

STATES OF JERSEY



GREEN LANES AND QUIET LANES: PRIORITY TO PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND HORSE RIDERS (P.79/2020) – AMENDMENT (P.79/2020 AMD.) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 9th July 2020
by the Minister for Infrastructure**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

I am pleased to see that Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier proposition is supporting the Government's work delivering the principles of the Sustainable Transport Policy and the Comité des Connétables have clarified that proposition. However, I believe there are practical difficulties in some aspects of the proposition and that much of the remainder is work currently in progress.

Deputy Ward is suggesting that the parishes identify a new network to encompass some green lanes, but not all, and some other 'Quiet Lanes' in which to implement a new restriction giving priority to Walking, Cycling and Horse Riders and prohibiting motor vehicles other than for essential travel.

There is already provision in law to designate a road with a prohibition for motor vehicles except for access; this is already used on some roads by some parishes. Such a restriction applied to large portions of the countryside would be rather draconian, preventing access for many people including tourists. It would also be difficult to enforce if too many properties had the exemption 'for access'.

However, I understand that the new definition of essential travel is closer to the guidance given in the Highway Code about green lanes: 'necessary for access or sightseeing'. My concern is that such a law would be unenforceable as any driver stopped on suspicion of being non-essential travel could claim they were sightseeing, requiring additional proof to support prosecution. This would be a challenge in law drafting.

Whilst they may not be perfect, the existing arrangements whereby Green Lanes are legislated as a 15mph limit with guidance in the Highway Code acts as a deterrent to many drivers and legislates that those drivers using them must travel at speeds similar to cyclists. My department currently has a process working with the parishes to review their green lane network and expand it if they want to.

For those parishes who want a more restrictive ban on vehicles there is the option to use a prohibition of motor vehicles except for access restriction. This would prohibit sightseeing so should not be used over a wide area but there may be opportunities to use this restriction to break rat-runs with minimal inconvenience for others.

The next step, which some parishes have used, is to install physical measures to prevent all through traffic other than walking and cycling. Again, my officers and I have supported parishes to implement such restrictions.

These options are already available to Parishes and road users should understand relevant signing as they have been in law for many decades.

It is incumbent upon me to identify some practical issues that flow from this Proposition and highlight the provisions that already exist in the highway code and existing programmes.

However, I recognise that these roads are administered by the Parochial Authorities and that the responsibility and burden for enforcement will fall to them. Thus, if the Connétables are willing to accept the Proposition, I too am happy to support them in their work.

Financial and manpower implications

It is likely that agreeing the wording of any new law, specifically the definition of 'essential travel' would take considerable officer time. This would have a knock-on effect delaying, amongst other projects, the speed limit review programme and hence delaying the extension of the Green Lane network as it is currently defined.

Financially the cost of new signing and road markings would fall to the Highway Authority, which is likely to be predominantly the parishes. Without knowing the extent of the network, it is not possible to put a figure on the likely costs.