

# STATES OF JERSEY



## **ISLAND PLAN 2022-25: APPROVAL (P.36/2021) – FORTY-SECOND AMENDMENT TRANSPORT AND PARKING**

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Lodged au Greffe on 12th July 2021  
by the Connétable of St. Helier

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**STATES GREFFE**

ISLAND PLAN 2022-25: APPROVAL (P.36/2021) – FORTY-SECOND  
AMENDMENT

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**1 PAGE 2 –**

After the words “the draft Island Plan 2022-25” insert the words “except that –

- (a) in Policy H2 – ‘Housing density’, after the third bullet point of the third paragraph, there should be inserted the following bullet point –
  - “the quantity of amenity space and parking, including visitor parking”;
- (b) in the Proposal – ‘Sustainable transport zones’, for the word “publish” in the first sentence there should be substituted the words “and bring to the States Assembly for approval, in conjunction with the Minister for Infrastructure’s forthcoming Parking Strategy, draft”;
- (c) in Policy TT4 – ‘Provision of off-street parking’, in the third paragraph, for the words after the word “supported” there should be substituted the words “unless the new spaces will be provided for the use of residents, shoppers and visitors”.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

**Note:** After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

to approve, in accordance with Article 3(1) of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002, as amended by the Covid-19 (Island Plan) (Jersey) Regulations 2021, the draft Island Plan 2022-25, **except that –**

- (a) in Policy H2 – ‘Housing density’, after the third bullet point of the third paragraph, there should be inserted the following bullet point –
  - “the quantity of amenity space and parking, including visitor parking”;
- (b) in the Proposal – ‘Sustainable transport zones’, for the word “publish” in the first sentence there should be substituted the words “and bring to the States Assembly for approval, in conjunction with the Minister for Infrastructure’s forthcoming Parking Strategy, draft”;
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## REPORT

### Introduction

Trying to amend the Travel and transport section (pages 249 to 264) of the draft Bridging Island Plan, I found myself constantly referring back to the similarly titled section in the last plan and the amendments which I tabled to that plan. The shared title is just about all that the two Island Plans have in common in their approach to the challenges and opportunities of our transport network, and I found myself asking why the policies and proposals (such as they are) in the newer Plan are so much weaker and vaguer than those that were amended, debated and agreed ten years ago. The answer to the question is not difficult to find: successive Councils of Ministers have done very little to implement the previous Plan, so it must have been decided to try a different tack this time around and hope States Members will not notice that the boat is in fact drifting steadily backwards.

Section 8 of the new Plan begins: ‘In 2020, the States Assembly agreed a Sustainable Transport Policy (STP) that aims to create an entirely sustainable transport system by 2030. This requires a fundamental re-think of how road (and associated) space is allocated and used in Jersey, how the transport system is funded and what benefits are secured in return.’ This is mere spin: with the exception of some notable improvements to the bus service, successive Ministers for Infrastructure have done very little to implement the sustainable transport policies set out in previous Island Plans. They have failed, in particular, to introduce strategies for safe walking and cycling, and to fund the necessary infrastructure, relying instead on piecemeal changes; this can be seen in the fact that while we still have no cycle routes in St. Helier, there is a proliferation of cycle stands, many of which make life difficult for pedestrians. There are also dozens of junctions which lack pedestrian crossing facilities, and long stretches of pavement which are too narrow for safe pedestrian movement. However, rather than accepting this failure to deliver the routes and associated infrastructure for walking and cycling that are key components of any sustainable transport network, the Infrastructure Department has instead come up with the idea of ‘Active Travel’ (Policy TT2) which sounds like a new policy but is really an admission of failure.

The Travel and transport section in the new Island Plan runs to a mere 15 pages; the previous plan allocated 40. The old Plan, as amended, identified a comprehensive range of objectives, proposals and targets, with 14 specific policies; the new Plan turns its back on most of them, providing just 4 policies, and no targets, perhaps to avoid a repetition of the admission by the Minister for Infrastructure during Question Time on 2nd May 2017 that the target of a 15% reduction in vehicular motor traffic could not be met.

Given the sorry state of sustainable transport planning and implementation (the present Minister for Infrastructure stated in a recent exchange in the Assembly that he has no transport department) what are we to make of the watered down Travel and transport section of the draft Bridging Island Plan? Is there any point in trying to amend it, given that the provisions in the far superior section of the previous Plan have largely been ignored?

Of the four policies in the new Plan – Integrated safe and inclusive travel (TT1), Active Travel (TT2), Bus service improvement (TT3), Provision of off-street parking (TT4) – the last is too important to leave unamended, and it requires amendments along similar

lines to those that were tabled, debated and approved last time around. This is because, in spite of what might be called an ‘anti-car’ agenda in the Plan, the provision and management of vehicle parking will be beneficial in environmental, economic and social terms:

1. parking policy has a major part to play in reducing traffic congestion and in increasing walking and cycling;
2. getting our parking right, including unloading and servicing bays, is crucial to the success of the Town, especially for the viability of shops, restaurants, cafes, theatres, health clubs, etc.
3. off-street parking is needed by residents, who are surely entitled to the same rights of car ownership as people living in other parishes.

## **Policy H2 – Housing density**

**In the third paragraph after the third bullet point insert the words:**

- **the quantity of amenity space and parking, including visitor parking**

While the importance of there being ample provision of and access to amenity space in housing developments is stated elsewhere in the Plan the key Policy H2 makes no reference to it, nor to the importance of adequate parking being provided for residents and their visitors. This amendment seeks to address this.

## **Proposal – Sustainable transport zones**

**In the first line after the word “develop” replace the word “publish” with:**

**“and bring to the States Assembly for approval, in conjunction with the Minister for Infrastructure’s forthcoming Parking Strategy, draft”**

The proposal for ‘STZs’ is one of the more opaque ones in the Plan, nor do the four paragraphs that precede it give much clarity. What it seems to be endorsing is the prevailing view at the Planning Department that parking need not be included in residential developments, even in the case of new builds. For twenty years the St. Helier Roads Committee has been routinely rejecting planning applications for new residential developments in the parish which do not provide at least one space of off-street parking per unit of accommodation. These rejections are only advisory and the Roads Committee’s concerns have been over-ridden frequently.

While it is recognised that it is not always possible to provide this standard of parking space when older properties are being refurbished, or in respect of proposals to convert outworn offices into residential accommodation, especially in the Core Retail Area, or in Conservation Areas, the Committee believes that wherever possible, urban dwellers should be given the same right to own a private car that is enjoyed by those living in more rural areas. Indeed, given the difficulties of accessing by other means the best of the Island’s open spaces, beaches and outdoor sports facilities, it is particularly important that this is the case.

This is not to say that the strategic aim of reducing dependence on the private car is not a worthy one, although the distinction should be made between car use and car ownership; Islanders who have reduced their need to travel by choosing to live in town

are likely to have a much smaller carbon footprint than people living at a distance from their workplace and the schools, but they have every right to be able to access the Island or make off-island trips in their private vehicle.

Clearly there is insufficient capacity for on-street parking to cater for the parking needs of residents of the most densely populated urban areas, which is one of the reasons why Residents' Parking Zones were introduced by the Government in conjunction with the Parish in parts of St. Helier. If planning applications to increase the number of units of residential accommodation are not accompanied by an increase in off-street parking provision, the pressure for on-street spaces will only increase. This problem will be exacerbated as more housing units are introduced into St. Helier by the conversion of outworn office buildings and hotels into accommodation, while further pressure on on-street parking is bound to arise from the creation of safe cycling routes in St. Helier which is bound to require the removal of some on-street parking.

This amendment requires the Minister for the Environment to collaborate with the Minister for Infrastructure who is believed to be working on a Parking Strategy. It is entirely appropriate that any supplementary planning guidance for 'STZs', or indeed, for parking standards, should be presented to the States Assembly in draft as part of the overall Parking Strategy before they are published by the Minister for the Environment.

#### **Policy TT4: Provision of off-street parking**

**In the third paragraph after the word "supported" insert the following words:**

**"unless the new spaces will be provided for the use of residents, shoppers and visitors,"**

If this policy in the draft Plan is not amended it will be possible for the Planning Department to refuse applications for new off-street car parks in Town designed to fulfil the parking needs of residents, shoppers and visitors.

Shopper parking needs to be adequate if town retailers in the Core Retail Area are to be able to attract customers to their shops in the face of online competition and out-of-town shopping facilities that offer more convenient and often free parking. The Draft Bridging Island Plan, if unamended, would make it impossible for much-needed short-stay parking to be provided on new sites capable of serving the town centre, and for the capacity of surface car parks, such as in Midvale Road, to be increased with a modern stacking system.

Off-street parking is also important to visitors. One of the drawbacks of St. Helier's Residents' Parking Zones is that it has become more difficult for residents to receive visitors; many people affected in this way are elderly and do not drive and can be left isolated if friends and relatives are unable to visit them. This is why a good case can be made for providing a new off-street car park in the Rouge Bouillon area to serve the northern residential areas of town.

#### **Financial and manpower implications**

None.

### **Child Rights Impact Assessment implications**

This amendment has been assessed in relation to the [Bridging Island Plan CRIA](#). Insofar as the improved management of parking can reduce traffic congestion and pollution, the health and wellbeing of children will clearly benefit. Children living in town require less ‘chauffeuring’ than their peers in more distant parishes but many families living in town depend on the use of the private car, and on the ability to park it conveniently, especially to be able to benefit from car journeys out of town to explore the Island’s coast and countryside.