

2019.02.12

12 The Connétable of St. Helier of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the site vacated by the States of Jersey Police: [OQ.40/2019]

Will the Minister update the Assembly on the steps being taken to repurpose the site vacated by the States of Jersey Police?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Infrastructure):

The yard is used by the Fire Service, who have also taken on a small element of the old police station. There are currently no plans to move the Fire Service elsewhere. The old police headquarters building is empty and in the process of being decommissioned, as it is unfit for occupation or any use. This is a valuable site in St. Helier and there is keen competition for it to be allocated for a variety of uses. These will be considered and suitability and cost of use put forward and the Assembly will of course be updated.

3.12.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:

I am disappointed that we seem to have moved backwards from the time this was last raised in the States by former Deputy Lewis of St. Helier. Can I remind the Minister and ask him will he confirm that among possible reuses for the site were more space for Rouge Bouillon Primary School, more amenity space for town residents, who have very little access to open space in the area of Rouge Bouillon, and more parking, so that some people who currently drive into town can park and walk and for residents to have more parking spaces? If he cannot explain now, will he undertake to investigate those 3 quite valid priorities for the use of this space and to come back to the Assembly in a short period of time?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

The site is partially listed. The central fire station is the old arsenal. The remainder of the site is obsolete and in disrepair and is in the process of being shut down and boarded up to prevent unauthorised access and vandalism. With suitable investment, it is believed the site could accommodate a combined fire and ambulance centre and would deliver efficiencies to our colleagues at Home Affairs, freeing-up the existing ambulance centre for development. No formal work has been commissioned to resolve this. Interest has also been expressed in the site as an extension for Rouge Bouillon School, which I believe answers the Constable's question. No formal work has been commissioned to determine the requirements or cost. The site could also be considered for disposal or development in the context of the office modernisation programme.

3.12.2 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

The Constable did ask my question, but with my Education hat on, can I please reassert to the Minister the Education Department's keen interest in the site, the expansion of Rouge Bouillon School? If there has not been a feasibility study by the department, will the Minister meet with the Minister for Education in order to discuss and progress that particular matter?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes. I have just mentioned, interest has been expressed as an extension to Rouge Bouillon School and more than happy to pull that one forward.

3.12.3 The Connétable of St. Helier:

I am a little bit dismayed by the prepared answer nature that the Minister has read out. He has not given me an undertaking that he will come back to the Assembly with any timescale to comment on

the need for more amenity space and more parking in the area of Rouge Bouillon. I would like to hear that from him. I would like to ask him whether he agrees with me that 15 years to repurpose the former J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls) building should not be his target with repurposing the former States of Jersey Police headquarters.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Indeed, 2 totally separate cases. No intention of waiting 15 years or anything like it. As I say, the building is now vacated, parts of the building are being used by the Fire Service. The rest of the building will be repurposed or otherwise disposed of. But as I say, I am quite keen for it to be put to a good use and I think the school would be a good use, but I will get back to the Assembly when we progress this further.

The Bailiff:

I wonder if I could ask the Chairman of Privileges and Procedures if he has got any plans for increasing the fines for Members whose machines ping during the Assembly?

Deputy R. Labey:

Yes, and I would like to thank Deputy Wickenden for immediately looking at me when my computer went off and then looking at you. **[Laughter]** Of course we will contribute.

The Bailiff:

The Greffier will make a note of that, thank you.