STATES OF JERSEY

COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): TWENTY-FIRST AMENDMENT (P.75/2026 AMD.(21)) – COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 6th November 2026
by the Council of Ministers

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Although the Council of Ministers supports the addition of 9.5, Members are asked to reject the addition of 9.4. While the intent is understood and the principle is supported, this part of the amendment is not an appropriate mechanism for improving play provision when the objectives are already reflected within existing Play Plan commitments, which adopt an evidence-led, Island-wide approach rather than focusing on a single parish.

9.4 Open space audit and measurable standards

The importance of ensuring that children and young people have access to high-quality opportunities for play and recreation are already reflected within the Play Plan, which contains a number of actions aimed at improving understanding of play provision and ensuring that play is considered as part of planning, regeneration and community development.

These actions include strengthening play provision through the planning process, reviewing outdoor play space available to children attending specialist and alternative education settings, producing an Island-wide map of open and play spaces, exploring opportunities to increase community access to school grounds, supporting parishes to promote local play opportunities, and establishing mechanisms to ensure that play is considered within future development proposals.

The Play Plan takes an Island-wide approach, recognising that the needs of children and young people, and the availability of play opportunities, differ between communities. At present, no single parish has been formally identified through the Play Plan as having the lowest level of play provision. Indeed, part of the purpose of the Play Plan work is to develop a stronger evidence base to better understand existing provision, identify gaps and inform future priorities across all parishes.

Ministers are concerned that the amendment introduces additional commitments without identifying the resources required to deliver them. There is currently no dedicated funding attached to delivery of the Play Plan, and progress is dependent on prioritisation within existing resources and partnership working across Government, parishes and community organisations. Ministers further note that responsibility for providing and maintaining play spaces does not rest solely with Government, with many parishes already investing in local play facilities.

Whilst an updated audit of open space in St Helier would provide a more recent picture, an established baseline already exists, provided by the 2018 St Helier Open Space Audit.

The 2022 Bridging Island Plan, approved by the States Assembly, subsequently established measurable benchmark standards for different forms of open space, including parks, play space, amenity green space and natural green space. The Plan uses these standards to assess existing provision and future need.

Adopted benchmark standards for open space in Town		
Typology	Quantity standard Ha/1,000 popn (Vergée/1,000 popn)	Access standard (metres)
Parks	0.5 (2.8)	500
Play space	0.1 (0.55)	500
Outdoor sports facility	0.8 (4.44)	3,000
Amenity greenspace	0.25 (1.40)	500
Natural greenspace	1.0 (5.50)	500

Source: Bridging Island Plan 2022 (approved by the States Assembly, March 2022)

A new audit would, therefore, update the existing evidence base rather than establish one for the first time. There is presently no identified resource to undertake this work by the end of 2027. Given the evidence and standards already in place, this is not considered be the most effective use of limited resources at this time.

Conclusion

Ministers ask Members to acknowledge that there are already provisions that protect – and create – open space and play areas. The proposed amendment does not strengthen those protections. Instead, it risks replacing a carefully considered framework with an absolute requirement that could prevent beneficial projects that serve the wider public interest, even where equivalent or improved open space provision is secured.

An updated audit may provide more recent information, but it would not create a new evidence base. It would simply refresh one that already exists.

The Council of Ministers asks Members to reject part 9.4 and accept 9.5 of this amendment

Comment under Standing Order 37A

This Comment was presented shortly after the standard timeframe stipulated by Standing Order 37A due to the time required to finalize administrative arrangements, and to ensure that full and due regard was given to the amendment.