

**ST. HELIER RING ROAD: DEFERMENT OF WORKS (P.115/2001): REPORT**

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**Presented to the States on 30th October 2001  
by the Planning and Environment Committee**

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**STATES OF JERSEY**

**STATES GREFFE**

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## REPORT

**This report is presented by the Public Services and Planning and Environment Committees jointly and has been approved by both Committees.**

### **Strategic policy context**

The strategic policy context for changes to the road network in St. Helier is provided by the current Island Plan. This was approved by this House in 1987.

The Island Plan conferred a hierarchy to the St. Helier road network. This produced the policy concept of the 'Cordon Area'. The objective of the Cordon Area is described in the Plan as follows -

*'Within the heart of the town priority will be given to pedestrians, and the environment of streets improved, by restricting vehicular access during certain hours of the day. This will prevent motorists making through journeys and will reduce congestion. Measures will be taken to promote the character of this area by the careful selection of paving materials, lighting, signing, seating and planting.'*

The Plan went on to state that the restriction of access may be permanent or temporary.

The Cordon Area is defined on the Island Plan Town Map (extract at Appendix 1).

The policy objective of giving greater priority to the pedestrian in the centre of town has been confirmed by successive corporate policy documents since the approval of the Island Plan (i.e. *2000 and Beyond: Strategic Policy Review 1995* and the *Sustainable Island Transport Policy*). Relevant extracts from strategic policy documents are provided at Appendix 2.

It can, therefore, be seen that the recent traffic management changes that have taken place in Union Street and The Parade, and which are planned for York Street, Dumaresq Street, Charing Cross and Broad Street are all part of a much broader plan. They accord with the strategic policy framework that has been approved by the States and they are not piecemeal or uncoordinated.

### **St. Helier 'Street Life' Programme**

The Public Services Committee, as the Island's strategic highway authority with responsibility for traffic management, approved the recent and proposed changes in this part of St. Helier in October 2000. There are a number of distinct phases to this programme of works, the first of which was implemented at Union Street and The Parade, through the partnership of the Urban Renewal Sub-Committee, earlier this year.

The programme is designed in a phased sequence in order to ameliorate disruption at any one time, to permit monitoring and evaluation of each phase and to accord with the availability of resources required to enable implementation.

Broad Street features in phases four and five of the programme. This will not involve its closure to traffic.

Extensive consultation and publicity in respect of both the wider St. Helier 'Street Life' Programme and the specific proposals for the first phase of it, in Union Street and The Parade, was undertaken prior to implementation. This was detailed in response to a question from Deputy Baudains on 27th March 2001 (1240/5(1400): a list of questions asked by Deputy Baudains related to the St. Helier 'Street Life' Programme is presented in Appendix 3).

It is claimed that businesses in the area were not party to this process of consultation. In the absence of precise details from Deputy Baudains it is difficult to respond specifically. Appendix 4, however, provides a schedule of those streets in which *Jersey Post* delivered leaflets relating to the proposed works to residential and business addresses. These leaflets sought views and comment on the proposals and made the offer of further advice. In addition, specific consultation with major businesses in the area was undertaken as a matter of course.

The benefits of the scheme, in terms of a reduction in road traffic accidents, cannot be quantified so soon after only the first phase of the programme has been implemented. There has, however, been a significant reduction, by as much as 60 per cent in the volume of traffic using Dumaresq Street, York Street and Charing Cross. Already, therefore, pedestrians in this area are benefiting from a much improved and safer environment.

The occurrence of two accidents involving pedestrians in Union Street soon after the changes is deeply regretted. It is,

however, inevitable that any change in traffic flow will pose initial danger as people become familiar with new arrangements. In both instances, the accidents were apparently as a result of the pedestrians involved failing to account for the new direction of traffic flow despite the general publicity surrounding the scheme and warning signs in the locality. It is also relevant to note that the accidents occurred in close proximity to the new pedestrian crossing facilities provided as part of the traffic management scheme to improve safety for pedestrians wishing to cross Union Street.

It is acknowledged that the new system has posed some difficulties for motorists. Again, this is inevitable, as drivers deal with alterations to their habitual routes imposed by the traffic management changes. The new junction at The Parade and Union Street has, however, been extensively monitored to promote maximum efficiency in the operation of the signals. Traffic is now flowing more smoothly, the level of congestion has reduced and journey times have lessened since the initial introduction of the changes.

The general response from business about the objectives of the programme has been positive. Two businesses in the area reported some detrimental affects upon their operations following the implementation of changes in Union Street and The Parade. The Planning and Environment and the Public Services Committees have sought to work with these businesses to overcome these difficulties by providing information to their customer base and new directional signage.

### **Other traffic management**

The changes that have taken place at the La Motte Street/St. Saviour's Road junction and proposed at the Mont Millais junction form part of the Public Services Committee's general traffic management and signal replacement programme. In both instances, the proposals included public consultation as an integral part of their development, particularly as there were to be significant changes to the manner of operation at these junctions. This took place at the Jersey Archive on 29th November 2000 and was advertised in the local media. The public wholly endorsed the proposals for La Motte Street, while some concern was raised in respect of the proposals for Mont Millais. These concerns were considered by the Public Services Committee in amending the Mont Millais proposals.

The implementation of the scheme at the La Motte Street/St. Saviour's Road junction has addressed concerns expressed by local residents and the Parish of St. Helier's Roads Committee in relation to the volume and speed of traffic using Ann Street. It has also served to provide pedestrian crossing facilities throughout the junction where previously there were none.

### **Summary**

The traffic management and environmental improvements that comprise the St. Helier *Street Life* Programme originate from approved States strategic policy embodied in the Island Plan. The implementation of these proposals by the Public Services Committee in partnership with the Planning and Environment Committee under the auspices of the Urban Renewal Programme is contributing toward the attainment of States' strategic objectives. The proposals are being taken forward in a co-ordinated and programmed sequence. The overall Programme and each distinct phase within it has and will continue to be the subject of extensive consultation. Resource provision is made for the implementation of the further phases of the St. Helier *Street Life* Programme in the Urban Renewal Programme.

Responsibility for the maintenance, development and implementation of detailed traffic management proposals properly rests with the Public Services Committee as the Island's strategic highway authority. Where significant change to existing traffic management is proposed, consultation will remain an integral element of the development of specific proposals.

### **Conclusion**

Both the Public Services and Planning and Environment Committees are implementing States approved policies in a planned, progressive manner with full consultation. This work should continue. Accordingly, Deputy Baudains' proposition should be rejected.



### Strategic policy context for the St. Helier *Street Life* Programme

Extracts from strategic policy documents -

#### Island Plan (1987)

##### *Cordon Area policy objective*

Within the heart of the town, priority will be given to pedestrians, and the environment of streets improved, by restricting vehicular access during certain hours of the day. This will prevent motorists making through journeys and will reduce congestion. Measures will be taken to promote the character of this area by the careful selection of paving materials, lighting, signing, seating and planting.

#### 2000 & Beyond: Strategic Policy Review (1995) Part 1

##### *Objectives*

- to reduce the detrimental impact of traffic on people's lives;
- to raise levels of environmental awareness and responsibility.

##### *Action*

- the Planning and Environment Committee to be requested to develop a programme of urban renewal;
- the Public Services Committee to be requested to bring to the States... a sustainable Island transport policy which ensure *inter alia* the provision of a comprehensive Island wide public transport service and which will give higher priority to the interests of the pedestrian and cyclist;
- to continue the programme of environmental improvement areas, and traffic calming generally, to lessen the detrimental impact of traffic on the lives of Island residents and those living in the town of St. Helier in particular.

#### Sustainable Island Transport Policy (1999)

##### *Aim*

- to encourage improvements in the transport network which will reduce the environmental impact of traffic; (by)
  - maintaining and improving accessibility for all;
  - promoting the use of energy-efficient modes of transport;
  - reducing, where possible, the environmental impact arising from the use and development of the transportation network;
  - promoting the highest possible standard of safety throughout the network.

##### *Proposals*

- The Committee believes that pedestrian-priority areas should be created along the lines approved in the Island Plan, particularly where high numbers of pedestrians are competing for space with on-street parking and non-essential vehicles. Where necessary, these would permit the through-passage of public transport vehicles, cycles and emergency vehicles, while essential loading/unloading facilities would be provided with time restrictions where appropriate. The Committee is of the view that such measures require the co-operation and support of local businesses, whose proprietors will need to be convinced that public access to their premises will be improved rather than worsened by pedestrian priority areas. Halkett Place, Beresford Street, Waterloo Street, Don Street, Charing Cross, Sand Street, York Street, Broad Street and Colomberie will all be surveyed to establish whether less vehicular traffic at busy times of day would lead to an increase in retail profitability and an improvement in the quality of the urban environment as experienced by the majority of users of the available public space.

The Committee's proposals to extend pedestrian priority areas have already received the support of the Centre Ville Group. In conjunction with a town hopper bus service, a park and ride scheme and improved cycle access to town, adding to the pedestrian-priority areas of the town is seen as an exciting opportunity to enhance the quality of life experienced by all users of the town, and a major step towards the regeneration of St. Helier. The Committee would emphasise that its proposals are for pedestrian-priority areas not for pedestrianisation; it believes that increased access to St. Helier, together with increased freedom of movement around the town, will be beneficial for business and tourism and will create a better town environment.

**Schedule of related questions asked by Deputy Baudains**

1240/5(1400) 27th March 2001 to the President of the Public Services Committee

1. With regard to the recent widening of the pavements in Bath Street between Wests Centre and Minden Place, would the President advise members -
  - (a) of the details of any public consultation that took place;
  - (b) whether the Committee sought comments from users of large vehicles, for instance hauliers and the Fire Service;
  - (c) whether the Committee is aware that lorries exiting from Charles Street onto Bath Street now mount the pavement to get round;
  - (d) why it was considered necessary to make the pavements so wide, given that they only exist for a limited length?
  
2. With regard to the wide-ranging changes proposed for traffic in Union Street, the Parade and Broad Street, would the President -
  - (a) advise what public consultation is planned so that residents, traders and those who use these routes can have their concerns heard;
  - (b) advise whether the Committee has consulted with the Fire Service and others users of large vehicles such as cranes and plant to ensure that access is not impaired for them;
  - (c) inform members what research has been carried out to ensure that temporary road closures arising from a motor traffic accident or emergency road works for example, do not cause a gridlock;
  - (d) confirm to members that these proposals, and any others under consideration, will not increase the response times of the emergency services or adversely affect their ability to overtake traffic.
  
3. Would the President advise when he will be bringing proposals to the States so that members may debate details of an integrated transport strategy?

1240/5(1424) 15th May 2001 to the President of the Planning and Environment Committee

1. On 27th March 2001 I asked a question of the President of the Public Services Committee about alterations to the Union Street/ York Street junction and was advised that my question should have been addressed to the President of the Planning and Environment Committee as the works were being promoted by the Urban Renewal Sub-Committee. Would the President therefore advise members -
  - (a) with reference to the plans, what changes are being considered in light of the comments made at the mobile 'exhibition trailer' parked at the Cenotaph;
  - (b) whether, in future, conventional public meetings will be called to advise the public of the Committee's proposals rather than the 'roadshow' used to advertise the Union Street/York Street plans, as the latter gives little opportunity for the motorist to have an input and is therefore biased towards the pedestrian;

1240/5(1460) 3rd July 2001 to the President of the Planning and Environment Committee

1. Would the President -
  - (a) state whether the decisions of the Urban Renewal Sub-Committee are normally submitted to the full Committee for endorsement?
  - (b) advise members of the Sub-Committee's remit?

2. Would the President -
  - (a) confirm that the Urban Renewal Sub-Committee has £500,000 at its disposal per year?
  - (b) advise what major projects this money has been spent on in the last three years?
  - (c) state how the various projects are prioritised?
3. Would the President advise whether the Sub-Committee's work is limited to St. Helier, or whether it can operate in other parishes? If the answer is affirmative to the latter, would the President advise what percentage of the £500,000 has been spent in St. Helier in each of the last three years?
4. With regard to the road alterations involving Union Street, York Street, Charing Cross, the Parade, Dumaresq Street, Conway Street, New Cut and Broad Street, would the President -
  - (a) advise what benefits were anticipated from these alterations?
  - (b) advise members whether one of the main purposes of these alterations is to restrict the movement of cars into town?
  - (c) agree that the public have not been kept fully informed, and that the 'roadshow' type presentation to the public did not meet the aims of the 'Street Life Programme', issued by the Committee in conjunction with Public Services Committee, which states that 'At each stage, information will be published about the details of the plan, and members of the public will be kept fully informed'?
  - (d) would he agree that the traffic alterations in question have not been a success to date, and will he therefore revert the traffic flows to their original format?
5. In view of the chaos that has ensued as a result of traffic alterations in Union Street, York Street, etc., would the President agree that in future wider consultation is needed, involving more than just those living or working nearby, and therefore undertake to publish the current plans in full in the media? Would he also ensure that any future plans are similarly published, so that the public generally, and motorists in particular, have sufficient advance warning, not only to express their views, but also to enable them to understand what is happening?



**Schedule of delivery for St. Helier *Street Life* Programme leaflets**

Hue Street (including Hue Court)  
Dumaresq Street  
Devonshire Place  
Devonshire Lane  
King Street  
Cannon Street  
Old Street  
Union Street  
The Parade  
York Street  
Charing Cross  
Lempriere Street  
New Street