



## **The Final Bermuda Plan 2018**

**Presented by:**

**The Hon. Walter Roban, JP, MP**

**Ministry of Home Affairs**

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**Mr. Speaker**, today I laid for the consideration and approval the final Bermuda Plan 2018. The Bermuda Plan 2018 (the Plan) is a development plan prepared by the Department of Planning to guide development for the island for many years to come. The Plan, which covers the entire Island with the exception of the City of Hamilton, comprises a policy document and zoning maps and the Tribunal report. Once approved by

the both Houses, notice of the approval of the Bermuda Plan 2018 will be published in the official Gazette.

**Mr. Speaker**, it must be noted that due to the size of the documents, the Plan can only be accessed electronically. The Planning statement and the Tribunal reports are 200 and 700 pages respectively. The zoning maps are multi-layered which can be more instructional to Honourable members as these layers can be manipulated. I invite members of this Honourable House and the public to access the Plan on the Department of Planning website or, more specifically, by entering the URL: <https://planning.gov.bm/index.php/bermuda-plan-2018/>.

**Mr. Speaker**, the Plan 2018 is the product of consultation with the public, key stakeholders, statutory bodies and extensive research. The overarching aim of the Plan is “to effectively manage Bermuda’s natural and built environment, resources and development and to help build healthy, sustainable communities.” In support of this aim, the Plan is based on three strategies:-

- A Development Strategy

- A Conservation Strategy
- A Community Strategy

**Mr. Speaker**, within the framework of these strategies, the Bermuda Plan 2018 sets out five key goals:-

1. To conserve open space and protect the Island's natural and built heritage;
2. To provide sufficient development potential to meet the community's needs;
3. To facilitate community improvements in neighbourhoods to create better, healthier and safer places to live and visit;
4. To encourage a more efficient and sustainable use and development of land and buildings; and
5. To ensure a high quality of design and accessibility in all new developments.

**Mr. Speaker**, Honourable Members may recall that the Bermuda Plan 2018 was first released as a draft Plan and was the subject of a three-and-

a-half month public consultation period from the 3rd December 2018 to the 15th March 2019. During this consultation period, a total of 457 objections and counter objections were received.

**Mr. Speaker**, of the objection submissions, 282 (62%) were objections, 161 (35%) were counter objections and 14 (3%) were representations in support of zonings or policies in the Draft Plan. A total of 50 objections were ultimately withdrawn or deemed invalid. Of the remaining 232 objections, 147 (63%) were zoning related. The most common zoning objections involved landowners wanting to remove Agricultural Reserve and Woodland Reserve Conservation Areas from their property. This has been a common theme with objections to previous Draft Bermuda Plans, and reflects landowners wanting greater development potential for their properties.

**Mr. Speaker**, on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020, I appointed the Draft Bermuda Plan 2018 Tribunal (the ‘Tribunal’) to hold public inquiries for objections and representations to the Draft Bermuda Plan 2018. Members of the Tribunal were Mr. John Payne (Chair), Mrs. Jennifer Haworth and Mr. Carlos

Amaral. Additionally, Mr. Jonathan Starling, Ms. Vanessa Turner and Ms. Quinell Francis were appointed as alternate members.

**Mr. Speaker**, in the Department's processing of the 232 valid objections, it is pleasing to note that 52% of them were resolved between the Department of Planning's technical officers and the objector. This left the remaining 48% of objections in an unresolved status to be heard by the Tribunal.

**Mr. Speaker**, the Tribunal commenced in-person public inquiries on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020, however, the inquiries were halted shortly thereafter in response to the health restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Department acted as swiftly as possible to amend the Tribunal procedures which involved holding the hearings virtually and live streaming them from the Department's website. A total of 16 Tribunal meetings were held in this manner with the last hearing concluding on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

**Mr. Speaker**, the Draft Bermuda Plan 2018 Tribunal Report, which included the Tribunal's recommendations for each objection along with

general remarks, was submitted to me for review and resolution. Following the completion of my review, this report was finalized to reflect the resolutions for each objection and representation.

**Mr. Speaker,** the Bermuda Plan 2018 Planning Statement and digital zoning maps reflect the final resolutions for amendments to the Draft Bermuda Plan 2018. We will discuss further the resolutions in a more fulsome debate on the 4<sup>th</sup> June. I look forward to receiving the input and questions of Honourable members at that time.

**Mr. Speaker,** the importance of the Bermuda Plan 2018 cannot be understated. There is a recognized need to provide flexibility within policy to provide the necessary mechanism to support development and new investment. This of course should not be to the detriment of our natural environment. The work of the Department involves assessing these competing interests and is becoming increasingly challenging in today's dynamic environment.

**Mr. Speaker,** I would like to take the opportunity at this time to thank the members of the Tribunal for their hard work and contributions to Bermuda

Plan 2018. In addition I would like to recognise the efforts of Ms. Victoria Pereira, Director of the Department of Planning and her team.

**Thank you, Mr. Speaker.**