Flacq and the coastal areas are net importers of labour whereas the other areas all have substantial job ‘deficits’ as shown in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8 Commuting Levels by Sub-Area, Flacq 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT SUB-AREAS</th>
<th>Resident Workers</th>
<th>Workplaces/ Jobs</th>
<th>Balance</th>
<th>Net Commuting Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lalmatie/ Bon Accueil</td>
<td>10287</td>
<td>4942</td>
<td>-5,345</td>
<td>-52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Julien/ Camp de Masque</td>
<td>6728</td>
<td>3816</td>
<td>-2,912</td>
<td>-43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre de Flacq</td>
<td>7799</td>
<td>11692</td>
<td>3,893</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poste de Flacq/ Quatre Cocos</td>
<td>4674</td>
<td>7724</td>
<td>2,660</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Ithier/ Ecroignard</td>
<td>4267</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>-3,060</td>
<td>-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bel air</td>
<td>8304</td>
<td>5274</td>
<td>-3,030</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trou D’Eau Douce/ GRSE</td>
<td>2784</td>
<td>4213</td>
<td>1,429</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebastopol</td>
<td>2216</td>
<td>1272</td>
<td>-944</td>
<td>-43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flacq District</td>
<td>47059</td>
<td>39690</td>
<td>-7,369</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, CSO.

2.4.3 Environment

Flacq is relatively flat and has extensive coastal frontage along the east coast of Mauritius extending from Pointe des Roche Noire on its northern boundary to Pointe aux Feuilles on its southern most boundary. The coastline is the District’s principal natural asset yet it is also vulnerable to development pressures, as it contains a number of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) including mangroves, wetlands, the coral reef and undeveloped islets and coastline.
Inland, Flacq contains Fayence Mountain and Blanche Mountain - components of which are protected Mountain Reserves. The northern slopes of the Bambous Mountains provide the southern boundary to Grand Port District whilst the upper sections of the mountains are also protected Mountain Reserves.

Rivière Francoise, Rivière du Poste de Flacq and Rivière Coignard are the main rivers in the north, while Deep River and Grand River South East are located in the south of the District.

### 2.4.4 Highways and Transport

There are two main routes which link Flacq with Port Louis and the conurbation: these are the A2 to the north via Pamplemousses and the A7 westwards via Quartier Militaire and Moka/St Pierre. Both are single carriageway roads, passing through settlements with extensive ribbon frontage development and both carry significant traffic volumes, with a large proportion of buses and commercial vehicles.

North-south movement is currently catered for by a network of lower standard and disjointed Class B roads, including a scenic coastal road. The proposed East Coast Trunk Road would pass north-south through the District providing access south towards the Airport and north (and west) towards Port Louis, the Port and the Northern Tourist Zone. The route as currently proposed by the RDA is likely to comprise a mix of new construction, mostly village by-passes and some upgrading of existing roads.

### 2.4.5 Infrastructure and Utilities

The water supply system in Flacq consists of relatively small diameter pipelines served primarily by local boreholes; some minor improvements are currently being made. The CWA is currently preparing a water supply master plan that will investigate the works required to improve the water supply to the area, but it will be expensive to meet all major new water demands and the siting of any water-intensive industries in particular should be informed by the current supply situation and the costs associated with upgrading the network.

In the extreme west the La Nicolière Feeder Canal, which transfers water from Midland Dam to the Nicolière Reservoir, runs from south to north. This canal is an important conduit for water used for potable purposes and the catchment areas to the west of the canal need to be protected from polluting developments.

There are three power stations in the District, all privately operated. Only one of these, the FUEL Steam and Power Generation Co Ltd plant at Union Flacq,
produces power throughout the year. The others, at Beau Champ and Constance, only produce power when bagasse is available. Despite the existence of three power stations the availability of electricity in areas east of Union Flacq is not good at present and major reinforcement of the main feeders would be required to service any substantial increase in demand.

There are no centralised sewerage or sewage treatment systems in the District.

2.4.6 Summary of Development Constraints, Opportunities and Issues

Flacq needs to consolidate its economic base, with regard to its mix of agriculture, manufacturing and tourism activities; however improvements in regional accessibility and utility provision will be needed to sustain growth. By 2020 it is projected that there could be a requirement for 17,000 more dwellings to accommodate the population increase and changes in household structure, including potentially some relocations out of the conurbation where land values and land availability are likely to remain at a premium.

With the continued rationalisation of facilities in the district’s sugar industry and a potential tapering off of some textile industry activities employment trends are likely to continue to show a move out of agriculture and traditional industries to the service sector (including some offices and ICT and tourism-related developments) and into facilitating small scale industrial starter units, workshops and SMEs (Small and Medium- Sized Enterprises).

Commuting westwards to the conurbation is likely to show an increase given the growth of Cybercity/Highlands and continued office expansion in Greater Port Louis along with proposed improvements to highways networks. To balance this outflow of labour, further development in the tourism sector and IRS projects is likely to be the main driver of economic growth in the district that could principally generate more employment towards the Eastern Tourism Zone. Planning to sustain the continued vitality of the Centre de Flacq cluster including Poste de Flacq as the District’s commercial and service centre will also be important.

The East Coast Trunk Road which is proposed to link the south east of the country to the Northern and Eastern Tourism Zones via the main east coast settlements, could also assist regeneration of the area in the long term, by improving access to Centre de Flacq, Bon Accueil and Bel Air/Rivière Sèche as well as by enhancing the role of Trou D’Eau Douce in the Tourism Zone. However for development to happen in any substantive way, it will be important to improve the availability of potable water and to upgrade the power transmission network to cater for any significant increase in demand.
2.5 **The Vision for Flacq**

The vision for Flacq focuses on planning for the sustainability of the key settlements and growth zones - Centre de Flacq/Poste de Flacq, Bon Accueil and Bel Air/Rivière Sèche and on the emerging tourism centre at Trou D’Eau Douce/Belle Mare in the Eastern Tourism Zone. Some flexibility is required to accommodate sites for future commercial and industrial development including SMEs associated with improved strategic highway links including the East Coast Trunk Road. Ensuring infrastructure particularly water supply and electricity is available to support future employment and residential demands is also needed.

Proposals for strategic east-west highway improvements linking the District into the M1/M2 motorway via the A2 and the A7 highways are a priority consideration and have been identified in the National Development Strategy.

This Scheme will also need to manage and integrate medium and longer term developments associated with consolidating and expanding the recreation and leisure potential of the Belle Mare Water Park and the tourism potential at Trou D’Eau Douce. Pressures for development especially on the coast need to be balanced with sustaining local economies and the natural environment and ambience of the area, so that new opportunities for existing communities, tourist resorts and newly located or relocated businesses and industries can be created and sustained.

Through the creation of a development strategy and management framework this Scheme should aim to show how land can be developed whilst respecting and enhancing the amenity and quality of life of the area and its inhabitants ensuring that development evolves in a sustainable and integrated way. By providing planning and design guidance on future action areas and priorities for development, the Scheme can also assist in focusing initiatives which promote socio-economic development in accordance with Government and private sector objectives and which fosters effective public-private and community partnerships.
3 Strategic Development Principles and Objectives

3.1 Approach

This Scheme represents a major departure from previous plans which broadly advocated a prescriptive approach to development planning during a period of relative economic stability. By providing detailed forecasts for future land uses and areas, the previous Scheme then allocated uses to specific sites, in an attempt to manage and control development.

This approach is no longer appropriate given the pace of economic and related land use changes that are now taking place in Mauritius and which are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. In addition the previous prescriptive method of planning has led to large areas of land within zones designated for development or within settlement boundaries remaining undeveloped, largely as a result of land ownership complexities, market pressures for different sites and conflicting priorities for land development amongst some Government Ministries and Agencies.

As a consequence a more flexible and responsive development management and control system is needed to facilitate much-needed growth and help sustain the country’s competitiveness on the world stage. The dynamic economic shifts need to find expression in the land use planning system both at the national and at the local levels.

3.2 Key Development Principles and Objectives

Synthesizing the key development principles contained in the NDS and building on the extensive consultation processes adopted, this Scheme lays the foundation for a more flexible and responsive pattern of land use planning by promoting the following key action-oriented goals and objectives:

3.2.1 Goals

- The efficient development and sustainable use of land which allows for the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural and man-made assets
- A dynamic and flexible approach to land development which facilitates coordination, integration and inclusivity for all stakeholders.
3.2.2  **Key Objectives**

- **Clustering new development** in and around existing settlements and especially identified growth zones, by making more efficient use of existing facilities and services and strengthening the economic and social linkages between them; clustering homes, jobs and leisure opportunities also assists in alleviating expensive public infrastructure costs; and improves the integration of land use and transport including reducing dependency on the private car (especially for journeys to work);

- **Using a sequential approach** to site development which supports the clustering principle, by seeking to ensure that sites and land parcels in and around already built-up areas and defined settlement boundaries have been looked at before trying to convert more valuable agricultural land or developing quality landscape and environmentally-sensitive ‘greenfield’ sites;

- **Stimulating development which contributes to a sustainable future** by recognising that well-designed schemes can contribute to employment creation and environmental management and by involving key stakeholders in development implementation, operation and maintenance; and

- **Enhancing the design quality and image** of new developments by carefully considering the impact the proposals are likely to have on their surroundings and on the existing transport and utilities networks and determining whether they are making the most appropriate use of the site.

3.3  **A New Approach - Revised Settlement Boundaries**

Because of the new planning approach laid down in the National Development Strategy that responds to the economic shifts and challenges now taking place in Mauritius, this revised Scheme proposes a more flexible and pro-active planning vocabulary.

Under the new approach a range of criteria for project acceptability is now proposed with the emphasis on facilitating rather than restricting development: this approach is deemed more responsive to scheme objectives than that of previous schemes which mainly judged a project’s acceptability on whether it lay within or outside a defined settlement boundary (settlement ‘limit’).

As one practical example of the new approach, the restrictive term “Limits of Permitted Development” used in previous Schemes has been replaced with the more flexible “Settlement Boundaries”. In this context revisions to some
growth zone boundaries have been made based on TCPB rezoning approvals\(^1\); these mainly resulted from SIE Act-related commitments such as land conversion schemes and VRS. Some amendments were also made as a result of written representations from the Public Consultation process. Criteria for including sites in revised boundaries were:

- The site lay contiguous to settlement boundaries and was considered to contribute to improved settlement structure, rounding off or infilling;
- Connections from the site to transport and utility networks could be made without undue public expense, and
- The site had been cleared and had already been provided with roads and utilities or where development had been completed, as at 31 December, 2005.

In and around growth zones where building and land use permit applications had been approved but were found to be some distance away from settlement boundaries and did not appear to be rounding off settlement structure or complementing transport and utility networks, boundaries were not adjusted. In all other cases settlement boundaries remain unchanged as in previous Schemes.

3.4 Process for the Generation and Use of Policies

In formulating policies and programmes to assist in implementing the vision for the District, the planning process adopted the following approach:

- Reviewing existing Schemes and policies;
- Conducting site visits and ground–truthing of new major strategic developments;
- Carrying out consultations, workshops and focus group sessions with key stakeholders to update and verify policy and issue assumptions;
- Applying the strategic development principles framework derived from the NDS to the level of the District;
- Consolidating and updating district-wide generic policies and formulating more detailed policies for managing and controlling development for specific uses, settlements and areas of land;
- Identifying mechanisms for implementation, action area planning and monitoring;
- Preparing revised Schemes for statutory planning procedures, Public Deposit and Modification; and
- Finalisation of revised Scheme following approval of Modifications.

\(^1\) The rezoning approval implied a land conversion certificate had been obtained from the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries.
To aid understanding and application, the Policies generated through this process have been grouped as follows:-

- **Strategic Development (SD) policies** (refer to section 4.1), which are generic to a variety of development types and have district-wide application;

- **Detailed Development policies** (refer to sections 4.2-4.12), which mainly apply to a particular land use type, settlement or area.

Strategic policies should be used to determine if the development, in principle, is likely to be given approval given a range of specified criteria. Once the ‘in-principle’ decision has been taken to proceed, the detailed policies and related Design Guidance for specific land use types should be used to prepare or assess key elements of the proposal, such as its likely impacts on adjoining uses, the local community and amenity and the natural and built environment.

The policies should be used not only to aid central and local Government officers in providing advice and assessing development proposals but also to guide project promoters, developers and individuals in preparing and designing their projects (along with the new Design Guidance).

They should also be used in appropriate cases as a basis for negotiation so that viable and sustainable development can be achieved from which all parties, including other Government Ministries and agencies in the public sector, private sector organisations and the community, can benefit.

It should be noted that in preparing and assessing building and land use permit applications, **strategic development policies should take precedence over detailed policies.**
4 Policies and Proposals

4.1 Strategic Development Policies

Within the District there are three broad locations where development may be proposed:

(1) within clearly defined settlement boundaries;
(2) on the edge of settlements; and
(3) outside the boundaries of defined settlements.

Based on the key development principles and objectives a development strategy for the District has been devised with the following locational preferences:

- Focusing major strategic developments on the growth zones, ie. the identified Rural Regeneration Zones at Moka/St Pierre, Highlands, Quartier Militaire, Centre de Flacq, Bon Accueil and Bel Air/Rivière Sèche and within the Eastern Tourism Zone from Roches Noire to Grand Rivière Sud Est and including Trou D’Eau Douce;
- Consolidating other developments within and on the edge of existing settlement boundaries and villages to foster smaller scale growth and sustain local economies; and
- Restricting major new development elsewhere; whilst
- Providing flexibility to accommodate some proposals outside settlement boundaries in specified circumstances.

As an aid to preparing or assessing acceptability 'in principle' of a development's location in relation to the settlement strategy, six strategic policies have been devised. A sequential approach to site selection is proposed which incorporates specific performance criteria to help determine how appropriate a proposed development is in relation to the key locational preferences described above, as well as site context and other measures. *Figure 4.1* overleaf illustrates the broad approach.
Figure 4.1 Clustering and the Sequential Approach
SD 1

Development Proposed within Settlement Boundaries

Subject to the provisions of Policy SD 2 of this Outline Planning Scheme development, other than bad neighbour development should normally be permitted within settlement boundaries as defined on the Development Management Map. A sequential approach should be followed which shows that previously developed, under-utilised or vacant land or premises have been considered for use before new greenfield sites have been selected. Such development should not constrain the expansion of significant employment generators nor inhibit the comprehensive development of areas or adjacent sites.

Justification: In order to make efficient use of existing services and facilities and utility and transport infrastructure, patterns of development should tend towards concentration rather than dispersal. Within settlement boundaries, sites within built-up areas should be considered before new greenfield land is developed. By focusing and clustering development within settlement boundaries, pressures on areas of environmental sensitivity and landscape significance and on valuable agricultural land can be reduced and efficiencies in the provision and use of expensive public infrastructure can be achieved.

Clustering development which should not adversely affect future development of areas of vacant or underutilised land, adversely impact upon quality of life nor prevent expansion or disrupt existing business activities should be actively promoted within settlement boundaries. Piecemeal development or one-off developments which would impact on the comprehensive development or redevelopment of areas by sterilising land, stagnating or inhibiting access to other land parcels should not be encouraged.

SD 2

Development Proposed within Settlement Boundaries on Sites Suitable for Agriculture, or on Sites of Environmental Sensitivity or Landscape Significance

In support of Policy SD 1 where a proposed development other than a bad neighbour development is located on land identified as being of Agricultural Suitability or in or adjoining an Area of Landscape Significance or Environmental Sensitivity, there should be a general presumption in favour of development subject to statutory clearances being obtained from the relevant authorities.

In considering such clearances within settlement boundaries relevant authorities should take into account the following criteria:
Where the proposal is from a small owner seeking residential property for themselves or their close kin and can be considered under the SIE Act; or

Where land suitable for agriculture has been determined to be surplus to future long term agricultural requirements by the owner of such land and which could otherwise be developed more efficiently than a similar-sized development outside settlement boundaries and which includes uses such as community or social facilities or affordable housing or NHDC scheme; or

Where there has been formal commitments given by the Ministry responsible for Public Utilities, the Local Authority, the Town and Country Planning Board, the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands or other Government-approved scheme prior to the approval of this Outline Scheme, provided such commitments are duly supported by bona fide evidence i.e. original and authentic documents

And the proposals:

Do not inhibit the comprehensive development of an area or restrict access to adjoining areas of land appropriate for development or the sequential release of land nor prevent expansion or disrupt existing business/employment generating activities; and they

Can be readily connected to existing transport and utility networks or can be connected without unacceptable public expense.

Justification: Although there is a presumption in favour of most forms of development within settlement boundaries, other than bad neighbour developments, appropriate clearances will still need to be sought in accordance with policies of relevant authorities where sites are located on land identified as being suitable for agriculture (or forest), or on land with environmental sensitivity or landscape significance.

Notwithstanding the clustering and sustainability principles facilitated under Policy SD 1 development proposals within settlements boundaries need to be balanced against the loss of agricultural land likely to be required in the long term, or land of ecological or landscape significance. Mitigation measures and sensitive designs should be paramount in considering such sites for development, whilst ensuring development of other sites in the vicinity is not inhibited or stagnated by the development proposed.
Development on the Edge of Settlement Boundaries

There should be a general presumption in favour of development on the edge of but outside defined settlement boundaries providing such development proposals are aimed at:

- Consolidating gaps in an otherwise built up area; or
- Rounding off an existing settlement being contiguous with its existing built-up area and are not creating or progressing ribbon development; or
- Infilling (of development) where no strategic gap between settlements is proposed; or
- Providing industrial uses which may not be appropriate within settlement boundaries; or

Or where:

- The proposal is from a small owner seeking residential property for themselves or their close kin and can be considered as a hardship case, provided that in the opinion of the relevant authorities such release would not encourage large scale removal of land from agriculture; or
- Land suitable for agriculture which has been determined to be surplus to future long term agricultural requirements by the owner of such land and which could otherwise be developed more efficiently than a similar-sized development outside settlement boundaries and which includes uses such as community or social facilities or  affordable housing or NHDC scheme; or
- There has been a formal commitment given by the Ministry responsible for Public Utilities, the Local Authority, the Town and Country Planning Board, the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands or other Government-approved scheme prior to the approval of this Outline Scheme, provided such a commitment is duly supported by bona fide evidence ie. original and authentic documents;

And the proposals:

- Are capable of connection to existing utility supplies and transport networks or can be connected without unacceptable public expense; and
- Do not inhibit the comprehensive development of an area or restrict access to adjoining areas of land appropriate for
development or the sequential release of land nor prevent expansion or disrupt existing business/employment generating activities; and they

- Are not located in an environmentally sensitive area nor in an area of landscape significance as notified by the Ministry responsible for Environment and National Development Unit; or
- Are not occupying a site of long term suitability for agriculture, forestry or an irrigation zone as notified by the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries.

Justification: Generally there are grounds for refusing development proposals on the edge of, but outside, settlement boundaries on account of the large amount of land already available but lying undeveloped within many settlement boundaries, or through sites committed or being processed for land conversion, Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS) and morcellements.

However it is clear that in some areas land prices and/or ownership complexities constrain lower income groups from achieving land/plot acquisition, whilst in others, conflicts between agencies over land development priorities has left developable land idle. It would be unrealistic to resist demand for all new uses on the edge of settlements, especially for employment-generating uses where demand can be demonstrated or to provide housing opportunities for particular vulnerable income groups and on lands no longer required for agriculture.

Some industrial uses, other than bad neighbour developments, requiring large floor plates and being potentially incompatible with residential uses by nature of their size and scale, or their operation due to noise, emission of smoke, dust, fumes, or traffic generation may be better located on the edge of settlement boundaries.

In specific cases, through collaboration with the relevant clearance authorities, mitigating circumstances such as cases of family hardship, or opportunities for land owners to utilise surplus agricultural lands for integrated development schemes involving provision of a mix of uses including affordable housing or community and social facilities, or prior commitments should be taken into account in determining appropriate clearances. In this context hardship cases, small owner and close kin are as defined by the guidelines produced by the Town and Country Planning Board, 1998 and as subsequently amended.

The **Town and Country Planning Board** approved guidelines regarding **hardship cases** applicable to **small owners and their close kin** are as follows:
1. **A small owner** is one who owns not more than **one hectare** (i.e. 10,000 m²) in the aggregate and which may be made up of more than **one** portion located in different places in Mauritius;

2. If a small owner is seeking residential property for himself, **none** of the properties should be located within settlement boundaries;

3. If he is seeking residential property for his **close kin**, he should have no other land for that purpose (except his own private residential property) within settlement boundaries.

4. **Close kin** is defined to include ascendants or descendants (Parents and their children, grandparents and grandchildren) up to the level of first cousin (i.e. a cousin, an uncle or an aunt, a nephew or a niece) who do not own any plot of land and who would benefit from the sale or donation.;

5. The plot to be released should not normally exceed **422 m² (10 perches)** per beneficiary.

   And

   The land in question

   (a) Should be located in an area where development is permissible in accordance with the policies of the **Outline Scheme** or **Development plan**, as the case may be, of the relevant **Local Authority**;

   (b) Should not be located within a **gazetted irrigation area**;

   (c) Should have been owned as at **30 September, 2005**. Consideration may be given to land accrued through donation/inheritance after 30th September 2005, subject to a Land Conversion Permit being obtained from the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Fisheries and provided parent property was acquired/in possession of original owner prior to 30 September 2005.

6. The applicant and the beneficiaries where applicable should support their application by way of an affidavit /declaration.

7. The eventual beneficiary should be in a position to provide the necessary basic infrastructure to site (water, roads and electricity).
8. Hardship criteria should not be used for the release of sites forming part of subdivisions subject of duly approved agricultural morcellements.

SD 4

Development on Land Outside Settlement Boundaries

There should be a general presumption against proposals for development outside settlement boundaries unless the proposal:

- Has been shown to have followed the sequential approach to the release of sites identified in SD 1, SD 2 and SD 3 and there are no suitable sites within or on the edge of settlement boundaries; and
- Is for the essential purposes of agriculture, forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area; or
- Is for the re-use or refurbishment of existing buildings set in their own grounds; or
- Is considered a bad neighbour development as defined in Policy ID 4; or
- In cases of national interest when having regard to material considerations, locational preferences linked to employment-creating uses and socio-economic policies of Government, development may have to be outside settlement boundaries and is acceptable on planning, traffic impact and environmental impact grounds; and
- Is capable of ready connection to existing utility supplies and transport networks or can be connected without unacceptable public expense;

Or where;

- The proposal is from a small owner seeking residential property for themselves and their close kin and can be considered as a hardship case, provided that in the opinion of the relevant authorities such release would not encourage large scale removal of land from agriculture; or
- There has been a formal commitment given by the Ministry responsible for Public Utilities, Local Authority, the Town and Country Planning Board, the Ministry responsible for housing and Lands or other Government-approved scheme prior to the approval of this Outline Planning Scheme, provided such a commitment is duly supported by bona fide evidence i.e. original and authentic documents;
And the proposal:

- Is not located in an environmentally sensitive area nor in an area of landscape significance as notified by the Ministry responsible for Environment and National Development Unit; or
- Is not occupying a site of long term suitability for agriculture, forestry or an irrigation zone as notified by the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries;

Broadly follows the design principles contained in Design Guidance outlined in SD 5.

Justification: At the District level there is sufficient land available, committed or vacant within settlement boundaries for residential development and through approved morcellement, VRS and other land conversion schemes to accommodate future residential needs for the next 15-20 years. To conserve remaining land in the District, especially land required for long term agriculture, or land that has an ecological or landscape significance, a sequential approach to new development should be followed which first considers sites within or on the edge of built-up areas in existing settlements before greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries are selected. This presumption reinforces key NDS objectives for clustered growth and more efficient provision of transport and utility facilities and social and community services.

It is recognised however that not all development can or should be accommodated within settlement boundaries and under well-defined circumstances some developments may be more appropriately located outside settlement clusters and the main built-up areas. The definition of hardship case, small owner and close kin is as defined in SD 3.

SD 5

Design Quality and Sustainable Development

New development should conserve and enhance the character and attractiveness of the District so as to foster desirable and accessible living and working areas that provide an improving quality of living. Proposed development should be expected to conform to Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) on Design Quality of:

- Residential Development;
- Industrial Development;
- Commercial Development;
- Hotels and Integrated Resorts Development;
And

- Any future nationally-adopted design guidance matter.

For all developments, relevant design considerations should include:

- Ensuring an appropriate standard of design including density, height, bulk and scale and improving areas of poor quality environment;
- Preserving and enhancing historic buildings and townscapes and maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place;
- Protecting and enhancing urban open space, green wedges, areas of landscape significance, environmentally sensitive areas and land/water interface areas;
- Redeveloping vacant and under-used sites and optimising the use of previously developed built-up areas; and
- Improving existing building stock.
- Adopting energy-saving designs, devices and eco-friendly practices

Development in coastal locations and in coastal settlements particularly in areas of ‘Coastal Lands’ as defined by updated Planning Policy Guidance – Design Guidance: Residential Coastal Development, should be carefully designed given the sensitive location and the visual impact when viewed from the lagoon. The Design Guidance contains particular design principles for development in the Coastal Lands area with which all developments should normally conform.

Justification: A key objective of the NDS is to promote sustainable development and good design is essential if attractive, high-quality sustainable places are to be produced where people (both residents and visitors) will want to live, work and relax. Quality design is fundamental to any sustainable strategy of urban, rural or coastal redevelopment and upgrading.

Difficulty has been experienced in the past when development designs and decisions have not been based on sound design principles. A series of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) documents has been prepared and adopted, the first of which (PPG1) covers Design Guidance for some key land use types which promote and explain the approach to better quality design principles and practice. The Design Guidance PPG should also help to reduce uncertainty and delay in the decision-making process. Whilst the guidance aims to cover a variety of locational preferences they do not cover every possible circumstance and there needs to be some flexibility in their application.
Particular care with design is required on sites fringing the coastline. More stringent design criteria particularly with regard to density, height, scale, setbacks, use of materials, landscaping and sewage treatment provision is provided to ensure that coastal development is appropriate, environmentally acceptable and suited to the sensitive coastal location.

The process also allows for updating and additions of new guidance as resources and demands change. However, should a departure from Guidance be proposed it should be the developer’s or Government officer’s responsibility to provide reasoned justification for such a variance. The statutory status of the updated Guidance is deliberate to ensure that they are deemed material and relevant considerations when assessing development proposals and when appeals against refusal of development permission are being heard.

SD 6

Growth Zones and Action Area Plans (AAPs)

Where sites for major new developments are required or are being considered within the District, public and private sector stakeholders should be first directed towards settlements capable of forming the basis for sustainable long term growth. Such growth zones have been defined and designated as Urban Renaissance Zones, Rural Regeneration Zones, Tourism Zones or Special Use Zones according to criteria established within the National Development Strategy.

Rural Regeneration Zones focus on Moka/ St Pierre, Highlands, Quartier Militaire, Centre de Flacq, Bon Accueil and Bel Air/Rivière Sèche and the Tourism Zone comprising the Eastern Tourism Zone from Plaines des Roches to Grand Rivière Sud Est including Trou D’Eau Douce.

Where sites for major development can be found in designated growth zones and in other suitable areas of significance for environmental, social or economic planning and acceptable on planning grounds, scheme promoters and private sector developers as well as public sector agencies should be encouraged to bring forward Action Area Plans in accordance with the Design Guidance in policy SD5 and other relevant policies contained in this Outline Planning Scheme.

Justification: Growth zones have been identified within the NDS as development opportunity areas on the basis of good or potential strategic road network links, thresholds of population and jobs and proximity to social networks, retail and community services and facilities. Other criteria for selecting growth zones can include the need to attract inward investment (both private and public) to trigger regeneration due in part to loss of employment in the sugar industry, where key development areas have already been identified.
in other nationally-adopted studies (for example the Tourism Development Plan), or where there are conflicting pressures for development and conservation.

Where suitable sites for major developments can be found in strategic growth zones as Urban Renaissance Zones, Rural Regeneration Zones, Tourism Zones and Special Use Zones within the NDS, government/private sector and other stakeholders and developers should be encouraged to draw up Action Area Plans for mixed use, special use and tourism-related developments involving public sector involvement as appropriate. In preparing such Action Area Plans consideration should also be given to the requirements for future support activities including public transport, traffic management and new highways and housing, education and health facilities. In these cases planning for future adequate water, sanitation and solid waste facilities should also be important considerations.

The process of Action Area planning should involve:

- An area-wide approach to integrated development planning and design;
- Targeted public and private sector investments

and in appropriate circumstances:

- The use of planning obligations/agreements, and
- Improved and simplified mechanisms, including financial incentives for project implementation.

4.2 Housing

The Housing Technical Note prepared as background to this Outline Planning Scheme analysed residential supply and demand for land in the District Council Area. This Technical Note indicates that around 34,700 housing units would be required over the next 20 year period – some 26,300 arising from demand of the District’s population growth and 8,400 assumed to be generated by households moving into the District.

Information on the supply of land from VRS, approved morcellement and other government land conversion projects indicates some 645 ha has already been committed which could accommodate around 12,900 units. Another 12,600 units could be yielded through infill/densification and a reduction in vacancy rates. This figure however does not include vacant or undeveloped land still available within existing settlement boundaries or that may be included in Integrated Resort Schemes (IRS) or other future land conversion schemes.
At the District level then, it could be argued that no additional land would be required. However, it would be unrealistic to consider freezing the release of further residential land over the time frame of this Outline Planning Scheme given cultural factors, preferences for particularly attractive sites and potential changes in demand for new house types, land and plots over the next two decades. Rather then, revised housing policies should focus on how best to manage future residential development and land release.

In this context the location of proposed housing and morcellements developments should be primarily assessed under policies SD1 to SD 4 and design aspects under SD 5 and, in particular the Residential Design Guidance. Aspects such as morcellements layouts and design, density, bulk, scale, plot coverage, setbacks, materials, tall buildings, building on hill slopes, mixed use, provision of infrastructure, parking and road layouts are addressed in the Residential Design Guidance. For other components of housing and morcellements development the following policies apply.

H 1

Development in or on the Edge of Minor Settlements

*In or on the edge of minor settlements for which no settlement boundaries have been defined development should be permitted subject to the clustering principle and sequential approach outlined in SD 1, SD 2 and SD 3 and design parameters under SD 5.*

*Justification:* The design and assessment of proposals for sites in and around small villages which have no defined boundaries should also follow the sequential approach and clustering principles adopted for major settlements. Rounding off and infilling in small settlements and villages assists in the efficient use of land as a resource, in the effective provision of transport services and utilities and in the consolidation of existing community and social networks.

For the purposes of this policy, a minor settlement is defined as “*one having more than fifteen houses in a more or less compact form and which shows potential in growing into a proper settlement*”

H 2

Upgrading Programmes

*Where regularising or upgrading of squatter housing in situ is not feasible relocation of squatters to new sites should be considered. If relocation is being considered the sequential approach outlined in Policies SD 1, SD 2 and, SD 3 should be followed to identify suitable sites.*
Justification: This policy seeks to encourage the upgrading of sub-standard residential areas. The objective is first to consider improving conditions in existing settlements which have identified concentrations of sub-standard housing and/or infrastructure before relocation to new sites is examined. Where existing squatter housing is identified which cannot be provided with utilities and access at acceptable public cost or where such housing is located in areas of environmental sensitivity or landscape significance or where housing conditions are considered to impact adversely on the health and safety of occupants or nearby residents, relocation to new sites should be considered. Design principles rather than strict adherence to standards (except on health and safety grounds) may be appropriate in the regularisation, upgrading or relocation process.

H 3

Affordable Housing, Low Cost Housing and Land Development

Identification of sites for morcellements and schemes which are aimed at providing low cost or affordable housing including NHDC and VRS projects should follow the provisions of strategic development policies SD2 and SD 3 and should wherever possible be located within or adjoining settlement boundaries. The use of surplus agricultural land within settlement boundaries or land that can be released from agriculture on the edge of settlements should be considered favourably subject to clearance from the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries.

Flexibility in plot size may be appropriate if well-designed layouts are proposed. Similarly flexibility, except for maximum height allowable and for on-plot sewage disposal particularly in Coastal Lands, may be appropriate for residential development on existing legal small residential plots within settlement boundaries on economic hardship grounds. The general design principles of the Residential Design Guidance and SD 5 should be broadly followed particularly with regard to infrastructure provision.

Justification: NDS studies based on CSO data suggest up to 90% of individual families may not be able to afford plots of land within morcellements where these are developed by the private sector. Much residential development seems to be financed through traditional extended family practices which facilitate initial land purchase the site often being developed over time as and when further resources become available.

VRS and NHDC provide some housing options for lower income families. However prevailing land prices in and around settlement boundaries or land ownership complexities have often resulted in sites being only available to the
public sector in locations remote from existing settlements and community facilities. Such remotely located sites often mean that provision of services and utilities becomes more expensive with knock-on effects on the costs of construction and delivery to the consumer.

The Government through the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands is currently investigating a range of affordable housing mechanisms and the intent of this policy is to provide sites in sustainable locations, integrated with existing settlements and infrastructure and community facility networks. In the future, development under low cost and affordable housing schemes should follow the clustering and sequential approach principles within the strategic development policies and target vacant, unused or under-utilised sites in or on the edge of already built-up areas before considering green field sites in new locations. New Government housing policies and funding mechanisms will be needed to facilitate such developments which are more likely to be cost effective than similar schemes in more remote locations. Some sites can be made available within or on the edge of settlements providing a more flexible approach to the use or re-use of agricultural land is followed. Strategic policies SD2 and SD3 and housing policy H 1 provide guidance.

Plot size may be flexible to ensure affordability can be achieved. Similarly flexibility in permitting residential development on existing small plots with legal land title in existing settlement boundaries may be appropriate to enable low income owners to undertake property improvements. Residential Design Guidance incorporates design concepts for affordable housing morcellements and developments and acknowledges low cost housing improvements.

4.3 Heritage Conservation

The wealth of buildings of special architectural, cultural and historic interest in Mauritius plays a large part in maintaining and creating the locally distinctive character of the island’s historic landscape. There are over a 160 National Heritage sites and Monuments on the statutory schedule (National Heritage Fund Act 2003). The continued maintenance and repair of this built heritage is essential to maintaining and enhancing the unique character of the island.

HC 1

National Heritage Sites and Monuments and Conservation Areas

The quality and local distinctiveness of the historic built environment should be maintained and improved by:

- Protecting all National Heritage Sites and Monuments, their settings and historic landscapes against demolition and inappropriate alteration or development. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of National Heritage Sites and Monuments;
• Proposals for external or internal alterations or additions to National Monuments should respect the integrity of the buildings or structures and harmonise with their special architectural, cultural or historic features and character; and

• Encouraging conversion of appropriate redundant National Heritage Sites and Monuments to new uses that do not adversely affect their special architectural, cultural or historic value and as a means of securing their economic viability;

The setting of a National Heritage Sites and Monument should be a material consideration in the determination of development proposals. A list of items of National Heritage is annexed in Scheduled Two of this Outline Scheme.

Justification: A schedule has been prepared under the National Heritage Fund Act 2003 Act which lists the items of National Heritage of Mauritius. Twelve national heritage items are located in the District Council Area as detailed in Schedule Two.

Any applications located within the setting of an item of National Heritage or involving such items should be carefully considered and be in accordance with the National Heritage Trust Fund Act. Opportunities for private sector usage of National Heritage items which can facilitate their sustainable use should be supported subject to broad conformity with The Design Guidance and SD5.

4.4 Education, Health and Community Facilities

The background to these policies is provided in the National Development Strategy.

SC1

Pre-Primary Education

Proposals for the provision of pre-primary centres should be favourably considered if the development meets the following criteria in order of preference:

(a) Purpose-built centres on separate suitable sites within settlement boundaries;

(b) the use of appropriate community buildings such as village halls, social/community centres, religious buildings;

(c) the use of part of a private residential building or plot within settlement limits provided that:

(i) the premises are of a suitable size and design to accommodate the maximum number of children enrolled;

(ii) there is sufficient space for off-street car parking for staff;
(iii) no traffic or safety hazards should be created by the parking of vehicles depositing and collecting children from the site; and

(iv) no environmental or other nuisance should be caused to detract from residential amenities of the area.

Justification: It is the Government’s aim to offer the opportunity of pre-primary education to all children in the 3 to 5 year age group. Ideally, such education facilities should be attached to all primary schools but financial constraints mean that for some time provision will have to continue to be made in other premises by both public and private sectors. A considerable contribution is made by small private pre-primary centres on residential plots and this should continue to be permitted provided that specified criteria are met.

SC 2

Location of School Sites

Sites selected for schools should follow the sequential approach outlined in Policies SD 1, SD 2 and SD 3 and be either within or on the edges of settlements where large vacant sites, utility networks and public transport services are available or can be provided at acceptable public cost. In appropriate cases, new District-level public sports and recreation facilities should be considered for location adjoining major school sites where a high level of accessibility especially by public transport can lead to more efficient provision through shared use.

Justification: The Ministry responsible for Education has been actively constructing new schools especially secondary and sixth form colleges to address the shortage of high school places throughout the country. The Outline Scheme seeks to enable the education authorities to plan for new schools in areas of growth or deprivation consistent with its aims and development principles. Ideally, all primary school children should be able to walk to their nearest school and all school aged children should have access to a choice of travel modes including public transport.

In well–accessed locations, especially by public transport, consideration should be given to provision of district level public sports and recreation facilities where shared use of facilities by students, staff and the community can lead to efficiency in provision and use of expensive Government social infrastructure.
SC 3

Location and Clustering of Community Facilities

Proposals for community facilities within village or settlement centres or on sites which are easily accessible by public transport within settlement boundaries should be favourably considered. Where suitable sites are not available within settlement boundaries having regard to the sequential approach under Policy SD 1 and SD 2, sites on the edge of settlements may be considered in accordance with Policy SD 3.

Justification: Community facilities should be located on sites which are conveniently and easily accessible by a variety of travel modes so as to enhance accessibility and use. Clustering of community facilities should encourage more efficient and effective use of all amenities and can facilitate sharing of parking, access roads, open space and other local services.

SC 4

Location of District and Regional Sports Facilities

Future District and when appropriate regional sports facilities should wherever possible be located close to schools lacking their own facilities and/or within designated growth zones such as Rural Regeneration Zones in accordance with Policy SC 2. Such sites should have a high level of accessibility which provides for a variety of travel modes particularly public transport.

Justification: Many existing schools have insufficient space on site to accommodate suitable sports facilities. The development of such facilities in strategic locations would enable school children to have adequate access to physical education. Rural Regeneration Zones would be appropriate locations for such sports facilities where a higher level of accessibility is likely to be available or achievable. The potential for multiple and shared use of sports and related recreation facilities including parking should be considered when drawing up new proposals for major projects.

SC 5

Health Facilities

New health facilities including private health clinics should be sited in accordance with the clustering principle and sequential approach outlined in the Strategic Development policies. Sites for major new health facilities should be capable of accommodating future expansion needs, including future car parking for visitors and staff and a landscape...
buffer. A Transport Assessment as outlined in Policy TP 2 and an EIA as required under the Environment Protection Act 2002 should be undertaken as part of the building and land use permit procedures.

**Justification:** Whilst the Ministry responsible for Health and Quality of Life is consolidating public health facilities and hospitals mainly on existing sites, private health clinics are emerging throughout the country. Some medical facilities can generate large volumes of traffic, need to be well located to the highway and public transport networks and once established tend to expand over time: strategic performance criteria can guide such development to appropriate locations. The sites for new facilities should be within or contiguous with settlement boundaries, be located where a range of transport modes are available for community users, have good site access and be located away from bad neighbour development.

**SC 6**

**Cemeteries, Crematoria and Cremation Grounds**

Proposals for cemeteries, crematoria and cremation grounds should follow the sequential approach to development outlined in Policy SD 3 such that these uses are located on the edge of settlements, in accessible locations for the community, away from Environmentally Sensitive Areas and where they do not pose a threat to restricting or sterilising development of existing settlements. Clearance from Ministry of Health and Water Resources Unit (for cemeteries) must be obtained in the planning of new cemeteries, crematoria and cremation grounds.

A buffer zone of at least 200 metres from sensitive uses should be observed for new cemeteries and cremation grounds and a minimum buffer zone of 100 metres would be desirable for crematoria.

**Justification:** These uses are required to be accessible to local communities and individual cultural and religious groups yet if not carefully located could restrict or frustrate the future expansion of settlements. The criteria within Policy SD 3 provide the performance measures by which to address the locational aspects of these forms of development.

**SC 7**

**Access for Disabled People**

Proposals for the construction (or alteration) of buildings open to the public and buildings used for employment and education purposes should normally provide suitable access and facilities for people with disabilities, as customers, visitors and employees. The access design
should generally be in accordance with that outlined in Design Guidance specified in SD 5.

In determining the precise requirements account should be taken of the number of disabled persons likely to use the building, the cost of provision and any other constraints.

Justification: It is the Government’s aim that people with disabilities should play as full a role in society as possible. The inaccessibility of land, buildings, transport and other facilities often prevents this. Given the number of persons in the community with a disability there is a strong case for using development and building permit powers to improve access for them. Providing better access can be costly however and care should be taken to ensure that any such requirements imposed on a development project are reasonable in relation to likely usage, cost of provision and other constraints. Design Guidance contains guidelines on the location, provision and design aspects of disabled access.

SC 8

Prison Sites and Buffer zones.

Sites selected for prisons within the Planning Area should follow the provisions of Strategic Development policy SD3 and Policy SD4 and should be located on the edge of or outside defined settlement boundary where large vacant sites are available with reasonable distances to provide buffer zones from sensitive uses.

Proposals for prison sites should be favourably considered if the development site meets the following criteria:

(a) Purpose built development is envisaged;
(b) There is sufficient space around site to accommodate:
   (i) an inner buffer zone of 50 metres wide where no building development except sugarcane plantations, food crop and plants not exceeding 7 metres high and animal grazing would be allowed, and
   (ii) an outer buffer zone of an additional 100 metres from the inner buffer zone where no buildings higher than Ground floor+1 or a maximum height of 10 metres would be allowed;
(c) No overlooking into the prison site would be allowed from the buffer zone.

Justification: This policy recognizes the need for society to provide dedicated facilities to maintain law and order and allow social rehabilitation of prison inmates. However, this also puts an obligation to protect external communities which could be at risk and appropriate passive protection zones through demarcation of buffer zones are required. The Development Management
Map will show existing prison site at Melrose and its buffer zones. The policy will be enforced by the Local Authority.

4.5 Employment Uses

Employment uses are vital to support the four pillars of the Mauritian economy – notably industry, service sector including commercial and financial services and ICT, tourism and agriculture. Employment-related development policies are as follows:

4.5.1 Commercial and Retail Development

CR 1

Proposals for commercial and retail development including shops, offices and restaurants should conform to the clustering principle and sequential approach outlined in the Strategic Development policies such that areas within settlement boundaries particularly sites in Urban Renaissance Zones, Rural Regeneration Zones and village centres should be explored before sites on the edge of settlements are considered. The design of retail, office, commercial and business development should generally be in accordance with the Commercial Design Guidance and SD 5.

Major new retail stores and shopping malls should first be considered in settlement centres, then in edge-of-centre locations. Proposed out-of-centre retail stores should only be acceptable in cases where:

- No suitable site in the settlement centre or edge of centre is available; and
- The development either by itself or taken together with other development proposals has been assessed to show it should not undermine the vitality or viability of nearby centres and should contribute to local and regional shopping needs by improving the range of goods and services available; and
- The site is well related to transport and utility networks and has been assessed by way of a Transport Assessment in line with the requirements of Policy TP 2; and
- The site does not occupy land which is considered to be suitable for long term agriculture or is environmentally sensitive or of landscape significance.; and
- The design of the proposed development enhances the local built and natural environment and generally accords with Commercial Design Guidance.

Shops including tabagie, small groceries and snack foods premises which serve local neighbourhood needs may be located within
settlement boundaries and within predominantly residential areas providing the gross floorspace does not exceed 60m² and such developments have due regard to traffic and pedestrian safety. Proposals for new local shops with direct access onto highway and main roads should not normally be permitted. The location and requirements for small shops not exceeding 60m² should broadly conform to the principles detailed in the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 1) on Commercial Development (Local centres and Corner shops)

Justification: Commercial, business and retail developments including shops, offices and restaurants should wherever possible be located so as to add to the vitality of settlement and village centres in areas well-served by a variety of transport modes and employment pools. New development should:

- Sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of settlement and village centres;
- Maintain an efficient, competitive and innovative commercial and retail sector;
- Cluster commercial and retailing and other complementary development so as to encourage competition – this produces benefits to consumers and reduces the need for multiple car trips to separate locations; and
- Ensure the availability of and easy access to a wide range of shops, employment, services and facilities.

In considering proposals the permitting authorities should adopt the clustering principle and sequential approach to site selection and use as outlined in the Strategic Development policies.

It is recognised however that certain retail activities for example those shopping malls requiring large floor plates are better located out of centre. When preparing proposals for such developments scheme promoters will need to show that the project should not adversely affect existing centre retail by undertaking an assessment and a related Transport Assessment. The criteria to be included in these assessments for use by developers in preparing new proposals and to facilitate permitting authorities in assessing development applications should include the following:

- How does the development contribute to local shopping needs;
- What are the requirements for a large single floor area (or external sales and storage area) and a substantial adjacent customer car park;
- What is the impact on local sales patterns; are these sufficient to prejudice the role or vitality of existing centres;
- What is the impact on the surrounding road and public transport networks;
- What is the provision for the disabled and pedestrians;
- How is the utility infrastructure to be provided and at what (acceptable public) cost; and
How does the development safeguard or enhance land of suitability for agriculture and the local environment and landscape.

Approval is likely to be subject to:

- The proposed development being an appropriate use for the land;
- Lack of an available, alternative site within or adjacent to the settlement centre and;
- It being in broad conformity with Commercial Design Guidance.

Permission is likely to be refused if:

- Any diversion of trade likely to result from the new scheme could seriously affect the vitality and viability of any nearby centre as a whole; or
- The development could give rise to unsatisfactory traffic, public transport, parking or environmental problems.

Smaller retail uses in residential and other areas can assist in providing services for the daily needs of those living or working in the vicinity.

The Commercial Design Guidance should assist in encouraging better design in centres and ensure that cumulative effects of central area evolution can be addressed through consistent design parameters.

4.5.2 Business Parks, High Tech, ICT and Research and Development Offices

BP 1

Business Park Development

Locations for business, high tech, research and development parks should follow the clustering principle and sequential approach outlined in the Strategic Development policies and should accommodate those uses that are non-pollutive and that engage high valued and knowledge-intensive activities. Vacant land or under-utilised sites in existing business parks should be examined before new greenfield locations are considered.

Generally a presumption in favour of development should be given to clustering of such uses into locations with convenient access and within a good landscape setting and with a high standard of design. The Board of Investment and Business Parks of Mauritius should be consulted regarding the location of such parks. Business park designs should broadly conform to Commercial Design Guidance.
Justification: Further growth in the financial and ICT sectors of the economy is likely to lead to demand for types of office space that are not currently available. It is common international practice for the ICT sector in particular to locate in office campus environments outside the central areas and CBDs (Central Business Districts) - Silicon Valley in the USA and Cybercity near Reduit are prime examples of this trend.

Policy BP1 reinforces Government’s intent to capture a share of the growing ICT sector and there is likely to be a demand for new types of office environment and new types of office space. Greenfield campuses and highly serviced call centres are examples of new forms that will not fit comfortably into existing settlement centre office stock. Supporting these “edge of town” office environments there will be a need for housing, retail and community services (schools, hospitals, etc). It is likely that clusters will tend to develop at strategic transport nodes and long term planning should anticipate this trend.

Given the importance and land take associated with such uses, the Board of Investment and Business Parks of Mauritius Ltd should be involved in the locational and development type processes. Commercial Design Guidance has been prepared which should assist in locational, design and assessment decisions for business parks.

4.5.3 Industry

Development proposed for industrial sites, estates or uses should incorporate the sequential approach outlined in the Strategic Development policies as well as the Industrial Design Guidance outlined in Policy SD 5. However, depending on the industrial use proposed, a varied sequential approach should be adopted. Those industries which are unlikely to adversely impact upon adjoining development should be accommodated within settlement boundaries and make use of available land and sites in existing industrial estates. For medium and large scale industries, sites on the edge of and out of settlement boundaries are likely to be more appropriate.

No new industrial zones are identified within this Outline Scheme: however encouragement of mixed uses for under-utilised or vacant sites in existing industrial estates and industrial zones within settlement boundaries is proposed. Special Use Zones should be considered where major new industrial uses or industrial clusters are being located, expanded or relocated for which Action Area plans should be prepared. More specific policies for industrial development, including bad neighbour development, are as follows.
ID 1

Development in Existing Industrial Estates and Zones within Settlement Boundaries

Within existing industrial estates and zones within settlement boundaries and identified on the Development Management Map there should be a presumption in favour of light industry, small factories and workshops (including Small and Medium Enterprises-SMEs) and those industries not causing a nuisance to nearby residential and other sensitive uses by reason of smoke, fumes, dust, noise, excessive vehicular movements and loading issues.

In existing industrial estates or industrial zones within settlement boundaries where limited or no industrial development has materialized, the development scope could be widened so as to encourage mixed use development like commercial and leisure and even residential uses.

Land uses such as wholesalers, timber and building supply merchants and those requiring the sale of bulky goods should be considered favourably in designated industrial estates, subject to transport assessment and retail assessment (for large operations) indicating acceptable and manageable impacts and suitability of operation hours.

Justification: In previous Schemes, large tracts of land were identified and zoned for industrial use within settlement boundaries. Although some take-up of industrial land has occurred in some areas, this process is perceived to have been largely unsuccessful in marshalling major new industrial sites to sustain economic growth. In particular whilst there is an expressed shortage of land for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), incubator and starter units, these have not located to any extent in the existing designated industrial zones.

To encourage more efficient use of industrial land and services within settlement boundaries, some complementary ‘bulky’ commercial uses which require large floor areas and which generate significant volumes of heavy and medium goods vehicles not normally suitable in settlement centre locations could also be clustered in or on the edge of existing industrial estates and zones. Such clustering would enable more viable use of designated industrial sites and help sustain local and regional employment opportunities.
Small Scale Enterprises and Home Working

Proposals to operate or extend office/business uses or small scale enterprises from residential properties should only be permitted if the use is ancillary to the principal use as residential. Criteria should include:

(i) Premises are of a suitable size and design to accommodate the additional activity and all its ancillary requirements such as parking, loading area and adequate setbacks from neighbouring properties.

(ii) No neighbours' objections within a radius of 50 metres.

(iii) No serious adverse impact on residential occupiers in the area or the character of the neighbourhood particularly in regard to noise, smoke, fumes, smells, dust nor excessive vehicle movements or loading and unloading of goods and products;

(iv) Sufficient parking space within the curtilage of the property available to accommodate any staff or visitors;

(v) Safe access from the roadway.

Storage of materials should be able to be contained within the curtilage of the property. The operator of the office/business use or small scale enterprise should reside at the premises.

Justification: Technological advances and the evolution of the ICT sector in Mauritius are expected to facilitate an increasing proportion of the working population being home-based. Use of a room as office or business typically does not require a building and land use permit as clients associated with the business do not need to frequently visit the property or there are very infrequent deliveries from trade vehicles. The use of part of a dwelling on a small scale for an office can similarly be low key in nature, which does not adversely affect residential amenity, whilst reducing the number of journeys to work and thereby easing traffic congestion. It can also provide local employment opportunities in the service sector.

Small scale enterprises which are carried out in the home without need for modification of the dwelling may also be acceptable but more stringent criteria are necessary to ensure that surrounding residential amenity is respected.

Light industrial uses such as panel beating and spray painting, manufacture of
furniture and vehicle repairs are not normally suitable in residential areas due to dust, noise and fumes and other environmental effects. However in order to provide for establishing small scale enterprises where start-up capital outlays for new premises may be beyond the operator’s means, use of home may be appropriate where vehicle movements and noise and parking, loading and unloading are not disruptive to the amenity of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Examples of small scale enterprises include cooking of sweets and food preparation, sewing and small scale clothing manufacturing, repairs to electrical goods, minor car/mechanical and bicycle repairs and artist studios.

For both use of home as office and for small scale enterprises the key decision is whether the overall character of the dwelling and surrounding amenity will change as a result of the business or enterprise. If the answer to any of the following questions is "yes", then permission is likely to be refused:

- Will the home no longer be used mainly as a private residence?
- Will the business result in a marked rise in traffic or people calling?
- Will the business involve any activities unusual in a residential area?
- Will the business disturb your neighbours at unreasonable hours or create other forms of nuisance such as noise, dust, fumes or smells?

ID 3

Industrial Development at the Edge of Settlement Boundaries

To facilitate growth and consolidation of industrial uses including manufacturing, storage, warehousing and distribution uses and related support services but not bad neighbour developments as outlined in ID 4, proposals for new development which require large sites and generate high volumes of vehicle and truck movements should follow the sequential approach outlined in SD 3 and SD 4.

Existing available, vacant or under-utilised sites in industrial areas on the edge of settlements or outside of settlement boundaries including the re-use of redundant sugar factory buildings and surplus estate workers housing clusters should be considered before examining new greenfield sites in edge of settlement locations. Clustering of industrial uses should be encouraged where high levels of transport accessibility and utility services, particularly water, sewerage and electricity networks are available or can be provided at acceptable public cost.

Proposals for development may also require an Environmental Impact Assessment licence/Preliminary Environmental Report Approval in accordance with the EPA 2002 as amended and/or a Traffic Impact
Assessment. Proposals should broadly conform to PPG - Industrial Design Guidance.

Justification: There are three key factors that determine the suitability of land for industrial usage:

- The site should enjoy secure and direct road access for delivery of raw materials and finished products;
- There should be adequate levels of reliable utility and telecommunications infrastructure, or this must be capable of installation at acceptable public cost; and
- There should be an available labour force within a reasonable commuting distance.

It is recognised that industrial development may not always be suitable within settlement boundaries for valid operational reasons. Also access to markets is highly reliant on efficient access to a good road network which link the industrial premises to the Port, its support industrial premises and raw materials. Land should be accessible and serviced if it is to attract investment in industrial buildings and plant. Clustering should encourage phased release of land for industry and a variety of support activities.

Some areas have already been identified in the District for industrial usage but sites have not been taken up due to a variety of factors including poor access, lack of flexibility over the size of plots and concerns of traffic using settlement and central area streets potentially disturbing the amenity of local residents and businesses. Providing a criteria-based approach enables suitable sites to be identified for a range of industrial uses, as well as ensuring consideration of vacant or redundant industrial sites such as re-use of old sugar factory complexes.

Industrial Design Guidance has been prepared to address operational aspects of industrial premises such as layout and service access, health and safety factors such as fire protection and waste water treatment as well as setbacks, landscaping and amenity.

ID 4

Bad Neighbour Development

The location of bad neighbour uses should follow the sequential approach commencing with Policy SD 3 and where buffer zones are required or potential nuisance exists, with Policy SD 4.

Bad neighbour developments are defined to include quarries, stone crushing plants, concrete batching plants, asphalt mixing plants, power
stations and tank farms, animal-rearing uses including piggeries and poultry farms, sewage treatment works, sites for landfill and other forms of solid waste disposal, waste transfer stations, civic amenity sites, scrap yards, recycling and composting facilities.

Preference should be given to proposals for bad neighbour developments which can be clustered to share a buffer zone or on an existing under-utilised or vacant industrial site including those associated with the sugar industry or contribute to regeneration of derelict sites or provide opportunities for transport improvements.

Such proposals should also ensure that:

- Adequate road access and utility provision (electricity, water, sewerage, solid waste and telecommunications facilities) are available or can be provided as part of the development costs;
- A wastewater treatment facility is able to be included in the development (if applicable to the type of development proposed) and measures are incorporated to protect groundwater from being contaminated;
- The development would not adversely impact other employment uses nor prejudice the future expansion of growth zones such as Rural Regeneration Zones, existing settlements or other sensitive uses such as residential development, schools, education and health facilities and tourism sites and complexes;
- The development would not adversely affect areas suitable for agriculture or of environmental sensitivity or landscape significance;
- Mitigation measures including buffer zones, landscaping and an after-care plan required as a condition of an EIA licence approved by the Ministry responsible for Environment are capable of being provided within and around the site as part of the development costs.

Acceptable uses within buffer zones may include agriculture, forestry, non-intensive animal-rearing, grazing and pastures and leisure and recreation facilities. Certain other uses such as storage, warehousing and distribution industries may also be appropriate at varying distances from a bad neighbour cluster. The buffer zones for particular uses should form part of the EIA licence and be determined by the relevant statutory authorities.

All industrial development proposals should be in broad accordance with Industrial Design Guidance and take into account the design of the site and the visual impact of the development. General guidance on buffer zones for particular uses is also contained in the Industrial Design Guidance.
Justification: This policy recognises that bad neighbour uses are essential for the continued economic growth of the Mauritian economy, but that a precautionary approach to siting new facilities is required to safeguard local environment and amenity. Bad neighbour developments are defined to include those uses requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment licence as listed in the First Schedule (Section 15(2)) Part B of the Environment Protection Act 2002 and/or are considered a potential nuisance to adjoining residential neighbours by reason of noise, dust, smoke, fumes, smells, abnormal hours of operation or parking or excessive loading problems or through the appearance and scale of the proposal.

Bad neighbour developments are required to be distant from residential and other sensitive uses for health and safety reasons and require buffer zones which can preclude certain forms of development within a specified distance. Given the difficulty in identifying new sites for such clusters it is essential suitable performance criteria are established to address bad neighbour locational and operational requirements. Although sites should normally be located away from existing settlements adequate access to road and public transport networks, labour and other linked activities should normally be required.

In selecting new sites for bad neighbour developments, locations for some particular uses such as landfill and stone crushers should where practicable be planned up to 1km distant from sensitive land uses, which include residential areas, hospitals and schools. In and around existing built-up areas a reduced buffer zone may have to be adopted, taking into account topography, the nature of the facility, wind direction and other local site factors. Where sufficient land is available, the clustering of bad neighbour uses on a single, well-accessed site should be considered in order to reduce adverse environmental effects.

4.6 Agriculture

A 1

Protecting Agriculture Land

Land suitable for agriculture located outside settlement boundaries should be protected from development unless such development is essential for agriculture, forestry and other uses appropriate to a rural area or if found necessary using the sequential approach outlined in SD 3 and SD 4 and H 1. A high degree of protection should normally be afforded to land within gazetted Irrigation Zones and other land which has fixed irrigation equipment and which is required for long term sustainability of the agricultural sector. Watchman’s quarters cum store of a maximum gross floor area of 30m² may be allowed on agricultural plots of over 1 arpent. However, an owner of more than one agricultural
plot of more than one arpent being located contiguous to each other (agricultural plots in single ownership) will not be allowed more than one watchman’s quarters unless there is valid justification provided."

“Agricultural subdivisions should comply with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture and any Cahier des Charges accompanying these operations should strictly reflect the purpose for which the land is being subdivided’.

**Proposed integrated and comprehensive development on land suitable for agriculture located within settlement boundaries, or on the edge of settlement boundaries should be considered through the provisions of Policy SD 2, SD 3 and H 1.**

*Justification:* Conservation of land suitable for long term agricultural use is a core policy of the NDS and this Scheme and accords with the sequential approach to identifying developable land specified in Policies SD 1, SD 2, SD 3 and SD 4. Development outside settlement boundaries for non-agricultural uses should normally be discouraged where productive agricultural land would be lost. This is particularly important for irrigated lands where heavy investment has been made to provide the necessary infrastructure.

However there is agricultural land which, primarily due to poor soil conditions, is not likely to be productive in the foreseeable future; furthermore because of restructuring in the sugar sector additional ‘productive but non-viable’ land is likely to be sought for release by landowners from sugar use during the plan period.

In such circumstances new development proposals should be directed to such ‘surplus’ sugar lands on sites on the edge of or outside settlement boundaries, in accordance with Policies SD 3 or SD 4 or H 1 and relevant clearances obtained from the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Food Security. Development proposed on agricultural land within settlement boundaries should be considered in accordance with Policy SD 2.

**A2**

**Agricultural Diversification**

*On sugar cane land which has been classified as marginal in the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security/MSIRI 2002 Land Suitability Map, and in accordance with the Non-Sugar Sector Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, 2003-2007, the release of such lands for non-sugar sector agricultural uses should be considered favourably.*

*In considering such development applications, suitable sites should normally be located:*
• outside settlement boundaries, strategic growth clusters or existing village limits;

• outside Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) as defined by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development;

• outside areas of landscape significance as defined by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development; and

• should not be required for use for a sugar cane buffer stock as determined by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security /MSIRI and the private sector.

Such developments should broadly follow the design principles set out in the Industry in the Countryside Design Guidance.

Justification: The recommendations of the Non-Sugar Sector Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security 2003-2007 envisage a reorientation of the non-sugar sector towards a more technology-based approach to achieve a measure of self-sufficiency, to meet increased quality standards, to develop agro-processing, promote entrepreneurship, optimise export opportunities, ensure conformity to international food safety norms and maximise potential benefits from regionalisation.

The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security Non-Sugar Sector Strategic Plan is an important component in determining and locating agricultural/farming diversification projects within revised Outline Schemes in the context of the National Development Strategy, and national socio-economic priorities. The adoption of intensive cultivation practices based on modern practices has become essential in optimising agricultural productivity within available land resources and increasing urbanisation.

Where sugar cane land has been classified as marginal in accordance with Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security /MSIRI 2002 Land Suitability Map, and does not fall into one of the above categories and is located outside major settlements, strategic growth clusters or existing village limits, there will be a presumption in favour of agricultural diversification schemes including hydroponic agricultural schemes. Such developments should broadly follow the design principles set out in the Industry in the Countryside Design Guidance.
4.7 Mineral Resources

MR 1

Protection of Mineral Resources

Mineral resource sites as shown on the Development Management Map should be protected from most forms of development. Such sites hold reserves which are important to the national economy and for the building construction sector. Buffer zones of 1km should be established between such sites and sensitive uses including housing, education and health facilities as well as from boundaries of catchment areas of dams and reservoirs.

There should be a general presumption against development likely to undermine the long term quarrying capability, unless and in the national interest or is a Government approved scheme which has already been identified or committed or where suitable alternatives are not available.

Priority quarry areas identified by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and their buffer zones of 200 metres from the quarry boundaries will be protected from all types of development. Temporary undertakings may be allowed outside the 200 metres buffer zone up to 1 km from the quarry boundaries, subject to relevant permits and licences being obtained from statutory authorities.

Temporary development may be allowed on a potential mineral site and its 1 km buffer subject to relevant permits and licenses being obtained from statutory authorities. Any proposal for permanent development on potential mineral sites and within the 1 km buffer may be considered based on site investigations carried out in line with the methodology developed by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and demonstration that these sites do not have significant quarry potential in terms of quality and quantity of rocks and their economic exploitability. The site investigation report will be examined by a Technical Committee set up by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, with a view to recommend to the Ministry whether the site needs to be retained for quarrying or released for other developments.

The final decision of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development shall prevail over the provisions of the Outline Scheme in respect of that potential mineral resource site.

All temporary development shall be subject to termination upon issue of prior notice, when the site will be required for quarry operations. No
claim for compensation or liability for damages from the Government of Mauritius would be entertained at closure of operations to allow for quarry activities.

**Justification:** Since sand extraction from the lagoon was ceased in Mauritius in 2001, terrestrial deposits of sand, building aggregate, crushed rock and other raw construction materials are the only source of supply. To ensure future demand from the construction sector can be met the Ministry responsible for Environment has carried out a detailed study to identify the level of resources available, so as to provide adequate protection for proven sites. The study identified two categories of mineral resource sites, respectively priority sites and potential sites. For the priority sites the consultants had fully investigated them with respect to quality of rocks and had determined that they were viable for rock quarrying. The priority sites will be highlighted on the Development Management Maps. As for the potential sites, the quality and quantity of rocks were not determined by the consultants.

Given that the resources will need to be extracted or quarried at varying times in the future, buffer zones which separate sensitive uses from the potential bad neighbour aspects of quarrying or extraction are recommended to protect both the resource and residents. **Further guidance is provided in policy ID 4 and Industrial Development Design Guidance.**

### 4.8 Tourism

The coastal area within the District is an important national asset both with regard to the national economy through the tourism sector and as an attractive and fragile environment. Both aspects of the coast are interlinked – the quality of the natural environment is an integral component in the continuing success and growth of the tourism industry. Sustainable management and maintenance of development within the sensitive coastal environment is the basis of the policies below.

#### 4.8.1 Coastal Development and Tourism

**CDT 1**

**Coastal Development and Tourism**

*On the coast within Tourism Zones identified in the Tourism Development Plan and illustrated on the Development Strategy Map and Development Management Map, clustering of tourism and other employment-generating activities within or adjacent to existing settlements, resorts and campement sites and utility and transport networks should be encouraged.*
Major new developments should be focused within the Eastern Tourism Zone where Tourism Action Area Plans and other Government-approved schemes have already been identified and committed. In this Zone and where sites are within or adjacent to existing settlement boundaries, existing tourist resort complexes or major campement sites, there should be a general presumption in favour of mixed use tourism and other forms of complementary tourism employment creation.

Proposals should generally comply with the design criteria contained within the Hotels and Integrated Resorts Design Guidance and other relevant Design Guidance outlined in SD 5. Developments within the Coastal Lands should also conform to detailed coastal development design principles defined in the Design Guidance.

Justification: The Eastern Tourism Zone including coastal land stretching from Roches Noires to Poste Lafayette, from Poste de Flacq to Belle Mare and Trou D’Eau Douce and including Grand Rivière Sud Est, Ile Aux Cerfs and Ile de L’Est was identified by the Ministry responsible for Tourism within the Tourism Development Plan 2002. Clustering of development within Tourism Zones would support the objectives of the NDS and provide more sustainable development patterns, support existing local communities and build on existing transport and utility provision whilst enabling parts of the coastline to remain open and in their natural state through environmental management plans.

Further development guidance is provided within the Hotels and Integrated Resorts Design Guidance and the Residential Development Design Guidance. More stringent design parameters have been devised to ensure sustainable development occurs in such sensitive locations. In all cases of major development on the coast, building and land use permit applications will be required to include a comprehensive EIA in accordance with the Environment Protection Act 2002.

CDT 2

Conservation and Tourism

Within approved Tourism Zones but outside of existing settlements, resort complexes and major campement sites and outside Tourism Zones, in open coastal and countryside locations, particularly where agricultural, environmental and landscape considerations are of significance, there should be a general presumption against major new development, unless and in the national interest or where a Government-approved scheme has already been identified and committed, or suitable alternatives are not available. In these cases the full environmental,
social and transport costs of the new location and the alternatives considered should form an integral part of the decision-making process.

In locations in and adjacent to settlement boundaries as shown on the Development Management Maps, either within or outside the Tourism Zones, there should be a general presumption in favour of small scale developments where these can be shown to sustain local economies, especially where changes due to restructuring and diversification in the sugar sector are envisaged or where fishing and/or sand mining activities have ceased. Proposals should generally conform to detailed coastal development design principles defined in the Design Guidance.

Developments within the Coastal Lands areas should conform to detailed coastal development design principles defined in the Design Guidance.

Justification: The Eastern Tourism Zone was identified by the Ministry responsible for Tourism in the Tourism Development Plan 2002. Within this Tourism Zone but outside main settlement boundaries and on land on the open coast and countryside there should be a general presumption against major development except in cases of national interest or where a Government-approved scheme has already been identified and committed and other suitable alternatives are not available as provided for under SD 4.

A sequential approach should be considered for the release of sites in these areas. Criteria should focus on maintaining land of suitability for agriculture as defined by the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Food Security, including use of land for sugar cane and non-sugar sector uses. Other factors should include protecting land with environmental sensitivity or landscape significance as defined by the Ministry responsible for Environment.

Unless it can be demonstrated that proposals including national-interest proposals can be integrated with existing settlements and activities and transport and utility networks and can contribute to the enhancement and maintenance of the surrounding environment including wetlands, mangroves and lagoons, major new developments should not normally be permitted.

Where small scale developments are proposed on land within or adjoining settlement boundaries within the Eastern Tourism Zone, or in open coastal or countryside locations, there should be a general presumption in favour of new schemes where it can be shown that they meet local needs and can contribute to the sustainability of local economies.
Integrated Resort Schemes

Integrated resort schemes (IRS) and Real Estate Schemes (RES) should follow the sequential approach and clustering principles outlined in the Strategic Development policies and Policy CDT 1. IRS should complement and support local tourism and settlement strategies by creating a positive impact on the physical, economic and social environments within which they are located. Where sites are located outside settlement boundaries and tourism zones, proposals including proposals in the national interest should conform to the principles of CDT 2.

Integrated resort schemes should aim to provide:

- significant socio-economic benefits to the community through investment and employment creation and the use of planning agreements;
- a mixture of uses to create a vitality and diversity and to reduce the need to travel by providing for example a balance of hotel, tourism, recreation, leisure, residential and commercial development and social and community facilities;
- safe and efficient transport infrastructure and utility services in compliance with the specifications of the relevant authorities;
- a high standard of urban and landscape design in accordance with Hotel and Integrated Resort Design Guidance and other relevant guidance outlined in SD 5, with self regulatory “Cahier des Charges”;
- an environmental management plan which includes mechanisms to protect and sustain environmentally sensitive areas within and adjoining the site and public access to open space, green spaces and the coast.

Real Estate Schemes should be developed and aim at:

- Freehold land of an extent of at least 1 Arpent but not exceeding 10 hectares (23.69 Arpents).
- Extent of land used for development of a residential property (a single unit) within the real estate development must not exceed 1.25 arpents
- A mixture of uses including commercial, leisure as well as day-to-day management services such as security, maintenance, gardening, solid waste and household services.
Justification: With continued demand and increasing prices for land directly on the coast, Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) are coming under more direct and indirect pressure from development. At the same time the tourism and real estate industry are striving to introduce new development models which *inter alia* will retain a site’s natural image whilst enabling new facilities to be introduced such as golf courses, within the overall hotel or resort complex in order to remain competitive in the global economy.

Such developments termed as integrated resort schemes (IRS) are designed to comprise a mix of uses – a residential component, hotels, golf courses and other leisure, commercial/retailing as well as incorporating local community and social facilities. They can generate a range of employment opportunities including jobs for the unskilled / semi-skilled workforce and may be able to offer employment opportunities for those leaving the sugar industry.

The policy for integrated resort projects thus recognises that clustering of such development can assist in regenerating settlements, where it is based on strong sustainable development principles and integrated with existing communities to provide a range of benefits. In responding to these new market requirements the introduction of a new hotel cluster at Bel Ombre along the south coast of Mauritius has generated substantial inward investment into a community whose agricultural base had been under threat.

Integrated resort schemes, if carefully designed, can also facilitate the management and enhancement of ESAs (through for example environmental stewardship mechanisms) thus reducing potentially adverse environmental impacts on the fragile ecosystem.

The Hotels and Integrated Resorts Design Guidance should be considered at an early stage in project preparation. Other design guidance – for Residential and Commercial Developments should also be consulted as appropriate although integrating the design of the whole scheme is vital if it is to function within its setting. Self-regulating Cahier des Charges would assist in this regard and should form part of the building and land use permit process.

Real Estate Schemes should broadly follow the guidance provided in the Planning Policy Guidance PPG 1 as subsequently revised. They should complement and support settlement strategies by creating a positive impact on the physical, economic and social environments within which they are located. The siting of RES in view of its scale requires a careful approach. The clustering principle and sequential approach to development outlined in the *Strategic Development policies (SD1,SD2,SD3,SD4)* should be followed for RES and proposals should demonstrate how they contribute in maintaining and enhancing the townscape/landscape character of the area.
4.8.2 Campement Sites and Pas Geometriques

CDT 4

Campement Sites and Uncommitted Pas Geometriques Land

Campement sites may be redeveloped for tourism uses (on large scale sites for high quality tourism establishments) within the Tourism Zones following the clustering principle and sequential approach to development outlined in the Strategic Development Policies and CDT 1. Redevelopment of existing campement sites and extension of leases of campement sites outside of the Tourism Zone and settlement boundaries may be permitted for local needs for residential purposes and in accordance with Policies SD 3, SD 4 and CDT 2.

Where proposed campement site development lies within an ESA it should be accompanied by an environmental management plan outlining responsibilities for the management and maintenance of the ESA. Any such development should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Environment Protection Act, 2002 as amended.

Development adjoining ESAs should obtain the prior approval of the Ministry responsible for Environment and should be in accordance with the policies defined in the study of Environmentally sensitive Areas (ESAs) in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

On uncommitted Pas Geometriques land outside of settlement boundaries no major new development should be permitted, other than as provided for in Policy SD 4. Small-scale developments in these areas should only be permitted where they satisfy relevant authorities’ agricultural, environmental and landscape criteria and can be shown to sustain local needs.

Redevelopment of campement sites should be designed and assessed in accordance with design policies and criteria contained in the Hotels and Integrated Resorts Design Guidance applying to Coastal Lands areas and where appropriate in the Residential Development Design Guidance.

Justification: The leasing system via campement leases has enabled the control of residential and tourism developments along the coast. Redevelopment of campement sites within or on the edge of the Tourism Zones would facilitate tourism activities on large scale coastal sites, provide a mechanism for the management of ESAs and enable efficient use of Government-owned land.

The Pas Geometriques, an 80 metre strip (approximately) of state-owned land located around most of the coast, enables the Government to have an ownership
and controlling mechanism for most coastline development. Uncommitted Pas Geometriques land should be protected from major new development allowing valuable coastlines to be retained in their natural state subject to the provisions of policies SD 3, SD 4 and CDT 2.

4.8.3 Marinas and Land-Water based Development

CDT 5

Land-Water Interface Development

Proposals which involve development either within the water or at the interface between land and water, such as marinas, jetties, piers, moorings, development/rehabilitation of existing barachois, aquaculture activities and tourist establishments should be carefully considered in the foreshore areas. All developments listed in the Environment Protection Act 2002 as amended such as barachois, fishing port, construction of breakwaters, groins, jetties, revetments and seawalls, will require an Environmental Impact Assessment licence or preliminary Environmental Report approval. Clearance from the Ministry responsible for Fisheries and the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands on the ‘in principle’ acceptance of such state land locations.

The clustering principle and sequential approach to development outlined in the Strategic Development policies should be followed for land-water based development. Any development which involves landside (for example restaurant, sailing club facilities, car and boat trailer parking, boat storage, mechanical and boat repair facilities, petroleum and diesel storage and pumping facilities, waste water extraction etc) and water-related development impacts (for example jetties, piers, berths etc) should also consider:

(a) the appearance of the development from the waterway and the foreshores;
(b) the effect of the development on any environmentally sensitive area or area of landscape significance or a place of heritage significance in the vicinity;
(c) whether the development would cause pollution or siltation of the waterway to an extent that would jeopardise any existing or potential uses of the waterway;
(d) whether the proposed development incorporates environmental stewardship of terrestrial and/or aquatic ecological areas;
(e) the impact of any commercial activities on existing settlements’ town centres;
(f) traffic impacts including parking;

(g) any other relevant management plan, Design Guidance prepared by the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands and Guidance provided by other Ministries including the Ministry responsible for responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries;

(h) infrastructure provision, acceptable sewage treatment facilities, disposal of solid waste and waste water, drainage, accidental spillage and other guidance or requirements of the Ministry responsible for Public Utilities, the Ministry responsible for Health and Quality of Life, the Ministry responsible for Environment and National Development Unit and the Waste Water Authority.

Activities and development listed in Schedule Three of this plan should not be permitted on public beaches and should not normally be permitted in Environmentally Sensitive Areas as specified in EC 1 as well as islets and islands unless the proposed development supports the economic vitality of local communities or is considered in the national interest and is acceptable on planning, environmental and transport grounds and is designed sensitively.

The design and assessment of development proposals identified in Schedule Three should broadly comply with the design parameters outlined in the Hotels and Integrated Resorts Design Guidance (including that for Coastal Lands development) outlined in SD 5.

Justification: Growth in the tourism sector and changing recreation patterns are placing more demands on the use of the lagoon, the islets and off-shore islands. This is creating demand for marinas and water-based recreation, leisure and tourism activities and such demand is likely to increase over time. The development of such facilities can, if carefully sited, designed and managed add to the attraction of an area, generate employment, support the local economy and add to the water-based experience for Mauritians and visitors.

Key criteria for the design and assessment of a range of land–water interface development listed in Schedule Three include coastal protection, pollution prevention, wastewater disposal and water quality, soil and erosion prevention, air quality, environmental noise and design factors: the Hotel and Integrated Resort Design Guidance outlined in SD 5 contains a detailed checklist of such criteria. An EIA licence from the Ministry responsible for Environment is an integral part of the approval process which aims to address environmental sustainability issues in detail. Given other complex impacts of such developments the views of other relevant Ministries’ in the assessment process should be taken into account.
4.8.4 Public Beaches

CDT 6

Public Beaches and Access

*Areas proclaimed as Public Beaches under the Local Government Act are shown on the Development Management Maps. Major development should not normally be permitted except for the provision and improvement of sensibly-designed visitor facilities, local access and enhancement of landscaping that adds to the amenity and public use of the beach. Development adjoining or adjacent to a public beach should maintain road and pedestrian access and safeguard land for future visitor facilities.*

*Proposed public access to the beach and shore should be identified in applications for coastal morcellements, tourism development, any future leasing arrangements for campement sites or development proposed on the Pas Geometriques. Such public access ways should be protected from development.*

*Justification:* The public beaches provide the main access to the coastline, lagoon and sea along many parts of the north and west coast. Access to the beach is highly valued by the Mauritian public and should be safeguarded in locations where intensification of campement sites or tourism development could lead to encroachment and damage to the beach’s visual setting and amenity. Landscaping and tree clusters at public beaches should be maintained in the form of native species to provide part of the amenity attraction and as funding or planning agreements allow, be enhanced as part of landscaping improvement programmes – rather than being lost for parking for nearby commercial development. For the popular public beaches visitor facilities should be provided but more remote beaches should be left in their undeveloped state.

Given the importance of public beaches as recreation facilities for Mauritians and the pressure to develop along the coast, maintaining suitable access to public beaches has become more difficult. The policy supports the provision, safeguarding and maintenance of public access as part of new or redeveloped coastal tourism sites, through the introduction of IRS schemes and through the process of leasing or renewing of campement sites.
4.9 Environment and Fisheries

Policies within this section relate to two facets of the natural environment:

- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), which relate to statutory and non-statutory designations: Environmental Protection (EP) areas which are areas of nationally-significant ecological value protected by various Acts; and Environmental Conservation (EC) areas which are, as yet, not protected by legislation but which are worthy of conservation due to their vulnerability to development. The aim here is to use a precautionary approach when preparing or assessing building and land use permit applications. The significance of these non-statutory conservation areas is likely to be better understood through detailed studies carried out by the Ministry responsible for Environment; and

- Areas of Landscape Significance (ALS) which relate to the Landscape Value of an area because of its particular quality, setting and function. In some cases such areas may have an ecological function as well as a landscape function such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); in others the aim should be to preserve an area of landscape in its unbuilt state, including natural sections of the coastline, or provide a strategic gap between settlements.

4.9.1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs)

Environmental Protection

EP 1

Protection of Nature Reserves and Mountain Reserves

All Nature Reserves and Mountain Reserves designated under the Forests and Reserves Act and shown on the Development Management Maps should be protected from development except as allowed under the said Act, or for educational purposes, visitor facilities or in the national interest. Development in these areas which would destroy or adversely affect the area's natural environment should not normally be permitted, unless supported by an approved environmental management plan and an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with the EPA 2002 as amended.

Justification: To protect nationally-significant natural green areas and to assist in preserving natural environmental heritage.
EP 2

Protection of River Valleys and Water Resources

River Reserves as defined by the Forests and Reserves Act means:

“(a) where there is an escarpment, the land extending from the edge of a watercourse to the top of the escarpment;

(b) where there is no escarpment, the land extending from the edge of a watercourse to a distance measured on the horizontal plane

(i) in the case of a river, of 16 metres;

(ii) in the case of a rivulet, of 8 metres;

(iii) in the case of a feeder, of 3 metres.”

Rivers and rivulets the subjects of River Reserves are listed in the Fourth Schedule to the Act.

All River Reserves should normally be protected from development. Exceptions may be made for works deemed essential for water abstraction, flow regulation, flood control and for road crossings.

Clearing and replanting of river reserves shall only be carried out with authorization from the Conservator of Forests

Justification: Given the importance of water resources nationally and in the District careful consideration is required where development is proposed in the vicinity of rivers and rivulets because banks are easily damaged and there is a risk of pollution. Many of the watercourses also act as landscape or ecological corridors and some have recreation potential. Placing any structure within an area that might flood during an extreme weather event may result in a restriction in the flow characteristics of the watercourse and cause unacceptable flooding to occur in other areas.

EP 3

Marine Protected Areas

In addition to the requirements under the Environment Protection Act 2002 and the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 1998, the aims and objectives of Fishing Reserves and Marine Parks should be
acknowledged in the assessment of any development which may affect the operations and environmental functions of such Reserves and Parks.

Justification: To ensure land and water-based development does not adversely affect nationally-protected sensitive marine environments. Fishing Reserves and Marine Parks not only help protect the livelihood of local fishermen but assist in replenishing fish stocks within the marine ecosystem. The intent of Policy EP 3 is to address the issue of development proposals adjoining or within Marine Protected Areas and to assist in the on-going protection of Fishing Reserves.

Environmental Conservation

EC 1

Conservation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs)

Further to more detailed identification, mapping and classification of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) by the Ministry responsible for Environment and in addition to any requirements under the Environment Protection Act 2002 as amended, the natural functions, biodiversity, habitat and amenity of ESAs should be protected from adverse effects of development.

The ESA study has assessed the relative importance of different ESAs for their long term maintenance of their integrity. Each ESA type has been categorized on their sensitivity in maintaining environmental functions and provides sufficient flexibility in proposed land uses to strike a balance between environmental protection and sustainable development needs.

Where the ESAs are indicated on the Development Management Maps there should be a general presumption against development other than for educational or environmental management purposes or in order to sustain local economies or where development is deemed to be in the national interest and is acceptable on planning and environmental grounds. In case of discrepancy between the ESAs shown on the DMM and the ESA map at the Ministry of Environment, the project proponent should consult the Ministry of Environment.

Any development proposed within ESAs will be required to first obtain an Environmental Impact Assessment licence under the Environment Protection Act 2002 as subsequently amended.

Developments adjoining ESAs should obtain the prior approval of the Ministry responsible for Environment and should be in accordance with
the policies defined in the Study of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

Opportunities for the sustained management of ESAs, which may form part of developments, should be pursued through planning agreement/obligation mechanisms. In all such cases, proposals for development within or adjoining Environmentally Sensitive Areas will need to demonstrate how they contribute to maintaining and enhancing the environmental character of the area and that they comply with relevant criteria in the Design Guidance outlined in SD5.

For the purposes of this Policy, ESAs are defined as follows:

- **State Lands including State Forest Lands and privately-owned Mountain Reserves**;
- **Habitat for Endemic Flora and Fauna - which have strong links to the Reserves identified in Policy EP 1**;
- **Mountain Slopes and Range Peaks – for moderately steep to steep/very steep hillside and mountain slopes and ridgelines**;
- **Coastal Features - including parts of the coastline, sand beaches and dunes. Mudflats, offshore islets and coastal wetlands and mangroves**;
- **Water Resources - major aquifers, surface water catchment areas and identified reservoirs/dams, lakes, upland marsh and boreholes and existing weirs; and**
- **Geological Features - the location of lava tubes and pits and caves which are associated with cave networks and groundwater supplies.**

**Justification:** ESAs represent national environmental assets and their on-going management, protection and enhancement is vital if sustainable development goals are to be achieved. The intent of policy EC 1 is to reinforce a general presumption against major development in or adjacent to identified ESAs. The adoption of a precautionary approach to development is considered appropriate; the policy also incorporates the principles of Policies SD 2, SD 3 and SD 4 requiring additional environmental information for developments when considered necessary to inform the decision-making process.

The management of ESAs is achievable within this policy through permitting environmental management measures in sensitive locations. This should enable private sector management of ESAs, some good examples of which
currently exist in tourism developments in the Eastern Tourism Zone where longer term maintenance, monitoring and enhancement measures have been put in place.

Identification of ESAs on the Development Management Map should afford protection while more detailed studies are completed. As the boundaries of ESAs become more well-defined, Policy EC 1 and supporting mapping base should be adjusted.

EC 2

Conservation of Water Resources

The existing and proposed dams/reservoirs and their catchment areas and the rivers that supply water into them should be safeguarded against pollution, erosion and deforestation. Development within 30 metres of the high water level of the dams and adjacent to rivers, rivulets and streams, open canals or within the catchment areas should not normally be permitted, unless the developer has obtained written agreement from the Water Resources Unit/Ministry of Public Utilities (WRU/MPU) and the Sanitary Authority that the proposals do not pose a threat to the quality or quantity of surface or groundwater resources. A passage 1 metre wide shall be left along one or other side of every canal along its whole length and kept free from obstruction.

No development should be permitted within a 200 metre radius of a borehole or spring without consultation and prior written approval of the WR/MPU.

*Justification:* The economic treatment of water to render it safe for human consumption is of paramount importance to health and quality of life: any potentially polluting industries should be sited in appropriate locations where a failure to meet the relevant WRU/MPU effluent discharge standards will not jeopardise the nation’s water supply. Regardless of the location of an industry there is still a need to ensure that effluent water treatment plants are provided and operated satisfactorily to ensure that the effluent meets the standards required by the WRU/MPU or Wastewater Management Authority (WMA).

Deforestation of catchment areas causes an increased “peakiness” in surface water run-off, as does increasingly dense development, with a consequential increase in the volume of water that will be lost to the sea and a reduced dry season flow rate. Deforestation also exacerbates soil erosion, leading to silting of dams and intakes, more turbid water to be treated and potential harm to the lagoon ecosystems.
Protection of groundwater from contamination is recognised as being very important. The WRU/MPU normally requires a development exclusion zone of 200 metres around all new boreholes, springs and around as many existing boreholes as is practicable. Any development within 200 m of a borehole should not be permitted unless the WRU has given written confirmation that the proposals pose no threat to the groundwater resources; the WRU/MPU should consider giving a “no objection” response where the area is fully sewered and the development will be connected to a mains sewer.

EC 3

Wetland Conservation

Wetlands have been defined on the Development Management Map in order to prevent development on such sensitive areas. Development should not normally be allowed within wetlands or buffer areas (30 metres from the edge of the wetland) except in cases for educational or environmental management purposes or where in the national interest and is acceptable on planning and environmental grounds.

In view of the valuable functions they serve, the opportunity should be taken to implement wetland restoration and creation projects that are sensitively designed to be self-sustaining and persistent features of the landscape.

Any development proposed to directly adjoin wetlands (or within wetlands as specified above) will be required to first obtain an Environmental Impact Assessment licence under the Environment Protection Act 2002, prior to seeking a building and land use permit.

The filling in of wetlands should not normally be permitted, unless the proposed development is in the national interest or is located on a small parcel of land or infill site which is required to sustain the local economy and where the majority of the site has already been developed and the remaining smaller portion is not capable of restoration. In these cases clearance should be sought from the Chairman of the National RAMSAR Committee set up under the aegis of the Ministry responsible for Fisheries.

Justification: For the purposes of this Policy, wetlands are defined in accordance with the definition provided by the National RAMSAR Committee within the Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries which is “areas of marsh or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water which is static or flowing, fresh or brackish or salt including areas of marine water.”
Wetlands are a water-based ecosystem – they provide a transition zone between terrestrial systems which are mostly dry and aquatic systems which are permanently wet. Being the interface between the two systems they share characteristics of both. Wetlands have both an environmental and an economic function – they are reservoirs of biodiversity, assist in flood control by gradually releasing rainfall and stormwater, enable vegetation to grow which assists in bank and coastline stabilisation and act with mangroves to trap sediment before it enters the marine system where it could adversely affect coral reefs and filter runoff to remove contaminants before they enter groundwater reserves.

The policy thus provides a precautionary approach to development including identifying buffer areas around wetlands to ensure their on-going protection. This is essential given the preparation of the Wetlands Protection Bill which, when enacted, should offer increased protection for this ecological and hydrological resource. In cases of small scale developments proposed on small parcels of land or infill sites identified as wetlands, where these can be shown to have minimal adverse environmental impact and which are needed to sustain local economies, there should be a general presumption in favour of such schemes subject to clearance of the National RAMSAR Committee.

EC 4

Conservation of Islets and Islands

All islets and islands not proclaimed Nature Reserves nor being part of the National Park should be retained in their natural state and there should be a general presumption against development unless for conservation, education or national interest purposes.

If some forms of eco-tourism are proposed within the conservation management plans prepared for islets or islands including improvements and minor expansion of tourist facilities development proposals may be supported if:

(a) the unspoilt forests and natural state are retained;
(b) they would not generate overcrowding;
(c) they broadly conform with design criteria associated with Coastal Lands development criteria outlined in Policy CDT 4;
(d) they broadly conform with criteria for land-water interface development outlined in Policy CDT 5;
(e) where relevant, they are in accordance with the conservation management plans prepared for each island or islet;
(f) they incorporate the management of ESAs through environmental stewardship mechanisms encapsulated in an environmental management plan; and

(g) an EIA as required under the Environment Protection Act 2002 has been prepared and an environmental impact licence has been obtained.

Justification: The islands and islets are part of the sensitive lagoon ecosystem and are natural national assets which should be generally protected from development. Some of the smaller islands are incapable of supporting any development as it would detract from the natural views to the island and sea. The Ministry responsible for Agro-Industry and Fisheries, through the National Parks and Conservation Service, is preparing and implementing management plans for the islands and islets and these efforts should be supported to retain and sustain natural resources as well as development when appropriate.

Part of Ile aux Cerfs has been developed to incorporate a golf course and now attracts many day visitors. Some moderate expansion and improvement of the facilities is likely to be required in the future: such development will require sensitive design in accordance with updated Design Guidance, environmental impacts should be minimised and through the EIA licensing process under the Environment Protection Act, a long term environmental management plan for the entire island should be prepared and monitored.

EC 5

Building on Hill Slopes

Generally there should be a presumption against development on very steep slopes (a gradient of 20% or 1 in 5, or above). Structures supporting telecommunications equipment, utility services, roads, recreation facilities and other uses in the national interest may be necessary in such locations but should comply with Policy LS 1 if located in an area of landscape significance such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

On moderately sloping to steep slopes (between 10% and 20%) shown on the Development Management Maps as ‘Mountain Slopes’ and ‘Range Peaks’, there should be a presumption against most forms of development unless:

- It is designed so as to not reduce nor scar the natural landscape qualities of the hill slopes;
- it does not disturb the natural slope stability;
- it is sited and designed in sympathy with rather than dominating the natural character of the hill slopes.
Given the potential need for earthworks, retaining walls, drainage works, driveways and access ways together with a building, proposed development should be designed in accordance with Design Guidance and a geotechnical report from a qualified engineer should be required to form part of the building and land use permit application. An Environmental Impact Assessment will be required for development on mountain slopes as defined by the Environment Protection Act 2002.

Justification: For steep slopes above 20% gradient no development, unless in the national interest such as infrastructure, utility provision or for defence purposes, should normally be permitted given the substantial earthworks, comprehensive drainage and visual intrusiveness generated by such development and the increased risk of creating landslides.

On moderately sloping to steep slopes, four aspects of development cause concern: visual intrusiveness, slope stability, costs and provision of infrastructure. With regard to visual intrusiveness the height, bulk, scale and colour of materials of the proposed development need to be considered together with its location. Man-made development in a natural environment should be carefully reviewed so that the visual intrusiveness impacts are minimised through sound site design principles and use of appropriate engineering, landscaping and building materials.

Drainage, provision of utility services and earthworks may be necessary to support the structure and if not appropriately designed can cause erosion and siltation through removal of natural vegetation, alter existing drainage characteristics, increase stormwater runoff and restrict groundwater percolation. If not properly managed such development could lead to landslip. As such the information submitted with the building and land use permit application should include a geotechnical report by a qualified engineer on soil characteristics in relation to the risk of landslides, as well as area-wide drainage and sewage treatment proposals, landscaping and erosion mitigation measures. An EIA licence may also be required as specified by the Environment Protection Act 2002.

4.9.2 Areas of Landscape Significance

Landscape Value

LS 1

Conservation of Scenic Landscape Areas

The natural and open character of Scenic Landscape Areas, identified on the Development Management Where proposals for tourism, leisure or recreation, or an integrated resort scheme, settlement extension or new
settlement adjoin or form part of a Scenic Landscape Area, such developments may be allowed where they are in accordance with the sequential approach to site identification outlined in Policies SD1, SD2, SD3 or SD4.

Where Special Development Areas and Zones have been identified in previous Outline Schemes and commitments made between Government and Landowners, leisure, tourism, recreational, commercial and residential uses may be allowed.

In all such cases, proposals for development within or adjoining Scenic Landscape Areas will need to demonstrate how they contribute to maintaining and enhancing the landscape character of the area and that they comply with relevant criteria in Design Guidance outlined in SD5.

Justification: Because of their open natural physical attributes, some areas whilst consisting of vegetation of limited ecological or natural landscape value, provide interest and character to the countryside, coast or within or on the edge of settlements. Whilst such areas are not worthy of protection on ecological grounds alone, nor are they of outstanding natural beauty, they can contribute to the scenic attributes of built-up areas, the open countryside and the coast and are thus worthy of conservation, consistent with the principle of sustainable development. In all cases, proposals for development in or adjoining a Scenic Landscape Area should show how they contribute to maintaining and enhancing the landscape and conform to design guidance contained in Policy SD 5.

LS 2

Strategic Gaps

A positive approach to the retention, provision, use and treatment of open countryside between settlements should be adopted by safeguarding open land from built development and maintaining its positive contribution in providing a visual and physical break between settlements.

Development should not be permitted if it would contribute to a possible merging of settlements and the creation of urban sprawl or where it would be harmful to the natural, landscaped and/or rural character of areas of land that form belts of countryside around and between settlements.

Opportunities afforded through public private partnerships, collaboration with developers through planning agreements and the use of existing and proposed funding mechanisms should be examined
where necessary to acquire, replace and maintain valuable green wedges and strategic open spaces particularly between settlements.

**Justification:** Strategic open spaces play a significant role in sustaining and improving the amenity of settlements in urban and rural areas, attracting new investment, employment opportunities and improving the quality of life of residents and workers. Strategic open space plays an essential role in providing the necessary facilities for a wide range of leisure, educational and recreational activities from formal sporting facilities to walking, sitting, informal play and cultural and entertainment facilities. Open space forms a key part of a District’s landscape, making a contrast with built development and should be conserved and enhanced as part of area-wide planning.

In appropriate cases, the use of public private partnerships and planning agreements should be examined to acquire or replace and maintain valuable green wedges and open spaces, particularly between and within settlements. Existing funding mechanisms should be examined in this connection.

### 4.9.2.1 Northern Airport Development

Plans for a new international airport at Plaine des Roches date back to the early 1980’s when it was thought that technical constraints on the expansion of the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport (SSRIA) at Plaisance merited a move to a better site. Since then improvements have been made at SSRIA and further investment is planned, but it remains Government policy to safeguard land for a possible second airport in the North.

However the possibility of a new airport being introduced in the District has created some uncertainty amongst local residents as well as tourism and commercial interests. Because of safety and height restrictions being imposed in connection with possible airport runway/approaches, proposals for future development are being constrained.

It is understood that Government is reviewing air transport policy, including the prospects for a second airport at Plaines des Roches: pending the outcome of that review, provision should continue to be made for safeguarding the site in the revised Scheme. It is also proposed that should the policy review recommend retention of a safeguarded site for a second airport, further studies should be carried out to determine and verify the potential environmental impact and constraints to development that such a facility could impose on the District’s future development.
NA 1

Northern Airport Safeguarding

The current areas subject to building control and restriction around the proposed Northern Airport are shown on the Development Management Map. These include areas affected by both potential airport operations and defined safeguarding areas.

Pending the outcome of the on-going air transport policy review, previous restrictions should continue to apply. Should the review recommend retention of a safeguarded site for a new airport in the North, consideration should be given to the conduct of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to determine the potential impact of such an airport and its operations on existing and future developments in the area.

Justification: Government policy supports the continued protection of the site for a possible second airport at Plaine des Roches. However current height and other restrictions are constraining the future development plans of the residential, tourism and commercial sectors. The main concerns are to protect people from excessive aircraft noise and ensure that aircraft can operate safely. To prohibit all new development in the affected settlements and tourism areas would cause considerable hardship to both local people and investors and there is a case for allowing some development provided that developers and occupiers are made aware of the potential problem.

Pending the outcome of a policy review of the air transport sector, Policy NA 1 supports continued safeguarding of the proposed airport operational areas including approaches. Development within the airport noise constraints zone as identified on the Development Management Map should not be permitted. Exceptions may be made for development within or on the edge of existing settlements but in all cases the applicant should be made aware of the potential noise problem and a statement to this effect should be included in the Building and land use permit.

The height of all new development within the airport height restriction zone as shown on the Development Management Map should be controlled, generally to a maximum height of ten metres. This limit may be relaxed depending on the sites’ distance from the airport and its orientation in relation to the main flight paths. Proposals for buildings and structures taller than 30 metres that are outside the height restriction zone but within 6 kilometres of the airport or the runway approach will also need the approval of the statutory authorities (the Civil Aviation Department, Ministry responsible for External Communications).
Should the policy review recommend retention of a safeguarded site for a second airport in the North, it is recommended that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be commissioned by relevant authorities to clarify the impact the height restriction zone and noise constraints zone could have on constraining development in the District.

4.10 Highways and Transport

TP 1

Integrating Land Use and Transport

Development should be located so it can be served efficiently by public transport, cycling and walking, to maximise accessibility to local facilities and to encourage the reduction in number and length of trips by private car. New developments should be designed to encourage public transport use, bus operation (lay-bys and terminals) and safe and convenient pedestrian access routes where appropriate.

Within Growth Zones where Action Area Plans are being prepared measures should be taken which:

- increase opportunities for integration, by developing (in partnership with public transport operators and the private sector) high quality interchange facilities for buses and other forms of public transport; and
- where feasible, give priority to public transport, walking and in some specific locations cycling in terms of road space and junction design.

New development, including morcellements, proposed in accordance with policies SD 1, SD 2, SD 3 and SD 4 should encourage walking and cycling, by developing networks of safe, direct and attractive routes linking residential areas, schools and other local facilities with settlement centres.

Justification: Transport policy and proposals should support sustainable growth and development, rural regeneration and economy in the use of land. In line with key transport policies within the NDS land use and transport should be integrated such that:

- Development should be planned so that it minimises the need to travel and facilitates safe and convenient movement on foot, by cycle and by public transport;
- Development that attracts large numbers of passenger movements should be focused on sites in Urban Renaissance Zones, Rural
Regeneration Zones, Tourism Zones and other large settlement clusters, where potential exists to provide for convenient access by public transport, by cycle and on foot;

- Development which generates large numbers of freight and goods movements should be encouraged to locate or relocate in Special Use Zones or on the edge of settlements in accordance with SD 3 where sites are well-served by the strategic transport network; and

- Development should be planned to enhance the viability of existing and proposed public transport services including services in the countryside especially within Rural Regeneration Zones and on the coast within Tourism Zones.

TP 2

Traffic Assessment

Where developments will have significant traffic implications, Traffic Assessments should be prepared by scheme promoters and submitted alongside the relevant building and land use permit applications. The coverage and detail of the Traffic Assessment should reflect the scale of development and the extent of the traffic implications of the proposal.

For small schemes, the Traffic Assessment should simply outline the traffic aspects of the application including access, parking and safety aspects. For major strategic proposals, the assessment should illustrate how accessibility to the site can be provided by a range of modes and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site. It should also give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and in appropriate cases cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal and to mitigate traffic impacts.

Evaluation of safe ingress and egress of traffic and pedestrians should be included in the assessment, as well as safe driver sight line distances for vehicles leaving the property and on roadways. Parking provision should reflect the hours of operation, spaces available for public parking and level of public transport provision. Opportunities for shared parking arrangements should also be explored.

Justification: Prospective developers should hold early discussions with the Ministry responsible for Public Infrastructure’s Road Development Authority (RDA) and Traffic Management Unit (TMU) in order to clarify whether proposals are likely to be acceptable in traffic terms and to “scope” the requirements of any Traffic Assessment. Where proposals are clearly in line with planning policy (for instance where they accord with the Growth Zone locations and include measures to improve access by non-car modes) it should increase the likelihood of a building and land use permit being granted without undue delay.
In these circumstances, the relevant agency may want to reduce the requirements and coverage of the Traffic Assessment to deal with those aspects necessary to finalising the scheme.

Traffic assessments enable planning authorities and relevant road traffic and transport agencies better to assess the application and provide a basis for discussion on details of development proposals, such as the level of parking, the siting of buildings and entrances and the need for further measures to improve access arrangements to the site. Details of any firm proposals to improve the access to a site, including committed schemes nearby, should be taken into consideration when assessing the suitability of a site for development.

Major developments comprising a mix of jobs, shopping, leisure and other services should offer a realistic choice of access by public transport, walking and in some cases cycling, as well as by private transport. This should be assessed in terms of how easy it is to get to the site comparing the different modes (taking into account journey times, public transport frequency, quality, safety and access for disabled people). Such developments should not be designed and located on the assumption that the car will represent the only realistic means of access for the vast majority of people.

Where a development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services is proposed outside settlement boundaries, the onus should be on the developer to demonstrate why it cannot fit into the preferred locations in accordance with policies SD1, SD2 and SD3 and to illustrate how the accessibility of the proposed development by all modes compares with other possible sites.

TP 3

Access to Major Highways

*No direct access should normally be permitted on M class roads except for acceleration and deceleration lanes.*

*Any new vehicular access to/from a Main (Class A or B) Road should be designed with adequate visibility to minimise accident risk and interference with through traffic. Individual plot access should only be permitted if there is adequate turning space on the plot to enable all vehicles to enter and exit in forward gear.*

*Developments which would generate large volumes of traffic (especially Heavy Goods Vehicles) on adjoining roads in excess of their reasonable capacity or which would significantly increase accident potential, should not normally be permitted.*

*Justification:* Motorway and Class A and B Main Road’s prime function is to provide for longer distance journeys. Access directly onto such roads disrupts
flows, adds to congestion and can trigger accidents merging vehicles at different speeds. In line with the sequential approach to development outlined in policies SD 1 to SD 4 any development which could increase accident potential on a major highway should not normally be permitted.

It is important that any new or changed access point onto the main road network is carried out to a satisfactory standard. Access arrangements including scale, type and locations of junctions and/or access points should be checked by the relevant highway authority for adequate provision of main road safety both with regard to ingress and egress traffic movements, traffic on the existing road network and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Where suitable access is available onto a secondary road is available this should be considered. Shared access points can reduce conflict and accident risk and should also be considered for new development.

TP 4

Parking Requirements

All new developments (or extensions to existing buildings) should be required to make provision for an appropriate number of parking spaces in accordance with updated Design Guidance. In the case of settlement centre sites, developers are encouraged to coordinate and combine the provision of car parking so as to maximise the efficiency and use of the spaces: publicly accessible shared spaces are preferred to a larger number of small private parking lots.

For developments unable to park all of the expected cars on site and where no opportunity exists to combine parking onto a shared public parking area even with a financial contribution to a communal parking area, the permitting authority may allow the development if it can be demonstrated that the shortfall can be accommodated in a satisfactory manner without giving rise to traffic hazards or, by reason of the nature, operational or functional aspects of the use or hours of operation the proposed use would not generate the parking demand or requirements specified.

Justification: Parking is an integral component of development and should be generally considered as an essential element in the design and layout of a new development. For most forms of development parking should be considered within the plot boundary; however in certain situations communal parking areas are desirable – particularly in settlement centres where benefits to overall parking provision, vehicle flows, pedestrian safety and streetscape are a more desirable solution than individual use provision. The updated Design Guidance for Residential, Commercial and Industrial Developments
contain parking parameters including locational criteria, design considerations, driver and pedestrian safety and options for shared parking arrangements.

In Action Areas consideration should be given to the use of public/private sector partnerships and planning agreements to provide communal parking facilities particularly in town centres.

In other situations where circumstances dictate that parking specified within the parking standards is excessive (for example due to number of employees, type of use, hours of operation, some on-street parking being available that would not cause a traffic hazard), exceptions to parking provision may be warranted.

TP 5

Junctions and Access on the M1 Motorway

*A new junction is proposed along the motorway south of Réduit towards Ebene and Wooton*. An area of search for the new junction as identified on the Development Strategy Map and Development Management Map should be subject to more detailed study by RDA and a preferred junction location safeguarded from new development.

*Development on sites adjacent to and served by the M1 Motorway should be strictly controlled and wherever practical, access proposals should be consolidated with adjoining sites and connected where capacity exists to existing major interchanges (including Réduit and Mount Ory)*.

*Major new proposals involving additional traffic generation on sites adjacent to and served by the M1 Motorway should be subject to a Transport Assessment as outlined in policy TP 2.*

*Justification:* The M1 Motorway is currently heavily loaded and congested during peak periods, especially at junctions and on the steeply graded sections. A Strategic Access Study should be undertaken by RDA to identify the requirements for a new junction along the M1 south from the Réduit interchange towards Ebène and Wooton, to serve major new sites adjacent to the Motorway (and specifically the University/Highlands and Moka/St Pierre growth clusters). The Study should include the design, layout and spacing of all interchanges: these should be constructed to consistent standards and should not impede through traffic movements. Additional (secondary or supplementary) accesses to the Motorway should not be allowed.

In order to maximise the available capacity and enhance road safety a strict limit on the number, spacing and design of interchanges is required. Any
proposals to increase traffic volumes or intensity of use should be reviewed in the context of a comprehensive study of the traffic capacity, operational efficiency and road safety of the M1 Motorway through and adjacent to the District.

TP 6

Strategic Links to the North

A new strategic road linking the District to the North is proposed by RDA. A preliminary route via Verdun and Notre Dame in Pamplemousses/Riviere du Rempart District is shown on the Development Strategy Map and Development Management Map. A more detailed study including options for Motorway Junctions near Ebène should be carried out by RDA to confirm a preferred alignment which should be safeguarded from new development. Reference should also be made to Policy TP5 with regard to new motorway junctions.

A new link road is also proposed from the A7 at Moka to the proposed Port Louis Outer Ring Road in the Pailles area. Although this scheme is not a high priority, a detailed review of the options should be carried out by RDA and a preferred alignment safeguarded from new development.

Direct access to the new routes from adjacent land should not be encouraged and access from individual plots should only be allowed subject to the agreement of RDA and in compliance with Policy TP 3 above.

Justification: The proposed strategic link to the North via Verdun and Notre Dame is intended to improve access though and within the District including to the University/Highlands and Moka/St Pierre clusters, as well as facilitate connectivity to the northern and eastern parts of the island and the Port Louis northern approaches. A new motorway junction in the vicinity of Ebène is proposed in the longer term.

The proposed Moka/A7 link to the Port Louis southern approaches is aimed at providing an alternative route and increasing overall traffic capacity between the two areas. The scheme would potentially assist in relieving the currently congested sections of the M1 Motorway and the junctions at Réduit and Mount Ory.

The scheme should only be implemented after completion of the Port Louis Outer Ring Road which would provide additional capacity on the southern approaches and improved traffic distribution within Port Louis.
TP 7

B6 Upgrading and Quartier Militaire By-pass

*A programme of upgrading is proposed together with the construction of new by-passes at Valetta (B6) and Quartier Militaire (A7). The RDA has identified a preferred alignment as shown on the Development Strategy Map and Development Management Map which should be safeguarded from new development.*

*Direct access to new bypasses from adjacent development should not be encouraged and access from individual plots should only be allowed subject to the agreement of RDA and in compliance with Policy TP 3 above.*

*Justification:* To reduce congestion in the District along the B6 from Wooton and on the A7 from Réduit a programme of upgrading is proposed together with the construction of by-passes at Valetta and Quartier Militaire.

The specific objectives of the programme include:

- To relieve traffic congestion within and through settlement centres;
- To improve environmental conditions and road safety within existing centres;
- To allow for and encourage the development and densification of the settlement centres through the release and rationalisation of suitable land within an expanded urban envelope (whilst containing the extent of urban sprawl); and
- To improve flows and speeds for longer distance through traffic.

Where appropriate sections of the scheme should be brought forward for implementation through public-private partnering arrangements and planning agreements with the beneficiary land owners as part of rural regeneration initiatives in relation to demand for new development sites in and around designated growth zones.

TP 8

Upgrading of Existing Highways

*It is proposed to upgrade sections of the A2 and A7 within the District: the upgrading of A2 should form part of the proposed Strategic East Coast Trunk Road under policy TP 9. In conjunction with RDA initiatives and wherever possible in the development or redevelopment of adjacent sites on the A2 and A7, the opportunity should be taken to improve the alignment, sight-lines or provide a shoulder or footway as appropriate.*
Developments proposing individual direct access to the A2 and A7 highways should not normally be allowed: accesses should be combined and located to minimise interference with through traffic and to reduce accident risk.

Justification: Apart from the M1, the A2 and A7 form the principal traffic routes through the District. Measures should be taken to improve traffic carrying capacity, through the restriction of new access points, the progressive elimination of on-street parking and the provision of bus bays and off-street parking areas. It is considered unlikely that significant improvements or upgrading would be justified in the short to medium term (given the current traffic volumes), however, as funding and development/re-development opportunities arise, measures should be taken to improve traffic capacity and safety through local widening and realignments where required to provide a standard cross-section of 7m, with 1.5m shoulders in rural areas and with footways (on at least one side) in settlements or where there is significant or contiguous frontage development and/or pedestrian activity.

TP 9

East Coast Trunk Road

The Government is proposing to construct a strategic East Coast Trunk Road. The scheme would incorporate existing committed projects such as the South Eastern Highway from Plaine Magnien to Ferney, sections of new alignment, local bypasses and the upgrading, realignment and/or rehabilitation of existing highways.

The preferred alignments identified by RDA and as shown on the Development Strategy Map and Development Management Map should be safeguarded from new development. Direct access to the Trunk Road/Highway from adjacent land should not be encouraged and access from individual plots should only be allowed subject to the agreement of RDA and in compliance with TP 3.

Justification: To assist with the regeneration of settlements in the eastern part of the island and enhance tourism potential in the Eastern Tourism Zone it is proposed to develop an East Coast Trunk Road. The route is intended to improve regional and local access and provide links towards the SSRI Airport in the south and to the Port and the Greater Port Louis area in the North West. Potential links to the Northern Tourism Zone are also being considered.

In the south, the route will comprise that section of the South Eastern Highway from Plaine Magnien to the B28 at Ferney. Within the District northwards from the B27 at Trois Ilots, a new road will be constructed incorporating bypasses to Bel Air/Rivière Sèche and Centre de Flacq:
• B27 near Trois Ilots – Bel Air/Rivière Sèche Bypass – A7 near Camp Garreau;
• Centre de Flacq Bypass: A7 near Camp Garreau – B23 near Belle Vue Allendy (plus link from A7 Camp Garreau to B56/B28 near Bramsthan).

North of Centre de Flacq, two separate alignments are proposed (both require construction of a new link from B23 near Belle Vue Allendy and A2 near the junction with B22 at Petite Retraite):

• the upgrading of the existing A2 towards Port Louis, including construction of bypasses at Bon Accueil and Pamplemousses; and
• a new road northwards, passing west of Rivière du Rempart and connecting with the M2 Motorway and linking with the Northern Tourism Zone coastal road.

The upgrading of the existing A2 from Centre de Flacq towards Port Louis should be accorded a higher priority than the construction of the new road to the M2 and Northern Tourism Zone. Alternatives – including upgrading of existing roads – may subsequently be investigated for this latter section.

Wherever possible, in conjunction with the development or redevelopment of adjacent sites along upgraded routes, the opportunity should be taken to improve traffic capacity and safety through local widening and realignment, improvement of sight-lines or provision of a shoulder or footway to provide a standard cross-section of 7m, with 1.5m shoulders in rural areas and with footways (on at least one side) in settlements or where there is significant or contiguous frontage development and/or pedestrian activity. In general individual accesses should not be allowed: accesses should be combined and located to minimise interference with through traffic and to reduce accident risk.

The proposed East Coast Trunk Road is designed to provide local bypasses for main settlements designated as Rural Regeneration Zones in the NDS. In these cases where traffic, safety, environmental and development benefits can be expected to arise over the Plan period following introduction of the new route, Action Area Plans should be prepared with the involvement of key stakeholders as provided for under policy SD 6. Where appropriate, sections of the scheme should be brought forward for implementation through public private partnering agreements and planning agreement mechanisms as part of rural regeneration initiatives in relation to demand for new sites for development in and around designated Growth Zones.
TP 10

Bel Air Rivière Sèche and Trou D’Eau Douce Bypass

*A bypass to Bel Air Rivière Sèche and Trou D’Eau Douce is proposed connecting from the proposed East Coast Trunk Road (approx 3km north of Trois Ilots) to B59 (Belle Mare Coast Road) at Palmar. A preferred alignment identified by RDA and shown on the Development Strategy Map and the Development Management Map should be safeguarded from new development.*

*Direct access to the new routes from adjacent land should not be encouraged and access from individual plots should only be allowed subject to the agreement of RDA and in compliance with Policy TP 3 above.*

*Justification:* The objective is to provide improved access from the proposed East Coast Trunk to the Eastern Tourism Zone and in particular to assist in the consolidation and growth of the identified tourism clusters at Belle Mare and Trou D’Eau Douce and rural regeneration in the settlement cluster of Bel Air Rivière Sèche. Where appropriate, sections of the scheme should be brought forward for implementation through public private partnering agreements and planning agreement mechanisms as part of rural regeneration initiatives in relation to demand for new sites for development in and around designated Growth Zones.

TP 11

Safeguarding of Ex-railway Track

*Land forming part of the ex-railway track and grounds which has a reasonable prospect of re-use for transport services in the foreseeable future should be safeguarded from building development in the Council Area. Such applications should be determined on a case by case basis by the relevant authorities.*

*Justification:* This land may be required in the future for the implementation of transport services and extensions including new modes of travel such as the alternative mode of transport (AMT) being considered by Government, especially to serve the conurbation, new growth areas and settlement extensions. Experience elsewhere has shown that once such rights of way are lost to development, more efficient forms of transport provision to serve growing centres of population and jobs are often precluded.

In order not to sterilise too much land however, both in rural as well as urbanised locations, especially where other forms of employment-creating
development are much sought-after, each application for development affecting ex-railway track lands should be considered on its merits by the Ministry responsible for Public Infrastructure and Land Transport and the Ministry responsible for Housing and Lands.

4.11 Infrastructure and Utilities

ST 1

Sewerage Systems

Major developments adjacent to areas with mains sewers should be connected to the sewerage system and associated treatment works and served by sewerage reticulation.

Major developments adjacent to or likely to affect Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), or in Coastal Lands locations or within 1 km from the mean high water mark (MHWM) should be provided with a sewerage system or be connected to a centralised sewage treatment plant. Other developments should be laid out in a manner that will allow the later provision of mains sewers in an economical and efficient manner. Layouts should broadly conform to Design Guidance outlined in SD 5.

Justification: Contamination of groundwater resources is recognised as being a significant threat to the water supply of Mauritius and it is imperative that this resource is afforded the maximum protection possible. The Sewerage Masterplan does not include provision of sewerage systems for the District Council Area, largely because of its dispersed population, with the exception of Centre de Flacq where a wastewater treatment plant is proposed to the east of the settlement.

As a consequence new morcellements and other major developments within and close to areas already sewered or areas planned to be provided with mains sewers such as the proposed Highlands cluster should be laid out in such a way that should facilitate their connection to the mains sewerage system in the future. Other developments should be laid out in such a way that should facilitate the provision of sewerage in the future; for example by laying out plots in such a way that would allow sewers to run with the natural ground slopes and avoid, as far as possible, the need for sewage pumping stations.

In or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas or in Coastal Lands locations consideration needs to be given to requiring the developer of major schemes to install a comprehensive sewerage system and connecting this to a sewage treatment plant. Such a system needs to be designed in conjunction
with the WMA to ensure that it is fully consistent with any plans for future sewerage provision to the wider area.

The developer should be required to provide full details of how the system will be operated and maintained.

Further guidance is provided in Design Guidance outlined in SD 5.

ST 2

Sites for Sewage Treatment Works

Sites for sewage treatment works close to urban areas and major settlements in the countryside and on the coast need to be safeguarded from future development. The site proposed for a sewerage treatment plant east of Centre de Flacq is shown on the Development Management Map. Buffer zones for sewage treatment works should conform to advice in the Industrial Development Design Guidance.

Justification: The Wastewater Management Authority has a target of connecting at least 80% of the population of Mauritius to a sewerage system and sewage treatment works by 2020 with an intermediate target of connecting 50% of the population by 2010. There are relatively few sites where it will be economically viable to construct sewage treatment facilities. Over the plan period consideration should be given to the provision of sewerage systems in settlements that were not included in the original Sewerage Masterplan, especially in the west of the District where urbanisation pressures are likely to continue. As such sites are identified and confirmed by the WMA they need to be safeguarded from development. Also such facilities are considered to be “bad neighbour” developments and new works need to be located away from residential and other sensitive land uses as outlined in ID 4.

ST 3

Treating Effluent from Polluting Industries

All industries that produce potentially polluting effluent must be required to provide an appropriately designed and maintained effluent treatment plant. Industrial effluent must not be connected to septic tank systems.

Justification: Generally due to the extreme vulnerability of the water supply aquifer that extends under most of the District it would be preferable that no potentially polluting industry be located other than in an area served by a centralised sewerage system. If, in the national interest, it is essential that potentially polluting industries be located in areas not served by centralised
sewerage systems, then the industry itself should be required to provide and maintain a full treatment works to ensure the effluent meets WMA and other relevant authority standards required for discharge to the environment. Septic tank systems would not be acceptable for treating industrial effluents.

ST 4

Septic Tanks and Soakaways

*Where centralised sewerage systems are not available or viable, septic tank sewage treatment systems should be required.* Written approval of the design of the proposed sewage disposal system should be obtained from the WMA prior to issue of a building and land use permit.

No subsequent change to the number of residential units on, or use of, a plot should be permitted unless approval of the sewage disposal system is again obtained from the WMA.

*Given the higher risk of contamination of groundwater in Coastal Lands locations or in high groundwater areas or on less permeable ground and as advised by the WMA, development proposed in such areas should provide leaching fields as part of the sewage disposal system.* Written approval of the design of this type of sewage disposal should also be obtained from the WMA prior to issue of a building and land use permit. *The location and design of septic tanks and soakaways should broadly conform with Design Guidance and their construction supervised and controlled by relevant authorities to ensure that they are properly built and maintained.*

*Justification:* Properties in un-sewered areas are generally served by on-plot septic tanks and soakaways or leaching fields (required in Coastal Lands areas, high groundwater areas and on less permeable ground particularly). Many of the installed septic tank systems have been poorly designed and constructed and consequently contribute to pollution of adjacent properties, water courses and potentially the important groundwater and surface water resources.

The practice of constructing a septic tank system sized for a single residential unit and then connecting several apartments or housing units to it should be discouraged; in many instances it is likely that the constructed facilities provide practically no treatment and are little better than pit-latrines.

Septic tank systems can treat sewage to a reasonable standard and where the soil conditions are suitable they are appropriate means of treatment in relatively low density and scattered developments. It is important that they are
properly designed, constructed and maintained if the environment and groundwater resources in particular, are to be protected.

Special care is needed when designing septic tank systems in higher density developments and in areas of particularly permeable or impermeable soils. The WMA has design guidelines which have been incorporated into Design Guidance outlined in SD 5. Any departure from the existing criteria for the siting of septic tank and absorption pit with regard to location and plot size and specific circumstances will need to be referred to WMA on a case to case basis. Adequately-resourced building regulation inspection teams should be set-up and operationalised to enable and monitor this construction and approval process.

**DR 1**

**Drainage Systems**

*All major developments should provide appropriate systems to ensure that they are adequately drained, that neighbouring developments are not adversely affected and the cumulative drainage implications for the wider catchment area are taken into account in the planning of new schemes. Drainage systems should broadly conform to Design Guidance outlined in SD 5.*

*Justification:* Drainage systems and discharges from developments need to be properly designed to ensure that they are adequate to protect the development from the effects of all but the most extreme rainfall events whilst avoiding creating problems for nearby properties and/or damage to the environment. The areas that might flood during an extreme rainfall event should be identified through site visits and studies and the development planned to minimise potential adverse effects.

Catchment areas for each stream, rivulet or river should be determined and use should be made of these natural courses to channel water through the development as far as possible; roadside drainage should only be used to channel water from relatively small catchment areas, of 2 to 6ha (for ground slopes of between 0 and 6%).

**SW 1**

**Sites for Landfill**

*Sites for new landfill and for other types of solid waste disposal should be protected from development. In respect of buffer zones for such bad neighbour developments, reference should also be made to the provisions of Policy ID 4 and Industrial Development Design Guidance.*
Sites for proposed landfills will be required to undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with the EPA 2002 as amended, a social impact assessment as well as a traffic impact assessment.

*Justification:* The Ministry responsible for Local Government has requested proposals from landowners to make land available for the construction of new landfill sites: such facilities will require a comprehensive EIA to be prepared. Landfill facilities are considered to be “bad neighbour” developments and need to be located away from residential and other sensitive land uses. Wherever possible, such sites together with other ‘bad neighbour’ developments should be clustered within an industrial/utility development on a well-accessed site where buffer zones up to 1 km can be established from sensitive land uses. The Industrial Development Design Guidance contains guidelines on buffer zones for Landfill sites.

**E 1**

Sites for New Power Stations

*To sustain increased industrial activity and other development throughout the country new power supplies will be required over the planning period. The CEB continues to request proposals from the private sector to construct additional power generation facilities.*

*To address future requirements a new station may be constructed adjacent to the MDA sugar factory at St Pierre/Helvetia and a new coal/bagasse plant adjacent to the existing one at Union Flacq. Potential sites, once confirmed, should be safeguarded from development and in planning new developments in adjacent areas consideration should be given to the establishment of a buffer zone around such a bad neighbour development, in accordance with Policy ID 4 and the Industrial Development Design Guidance.*

Development proposals for new power stations will be required to include a comprehensive EIA in accordance with the EPA 2002 as amended

*Justification:* The Central Electricity Board (CEB) anticipate that a large proportion of their increasing electricity requirements will be met by independent power providers (IPP); it is probable that private sector power stations will rely upon burning bagasse and coal in the non-harvest season and consequently new stations are likely to be sited close to sugar factories. Requests for proposals for new power stations continue to be made by the CEB and there is the potential for one to be constructed somewhere in the district.
Construction of Overhead Power Lines

Construction of new High Voltage (HV) overhead power lines should not normally be permitted across areas of environmental sensitivity or landscape significance, or within 13 metres of existing developments, subject to consideration of factors such as topography and vegetation. Installation of high tension lines in environmentally areas will require an Environmental Impact assessment in accordance with the EPA 2002 as amended.

Justification: It is important to retain the integrity of areas of environmental sensitivity and landscape significance and to protect existing development from the industrial wirescape that results from close proximity to HV pylons and cables. A way-leave is required for such power lines (approximately 26 metres), which needs to be accessible and maintained clear of trees, which consequently leaves an open swathe through the countryside.

Service Corridors

The need for service corridors and rights of way for water supply, power cable and telecommunications cable networks and other services should be incorporated into the design stage for major development projects and be reflected in the construction of the development. The design and setbacks required to accommodate service corridors should conform with Design Guidance outlined in SD 5.

Justification: It is essential that corridors for the erection of overhead lines and for laying underground cables and pipes are identified during the planning stage of major new developments. Generally it is preferable to install the water supply pipes, medium and low voltage power lines and telephone lines along road reserves and these should be sufficiently wide, with buildings set back from the side of the road reserves to allow adequate clearance to cables. High voltage electricity lines will generally need to cross over third party land and permission for major developments should be conditional upon the utility providers being able to obtain necessary wayleaves. The CEB has stated that where a development requires the relocation of power supply infrastructure including undergrounding of cables then the cost of doing so should be met by the developer. For safety reasons, underground cables should be separated from other services.
GI 2

Sites for Power and Telecoms Infrastructure

*The need for sites for transformer sub-stations, distribution kiosks, telephone kiosks and cabinets should be considered during the planning and design stage for development projects and broadly conforms to Design Guidance outlined in SD 5.*

*Justification:* In order to supply new customers with electricity it is necessary to reduce the supply voltage to that required by consumers, generally 230V for domestic customers but a higher voltage may be required by commercial and industrial customers. The electricity and telephone utility providers require areas for the construction of transformers, distribution cabinets, kiosks and masts and developers should provide suitable sites to allow the installation of the necessary equipment. For single plot developments in existing built-up areas space will often be required within the building itself.
## Schedule One

**VCA Population 2000**

### POPULATION - MOKA FLACQ DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village Council Area (VCA) - Moka</th>
<th>Population 2000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camp Thorel</td>
<td>2,168</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dagotière</td>
<td>6,352</td>
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<td>Dubreuil</td>
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<td>Esperance</td>
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<tr>
<td>La Laura – Malenga</td>
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<td>Moka</td>
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<td>Providence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verdun</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>Village Council Area (VCA) – Flacq</td>
<td>VCA Population 2000</td>
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<td>Bel Air Rivière Sèche</td>
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<td>Trou D'Eau Douce</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Housing & Population Census, CSO, 2000
Schedule Two

National Heritage Fund Act
Schedule of Items of National Heritage

MOKA DISTRICT

1. Government House, Le Réduit

FLACQ DISTRICT

2. Commerson Monument
3. District Court
4. Limekilns (Poste de Flacq)
5. Old Cemetery (Poste de Flacq)
6. Old Sugar Mill Chimney (Petite Retraite)
7. Pont D'Epinay (Bramsthan)
8. Prisons of Belle Mare
9. Ruins of Quatre Cocos Factory
10. Sugar Factory (Belle Mare)
11. Tomb of Le Comte Gaud Louis Ravanel (St. Julien Cemetery)
12. Verandah of Manager's Residence (Constance)
Schedule Three

Land/ Water Interface Development

(a) Boating industry facilities;
(b) Boat launching ramps;
(c) Boardwalks;
(d) Large marinas;
(e) Marinas;
(f) Public water transport facilities;
(g) Water based restaurants and entertainment facilities;
(h) Water recreational facilities;
(i) Development for the purposes of any of the following, when carried out wholly or partly in the waterway:
   (i) Dwellings of any type (including serviced apartments),
   (ii) Commercial premises,
   (iii) Tourist facilities,
   (iv) Shops and retailing,
   (v) Restaurants,
   (vi) Recreation facilities,
   (vii) Car-parking.
(j) Charter and tourism boating facilities;
(k) Commercial port facilities;
(l) Houseboats;
(m) Multiple moorings;
(n) Slipways;
(o) Wharves, jetties, pontoons;
(p) Boatsheds; and
(q) Commercial port facilities.
(r) Development/rehabilitation of existing Barachois, aquaculture activities
Schedule Four

Glossary of Terms