

2.2 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier of the Assistant Minister for Planning regarding the shortage of 2, 3 and 4-bed housing in the Island:

In the light of the findings of the 2007 Housing Needs report pointing out the shortage of 2, 3 and 4-bed housing in particular, will the Assistant Minister inform Members what estimates she envisages for the provision of such housing arising from the White Paper, *New Development Guidelines for Town*?

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (Assistant Minister for Planning):

Just to say that the Minister sends his apologies, he has been involved in an accident over the weekend, so I am answering these questions at short notice. The recently identified brown field sites will provide a significant number of out-of-town housing units for other than exceptional circumstances. The Minister and I believe that we should discourage further development on green fields in the countryside. Consequently we need to balance a housing supply. The new development guidelines for the town consultation document is designed to encourage developers to concentrate their efforts in providing new housing in St. Helier rather than on a green field site. The key however is that all new homes must be of high standard. I am pleased to say that from the meetings that the Minister has had and attended recently, the proposal is already working and there are plans emerging for a significant number of high quality homes and apartments in town. This of course needs to be combined with significant public investment in the infrastructure of the town and this must come from the £50 million to £70 million projected receipts from the Esplanade quarter, should this find favour with Members. The *New Development Guidelines for Town* document is not designed to provide a specific number of units, rather it is designed to provide a shift in focus. The Housing Needs Survey identifies shortages, some of which may be resolved by shifting, by example, from rental to shared equity. However, for accurate matching of supply with demand we need a piece of further analysis taking into account no new housing, either planned or under construction.

The Bailiff:

I am sorry, Assistant Minister, you are time expired now.

2.2.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Will the Assistant Minister assure Members that there will be a renewed emphasis on the building of houses, 2, 3 and 4-bedroom houses which are the shortage area, rather than the current domination of flats, one and 2-bed?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes, Sir, I can assure him and I know the Minister is asking his department to work with the Statistics Unit to provide a list of type of homes that are going to be needed over the 5 years, taking into account what he has just said.

2.2.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Assistant Minister share the confusion of all other Members with the statement of the Minister for Housing that he is moving ahead at Salisbury with one-bedroom flats when that need was not defined clearly in the social needs report? Is the Minister and the Assistant Minister, Sir, are they being guided by the intuitive and anecdotal planning of the Housing Minister or by the Social Needs Housing Survey?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I cannot answer for the Minister for Housing, I can just say that the Housing Needs Survey shows that there is a potential surplus of one-bedroom apartments but then you have also got to take into account that it could be a potential surplus but depending on the complementary availability of larger accommodations for those people to move in to. So, it is not just surplus of one-bedroom apartments, there are other factors to take into account.

2.2.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Does the Assistant Minister accept that the provision of high quality housing in St. Helier requires good amenity space and good parking space for that housing, and that means relatively low density housing rather than the high density which appears to be promoted in the new guidelines?

The Deputy of Trinity:

As in any planning, it is not one specific area. It is a multitude of things, like amenity space, car parking, which all have to be taken into account. An amenity space is important if we are to encourage young families, people to move into town. That is highlighted in our consultation document and I urge the Deputy perhaps to respond to that.

2.2.4 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville:

Excuse me, but I am getting very confused. In the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* last night, in the article that Deputy Le Hérisier referred to, the Housing Department are saying that, and I quote: "They still require one-bedroom flats despite what the Housing Needs Survey says." In an answer to a written question today the Planning Minister says that it is indicated that there are healthy supplies of one, 2 and notably 3-bedroomed homes in the pipeline. So on the one hand the Housing Department is saying there are not enough one-bedroom homes and the Planning Minister is saying there is a healthy supply. I am totally confused. Could the Assistant Minister clarify the situation please?

The Bailiff:

The Assistant Minister cannot be called upon to answer for matters in the *Jersey Evening Post*, Deputy but [Laughter] if she is willing to answer the question in a different context that is acceptable.

The Deputy of Trinity:

There are just a couple of points. I think the Housing Needs Survey has estimated the potential housing requirements for the next 5 years, and that is where another piece of research work of exactly what type of houses are needed in town, whether it is 2, 3, 4-bedroom houses, *et cetera*. That piece of work needs to be done as a follow-up from Housing Needs Survey, and also looking hand in hand with the White Paper that is out now on *Guidelines for Town*, both of those are very important to look for the future for the next 5 years.

2.2.5 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Does the Assistant Minister accept that the bringing-up of children in flats or 3-bedroom flats, without sufficient amenity space, is a recipe for social problems later on?

The Deputy of Trinity:

It is a very good point and the Minister and I have been talking a lot about the importance of amenity space. I would agree with the Deputy that amenity space, whatever we are going to do in town - the regeneration of town - amenity space for our young children is important and the right amenity space, and I would stress that.