Sir

I am honoured to be proposed for the vital job of stewardship of Jersey’s special environment and ensuring it remains so. In accepting the nomination, I want to inform members of the skills and knowledge I can bring to the role, the main environmental policy priorities with the likely direction of travel if I am elected.

My past record demonstrates my tenacity, diligence, hardworking and passion for whatever task I take on. I have served as a civil servant and a politician; in government finance, health, planning and property management. In private sector law firm and trust company and in Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney.

 I have professional qualifications in Accountancy and Compliance. “what you see is what you get” - no frills, open style, working with others.

After coming to Jersey to work in Treasury and Health, I headed up the then IDC, my role for 13 years. There were huge concerns about population and the need to conserve our coasts, heritage and countryside. While reforming the old IDC I expanded its role into the environment functions. In 2002 I formed the environmental department proper, absorbing scientific functions from public works, met office, and regulatory from agriculture, setting a programme of environmental legislation. I stood down in 2004 to enable efficiency savings.

There are those will say this experience is too close for me to be Minister but that was 14 years ago, and the department has since gone through much change. Since then I also have had four other roles outside the States.

I have also worked with Guernsey Planning appeals tribunal; I managed a Jersey law firm and supported client planning matters, having overseen the development of new Planning and Building Law and the Island Plan 2002. I was critical of the brutal design of the Portelet development in my constituency, and stood and was elected Deputy to change things, successfully bringing a proposition to replace the royal court planning appeals .

I also amended the island plan to protect neighbours from over development.

I served for three years as Chair of the Environment Scrutiny panel. Our work on the Energy Policy to the States is still 100% valid today and is hugely disappointing to me that nothing has been done to progress our opportunity to exploit renewable energy. Similarly, with the management of radon health risks.

After my unsuccessful 2014 Senatorial election, I was invited to Alderney to work as their Planning Officer. In three years I produced their 2017 land use plan with political members, working with an external practice, the Environment and Heritage community groups. This required revisions of their planning law where I instructed Guernsey’s crown officers. After taking this through two Planning Inquiries Alderney now has a modern and robust framework of law and policy to manage the multi-million renewable energy projects on their doorstep. The chairman of Guernsey Development Control Authority has showed much interest in this work as have the crown dependencies and overseas territories environment ministers group.

During this time, I assisted Jersey planning appellants and represented one case through the Complaints Board. I made undertakings to constituents to return as Deputy and challenge for environment minister. I am fulfilling that promise today but did not expect to be proposed by the CM.

I am generally content with the regulatory work of the environment team other than the need to ensure agricultural practices reduce ground water pollution from nitrates and other chemicals and soil erosion. We can’t tolerate exceeding 50 mg/ l the EU limit in drinking water. But new policies and research investment into alternative crops, field Trials and scientific research is important. With Brexit risks and the bay of Granville agreement with the French requiring renewal, Important work is to be done on fisheries conservation.

Environment and Planning are two sides of the same policy coin, together with transport planning and the allocation and use of States land and property assets are part of the strategic picture.

This should include our assets managed by SOJDC and other quangos which require a common strategy and policy setting. Without it there will continue to be limited progress on Urban improvements. Longstanding promises made to town residents by previous ministers must be delivered. Town including the Waterfront, needs public investment and an integrated development plan so people *want* to live in town. I want to plan so our delivery agencies can provide more open green spaces, parks and play areas, community centers, better pavements, better crossings, tree lined streets, a hopper bus, and cycle paths.

We need joined up policies to deliver and reduce the adverse impact of traffic on residential communities.

Environment will be a key player in cross ministry Strategic Policy groups planned by the chief Minister, this will be worked out in next few months, important decisions need to be made. There is a requirement to reflect the civil service organisational changes in the political oversight and accountability arrangements and must get this right

I want to see working groups formed for the island plan review, in partnerships with Parishes and community stakeholders. The plan must be adopted by 2021 at the latest. I want to see an interim review of housing, especially affordable housing policies, by the end of this year.

That will include producing village plans for future sustainable communities with the Constables, to identify and evaluate suitable brown-field and ill fill sites. I would not myself rule out limited expansions of village envelopes if this can be accommodated by the communities. That work will need substantial resources to engage an external planning practice who will bring quality public engagement, objectivity and rigor which is lacking in 2011 plan. The draft plan and all its policies will go to public consultation, a planning Inquiry and ultimately to the States for approval.

I want to see policies to stop out of scale buildings being imposed on communities.

I want to call a halt to the damage to our townscapes by ensuring all new developments have appropriately scaled buildings which establish a strong sense of place which respects the special character of Jersey.

Our Green zone is under threat from major developments, schemes proposed by government agencies should not encourage developments which breach policy. Locate jersey with wealthy residents seemingly have a by – pass from normal planning restrictions allowing mega large mansions which unacceptably impose on neighbors and dominate their surroundings. They have the resources compared with the ordinary people who must jump through endless bureaucratic hoops and cannot afford legal challenges.

I propose our next draft island plan includes a policy restriction on the size of such replacement dwellings.

Our shorelines are also increasingly vulnerable to damaging over- development. The law requires we protect our coasts and countryside, but many of 2011 policies are ambiguous, and have contradictions. I would like to see stronger policy protection and legal powers to designate conservation areas to conserve our very special areas, whether landscape, coastal, special biodiversity or heritage.

I would like to see Planning policies which are strong which encourage the re-development of brown field sites, the conversion of redundant historic farm buildings and replacement of commercial buildings (including offices) to provide much needed homes, including two generation homes.

Our Planning law needs amendment to provide stronger powers to enter into planning obligation agreements to require developers to provide affordable housing sites and deal with developer’s land banking. A housing crisis can’t be solved by planning permission alone but needs intervention.

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The planning system needs to be robust, with no more bureaucracy than needed proportionate to the development proposed. Unfortunately, the planning system bites disproportionately on the small householder. Under the new civil service structure regulatory functions are going to be combined. This makes it even more important the Ministers policy setting and regulatory decision processes work better. At present this is weak.

I will review the single planning inspector system for appeals relies too heavily on their subjective judgements. I favour the Guernsey tribunal system with an inspector siting with two other persons.

Sir that is but a flavour of what members can expect if I am elected, pragmatic but a firm hand, consultative but robust.