

2.11 The Connétable of St. Helier of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding business and residential parking scheme at Cheapside and Kensington Place, St. Helier:

Would the Minister confirm whether he has determined the Parish of St. Helier's application to implement the business and residential parking scheme in the Cheapside and Kensington Place areas of the Parish and, if not, explain the reason why?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye of St. Helier (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

The Connétable is well aware that my Department has advised him only recently that no further business and residential parking zones will be considered until the St. Helier Regeneration Strategy report has been finalised. This work will incorporate a parking strategy for the town area which will consider the needs of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors alike and it would be premature to implement a scheme which may be at odds with the strategy's recommendations. The scheme the Parish is putting forward is very comprehensive and I acknowledge the work and research that has been undertaken. However, it needs a full assessment from my Department to ensure there are no adverse traffic implications. As an example, the current proposal incorporates parking on the Ring Road which I consider should be a clear way and all parking legal and otherwise should be prohibited and firmly policed. I am aware that the Connétable has received advice from the transport consultants engaged on the St. Helier regeneration project suggesting that his scheme could go ahead prior to the strategy being developed and published. I fundamentally disagree with this piecemeal approach to parking strategy and I remind the Connétable that it is the taxpayers who are funding this major review to improve and enhance the town for everybody.

2.11.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would the Minister not confirm that it is an existing States policy that residents parking should be introduced and that until that policy is reversed or otherwise altered we should be sticking to it? Is he further aware that not only has a great deal of work been undertaken by the Parish on the new scheme following agreement with his Department, but that residents of the area have been consulted and have formed a residents working group and they are waiting to begin the process that was so successfully carried out in the Stopford Road and St. Mark's Road area and it is not fair to them to tell them that their plans are going to be put on hold for probably about a year?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I am well aware of all those detailed facts that the Connétable has pointed out. I am also well aware that it is indeed the States policy to introduce business and residents parking zones. However, the timetable is separate from the question of whether they should be introduced or not and currently the timetable is not appropriate to introducing those types of zone before the St. Helier Regeneration Strategy report has been finalised.

2.11.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is the Minister aware that his reputation as the Minister for Initiatives is likely to be replaced by the title Minister for Inaction if he continues his present stance?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

No, I am not aware of that and I think the suggestion is utterly preposterous. [Laughter]

2.11.3 The Connétable of St. Helier:

The Minister was good enough to refer to the fact that the transport consultants engaged by the States to carry out the parking strategy have written to me to say: "We see no reason why the Parish should not continue to work on the schemes you mention." Is the Minister not prepared to concede that given there is a States policy requiring these schemes, given the enormous success and difference in quality of life that the Stopford Road scheme has made for residents, that it is in fact inappropriate of him to block the introduction of further schemes and would he further reveal how long he feels the delay will take if he is not prepared to concede this?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I am not aware at this stage when the St. Helier Regeneration Strategy report will be finalised, so I cannot give any indication to the Connétable as to how long that may or may not take place. However, what I can advise both the Connétable and Members is that I have personal experience while residing in London of living not only alongside a residents parking zone but also within one. The features of that are substantially different from the current effects being generated by the experimental zones that are being introduced in Stopford Road and that the Connétable was hoping to introduce in other areas. Numbers of experimental zones, while they are clearly of benefit to the residents who live in one, simply shunt the parking problem along to neighbouring areas. Therefore you get extremely different results from looking at an analysis of individual experimental zones compared to a comprehensive resident zone. It is because of that I think it is only responsible to wait until the parking strategy within the St. Helier Regeneration Strategy has been looked at in some considerable detail.

2.11.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is the Minister going to account to the residents in my district in St. Helier No. 2 as to why no further progress is being made on residents parking?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

No, Sir, I would expect the Deputy to undertake that in the light of replies I have already given. [Laughter]