

2.13 Senator F. du H. Le Gresley of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding an update on the review of the draft supplementary planning guidance for Island Plan Policy H3 (Affordable Housing):

Could the Minister provide Members with an update on the review of the draft supplementary planning guidance for Island Plan Policy H3 - Affordable Housing?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel (The Minister for Planning and Environment):

Members will recall that the former Minister for Planning and Environment gave an undertaking during the Island Plan debate that the new affordable housing policy set out in the new Island Plan at Policy H3 would not come into effect until a new supplementary planning guidance to inform its operation had been adopted. This undertaking was formally expressed and approved by the States Assembly as set out in proposal 21 of the 2011 Island Plan. Now, work to progress the new supplementary planning guidance is ongoing. My department has engaged expert advice with experience and knowledge of the operation of similar affordable housing policies in the United Kingdom to advise on the refinement of the draft supplementary planning guidance and to assist with preliminary consultation on its content with the development industry. This work is scheduled to be undertaken during November with a view to the commencement of the public consultation on a draft form of the guidance in January 2012 before the matter is presented to the States early in the New Year. It is envisaged that the guidance could therefore be in place during the first quarter of 2012, which would enable the use of the new Policy H3. It is relevant to note that the original proposal for Policy H3 supported by independent planning inspectors was that it did not become operational until 2012 in order to allow time for the development industry to prepare for its introduction.

2.13.1 Senator F. du H. Le Gresley:

Is the Minister aware of the concerns of members of the Jersey Construction Council that because of existing use values, Policy H3 is not viable for brownfield sites and if rigorously applied, could, in fact, result in fewer affordable houses being built?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

I am, but equally I am informed by the statement that was made by the Jersey Construction Council on 22nd June 2011 around the time of the discussions on the Island Plan that that Council particularly encouraged that the specific workings of the policy and the supplementary planning guidance had to be consulted upon before they were adopted as part of the Island Plan, and it also strongly believed that the proposed policy must be tried and tested by the industry before the States vote to adopt a way forward. Indeed, all of these points are due to be raised at the pre-consultation meetings with the industry and they will be acted upon.