



**Proposed Local Development Plan, 2023
L'Anse aux Epines, St George, Grenada**

Submitted to: The Planning and Development Authority

By: L'Anse aux Epines Association (LAEA) and Coral Cove Group (CCG)

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Preamble

A local development plan is a vehicle for communities to decide key items about the future of where they live and work. It sets out a vision for the uses of land and assets that can be enshrined in state policy and law.

This proposed local development plan is prepared under the Physical Planning and Development Control Act 23, 2016, Part III. It aims to achieve legal status and to provide input as part of a national physical development plan. We aim to work closely with the Planning and Development Authority and other agencies including Climate Resilience and Environment to formulate an agreed plan for a sustainable future for L'Anse aux Epines, which can be revisited periodically as change is required.

It is intended that the process of evolving this local development plan will be useful for other community groups in preparing local plans for other areas of the country.

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1. Introduction/Vision

L’Anse aux Epines (LAE) is a peninsula with Mt Hartman Bay to the east and Prickly Bay to the west. As the most southerly tip of Grenada, it separates the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean.

It is predominantly residential and, as a location for convenient access to shopping, employment, the national airport and other amenities, it is under considerable pressures for further residential and commercial development, including tourism. These pressures are threatening the quality of low-density residential life and the preservation of remaining natural assets including wetlands and mangroves and the conservation of land, coastal and marine flora and fauna.

This proposed Local Development Plan 2023 is based on the aim of achieving a balance between retaining remaining natural assets, responding to housing demand, creating employment opportunities compatible with an established low-density residential area, and promoting environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

The vision for LAE is to maintain its predominantly residential character, to prevent over-development and to create improvement in the quality of the built and natural environments for the experience of residents and visitors alike.

2. Brief History and the Area Now

What is now called L'Anse aux Epines was once part of Grand Anse Estate. In 1846 it was severed from the larger estate and re-named. Gordon Brathwaite purchased it in the 1950s with the intention of farming the flat lands and building on the slopes. Gradually over the years it was developed with access roads and sub-divisions for housing and hotels, with some areas kept for agricultural purposes. Almost all lands are now sold, with some of the residual lands presently held by a trust.

3. Main Issues

Current issues faced include the following:

- development on sites of environmental or conservation significance that provide habitat for native species and contribute to climate sustainability
- pressure for buildings to have more than two storeys (two storeys is accepted in Grenada as the norm for residential areas) including pressure to construct multi-storey apartment buildings replacing small scale and low-density buildings
- construction of large developments on lands adjoining LAE that would bring adverse consequences for LAE in terms of damage to the natural coastline and ecology, contamination of the marine environment and increased road traffic volumes, especially at pressure points already operating at capacity at peak times
- climate change / global heating effects causing rising sea levels and loss of beaches, coastal land and buildings
- weak and slow legal remedy for violations of land covenants (aiming to control development) causing disbenefit to neighbouring properties
- water supply constraints
- rising traffic volumes including after-dark volumes and roadside parking posing serious risks to pedestrians and causing congestion in the access to LAE.

4. Key Aims and Objectives of the Local Development Plan (LDP)

The LDP aims to influence the current and future development of LAE to alleviate the worst of the issues identified in Section 3 above. It aims to produce an agreed-upon set of land uses and development rules that allow residents and businesses to live in peace and harmony with each other and with the natural and social environments.

The overwhelming consensus of residents of LAE is that the peninsula should remain predominantly residential comprising single dwellings of one or two storeys on lots sufficiently large to allow significant planting or retention of native vegetation to maintain the low-density, green, family-home character of the area.

Commercial development - workplaces, retail and tourism - should be limited to those sites already in those uses or in the area allocated for those uses in this LDP as outlined in Section 7. Commercial and residential activity should be restricted in nature and size so as not to significantly increase adverse environmental and social effects including traffic volumes, speeds, pollution and noise. Pedestrian safety should be improved urgently. Economic development and employment creation should be compatible with a predominantly residential area.

Areas of environmental or conservation importance including wetlands, coastline and mangroves should be designated as Environmental Protected Areas under the Physical Planning and Development Control Act 23, 2016. Section 48 of the Act states:

(1) “Without prejudice to the exercise of the power conferred on the Minister under section 47, the Minister may, on the recommendation of the Authority, and if he is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so, by Order published in the Gazette, declare any area to be an environmental protected area and direct the Authority to prepare and to submit to him, for approval, an environmental protection plan for that area; and the Authority shall act accordingly.

(2) The undertaking of any activity in an environmental protected area shall be subject to such conditions as may be prescribed.”

Annex 2 provides our suggestions for conditions for each of the proposed Environmental Protected Areas.

LAE is coastal and vulnerable to changing weather patterns and sea level rise highlighting the need to maintain and protect the wetland areas, mangroves and beach-stabilising trees, reefs and seagrass beds.

The built form of all future development should be limited in height and bulk and plot coverage to retain the character of a residential area and to avoid blocking sea views. This is elaborated in Section 6.

5. Built Development and the Area Now

Figure x shows the pattern of land use today with:

- residential lots
- wetlands and other green spaces
- commercial and hotel sites and uses.

The main commercial uses currently are:

[add brief description where missing or inaccurate]

- Twelve Degrees North – hotel apartments
- SGU University Club – residential for SGU and restaurant
- Lance aux Epines Cottages – self catering resort and restaurant
- Calabash Hotel – boutique hotel
- Prickly Bay – marina, restaurant and bar with independent retailers
- Secret Harbour – boutique hotel, marina and restaurant
- North South Wines – wine shipper and retailer
- Dr. Yaw - dentist
- Sugar and Spice -
- The Brewery – bar and restaurant
- Spice Affair - restaurant
- The Junction - bar
- TVA Consultants – surveyors and engineers
- Caults' -
- Mt. Hartman Bay Estate – holiday villas
- Villamar Apartments – rental apartments
- Vintage 20 Ltd. -
- Solamente - guesthouse
- Caribbean Food Distribution Inc. – importers and distributors
- Mandela Court – apartment hotel
- Monmot Apartments – apartment hotel

Figure x: Land use today [to be annotated showing location of all main uses]



6. Future development

This is considered in terms of:

- Built form and infrastructure: LAE wide
- Development by specific sites

6.1 Built form and infrastructure - LAE wide

The current relevant regulations are the Land Development Regulations and the Land Development (Fees) Regulations Cap. 241A under the Physical Planning and Development Control Act 23, 2016.

For the most part, these regulations are appropriate except that they leave too much to the discretion of the Authority. This results in uncertainty for residents and potential developers and leaves the Authority open to accusations of making arbitrary decisions – or worse. LAE requires more specific and more rigorous regulations controlling the built form of developments including their height and plot coverage because LAE is now a well-established, predominantly residential area where residents need some protection and certainty about what will be allowed on land affecting them. This applies to other areas of the country as well of course.

This could be achieved by the addition of a second schedule to the Land Development Regulations Cap 241A and detailed proposals for this are provided as Annex 1 to this LDP.

6.2 Development by specific sites

For the purposes of this LDP, LAE is considered under a number of sub-areas. These are:

Key sites within LAE:

- Coral Cove Cottages
- Brewery strip
- 'Village Green' (playing field) and surrounding plots
- Public beach next to LAE Cottages
- Secret Harbour / Mt Hartman
- Wetlands and coastal mangroves
- Prickly Bay Marina
- SGU Club and land to the north.

Key sites affecting LAE:

- LAE approach road
- Quarry
- Mt Hartman.

Section 7 provides proposals for development and constraints for each of these locations.

7. Key sites within LAE

Coral Cove Cottages

This 5-acre site has been a low-key, self-catering tourism facility for decades with five single storey cottages and a small block of rooms. It has a narrow beach protected from erosion by established trees and is a nesting site for the critically endangered Hawksbill turtle.



It was recently closed and the site acquired by an overseas developer. Plans were submitted for a large, 5-storey hotel that was vehemently and successfully opposed by the LAE community and beyond and by environmental and conservation groups.

The site is entirely unsuitable for a conventional hotel facing the constant and corrosive Atlantic winds. It could end up as a white elephant – a half completed shell or a failed hotel and eyesore as happened in Tobago when Hilton pulled out of a major hotel in a similar situation leaving the government to pick up the tab for expensive restoration after only a few years of exposure to the sea blast.

<https://www.raymondandpierre.com/articles/article46.htm>

The site would be suitable for a small eco-tourism lodge based on marine exploration and educative vacations of the kind growing in popularity around the world. Any development should be restricted to the footprints and form of the existing cottages with a maximum of two storeys and with no encroachment towards the sea.

The southern 40% of the site is untouched ancient coastal woodland and should, together with the trees on the beach, be designated as an Environmental Protected Area under the Physical Planning and Development Act 23, 2016, S.48.

[Etc.]

The Brewery Strip

The western side of the LAE Main Road into LAE has developed into an entertainment strip from The Brewery south to the 'village green' with two bars and two restaurants and a small supermarket at the entrance of the road into the Calabash Hotel and other holiday accommodation.



There are likely to be pressures for more such development in this area and this should not be opposed as long as individual applications provide adequate off-road parking and noise protection for residences to the west and east of the Strip.

[Etc]

‘Village Green’ (playing field) and surrounding plots

The main uses of this area are the playing field, Calabash Hotel and adjacent holiday apartments, LAE Cottages, a wine retail business, an engineer’s office, a dentist and a small private school.

The green itself is owned by a member of the Brathwaite family and is set aside as public space used for informal sports activities and maintained by the LAEA. Some community tree planting around the edges has been undertaken. There is a possibility that a portion of the southwest corner may have to be converted into a holding pond to accommodate problematic area drainage.

No building should be allowed on this site.

New development is possible on private plots on the west side of the road along the western edge of the green and would be suitable for commercial use extending the ‘Brewery Strip’ or for residential use.

No further development is foreseen for the Calabash Hotel or other sites adjacent currently providing holiday apartments and another small, single storey hotel. In the case of any further building, height should be limited to a maximum of two storeys.

[Etc.]

Public beach next to LAE Cottages

This area of 18,200 square feet at the southern end of LAE Beach has been set aside by the private owners for public use and beach access. It is currently kept clean and maintained by the private owner of Lance Aux Epines Cottages.

Note that the protection from development afforded this area results from the decision of its private owners and not (yet) from legislation.



No development of any kind should be granted consent and public access should be ensured.

[Etc.]

Secret Harbour / Mt Hartman

This is a mature small hotel, restaurant and marina at the top of Mt Hartman Bay. It is a quiet, low activity area and the Bay is used for yacht anchorage with access to the marina jetty for provisioning and transport.



Next to and north of Secret Harbour are three individual houses on the Bay abutting a five-acre site with planning consent for an industrial boatyard. This consent is strongly opposed by LAE residents on environmental and contamination grounds and is now under judicial review.

An industrial boatyard is an entirely inappropriate use for this land requiring the removal of mangroves lining the coast, dredging and piling of the sea bed and producing aquatic poisons as boats are stripped of old antifouling paints and repainted.

[Etc.]

Wetlands and coastal mangroves

Located in south LAE, the wetlands is 11.57 acres of mangrove and dry scrub forest. The area has been set aside by the owners as a natural protected green space. In order to assist with the care and protection of the area the owners are collaborating with the Gaea Conservation Network to monitor, advise and share information about the health of this protected area. Note that the protection from development afforded this area results from the decision of its private owners and not (yet) from any legislation.



Much of coastal LAE and adjacent Mount Hartman is lined with ancient mangroves. These protect from erosion and sea surges, filter soil and silt run off and constitute nurseries for much young marine life some of which, when adult, forms the catch of the local fishing industry.

No development should be allowed that removes or damages any mangroves within LAE or the coast of Mount Hartman Bay from Secret Harbour around to the Dove Sanctuary.

It is intended that the proposals in this sub-section shall be taken into account by the ministry responsible for the environment in preparing a Coastal Zone Management Plan under the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Act 8, 2019. “The Minister may, in consultation with the Director and the Fisheries Division, by Order designate any portion of the coastal zone as a prohibited [or restricted] area . . .” to, inter alia, preserve or enhance the natural beauty of the area or to protect or rehabilitate the flora and fauna found in the area.

[Etc.]

Prickly Bay Marina area

Prickly Bay is already seriously polluted by sewage from boats and (mainly) from inadequate sewerage systems of the residential and commercial developments lining both sides of the Bay. If this not corrected and allowed to get worse it will have serious consequences for hotels and public beach use. We request a survey by public health engineers and Nawasa to find affordable solutions and to enforce compliance under public health legislation from all existing developments.



Any applications for further development on the coast should be subject to rigorous evaluation by the public health authorities, consents should be subject to strict conditions and construction monitored closely to ensure compliance. Planning consents granted by the Planning and Development Authority should include clear warnings that violations are an offence, consents will be revoked and developments stopped.

[Etc.]

SGU Club and land to the north

This old hotel site and buildings are now owned by SGU and used as accommodation for visiting SGU staff and researchers and a restaurant open to the public. The large vacant site to the north once had a single dwelling since removed. It is owned by a senior SGU individual privately. The small vacant site further north and with mature trees is also thought to be owned by individuals connected to SGU.

These are important sites forming a small green 'lung' forming a link from the sea to the wetlands. It has been slowly returning to its former natural state and provides a haven for wildlife including the Barn Owls frequently seen there and nearby hunting for rodents at night.



Any development of this site should be restricted to replacing the previous single residence. Multiple housing units, apartments or commercial use should not be allowed.

The site should be given Environmental Protected Area status under the Physical Planning and Development Act 23, 2016, S.48 with the provision of allowable development for a single residence to a maximum of two storeys high with the condition that the bulk of the site is left to revert to its natural state of dry woodlands.

[Etc.]

8. Key sites not within LAE but affecting LAE

LAE Approach Road

This refers to the road into LAE from Sugar Mill to the Brewery Strip.



Traffic issues are building up here quickly. A new multi-storey mall will add more. Pedestrian safety is an urgent problem with increased volumes of pedestrians including workers walking in and out after dark, the absence of pavements and the uncontrolled speed of vehicles. Speed control measures are needed urgently on all sections of this road particularly on the long straight section by the US Embassy.

There are already multi-storey buildings along this road. More apartment blocks and commercial buildings are likely and there is no reason to prevent this if they provide adequate parking.

Multi-storey buildings should stop at LAE boundary to indicate entry to a different 'place' as buildings thereon into LAE are one or two storey only and should remain so.

All new development planning consents should be conditional on providing pedestrian footpaths along road frontages

[Etc.]

Quarry

Around 40 years worth of high quality stone remaining.
What then!



[Etc.]

Mt Hartman

Uncertainty over what is likely to happen here.

Not clear what is approved

Under challenge by judicial review

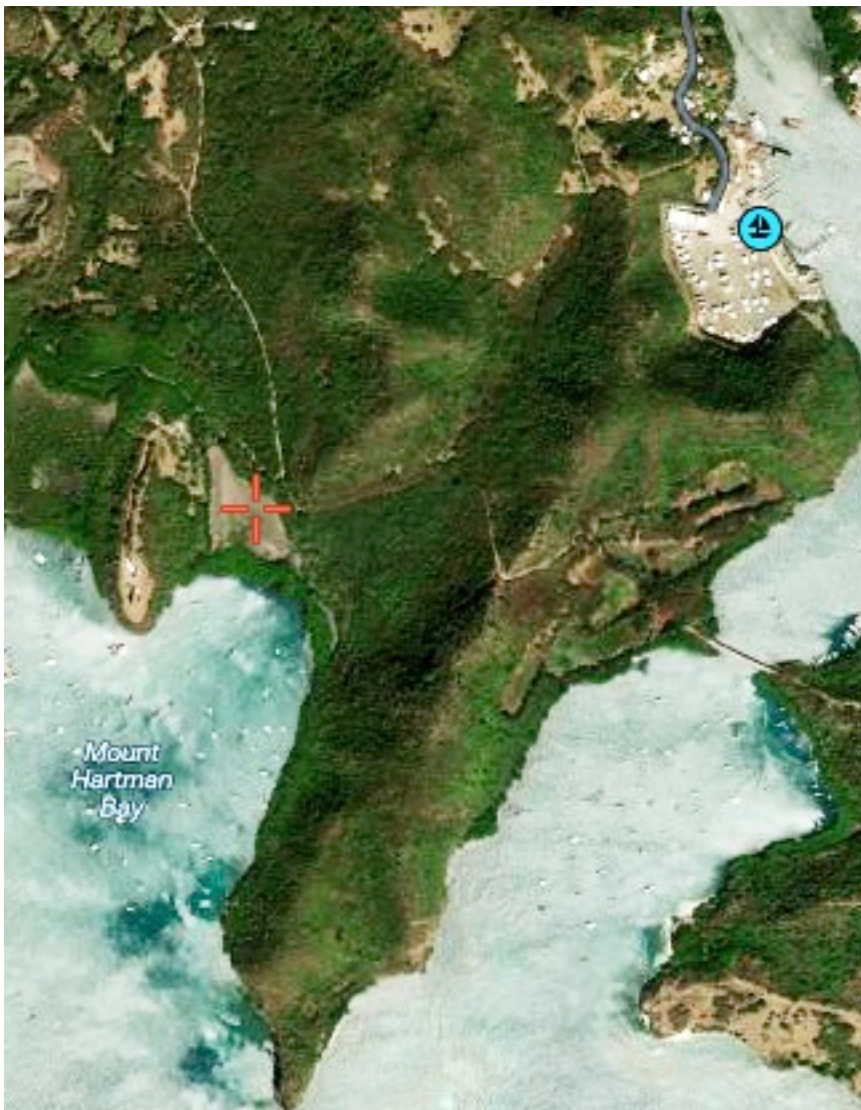
Dependent on CBI money

No work going on

Fanciful schemes with teaching hospital that is technically impossible (not enough patients in small country and not enough pathologies for rounded clinical experience for students etc.), massive hotel plans impossible to service with road access, staff, staff housing etc.

Government should call in this scheme and withdraw consent unless the whole thing is negotiated and subject to proper community and expert views.

Any further building on Mt Hartman should be of a sustainable scale, leave all mangroves in place, protect the Dove Sanctuary etc.



[Etc.]

9. Consultation and Approval Process

Consultation with CCG and LAE members based on an adequate draft document – email survey

Media coverage – invitation to comment

Consultation with relevant ministries etc.

Discussions with Planning and Development Authority

Annex

Building Regulations for L'Anse aux Epines

Current Building Regulations

Under the Physical Planning and Development Control Act 23, 2016 it says:

- 80.** (1) The Physical Planning and Development Control Act, Cap. 241A is hereby repealed.
(2) The Land Development Regulations and the Land Development (Fees) Regulations Cap. 241A continues in force upon the coming into force of this Act, until revoked or amended.

Regulations for L'Ance aux Epines (LAE)

These could be handled as a second schedule to the Land Development Regulations Cap 241A as follows below.

Schedule 2

L'Anse aux Epines

This Schedule applies to all development within the area known as L'Anse aux Epines and defined by the dashed line on the plan. [Insert plan].

In addition to the rules and constraints provided by these Regulations PARTS I – IV nationally, the following apply to L'Anse aux Epines. Where no changes are indicated for L'Anse aux Epines in this Schedule, the main body of these Regulations PARTS I – IV applies.

These Regulations applying to L'Anse aux Epines bind the Authority and are not discretionary by the Authority unless so specifically indicated and only with the conditions indicated.

PART II: Development Regulations

Development for housing purposes

1. (a) The minimum size of plot shall be 6,000 square feet (560 square meters). Any subdivision of plots is to be determined or approved by the Authority after site analysis but shall result in no plots smaller than this minimum.

(b) The ground floor area of any building within the same plot shall not exceed forty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated. Where any existing development that exceeds this plot ratio is subject to redevelopment, the ground floor area of the new development shall not exceed forty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated.

Development for commercial purposes

2. (a) The ground floor area of the building shall not exceed forty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated. Where any existing development that exceeds this plot ratio is subject to redevelopment, the ground floor area of the new development shall not exceed forty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated.

Development for industrial purposes

3. (a) The ground floor area of the building shall not exceed forty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated. Where any existing development that exceeds this plot ratio is subject to redevelopment, the ground floor area of the new development shall not exceed forty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated.

Development of hotels, guest houses and hotel apartments

5. (a) The ground floor area of the building shall not exceed twenty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated. Where any existing development that exceeds this plot ratio is subject to redevelopment, the ground floor area of the new development shall not exceed twenty per cent of the total area of the plot on which the building is situated

[Note, the changes above leave all development plot coverage at a maximum of 40 per cent except for ‘hotels, guest houses and hotel apartments’ where it shall be at the existing maximum of 20 per cent. The rationale is to maintain the ‘green’ nature of the area. These plot ratios are not discretionary by the Authority.]

PART III: Standard Conditions

7. The Authority shall not authorise any development closer than 165 feet (50 metres) from the high water mark or on lands less than 10 feet (3 metres) above mean sea level. In no circumstances shall any development remove mangroves and any applications that involve the removal of mangroves shall be rejected and any development that does so during construction or subsequently shall have its planning consent revoked.

8. No part of any building of any type of development shall be erected within 10 feet (3 metres) from any side or rear boundary of the plot on which it is situated. In the case of hotels, guest houses and hotel apartments this distance shall be 20 feet (6.1 metres). Any application for a variation in these distances must be accompanied by legally signed and witnessed statements from the owners of all adjacent plots consenting to this and the Authority shall take steps to ensure authentication of such statements if it is minded to grant consent and the Authority shall not grant consent if any owner of an adjacent plot does not so consent.

10. The height of all buildings shall not exceed two storeys. Where buildings exist that exceed this height are redeveloped the new buildings shall not exceed two storeys in height. Building height is not at the discretion of the Authority.