

5.5 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of the Minister for the Environment regarding the environmental impact of the residential properties planned for development around the Ann Court area of town: [1(524)]

What work, if any, is being done to consider the environmental impact of the residential properties planned for development around the Ann Court area of town; and, if no such work is being done or planned, will the Minister agree to implement a study of this matter to ensure that quality of life is maintained for the residents of that part of town?

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

The applicant, Andium Homes, has submitted a comprehensive environmental impact statement with this planning application, which is published and available on the States of Jersey website under Planning reference P.2017/0730. A non-technical summary is also available. In addition, planning officers will assess the application in the light of the comments received and in accordance with the policies set out in the Island Plan before making a recommendation to the Planning Committee. Members will know that these policies are comprehensive and include among many other issues a requirement that the development does not unreasonably harm the amenities of neighbouring residents.

5.5.1 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Since the vast majority of the housing planned for this part of town will be undertaken by a States-owned body, this obviously provides the States a very good opportunity for comprehensive planning for the entire district. Would the Minister agree to engage with not only other States departments, such as the Education Department, which will have to provide school places for the children that live in these houses, but also the constituency representatives around the area who will be hearing concerns raised by people who are already in the area to do with things like traffic and pollution and the education for the people in that area, and make sure that there has been a much wider consultation than there so far has been before any final decision is taken?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

There are a lot of questions in that question but what I can tell the Deputy is I, like him, see the opportunity for a co-ordination of housing in this North of Town area. The North of Town Masterplan was implemented in 2011, went through this Assembly, and it envisages housing on a number of sites in the North of Town. The fact that we have one developer now in charge of 3 of those significant sites I see as a really good positive step forward and the opportunity to co-ordinate, as the Deputy says, a lot of issues which can make the life of people who live in that part of town better.

5.5.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

One of the reasons underpinning the need for the Millennium Town Park where it is was the density of population in its surrounding. It is the highest population density on the Island. Can the Minister bring forward his estimates of what population density will return to after all of these 1,000 units of accommodation are built around the current Town Park?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I cannot give the Deputy an answer to that question specifically, but it will come as no surprise that the density of population in that part of town can only rise in the future. We have identified in the Island Plan the desire to protect the countryside. We know, we accept, that we will have more people living in town. We know, because we have the North of Town Masterplan, we

have a number of significant sites in that part of St. Helier that will be built on for housing. The density can only increase.

5.5.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

The question was: would the Minister bring forward the figures which show the increase in population density? Would he recognise that these 1,000 or so units of accommodation are flats with people having no access to a green space apart from the park?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

The Deputy is talking about planning applications which have not even been submitted yet. I do not see how he knows what size the units are going to be or how a number of people are going to live there. I would say to him that he talks about people needing access to green and open space and the Future St. Helier project, and certainly my vision under the Jersey infrastructure levy, is to have the monies and the foresight available to turn this part of town, roads in this part of town, streets and lanes in this part of town, into more accessible areas for pedestrians, for cyclists, to make it more green, more open, to increase the amount of amenity space. I come back. We now have a single developer on 3 significant sites, and I am sure in working with him ... and the Deputy will know if he has looked at the plans, the area outside the Arts Centre in Phillips Street, there are already some proposals on the table to make this part of town a much, much better place to live.

5.5.4 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

In line with some of the final comments made by the Minister there about his vision for the area, could he just sum up what exactly has happened in the last 3 years to improve access and green space in that part of town? Because I live there and I do not think a single thing has been done.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I can only admit that the Future St. Helier project has had a huge amount of work to do in putting plans together, in putting visions together, and the one thing it does not have is cash. The Jersey infrastructure levy will provide that cash. If we have it, we will be able then and in a position to move forward with schemes which we can fund. But with constraints on budgets, it has been very difficult to continue to build schemes across town like we have done in Charing Cross and Castle Street. But I can only assure the Deputy that I will continue to work, and while we have not developed out and created a lot of new green and open area in the past 3 years, if I get my way we will certainly be doing that in the next 3.