

Government of Jersey  
Union Street | St Helier | Jersey | JE2 3DN

Deputy Hilary Jeune  
Chair, Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel

**BY EMAIL**

9th February 2026

**RE: Animal Welfare & Control Review – Public Hearing Follow-up**

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 as a follow up to the public hearing for the Animal Welfare & Control Review. Please find the relevant areas addressed below:

**1. The Jersey Marine Spatial Plan identified that current beach-control regulations focus on separating dogs from other beach users rather than protecting sensitive wildlife, particularly overwintering and wading birds in areas such as St Aubin's Bay, St Catherine's Bay, Archirondel and Anne Port. What assessment, if any, has been made of the increased ecological pressures on Ecological Sites of Special Interest during the summer beach restriction period, including the impact of professional dog walking businesses?**

During the summer months, there is a noticeable increase in dog fouling on Sites of Special Interest (SSIs) and other ecologically sensitive countryside areas. In addition to being an inconvenience for visitors and staff working outdoors, including the Ranger team and contractors, excess nutrients from uncleared dog waste alters low-nutrient ecosystems such as sand dunes and heathlands. This enrichment promotes the growth of undesirable plant species, such as Bramble and Stinging nettle, and contributes to changing ecological conditions.

Some areas are also showing clear signs of increased visitor pressure during the summer, particularly through erosion. This is especially evident at Ouaisne and across the sand dune systems at Les Blanches Banques, St Ouen.

Officers from Natural Environment carry out a range of monitoring activities that can be used to inform your question; including:

- **Habitat condition monitoring** on SSIs, undertaken cyclically. Evidence of erosion pressure is one of the factors assessed.
- **Visitor surveys** using motion-triggered cameras, which track path use on selected sites. Four seasons of data have been collected, identifying types of users (walkers, dog walkers, cyclists, etc.) to support management decisions.
- **In-depth visitor studies** conducted in summer 2021 across five ecologically sensitive sites found that, on average, 52% of visitors were accompanied by a dog. At Noirmont SSI, this rose to 65%.
- **Targeted dog-count surveys** undertaken since 2024 at La Mielle de Morville between 9–11am recorded an average of 33 dogs on site, representing 83% of all visitors. The site covers 0.5 km<sup>2</sup>.
- At **Noirmont SSI**, 1,280 dogs were recorded during a single week in September 2024.
- **Monitoring of car parks at SSIs** is also carried out, including counts of vehicles belonging to professional dog-walking businesses. At Les Blanches Banques SSI, up to six such vehicles have been recorded in a single car park on a typical day. There are four car parks serving this site.

In conclusion, while no formal assessments have yet been completed on the actual impact, the consistent observations of Natural Environment officers and the above surveys staff strongly indicate an increase in dog-walking activity during the summer months, correlating with the seasonal dog restrictions on beaches.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Luce', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Deputy Steve Luce  
**Minister for the Environment**