

# STATES OF JERSEY



## SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE – PARKING STRATEGY

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Lodged au Greffe on 27th June 2023  
by the Connétable of St. Helier  
Earliest date for debate: 18th July 2023

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STATES GREFFE

## **PROPOSITION**

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

to request the Minister for the Environment to defer approval of the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on residential parking standards, published for consultation in March 2023, until such time as a parking strategy for the Island has been developed, consulted upon, and presented to the States Assembly for debate.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

## REPORT

While the proposals by the Minister for the Environment to allow planning officers to reduce the amount of off-street parking provided in new residential developments may appear to be appropriate given with Jersey's commitment to tackling the climate change emergency and consistent with recent policies approved by the States Assembly, if adopted they risk discriminating against the residents of some parts of the Island, particularly in the centre of St Helier.

Reducing the amount of off-street parking available to the residents of urban areas will also increase competition for on-street parking spaces thereby adding to traffic congestion and making it harder to introduce safe, segregated cycle routes. The authors of the Draft SPG report have fallen into the trap of confusing car ownership with car use, claiming that allowing town residents the freedom to own a private vehicle will lead to an increase in vehicle use and traffic congestion in urban areas.

The new parking standards for residential development due to be adopted by Government will make it even harder for a St Helier resident to own a car, though these tough new rules won't apply to residents in other parishes. The report accompanying the Draft SPG claims that residential car parking provision in town adds to congestion, but who causes the morning and evening rush hours? Most people who live in town enjoy their ability to leave their car at home (if they can) and walk or cycle to work, to school or to the shops. If they own a car they use it to make trips to the beach or the garden centre, journeys for which public transport or cycling isn't practical, or for an off-Island getaway. The Draft SPG risks increasing the divide between the quality of life experienced by town and country residents, in spite of the fact that town dwellers are supporting environmental sustainability by choosing to live in town in the first place.

If the Government wants to reduce car ownership (as distinct from car use) it needs to take measures across the board and not penalise St Helier residents, nor the residents of the other 'Sustainable Transport Zones' referred to in the document.

For more than a decade the St Helier Roads Committee in its capacity as a statutory consultee for planning applications in the Parish has been objecting to development proposals which reduce the amount of car parking available for residents in St Helier. The Committee has always recognised that in the case of the redevelopment of outworn offices and commercial property, in particular, into much needed residential accommodation, it may not be possible to include provision for car parking; this is also true to the creation of additional units of accommodation in town where the introduction of garages or driveways is not possible if an attractive streetscape is to be preserved.

Of course, it's not always possible to do that but if it is – such as was the case when a large commercial building alongside West's Centre was converted into flats by Dandara – the Committee believes that it's essential, and in that particular case it was listened to, and a proportion of those new residents now have the option of owning a vehicle if they wish.

Increasingly, however, we are seeing new housing developments approved with insufficient car parking – recently the Jersey Brewery site was approved with just 0.25 parking spaces per unit, the result being that parishioners who need a car will be forced either to rent a private space away from their home or to make their already complicated lives more difficult by continually having to hunt for an on-street space. Then, when

visitors to town in the evenings at weekends need to park in Minden Place Car Park, for example, they find it full of residents' cars.

Neither the Sustainable Transport Policy nor the Bridging Island Plan afforded States Members the opportunity to agree a Parking Strategy, the delivery of which has been promised by successive Ministers for Infrastructure for many years. The problems caused by the under-supply of off-street residential parking spaces should be fully understood, and new parking policies in pursuit of the Island's environmental goals should be agreed through debate and, if necessary, amendment by the States Assembly, before new residential parking standards are adopted by the Minister for the Environment.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

There are no financial and manpower implications arising from this proposition.