

5.13 Deputy M. Tadier of the Minister for Housing regarding plans to build 4 new homes on green areas in Les Quennevais Park and Le Clos des Sables:

Does the Minister support the plans submitted by Jersey Property Holdings to build 4 new homes on green areas in Le Quennevais Park and Le Clos des Sables, and how does he envisage this will impact on current parking issues on the estate?

Deputy S. Power of St. Brelade (The Minister for Housing):

I think this issue has its origins in the sale of a small triangular piece of land to a householder in Clos des Sables and an investigation by Property Holdings into the replacement of the leases on some flats with flying freeholds. I am disappointed that this question is the first I should hear about this, unless I have missed something, and to develop more homes on land which is not only owned by the public but also in my own Parish. I am therefore grateful to Deputy Tadier for raising the matter. I am now aware that Property Holdings have been discussing with the Planning Department the potential for a small number - 4 in this case - of new homes to be developed on these sites. I am told that discussions have not advanced beyond the concept stage and while there is a site plan identifying plots that I have now seen, no feasibility study has been undertaken or detailed designs commissioned.

5.13.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

It was not my understanding that it was related to the plot of grass that I think wedges between 107 and 108 at Clos des Sables, but irrespective of that, will the Minister join me to set up a meeting with Jersey Property Holdings with utmost urgency so that we can really identify issues which are both important to the Island and to our district, as it happens, so that we can find a way forward which will satisfy the residents in the area who are clearly and have been for many years due to political neglect in the Parish suffering because of a lack of adequate parking and other facilities.

Deputy S. Power:

I would be careful when the Deputy uses the words political neglect in the Parish because I doubt whether I would agree with that, the Constable would agree with that or Deputy Jeune would agree with that. However, and I will finish the answer to the question, I am very willing to discuss with the Deputy and the Constable and any other political representative of the Parish any development of any homes in the Clos des Sables or Les Quennevais area as long as the homes are affordable.

5.13.2 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I would join the Minister in refuting the Deputy's allegation of political neglect. The Deputy is well aware... he has attended several meetings on the matter and I am not sure what his motives are in raising this matter in the States, but there is considerable progress to be made with regard ...

The Bailiff:

You are coming to your question to the Minister?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Yes. With regard to the sale of property, and I would ask the Minister, would he agree with me that the sale of housing property to flying freehold or disposable to the public sector, would he agree that it is a matter in his mind?

Deputy S. Power:

There are 2 parts to that. The first part of the answer is that any discussions with Property Holdings in any development of any areas of land in the Parish in the Les Quennevais area, I am very happy to go to any meeting. With regard to the question of flying freeholds on one particular area where there are 3 blocks of flats. I attended many, many meetings both in 2010 and 2009 with Deputy Le Fondré and the matter is still not resolved. The leases are running down from a 99-year lease to about 51, 52 years now. The matter does need to be addressed but it is a matter that has to be resolved at some future date.

5.13.3 Deputy A.E. Jeune:

I think it would be remiss of me if I did not stand up and support my other colleagues in saying I think that Deputy Tadier has got it wrong when he says there has been political neglect. However, having said that, would the Minister agree that we are better to do backfill in terms of building houses rather than on green zone?

Deputy S. Power:

I think the Deputy means infill rather than backfill. Backfill would be a JCB. I am willing to consider anything that allows affordable housing in the Les Quennevais and La Moye areas. If Property Holdings come up with a scheme and they present it to the Constable and the 3 Deputies in the Parish and it is for anything other than affordable housing I will not support it. There are 4 sites identified in this particular scheme, which is at its infancy stages. It has to go through a series of hoops and jumps to get to the next stage. I am only interested in any disposal or planning application that will fill the lease sites as long as it produces houses that people can afford to live in or buy or build.

5.13.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

I should clarify that was not meant as a slight on my colleagues. The problems in this area have been going on for decades, and when I say a “political problem” I see it is - and this is where the next question will be going - to do with a lack of control that the Parish has over many of the areas in the Parish because they are simply not owned by T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) or by the Parish itself, but simply by Property Holdings who always claim that they do not have any money. So, will the Minister again - and I am sure he will - undertake to work very closely with myself and with the Constable as well to sort out these issues and to try and find a solution which will be beneficial both to Property Holdings, his department and to the residents of that area?

Deputy S. Power:

I will be very willing to work with Deputy Tadier, the Constable and Deputy Jeune in any issue to do with housing in the Parish and in any areas that he has identified in terms of some things that have gone on for long periods of time. Personally there are issues within the Parish that do cost money that need to be fixed but I am always willing, as I am sure the Constable is, as is Deputy Jeune, to resolve these matters and I would say that this might have been easier to resolve with a phone call rather than an oral question.