

4.16 Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the total cost of purchasing the Jersey Gas site from Andium Homes, building the proposed new Town Primary School on the site, demolishing Springfield School and Le Bas Centre and creating pocket parks on these sites, and delivering the proposed North of St. Helier Youth Centre (OQ.235/2025):

Will the Minister provide the estimated total cost of purchasing the Jersey Gas site from Andium Homes, building the proposed new Town Primary School on the site, demolishing Springfield School and Le Bas Centre and creating pocket parks on these sites, and delivering the proposed North of St. Helier Youth Centre; and also provide the timescale for the delivery of these capital projects?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Minister, in 90 seconds.

Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I thank the Deputy for his question. To ensure the purchase can proceed without further delay, the formal transfer of the Jersey Gas site from Andium Homes, a price has been agreed for a nominal sum of £1. To compensate Andium Homes, the Draft Budget proposes an agreed reduction of £1.5 million per year to the return Andium pays to Government lasting 10 years. A number of factors, both known and unknown, can influence accurate predictions of future costs and these must accordingly caveat this answer. There is currently a sum of £15.5 million identified in the latter years of the Draft Budget for new schools and educational developments, which is intended to provide funding to commence provision of a much-needed, modern town-based primary school at Gas Place. The cost of demolition of the buildings referenced is currently in the order of £15 per square foot; however, that sum will be heavily influenced by additional factors such as site access, the presence or not of hazardous materials, waste management and disposal, and logistics. The cost of the new pocket parks is also a subjective assessment and will depend on the exact nature of the project and I would expect extensive stakeholder engagement with the people that live nearby. The proposed cost of the North of St. Helier Youth Centre is on record in the Draft Budget on page 56 at a total of £16.13 million. I would emphasise that this price also includes provision of a new Y.E.S. (Youth Enquiry Service) Centre and is not just limited to a Youth Centre.

4.16.1 Deputy D.J. Warr:

Has any consideration been given to using the Jersey Gas show room for the provision of a much more affordable and much-needed St. Helier Youth Centre and, if not, why not?

The Connétable of St. John:

I believe there was a debate in this Assembly about the use of the gas site and that debate took place after discussions with officers. We do not currently own the site so we are currently not able to use it. The debate about the Youth Centre I believe has been long exhausted and I support the decision of Government and this Assembly to continue with those plans.

4.16.2 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf of St. Saviour:

Based upon what the Minister explained in terms of ifs and buts and maybes of future Budgets, would he be prepared to give a date when he would expect this new primary school to be opened? What year is it?

The Connétable of St. John:

It is 2025, that is the era it is. In terms of the ...

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

This is opening the new school on the Gas Place site? I do not think it is possible.

The Connétable of St. John:

In terms of the opening for the town school, there is a lot of work to be done in terms of detailed design, *et cetera*. I visited the town schools personally to see the challenges those schools have got and we have to complete this building as soon as possible. I am not sure of the exact date but I would hope it would be around 2028, 2029.

4.16.3 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Is he saying that there is going to be budgetary provision for a school opening of that town primary school by 2029? Is he going to really restate that for certain?

The Connétable of St. John:

That will be a decision taken by this Assembly but I believe that if this Assembly supports the provision of modern facilities for our young people, for our teachers, for the parents of those people, then we have to make the provision within our capital funding as soon as we can do that.