

STATES OF JERSEY



ISLAND PLAN 2022-25: APPROVAL (P.36/2021) – TWENTY-SIXTH AMENDMENT AMENDMENTS TO POLICY H8, POLICY SP2 AND POLICY PL5

Lodged au Greffe on 12th July 2021
by Senator K. L. Moore

STATES GREFFE

1 PAGE 2 –

After the words “the draft Island Plan 2022-25” insert the words –

“except that, in order to achieve the ability for existing properties to be sub-divided or traditional buildings to be converted to create additional units of accommodation, within Policy H8 –

- (a) the word “and” at the end of sub-paragraph 1.a. and sub-paragraph 1.b. should be deleted;
- (b) in paragraph 2. the words “in the case of an extension or” should be substituted with the words “it involves”;
- (c) in paragraph 2. for the word “household” there should be substituted the word “households” and sub-paragraphs 2.a. and 2.b. should be deleted; and
- (d) the word “and” at the end of paragraph 5.a and sub-paragraph 5.b should be deleted, with the remaining sub-paragraph re-designated accordingly.

2 PAGE 2 –

After the words “the draft Island Plan 2022-25” insert the words –

“except that, within Policy SP2, after the words “in its location” there should be inserted “; or where it involves the conversion, extension and/or subdivision of existing buildings”;

3 PAGE 2 –

After the words “the draft Island Plan 2022-25” insert the words –

“except that the second paragraph of Policy PL5 should be deleted and replaced with the following paragraph –

“To protect the countryside and coast and to ensure development is concentrated in the most sustainable locations, the development of new homes will be supported in limited circumstances including the conversion, extension and/or sub-division of existing buildings.””;

4 PAGE 2 –

After the words “the draft Island Plan 2022-25” insert the words –

“except that the draft Island Plan 2022-25 should be further amended in such respects as may be necessary consequent to the adoption of the amendments to Policy H8, Policy SP2 and Policy PL5.”

SENATOR K.L. MOORE

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

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

to approve, in accordance with Article 3(1) of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002, as amended by the Covid-19 (Island Plan) (Jersey) Regulations 2021, the draft Island Plan 2022-25, **except that –**

1. in order to achieve the ability for existing properties to be sub-divided or traditional buildings to be converted to create additional units of accommodation, within Policy H8 –
 - (a) the word “and” at the end of sub-paragraph 1.a. and sub-paragraph 1.b. should be deleted;
 - (b) in paragraph 2. the words “in the case of an extension or” should be substituted with the words “it involves”;
 - (c) in paragraph 2. for the word “household” there should be substituted the word “households” and sub-paragraphs 2.a. and 2.b. should be deleted;
 - (d) the word “and” at the end of paragraph 5.a and sub-paragraph 5.b should be deleted, with the remaining sub-paragraph re-designated accordingly.
2. within Policy SP2, after the words “in its location” there should be inserted “; or where it involves the conversion, extension and/or subdivision of existing buildings”;
3. the second paragraph of Policy PL5 should be deleted and replaced with the following paragraph –

“To protect the countryside and coast and to ensure development is concentrated in the most sustainable locations, the development of new homes will be supported in limited circumstances including the conversion, extension and/or sub-division of existing buildings.”;
4. the draft Island Plan 2022-25 should be further amended in such respects as may be necessary consequent to the adoption of the amendments to Policy H8, Policy SP2 and Policy PL5.

REPORT

The island is experiencing a housing crisis. Despite some new building over the past decade, demand has not kept up with supply and many islanders are struggling to find homes that they can afford to rent or buy.

The shortage of housing has a particular impact upon children. The Independent Jersey Care Inquiry said “It is clear from the evidence given to the Inquiry that the availability and cost of housing presented considerable difficulties for families in the period under review. Inadequate housing is cited in numerous Education and Health and Social Services Department records as a reason for the admission of a child into care., It often formed part of a background of deprivation, along with unemployment, alcoholism and domestic abuse.” (2.34 p.20)

More recently the Life on the Rock report published on 7th July 2021 gives direct testimony from children. It is clear that they are very aware of the cost of housing in the island and the pressure that places upon their parents and guardians. It also describes “Poor or inadequate housing conditions featured in a number of other children’s stories where they told of, for example, cramped living spaces, sharing a bedroom with parents, run down property or an inability to play freely at home.” (P.8)

It is recognised that the cost of housing causes considerable numbers of islanders to seek a better quality of life elsewhere. This places further pressure on the services and businesses that struggle to recruit and retain people. With high levels of vacancies in key areas such as health and education.

The bridging island plan paves the way for some additional affordable housing, these generally focus on sites adjacent to or within existing settlement areas.

The Jersey Opinion and lifestyle survey on 2018 identified that 81% of people living in rural parishes were very satisfied with their local neighbourhood, whereas only 36% of people living in St Helier were very satisfied with their local neighbourhood. It can be concluded that focusing on increasing the density of housing with St Helier and other urban areas will not improve the feeling that those residents have with regard their local neighbourhood and some solutions need to be found elsewhere.

Although the most economic way to deliver additional housing will be through building new houses on clear sites, there are a considerable number of buildings around the island that sit unused or underused. No longer suitable for farming, these generally traditional buildings add to the charm and character of the island’s rural and coastal character.

The current policy enables some conversion of such buildings to provide home offices, gyms, pool houses or party rooms for large houses. This amendment seeks to encourage the creation of additional dwellings, so that a greater number, albeit still a small group, will be able to enjoy the pleasure of living in the countryside.

The ethos of the BIP suggests that housing should be focused around existing settlements in order to prevent an increase in traffic outside of those areas. Whilst the desire to minimise traffic is laudable, this amendment will deliver only a small number of homes, it will not add noise or strain within the countryside, but it will offer an alternative lifestyle for those who are able to access them.

Existing policies which encourage islanders to use sustainable or active travel are already in place and the new residents would be encouraged to use the existing network of green lanes and bus routes to maintain the quiet of the surrounding area.

Through the planning and building control process the conversion of traditional buildings will improve their thermal efficiency, there will be incentives to use low carbon sources of energy as well as the requirement to connect to mains water and drainage. Given that the buildings exist already, the impact on the landscape would be minimal and, in many cases, could be seen as an improvement, particularly when sites that are currently derelict and or overgrown would become characterful and the ground around them would be cultivated.

The second part of this amendment enables the subdivision of existing homes to create additional units of accommodation again sustainably delivering new homes from within existing buildings therefore reducing levels of under occupation of those dwellings.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no financial or manpower implications arising from this amendment.

Child Rights Impact Assessment review

This amendment has been assessed in relation to the [Bridging Island Plan CRIA](#). This CRIA identifies the relevant articles from the UNCRC and I refer to Article 27 which places a duty on government to actively provide support to enable children to have a “standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development”. There is a need for more family homes given the impact that inadequate accommodation has upon children and their development. This is particularly well illustrated in the [Independent Jersey Care Inquiry](#) and, more recently, in the [Life on the Rock](#) report.