

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY S.S.P.A. POWER OF ST. BRELADE**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th JUNE 2006

Question

At a public Parish meeting held on 22nd May 2006, the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture indicated his concerns regarding the future capacity at La Moye and Les Quennevais schools.

Would the Minister inform members –

- (a) whether he will temporarily halt any planning consultations and planning applications in the La Moye and Les Quennevais areas in view of the possible shortage of capacity in the schools in these areas? and,
- (b) whether consideration will be given to any compounding of traffic congestion arising at Beaumont and Victoria Avenue should development continue in the La Moye and Les Quennevais areas arising from school children attending school in St. Helier because of insufficient school capacity in the west of the Island?

Answer

- (a) For land use planning purposes, the Island operates a plan-led system and the 2002 Island Plan lies at the heart of this approach. It contains a framework of strategic planning policies and proposals, including the spatial strategy governing the location of new development and sites zoned for Category 'A' housing purposes;

these policies and proposals were formulated and approved following extensive consultations with interested parties and a States' debate in July 2002. The Education and Public Services Departments were among those bodies consulted and their views were factored into the site selection process;

clearly, educational forecasting is not an exact science and situations are subject to change. Indeed, I am aware that the catchment areas of schools are adjusted from time to time to cope with fluctuating numbers of school age children in each Parish. In some cases, temporary class accommodation is established to overcome short term population blips;

in the event that there are substantiated concerns about capacity at schools, I am sure that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture will formally report those to me. At that point an appropriate course of action can be determined. In addition, there will be a review at a strategic level when the Island Plan is reviewed in 2007.

The Planning Applications Panel will continue to consider applications for new homes on their individual merits, having regard to the provisions of the 2002 Island Plan and to any other material considerations. Any large scale applications for new homes will normally be referred to the Education Department for comment and the availability of school places will be a significant factor in determining the applications. I feel it unreasonable therefore to operate a complete embargo on new housing development at La Moye/Les Quennevais.

- (b) See answer to (a) above.