

# STATES OF JERSEY



## PLÉMONT HOLIDAY VILLAGE – ACQUISITION BY THE PUBLIC AND SALE TO THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR JERSEY (P.90/2012) – AMENDMENT

---

Lodged au Greffe on 10th October 2012  
by Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement

---

STATES GREFFE

PLÉMONT HOLIDAY VILLAGE – ACQUISITION BY THE PUBLIC AND SALE  
TO THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR JERSEY (P.90/2012) – AMENDMENT

---

**1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –**

After the words “Appendix 1 to the Report” insert the words “provided that the cost of the acquisition does not exceed £8 million”.

**2 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (b) –**

For the words “at a fair and proper price to be agreed by the Minister for Treasury and Resources” substitute the words “for a sum not exceeding £8 million”.

**3 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (c) –**

Delete paragraph (c) and renumber remaining paragraphs accordingly.

DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT

## REPORT

P.90/2012 has to be the most astonishingly reckless proposition I can ever recall reading. That it comes from the Chief Minister – and is supported by the Minister for Treasury and Resources – makes it even more alarming. The fact that by reading the Report accompanying P.90/2012 one gets the impression the Chief Minister is being ‘bounced’ into this by the combined enthusiasm of his Assistant Minister, Senator P.M. Bailhache and the Minister for Treasury and Resources does not excuse that.

The alarming thing about the Proposition is that, if adopted, it binds the Assembly to purchase the property involved **at any price**.

We are aware the promoters of the purchase plan have bandied about a possible purchase price of £8 million. We are also aware the owner has been quoted in various media as valuing this property at around £14 million.

If one turns to the first page of the (excessively detailed) Report accompanying P.90/2012 one sees a number of concerns, spreading over a period of years, with regard to the possible cost of acquiring this land. We see that in 2008 *‘the Council had concerns as to the cost of acquiring the land’*.

When the Connétable of St. Ouen lodged his Proposition P.152/2008 to purchase Plémont Holiday Village site he at least had the good sense to make it ‘in principle’ so that after a price was agreed it would come back to members *‘to decide what further action, if any, they might choose to take’*. That sensible safeguard is missing from P. 90/2012.

We note, too, that *‘Negotiations were instituted, but it was clear that the owners had in mind a price that was regarded by the Treasury as unrealistic .....’*.

One has to wonder, given the completely open-ended commitment in P.90/2012, whether the Minister for Treasury and Resources is still smarting from his Lime Grove gazumping. Whether or not that is the case, offering what would be essentially a blank cheque – especially during these highly uncertain economic times – is in my view reckless and completely unacceptable.

My amendment is not about whether or not the States should buy Plémont.

I have consulted a cross-section of the public and there seem to be two camps – allow a small development with the remainder returned to nature, or buy the site but with regard to the present financial climate.

It is clear, therefore, that (even if for no other reason than financial prudence) should the States decide it wishes to purchase the site there must be a limit to the amount of taxpayers’ money used in the enterprise. Such a limit would not only be a protection of our finances in these turbulent financial times, but would indicate to the owner that this would not be the usual ‘name your price and we’ll pay it’ that has been the by-word for States purchases over so many years.

I have deliberately chosen a figure which not only some of those members of the public leaning towards purchasing the site believe is reasonable, but is also the figure which the promoters of P.90/2012 have used in their Report on page 11. I presume,

therefore, that they will be able to confirm what they have already stated and support this amendment.

Finally, the issue of compulsory purchase is raised in P.90/2012. For the benefit of those who are not familiar with the process, I believe it is important to dispel any notion that it is a mechanism by which the States can purchase 'on the cheap'. Not only is the process cumbersome and potentially long-winded, but it most certainly is not one providing a valuation other than the true market price. It should further be noted that moving to compulsory purchase in part (c) of P.90/2012 would only be triggered if the owner had refused the States offer (limited to £8 million by this amendment). As the owner would presumably not wish to become embroiled in the compulsory purchase process unless he had good reason to believe the value of his property was substantially greater than the States was offering, one must assume that the final price arrived at by the process would be substantially higher than the States offer. Bearing in mind the States could not abandon the purchase if the price was above what they wished, it is not difficult to see that part (c) is actually a blank cheque without limit. Therefore, for any financial limit to be effective, part (c) must be removed.

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

There are no financial or manpower implications from this amendment, other than perhaps a saving in capital expenditure.