

# **STATES OF JERSEY**



## **PROVISION OF PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS (P.60/2006): COMMENTS**

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**Presented to the States on 20th June 2006  
by the Minister for Transport and Technical Services**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## COMMENTS

The Connétable's report implies that my department has done very little in respect of road and pedestrian improvements in St. Helier. This is simply not true and, with limited resources – both manpower and financial – what has and is being achieved is considerable and commendable. May I remind Members that significant urban improvements have been undertaken in Broad Street, Charing Cross, York Street and Bath Street as well as traffic management schemes in Devonshire Place and Union Street which have all aimed to make the town more easily accessible for both pedestrians and motorists.

As far as these two specific requests are concerned, the facts are –

### 1. **Burrard Street**

The previous Environment and Public Services Committee considered this site a number of times, most recently in May last year. Observations at that time indicated that pedestrians had little trouble in crossing the road as sufficient gaps in traffic and numbers of courteous drivers afforded crossing opportunities to pedestrians of all levels of ability. Furthermore, this is a key access route in the town area and maintaining the traffic flow is essential. Any form of crossing will affect that flow. However, at the Committee meeting in May, to which the Connétable was invited, it was agreed that some additional pedestrian facility would be beneficial and a build-out from the kerb on the southern side of the road was approved to shorten the width pedestrians had to cross. This work was subsequently prioritised for 2006 funding and was completed about a month ago. As this facility is not a defined crossing, there will be no impact on traffic flow which the Committee, at that time, considered an important issue.

Within a few weeks of completion, the Connétable has lodged his Report and Proposition requesting a Jersey crossing, before any further monitoring of the area can be undertaken to analyse the effect of the recent works. The department will now be monitoring the area before agreeing to any further adjustments – but if a crossing is considered beneficial, the most appropriate kind will be installed. This will either be a zebra crossing with appropriate lighting or a pelican crossing – in fact, when the road was resurfaced, ducts were incorporated to facilitate the installation of either of these crossings.

### 2. **Mulcaster Street**

The previous Committee again acknowledged that this area would be better served by a pedestrian crossing facility and in October 2004 agreed in principle to provide a pelican crossing (similar to that further up Mulcaster Street near the junction of Pier Road) at an estimated cost of £15,000 when funds became available. The department did have an annual budget of £150,000 for road safety schemes of this nature but this budget was eliminated in the 2005/7 Fundamental Spending Review process, which took place in 2004 and took effect from 2005. Given this, when works are now considered essential, expenditure within the department has to be reprioritised to provide funding.

There is a fundamental issue with what the Connétable is proposing at Mulcaster Street. A Jersey crossing, unsigned and unlit, on this road will be dangerous. In daylight, most road users will be able to see the black and white markings signifying the crossing. On a dark, wet winter's afternoon, these markings are considerably less visible to the driver. Furthermore, the speed of traffic in this area is greater than other places where Jersey crossings have been successfully installed. For instance, the Jersey crossing outside the Post Office in Broad Street is within a traffic calming area – raised and different coloured carriageway – so the motorist is aware that he/she is in a predominantly pedestrian priority area and should therefore be expecting people to be crossing the road at some point. Mulcaster Street is classified as a primary road and the only safe facility to allow pedestrians to cross is a controlled signal – a pelican crossing as agreed by the previous Committee.

Apart from the extensive works which have been undertaken in St. Helier, there are potential schemes in every other Parish and I am sure that every member in the assembly can think of something within their own area which they want doing – whether it be a pelican crossing in St. John, a cycle track in St. Peter or a fundamental improvement at Beaumont junction. In fact, Beaumont Hill is the Island's worst accident spot but it has proved

impossible to provide the resource required to identify possible solutions because smaller, minor works are elevated higher in the priority list such as the ones now being brought forward by the Connétable.

The current list of outstanding issues to be assessed by the Department – some much more significant schemes than others – totals over 60. Manpower and financial resources do not allow all these to be done and the Department has struggled with how to ensure scarce resources are being used most efficiently and effectively. The current ad hoc system, mostly dominated by the ‘he who shouts loudest’ method of allocation, cannot continue and I will be proposing, within the Sustainable Traffic and Transport Action Plan, a new process whereby there will be an annual bidding system by the Parishes where requests are submitted to the Transport and Technical Services Department, analysed and prioritised and the list agreed or amended by the Comité des Connétables.

Only when an unforeseen issue arises, where the health and safety of the public is jeopardised, would this list of works be changed and then only with the Comité’s approval. The budget will be fixed, dependant on Cash Limits, and this will determine how many schemes can be undertaken. My aim is to bring transparency and openness to the process and allow the Connétables, as a collective, to make key decisions on what the priorities for my Department in this respect should be.

I cannot support these requests of the Constable. Neither is justified in traffic engineering terms – in fact, the Mulcaster Street proposal will reduce safety for pedestrians in the area – and neither can realistically be considered to be a higher priority than the works currently being undertaken. Burrard Street will be monitored and, if considered appropriate, a crossing with controlled or fixed lights will be installed. A pelican crossing at Mulcaster Street has already been approved and is awaiting a funding stream.