

21.01.19

15 Senator S.Y. Mézec of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding sites earmarked to build new housing (OQ.22/2021):

Since the relocation of government offices from Cyril Le Marquand House to Broad Street in 2018 as part of a wider office strategy to free up government-owned sites for affordable housing, will the Minister advise how many government-owned sites have been officially identified for this purpose?

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (The Minister for Infrastructure):

The Chief Minister will be taking this one, Sir.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister - *rapporteur*):

I just want to challenge the initial assumption of the question before trying to give the Senator the answer he needs. The reason for doing the office strategy is that if we do nothing it, broadly speaking, being really simplistic about this, will cost us £30 million more than doing anything along the lines that we are proposing. Essentially, if we prevaricate, if we delay, if we do not do anything, there is a cost. If we do not do anything ... the discounted net economic cost is £30 million less than the do-nothing option. That is around the principles of any scheme. Also, it generates around £7 million a year savings if we do something. But in terms of housing site or sites that can be released, let us be clear. The principles would be that we would go from 21 buildings down to 6. That is about 18,000 square metres that can be released and, therefore, that would identify the sites potentially for new housing that could be identified. It is also worth making the point, importantly, that in the pipeline at the moment Andium are working on around 2,000 additional homes by 2025. There are some numbers around that but time does not allow me to expand too much. Also, the waterfront is expected to deliver over about 1,000 units and that is 2025 to 2035. Equally, Ports of Jersey schemes may also deliver 500 to 1,000. There are some other numbers around it but there are things in the pipeline for affordable housing as well as the benefits generated by the release of sites if we can get to the office strategy.

10.15.1 Senator S.Y. Mézec:

My question was asking for specifically which sites or how many sites have been officially identified for this purpose; not potentially, not theoretically, which ones specifically have. Because we know that there are already sites which are lying empty or unused or underused when there is a desperate need for affordable homes. Andium, as he mentioned, are desperate to acquire sites so that they can get building. How many sites since the move to Broad Street have been officially identified for the purpose where beforehand they were not?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

There are 2 issues that come out of that. One is obviously what you define as affordable housing, and the other point being specifically identified is predicated on a scheme having been signed off because that then starts releasing. As I have said, in terms of numbers, it is 21 buildings being reduced to 6; therefore, that would be around 15 buildings, which I have translated into that sort of number of sites, but it is around 18,000 square metres that would be released. That is obviously the construction side. While the Senator, like me, is very concerned about the pipeline and the provision of housing, I do make the point that Andium also are moving on and delivering houses: 400 have been delivered to date and I believe 700 are also under construction or have planning permission. Their aim is to deliver 2,000 homes by 2025. So there are units in the pipeline but in

terms of the specific ability to identify sites today as a result of the release of the office strategy, I cannot at this stage because I need it signed off first.