

STATES OF JERSEY



LA COLLETTE LOW RISE DEVELOPMENT: PROTECTION OF EXISTING AMENITY SPACE AND TREES – DIRECTION TO ANDIUM HOMES LTD.

**Lodged au Greffe on 31st March 2017
by the Connétable of St. Helier**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

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

to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to direct Andium Homes to redesign their development proposals in order to maintain the existing amenity space and trees on the site between La Collette Low Rise and its border with Green Street, an area designated as ‘Protected Open Space’ in the Island Plan.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

The revised Planning Application to redevelop La Collette ‘low rise’ housing (PP/2015/0747) by Andium Homes, the States-owned company responsible for managing, improving and increasing the Island’s stock of social housing, was the subject of a proposition in the States Assembly by Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier (P.78/2015 – La Collette Low Rise: protection of open space – petition) requesting that the then Minister for Planning and Environment ensure that any redevelopment of La Collette Low Rise upholds and maintains the Protected Open Space status of the existing green space on the site between La Collette Low Rise and its border with Green Street.

On 8th September 2015, the States Assembly agreed, by 22 votes to 19, to support the proposition. In spite of the wishes of the States Assembly and, in spite of the fact that some members of the Planning Applications Committee, and the Minister for Planning and Environment himself, spoke and/or voted in the debate (which is against usual practice), the Planning Applications Committee nevertheless went ahead and approved the application at its December 2015 meeting, with planning permission being issued on 18th January 2016.

A third-party appeal was lodged by certain residents of Green Street, and heard by Mr. Philip Staddon, B.Sc., Dip., M.B.A., M.R.T.P.I., who rejected the appeal in July 2016. The Inspector’s report states that the Planning Department and Andium Homes ‘consider that the Green Street open space is little used and its reduction meets the required policy tests and will facilitate the wider benefits of the scheme, including the delivery of much needed affordable homes and the more efficient use of land’ (paragraph 18).

Supporters of the current proposals – which involve almost trebling the number of units of housing on the site – point to a larger amount of open space to be provided as part of the scheme; however, this is essentially private and is not public amenity space. It should go without saying that the value of simple parkland, i.e. grass and trees, in a densely populated community goes beyond whether people actually use the public open space or not. Users of Green Street, in particular, value the experience of walking beside the current green space, while the value of town trees is obvious.

Nothing in this proposition seeks to challenge the assumption that La Collette Low Rise housing needs to be refurbished or redeveloped; as the Planning Inspector pointed out (especially in paragraph 51 of the Report), the present condition of the flats is unacceptable. It is also beyond doubt that Andium Homes are doing an excellent job in refurbishing the Island’s stock of social housing, particularly in such locations as Nicolle Close and Caesarea Court, St. Helier.

What this proposition is seeking is to uphold is the Island Plan’s protection of the important open space, including the trees, on the Green Street side of the development site. The States Assembly has already signalled its wish that the public amenity space be retained, and it is up to Andium Homes to come up with refurbishment or redevelopment proposals which respect the wishes of the States and the States’ Strategic Policies on the importance of green space and trees in the densely populated capital of the Island.

A version of this proposition was considered by the St. Helier Parish Assembly on Wednesday 1st March 2017, where it was supported by 28 votes to 3. It is also supported by the Havre des Pas Improvement Group.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no financial or manpower consequences for the States arising from the adoption of this proposition.

APPENDIX

Existing Site Plan



Existing view from Green Street

