

2.5 Deputy S. Power of St. Brelade of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding the future usage of the former Tourism Office at the Weighbridge and Liberation Square:

Would the Minister advise Members whether the future use of the former Tourism Office at the Weighbridge in Liberation Square will uphold the historical significance of that building and will he give assurances that business identification and signage will not occlude or diminish its historical uniqueness and that the use of the building on Liberation Day will not be compromised?

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

The former Tourism Building at Liberation Square is part of a designated Site of Special Interest and, as such, is subject to stringent controls. Planning permission was properly granted some time ago to remove the 1980s additions made to the rear of the building to enable Liberation Station to be constructed but most of the original building remains. I fully support my predecessor's decision in this respect. I am happy to give assurances to Deputy Power that neither the historical significance, nor the appearance of the building, will be materially diminished or compromised by the physical alterations or advertising and signage, all of which still have to be finalised through the planning process. I further undertake to ensure that no external illuminated signs will be placed on the building. I will do everything I can to ensure that the new use for the building does not in any way compromise the part this building plays in future Liberation Day celebrations. Indeed, I will write to the developers this week to notify them of this important issue and I thank the Deputy for identifying this important matter. It should be noted that the recently approved plans for the Weighbridge will significantly improve the opportunity to extend the Liberation Day celebrations because the area available to the public has now been hugely increased.

2.5.1 Deputy S. Power:

Can the Minister ensure through his role on the Council of Ministers that the building, while it remains vacant, remains in a presentable and clean state and that the frontage of the building, particularly the glass, is kept in a satisfactory condition?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

I will certainly do my best to ensure that the building is kept in good condition. It is a very significant building, both for the Island and, I presume, for the developers, as it is a key part of the site and I will certainly do everything I possibly can to ensure that it is kept in good order with the glass clean and looking in a presentable state.

2.5.2 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Could I ask the Minister for Planning whether he regards the new premises being occupied by the Tourism Department as an improvement on the old ones?

The Deputy Bailiff:

I think that that is a question too far in relation to the question, Connétable. Very well. We will come to question 6, which Deputy Baudains will ask of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture.