

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND REGULATION
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QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 5th OCTOBER 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 12th OCTOBER 2026**

Question

“Further to the publication of the [Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030](#) and the Minister’s stated intentions around planning reform, will he advise –

- (a) the specific planning processes he intends to reform during 2027;
- (b) the expected reduction in processing time;
- (c) how the cost and value of these reforms will be measured; and
- (d) how he intends to assess whether the reforms have reduced unnecessary regulation without detrimentally affecting planning safeguards?”

Answer

The reduction of unnecessary regulation and red tape, including within the planning system, is a specific commitment of the proposed Common Strategic Policy 2026 to 2030. In support of that objective, the Minister for Planning and Regulation is developing a programme of planning reform to make the planning system simpler, more proportionate and more responsive, whilst maintaining appropriate environmental, heritage and community safeguards.

- (a) Much beneficial change and improvement has already been delivered in the performance of the island’s planning service. The reforms being developed now and into 2027 will continue to build on this. The areas under consideration include the revision of elements of the Island Plan and its associated planning policy framework; the review and simplification of supplementary planning guidance; further expansion of permitted development rights; monitoring and review of application validation and the continued modernisation of digital planning services.

Lasting improvement is also dependent upon organisational culture and a commitment to customer-focused service delivery. The reforms will, therefore, seek to embed a more proportionate, risk-based and evidence-led approach to planning, ensuring that regulatory requirements are focused on matters of genuine public interest and supported by robust evidence. Work will continue to enhance the application validation process with three and six month reviews of the recently implemented improved validation and consultation matrix.

- (b) The objective of the reform programme is to improve the efficiency, consistency and responsiveness of the planning system. No specific target reduction in, for example, planning application processing times has, therefore, been established. This is because the programme comprises a range of interrelated reforms across the service, the impact of which will need to be assessed as they are developed and implemented.

The intention is to make the wider planning system simpler and more accessible, and to promote certainty and confidence in faster decision-making, whilst maintaining quality and appropriate safeguards to deliver robust planning outcomes. The key performance indicator for the determination of planning applications remains the percentage of planning applications determined within eight weeks (minor applications) and 13 weeks (major applications) - the performance target is 85%, and at present 90% of applications are determined within the target timeframe, or within a period agreed with the applicant.

- (c) The costs associated with implementing planning reforms will be managed through the normal processes of Government business planning, project governance and budget oversight.

The value of the reforms will be assessed through established and enhanced planning service performance information, together with the delivery and reporting of specific commitments, actions and outcomes arising from the reform programme.

Stakeholder feedback, user engagement and service data will provide an evidence-based assessment of the extent to which reforms improve clarity, accessibility, transparency, efficiency and the overall experience of those interacting with the planning system, whilst maintaining confidence in the quality and integrity of planning decision making.

- (d) The Minister's intention is to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and delay rather than weaken planning safeguards.

In line with the Common Strategic Policy's emphasis on economic growth and competitiveness, the Minister will consider the extent to which planning reforms help to facilitate investment, support business activity and enable the timely delivery of homes and infrastructure, whilst continuing to safeguard the island's environment, heritage and quality of life. The Minister will, therefore, assess reforms against their ability to deliver the sustainable development of the island.