

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY M.R. LE HEGARAT OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2021**

Question

Will the Minister inform members of the following –

- a) the number of glasshouse or polytunnel sites no longer in active use;
- b) the length of time that they have been derelict for;
- c) what, if any, actions are being taken by government to see these sites restored to agricultural use or adapted for another purpose; and
- d) the reason why none of these sites was nominated for affordable housing in the Bridging Island Plan?

Answer

a) and b) Information about the amount and use of land under glass or polytunnels is set out in the [agricultural statistics report](#) the latest of which, for 2018, was published in September 2020.

Relevant extracts from this report are set out below which indicate that 43.5% of land under glass; and 15% of land under polytunnels has not been actively cropped in the last 12 months (as of the end of 2017).

The fact that land under glass or polytunnels has not been actively cropped does not necessarily render the structures derelict; however, the viability of using them for productive agricultural use will likely decrease over time where they are no longer used and maintained.

Table 10: Glasshouse areas (m²)

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | m ² | m ² | m ² | m ² | m ² |
| Glasshouses under 5 years | 5,800 | 5,800 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Glasshouses 5 - 10 years | 12 | 12 | 5,812 | 5820 | 5,020 |
| Glasshouses 10-15 years | 26,019 | 20,131 | 16,131 | 0 | 800 |
| Glasshouses over 15 years | 193,639 | 199,527 | 189,914 | 168,480 | 149,012 |
| Total area of glasshouses | 225,470* | 225,470* | 211,857* | 174,300* | 154,832 |
| Of which: | | | | | |
| Area not cropped in last 12 months | 24,150 | 21,468 | 30,878 | 30,590 | 67,334 |
| % not cropped of production area | 10.7 | 9.5 | 14.5 | 17.5 | 43.5 |

Note: data does not include garden centres, parks & gardens and derelict/rezoned glasshouse sites.

Source: Agricultural statistics report (2018)

Table 12: Polythene Tunnel Areas (m²)

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | m ² |
| <i>Area of Multi Span</i> | 94,145 | 97,281 | 88,275 | 82,257 | 59,467 |
| <i>Area of Single Span</i> | 54,777 | 53,945 | 51,235 | 53,918 | 53,121 |
| <i>Total area of polythene tunnels</i> | 148,922 | 151,226 | 139,510 | 136,175 | 112,588 |
| <i>Of which:</i> | | | | | |
| <i>Area not cropped in last 12 months</i> | 19,857 | 17,263 | 16,796 | 16,845 | 16,897 |
| | | | | | |
| <i>% of production area not cropped</i> | 13 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 15 |

Source: Agricultural statistics report (2018)

c) The States Assembly sets the planning policy framework for the management of derelict and redundant glasshouses in the Island Plan.

In the current Island Plan this is contained in [Policy ERE 7: Derelict and redundant glasshouses](#). The key elements of this policy are as follows:

- glasshouses which have become surplus to the requirements of the existing user, but which are considered to be of value to the horticultural industry, should be retained in the industry and advertised for sale or rent.
- where glasshouses are no longer viable to the horticultural industry and a 'disuse and disrepair' condition is attached to the planning permission, then the landowner will be required to comply with that condition.
- in exceptional circumstances, the development of redundant and derelict glasshouse sites may be considered for non-agricultural purposes, provided that the amount of development permitted will be the minimum required to ensure a demonstrable environmental improvement of the site by the removal of the glasshouses and any contaminated material, the reduction in the area of buildings, and the repair to the landscape.

The draft Island Plan contains similar policy provisions at [Policy ERE6 – Derelict and redundant glasshouses](#).

d) To ensure that the development needs of the island can be met, as far as possible, over the plan period of the bridging Island Plan, the Minister for the Environment invited landowners to put forward sites that were available and which might be considered and assessed for their development potential, as part of the Island Plan Review 'call for sites' process. This enabled the owners of land - including the owners of derelict and redundant glasshouses and polytunnels – to submit their sites for consideration.

Any site considered as part of this process was assessed against a range of planning criteria, including the existing use of the land, as set out below.

| Assessment criteria | | Classification | Rating |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------|
| Spatial strategy | Settlement Integration: | Within or edge of primary or secondary centre | 4 |
| | | Within or edge of local centre | 3 |
| | | Within or edge of smaller settlement | 2 |
| | | No integration | 1 |
| Accessibility | Accessibility & suitability | Very high accessibility rating (rating above 80) | 5 |
| | | High accessibility rating (rating above 60-80) | 4 |
| | | Medium accessibility rating (rating above 40-60) | 3 |
| | | Low accessibility rating (rating below 20-40) | 2 |
| | | Very low accessibility rating (rating below 20) | 1 |
| Landscape analysis | Countryside Character Area (ILSCA) | Urban area | 7 |
| | | Interior agricultural land | 6 |
| | | St Clement & Grouville coastal plain | 5 |
| | | St Ouen's Bay & Quasine coastal plain | 4 |
| | | Escarpment | 3 |
| | | Enclosed valleys | 2 |
| | | Cliffs and headlands | 1 |
| Use | Existing use of site: | Brownfield | 4 |
| | | Glasshouse | 3 |
| | | Agricultural field | 2 |
| | | Open space/recreation/community use | 1 |

Table HSA2: Site suitability analysis criteria

Source: Housing land availability and assessment of sites report (2018)

In this respect, therefore, any derelict and redundant glasshouse or polytunnel sites submitted and assessed through this process would have been considered against these relevant criteria; however, it is only those sites that performed best against these key planning criteria that have been taken forward for further assessment and review. The detail of the site assessment process, and the outcome of the initial assessment of sites, is set out in the [housing land availability and assessment of sites report](#).

Those sites proposed for rezoning in the draft plan, to help meet the need for affordable homes, are those that are considered to be most acceptable in planning terms.

It is relevant to note that island's agricultural industry has been undergoing change for some considerable time, including the cessation of tomato growing for export in 2008. Since that time, a number of those former glasshouse sites most suited for development for other uses, specifically the development of homes, where they were well-located relative to the island's built-up areas, have already been redeveloped through their rezoning in previous Island Plans. This includes the following sites:

- De la Mare Nurseries, Rue a Don, Grouville (now Jardin de la Mare)
- Samarès Nursery, Grande Route de St Clement, St Clement (now Clos de la Colonie +)
- Field 274, La Louderie, St Clement (now Hameau de la Mer)
- Fields 561 and 562, Rue du Maistre, St Mary (now Jardin de Haut)
- Fields 203, part 204 and 252, Rue de Jambart, St Clement (now Clos du Corvez)
- Hodge Nurseries, Grande Route de St Clement, St Clement (now Clos de L'Abri)
- Fields 786 and 787, La Rue des Cosnets, St Ouen (now La Ville Vautier)

The remaining stock of older derelict and redundant glass is generally considered to be less well-suited to redevelopment for affordable homes because of, amongst other issues, its relatively remote location and potential to generate significant trip generation, and potentially damaging impact on the character of the countryside.