

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 – 2018 (P.27/2015): NINTH AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 14th April 2015
by the Environment, Housing and Technical Services Scrutiny Panel**

STATES GREFFE

PAGE 2 –

After the words “in the attached Appendix” insert the words –

- (1) “, except that in the chart on page 8 of the draft Plan before row 1.1 insert an additional row as follows with the remaining rows renumbered accordingly –

	Desired outcome	Key Areas of Focus 2015 – 2018
1.1	Incorporation of environmental issues within determination of health strategy and policy.	Consider within policy-making environmental issues (which have both direct and indirect impacts on health and well-being) and how they can be addressed as part of an overall preventative strategy.

- (2) “, except that on page 9 of the draft Plan, in the section headed ‘Our Ambition’ after the words ‘educational achievement’ insert the words “, environmental awareness” and in the chart on page 10, before row 2.1, insert an additional row as follows with the remaining rows renumbered accordingly –

	Desired outcome	Key Areas of Focus 2015 – 2018
2.1	Jersey’s children and young people are given an awareness of the environmental issues facing Jersey and the development of the Island’s education system and curriculum takes into account environmental sustainability.	Jersey’s children understand the environmental and resource challenges facing the Island. Environmental sustainability is fully integrated into the decision-making process.

- (3) “, except that on page 11 of the draft Plan, in the title to that page, for the word ‘maximising’ substitute the word “optimising”; in the section headed ‘Our Ambition’ for the word ‘sustained’ substitute the words “environmentally sustainable”; and in the chart on page 12, before row 3.1, insert an additional row as follows with the remaining rows renumbered accordingly –

	Desired outcome	Key Areas of Focus 2015 – 2018
3.1	Jersey’s credibility and standing in the market place amongst informed investors is improved and enhanced in terms of environmental sustainability.	Consider the importance of critical environmental resources and the benefits of adopting environmental management principles to help improve productivity and efficiency. Develop a focus on attracting environmental businesses to Jersey.

- (4) “, except that on page 13 of the draft Plan, in the section headed ‘The Ambition’ after the word ‘vibrant’ insert the words “, environmentally aware”; and in the chart on page 14 before row 4.1 insert an additional row as follows with the remaining rows renumbered accordingly –

	Desired outcome	Key Areas of Focus 2015 – 2018
4.1	St. Helier is an environmentally friendly and environmentally aware place in which to live and work.	Consider explicitly best environmental practice in policy-development and decision-making to improve the attractiveness of St. Helier as a place in which to visit, invest and live.

- (5) “, except that in the chart on page 14 before row 4.2 insert an additional row as follows with the remaining rows renumbered accordingly –

	Desired outcome	Key Areas of Focus 2015 – 2018
4.2	The use of resources in St. Helier is managed environmentally with demand management of energy a key policy driver.	Identify and implement measures to address contributing factors towards climate change through demand management and the environmental management of resource use. Consider, monitor and report upon progress against targets in respect of carbon emissions and other contributing factors towards climate change.

REPORT

Introduction

1. Our amendments would not change the proposed priorities of the Council of Ministers; they would remain health; education, the economy; and St. Helier. We recognise that, in the Draft Plan (and particularly in its proposals for the *Island Vision*), the Council of Ministers is talking about environmental and sustainability issues. The Draft Plan acknowledges, for instance, that “*Islanders are worried that growth and associated development will erode the environmental and social advantages we value so highly.*” The Council of Ministers therefore appears to be aware of the longer-term context. However, there needs to be confidence that these matters will not simply be forgotten during the current term whilst work focusses on other matters.
2. This amendment from the Environment, Housing and Technical Services Scrutiny Panel therefore seeks to ensure that explicit consideration is given to environmental matters and sustainability issues during the delivery of the Strategic Plan.
3. The amendment arises from our current review relating to environmental policies. We had 2 intentions in undertaking this review. First, we wished to assess the current situation in respect of environmental strategy and policy and to see how matters had developed since the publication of *Jersey into the Millennium: A Sustainable Future*. Secondly, we sought to assess the Draft Strategic Plan from an environmental perspective.
4. We have examined a number of issues during our review which we will cover more fully in a report to be presented before the debate on the Draft Plan. The written submissions we have received and the transcript of the public hearing we held with the Minister for Planning and Environment are all available on the Scrutiny website (www.scrutiny.gov.je). We have undertaken our review with the assistance of an expert adviser.
5. We have had to lodge this amendment prior to the presentation of our report due to the lodging deadline for amendments to the Draft Plan. The amendment seeks to address one matter arising from our review: that the Draft Plan does not address sufficiently explicitly environmental and sustainability issues. If such issues were incorporated more explicitly, this would ensure not only that they were not forgotten during this term of office, but also that the Draft Plan was consistent with longer-term strategic planning.

Environmental Matters in the Draft Strategic Plan

6. We have investigated how environmental considerations informed the development of the Draft Plan. We were kindly provided a briefing by the Department of the Environment on environmental matters. This was the same briefing which had been provided to the Council of Ministers during its preparation of the Draft Plan and which subsequently (at our suggestion) was offered to all Members. We found this briefing to be comprehensive and extremely informative. It described very clearly the environmental and sustainability issues facing Jersey, and it posed some pertinent questions for

Members to consider about how those issues could be addressed. Unfortunately, the Draft Plan (as currently framed) does not bring these issues to the fore to the extent that one might expect as a result.

7. With the assistance of our expert adviser, we have examined the Draft Plan from an environmental perspective. There are references to be found within it. It is stated, for example, that one of the purposes of the Island's government is to "*deliver positive, sustainable economic, social and environmental outcomes for Jersey.*" This reflects a message which has often been given in recent years that strategic planning and long-term thinking should be based upon 3 pillars: the Community; the Economy; and the Environment.
8. The majority of references to environmental issues in the Draft Plan can be found in the section entitled 'Planning for the Future'. In this section, the Council of Ministers has described the longer-term issues facing the Island over the next 2 decades and has also explained that the 4 priorities proposed in the Draft Plan will not constitute the sole focus of work during the current term. Indeed, the Council has advised that work will be undertaken on a new Climate Adaptation Strategy and a new Water Strategy whilst it is subsequently stated that key issues such as climate change will be embedded into the strategy development process. Finally in that section, the Council has explained that work will be undertaken on developing the *Island Vision*: a long-term plan for Jersey.
9. This is consistent with the testimony of the Minister for Planning and Environment when he appeared before us. At our public hearing, the Minister advised us that: "*there are four strategic priorities that have come out of the Council of Ministers, but that does not mean to say that we are not focusing on everything else as well, but those are the four priorities we have chosen to really home in on.*"¹
10. We were also advised about the long-term plan or vision which is due to be produced in due course. It was in fact a priority of the previous Strategic Plan, agreed in 2012, that the Council would improve long-term planning. No long-term plan was produced during the last term of the States Assembly, but the previous Council did publish a framework that would support the construction of a long-term vision. We have been advised during our review that long-term plans stretching 20 years into the future (or even further) have been developed in other jurisdictions.
11. The Draft Plan explains what that long-term plan, the *Island Vision*, is intended to be. It will reportedly "*define social, economic and environmental outcomes against which progress can be measured*" and "*inform decisions about the balance between social, environmental and economic themes.*" It will also reportedly "*recognise the inter-dependencies between economic, social and environmental goals and how compromises and trade-offs can best be achieved.*" The *Island Vision* is therefore intended to address environmental issues, a fact confirmed to us by the Minister during our review.

¹ Transcript of Public Hearing with the Minister for Planning and Environment, page 30

12. According to the Draft Plan, the Strategic Plan is supposed to identify the key priorities for the Council of Ministers for the current term of office and to set the strategic direction for detailed delivery plans. In terms of its relationship to the long-term vision, we were informed during our review that, once the long-term vision was set, “each new Council or government that comes in looks at it and says: “Let us have a look at an assessment of how we are doing against target. Is this vision still achievable? Are we making the progress we wanted to? Are our strategies designed to deliver it working?” Then you can either recast the vision, if you need to and say: “We need to make some changes to it” recast the vision, but then say: “What are we going to do during our term of office?” So for that three or four years, you create a priority plan that says: “In the context of the longer plan, which is addressing economic, social and community themes, what are the priorities we are setting for this term of office?””² The long-term vision is therefore intended to inform the identification of strategic, shorter-term policies within the Strategic Plan.
13. It was suggested to us that the current Draft Plan should be considered in that context. However, there is currently no long-term vision in place in which the Assembly can contextualise the Draft Plan and against which Members can assess the Draft Plan. The *Island Vision* will, we understand, be developed, consulted upon and brought forward later this year. There was an acknowledgement during our review that will in essence involve doing things the wrong way round. However, the Council of Ministers has little choice due to the provisions of the *States of Jersey Law 2005*.
14. We understand those legal obligations but, given the testimony we have received, we would still expect there to be a link between the proposed Draft Plan and the long-term planning which is due to be undertaken. We have been informed that the *Island Vision* will address environmental matters. It would therefore follow that the next Strategic Plan, which will relate to that vision, should be explicitly consistent with it.
15. However, whilst there are references to environmental issues in the Draft Plan, the majority (as we have stated) relate to the development of the *Island Vision* and not to the delivery of the Strategic Plan over the current term. Nevertheless, if the Environment is indeed one of the 3 key pillars on which strategic planning should be based; if strategic planning is indeed intended to be co-ordinated and integrated in its approach; and if the Draft Plan is supposed to be consistent with the *Island Vision* – one would expect environmental considerations to permeate more visibly through the priorities identified in the Draft Plan for the current term.
16. Indeed, that is our expectation based upon the briefing we have been provided and from the testimony we have received about the long-term vision. The *Island Vision* will, we were told, address environmental issues. However, there is little reference to the environment in the 4 key priorities identified for this term: health; education; the economy; and St. Helier.

² Ibid, Page 32

17. It would appear that the ‘environmental priority’ amongst the 4 proposed by the Council of Ministers relates to the future of St. Helier. In that regard, the Draft Plan states that: “*we need to protect our beautiful natural environment while capitalising on a key asset that has so much more to offer: the town of St. Helier.*” Taking this approach is described a “*sound, long-term investment.*” Aside from that, however, it is difficult to discern exactly how the 4 priorities will help to address the longer-term environmental issues facing the Island.

The Panel’s Amendments

18. Given the above, we have found that environmental matters should be reflected more explicitly within the priorities for the current term. Indeed, it was acknowledged during our public hearing with the Minister that the relationship between the Draft Plan and the long-term vision could have been made more explicit. Adoption of our amendments would help to address that situation.
19. We have not proposed that ‘the Environment’ be placed as a distinct, fifth priority. To do so would potentially place it as a priority in competition with the others. For integrated and co-ordinated strategic planning, we believe environmental considerations should inform and be a part of the work on all 4 priorities. Environmental challenges are far-reaching, and addressing them concerns all aspects of Island life, including the health and education of Islanders and Jersey’s economy. Integrating environmental thinking within the 4 identified priorities would make it less likely that environmental issues were forgotten about during this term. It would also make it easier to discern the link between the Draft Plan and what is anticipated in the *Island Vision* and it would, in our view, therefore be easier to ensure that the work undertaken during the current term was consistent with long-term strategic planning.
20. With the help of our adviser, we have therefore considered each of the Council’s 4 proposed priorities and considered how environmental considerations could be incorporated within them. Our amendment consists of 4 components (one relating to each priority), which can be voted upon separately and which, if adopted, would thereby ensure that explicit consideration of environmental and sustainability issues would be included in the delivery of those priorities.

Amendment (1) – Health and Well-being

21. Our adviser has stated to us that “*the most cost-effective mechanism for delivering health and well-being is through prevention – rather than cure. The environment has the single largest impact on people’s health and well-being through the quality of the air, water, nutritional value of the food, management/avoidance of pollutants and contaminants, and access to the surrounding “natural” environment – parks, countryside and coast. For an effective preventative health and well-being strategy to be delivered, it should have full regard to, and the integration of, environmental issues throughout.*”³

³ Citations have been taken from a report provided to us by our adviser, which we intend to publish as an Appendix to our report.

22. We understand that *Health and Social Services: A New Way Forward* (P.82/2012), to which the Draft Plan refers, does include provision for a preventative approach. However, the Desired Outcomes listed under this priority in the Draft Plan do not make explicit reference to this fact. Our amendment seeks to address this and to ensure that the impact of environmental issues on the health and well-being of Islanders is taken into account during the development of health strategy and policy.

Amendment (2) – Education

23. We have noted that the Draft Plan states that our children and young people will be educated about the Island’s history, geography and culture, but not about the environmental issues which affect us. We have been informed by our expert adviser that: *“it is vital that Jersey’s children are educated to become globally competitive, and also become global citizens with a working knowledge of how the planet operates, not only economically, but also in respect of ecosystems, energy and resource issues, impact of climate change, etc. It is vital that the environment/sustainability is integrated throughout the whole curriculum to ensure that the children are equipped for adulthood, and that they may then subsequently make informed decisions based on realistic assessment of not only economic and social risks, but also those that arise from environmental threats, constraints and opportunities.”*
24. Our amendment therefore seeks to ensure that environmental sustainability is fully integrated into the decision-making process and that the need to educate our children on these matters is also fully recognised. We have done this by suggesting an addition to the Desired Outcomes and by amending the ambition for this priority to make it explicit our children and young people should become environmentally aware.

Amendment (3) – Economy

25. The Economy and the Environment are often placed in opposition, as though the focus on one requires ignoring the other. This should not be the case in the integrated development of strategy. The Draft Plan refers to the need to improve productivity and states that: *“productivity is about how well we use our available resources – land, people and capital – to produce goods and services.”* This has been picked up by our adviser, who has stated to us that: *“the application of sound environmental management principles would have embraced this requirement – along with that of ensuring the preservation of “natural capital”. Environmental management/resource management is a mindset that delivers optimisation of resources.”*
26. Our adviser has also informed us that *“economic growth cannot be delivered without full regard to energy and resource considerations – supply, security, and the arising environmental impacts. Furthermore one of the primary principles of environmental management is resource use efficiency as a mechanism for minimising environmental degradation and pollution: Eliminate. Reduce. Reuse. Recycle. Dispose safely.”*

27. The Draft Plan already refers to productivity, but we have suggested that an additional Desired Outcome be added in respect of this priority to ensure that the Island's credibility and standing in terms of environmental sustainability would be enhanced amongst informed investors. This would require the recognition of the importance of critical environmental resources and the benefits of adopting environmental management principles. This would help to improve productivity and efficiency, and might also help to open a market for environmental businesses to the Island.
28. Our adviser has also raised the question of whether this priority is truly “*‘maximising economic growth’ (in which case at what cost and for whom), or is it actually ‘optimising economic growth’ (at minimum cost for the benefit of all).*” We have suggested an amendment to the title of this priority to reflect this.

Amendment (4) – St. Helier

As we have stated, this priority would appear to be the ‘environmental one’ amongst the 4 identified by the Council of Ministers. In some respects, this would appear to be on the basis that focusing on St. Helier will mean the Island's countryside will be left alone. Indeed, our adviser has highlighted that the identification in the Draft Plan of the importance of the biodiversity of the Island's countryside and coast for all to enjoy is to be “*commended.*” Whilst there are some implicit references within the current Desired Outcomes under this priority to environmental matters, we have found that the commitment should be more explicitly stated. We have therefore suggested the addition of a Desired Outcome to ensure that, within the work to be undertaken on St. Helier, there is a focus on ensuring that it is an environmentally aware and environmentally friendly place in which to live and work.

Conclusion

30. We recognise that there are developments happening outside of the Strategic Plan process. We shall cover these matters in our report, but one development worth mentioning at this juncture is the proposal for a Sustainability Assessment Framework. In his written submission, the Minister for Planning and Environment informed us that he was “*keen to develop a sustainability assessment framework for decision making and policy development that will be applied across all areas.*” The work on developing this Framework has not yet been completed but, at our public hearing, the Minister explained that: “*at the moment every proposition that comes to the States at the end just has a financial and manpower requirement. In a similar sort of a vein, I do not know if it will be done quite like that, but when we come up with new policy, we have financial, manpower [implications] and there will be some sort of environmental angle, so we will always be looking to see how new directions that the Assembly takes or the Government takes, how that might affect the environment, the Island and sustainability. So we will be trying at all times to look at the wider implications of a particular policy.*”⁴ This would suggest the framework would require accompanying statements to be made for propositions similar to those already required under Standing Orders for financial and manpower implications. The Minister stated that he wanted “*to see this framework applied to all emerging policies/decisions to ensure that*

⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing with the Minister for Planning and Environment, page 31

the relevant environmental considerations are recognised which would ensure that all policies are future proofed.”⁵

31. The development of the Sustainability Assessment Framework would appear to be a welcome development, in that it would be reflective of an integrated approach to strategic planning and policy development. It would also show how much prominence Ministers (indeed any Member lodging a proposition) would need to give to environmental matters, something our amendment also aims to achieve by ensuring that delivery of the Strategic Plan explicitly incorporates environmental considerations, and that those considerations are therefore brought to the fore.

Financial and manpower implications

32. As the Council of Ministers has stated in the principal proposition, any additional financial and manpower implications will be brought forward in specific policy proposals and the Medium Term Financial Plan. However, in the section of the Draft Plan relating to Service Delivery and Funding, the Council of Ministers has talked of the need to deliver value for money and efficiency. Incorporation of environmental thinking should assist in that regard. We would also highlight that explicit incorporation of that thinking within the work to be undertaken should help to ensure that environmental matters are not an ‘add-on’ in terms of expense, but become simply a part of the work being undertaken.

⁵ Written Submission from the Minister for Planning and Environment, 16th March 2015