

# STATES OF JERSEY



## ACCOMMODATION FOR TEMPORARY WORKERS

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**Lodged au Greffe on 10th March 2022  
by the Deputy of St. Peter  
Earliest date for debate: 25th April 2022**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## **PROPOSITION**

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

- (a) that appropriate sites in the Island should be identified and made available for the provision of temporary accommodation to house between 200 and 500 temporary workers;
- (b) to request the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture and the Minister for Treasury and Resources to initiate discussions with Jersey businesses in order that potential sources of private funding for the provision of such accommodation may be identified;
- (c) to request the Minister for the Environment to issue the necessary instructions, including any law-drafting instructions required, to ensure that planning permission may be granted to an application for the construction of such accommodation, provided that any such permission would be granted on the basis that the accommodation would be used for a maximum of 3 years; and
- (d) to request the Minister for Housing and Communities to establish a departmental investigation into longer-term solutions for the housing of temporary workers (beyond the use of temporary accommodation), with a view to a report on the options available being presented to the next States Assembly in September 2022.

DEPUTY OF ST. PETER

## **REPORT**

### **Objective**

It is clear to us all that we have a real issue with accommodation in the Island. This proposition is aimed to release the pressure on accommodation for temporary / seasonal / migrant workers, call them what you wish, but I will refer to them as ‘temporary’ during this report. They provide an invaluable contribution the operations, wellbeing, and enjoyment of the Island we all cherish. We need them to come to Jersey and those who are prepared to travel here have many other places they can choose to work in around the world. As a result, we need to deliver reasonably-priced accommodation to make Jersey attractive for these workers. My research suggests that reasonable means c. £800 pcm.

### **Timescale**

This proposition is a temporary solution. I totally accept that it will be unacceptable in the medium to long term. The Island deserves better aesthetics and workers deserve better quality accommodation, but this is about a short-term solution, delivered quickly, to a help solve a major problem addressing us today. I see no reason that decisions as to supplier and land cannot be delivered within 60 days of States agreement.

### **Benefits**

1. The provision of reasonably priced accommodation to temporary workers.
2. It will make it more attractive for temporary workers to come to Jersey and fill the shortfall in key industry sectors.
3. It will help towards full-service provision for:
  - (a) Tourism;
  - (b) Hospitality;
  - (c) Transportation (delivery drivers);
  - (d) Healthcare (e.g., at the Hospital);
  - (e) Care workers;
  - (f) Retail; and
  - (g) Construction.
4. An improvement in the quality of life of all Islanders by assisting businesses and service providers to deliver the services we wish to enjoy.

### **Issues**

The shortage of accommodation stock is driving an unfavorable pattern of behaviour. Members will all have seen the number of hotels closing and the number of guest houses, lodging houses and small units of flats that are changing hands. Each one has multiple bidders, which is driving up prices; and, more importantly, reducing housing stock for the local market. We are now seeing a trend in the purchase of 3- and 4-bedroom houses for staff accommodation, which is taking away supplies of the most popular properties for families in the Island. These sales are being made to large business with deep pockets. However, as we know, 94% of businesses in Jersey have fewer than 20 people and these businesses do not have the resources to buy property, and so cannot compete. They therefore rely on finding licensed property in the open

market to accommodate staff. This often means that these employers have added costs in order to accommodate their staff. This, I've heard anecdotally, can be as much as £600 pcm. This either erodes business profits, forces price rises, or indeed could result in unnecessary closures.

## **Solution**

To bring temporary accommodation to Jersey. This will be rented and then decommissioned and returned after 3 years.

These companies, which have possible solutions, have been approached:

[Portable workforce - Portable Living Group \(theportablelivinggroup.com\)](http://theportablelivinggroup.com)  
[Portable Cabins & Portable Units for hire - Bunkabin](http://www.bunkabin.com)  
<https://www.selectplanthire.com/#product-services> (this is a subsidiary of Laing O'Rourke. They have recently started delivering residential accommodation which is not reflected on their website)

These businesses offer a spread of solutions at each end of the price and quality spectrum. Affordability is a decision criterion that needs to be made.

General opinion is that, by using 7500 square metres at D'Hautrée as an example, 250 homes could be accommodated. However, 200 units with additional amenities (communal space, TV lounge etc.) would be preferable.

## **How will this be delivered?**

Lee Madden, MD of GR8 Recruitment, has volunteered to chair a board to deliver this project. He will coordinate investors, ensure it is project managed, and deliver value. He will be fully supported by Jersey Business (<https://www.jerseybusiness.je/>).

Members will see that GR8 (<https://gr8jersey.com/>) is fully versed in the recruitment challenges faced in Jersey, of which accommodation is a vital part.

## **How will this be funded?**

This will be funded by private investment, to deliver a service to benefit all sectors involved, but not to realise unreasonable profit.

Jersey Business are coordinating, and in active dialogue, with potential local investors who are expressing a high level of interest in supporting this either for the Island, or because they would like to take some of the accommodation for their own use. It is envisaged that at least 50% of the units will be available for small businesses who desperately need the service but cannot afford to invest individually.

## **Where?**

D'Hautrée school site has 7500 square metres of potentially available space located near utilities.

The following sites off Trinity Hill, which have landowners who are willing to be part of the project and have water & sewage connections, have been put forward to Jersey Business:

Field H1374 – Next to Bartletts Potatoes  
[what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Field H1363 – Trinity Hill, St. Helier  
[what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Filed H1363A – Trinity Hill, St. Helier  
[what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Field H1364 – Trinity Hill, St. Helier  
[what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Field L39 – La Grande Route de St. Laurent, St. John  
[what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Filed T1249 – Near Lyndale Sport off Trinity Hill  
[what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Other sites put forward by Government, individuals or benefactors are most welcome.

### **Collaboration**

The Our Hospital project has similar challenges and the construction consortium is exploring similar avenues. It is important, should the Assembly adopt this proposition, that both projects liaise in order for the project to benefit from economies of scale in buying power, logistics and shipping.

### **The main challenges**

These are twofold. Firstly, finding the land, but secondly and more importantly, achieving planning permission. Hence part three of the proposition to treat this as a critical situation that is within our gift to solve.

### **Long-term Goal**

There is no point having a temporary solution unless work goes on to find a permanent alternative, hence part 4 of the proposition.

I envisage developing very smart modern worker accommodation similar to some very successful developments by, for example <https://vitagroup.com/>. This is an example of modern urban living that we should consider, that will encourage our workers to come to support our Island on short term contracts. It must be stressed that this is part of the solution, and not suitable for everyone, especially those with families who will most likely need a different offer.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

This proposition is an enabler for private business to deliver a solution that meeting with Government policy to deliver much needed homes.