



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

Department of Planning

Application Reference: P0175-26
Date Received: 19 June 2026
Deadline for Representations: 03 July 2026

Application Type: Planning Application for Development
Final Approval
Proposal: Proposed Three 3-Storey Residential Buildings for Cochrane Road - Victoria Place II Village Comprising 12 Two-Bedroom and 24 Three-Bedroom Units (36 Total) With Associated Infrastructure, Parking (53 Cars / 50 Bikes), Landscaping, New Access to Cochrane Fox Road, Playground, and Communal Waste Facilities.
Applicant: Ministry of Housing and Municipalities
Location: 6 Cochrane Road, Sandys
8 Cochrane Road, Sandys
4 Cochrane Road, Sandys
Parcel Number(s): 35185

Decision Type: DAB **Meeting Date:** 21 October 2026
Technical Officer: Dolores B. Vazquez
Technical Officer Recommendation: Approve

Site Information

Lot Size: 227,690 sq. ft.
Vacant Site: Yes
Listed Buildings: None
Development Plan: Bermuda Plan 2018
Zonings: Nature Reserve
Open Space Reserve
Residential 1
Protection Areas: WRP 2017,
Orders/Agreements: Special Development Orders

Proposal Information

	Existing	Proposed Additional	Total	
Site Coverage	46,568 sq. ft.	18,689 sq. ft.	65,257 sq. ft.	28.66 %
Hard Surfacing	46,568 sq. ft.	59,919 sq. ft.	106,487 sq. ft.	46.77 %
Dwelling Units	0	36	ft. 36	

Car Parking	0	53	53
Motorcycle Parking	0	60	60

Demolition Proposed: No

History

Reference	Date	Status	Description
B0718/15	09/21/2015	Complete	Demolition of Existing Residential/ Derelict Units
SDO-49	10/27/2010	Approved	Victoria Place Rental Homes (Ireland Island, Sandys Parish) Special Development Order 2010
P0318/11	06/27/2011	Approved	Proposed Phased Project for Construction of 100 New Residential housing Units, Including Provisions of Amenity Area and 2 New Bus Stops.
APPL-P0318/11	11/21/2011	Approved	Proposed Phased Project for Construction of 100 New Residential housing Units, Including Provisions of Amenity Area and 2 New Bus Stops.
B0053/19	01/22/2019	Issue Certificate	Proposed Pump Room
B0655/12	11/09/2012	Complete	Proposed Phased Project for Construction of 100 New Residential Housing Units, Including Provisions of Amenity Area and 2 New Bus Stops. PHASE 2 -PROPOSED Five Buildings with Ten 2Bedrooms Units, Ten 3Bedroom Units, Erection of Building Frame ONLY & Site Works.

Objections / Representations

Reference	Objector/Representor	Date Received
REP0113-26	Bermuda Audubon Society	06/29/2026
REP0116-26	K. Smith for BEST	07/03/2026
REP0121-26	Charlotte Andrews	07/08/2026

Assessment

PLANNING HISTORY/BACKGROUND

The Victoria Place Rental Homes (Ireland Island, Sandys Parish) Special Development Order 2010 (SDO) granted approval for a maximum of 100 dwelling units up to three storeys in height, comprising 45 3-bedroom units; 40 2-bedroom units; and 15 studio units. Reserved matters included siting and layout, site coverage, building heights, building lines, access parking provision, design and layout of all access roads and parking areas, design, architectural detailing external appearance and materials of all buildings and structures and landscaping. The SDO stipulated that the following reports and studies be provided with planning applications:

1. Traffic impact analysis
2. Sewage Treatment, Storm-water Management, and Potable Water Provision Report
3. Nature Reserve Land Use Impact Analysis (relative to any development in proximity of conservation

area)

4. Road system conforms to requirements of Ministry of Works and Engineering guidelines
5. General Adherence to relevant provisions of Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement

Application P0318/11 was presented to the Development Applications Board (DAB) on 28th September 2011 seeking approval of the reserved matters and the phased construction of the approved 100 residential units in 2 storey buildings, with Phase 1 encompassing 5 2-storey buildings containing 10 each 2 and 3 bedroom units (20 units total referred to as Victoria Place Phase I (VP1)). This application was refused by the DAB and appealed (APPL-P0318/11), with approval granted on 31st July 2012. Building permit B0655/12 was issued, and those 20 units are now completed and occupied. Therefore, 80 additional residential units approved under the SDO can be built.

It is noted that, in accordance with paragraph 3(3)(ii) of the SDO, the Bermuda Land Management Corporation (BLMC, which amalgamated the organisation formerly known as WEDCo) provided substantial supporting documentation including an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Traffic Impact Study, and Nature Reserve Land Use Impact Study to analyse existing and proposed site conditions and identify any mitigation measures required as a result of the development of the site. The following mitigation measures were identified and have since been installed:

1. The Dockyard Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is fully operational serving VP1, with excess capacity to serve the currently proposed development.
2. Changes to Cochrane Road had been identified (inclusive of a road closure), with the junction of Malabar Road and Cockburn Road widened to satisfactorily accommodate two-way traffic. What remains outstanding is road alignment improvements within the development envelope of the subject application.
3. Two bus laybys have been installed, serving east and west directions.
4. The Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was implemented in 2011/2012 and continues to be maintained with regular clean ups.

As a result of the prior approval, supporting documentation, and implementation of mitigation measures, the Department confirms that no additional studies are warranted to assess the implementation of the final phase of the SDO.

Finally, this application will be assessed against the Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement since paragraph 3(3)(ii) of the SDO states that reserved matters must be considered against that Plan.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The SDO site (227,690 square feet) is larger than the subject application site area, measuring 116,741 square feet. All policies will be tested against the application site.

The western extremity of this area incorporates Cochrane Road, a two-way public road, with Open Space, Coastal and Nature Reserves beyond the edge of the tarmac, ending at the Atlantic Ocean. The Grade 1 listed pumping station is in proximity to the southwestern corner of the site. To the north is Pender Road, leading to the Royal Naval Dockyard; to the east is Cockburn Road, another two-way public road, and VP1. To the south are other housing developments managed by the BLMC.

The central section of the development envelope is a level plateau, falling gradually in a northeasterly direction by a maximum of approximately 14'-0". The southeastern extremity falls steeply towards VP1, ending at the existing internal circulation driveway. Likewise, there is a substantial difference of elevation at the northeastern end of the site, approximately 12'-0" feet. This area is currently fenced off and grassed.

The area contains a mix of zonings including Mixed-Use, Institutional, Recreational, Coastal Reserve, and Industrial to support the range of existing uses, in addition to the myriad of facilities and uses contained within Dockyard. Public transportation options include ferry stops in Dockyard and at Watford

Bridge, in addition to the two aforementioned bus stops.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks final approval for the construction of three residential buildings, each 3-storeys in height. The grade to eave height of each building is 25'-0" with the highest point of the structure being the elevator shaft at 34'-4". Each of the floor plates are identical, with a continual vertical façade. The closest point of any of the 3 buildings to the public road is Building A, which is set back a minimum of 18'-6" from the edge of the road, to a maximum of 33'-9" at Building C.

The buildings are designed with two units on each side of a central breezeway, for a total of four units per floor, where access steps are located to each unit in addition to an elevator. The total amount of units proposed are 12 per building with an application total of 36 units. A single storey accessory structure at the western and eastern extremity of each residential structure houses telecommunications. Bermuda Image elements include lintels over the windows, vertical banding, balconies, and a parapet wall.

One building will contain 2-bedroom units (Block B 12 units) with the other two buildings containing 3-bedroom units (Blocks A and C 24 units). Each unit will have a gross floor area of 959 square feet and access to private outdoor space 162 square feet in size.

Communal open space is comprised of 5 separate lawn areas:

2,873 square feet at the southwestern extremity, incorporating benches, 2 scarlet cordia shade trees and 15 50-gallon oleanders to form a boundary hedge

3,162 square feet directly east of Building B, incorporating benches and 3 scarlet cordia shade trees

2,364 square feet directly east of Building C, incorporating benches and 2 scarlet cordia shade trees

2,208 square feet northwest of Building C, incorporating benches, 12 15-gallon oleanders to form a boundary hedge and 2 scarlet cordia shade trees

8,782 square feet at the northeastern extremity, with 20 15-gallon oleanders to form a hedge along the public road frontage

The amount of communal open space proposed totals 19,389 square feet of which 4, representing 10,607 square feet, include benches and shade trees, while the largest is lawn allowing for active use.

Three access points to Cochrane Road will be created (west/central/east) 14'-0" in width, which incorporates 12'-0" bell-mouths, and sightlines of 120'-0" sited 8'-0" from the edge of the road. Trench drains are included for storm water management. The western driveway provides access to 16 parking spaces, one of which is ADA compliant. The central driveway provides access to 14 parking spaces, two of which is ADA compliant. The eastern driveway provides access to 18 parking spaces, one of which is ADA compliant. 5 additional EV parallel parking bays are proposed along the Cochrane Road frontage. This results in property total of 53 parking spaces, with 4 ADA designated.

17 cycle bays are proposed in front of Block A; 14 cycle bays are in front of Block B; and 19 cycle bays are in front of Block C, for a total of 50 cycle bays across the site.

Site works include a maximum excavation of 4'-6" to create level development plateaus. A maximum 3'-6" high retaining wall is required for the western parking turnaround area, with a safety barrier on top. All buildings will be tied into the main sewage line that goes directly to the WWTP. Each building will have its own lift station to collect from each building and then be pumped into the force main.

Ancillary structures include three communal garbage storage areas. The north and central kiosks are

identical incorporating a 24'-0" by 10'-0" concrete pad (240 square feet) which will be covered with a trellis, a maximum 9'-0" in height. Each will house 14 garbage wheely bins. The western kiosk incorporates a concrete pad measuring 24'-0" by 8'-6" concrete pad (170 square feet) with the same trellis structure above, housing 2 to 4 garbage wheely bins.

In addition to the landscaping detailed above, African iris is proposed at the two outer driveways, with oleanders flanking the central driveway. 27 15-gallon oleander hedges are proposed along the northern portion of the development envelope, flanking Cochrane Road. An additional 54 15-gallon oleanders are proposed along the eastern boundary of the development envelope and when mature, will form a visual barrier between this phase and the original phase of housing.

A total of 18,689 square feet of site coverage is proposed with hard surfacing equating to 56,079 square feet. As a result, property total site coverage will increase to 28.66%, with hard surfacing increasing to 48%.

CONSULTATIONS

A request for consultation was forwarded to the Department of Works & Engineering Highways Section which, in correspondence dated 1 September 2026, confirmed no objection to the proposal. It did advise that depending on the elevation of the property, drainage should be contained on site and not run into the public road and that the applicant should consider placing sumps at the driveways to prevent that from occurring. A condition of approval to this effect has been added.

OBJECTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised in the Official Gazette listings on 19 June 2026.

Two in-time letters of concern were received (BEST and BAS), in addition to one out of time representation (BNT). The two letters of concerns both recognize the need for affordable housing but highlighted the development's location on protected Open Space Reserve and its environmental impact, noting inconsistencies in the application documents. The SDO governing the site should be included with the application for clarity.

The objectors posit that the application lacks critical studies and assessments required by the SDO, including a traffic impact analysis, sewage treatment, stormwater management and potable water provision reports, and a tree retention assessment. It is also claimed that the submission does not confirm stormwater drainage design, underground placement of cables, or indicate whether government environmental officers have reviewed key infrastructure plans.

Objectors further note the current plan shows only minimal plantings and green space, which is claimed to be inadequate for a large development in a highly visible and environmentally sensitive area near the historic Royal Naval Dockyard. A more extensive landscaping plan featuring dense planting with native and endemic species is recommended to support local wildlife, enhance mental health benefits for residents, and improve the local environment.

Finally, both letters suggest including solar panels in government housing developments to reduce environmental impact and lower electricity costs for residents, thereby improving affordability.

The out of time representation (BNT) states that the site is highly prominent at the entrance to the Royal Naval Dockyard along a main gateway and was formerly an Open Space Reserve valued for its landscape and public amenity. The SDO requires detailed landscaping emphasizing treatment along public roads. From a natural heritage perspective, the current landscaping plans fall short; BNT calls for more native and endemic plantings, quality canopy trees, generous green spaces, and stronger roadside and pedestrian corridor landscaping to enhance biodiversity, wellbeing, and the site's identity.

From a cultural heritage standpoint, BNT opines that the development should uphold high architectural standards befitting this nationally significant area, respect the adjacent Grade 1 listed Pumping Station,

and preserve important views to maintain the area's character.

An updated site plan has incorporated shade trees in the communal spaces, in addition to providing robust boundary hedges. In support of this approach, the owner stated that, 15 years on, VP1 is landscaped and maintained every month with the belief that there is very good balance of hard and soft landscaping. The owner concluded by stating that the subject application significantly reduces the number of structures and units relative to the previous approval. Upon completion of this phase, the entire development will have a total of 56 where the original approval was for 100 units. While the buildings will be 3 storeys, this is a preferable design as it reduces density of development (ie site coverage).

APPLICABLE PLANNING POLICIES

This application has been assessed against the relevant policies contained in the Bermuda Plan 2018 ("the 2008 Plan") as listed below:

Chapter 3: Planning Zones (ZON)

ZON.16 – Conflict between an SDO and provision of Plan; SDO prevails

Chapter 4: Development Applications Board and Advisory Boards (DAB)

DAB.4 – Other Departments, Ministries and Regulatory Authorities

Chapter 5: Planning Application Considerations (APC)

APC.12 – Purpose of Setbacks

APC.15 Board's discretion to reduce setbacks

APC.16(2) Board's discretion to reduce setback to a public road

Chapter 8: Design (DSN)

DSN.4 – Bermuda Image

DSN.6 – Siting and layout

DSN.9 – Buildings 3 storeys in height

DSN.11 – Residential Design Standards

DSN.12 – Privacy of units on site and adjoining properties

DSN.15 – Minimum gross floor area 2-bedroom unit 600 square feet; 3-bedroom unit 800 square feet

DSN.16 – Minimum gross private outdoor space 2 & 3 bedroom units 195 square feet

DSN.17 – Private outdoor space requirements

DSN.18 – Communal open space requirements (minimum 11,674 square feet)

DSN.19 -POS reduced by 1/3 if equivalent added to communal open space (2,338 square feet deficiency + 11,674 minimum communal open space = 14,012 square feet)

DSN.20 – Design of Communal Open Space

DSN.21 - Communal garbage storage area

DSN.25 – Accessible Buildings

DSN.27 - Filling

Chapter 9: Green Spaces and Landscaping (LSG)

LSG.3 – When landscaping plan required

LSG.4 – Landscape Plan requirements

GRE.5 – Landscape Plan requirements

Chapter 11: Transport and Accessibility (TPT)

TPT.10 – Gradient of a driveway

TPT.11 – Access to public road requirements

TPT.12 – More than one point of access from a site

TPT.16 – Safe & convenient pedestrian access

TPT.17 – Parking, loading and pedestrian access

TPT.20 – Parking standards: minimum provision 1.25 car spaces when 5 or more units proposed & 1

per cycle (minimum 45 cars/36 cycles)
TPT.22 – Parking for the disabled; minimum 3 required
TPT.23 – Parking space sizes
TPT.25 – Design of parking areas

Chapter 26: Residential (RSD)

RSD.3 – 35% maximum site coverage
RSD.10 – 25'-0" setback of development from a public road
RSD.12 – Apartment house development to a maximum of 5 storeys
RSD.13 - 3rd storey should be 70% of the gross floor area below
RSD.14 – Board's discretion to vary upper storey setbacks
RSD.16 – 70% maximum hard surfacing

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The SDO approved 100 units in two storey buildings across the entire site notwithstanding the zoning, with the SDO mandating that all reserved matters be assessed against the 2008 Planning Statement. As a result, the sole focus of this application is to test the reduced number of residential units and revised massing and design in the context of the updated site plan, focusing on the impact of the 3rd storey on adjoining properties and the visual amenity of the area. It is germane to note the applicant has confirmed this application represents the final phase of development (Phase 2), for a total of 56 units (20 previously constructed + 36 proposed), with 44 of the originally approved residential units being abandoned.

Policy RSD.3 is adhered to with a site coverage of 28.66%, well below the maximum permissible of 35%. The minimum setback to the public road is not adhered to for Buildings A (maximum deficiency 6'-6") and B (maximum deficiency 2'-6"), with APC.16(2) permitting a relaxation of setbacks from a road, providing certain criterion are met. In this case, the reduced setback is compatible with the design and character of the development in the immediate area, as many of the residential structures are located within the setback to the public road, with the reduced setback on this site being greater than other setbacks. It is also important to highlight that Cochrane Road can be considered a secondary road to the Cockburn Road, the main access to Dockyard, and will therefore be less heavily travelled, mostly for local residential access. It is also necessary to point out that the prior approval only contemplated setbacks of 10'-0" to 15'-0" so the increase in setbacks is an improvement over what could be built. Given the fact that the reduced setbacks will be in-keeping with the existing built environment and will not be detrimental to any neighbouring residential areas, the Board's discretion to reduce setbacks is merited in this case.

At three storeys in height, the buildings are below the maximum five storeys permissible under policy RSD.12. Even when the top of the elevator shaft is taken into consideration, the total height of the structure is well below the maximum permissible five storey height. Policy RSD.13 does require setback for apartment house development greater than two storeys in height, with the requirement that the third storey be no greater in size than 70% of the floor below. With identical floor plates, the proposal does not adhere to this requirement. Policy RSD.14 does provide discretion to wave this requirement.

In terms of impacts on residential amenity, in the context of the long and linear development envelope, bounded on the north by a public road and on the south by two storey residential development at a lower elevation, the continual vertical façade can be absorbed without detrimental impact on the amenity or privacy of any neighbouring property. As a result, policy RSD.14 is deemed satisfied and the discretion warranted to support this affordable housing development, a community benefit. Given the lot characteristics and excessive setback from adjoining residential developments, privacy to adjoining lots is achieved, in accordance with policy DSN. 12.

The residential structures include lintels over the windows, vertical banding, balconies, and a parapet wall, all Bermuda image elements as referenced by policy DSN.4.

It is recognised that the proposal presents utilitarian designs which could be notably improved by reducing the footprint of the upper floor, providing fenestration which better reflects the scale and massing of the building whilst reducing the extent of continuous walls and incorporating additional Bermudian design features such as pitched roofs, shutters and traditionally designed balconies and patios.

However, notable weight has been given to the fact that this is a low-cost housing project aimed specifically at providing a form of housing which is noted by the Ministry of Housing and Municipalities as being urgently required. Whilst the items noted above would notably enhance the visual impact of the proposal, these would come at an addition cost whilst requiring a smaller floor plate at the third storey would decrease the total amount of units which could be accommodated.

At 950 square feet in size, each unit greatly exceeds the minimum size requirement for a 2 or 3 bedroom unit in accordance with policy DSN.15(1)(c). Each unit would benefit from direct access to private outdoor space of 162 square feet. This is deficient by 33 square feet under policy DSN.16. Policy DSN.19 allows private outdoor space to be reduced by one third if the equivalent amount of floor space is added to the communal open space.

Expansive communal space is provided in the amount of 19,389 square feet, excluding walking paths and other unencumbered lawn areas throughout the development. This exceeds the minimum requirement of 14,012 square feet. As a result, the discretion afforded under policy DSN.19 is deemed warranted, particularly when proximity to Glass Beach, coastal paths and other parkland is taken into consideration.

With the existing topography being relatively flat, neither excessive excavation or filling is required, with a maximum excavation of 4'-6", thereby satisfying policy DSN.6. No fill is required.

The proposed new driveways meet all the technical requirements for a new access onto a public road contained in policy TPT.11. The proposal includes three separate driveways onto the public road, requiring the Board's discretion under policy TPT.12. The 3 driveways ultimately result in less hard surfacing, since they all lead to parking areas without the need for an internal circulation road. This configuration incorporates adequate facilities for the parking, loading, unloading and turning of vehicles, in addition to adequate and safe pedestrian access, in accordance with policy TPT.17.

A total of 45 parking spaces/36 cycle spaces are required to satisfy policy TPT.20, and with 53/50 provided, minimum parking standards are exceeded. Of these, 4 parking spaces are designed to accommodate disabled persons, with 5 electric vehicle charging points identified, satisfying policies TPT.22 and TPT.24. Under the 2008 Plan there is no requirement to provide EV charging points, so this inclusion is deemed a planning gain.

Parking has been designed in accordance with policy TPT.27; no vehicle parking is proposed with 3'-0" of a lot line. Electric vehicle parking laybys do abut the public road as does cycle parking, however given the adjoining public road is for local residential access purposes only, this configuration is supportable, and typical of urban environments. The Highways Section has no objection to the proposed turning movements of these spaces in the public road.

The proposed trash kiosks are single storey in appearance, do not exceed 12'-0" from grade to eave, contributing 250 square feet of hard surfacing. They are positioned in the setback to the public road, however, for collection efficiency, this is supportable. It should be noted even if they were set back 7.5 feet, they would still be visible from outside of the site due to their design and the amount of residential units intended to utilize the collections areas. Policies DSN.21 and UTL.14 are deemed satisfied.

The application includes a landscaping plan, reliant on boundary hedging (oleander) along the majority the boundaries and African iris defining two of the driveways and 9 shade trees have been incorporated

into the communal areas. As a result, the policies of Chapter 10 landscaping are deemed satisfied.

Conclusion

The prefabricated system being employed for this development is intended to keep costs at a minimum in order to meet the urgent need identified by the Ministry of Housing and Municipalities to provide low-cost housing. This has resulted in a development proposal of utilitarian design which would pose some adverse visual impacts on the local area. However, given the social benefits of the proposal as well as the acceptability of the proposal against all other considerations set out above, the proposal is, on balance, considered to be acceptable.

Recommendation

To approve the application subject to the conditions set out below.

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of 3 (three) years from the date of this permission.
2. A building permit shall be in force prior to the commencement of any building operations. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into operation until a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy has been issued.
3. In order to avoid the discharge of surface water onto the public road, provision shall be made for the control and disposal of storm water within the curtilage of the application site. Such measures shall be provided prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy
4. In order to provide for the safe flow of traffic, access details shall conform to the requirements of Policy TPT.11, Chapter 11 of the Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement and shall ensure that, at the point of access onto the public road, sight lines for a minimum distance of 120 feet can be achieved in either direction from a point 6 feet back from the edge of the carriageway. The said measures shall be implemented prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy.
5. Parking and manoeuvring space for 53 cars and 50 cycles shall be established for use in accordance with Policies TPT.20 and TPT.25, Chapter 11 of the Bermuda Plan 2008 prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy and retained thereafter.
6. The private outdoor living space shown on the hereby approved plans shall be established for use in accordance with Policies DSN.15 and DSN.16, Chapter 8 of the Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy.
7. The communal open space shown on the hereby approved plans shall be established for use in accordance with Policies DSN.18 and DSN.20, Chapter 8 of the Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy.
8. In the interest of visual amenity, the hereby approved walls shall be constructed of Bermuda stone, faced with Bermuda stone or plastered, rendered and finished, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy.
9. A Certificate of Completion and Occupancy shall not be issued until all plantings/works of the hereby approved landscaping plan have been completed. All plantings shall be maintained thereafter and, if any trees or shrubs shown on the approved plans to be planted or retained are removed, die or become seriously diseased or damaged within 3 years of issuance of the Certificate of Completion and Occupancy, they shall be replaced by trees and shrubs of similar size and species or an alternative as approved, in writing, by the Department of Planning.

10. The communal garbage storage area, as shown on the approved plans, shall be established in accordance with Policy DSN.21, Chapter 8 of the Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion and Occupancy.

Checked By:

Paul McDonald

Digitally signed by Paul McDonald
DN: C=BM, E=pamcdonald@gov.bm, O=Government of
Bermuda, OU=Department of Planning, CN=Paul McDonald
Date: 2026.10.20 15:55:35-03'00'