

STATES OF JERSEY



RESTRICTION ON SOLAR GROUND MOUNTS ON AGRICULTURAL LAND - PETITION (P.53/2026): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 24th March 2026
by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade
Earliest date for debate: 24th March 2026

STATES GREFFE

RESTRICTION ON SOLAR GROUND MOUNTS ON AGRICULTURAL
LAND - PETITION (P.53/2026): AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

Substitute the words “prohibition on” with the words “presumption against”.

After the words “agricultural land” delete the word “, and”, designate the words after “agricultural land” as paragraph (b) and redesignate the subsequent paragraph accordingly.

Substitute the words “include such prohibition” with the words “consider strengthening protections for the loss of agricultural land to solar ground mounts”.

DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE

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

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

- (a) that there should be a **presumption against** solar ground mounts on agricultural land;
- (b) to request the Minister for the Environment to **consider strengthening protections for the loss of agricultural land to solar ground mounts** in the next Island Plan; and
- (c) to request the Minister for Infrastructure, in consultation with the Minister for the Environment, to bring forward a policy framework to promote the installation of solar panels on all suitable States of Jersey owned buildings.

REPORT

I bring this amendment further to feedback received from some States Members and the petitioners themselves who attended the States Members' presentation on 18th March 2026, and also in relation to some of the Ministerial arguments, which I have taken on board.

Part (a)

Whilst there is significant support for my unamended proposition, I know that there are Members who support the general *spirit* of the petition (i.e. they don't want to see fields which could be used for growing increasingly being used for solar panels), but they recognise there might be some *exceptional* circumstances where their installation may be justifiable. The general feedback from Members, that there should be greater controls, and more – independent assessment – of what constitutes 'poor quality vs good quality' agricultural land.

The Minister states in his comments paper that –

“In respect of part (a) of the proposition, [...] the appropriate mechanisms for determining future land use- policy and assessing development proposals already exist within Jersey's established democratic and statutory frameworks.”

The framework he is referring to here is the [Bridging Island Plan](#) (the Plan). However, there is a degree of tension between these various policies in this area, particularly in relation to the installation of large-scale photovoltaic installations not seriously harming landscape and seascape character (p.233), namely, **Policy ERE1 – Protection of agricultural land** (p.177) and **Policy ME6 - Larger-scale terrestrial renewable energy developments** (p.233)

Furthermore, the Plan's spatial strategy seeks to achieve development that is sustainably accommodated in the island “safeguarding productive agricultural land, in order to increase the security of local food supplies, whilst supporting the long-term maintenance of the agricultural industry, and diversification of the rural economy.” (p.39). The Plan states that agricultural land will be protected from loss and alternative uses will only be appropriate on lower-quality agricultural land (p.77). Additionally, support will be given to proposals that seek the reuse or redevelopment of already developed land and/or buildings in the countryside (p.77).

There is a general concern that current safeguards are not sufficient; that more and more arable land will be given over to solar panels, perhaps unnecessarily.

Whilst there is a strong focus in the Bridging Island Plan on protecting high-value agricultural land (p.177, 233), the reality of who judges what land is considered as good arable land, is not clear.

On the matter of solar panels more generally, the Plan also cites –

“opportunities to address climate change that are particularly relevant to the town environment. These include the chances to deploy solar PV technology on larger office and residential buildings in Town” (p.67).

Part (b)

This part of the amendment takes note of comments in the Ministerial paper which said

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‘The process for reviewing and adopting the Island Plan is established in law and provides a transparent, democratic and evidence-based mechanism for determining land-use policy. Any attempt to pre-determine the content of a future plan in advance of this process risks undermining the integrity of the statutory system and cannot bind a future Minister or Assembly.’

I do have some sympathy for this position, but I would say that there is a balance to be struck between tying the hand of a future assembly, and suggesting a direction of travel. The intention of this part of the amendment is to move us more to the latter position.

Part (c)

This part remains unchanged. Like the petitioners, I consider that focusing on the built environment and the potential to place extensive solar arrays on buildings should be the first option, as opposed to placing these arrays on any type of agricultural land.

Financial and staffing implications

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

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment

I consider that this amendment has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022.