

2025.09.08

3.15 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier of the Minister for the Environment regarding the Northern Quarter development (OQ.184/2025):

Will the Minister advise whether more units of accommodation than were originally approved were permitted in the Northern Quarter development in St. Helier on the basis of the intention of Andium Homes to seek to extend the Millennium Town Park?

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

The planning history for the site, the Northern Quarter, formerly the BOA warehouse in Rue Le Masurier, is considerable. Subsequent to outline planning permission being granted on appeal in September 2016 for 169 dwellings, the scheme has been amended a number of times through the planning process to a final total of 195 units. Building records confirm this is the number constructed, but I have no indication of a specific justification for that increase, although we did find a housing mix commentary from 2020 that seems to indicate there was a demand for one bedroom units at that time. It may be that the unit mix was changed for this reason and that resulted in the additional units count.

3.15.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:

The Minister will be aware that several large developments have been completed or are under development in the area of the Millennium Town Park. Is he concerned that there is simply not enough green space in the Millennium Town Park to cater for all the new residents who are coming into the northern part of St. Helier?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

The Constable will understand that I am not going to pass comment in the Assembly on any potential expansion of the Town Park or otherwise due to the potential for planning applications coming in the future. The only thing I would say is that I have visited not only the Northern Quarter but I have looked at the other sites which are under development currently, and they all conform to the standards which we have asked of them, and Northern Quarter in particular got some outdoor space. It is the subjective thing about the amount of park space that may be needed near these developments, but they do all have recreational areas already.

3.15.2 Deputy J. Renouf:

The Minister answered the question as asked, which was to do with the number of units in the development and referred to the planning history. Can he confirm that the planning history did not involve expansion of the site, as opposed to increasing the number of units?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I can confirm that I believe that to be the case, if only inasmuch as that the Northern Quarter is a very specific site. It has always been my understanding that the development may include more units now, but the actual size of the site itself could not enlarge because it is surrounded by boundaries and roads.

3.15.3 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Would the Minister agree with a constituent of mine - actually not sure if it is a constituent but a member of the Honorary Police - that pointed out to me that Andium do have a no-ball policy in relation to their developments, and such that while the Minister for Infrastructure's laudable plans to get people active, that has a cost of parking, et cetera? Would he take the point that you cannot have any balls and kids want to play with balls in the Town Park actually, or something similar in terms of green spaces, what is going to be required? When the facts change, I change my mind. Does he?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I did say that every unit has a minimum amount of open space that has to be provided with each unit, and that is the case. I cannot comment on ball playing in these areas. I cannot say I know anything

about this but, if true, the Deputy does make a point; young children like to play with any manner of things, but quite often that involves balls.

3.15.4 The Connétable of St. Helier:

I appreciate the Minister is somewhat prevented from commenting on the issues around the extension of the Millennium Town Park, but I would hope that he has seen how well used the existing park is. Would he agree with me that we really need to look very seriously to see whether we can increase the space in order to cater for the residents of St. Helier?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I can confirm to the Constable that I have witnessed myself the use that particular park gets and other parks in St. Helier. I have witnessed for myself off-Island the benefits to communities of open green space in the built-up area and I would encourage as many as possible to be built. I am not going to go further than that. I will not be taking part in the debate in our next sitting as to whether we extend the park or not. What we build, as I have said before, it could well be subject to a planning application which I may need to determine.