

2016.03.22

3.3 The Connétable of St. Helier of the Minister for Environment regarding action to be taken under Her Majesty The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy project:

What action, if any, does the Minister propose to take under Her Majesty The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy Project and can the Minister advise what is being done to protect and increase the Island's tree cover and whether he considers this action to be sufficient?

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (The Minister for Environment):

The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy Project is primarily a forest conservation initiative and not therefore particularly applicable to Jersey as the Island does not have any woodland which is sufficiently large to be classified as a forest. Nevertheless, principles of protecting indigenous plants, trees and woodlands in the Island are of particular concern to me and I am undertaking a number of initiatives in support of them. First, in the urban environment where trees are relatively scarce and perhaps assume a greater value as a consequence I am working in partnership with Jersey Trees for Life, the Department of Infrastructure and the Parish of St. Helier to undertake a tree survey of the town. Secondly, throughout the Island the Jersey Biodiversity Action Plan Strategy seeks to inform how we might best protect and care for our most threatened species and habitats. Finally, where trees either individually or in groups are under threat of damage or loss as a consequence of development proposals I am able to protect them using powers available to me under the Planning Law and I have done so very recently in 2 specific instances. So my department is active in this area but, as always, we could do more and I am keen to work in partnership with other States departments, the Parishes and the committed and enthusiastic voluntary sector to ensure that Jersey and particularly St. Helier has a greener future.

3.3.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:

I thank the Minister for his answer and it is perhaps a sad reflection of where we are in this matter that we do not have anything that could be termed a forest, although I would hope we do have woodlands in Jersey. The Minister referred to town trees and I agree with him that they are scarce. The recent compensatory offer of an extension to the Millennium Town Park as part of the hospital proposal for People's Park would provide the opportunity for quite a large area of woodland in the heart of town. Would the Minister think that is worth pursuing?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I do not particularly want to comment specifically about the plans for the future hospital or Gas Place site but what I will say to the Constable is I will pursue every opportunity I can to make St. Helier greener. I have instructed officers recently that I want them to take more of an effort with a greener St. Helier and that will involve green roofs, green walls and greener areas for residents and visitors to our capital to enjoy.