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Darren Scott, Esq.,  
States of Jersey,  
Scrutiny Office,  
Morier House,  
Halkett Place,  
St. Helier,  
Jersey, JE1 1DD.

Dear Mr. Scott,

**The Rural Economy Strategy**

I am writing to you in response to an announcement which the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel placed in the Jersey Evening Post on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

Like the majority of Islanders, I believe that the key element of the countryside strategy should be to keep the countryside “green” so far as is possible. Whilst, of necessity, there will be requirements for additional homes in the country parishes, I feel that one should avoid both large-scale housing development and industrial and commercial development.

Furthermore I think that greater diversification is required in the use of agricultural land, particularly in the light of the decline of the traditional Jersey herds and our heavy dependence on the growing of Jersey Royal potatoes. This year has been a disastrous year for the latter, as confirmed by an article on the front page of the JEP of 5<sup>th</sup> May 2010 headed “ Growers hit by ‘worst potato season for 50 years’ ”. With the increasing intensity of global warming, clearly, things will not get better. Additionally the intensive growing of crops such as potatoes has an adverse effect on our limited water resources as farmers are forced to use irrigation to save their crops and use fertilizers to increase their yields.

The introduction of sheep farming has been a welcome diversification of land use. Another obvious alternative use for land is horse-grazing. Horses are an essential part of Jersey’s heritage and bring pleasure to thousands on the Island, as reflected in the Island’s thriving Horse and Pony clubs, the Race Club and, of course, the Jersey Drag Hunt. Benefits include:

- broadening the utilisation of land in Jersey, whilst keeping the Island ‘green’;
- a ‘hedge’ should, like at present, difficult economic times present themselves in the traditional farming industry;

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Darren Scott, Esq.,  
States of Jersey, Scrutiny Office.

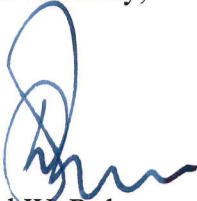
14<sup>th</sup> May, 2010

- a non-controversial activity which is complementary to other business activities, in particular, tourism;
- a business that creates employment both directly (by the employment of stable managers and stable hands) and indirectly (by the employment of blacksmiths, veterinary surgeons, and local contractors);
- a business that produces revenue not only for the employees previously mentioned but also for the feed merchants and the suppliers of saddlery and associated items, with a resulting benefit to the Jersey Treasury in the form of taxation and GST.

Of course, Jersey has already come to prominence in the horse-world. At the 2008 Beijing Paralympics, Simon Laurens of Trinity won a gold medal for Britain in the dressage competition - a magnificent achievement for Jersey, bringing to the world's attention a very positive side of Jersey, in contrast to some of the ill-founded adverse publicity it has received of late.

If you have any questions concerning my submission, or if you feel I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



David W. Roberts