

4.10 The Connétable of St. John of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding access to hard-copies of planning applications:

Will the Minister explain whether the only way the public can view plans relating to planning applications is online, and, if so, would the Minister undertake to make hard-copies of plans available within his department, given that many Islanders, including myself, are not computer literate. If not, why not? This excludes, and I will omit it from the question, the Parish Halls.

[10:45]

Deputy R.C. Duhamel(The Minister for Planning and Environment):

The details of applications for planning permissions have been available to view online since May 2012. Application details such as plans and supporting documentation, along with comments and consultation responses received in connection with applications are readily available for those who wish to monitor the progress of an application. The service has proved to be extremely popular with the application pages of the website, receiving around 20,000 page views in September, making it one of the most accessed services on www.gov.je. There have been similar amounts of interest since the service was started. However, when I started to make these details available on the website, I was conscious that not everyone will be comfortable accessing the information online. I made sure that the hard-copies of every submitted planning application would be sent to the respective Parish Halls so that residents could view the paper plans there. Paper copies are also available at South Hill. This availability is made clear on the application site notices, in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* advert and on the relevant correspondence. There are no plans at the moment or in the future to change this arrangement.

The Connétable of St. John:

I think the Minister has answered my question. Thank you.

4.10.1 Deputy J.H. Young:

Is the Minister aware of complaints by members of the public who have attempted to access the facilities that he has outlined and have found it difficult to locate the information due to the web search engine giving unreliable results? Is he aware of that?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

There have been no complaints over the operation of the website and feedback has been favourable over the usability in accessing information. If that is not the case and there are still disgruntled members of the public who have not taken the opportunity to complain to the Minister, then I am happy to receive those complaints.

4.10.2 Deputy J.H. Young:

I am grateful to the Minister. Could he arrange to speak to his own Chief Officer and find out about those complaints?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

As I said, I have not been made aware of any complaints so I suspect that in speaking to the Chief Officer, he would concur with the information that I have given to answer the question.