

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY J. RENOUF OF ST. BRELADE
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 3rd MARCH 2025
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 10th MARCH 2025**

Question

“Further to Ministerial Decision [MD-ENV-2025-94](#) regarding supplementary planning guidance relating to the development of properties with a floorspace of greater than 3000 square feet, will the Minister explain why there was no notification that the matter was under review and no public consultation?”

Answer

The development of new guidance or change to the suite of existing supplementary planning guidance forms part of the Minister’s drive to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the island’s planning service, as set out in this Government’s priorities, approved by the States Assembly in May 2024. This is a tool that can be used to provide more certainty and confidence to applicants about how to realise appropriate forms of development that the community needs and wants, whilst also seeking to deliver the most sustainable forms of development for Jersey in accord with the policy objectives of the bridging Island Plan. The development of new guidance and the review of the existing suite of guidance, therefore, remains at the Minister’s discretion in seeking to deliver the Government’s stated priority.

There is no legal obligation for the Minister for the Environment to undertake public consultation on the development of new or change to existing supplementary planning guidance. The reason for this is that supplementary planning guidance is just that – it is supplementary to the policy that has been approved by the States Assembly, and which is set out in the island plan. The development of island plan policy goes through a very comprehensive and robust process of public consultation, independent examination and ultimately States approval. That is why the island plan is the primary consideration in planning decisions and carries significant weight. Supplementary planning guidance cannot, therefore, change island plan policy and needs to be in accordance with it. The changes recently made to supplementary planning guidance do not alter the fact that island plan policy remains in place and will continue to be applied through the planning process.

The Minister is, however, obliged to consult with other ministers about supplementary planning guidance where this might affect their portfolio interest. The Minister for Housing and the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development have both been engaged in relation to the changes recently made.

Whilst the Minister for the Environment is not legally bound to undertake wider public consultation, it is custom and practice to do so when new guidance is being developed, or where significant revision to existing guidance is proposed. In the case of the most recent changes to guidance, it was the Minister’s judgement that this was a minor change to existing guidance and did not, therefore, warrant wider consultation at this time. This provision was also only introduced in to planning guidance relatively recently, in July 2023, when it was incorporated in to guidance about Housing development outside the built-up area; and Density standards. Both of these pieces of draft supplementary planning guidance were, themselves, the subject of consultation and the Minister had regard to the feedback from this consultation as part of his review of the 3,000 sqft floorspace parameter, as set out in his ministerial decision.

The Minister considers that the 3,000 sq ft floorspace limit on the development of larger homes was not particularly helpful as guidance, and that the island plan policy framework, together with other pieces of supplementary planning guidance that sat underneath it, was sufficiently robust to deal with proposals for large new or extended homes.

As with all supplementary planning guidance, the Minister remains open to considering its effectiveness, relative to the planning policy objectives that it is designed to support and deliver.