

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT  
BY DEPUTY H.L. JEUNE OF ST. JOHN, ST. LAWRENCE AND TRINITY  
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 28th OCTOBER 2024  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2024**

**Question**

“In relation to planning application permissions that include protected trees listed in the [protected trees register](#), will the Minister advise –

- (a) how many applications have been submitted to change the planning permit to remove the protected tree(s);
- (b) of these applications, how many have been approved;
- (c) what reasons were provided by the applicant for removing the protected tree(s);
- (d) what reasons were stated by the planning department in granting approval to these changes;
- (e) where are the criteria for making these changes set out, in either the relevant planning legislation or policies;
- (f) whether there have been developers who have cut down protected trees without first seeking a change in planning permission; and
- (g) what penalties, if any, have been issued to those who have cut down protected trees without planning permission?”

**Answer**

Due to the configuration of the current back-office system the Department does not hold data or specific information on the number of planning permissions for new development that may have authorised the removal of trees on the protected trees register. Questions a-d can therefore not be answered.

System transformation remains critical to the ambitions of the Department to implement a fit for purpose planning administration platform through the RIDA project to support planning reform as mentioned in the Government’s Common Strategic Policy 2024-2026. This new system will support the gathering and capturing of data to which will assist in producing the kind of information being enquired about by Deputy Jeune.

Regarding question (e), the Policy relating to protected trees in the Bridging Island Plan 2022 is Policy NE2, that states the loss of protected, veteran, ancient and champion trees will not be supported except for where it can be demonstrated that they are dead, dying or dangerous, and that any development that would have an adverse impact on existing green infrastructure assets will be required to demonstrate that the benefit will outweigh the harm and provide details of how the features will be protected as far as practicable, and that measures are in place to minimise and/or mitigate their loss on-site, or will be otherwise compensated for.

Regarding questions (f) and (g) the Compliance Team have not identified the unauthorised removal of a tree on the protected list in the past 12 months, and no prosecutions or penalties have been issued in this time period.

END