

STATES OF JERSEY



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE – PARKING STRATEGY (P.50/2023): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 12th July 2023
by the Minister for the Environment**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The premise of the Connétable's amendment, such that I should postpone any decision to adopt supplementary planning guidance about residential parking standards until the States have approved a parking strategy, is flawed. It is flawed for a number of reasons.

- First, as acknowledged by the Connétable, there is a climate emergency. Transport is one of the biggest contributors to our carbon emissions and we need to change the way we travel. This Assembly has already set the strategic direction of policy for the development of a more sustainable transport system in the island, set out in the Sustainable Transport Policy (STP).

The STP will have implications for vehicle use and the provision of space for car parking throughout the island, including St Helier. The principles set by the STP, with most relevance to the provision of space for car parking, are as follows:

- recognise that fewer motor vehicle journeys will be good for Jersey
- reduce the impact of vehicles on our landscape and create more space for people in St Helier
- create planning systems that reduce the need to travel
- conform with the Jersey mobility hierarchy.

I have developed supplementary planning guidance that supports and helps deliver against these objectives. The Connétable's report acknowledges that my draft guidance is consistent with the policy direction already set by the States Assembly.

All States members, together with members of the public, have had an opportunity to comment on the detail of draft supplementary planning guidance. I am currently considering consultation feedback, including that of the Parish of St Helier's Roads Committee, and I will respond to all of the detailed points raised during consultation in advance of issuing revised guidance before September.

The Minister for infrastructure is likewise doing the same in the development of operational transport initiatives and measures related to the management of road space and parking within the policy direction already set by this Assembly.

- Second, there is a housing crisis. This Council of Ministers has a relentless focus on housing, including delivering homes and improving the quality of islanders' living environments.

The level of car parking space required to be provided for a residential development scheme is a key determinant of design and yield. Parking standards, along with standards for density and the space to be provided inside and outside of a home, form part of a package of supplementary planning guidance that is urgently needed to inform new residential development.

This is required not only to ensure that we make the best use of land, enabling the optimal density of development; but also to enable the delivery of affordable homes on rezoned housing sites in the Island Plan.

Current guidance on residential parking standards is over 30 years old and is seriously misaligned with the direction of other adopted States policy. Revised standards need to be adopted and they need to be adopted soon: this guidance cannot be subject to unnecessary delay.

- And finally, the Connétable suggests that the draft residential parking standards are discriminatory to the residents of St Helier. They are not.

As they stand currently, the draft standards allow developers to determine whether they want to provide car parking spaces as part of their development proposals up to a maximum of one space per home in the limited area of St Helier town centre only. Developers will only build homes that they know that people want and can afford to occupy. The current draft guidance provides them and islanders who want homes with choice.

For the remainder of the town of St Helier, as with the rest of the island, the draft guidance sets out a minimum requirement for the provision of car parking space – such that a minimum level of car parking **has** to be provided – which varies depending on the size of the home.

The minimum level of car parking is based on what other transport choices might be available to islanders in different parts of the island. This approach is adopted and has been applied across all parts of the island and is not specific to St Helier.

It reflects and supports the principles set out in the STP, and supported by the bridging Island Plan, that we should locate development in those parts of the island where people can enjoy the greatest access to services and places that they need to get to, thus reducing the need and distance that we need to travel.

The draft parking standards do not preclude car use, or indeed owning a car. As currently drafted, they require minimum levels of car parking provision in association with residential development schemes, except where they are located within St Helier town centre, where maximum standards apply. The draft standards also allow and encourage the provision of car clubs and car sharing which may be of benefit anywhere in the island, but particularly St Helier.

The guidance also proposes the introduction of parking standards for cycle parking, which is not currently required to be provided under the current outdated guidance.

It is important to emphasise, however, that the guidance currently exists as a draft for consultation: I am still in the process of reviewing the consultation feedback and deciding if and how the guidance might be changed in light of the comments received.

I will be giving the issues raised during consultation careful consideration and I remain open to making changes once I have considered the consultation responses in detail, and where I think change is justified and necessary.

On the basis of the above, I would respectfully urge members to reject this proposition and enable me to make progress with the important and pressing work of providing an up-to-date suite of planning guidance that can help deliver sustainable forms of development in accord with the policy direction already established by the States Assembly.