

## Minister for Infrastructure

P.O. Box 412, Beresford House  
Bellozanne Road, St Helier  
Jersey JE4 8UY  
Tel: +44 (0)1534 445509



26 November 2018

Deputy Morel,  
Chairman Economic Scrutiny Panel,  
Scrutiny Office,  
States Greffe,  
Mourier House,  
St Helier,  
JE1 1DD

Our ref: KL-TD 35/3/1

Dear Deputy Morel,

### **Economic Scrutiny Panel – Retail in Jersey Review**

Thank you for your letter regarding the delegation of responsibility for aspects of St Helier's infrastructure, particularly in urban areas and transport.

The Loi Sur La Voirie 1914 states that 'The States shall be directly responsible for the administration of the main roads and shall meet all costs of construction and other expenses' and that 'The States shall appoint a Committee for the Administration of Main Roads, authorised to take all necessary measures for suitable maintenance of the main roads'. This authority is delegated and embodied within the office of the Minister for infrastructure.

Subsequently, the Road Traffic (Jersey) Law 1956, set requirements for the other parochial road authorities to consult or seek the approval of the Minister for Infrastructure, for changes to roads and traffic that require Orders to be made.

The rationale for this hierarchy of authority, reflects the Island's strategic need for consistency in roads and traffic regulation and policy. It seeks to coordinate the efforts of the parochial authorities with the States and to avoid a situation whereby a change is made by one authority to the detriment of the Island as whole.

This is an eminently sensible legal arrangement where central government sets national policy, which is mirrored in many other jurisdictions, and local authorities must abide for the benefit of road safety and efficient operation of the overall transport network. I am aware of no imperative for change that I could support. The powers vested by the States in the office of the Minister for Infrastructure cannot be delegated beyond his control.

However, I can confirm that GHE (now incorporating the Department for Infrastructure) has for many decades endeavoured to work closely with the Parish and has delivered many urban renewal schemes for and in partnership with the Parish, for example the recent improvements to Conway St and Charing Cross and larger schemes such as the award winning Millennium park.

The Department has also worked with the Parish to develop projects 'in waiting' such as those set out within the Future St Helier Traffic Management Schemes Appraisal, but are currently unfunded. Within the process of developing these schemes there is sometime a natural tension between the limits of local ambition and the Island economy's strategic need to maintain an efficient transport system, which requires balanced adjudication and can be not entirely in accord with the Parish's views.

Undoubtedly, on occasion the Minister has had to advise the Parish that we are against a version of their favoured scheme, as it would demonstrably have an adverse effect on the wider travelling environment or would not be beneficial to road safety. Similarly, there can be differences in priority for schemes, as I have to consider where the best benefits for the whole Island can be achieved with the budgets available to me.

While our shared vision for a more walkable and accessible town with improved public realm, to make it an attractive destination to visit, live and work, is broadly aligned. It is understandable disagreements arise given the differences in strategic responsibility and constituency of the Minister for Infrastructure and the Connétable.

Furthermore, it worth noting that all of the significant public realm improvements undertaken in St Helier in the last 15 years or so, from Broad St to the Millennium Park, have been led, funded and implemented by the Minister for Infrastructure, on behalf of the States of Jersey. This is in addition to the numerous small schemes, being delivered annually.

By way of example, in just the last couple of years the following projects are in train or completed:

- new crossing facilities in Grenville Street, Green Street, Queens Road, La Route du Fort, and the Parade, Dumaresq Street, Beresford Street, Peter Street, Wellington Rd / St Saviour's Rd, and Janvrin Rd;
- Kensington Place traffic signal improvements;
- public realm and pedestrian improvements at Charing Cross and Conway St;
- the English and French harbours' walking and cycling improvements to form a contiguous St Helier waterfront promenade;
- the development of future project and policy work through 'St Helier Movement Strategy' and 'South West Town Planning Framework' and the developing St Helier Cycle Network Strategy;
- improvement to the entry gateways to St Helier;
- improvement to customer experience through car park refurbishments;
- increases in shopper and motorcycle parking; and
- real time parking information and the Pay by Phone Parking App.

All, to name but a few, funded and instigated by the Minister for Infrastructure for the benefit of St Helier.

Additionally, there is a limited pool of specialist resources on-island which are not available in the Parish. The engineers and transport planners employed by the States are experienced and professionally accredited within their specialist fields. These officers are able to advise on standards for the Island's transport infrastructure that are appropriate, thereby protecting the public from harm and the States from civil or criminal actions.

The best use of these resources is for them to be held centrally within the Minister for Infrastructure's Transport section and support the Island's overall transport networks (traffic, public transport, walking and cycling), government strategic policy and the planning processes, as well as the needs of the twelve parishes – such as the various parish road safety projects currently being supported in St Saviour.

Thus, while I am able to support an ever closer working relationship with the Parish of St Helier and encourage synergies where they exist, such as the ongoing project to improve coordination and align our processes being pursued by officers, I could not support the States divesting strategic infrastructure to the Parish.

Likewise, I am happy to work with the Connétable to understand his vision for the markets.

I trust that is helpful in your review.

Yours sincerely



**Deputy K Lewis**  
**Minister for Infrastructure**

direct dial: +44 (0)1534 448219

email: [k.lewis@gov.je](mailto:k.lewis@gov.je)

[www.gov.je](http://www.gov.je)

## **NB Further Comments on Scrutiny Transcript**

### **Midvale Road**

With regard to the Midvale Road project, as part of Future St Helier, the Department for Infrastructure worked with the Parish of St Helier and Planning to develop a programme of road improvement schemes, including Midvale Rd. While the Department was able to construct the Charring Cross and Conway St improvements from within its own limited budgets, without the support of a Jersey Infrastructure Levy there was no funding to deliver the other works.

In the absence of dedicated funding, the Department undertook a considerable amount of work developing other options as to how this scheme could be delivered. We wrote to the Parish in January 2018 explaining these options and asked the Parish how they wished to proceed. Unfortunately limited funds are available for road improvement projects and we were only able to offer a reduced scheme within the funds available. However, we did offer suggestions of how the funding gap could be addressed by the Parish or there was the option to wait until full funding became available.

We have a programme of road improvement and safety works which is reviewed quarterly. As no response had been received from the Parish, it was decided that the Department could no longer 'sit on' the £120, 000 budget allocation given the uncertainty of the project, but needed to reallocate it to other priority projects. The Parish were advised with the hope that we would be able to progress the scheme with the Parish at some point in the future.

## **La Colomberie and Bond St Bollards**

Following discussions with the Parish of St Helier it was agreed by both parties that traffic bollards should be removed as far as practicable from pedestrian areas to increase the area available to walk.

It was identified that the areas of particular interest were La Colomberie (Minister for Infrastructure's responsibility) and Bond St (Parish of St Helier's responsibility). In the event the bollards in La Colomberie were removed several years ago by the Department, shortly after the agreement was reached, and the bollards in Bond St remain awaiting removal to this day.