

# **STATES OF JERSEY**



## **COMPOSTING FACILITIES AT LA COLLETTE II: APPROVAL BY STATES ASSEMBLY**

---

**Lodged au Greffe on 14th March 2006  
by the Connétable of St. Helier**

---

**STATES GREFFE**

## **PROPOSITION**

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

to agree that no steps should be taken by the Minister of Transport and Technical Services to establish permanent composting facilities at La Collette II, St. Helier, until the proposed site and technology have been debated and approved by the Assembly.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

## REPORT

The Minister of Transport and Technical Services has made it clear that while his preferred site and technology for the proposed 'Energy from Waste' plant, or incinerator, will be brought to the States for debate, he is unwilling to treat the matter of composting in the same way. He has also indicated that he is not prepared to defer his decisions over composting until the relevant Scrutiny Panel has completed a further review. I believe that both decisions, relating to incineration and composting, will have significant ramifications, not only on St. Helier but on the Island as a whole, and that if the States are to debate the one part of the waste strategy it is logical for them to debate the other.

Both the Minister, and the Council of Ministers, which on a casting vote agreed to advise the Minister to disregard his Department's recommendations on the siting of the Island's permanent composting site at Warwick Farm, appear to have been motivated by the urgent need to address the odour nuisance being created by the current 'temporary' composting site at La Collette. This is commendable, but we should remember that if the current composting operation is indeed deleterious to the health of residents, it can and should be closed down forthwith. The Parish Deputies, led by Deputy Le Claire, and I have been involved in consultation with residents in the Havre des Pas region of St. Helier, and we have been encouraged to note that the Department of Transport and Technical Services are now taking the potential odour nuisance seriously enough to make use of specialised air monitoring equipment. This should mean that any repeat of the inconvenience, distress and reported health problems created by the Department's composting operations should be able to be addressed under existing legislation in a timely manner.

This being the case, we must question whether it is right for the States to expend millions of pounds on composting technology, and to select a site in a high-value urban area which is already suffering extreme traffic congestion, without these proposals being brought to the States for debate.

Since the Council of Ministers first broadcast 'its decision' in connection with this matter, there has been no explanation of the complete failure of the Minister to consult the Parish most likely to be affected by the decision. If for no other reason than allowing for proper consultation to take place, including a discussion of the best technology and the alternative site or sites for composting operations, this proposition should be approved, as the consultation involved in the Planning application process will not achieve these important outcomes.

Since travelling to the U.K. to view for myself the operation of cutting-edge 'in vessel' composting operations – which includes the composting of food waste, deemed 'impossible' by the then Committee of Environment and Public Services as part of their Solid Waste Strategy in July 2005, actually being carried out by Preston City Council – I am concerned that the Minister of Transport and Technical Services is going to proceed down the path of expediency in commissioning the enclosure of the 'windrow' composting facility rather than giving serious consideration to the alternative technologies which exist. If it is indeed possible to include food waste in the composting process, there is no doubt that we would have to revisit the decisions taken last year about the likely capacity of the proposed incinerator.

The Parish of St. Helier was able to make a detailed report on the proposed Jersey Mineral Strategy in April 2001 and the arguments made, particularly in respect of the potential traffic impacts of the Strategy, were instrumental in the Strategy not being brought forward for debate. In terms of the traffic impact alone of placing the entire waste management operation of the Island at La Collette II, as recommended by the Council of Ministers and as endorsed, apparently, by the Minister of Transport and Technical Services, I believe that the States should have the opportunity of fully debating this matter.

There are no financial or manpower implications for the States arising from this Proposition.