

03 May 2013

Department of the Environment
Planning & Building Services
South Hill
St. Helier
JERSEY JE2 4US

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF : MS. HELEN WILSON,
FIELD 622 INQUIRY PROGRAMME OFFICER.**

Dear Ms. Wilson,

Re: Planning Application Number - P/2010/1717

The Jersey Farmers' Union was formed in 1919 to promote the interests of those engaged in agriculture and horticulture in Jersey and to protect and preserve the Industry for future generations and for the benefit of the Island as a whole.

As such, the Union regards the conservation of all agricultural land to be of extreme importance. All land is of some value to the Industry whether it be prime agricultural land well able to sustain the cultivation of all agricultural crops or poorer meadow land suitable for grazing.

The above referenced Planning Application Number – P/2010/1717 refers to Field Number 622 in La Rue de la Croute, St. Ouen which is currently designated as 'green zone'. We understand the field measures approximately 9.5 verges which is considered large by Jersey standards and it would definitely be a loss to the Industry. We note that it is intended to utilise the eastern area of approximately 5.5 verges. If the remaining 4 verges were to stay under cultivation it would render the field in that format less viable with regards to agricultural husbandry and practices currently undertaken and the movement of large agricultural machinery etc.

We note that some commentators have suggested alternative green-field sites as being suitable for the provision of these units of sheltered accommodation. Unless they are on brown-field sites we would have no option but to object to them being used for development in accordance with our duty to the Industry and therefore our comments in this regard would be applicable.

The present shortage of agricultural land has been well documented and with the current resurgence in the Potato Industry which does not show any sign of abating, the demand is constant, a fact that is borne out by the increasing rentable value of the land. It is also vital to preserve all land in view of predicted future food shortages.

Agriculture is Jersey's traditional Industry and farmers and growers are the guardians of the countryside and contribute towards the Island's economy. The availability of agricultural land in the Island is finite, once it is lost to development it can never be recovered and the Island's land bank must not be allowed to diminish.

The Jersey Farmers' Union is mindful of the fact that sites have to be found for building but we feel that there are sufficient brown-field sites available without taking green-field sites, in accordance with the Island Plan.

Yours sincerely

GRAHAM J. LE LAY
PRESIDENT
JERSEY FARMERS' UNION