

**2.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding the structures and processes in place to ensure that the Minister and the Planning Department operated at arm's length from developers promoting the development of sites on the Waterfront:**

What structures and processes are in place to ensure that the Minister and the Planning Department operate at arm's length from developers promoting the development of sites on the waterfront?

**Senator F.E. Cohen (The Minister for Planning and Environment):**

I can assure the House that we are keeping a constant watch on the process to ensure that appropriate controls are in place at all times to be certain that the developers do not inappropriately influence the planning process. The master plan needs first to be debated by the States. If any planning application does not conform with the strict terms of the master plan, the application will be rejected. This includes maintaining the quality of design, quality of construction and environmental credentials. It is important to stress that the quantum of development and the mix of uses has been set by the Planning Department in association with other States' departments and the developers have not influenced this area. The master plan will be supplemented by strict design codes. These are being developed by the department in consultation with my newly-formed Waterfront Design Group. This group is comprised of a number of well-known local history and architectural experts. In addition to these measures, any application will be subject to a full public inquiry and extensive public consultation. I am determined to deliver a scheme of the highest architectural, environmental and construction standards of which Islanders can at long last be justly proud. The control measures will ensure that there will be no opportunity for anyone, including the developers, to dumb down the scheme.

**2.1.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:**

Could the Minister tell the House whether he meets in any respect, together or as an individual or with other Members - for example, of the Planning Department - with developers? Could he tell the House what is the general understanding when these meetings take place? Could he tell the House, Sir, how does he separate these meetings from the final decisions that are taken by his department about the waterfront?

**Senator F.E. Cohen:**

From my best recollection, the meetings that I have held with the developers, which have been with officers present, have always been about peripheral issues. For example, we had a meeting the other day where a number of politicians were present, a representative of the developer in relation to the Move On Café. I am particularly careful not to get involved in any areas where the developer could try and exert influence, particularly in relation to quantum or uses of development. I am particularly aware that as the final decision maker I have a responsibility in this area to ensure I am extremely cautious in any dealings with the developer.

**2.1.2 Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen:**

Could the Minister confirm how many developers are involved?

**Senator F.E. Cohen:**

This gives me an opportunity to explain that I am not the deal maker with the developer; the deal making is done by the Waterfront Enterprise Board. I have never seen the deal or the contract that is being signed between the Waterfront Enterprise Board and the developer. There is, as I understand it, one developer. Everything that I know, Members know, because it is in the master plan document.

**2.1.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:**

Can the Minister therefore assure us that except for so-called peripheral issues, he never meets with developers, there are never any promises made or reached or whatever at these meetings, and that he, at all times, keeps an arm's-length relationship with these particular organisations?

**Senator F.E. Cohen:**

The number of meetings I have had with the developers of the waterfront are very small indeed. I am always extremely careful at such meetings. I certainly never give any undertakings in relation to what will or will not be approved. I accept that in my position as Minister, Members would naturally expect me to be cautious and I am.

**2.1.4 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier:**

Being that there is one developer and being that the Minister has now said that he is not responsible for the negotiations, there are questions about the size of the development for the new quarter and the bond, et cetera, and the spread of risk and also the opportunity for other developers to tender for this type of a development. Who should these questions be put to within the States of Jersey in the mind of the Minister, please?

**Senator F.E. Cohen:**

To reiterate, and I am glad to have the opportunity of reiterating, I have nothing whatsoever to do with the deal making. Any questions relating to the deal making should be addressed to the Waterfront Enterprise Board or the Chief Minister.

**2.1.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Could the Minister confirm that because of his eminently sensible approach to produce a coherent plan there is a danger that the whole project could rely, as indeed the former questioner alluded to, on the presence of only one developer? Would he agree that planning may be driving towards that situation?

**Senator F.E. Cohen:**

No. The present position is from the planning perspective we are dealing with a master plan. A master plan will create a canvas. It is up to this Assembly to decide whether or not it believes that the master plan I have unveiled last week is something that they believe is in the interests of the Island and at this stage we are not dealing with a planning application.