

# STATES OF JERSEY



## MEANWHILE USE OF THE FORMER GAS PLACE SITE (P.48/2025): COMMENTS

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Presented to the States on 4th July 2025  
by the Council of Ministers

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STATES GREFFE

## COMMENTS

The Council of Ministers acknowledges the intention behind Deputy Warr's Proposition, which seeks to utilise the Gas Place site for meanwhile use prior to its long-term redevelopment. The focus on youth provision and community benefit is recognised and supported in principle. However, there are a number of practical, operational and strategic concerns that lead the Council to conclude that the proposal, as currently framed, cannot be supported.

At present, part of the Gas Place site is in active operational use by RoK Construction (Andium Homes' delivery partner) to support the delivery of the Maison Les Arches social housing development. The site provides essential welfare facilities, office accommodation and storage for materials, and RoK will require continued access until at least June 2026. Forcing early vacation of the site would compromise the timeline for delivering urgently needed homes, which remains a government priority.

The Council further acknowledges the intention behind Deputy Curtis' Amendment which seeks to reinforce the principle that public land should not lie idle when interim use could provide community or operational value. The Council supports the general principle of encouraging productive "meanwhile" use where they are feasible, safe and compatible with existing priorities. Indeed, the current use of the Gas Place site by RoK Construction to support the delivery of much needed housing is a good example of this in practice. However, the Council's concerns regarding the original Proposition, particularly around timing, operational constraints and clarity of responsibility remain equally relevant in the context of the Amendment.

While the Proposition does not seek direct government funding, it places an implicit expectation on Andium Homes to lead on stakeholder engagement, fundraising, and implementation of any temporary use. Andium was established to deliver and manage social housing. Diverting its resources toward the development and operation of general community or youth facilities lies outside its core purpose, mandate and operational capacity. Any such diversion risks undermining progress on its strategic goal of delivering 3,000 new homes by 2030.

The Budget 2025 already includes funding for the development of a new primary school at Gas Place and a new youth facility at Ann Street. These permanent, long-term investments have been designed to address many of the concerns outlined in the proposition. The proposed meanwhile use would, by its nature, be short-term—limiting the potential return on any investment and presenting further challenges around planning approval, design compliance, and safe operation.

Jersey Property Holdings is scheduled to take over the site between June and October 2026, following the completion of Maison Les Arches by RoK Construction. Once the site is handed over, the former gasworks area will require clearance, and safety works before any further development can commence. Enabling works are expected to begin in October 2026, approximately nine months prior to the main construction phase, which is planned to start in the third quarter of 2027. This timeline would only allow for a temporary or "meanwhile" use of the site for a period of approximately four to six months in 2026, before preparatory works commence.

Significant questions remain unanswered with regard to the planning process, including whether a change of use has been formally sought, what adaptations would be needed to bring the building to community or education-use standard, and who would manage responsibilities such as public liability insurance, fire and evacuation protocols, health and safety compliance, building maintenance, and safeguarding.

The Youth Service, while fully committed to expanding access to quality youth provision, raises similar concerns. Any facility used by young people must be appropriately staffed with qualified individuals, recruited under safer recruitment guidelines, including DBS checks and safeguarding training. These requirements are essential but currently unaccounted for within the proposition. Even for outdoor activity space, appropriate supervision and safeguarding would be required.

Construction of the new Town Youth Centre is progressing, with a target start date of December 2025 (subject to planning) and expected completion in 2028. This facility has been developed through consultation with young people and relevant professionals, and it offers a sustainable and high-quality solution that will meet the long-term needs of the community.

While the Council understands the urgency and frustration that motivate the proposition, the proposal introduces a number of risks and conflicts with current operational priorities.

The Council is, however, very happy to speak with any funders or stakeholders the Deputy has identified who wish to support youth provision in St. Helier. Such support would be welcomed as part of the delivery of the new Town Youth Centre, where it can provide meaningful and lasting benefit.

The Council acknowledges the intention of Deputy Curtis' amendment which seeks to reinforce the principle that public land should not lie idle when interim use could provide community or operational value. The Council supports the general principle of encouraging productive "meanwhile" use where feasible and appropriate. Indeed, the current use of the Gas Place site by RoK Construction to support the delivery of much-needed housing is a good example of this in practice.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, while the Council of Ministers appreciates the intent behind Deputy Warr's Proposition and shares the commitment to enhancing youth and community provision in St. Helier, the proposal in its current form presents significant operational, strategic, and logistical challenges. The ongoing use of the Gas Place site for essential construction operations, the misalignment with Andium Homes' core responsibilities, and the short-term nature of the proposed use all contribute to the Council's decision not to support the proposition at this time.

Nonetheless, the Council remains open to constructive dialogue and collaboration. It welcomes engagement with any stakeholders or funders identified by the Deputy who wish to contribute to youth services in the area. Such support would be most effectively directed toward the development of the new Town Youth Centre, where it can deliver lasting value and align with the Government's long-term strategic objectives.