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ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to existing roads are planned and carried out by the Public Works Committee and the Parishes. In most cases such improvements are not the subject of prior consultation with the Island Development Committee unless they form part of the Island Development Plan (e.g. St. John's Village) or part of a Town Redevelopment Plan (e.g. Dumaresq Street), and opportunities for discussion do not normally arise until an application for the proposed works is made to the Committee.

During the course of survey work for the preparation of the Town Plan the Chief Civil Engineer and Town Surveyor prepared maps of the town showing all future road improvements. These were classified as follows.

- a. Improvements approved by the States.
- b. Improvements approved by the Public Works Committee.
- c. Improvements suggested by the Chief Civil Engineer but not yet approved by the Public Works Committee.
- d. Improvements planned by the Parish of St. Helier Roads Committee.

The maps were held in the Planning Office until about two years ago, when they were returned to the Chief Civil Engineer at his request for a second set to be prepared for record purposes. At the time of their preparation it was decided not to transfer the information to the Visual Register in the Planning Office until the Town Plan had been approved by the States, but the maps were available to officers and members of the public, who could discover from them what properties might be affected by improvement lines. It was intended to update all Town Plan survey information on a regular basis.

Following the Transportation Survey and Study, the problem of future vehicular circulation in the town has been approached afresh and, with only a few exceptions, the improvement lines are now no longer relevant to current ideas.

It will be at least six months before a final Town Plan and associated Island Development Plan can be prepared for submission to the States for approval (Zoning Map No. 6 shows only the present situation, not the future intentions for land use, communications, etc.) and some means of keeping State's departments, Parishes and members of the Public informed of the plans for roads is needed until that time.

As far as the Island is concerned, it is suggested that a map be prepared by the Chief Civil Engineer to show all the roads or parts of roads which will be improved and, as far as possible, the programme for the carrying out of these works. This information can be:

- a. added to the Planning Office visual register,
- b. made available to members of the public, who will be able to see whether property in which they have an interest is likely to be affected. They will be able to approach the Chief Civil Engineer for details.

The map should be kept up to date by the Chief Civil Engineer, who should also inform the Planning Office when works have been completed so that the visual plot information can be made permanent.

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The town can be covered in much the same way. The Chief Civil Engineer could prepare a map showing the roads likely to be affected by the current ideas for traffic circulation and, as for the Island, this information will be recorded and made available to the public. Details will be available from the Public Works Department (and probably from the Town Hall) and the information will be kept up to date.

In this way any prospective developer will be able to discover whether his plans are affected by future road improvements, and the Assistant Planning Officers will be automatically informed (through the visual plot) of such improvements each time an application is made to the Island Development Committee. They will be able to refer such applications to the Chief Civil Engineer or Town Surveyor without having to rely solely on the memories of the Public Works and Parish representatives who attend the weekly meetings at which applications are examined. It must be possible for developers and their agents to discuss all matters relating to road improvements with the engineers of the Public Works Department or the Parish, the Assistant Planning Officers being informed of any decisions made during such discussions which might require to be taken into account when a recommendation is made to the Island Development Committee.

There remains the problem of certain existing properties in the town which are affected by future road proposals and yet, while they remain in private ownership, can be altered and refurbished with the result that when eventually acquired by the States they may have an 'inflated value'. This is a problem common to all kinds of redevelopment plans, and the aim must be to exercise sufficient control over the property to keep its value reasonable but without causing planning blight. An associated problem arises where slight alterations, usually to the frontage, are approved by the Island Development Committee; which alterations later lead to some form of structural failure involving a degree of reconstruction of the whole property. At that stage there is often no possibility of imposing the road improvement line on what has become, in effect, a redevelopment of the property.

There is only one sure way to prevent these things happening, and it is recommended that the following procedure be adopted wherever possible:

- a. As soon as an improvement line has been agreed by the Public Works Committee, the details should be sent to the Island Development Committee. The Planning Officer will discuss these with the Chief Civil Engineer, and any amendments and additions of a townscape or landscape nature can be worked out.
- b. The final plan having been approved by both Committees, should then go to the States to be approved as a Development Plan, so that it can become part of the Statutory Town Plan.
- c. Any properties affected will subsequently be subject to strict control by the Island Development Committee in the normal way or at the behest of the Highway Authority.


In order to avoid planning blight, even in cases where the plan is not to be implemented for some years, affected properties should be acquired by the States as soon as possible so that they can be properly managed and maintained. The interests of owners and tenants

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can be recognised in leasing-back arrangements, and the useful life of the property can be extended until such time as the plan is carried out. This procedure will also help to avoid the speculative re-furbishing of property known to be on the States long-term acquisition list,

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That a map of the Island be prepared by the Chief Civil Engineer showing all roads for which improvements have been agreed by the Public Works Committee, and where appropriate, Parish Roads Committees.
2. That a map of the Town be similarly prepared showing new roads, roads likely to be re-aligned and roads to be improved.
3. That appropriate information be plotted on the visual register and kept up to date regularly.
4. That details of road plans, especially as they affect private property, be available for discussion between interested members of the public and the engineers of the Public Works Department or Parish.
5. That major road plans be submitted to the States for approval as Development Plans as soon as details have been finalised.
6. That properties affected by such plans be acquired as necessary and as convenient and be maintained by the States until re-development is carried out.

 Architect/Planning Assistant.

January 1974

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