

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING
BY DEPUTY R.G. LE HERISSIER OF ST. SAVIOUR**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th MAY 2006

Question

What controls, if any, are in place, or contemplated by the Minister, to prevent the purchase of apartments for speculative purposes and does the Minister have data on the prevalence of such purchases?

Answer

There are no controls contemplated to prevent the purchase of apartments or other accommodation for speculative purposes, whether by qualified residents, or in the case of share transfer properties, by unqualified residents or persons outside the Island. While anyone can purchase share transfer properties, strict occupancy controls are placed upon all such properties, preventing their occupation by individuals without residential qualifications.

Currently, with a market with many apartments for sale, I do not believe that the impact of speculative purchases on the market is significant, nor that there are an abundance of speculators wanting to purchase residential accommodation. Furthermore, it should be noted that some fringe element of speculative purchase is required to maintain a healthy market for rental properties.

Checks are conducted to make sure that properties are not being unlawfully occupied, especially in the case of any recently built share transfer apartments where there are no recent housing transactions. There are, currently, several under investigation for possible unlawful occupation, which are taken extremely seriously, and these will be dealt with by prosecution in the courts.