

STATES OF JERSEY



SKATEPARK AT LES QUENNEVAIS SPORTS CENTRE (P.1/2021): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 2nd February 2021
by the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture
Earliest date for debate: 9th February 2021

STATES GREFFE

SKATEPARK AT LES QUENNEVAIS SPORTS CENTRE (P.1/2021):
AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

For the words “Les Quennevais Sports Centre, St. Brelade” substitute the words “South Hill Gardens, St. Helier, with satellite facilities in the west and east of the Island”.

2 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (b) –

For the words “Les Quennevais Sports Centre” substitute the words “South Hill Gardens”.

MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, SPORT AND
CULTURE

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

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

- (a) to agree that the new skatepark be located at South Hill Gardens, St. Helier, with satellite facilities in the west and east of the Island; and
- (b) to request the Minister of Infrastructure to bring forward a formal planning application for a new skatepark at South Hill Gardens, no later than 26th February 2021.

REPORT

The need for a new Skatepark facility for the Island is fully accepted by the Council of Ministers and is supported by the Assistant Minister with responsibility for sport.

The skatepark proposal is within the approved Government Plan 2021-2024 and capital budget is available for its delivery. There is a commitment to deliver the proposal by the end of 2021.

This amendment simply recommends that the site is at South Hill Gardens, St. Helier rather than at the Les Quennevais playing fields.

It is clear as part of the work to date that the skatepark maximise the benefit to the public and is accessible to as many people as possible.

Such facilities have wide social benefits and deliver against wider common strategic priorities, including putting Children First, and Improving Islanders' wellbeing, mental and physical health.

Initial engagement on the need and location for a new skatepark took place in 2018. The Report stated that 'there was a clear expression from the skate community that St Helier was the preferred settlement due to its population base and public transport accessibility from across the Island'.

A second skatepark consultation took place in June 2019 seeking support for siting the facility at Les Quennevais Sports Centre. The site at Les Quennevais was at the time considered the most deliverable for the Island as there was not unanimity for a site elsewhere and followed a desktop exercise to find a site solution.

However, before a significant sum of public funds was committed to the project, a review was commissioned by the incoming Acting Director General, with political support, taking into account various voices which had been heard raising the question again as to why the site was not in St. Helier, and how the Les Quennevais site might practically work.

A third consultation in January 2021 included the St. Helier option.

The results of this latest consultation have been released and show a preference for the South Hill Gardens site.

These are shown in the table below as Figure 1.

The siting within St. Helier also has the support from other organisations, including:

The Children's Commissioner
The Jersey Youth Service
The Jersey Skateparks Association (JSA)
The Parish of St. Helier
Jersey Sport
Jersey Development Company

It is clear that both sites are feasible. Both sites are affordable, and both sites can be delivered within the expected timescales.

The clear choice for members is whether the site is located in town to maximise users and the number of users. Or sited in a more remote location and service arguably a lower percentage of Islanders.

The South Hill Gardens feasibility study was completed in January 2021. It was a comprehensive assessment of all of the issues identified through the earlier desk-based assessment and included the following:

- Financial Assessment
- Programme Assessment
- Land Ownership & Legal Issues Background Check
- Key Stakeholder Consultation
- Concept Design Development
- Accessibility Assessment
- Land Use Planning Assessment
- Heritage Review & Consultation
- Archaeological Review
- Road Safety Assessment
- Rock Face Stability Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Preliminary Ground Investigation
- Buried Underground Services Assessment

The study concluded that South Hill Gardens is a viable site and can accommodate a 2000m² skatepark that meets the design brief developed with the skatepark users and includes obstacles and features for all users of all abilities.

The Les Quennevais Sports Centre site is also 2000m². The feasibility study included a cost estimate and review of the project programme to confirm that a skatepark at South Hill Gardens could be constructed within budget and to the same timescale as Les Quennevais Sports Centre.

As with all developments, there are a number of issues to be resolved during planning and construction stages. However, it is not considered there are insurmountable obstacles to either site.

Access, road safety, landscaping, visual impact, heritage impact can all be accommodated and resolved during the detailed design stage.



South Hill Gardens has the potential to link adjacent public spaces, enhance the landscape in this area, and bring back to life an under-utilised part of town.

Indeed, even the historic covenant supports the development of South Hill Gardens, which states: “The land would be used exclusively as a place of public recreation and pleasure.”

The South Hill Gardens site is accessible to the majority of the population, existing nearby parking facilities and bus routes will aid travel to the site



Figure 1 – Preference for South Hill Gardens

A public consultation has also been held that gave the public the choice between the two sites and the results returned with 60.1% of respondents favouring South Hill Gardens. This was the first time the skatepark community and the public had been offered a choice of sites. The 2019 Les Quennevais Skatepark consultation presented the conclusion of the desk-based assessment and asked respondents for comment.

Q2. Where would you prefer Jersey's centre for urban sports to be:			
Answer Choices	Responses		
Les Quennevais Sports Centre		39.91%	1,011
South Hill Gardens		60.09%	1,522
Response Total:			2,533

The South Hill Gardens consultation received over 2500 responses. By comparison, the 2019 Les Quennevais Skatepark consultation received 1150 responses. The consultation was promoted within all schools Island wide and a large number of postal responses were received from primary schools, indicating the consultation reached children and young people. The consultation also received 1282 responses from people interested in using the skatepark, 63.9% of whom favoured South Hill Gardens (Figure 2)

Figure 2 – Skatepark User Preference for South Hill Gardens

Q2. Where would you prefer Jersey's centre for urban sports to be:			
Answer Choices	Responses		
Les Quennevais Sports Centre		36.12%	462
South Hill Gardens		63.88%	817
Response Total:			1,279

South Hill Gardens provides a central location where users of the facility can meet easily and enjoy a social and physically active lifestyle. The design will cater for all users of all abilities and create a welcoming place for the public to watch and enjoy urban sports. There is also the opportunity for regeneration of the wider park areas with other leisure and recreation facilities to create an inclusive destination that is accessible to all.

Satellite facilities

To support a facility at South Hill Gardens, satellite facilities would be established in the east and west of the island. Together with the existing facility at St. John's Recreation Centre, this means skatepark facilities would be well distributed across the Island. Les Quennevais Sports Centre is a likely location of one of these satellite facilities and existing ball courts near to the sports centre building have been identified as a possible site. Options in the east of the island are being explored.

Conclusion

Our commitment to delivering a skatepark is not in doubt. It, however, must be in a location that serves the most people and it is considered that South Hill Gardens does that.

This site also has the wider public and agency support which is required to move the project forward.

It is therefore recommended that the Island's main skatepark facility is located at South Hill Gardens within St Helier.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no additional resource implications.