

4.7 Deputy R.J. Rondel of St. Helier of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding the relocation of the new Police Headquarters to the Green Street Site:

Would the Minister advise the Assembly whether there are any major concerns from a planning perspective regarding the relocation of the new police headquarters to the Green Street site and if so what these are?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel (The Minister for Planning and Environment):

There are no major policy issues preventing the principle of locating a new police headquarters on the Green Street car park site. The Island Plan envisages office and other such development taking place within the town of St. Helier. The proposal to locate the police headquarters to the Green Street car park is currently under informal discussion between the Treasury and Resources Department and the Planning Department. As Minister, I have not been involved in these discussions as I wish to maintain an independence from this informal process because I might wish to determine any subsequent planning application. It is vital that the Minister retains objectivity on any proposal so that the proper consideration of a formal application is carried out and is seen to be carried out in an open and transparent manner. Clearly I am aware, as other Members will be aware, that discussions between the departments have been ongoing for some time and that issues such as the scale, mass, access to and design of the building and the car parking on the site are still under debate. All of these matters will be robustly considered against the terms of the 2011 Island Plan during the process of a formal planning application if one is submitted. However at this time I am unable to comment further on this matter.

4.7.1 Deputy R.J. Rondel:

Would the Minister agree with me that we have so far possibly wasted large sums of taxpayer's money on the present plans for the new police station as they already need to be significantly changed from the original presentation from Jersey Property Holdings?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

Money is not a Planning consideration in terms of expenditure. Clearly the result of the application when one is forthcoming will pay respect or give due regard to the amount of monies that have been expended in getting to that position. Until we are at that position, I am not in a position to comment.

4.7.2 Deputy J.A. Martin:

I appreciate the Minister does not want to get involved at this stage politically. I am asking the Minister because it is directed at him. I am sure, as he says, there are discussions between quite a few Ministers and officers. I would like him to state whether his department has seen the impact traffic assessment report and if they are in possession of it - as promised to me at least 4 weeks ago by the Minister for Transport - can he assure that all States Members see this please?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

In as much as I am able to promise documentation from another department, I would assure the House that I will do my best to pass on any of those documents in the timescale that would allow Members to form a rational opinion of the process.

[10:45]

4.7.3 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour:

I am aware of what the Minister has advised the Assembly however before he determines it would the Minister advise the Minister for Treasury and Resources to bring a proposition to the States Assembly to allow the Assembly to accept the proposed locations outlining alternative sites within the report and if not, why not?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

The Minister for Treasury and Resources is entitled to bring whatever proposals he wishes to this Assembly. On a general point, I think it would be helpful perhaps if a general collective decision could be taken on an area that will represent a serious expenditure of States funds.

4.7.4 Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade:

Will the Minister confirm that both the Green Street car park site and, in fact, Lime Grove House itself, lie within the eastern gateway area, which is especially identified in the Island Plan, as requiring a comprehensive development plan? Would he not agree that it is his responsibility under the plan to bring that plan forward before approving applications and, in particular, does that Island Plan proposal not say that in the event of a major public project put in that area that plan should be brought before the States for approval?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

That would be my favoured approach and if I am in a position to bring forward master plans for this area, in addition to the other master plans that my department are intending to bring forward, although the budgets have not been found to pay for these items, then I will obviously do my best.

4.7.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Can the Minister say when the process of informal consultation will cease and when definitive advice will be given to the people behind the application?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

Presumably informal advice will cease when the Treasury Department or those departments beneath it bring forward a formal application.

4.7.6 Deputy R.J. Rondel:

Could the Minister possibly confirm that his department have been involved closely from an early stage with advising Jersey Property Holdings or possibly sitting on a panel with them or does he agree that perhaps a better process could be found when developing large State schemes such as this relocation of the police headquarters?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

It is always open to individual departments to improve on their services. From my reading of the situation at the moment it might well have been more useful to have had more extensive talks with the department but that is about as much as I can say.