

4.19 Deputy G.C. Baudains of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the recently installed pedestrian refuge near La Mare Slip:

With regard to the recently installed pedestrian refuge near La Mare Slip, would the Minister confirm that neither he nor his officers have any concerns about safety as a result of this construction?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

I thank the Deputy for this question and the opportunity to welcome the provision of this crossing facility for the pedestrians in the area of La Mare Slip. Requests for a pedestrian facility at this location go back many years. This was a challenging location for my department to provide facilities for pedestrians following detailed surveys of car and pedestrian movements and bearing in mind the proximity of the junction with Rue Du Maupertuis, it was determined that a pedestrian refuge island was the safest and most suitable type of pedestrian facility to provide at this location. My officers and I are comfortable that this refuge is the most appropriate means of providing a pedestrian facility while maintaining road safety for all users. As always, with any significant change to the highway, it will take drivers a while to get used to it. Therefore, as is normal, my department will monitor the refuge and take action should there be an unanticipated issue.

4.19.1 Deputy G.C. Baudains:

Is the Minister aware that previously drivers coming from the east of the Island to this junction would look for children coming up from La Mare Slip and traffic exiting from Rue Du Maupertuis? They are now forced to take their eyes off that potential hazard and look to make sure that they do not hit the pavement, which comes completely in front of them as they go around this island. It is an accident looking for somewhere to happen. What is the Minister's comment?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Indeed, the island has had a beneficial impact on speeds at this location which would help in reducing the number of road traffic collisions that have been recorded in the past junction of Rue Du Maupertuis. This section of road is subject to a 30 mile an hour speed limit. It is the responsibility of drivers to drive within the speed limits and at appropriate speed of the road conditions.

4.19.2 Deputy G.C. Baudains:

I think the Minister completely misunderstands the situation. It is not a question of speed; it is a question of the state of the road. The driver has to make sure that he does not mount the pavement getting around the traffic island and, as such, is no longer looking for potential accidents, in other words, children running up from the Slip or cars exiting from Rue Du Maupertuis. It is surely an accident that is going to be happening in the near future. Also, could he confirm that the buses do not have to mount the pavement to get round there?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Indeed, the bus company has been consulted both prior and following the installation and raised no significant concerns but would wish to review the position of the east-bound stop due to holding up cars, which is not a big issue. I repeat that cars are now being forced to slow down to 30 miles an hour, which is the speed limit, in order to negotiate this area.

4.19.3 Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement:

Would the Minister accept my thanks on behalf of the parishioners for the co-operation of his department in improving pedestrian safety in the Parish of St. Clement but while we are talking about La Mare - a very important area - we notice that in the spring time the bus shelter there was removed. The work seemed to have been completed on the improvements in the area but the bus shelter has not been replaced. Could the Minister tell me his plans on having the bus shelter reinstated in this place?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I thank the Constable for his comments and apologise for the delay of replacing the bus shelter. There was a question of where to exactly relocate the shelter and unfortunately the shelter was removed and placed elsewhere on the Island as we have a policy of putting up as many shelters as possible. A brand new shelter has been ordered and will be delivered to the Island on 16th December, and I can assure the Constable it will be a priority to get it erected as soon as possible.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Baudains, do you wish to ask the final question?

4.19.4 Deputy G.C. Baudains:

Yes, I am disappointed with the answer from the Minister. Will he ensure that the area is adequately monitored and look to perhaps altering the pavement on the east side to avoid the problems that I have outlined?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Absolutely. Our senior traffic engineers have worked on this project and, as I have stated previously, this area will be monitored closely and my department will monitor the refuge and take any action should there be an unanticipated issue.