3.3 Deputy F.J. Hill of St. Martin of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding the camouflaging of unsightly structures:

Will the Minister advise Members whether the Planning Department has a policy relating to the camouflaging of unsightly structures, and, if so, give details?

Senator F.E. Cohen (The Minister for Planning and Environment):

There is no general written policy regarding the camouflaging or screening of unsightly structures that already exist, except that I have issued guidance to reduce the visual impact of roof plants, such as air-conditioning plants. I have adopted camouflaging in relation to telecommunication masts and cabinets. When considering the sites of these structures I ensure that they were located close to existing groups of trees to mitigate their impact, or if this was not possible that trees be planted close by during the first available planting season. Policy G2 of the Island Plan, a generic policy, deals with general development considerations for new proposals and states that: "Any proposed development should not unreasonably affect the character and amenity of the area in which it is situated, nor have an unreasonable impact on the neighbouring users and the local environment by reason of visual intrusion or other amenity considerations." The department's legal powers do not extend to require owners to screen or disguise such structures which already exist. Thank you.

3.3.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Would the Minister consider that it is time really that the policy was adopted, particularly for those who have already … in respect of retrospective applications? Because quite clearly there are a number of sites around the Island which are unsightly. What steps could the Minister take to ensure that there are some proper camouflaging of these particular sites?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

I am very happy to look at the matter and prepared to undertake to do so, but dealing with the matter of retrospective applications is complicated and one would need to ensure that we were fair to property owners and did not place unreasonable burdens upon them. I am perfectly happy to look at the issue.

3.3.2 Deputy A.T. Dupre of St. Clement:

I just wondered if there is any chance of anything being put in front of the incinerator, because if you are driving along St. Clement's Bay that is going to be the most hideous eyesore and will there be any way of disguising that?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

I do not think anyone has ever suggested that the Energy from Waste plant was not going to have a very significant impact. What the Planning Department have tried to do is ensure that the impact is mitigated as far as possible by competent architecture. I am not expecting that the building is going to be invisible. There is a very clear and very well put together landscaping proposal to further mitigate the visual impact of the Energy from Waste plant, but I am afraid it is a rather large building. Thank you.

3.3.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Could I just ask the Minister … I thank him for his honesty and I look forward to working with him, possibly, in finding a way through particularly for those with retrospective applications. But could I just ask the Minister is he happy about the

nature of magnetic fields and has a survey been carried out of recent times to ensure that there is no effect for people living within close proximity to these antennas and other structures?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

With respect, I do not see that that is related to the question. I ask your direction whether I need to answer it, as I am not prepared for such an answer.

The Deputy Bailiff:

I think it is not very closely related, is it?