

# STATES OF JERSEY



## **DRAFT ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2010 (P.117/2009): SEVENTH AMENDMENT**

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**Lodged au Greffe on 8th September 2009  
by the Connétable of St. Helier**

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**STATES GREFFE**



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AMENDMENT

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**PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH (d) –**

After the words “withdrawn from the consolidated fund”, insert the words –

“except that the allocation for the item ‘T&R (PH) Backlog Maintenance’ under the heading ‘Earmarked Funds and Rolling Allocations’ shall be reduced by £400,000 and the following new item shall be added to Table D under the same heading –

		Proposed allocation £'000s
P&E	Urban Renewal Fund	400”.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

## REPORT

I believe that the States' approved allocation of £0.4 million to the Urban Renewal Fund should be reinstated in the 2010 Business Plan for the same good reasons that it was included in it in prior Strategic Plan and Business Plan proposals. The Council of Ministers seeks to delete this funding, on page 74 of the Draft Plan, 'on the premise that such works will be funded from planning gain'. The Council makes no effort to justify the proposal any further, neither by assessing the value of recent Urban Renewal projects, nor explaining how partnership projects between the public and private sector can be pursued when the public sector has nothing in its purse. How will 'planning gain' fund improvements to the public realm in the current economic climate? What about the impact on planning gain from the percent for art scheme?

The deletion of the Urban Renewal funding was done without any consultation with the Parish of St. Helier, in which the majority of Urban Regeneration schemes are to be found, or with the Urban Task Force, the Group which seeks to repeat the success of such partnership projects as the new Broad Street square and the enhancement of Conway Street. New projects such as the regeneration of Cheapside, for example, simply will not go ahead without this funding; the Urban Task Force will be nothing more than a talking shop and may as well be wound up.

During last year's Business Plan process I chose not to challenge the absence of an allocation for 2009, precisely because there was £400,000 in the budget for 2010. (P.113/2008 included an extra allocation of £11 million to various States departments on the flimsiest of grounds.) Since that time I have continued to urge the States to stick to its strategic policies of concentrating new residential development in the urban areas, especially in the town, both to protect the countryside and coastline, and to contribute to the town's vitality. However, the important caveat must be that we continue to invest in the public realm. This view is endorsed in the recently approved Strategic Plan: objective 13 is to 'Protect and enhance our natural and built environment'; 'Why we must do this' includes the statement, 'St. Helier is the heart of Jersey's community and we must continue to regenerate and develop it ...' How telling it is that the 2010 Business Plan includes both the deletion of the very funds required to regenerate St. Helier, as well as the deletion of the public's contribution to the Millennium Town Park project.

It is always difficult for a backbencher to know where to find the compensatory savings in the Business Plan to avoid proposing a net increase in States spending. However, I am confident that the proposed allocation of £4 million to Treasury and Resources for the 'Backlog maintenance programme' can bear a reduction of 10% to allow our Urban Regeneration programme to continue. This confidence has been strengthened by recent additional spending allocated to maintenance and infrastructure works out of the Fiscal Stimulus package. There is no doubt that the States have neglected the maintenance of their property portfolio over the decades, and naturally there will be lots of 'statutory' work driven by 'Health and Safety' considerations that needs to be carried out in 2010, but with 90% of the proposed budget intact, and after, one would hope, some extremely rigorous scrutiny of the recommendations by 'UK specialist surveyors Drake & Kannemeyer', the prioritised programme of maintenance work will be able to proceed next year.

**Financial and manpower implications**

The financial implications are self-explanatory and the amendment is cost-neutral as it proposes a compensatory reduction in the Backlog Maintenance allocation. There are no manpower implications for the States' civil service. Past projects funded by the Urban Renewal Fund have required a partnership approach from Transport and Technical Services and Parish of St. Helier stonemasons and road gangs, and there is no reason to think this would not apply for future works, reducing any impact on States or Parish programmes of work.