

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND TECHNICAL SERVICES BY
DEPUTY I.J. GORST OF ST. CLEMENT**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th NOVEMBER 2007

Would the Minister advise –

- (a) whether the positioning of both the animal incineration unit and the animal carcass storage facilities within the confines of Howard Davis farm are in breach of the Davis Family Trust Covenant and if not, would he advise on what criteria or legal advice that opinion is based?
- (b) if both these facilities are in breach of the covenant will he undertake to immediately stop any further processes or activities and actively look for an alternative site?
- (c) what consultation, if any, has taken place with Acorn Enterprises over the compatibility of these operations and its sheltered work and training of people with disabilities on the adjacent site?

Answer

- (a) The Minister is not currently in a position to advise definitively on this matter and is in the process of seeking further information.

The Agriculture and Fisheries Committee on 14th February 2002 considered changing the use of the disused bulb treatment plant at Howard Davis Farm for the construction and operation of a new animal carcass cremator. The shed in question had become available due to the Committee deciding to cease treating daffodil bulbs. A planning application was submitted to the Planning and Environment Committee on 14th January 2003.

At that time, it was not considered to be a breach of the covenant as the Agriculture and Fisheries Committee provided many services to the agricultural industry which included testing, training and operational support. This particular change of use from bulb treatment to animal cremator was considered to be a change from one operation in support of the industry to another. That criteria formed the basis for the current change of use.

- (b) There is no prevailing evidence to indicate that either of the facilities are in breach of the covenant.

The planning application was submitted by the Agriculture and Fisheries Committee, who at the time administered the Howard Davis Farm, providing training, research and development and numerous services to the agriculture, horticulture and fishing industries.

It is the intention of Transport and Technical Services to re-locate the cremator as soon as possible. Bellozanne is the preferred location, but land will not be available for approximately two years.

In the meantime it is essential that the Island has a modern and regulatory compliant facility to deal with animal waste derived from farms, abattoir, knacker's yard and other dead animals as they arise. It would be irresponsible to delay the construction of his plant any longer in the face of potential outbreaks of Foot and Mouth, Blue Tongue and Avian influenza, for example. Presently, all Jersey's animal by-products are shipped to the UK for incineration and in the event of a notifiable disease outbreak on the Island, the UK Government would almost certainly stop export of these materials, leaving the Island with a very serious animal waste disposal problem.

- (c) Before the application was made a thorough consultation process took place, with an open public meeting at

Trinity Parish Hall on 27th May, followed by an Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken by external consultants. This provided an opportunity for local people to listen to a presentation on the proposal and allow questions to be put to the department of Agriculture & Fisheries. The main issues raised were in relation to air quality, traffic and cost implications.

Acorn Industries were aware of the project and it is understood that they did not raise any concerns directly to the department in relation to the planning application or at the Parish Hall meeting. As far as it can be ascertained, Acorn Industries did not raise a formal objection to the application under the planning process.