

STATES OF JERSEY



MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT: POWERS (P.132/2010) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 22nd October 2010
by the Minister for Planning and Environment**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

As Minister for Planning and Environment I welcome and support Deputy Le Hérisier's proposition that ministerial powers and the manner in which planning decisions are made should be reviewed by the Privileges and Procedures Committee. Indeed, early in my term of office as Minister I acknowledged that the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002 conferred great responsibility on a single person and I pointed out the risks of single point decision-making. However, the system of Ministerial government does vest decision-making authority in individual Ministers, and one must question whether Planning is any different from any other portfolio.

As Minister, I introduced a system a year ago in which I attend Ministerial Public Hearings with the Assistant Minister and the Chairman of the Planning Applications Panel. Their role is technically acting in an advisory capacity, but their effect is to widen the decision-making process.

The Planning Applications Panel deals with far more applications than the Minister, and was specifically established to replace the former Committee and Applications Sub-Committees.

The majority of planning applications continue to be decided by planning officers with little or no political involvement.

Note: Between 1st January and 30th September 2010, the Minister decided 20 applications, the Planning Applications Panel 150 applications, and the Department 940 applications.