

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY SENATOR B.E. SHENTON
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 20th APRIL 2010**

Question

“Can the Minister advise whether he will consider changing the composition of the Planning Applications Panel in order that it just contains independent members of the public, some of whom may have relevant planning experience, rather than States members with political mandates and potential political conflicts?”

Answer

A fundamental principle of the planning application process is that it seeks to regulate the development activities of individual landowners in the “public interest”. To that extent there will often be a political dimension to certain applications, particularly when there have been a number of representations. The view has always been taken that the public interest is best reflected by the people the public elects, and thus mandates, to represent those interests.

For this reason, when the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002 was drafted, and later adopted by the States, it was the deliberate intention that membership of the Planning Applications Panel would be drawn from the members of the States Assembly. In order to effect the change the Senator suggests, it would be necessary for the States Assembly to amend the Law.

There is a code of conduct that regulates the actions of the individual Panel members regarding any personal or political interests, and requires them to act objectively in accordance with the Law, the Island Plan and other policies.

Accordingly, the Minister does not propose to change the composition of the Planning Applications Panel as the Senator proposes.