1.0 Introduction and Objectives

Anguilla has a beautiful environment. The design of buildings can have both a positive and negative impact upon this. The height of buildings in Anguilla can have an important part to play in optimising the use of land and as such can help provide a sustainable and prosperous country. The following policies are about encouraging development which is a source of pride whilst conserving and enhancing the environment and heritage of Anguilla.

This policy leaflet is for developers, landowners, businesses and the public. To provide a clear framework and reference document policies are:

- Written in this typeface and have the term Policy written directly next to them in the margin.
- Placed near the appropriate text (justification and or background).

2.0 What this document Covers

This document applies to free standing new buildings, extensions and refurbishment projects to existing buildings. To simplify matters in this text the term new buildings will be used to mean all of these.

3.0 Background – Why Building Heights are Important.

Building heights can have a fundamental impact upon ‘Our Quality of Life’. Tall buildings can enable developers to maximise the use of their land providing extensive high quality open spaces around them. At the same time poorly conceived and ‘out of place’ tall buildings can have a damaging effect upon the image of an area or neighbourhood. Low buildings if poorly sited can also have negative impacts. These policies are intended to create a balance between the urge for some developers to maximise the use of their land and the need to preserve the island’s traditions, heritage and, aesthetic environment.

Appendix 1 lists some current examples of buildings of varying height so that you can more easily recognise the ‘impact’ of a building of a similar height.

4.0 Key Design Concepts and Definitions.

There are a number of key factors that need to be recognised in the design of all buildings, which have a direct impact upon the relative height that a building should take. Many of the factors ‘over-lap’ in their influence.

4.1 Location

Location has a key influence on the design and height of new buildings. New buildings can be intrusive or they can be designed and sited so that they fit in. Planting is rarely enough to disguise buildings. It is usually provided in an attempt to
mask errors. The initial scale and nature of the buildings is the crucial factor. New buildings should not dominate the landscape. Large buildings can often be separated into elements (humanising the scale) this can enhance the quality of our landscape and provide a gentler skyline.

4.2 **Scale**
Scale is the size of a building in relation to adjacent and nearby structures. A building which is much larger (or much smaller) than its neighbours can look at odds with the landscape and streetscape.

4.3 **Proportion**
Proportion is the relationship between a façade’s height and width. Proportion affects scale. For example, if a new building were taller than those nearby and had a long façade out of proportion to its height, it would be out of scale because it would be too large or monumental for its location. Similarly, a building lower than nearby structures and with a fairly narrow façade in relation to that height might also be out of scale because it is too small or modest.

4.4 **Neighbourhood Character**
This is vital. It is the "personality" of a neighbourhood or area. It is determined by its distinguishing characteristics, which may be natural or man-made, or a combination. Sometimes this is referred to as the concept of designing in ‘harmony’ i.e. buildings being in ‘tune’ with their neighbours.

4.5 **Hierarchy**
Two components are relevant to this issue:
- ♦ the size of a building in relation to its public importance, and
- ♦ the size of a building’s elements in relation to their individual function.

4.6 **Photographic Montage**
This is a method of showing a proposed building / development on a photograph of a view. This method supplements the use of elevation drawings and can provide people with a clearer impression of how a development will be within its setting and its potential impact on views etc.

5.0 **The Planning Background.**
The need to provide a limit on building heights, as part of the development control process has been fundamental to Anguilla’s land development control system since it began in 1990. This document has been produced to provide clear and straightforward policies and advice. It supersedes the relevant sections of the Draft National Land Use Plan (1996) and the previous Government of Anguilla policy, which was a blanket approach of a maximum of 42 feet above ground level (or 3 floors) applied throughout Anguilla.

This Policy document will form Supplementary Planning Guidance and will be a material factor in the consideration of all planning applications, pre-application
discussions, appeals and any consideration of enforcement or other legal action.

6.0 The Policies
Many factors (including physical, development position, historic, cultural and environmental significance) mean that the most logical approach to the development and application of building height policies and guidance in Anguilla should be on an area by area basis. A number of maps will be used to supplement the descriptive policies and to provide clear identification of where the height zones are to be applied.

This document brings together new policies and existing policies in a comprehensive manner. The policy recommends that all building heights shall be measured as specified in the Anguilla Building Code. The Code specifies that the height of a building is: the vertical distance from grade to the highest finished roof surface of a flat roof or to the average level to a gable or hip roof.

7.0 Building heights and Wallblake Airport.

7.1 Wallblake airport remains one of the key entry points for tourists (visitors who stay for at least a night in Anguilla) and other visitors in Anguilla. The volume of passengers is shown below.

![Graph showing arrivals and departures](image)

Data Source: Statistical Department

7.2 The crucial role that air travel plays in bringing tourists and visitors to Anguilla means that there is a fundamental need to ensure that the airport can meet the forecast requirements for the next 20 years (and beyond).
For many years the Government of Anguilla has safeguarded the safe operation of the existing runway and airport facilities at Wallblake through the use of detailed and airport runway approach zone plans. These clearly indicate the maximum height to which development can be built before consultation with the Civil Aviation Authority is required.

The Government of Anguilla is committed to ensuring that the airport continues to operate safely, securely and in a viable manner. The Government of Anguilla has given a commitment that their long term plan is to develop to Option 3 (Atkins Report February 2002) extending the runway to the east from 1097m to 1799m.

This project will require purchase by agreement or through compulsory acquisition of land bounding the existing runway and airport facilities.

**POLICY AIR1**

The Government of Anguilla will not permit development which:

a) will interfere with or be adversely affected by the operation of the airport
b) lies in the transitional surface and approach zone of the airport
c) penetrates the approach slope of the airport runway
d) is in any other way an obstruction and hazard to aircraft approaching or leaving the runway

**POLICY AIR2**

The Government of Anguilla will not grant planning permission for development, which would prejudice the successful implementation of Option 3 of the Atkins Report (February 2002) for the redevelopment of the airport and runways including road realignment.

**POLICY HT1**

To ensure the safe operation of Wallblake Airport (including the proposed development of Option 3 of Atkins Report (February 2002) development in the areas surrounding the airport must not exceed the stated indicative maximum building heights above ground level as per the Atkins Report Map 010 (February 2002).

Building heights and Anguilla’s Coastal Beauty

Anguilla has a high quality environment that for a number of years has provided the base for its major industry, tourism. Both the natural and built environment play significant roles in this. Anguilla also benefits from a number of areas of higher quality environment. Without doubt the major natural attraction of Anguilla to tourists remains the island’s unspoiled beaches.

The beaches and the immediate hinterland are the first impression that visitors and tourists get of the island when arriving either by ferry or private yacht. The numbers of such people are significant and increasing. Between 1988 and 1999 visitor arrivals (people for which Anguilla has not been their usual place of residence for more than one year and are visiting either for pleasure, recreation holiday, business etc.) have increased by 43% from over 54,000 people a year to over 78,000.
8.3 The image of Anguilla that has been portrayed and which continues to attract tourists is of ‘Tranquility Wrapped in Blue’ rather than an island with ‘rampant’ commercialism. This is an image that the Government of Anguilla wishes to both protect and enhance.

8.4 A height of 42 feet has been clearly shown in a number of hotel and resort developments in Anguilla to be sufficient to provide accommodation that is high quality and the volume (capacity) to be sustainable. In essence it provides for three floors of accommodation with a cistern (below ground level) and various styles of roof detailing (either flat or pitched roofs). Where ground (impregnable rock) conditions do not permit a below ground cistern a maximum of two floors of accommodation will be possible with a ground level cistern. The external appearance of the cistern walls should be visually ‘broken up’ to limit the ‘blank’ and ‘overbearing’ appearance that can unfortunately result from such developments.

8.5 The same factors highlighted in paragraph 8.4 apply to residential development (private dwellings, rental property, apartments or villas) in coastal areas.

**POLICY HT2**

To protect the high quality image and visual environment of Anguilla’s coastline all buildings and structures in the area shown in Map 2 must not exceed 42 feet above ground level.

8.6 Whilst ensuring that the environment and views that are so important to Anguilla and its economy are protected and enhanced there are a number of coastal areas that benefit from topography that can accommodate development taller than 42 feet in height. Such development could lead to greater maximisation of the land resources whilst providing the opportunity for more extensive areas of landscaping and other amenities. Three coastal areas benefit particularly from hinterland that is elevated providing a backdrop which can shield what would otherwise be ‘over-bearing’ development. To limit the visual impact of these taller developments specific site setbacks are proposed as part of the policies.

**POLICY HT3**

To enable the economic maximisation of available tourism land whilst protecting the visual quality of the island the following maximum building heights will be applied:

- Area of Sandy Ground shown in Map 3A Heights of 42, 52 and 62 feet above ground level
- Area of Crocus Bay shown in Map 3B Height of 62 feet above ground
- Area of Shoal Bay shown in Map 3C Height of 62 feet above ground level

To assist in the determination of the application all proposals over 42 feet in height must be accompanied by a photographic montage to clearly show the proposed development. Façade detailing and site layout will play an important part in such applications as will the appropriateness of the design in the beach scene.
Building heights and Anguilla’s Other Natural Attractions

In addition to its beaches Anguilla has a number of other areas of natural and environmental interest and quality. These areas include:

- Land at Windward Point and Captain’s Bay
- West End Point
- Limestone and Blackgarden Bay
- Katouche, and Benzies Bay to Road Point.

For a number of reasons these areas are primarily undeveloped. These areas therefore benefit from:

- A natural ‘unspoiled image’,
- ‘Smaller’ more traditional scale of development.

This character is typified by properties of no more than two storeys in height with a water cistern (below ground level) and various styles of roof detailing (either flat or pitched roofs). It is clear from past examples that developments of three storeys (either three of accommodation or two of accommodation with an above ground cistern) in height can look out of character with these areas.

**POLICY HT4**

To protect the character and scenic quality of Anguilla’s remaining natural areas, which are a major contribution to the overall visual amenity of Anguilla, all buildings and structures in the area shown in Map 4 must not exceed 28 feet above ground level.

In addition to the overall height of any development or structure in these natural areas there is a need to ensure that its impact due to continuous vertical façade is minimised. Options are shown in Appendix 1 and 2 and include:

- Stepping back
- Designing with the contours
- Detailing of facades

**POLICY HT5**

Development in the areas identified in Map 2, Map 3A, Map 3B and Map 3C, Map 4, Map 5, Map 6, Map 7 and Map 8 must be designed to minimise the visual impact of height. No continuous vertical façade over 28 feet will be permitted. Methods include ‘stepping back’ development and or designing development to fit the contours of a site. In addition careful detailing elevation can provide assistance in reducing the ‘visual’ mass or height of a property.

Building heights and Anguilla’s Important Ridgelines and outstanding viewing areas.
10.1 Anguilla is sometimes considered to be a ‘flat’ island. Whilst it is true that no part of Anguilla is over 225 feet above sea level there are however, a number of important ridgelines and elevated areas that add to the beauty and quality of the island as well as providing outstanding viewing areas / corridors. For information Appendix 3 contains a list of some of the highest points in Anguilla.

10.2 The Government of Anguilla is committed to protecting and enhancing whenever possible the views of these areas from other parts of the island as well as the island’s coastal waters and the views from them.

10.3 Viewing Area of National Importance - Backstreet
Undoubtedly one of the most photographed and visited ‘views’ in Anguilla is from Back Street looking across Sandy Ground and Road Bay to Road Point. In the 1984 Tourism Masterplan for Anguilla strongly recommended that no development take place that would impact upon this view. This has been a policy that the Land Development Control Committee has consistently followed since their formation in 1990.

POLICY HT6
To protect the outstanding views of national importance no development will be permitted to the north of Back Street on land identified on Map 5 which extends in height above the road level of Back Street.

10.4 Ridge line of National Importance – Isaac’s Cliff
The view of Isaac’s Cliff from Sandy Ground, North Shannon Hill and North Hill and other areas is one of an undeveloped vegetated and natural cliff and ridgeline. It is one of the last remaining such views in Anguilla and the view is highly accessible to the general public. Many other similar views are only afforded from coastal waters or via private rights of way thus significantly restricting the numbers able to benefit from them. Two building heights will be used in this location due to the topography / contours in the area and distance from the cliff edge.

POLICY HT7
To protect the outstanding views of national importance development proposed to be built in the Isaac’s Cliff area shall be no taller than 15 feet or 28 feet above ground level as identified on Map 6

11.0 Building heights and Anguilla’s Historic areas.
11.1 Anguilla has two areas where there are a significant number of buildings and structures of historic and architectural merit :
♦ Sandy Ground and
♦ Upper Valley / Crocus Hill
The typical building styles in these areas are of ‘small’ scale development either single or maximum of two storeys. This provides the ‘character’ of these areas. Taller development would be inappropriate in these areas as it would not be capable of respecting the setting of the existing buildings and would create an unsympathetic environment.
To protect the natural and built environment of the ‘historic areas of Sandy Ground and Upper Valley / Crocus Hill no built development will be permitted above 28 feet above ground level. These areas are shown on Maps 7 and 8 respectively.

Many of the historic buildings in these areas also have facades ‘broken’ up with fine detailing or the approach of ‘stepping back’ to minimise the impact of their overall visual mass and height. For this reason POLICY HT5 will also be applied in these areas.

Building heights and Anguilla’s Commercial Capital

Anguilla is a country of limited land resources and there is a need to ensure that they are used to its maximum whilst ensuring that development is appropriate and sustainable. The Valley, Anguilla’s capital is both its administrative and commercial centre.

In many countries the presence of land taxation has been one of the key factors in encouraging developers to construct tall buildings to maximise their returns. Anguilla land taxes are currently not a significant factor in development styles and as such it is the capital cost of land which is ordinarily the major factor affecting development designs. From the 1970’s to 2002 a height of 42 feet above ground level has been applied which has limited buildings to three storeys maximum.

It is recognised that modern office development often requires higher floor to ceiling heights than other uses to facilitate the introduction of computer cabling, air-conditioning systems etc within a ‘dropped’ ceiling. As such for the Valley Commercial Area a maximum height of 62 feet will be permitted for office developments (offices, and retail with offices).

The Valley commercial areas benefit from some land, which is lower lying (forming natural ‘bowls’). This topography could enable buildings in excess of 42 feet to be possible. These could have the same relative visual impact when seen in the context of the entire area as those limited to 42 feet on the higher ground. It should be noted that due to the relative proximity of Wallblake Airport POLICY HT1 would override this in certain areas.

To enable the economic maximisation of available commercial land in the Valley whilst maintaining the image of the area a maximum building height of 62 feet above ground level will be applied for buildings in the area shown in Map 8. To assist in the determination of any application all proposals over 42 feet in height must be accompanied by a photographic montage to clearly show the proposed development. Façade detailing and site layout will play an important part in such applications as will the appropriateness of the design in the wider street scene.

Building heights in the rest of Anguilla

As mentioned earlier (paragraph 5.0) a maximum height of 42 feet above ground level
has previously been applied throughout Anguilla. It is considered that this height remains the appropriate height for all areas not covered by Policy HT1 to Policy HT9.

**POLICY HT10**

In areas shown in Map 9 for all built development (buildings and structures) a maximum building height of 42 feet above ground level will be applied. Where specific site conditions would provide a ‘shield’ to taller development taller development may in exceptional circumstances be permitted. To assist in the determination of any application all proposals over 42 feet in height must be accompanied by a photographic montage to clearly show the proposed development. Façade detailing and site layout will play an important part in such applications as will the appropriateness of the design in the wider street scene.

**14.0 Access in Anguilla’s ‘tall’ buildings**

**14.1**

Buildings over three floors in height can provide a significant number of benefits for their owners and users. To maximise these benefits there is a need to ensure that suitable access throughout the building is provided for all.

**POLICY HT11**

In all buildings of four or more storeys in height passenger lifts / elevators will be required to ensure maximum access is possible to all sections of the community irrespective of age, fitness and or disability.

**15.0 Setbacks from property boundary**

**15.1**

Setback distances from boundaries are a concept that has been used in Anguillian Planning since its inception. They provide protection to amenity of occupants and land users including privacy and also provide designs that fit with the particular neighbourhood character.

As building heights increase so does the need for greater setbacks from boundaries and this is reflected in Policy HT12. Providing a ‘true’ commercial core for Anguilla within The Valley and optimising the use of this land is a key aim of the Government of Anguilla. This will be facilitated through enabling taller development and setbacks similar to those for development less than 32 feet in height will be permitted.

**POLICY HT12**

To protect amenity and ensure developments fit within the character of existing neighbourhoods development setbacks for all proposals over 32 feet in height above ground level will be required as set out below. For development within the Valley Commercial area shown on Map 9 the setbacks for all development will be as per sections 12 and 12A of the Building Regulations, as paraphrased below:

*Every building shall have a minimum of 16 feet open space from its back boundary. This space is to be measured as an extension from the total width of the building. Open space at the back of a dwelling house shall in addition be at least two thirds its height.*
No building shall be constructed so that its roof, façade or any outside wall is within a distance of 6 feet from either of its side boundaries, or from any wall or fence that is to be built to separate any adjoining buildings or lands that have different owners. However, connected buildings will be considered as one building.

**Contact Details**

**Contact Address:**

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Government of Anguilla,  
The Valley  
Anguilla  
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**Fax No.** (264) 497 5924  

**E-mail Address:** yourplanning@hotmail.com  

**Further Information:**

Physical Planning Department Website: http://www.gov.ai/planning
Appendix 1

Reducing the visual impact of facades and designing with a slope – basic principles.

The drawings below show a cross section through a site

**Poor Design**

Building not designed with the contour and not stepped back.

**Good Design**

Building stepped back with the contour of the slope and ‘broken’ vertically.

This vertical break adds visual interest. It could provide an open balcony / patio area.
Appendix 2
External Detailing of façades

Methods to reduce the visual impact of large ‘blank’ façades such as cistern walls.

Why have detailing:
A large blank façade, which lacks architectural detailing, can significantly increase the visual impact of a building. This impact can be to such an extent that the entire building becomes ‘unacceptable’ in the proposed location. Detailing of buildings is a historic and cultural aspect of building design in Anguilla and the region. With the use of concrete blocks and render which have brought significant constructional benefits (cost, structural integrity) design principles that have evolved over years have mainly been ignored.

What detailing a façade brings to the scheme:
A detailed façade provides visual interest for the occupants, customers and public. It can be used as an expression of personal or corporate taste to leave a unique ‘mark’ on a building.

Cost effective and minimal maintenance:
It should be recognised that the following methods are low cost especially when considering the cost of overall building construction. They are very cost effective. Unlike plants which people often use to hide a large blank façade they only require periodic maintenance (painting when the house or building is painted only) and therefore expenditure (of money or resources, water, personal time) is low.

Construction of detailing
All methods can be simply constructed using concrete block and render / plaster. None of the elements need to perform a structural role and therefore expensive steel rods are not normally required. None of the methods proposed will weaken the construction or make it more prone to hurricane damage.

Horizontal Detailing
Continuous horizontal bands of detailing can be at various heights on a façade (at the base at the top or in between).

Vertical Detailing
Vertical detailing can be in the form of columns (non-structural visual only) or ‘false’ windows.
The sketches below show examples of how detailing can significantly improve the appearance of a façade.

A traditional cornice detail with ‘cyma recta’ moulding and dentil course.

A simplified version using square and quarter round sections to create a similar effect.

Another version with standard square sections but still maintaining good depth and projection.

As indicated in the text none of these elements needs to provide a structural role, as they are all decorative.
**Appendix 3**

**Elevated areas and notable hills of Anguilla**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Feet Above Sea Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crocus Hill</td>
<td>225 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Ta</td>
<td>217 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill</td>
<td>203 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Side</td>
<td>192 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roaches Hill</td>
<td>180 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fountain Hill</td>
<td>179 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Hill</td>
<td>176 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buntin Hill</td>
<td>175 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre Hill (near South Hill Village)</td>
<td>161 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation Hill</td>
<td>151 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proctors Hill</td>
<td>138 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rey Hill (near The Quarter)</td>
<td>132 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island Harbour Hill</td>
<td>112 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandy Hill</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Fortune</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Hill</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crocus Bay

MAP NO. 3B
- Crocus Bay -

- Red: No Built Development permitted. This zone extends 100 feet above the coastal recession line.
- Pink: No Built Development permitted. This zone extends above the active rock/slope failure line.
- Blue: No Built Development permitted. This zone extends 100 feet above the coastal recession line and above the active rock/slope failure line.
- Purple: Policy HT3 and HT5 Applies. Built development up to 92 feet above ground is permitted.
- Green: Policy HT10 Applies. Built development up to 42 feet above ground is permitted.

Note: These slopes areas have experienced significant slope failure/stresses. Any proposal for development must be in full accordance with the Coastal Slopes Policy and Guidelines including submission of geological/geomorphological assessment.

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Prepared by: Non-Residential Planning Unit, Department of Physical Planning, Government of Anguilla
August 2007.