

Statement of Tim Cowin, Town Clerk and Chief Executive of Ramsey Town Commissioners, to support the Public Inquiry into the proposed Ramsey (Boundary Extension) Order 2023.

1. Introduction

1.1 Ramsey Town Commissioners are providing additional evidence in respect of the Public Inquiry for the Ramsey (Boundary Extension) Order 2023. I, Timothy Cowin CEng, FIMeche am the Town Clerk and Chief Executive for Ramsey Town Commissioners. I have prepared this statement on behalf of Ramsey Town Commissioners. It will form the basis for any oral evidence given by me at the Inquiry, but I may make reference to papers already published and specifically those contained in the 'Ramsey Town Commissioners Proposed Boundary Extension September 2022' document.

1.2 I will address the following criteria:

1.2.1 (1) that the promoters' area and the area/s sought are really one community

1.2.2 (2) that there is community of interest in all or most public services, social agencies (for example schools, doctors' surgery/ies, recreation areas and community halls) and communal requirements of the future

1.2.3 (6) that the balance of advantage lies in the acceptance of the scheme, though it may generally be admitted that the area sought may be valuable in various ways to the local authority by whom they are now governed

1.3 I will also address the consultation and the consultation responses and additional information that has been provided by Garff, Lezayre and the 12 individuals that have registered to speak at the inquiry. As there are some shared subject matter issues in the responses, I will bring together common themes.

1.4 Finally, I will highlight the Ramsey Facilities and Management and briefly outline the Electoral Boundary Review.

2. Criteria

2.1 (1) That the promoter's area and the area/s sought are really one community

What is a *community*?

2.1.1 A *community* is a social group whose members have something in common, such as a shared government, geographic location, culture, or heritage.

2.1.2 *Community* can also refer to the physical location where such a group lives. It can refer to a town, city, village, or other area with a formal government whose residents share a nationality or culture.

2.1.3 The Isle of Man is an Island community; we have many things in common that define us: history, government, society, and language (English and Manx) come together to give the feeling of community and belonging. Community is also like a family within which there may be rivalries, disagreements, and fallings out. However as with a family, communities come together to protect, nurture, and support one another and repel threats that come from outside of the community.

2.1.4 People also belong to many different communities in their lives, be it the school community in early life, the community of work or the clubs, societies, churches, charities, towns, villages, or neighbourhoods that they are part of and associate with.

2.1.5 The Isle of Man is special in that there is a strong sense of National community and belonging; people know each other and have shared history, a parliament that is over 1000 years old and, although the Manx language is not commonly spoken, the dialect and use of language on the Island is unique. With this special strong Island sense of community there exists a very strong local community that is prevalent here on the Island but has ceased to exist in other countries and jurisdictions.

2.1.6 The northern parishes of the Isle of Man have separate identities but a sense of community with shared history be it as basic as many of us attended Ramsey Grammar School.

2.1.7 Our closest neighbours in Glen Auldyn as well as the small number of residents in the North, West and South areas identified in this boundary extension application are very much one community.

2.1.8 Money and rates are not a material consideration in this Boundary Extension process. If all the rates for properties in the north of the Island were equal or very comparable then there would be a ready recognition that our next-door neighbours are a part of one community.

2.1.9 Unfortunately, we have a nettle that is too hard to grasp and would appear to spell political suicide for any MHK who cares to grasp it. That is Island wide rate reform. Our antiquated Rating and Valuation Act 1953 is not fit for purpose, but its revision and update has been in the 'too difficult' pile for far too long. The Ramsey Boundary changes of 1970 and 1993 both make it clear that rate reform is required and long overdue. This is still the case, and there is no apparent plan to address the issue.

2.1.10 Spatially, Ramsey is a service centre; it is the capital of the north of the Island, indeed it is the largest town on the Island. It is the service centre for community, it is the principal community in the north, and it welcomes on a daily basis our friends and neighbours, all island residents, and visitors to this beautiful Island.

2.1.11 Any process such as this is divisive, but the simple fact remains, we are friends, family, business owners, customers, employers, employees, and community members. The utmost priority for Ramsey Town Commissioners is for the town to grow and develop successfully, and for our community to thrive and prosper. To do this we need each other, and we need to come together.

2.2 (2) that there is a community of interest in all or most public services, social agencies (for example schools, doctors' surgery/ies recreation areas and community halls) and communal requirements of the future:

2.2.1 The proverb "all roads lead to Rome" simply means that there are different paths and ways to reach the same goal. It is an age-old saying that has been used throughout history to show the concept of unity and convergence. All roads lead to Ramsey, in the case of this boundary extension, is simply a statement of fact. The Coast Road (A2) the Mountain Road (A18), Crossags Lane, Glen Auldyn Road via Lezayre Road, Jurby Road (A13), Andreas Road and Bride Road all radiate in and out of Ramsey, the largest Town on the Island, and the service centre of the North.

2.2.2 Ramsey is the community of interest for the entire north of the Island, as it provides the majority of the services – most shops, restaurants, pubs, cafes, filling stations, parks and leisure facilities, play equipment, sports fields, sports halls, library services, banking, cash points, churches or chapels and significant areas of maintained public open space. It is the sole provider in the north of the Island of hospital facilities, dentists, secondary school, banks, supermarkets, youth centre, army cadets, Catholic Church, bathing beaches, museum (Gibbs of the Grove), golf club accessed from the Town.

2.2.3 Glen Auldyn is an aspirational neighbourhood and many of the residents of Glen Auldyn have close links to Ramsey through family, friends and businesses or business dealings.

2.2.4 The residents of Glen Auldyn are our friends and closest neighbours. They live in one of the most desirable places on this Island and conceivably one of the most desirable places on the planet. Consequently, some of the residents and proponents of remaining in Lezayre may consider that the premium in purchase price of properties in Glen Auldyn on the very edge of the largest town on the Island justifies the separation from Ramsey.

2.2.5 In the 1980's and prior to the boundary extension in 1993, other areas such as Thornhill, with as strong a sense of community as Glen Auldyn feels today, were outside of the Ramsey Boundary. At that time, the residents made similar claims about land grab and argued they were part of a separate community. However, these areas are now part of Ramsey.

2.2.6 Westhill Village is an aspirational gated community within the town. There is a perception of exclusivity, and the neighbourhood tends to be relatively quiet and peaceful. Although there are distinct characteristics of each neighbourhood, there are many similarities between living in Westhill Village and living in Glen Auldyn. Fundamentally, the residents of both neighbourhoods have access to the same public services and social agencies but until now, whilst Westhill Village is within the Ramsey Town Boundary, Glen Auldyn is not.

2.2.7 The boundary extension process is not a “land grab” but a necessary and overdue re-definition of the boundaries of the town of Ramsey. Things change, historically Glen Auldyn was a separate entity but with the expansion of Ramsey it is no longer geographically separate and simply put, is an extended neighbourhood of Ramsey. Indeed, it feels strange that the primary school catchment areas do not more accurately reflect the distance to the appropriate schools, with the excellent primary schools in Ramsey being circa 152 metres from the Glen Auldyn junction in comparison to the 5.8 kilometres between the same junction at Glen Auldyn and Sulby Primary School.

2.2.8 Glen Auldyn is a collection of approximately 90 houses. Every group of houses or estate can be a community, communities build up where there is a strong sense of belonging or communal interest. As each housing estate (or mini suburb) has been built, there develops a common sense of belonging and common shared interest in the social character of the area. The lineal development of Glen Auldyn along the Auldyn River has been a natural development over time and in many ways mirrors the development of Ramsey along the Sulby River and the Auldyn River.

2.2.9 In a number of the consultation comments, residents of Glen Auldyn have implied that they only ever turn left out of the junction at the end of the road and don't use the services of Ramsey. Outside of Douglas nowhere provides the same depth and breadth of shops, leisure facilities, clubs, sports facilities and entertainment as Ramsey.

2.3 (6) that the balance of advantage lies in the acceptance of the scheme, though it may generally be admitted that the area sought may be valuable in various ways to the local authority by whom they are now governed:

2.3.1 Area of Ramsey 366 Hectares
Area of Lezayre 5,700 Hectares
Area of Garff in excess of 5,000 Hectares

2.3.2 North

2.3.2.1 The proposed area of the boundary extension to the north of Ramsey is 130 Hectares. There is a small number of residential properties (c 16) within this area with the focus of properties being on the northern side of Jurby Road in a ribbon development clearly extending out from the Town of Ramsey.

2.3.2.2 The proposed area of the boundary extension in this North section (as defined by the associated map) will have little impact on Lezayre Commissioners from a work done basis as the current services delivered to the 16 properties in relation to refuse collection and the weed spraying and sweeping of the Bride, Andreas and Jurby Road. The Civic Amenity site is located in this part of Lezayre, it is operated as a committee of Ramsey Town Commissioners with the 7 northern Local Authorities forming the committee. The site is managed on behalf of the committee by Ramsey Town Commissioners (staffing and operationally).

2.3.2.3 This area of land is significant to Ramsey as it represents the most important area for future development on the outskirts of the town. Flood risk and accurate flood maps have significantly reduced the viability for the development in Ramsey. There is a whole Island plan and strategic need for the Isle of Man to grow its population. The population growth requires at its base housing and particularly affordable housing as the cost of property on the Isle of Man is high and currently is a significant obstacle. Ramsey, as the largest town on the Island, needs to have the ability to meet future population needs.

2.3.2.4 What this boundary extension process does is ensure there is sufficient land for future development. This process sets the scene for the long-term future of Ramsey and for the next generations.

2.3.2.5 What this process does not do is set the development framework; that is currently clearly covered by the 1982 Development Plan and the Ramsey Local Plan 1998. The Area Plan for the North and West is still in development and has a very short-term life to 2026 and the whole Island development plan is in its infancy.

2.3.2.6 The balance of advantage clearly lies in acceptance of the application for the North section of the boundary extension.

2.3.3 West

2.3.3.1 The proposed area of the boundary extension to the west of Ramsey is 56 Hectares . There is a small number of residential properties (c 10) within this area with the focus of properties being on the southern side of Jurby Road in a ribbon development clearly extending out from the Town of Ramsey.

2.3.3.2 The proposed area of the boundary extension in this West section (as defined by the associated map) will have little impact on Lezayre Commissioners from a work done basis as the current services delivered to the 10 properties in relation to refuse collection and the weed spraying and sweeping of the Jurby Road (Lezayre Road being swept and serviced by the Department of Infrastructure).

2.3.3.3 This area of land is significant to Ramsey as it represents an important area for future development on the outskirts of the town. The area around Mountain View Innovation Centre is an area of economic growth and development for companies and represents a significant employment hub. Flood risk and accurate flood maps have significantly reduced the viability for development in Ramsey. Part of this area is relatively low lying and prone to flooding from the Sulby River, it could and would make excellent amenity land significantly enhancing the area.

2.3.3.4 Our Island Plan demonstrates the strategic need for the Isle of Man to grow its population. The population growth requires at its base housing and particularly affordable housing as the cost of property on the Isle of Man is high and currently is a significant obstacle. Ramsey, as the largest town on the Island, needs to have the ability to meet future population needs.

2.3.3.5 What this boundary extension process does is ensure there is sufficient land for future development. This process sets the scene for the long-term future of Ramsey and for the next generations.

2.3.3.6 What this process does not do is set the development framework; that is currently clearly covered by the 1982 Development Plan and the Ramsey Local Plan 1998. The Area Plan for the North and West is still in development and has a very short-term life to 2026 and the whole Island development plan is in its infancy.

2.3.3.7 The proposed development of 138 houses on the Lower Milntown Farm fields (planning Application number 20/01080/B) was rejected at appeal on 1st March 2023. Both Lezayre and Ramsey Commissioners objected to the scheme, Ramsey from the perspective that it was outside of Ramsey and Lezayre stating that there were other fields within Ramsey that could address the need. This land still lies zoned for development in the extant 1982 Development Plan.

2.3.3.8 The balance of advantage clearly lies in acceptance of the application for the West section of the boundary extension.

2.3.4 South

2.3.4.1 The proposed area of the boundary extension to the west of Ramsey is 70 Hectares. There is a small number of residential properties (c 3) within this area. This area is not about the development or development potential of this land. The extension of Ramsey into this southern area is simply to formalise and align the actual Ramsey boundary with the perceived boundary. The golf course to the North and West side of this area is assumed by almost everyone to be in Ramsey; the areas of Glen and heath land to the West and South are perceived to be part of Ramsey as the access to these areas is predominantly through Ramsey. The people of Ramsey access the beautiful low hillside on foot from Ramsey and consider the wooded area and glen to be part of Ramsey. DEFA, MHKs and planning have contacted the Town Hall to discuss the area and have been very surprised to find it falls outside of Ramsey.

2.3.4.2 In 1865, when Ramsey was formed, a crest was produced that is proudly displayed at the Town Hall and appears on the official Ramsey embossed stamp, depicting a crown sitting above the Albert Tower. The Albert Tower was vested in Ramsey Town Commissioners by virtue of the Ramsey Town Act 1970, and subsequently transferred to the safekeeping of the Government Property Trustees (now the Department of Infrastructure). Albert Tower is widely associated with Ramsey but currently sits outside of the town boundary, a mistake of history that needs to be corrected.

2.3.5 Glen Auldyn

2.3.5.1 The proposed area of the boundary extension for Glen Auldyn is 145 Hectares. There is a number of residential properties (c 90) within this area with the focus properties being on the southern side of Lezayre Road in a linear development clearly extending out from the Town of Ramsey.

2.3.5.2 The residents of Glen Auldyn already benefit from the communal services provided within the town and there is little physical separation between Ramsey and Glen Auldyn, with development now reaching the current boundary. Glen Auldyn is no longer separated from Ramsey, either in a physical sense or in community spirit.

3. Consultation

3.1 Consultation is vital to ensure the gathered views of all members of the community are incorporated into the process; engagement at an early stage demonstrates that the proposed Ramsey boundary extension application merits review and scrutiny.

3.2 Respondents to the public consultation were self-selecting and it was heartening that 334 responses were received. The fact that 12 individuals also registered to speak at the Inquiry shows people want to engage.

3.3 Ramsey Town Commissioners reviewed the comments made by members of the community who submitted non-confidential comments and, as part of their analysis, general themes were identified, details of which can be found in Appendix 1, along with Ramsey Town Commissioners' further replies.

3.4 As with most consultation processes, there is a silent majority who are not interested, do not want to engage or who see little or no advantage or disadvantage to themselves. In Ramsey, living in the 3875 households are 8,288 people (population from census 2021).

3.5 As shown in the analysis referred to above, it is predominantly the residents of Lezayre that are concerned by this process. There is fear of change and how it would impact the homeowners and residents. In reality, the impact on current households will be only slight. They will benefit from increased frequency of bin collections, access to the Town Library at a reduced subscription and a dedicated team of 20 workers looking after the town, parks, amenities and streets to provide seamless services.

3.6 The Department of Infrastructure is looking at a new Highway Maintenance Charter that devolves more responsibility to local authorities. It is yet to be determined how this will take shape, but Ramsey Town Commissioners recognise the importance of maintaining the town and have the resources, equipment, and staff to do so and as such, are better positioned than Lezayre Commissioners in this regard.

4. Ramsey Facilities and Management

4.1 With a population of 8,288, a 5.6% increase since 2016 (NB across the Island there was a 0.9% increase in this same period) and 3875 households in Ramsey, the town is vibrant and growing. Much of this growth has been filling in the vacant areas earmarked for development in the Ramsey Local Plan 1998.

4.2 Now with very few exceptions the development land has either been used to build and develop or has been rendered difficult if not impossible to develop by the very accurate flood risk models that have been developed by the Flood Risk Team from the Isle of Man Government.

4.3 Ramsey Town Commissioners consist of 12 elected members and has a staff of 52 members of staff. The employees of the Commissioners are responsible for the operation of the town and the duties that they perform are highlighted in Appendix 2.

4.4 The operations of the Commissioners is divided quite concisely into Town Hall, Finance, Housing and Properties, Works and Parks and Leisure, the Town Hall Library and the Northern Civic Amenity Site.

4.5 The Housing and Properties team look after the c 550 public sector commissioners' houses, 125 Ramsey and Northern Districts dwellings and the commercial properties owned by the town such as the Town Hall, Courthouse and the buildings in the Mooragh Park.

4.6 The most commonly visible teams and staff members regularly interacted with are the Works team and the Parks and Leisure team. Both the Works and Parks and Leisure teams have active schedules of work defined for their operations in Ramsey. The Works team is responsible for the refuse rounds, the street cleaning, basic highway maintenance, the maintenance of public open space and the support for events and event preparation. The Parks and Leisure Team are responsible for the town's parks, floral displays, trees and the horticultural elements of public open space.

4.7 The size and scope of the Ramsey Town Commissioners works teams is considerable and there are 2 depots in the town to support the teams. The teams are fully equipped with vans, tractors, lawn mowers and other gardening equipment, together with 3 refuse wagons and a street sweeper.

4.8 Ramsey is not perfect however the teams work hard to keep on top of the town's maintenance; the age of the buildings and infrastructure, specifically the pavements and roads, present challenges and Ramsey Town Commissioners work closely with the Highway Services Division of the Department of Infrastructure to maintain these areas.

4.9 Additional investment is planned in the equipment and infrastructure required by the Ramsey Town Commissioners' works teams to enhance the town environment. The annual budget process is perpetual and the 2024-25 budget setting will be well underway during this Inquiry process, and replacement of road sweepers, machinery and equipment will be considered to reduce the strain on our works teams and to enhance the level of maintenance undertaken throughout the town.

4.10 The built environment and brownfield sites in both public and private ownership needs more focus. With many of the buildings in the centre of town having been constructed in the 18th century, buildings that have not been fully maintained either need a substantial refurbishment or have already been demolished. The team at Ramsey Town Hall are addressing over 20 buildings that are classed as dilapidated and working with other business partners to try and promote the reuse of brownfield sites. However, this is challenging. There are legally enforceable mechanisms that Ramsey Town Commissioners can use in relation to dilapidated or dangerous buildings and they are employed when appropriate. In terms of brownfield sites in private ownership, Ramsey Town Commissioners have no direct control. Grants are available from the Department of Enterprise and there has been active dialogue between relevant parties.

4.11 There is a small number of sites owned by Ramsey Town Commissioners that could be developed; the Policy Committee are reviewing the sites to determine their best use and how they can address the needs of the town. Decisions in relation to this limited land holding are not straightforward. Their size is such that only limited development can take place and will not solve the existing housing shortage let alone make provision for expansion in line with central government policy.

5. Electoral Boundary Review

The Electoral Boundary Review Committee was set up in June 2022. The objective of the committee is to redraw electoral boundaries to ensure that there are consistent numbers of people within each electoral area. The problem with trying to achieve fairness with 2 elected members for each constituency is that there is a significant issue presented by the population density in urban areas vs. rural areas. This is evident in the proposed maps taking out a significant number of properties from Ramsey and putting them in Garff (680 residents) or Ayre and Michael (414). This Boundary Inquiry quite rightly has one of its main focuses on community.

Residents of Ramsey are a community and both 'Garff' and 'Ayre and Michael' constituencies have very different identities to Ramsey, particularly for the purposes of the national general election. It is worthy of note that this consultation was made live in November 2023 but has no influence, nor does it relate directly to the matter in hand, which is the expansion of the Ramsey Town Boundary.

Public Consultation – Response Themes & RTC’s Additional Reply
Summary

Ref No	Response Theme/Issue	Ramsey Town Commissioners’ Additional Reply
	General Comments	
Gen1	Land Grab	<p>Land Grab is defined as ‘the act of taking an area of land by force’. This claim was made by various responders but is strongly refuted by Ramsey Town Commissioners.</p> <p>Ramsey Town Commissioners have followed due process in their application to extend the boundary of the town. This Inquiry will assess the merits of the application through the appropriate consideration of 6 criteria, all of which have been addressed either within the original RTC application or in our statements and presentations.</p>
Gen2	Rural land is being sought	<p>Prior to the last boundary extension, suburban neighbourhoods such as Thornhill, part of Westlands, a section of Jurby Road and Westhill Village sat within Lezayre and, prior to their becoming housing development areas, had been fields within a rural setting. These areas, albeit on the outskirts, are now firmly established neighbourhoods of the town.</p> <p>A boundary extension would bring about no immediate change to the landscape. The Isle of Man does need to focus on food security, but the sought areas are relatively small and there is no lack of agricultural land on the Island.</p>
Gen3	Ramsey – state of the town/decaying from the centre	<p>There is plenty of evidence that supports the regeneration of Parliament Street, Market Square and some work that has already taken place on the quayside opposite the old Stanley public house.</p> <p>Ramsey Town Commissioners have an active schedule of works that covers street cleaning, seasonal weeding, grass-cutting, gullies, etc.</p> <p>Byelaws are in place to deal with littering, dog fouling, etc.</p> <p>Ramsey Town Commissioners are actively addressing dilapidated buildings in the town and have been working with 23 property owners. 8 x Section 24 Improvement Notices have been served in the last 2 years. Additionally, owners of Unoccupied Urban Sites have been contacted to make them aware of grants that may be available to them through the IOM Government Department of Enterprise – no responses have been received.</p>

Gen4	Premature Application/Not the right time/Need to await the adoption of the Draft North & West Area Plan	<p>Previous town boundary extensions have been exercised so that the boundary ‘catches-up’ with the community neighbourhoods and development areas.</p> <p>RTC is strategically considering the need for progression and expansion and considers the North and West Area Plan (irrespective of its draft status) to be short-sighted in that it has a shelf-life to 2026 only (and remains in draft!). RTC is looking far beyond that date to ensure the diverse needs of the town will be addressed not only in the medium term but also for the next generation and to meet the Island’s economic strategy to grow the population to 100,000.</p> <p>Development outside a settlement is restricted except where there are no other alternatives and even then, only in sustainable extensions to settlements. This is a fundamental strategic aspect of our application, i.e. to ensure development takes place only within accepted urban and suburban areas of the town.</p>
Gen5	Not on mains sewerage system, has own septic tank; no street lighting, no mobile phone reception	<p>This point is considered irrelevant because either a property is serviced via the public sewerage system, which means the cost is included on the annual property rates demand, or it is serviced via a private septic tank, which means the property occupant pays privately for the service. Some properties within a Ramsey boundary proposed extension area are connected to the public sewerage system.</p> <p>There are suburban areas within the town with limited street lighting and poor mobile phone reception and, whilst it is recognised that third parties are continually striving to improve their offerings, remarks of this nature are considered by Ramsey Town Commissioners to be irrelevant to this Inquiry.</p>
Gen6	Not One Community	<p>Ramsey Town Commissioners fully appreciate the distinct characteristics of the various urban and suburban neighbourhoods as well as the public amenities, rest and recreation community facilities, greenspace and the retail and business areas of the town centre.</p> <p>Ramsey Town Commissioners are of the opinion that all sought areas share a strong sense of community and are suburban neighbourhoods within the town.</p> <p>This proposed boundary extension is about taking a longer-term perspective, to enable growth and build a sustainable community that manages its diverse human, natural and physical resources effectively.</p>

		<p>Ramsey Town Commissioners, in considering the community needs, are seeking to pave the way to ensure resources are available to support future generations.</p> <p>See separate points following this table about various sites within some of the proposed extension areas, e.g. Ramsey Golf Course, Milntown Estate, Glen Auldyn, Mountain View Innovation Centre.</p>
Gen7	Ramsey needs to develop its brownfield sites in the town	<p>Development of the majority of brownfield sites is challenging and problematic at best because of their location in a flood-risk zone and that the development costs for isolated small sites render the spaces virtually undevelopable for anything other than owner occupation.</p> <p>See also point Gen3: Owners of Unoccupied Urban Sites have been contacted to make them aware of grants that may be available to them through the IOM Government Department of Enterprise – no responses have been received.</p>
Gen8	Ramsey has greenfield sites that can be developed without the need for expansion of the town boundary	<p>The available greenfield land for development, other than one small site to the West of the Andreas Road, planning applications are pending (e.g. Vollan Fields, Sulby Riverside/Poyll Dooey). There is no other significant development land available within the existing town boundary.</p>
Gen9	<p>Common Services - GP, Dental, Pharmacy Services, School capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of available Doctor, Dentist and School Services to support a boundary extension. • Ramsey Group Practice not accessed (Jurby Medical Centre made use of instead). • Dentists outside of Ramsey utilised. • Countryside based Pharmacies used, not any in Ramsey. • Schools can't accommodate an increase in admissions. 	<p>Manx Care is responsible for all primary care services on the Island and medical services are provided to residents if the relevant GP Practice list of patients is 'Open'. Contact was made with Ramsey Group Practice on 4th December 2023 and it was confirmed that the practice is accepting new applications from anyone based in the North of the Island. Appointments for Ramsey and Jurby surgeries are managed via the Ramsey Group Practice.</p> <p>Primary Care Services maintain the NHS dental waiting list and are responsible for making patient allocations to the NHS dental practices as and when practices have availability to take on new patients. When allocated, the dental practice is not necessarily in the locality where the patient is resident.</p> <p>The use of out-of-town pharmacies was largely due to the poor service and product provision (now being addressed).</p> <p>A boundary extension per se will have little effect on the availability and provision of these services. A boundary extension leading to further development and subsequent increase in population will underpin the need for the expansion of GP and dental services in Ramsey, which can be provided as part of structured progression and is aligned with the Policy to grow the economy.</p>

		<p>In terms of school capacity, contact was made with Bunscoill Rhumsaa at the beginning of December 2023 and confirmation received from the Executive Headteacher of Bunscoill Rhumsaa and Sulby Primary School that the maximum capacity of Bunscoill Rhumsaa is 566 pupils. There are 459 pupils in the school, resulting in a balance of 107 available pupil places, equating to 18.90%.</p>
Gen10	Rural vs. Urban – Ramsey Town Commissioners have not addressed the different needs of countryside vs. town living	<p>A review will be required to analyse and agree the way forward for service delivery and governance matters, to address the needs of the various urban and suburban neighbourhoods in the town, and to build community wellbeing and inclusion. Boundary extension, by definition, requires an integration of rural and urban growth – this is controlled by density.</p>
Gen11	Boundary Extension Application is contrary to IOM Gov policies re Climate Change Programme; building on the fields would increase the carbon footprint	<p>The Climate Change Act 2021 sets out the standards and principles that climate action must follow. The actions needed to mitigate climate change are wide-ranging and it is critical that Ramsey Town Commissioners fulfil their duties.</p> <p>Ramsey Town Commissioners are categorised as a Category B public body for the purposes of the Climate Change (Public Bodies’ Reporting Requirements) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.</p> <p>In guiding all new policy development and decision making, Ramsey Town Commissioners must undertake a documented Climate Change Assessment to evidence the support of climate justice principles, ensure all interim and net zero emissions targets are met and work towards sustainable development.</p> <p>In fulfilling our duties, we will be contributing to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystems.</p> <p>A boundary extension as such will have no direct impact on the Climate Change Programme as any subsequent new development application will be subject to climate scrutiny via the Climate Change Assessment process.</p>
Gen12	Proximity to the town centre of some residents living near to the existing Ramsey boundary in some proposed extension areas – they pay a fraction of the rates of Ramsey residents but enjoy the same benefits	<p>Irrespective of the financial aspects (which should be ignored in this process), some of the existing properties near to the edge of the boundary are as close, or closer, to the town centre than other properties within Ramsey.</p> <p>Furthermore, Ramsey Town Commissioners wish to address their concern over a small number of properties located inside the Ramsey Town Boundary Sign that can be found on directly opposite sides of the road, where one property is in Ramsey and others opposite are in Lezayre. Two such examples are:</p>

		<p>i) Creg Malin, <i>Ramsey</i> and 2 properties at Cronk Mayn, <i>Lezayre</i>, are on directly opposite sides of Jurby Road; ii) the Milntown Estate, <i>Lezayre</i> is directly opposite residential/industrial property, <i>Ramsey</i>, on Lezayre Road.</p> <p>The residents of these properties near to the edge of the boundary and within the proposed extension area can avail of the same common services as Ramsey residents and are part of the same community sharing the same community interests.</p> <p>The majority of Ramsey complies with active travel strategies, and this will not change.</p>
Gen13	Some of the proposed extension areas have special ecological value, woodland settings or enjoy dark skies. As such, these areas cannot be part of the Ramsey town	<p>Protected sites best represent our Manx heritage and Ramsey Town Commissioners are proud to partner Biosphere Isle of Man. We are passionate about protecting our natural resources, including established areas of special ecological interest within the town, e.g.:</p> <p>Poyll Dooley, situated in Ramsey next to Sulby River, is a recognised Nature Reserve with ecological significance, comprising salt marsh, wetland, grassland, meadow, woodland, nature trail, etc. Its continuous variation in exposure results in a specialised ecosystem, providing a unique habitat to rare and highly adapted species.</p> <p>The Ramsey Mooragh Shore is an Area of Special Scientific Interest under Section 27 of the Wildlife Act 1990. The Mooragh Park Promenade is registered as a Dark Skies Site; an Interpretation Board ensures that visitors can fully enjoy the stunning stargazing on offer.</p> <p>Ramsey Town Commissioners are of the opinion that, whilst intrinsically important aspects within our diverse community neighbourhoods, environmental/landscape concerns should bear little relevance to this Inquiry and are protected for their own sake via separate legislation.</p>

Ramsey Golf Course is a prime example of a five-star recreation facility and, according to the Ramsey Golf Club website, ‘the clubhouse and course are situated more or less in the centre of the Town of Ramsey’. The Club was founded in 1891, with the Club’s most prestigious trophy being presented to the Club for annual competition by Ramsey Town Commissioners in 1902. The Ramsey Golf Club Challenge Cup, or ‘The Town Cup’ as it is known, has been competed for since then (except for the World War years) and continues today as a prominent annual event in Ramsey’s golfing calendar. The Club was formed to provide facilities to the people of Ramsey to play golf and for public use within the town. In addition to the playing of golf, there are fabulous facilities available for both private and community gatherings to be held in the Clubhouse, which is enjoyed as a community destination by people from the wider Northern Parishes. The fact is that the golf clubhouse and course span across Ramsey, Garff and Lezayre. However, the perception of most people, and by the club’s own assertion, Ramsey Golf Course lies firmly within Ramsey.

The Milntown Estate was bequeathed to the Milntown Trust by the then owner, Sir Clive Edwards, on his death in 1999. A bronze plaque on the wall of the Milntown Mansion House quotes a passage from his will: 'Impressed by the kindness of the Manx people, it is my desire that my estate of Milntown and its grounds should be maintained as a place of historical interest for the benefit of the public.' Prior to Sir Clive's death, the Milntown Estate was not accessible to the public, so his gift to the local residents marked a significant point in time and resulted in the Trustees and Estate staff embarking on extensive improvements and creating new experiences for those visiting the Milntown Estate. 'Milntown', as it is warmly referred to locally, is a fabulous venue for members of the community to meet up for breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea or to visit the gardens and other facilities within the grounds. Additionally, Milntown has an active social media following and organises numerous events for the extended community to attend at various times throughout the year. The entrance is located within Ramsey on Lezayre Road circa 150 metres away from Bunscoill Rhumsaa and, directly opposite the whole northern boundary of the Milntown Estate on Lezayre Road are residential and industrial properties, all within Ramsey. Milntown is very much regarded as an integral part of the Ramsey town community.

Ramsey Town Commissioners consider **Glen Auldyn** to be a neighbourhood within Ramsey. It is positioned abutting the existing Western side boundary. The topography of Sky Hill gives a natural boundary defining Ramsey and Lezayre. The Glen Auldyn residents identify themselves as a separate community which is an important aspect to address. Community and a sense of belonging is crucial to who we are; it gives us identity and purpose. Ramsey is segregated into various small neighbourhood communities, e.g. Glen Auldyn, Lezayre Estate, Thornhill Park, Gibbs Grove, Westhill Village, Balleigh, Cloughbane, Barrule Park, etc.; each small community having particular nuances and unique qualities. We are all part of one larger community and that is the community of Ramsey.

The Mountain View Innovation Centre, in addition to employing circa 50 staff, also provides physical space for other businesses within the site, e.g. children's nursery, beauty salon, homecare and occupational health services, financial services, bistro, to name a few. The Centre clearly signifies the principles of innovation and is a key employment area on the outskirts of town. Additionally, the events venue and extensive facilities at MVIC are impressive and widely available to individuals, churches, charities, and community groups from the wider community. It is admirable that the organisation is all about Community – the community of the people who work at the site and the community in which we live.

A strong community spirit is an attribute that Ramsey Town Commissioners attach great importance to, and firmly believe that the Mountain View Innovation Centre and the space around the site can blend in almost seamlessly with the surrounding residential and Ramsey boundary expansion areas to become a fully inclusive extended community.

Ramsey Town Commissioners
FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

Abandoned Vehicles	Pedlars and Street Traders
Beaches	Play Areas
	Public Clocks and Seating
Car Parking	Public Information/Advice
Civic Amenity Site	Public Pleasure/Recreation Grounds
Community Halls	Public Seats and Shelters
Consumer Advice	Public Toilets
Control of Dogs	Rate Setting
Environmental Health Enforcement	Refuse Collection
Events and Attractions	Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships
Facility for the Public to view Planning	Sanitation
Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations/Enforcement	Administration of Sheltered Housing Authority
Food Hygiene Enforcement	Street Cleaning
Highway Hedgerows, Gullies & Verges	Street Lighting
Housing (management of 550 homes)	Street Nameplates
Library	Tourist Information
Litter Act/Designated Litter Officer	Unsightly/Derelict Buildings
Local Byelaws/Enforcement	War Memorial
Maintenance of Open Spaces	Sports Facilities

Ramsey Town Commissioners
EVENTS

Event Name	Description
Chilly Dip	New Year Day Dip
Shennaghys Jiu	A music and performing arts festival organised by a community committee which first took place in 1997
Daffodil Competition	Bulb growing completion with local schools
Sprintfest	Multi night music festival taking place during TT week
Ramsey Sprint	Motorcycle event on Mooragh site as part of TT Festival
Picnic In The Park	Family Fun Day In the Mooragh Park
Ramsey Rocks	Once Day Family Focussed event
Ramsey in Bloom	Completion celebrating domestic, commercial and community gardens
GranFondo	Cycling event hosted in Mooragh Park
Firework Display	Annual firework display in Mooragh Park
Civic Service of Remembrance	Annual Civic Service of Remembrance
Christmas Lights Switch On	Annual event to countdown the start the busy festive season
Ramsey Festival of Christmas Trees	Community festival of Christmas Trees in Town Hall
Ellan Vannin Memorial Service	Service to commemorate the loss of the Ellan Vannin
Ramsey In Bling!	Completion celebrating the best decorated residential and commercial properties during the festive period.
Community Carol Singing	Carol singing at the Courthouse with Ramsey Town Band
Various	Host various sporting events and triathlons, charity events in Mooragh Park

Ramsey Town Commissioners
DISPLAYS AT THE TOWN HALL

TT
World Book Day
Tynwald Day
Manx Grand Prix
Manx Nature Show
Sixties books, and Radio Caroline
A display to mark the start of the new school year
999 Emergency Services Day
Display of materials relating to the boundary extension plans
Access To Cash survey (display and accepted consultation responses)
Wind Farm Consultation
Electoral Boundary Review Information