

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT  
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT**

**ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th JUNE 2006**

**Question**

Would the Minister inform members how his policy on historic buildings reconciles with the recent decision taken regarding the property 'La Falaise' as not being a building with any historic relevance?

**Answer**

As I have made clear on a number of occasions my intention is to raise the status of our important historic buildings. To help achieve greater protection for our historic built environment I have recently formed the Ministerial Registration and Listing Advisory Group. This group comprises the members of the old Historic Advisory Panel and brings in many new members with specialist heritage knowledge. These are respected people who have spent a lifetime involved with various aspects of our history and it is entirely appropriate that they should be formally involved in my endeavours to provide the best possible pool of heritage knowledge from which I can draw to take decisions relating to the listing and registration of SSIs and BLIs.

However much we may wish to we cannot preserve all our old buildings but we must retain buildings of significant historic, cultural or architectural merit. Over the years we have seen the destruction of buildings that would have been preserved in many other jurisdictions; the most notable being Colomberie House.

Owning a BLI or SSI carries certain additional costs over an ordinary building. Repair works can be more costly and can be scrutinised by the Department. Presently only a small sum is available as heritage grants. I will be carrying out a review of the cost implications of owning SSI's and BLI's and will report back to the States once the work is concluded. This report will include a review of the current grant system.

La Falaise presented a very interesting situation. Initially it had been assumed that the building was constructed at the time of the breakwater (1847-1856) and that it may have had a 'military association'. When further research was carried out it transpired that plans existed in the Archive for this house. The plans were dated 1911 and clearly the house must postdate these plans. The plans include a foundation section indicating that whilst this may have been a reconstruction using some materials recovered from an earlier building it was effectively a new build. As there was no particular architectural merit in the building and as it had no know cultural or historical significance I felt that listing or registration was not warranted. However, I have stated that I would only consider allowing as a replacement a traditionally designed Jersey house of granite. It would need to be very carefully detailed included well proportioned windows and other traditional details.