

STATES OF JERSEY



FUTURE HOSPITAL: REVIEW OF PROPOSED SITE LOCATION AND COSTS

Lodged au Greffe on 21st February 2018
by the Connétable of St. John

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to note the recommendation of an independent planning inspector that the planning application for the new General Hospital should be refused, and the Minister for the Environment's subsequent decision to refuse that application, and to refer to their Act dated 1st December 2016, which approved in principle the site location for the new General Hospital, and to their Act dated 13th December 2017, which approved the Preferred Scheme contained within the Future Hospital Outline Business Case, and –

- (a) to request the Chief Minister, in consultation with the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Treasury and Resources, to appoint an independent team of advisers, including a Planning Inspector, to –
 - (i) conduct a review of the proposed site location for the new General Hospital in the light of the decision to refuse planning permission, including identifying any additional information now required for this purpose;
 - (ii) report by 1st September 2018 on the suitability of the proposed site location, given the new circumstances which have arisen because of the refusal of planning permission, in comparison to –
 - (A) a site on the Waterfront, including the Esplanade;
 - (B) St. Saviour's Hospital;
 - (C) the Overdale Hospital site;
 - (D) land at Warwick Farm; and
 - (E) any other sites considered by the independent team to be suitable;
 - (iii) report by 1st September 2018 on the estimated cost and timescale for the development of a new General Hospital on each site set out in paragraph (a)(ii);
- (b) to request the relevant Ministers not to enter into any new contractual and financial commitments and contracts for or in consequence of the proposed development on the proposed site location agreed on 1st December 2016 until the report by the independent team of advisers has been presented to the States;
- (c) to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to present a report to the States detailing the costs so far incurred by the Future Hospital project and any contracts currently signed.

REPORT

Since the States made its decision in December to give the new Hospital the go-ahead, public confidence in the new Hospital project has been seriously damaged after the rejection by the Planning Inspector. The Planning Inspector's report on the proposed application and rejection of the Planning Application, together with the Comptroller and Auditor General's report, which revealed that the States' process of site selection was fundamentally flawed, have all led to this unacceptable situation.

The Public's willingness to accept the huge cost has been seriously weakened following the Comptroller and Auditor General's report, which showed that there are no systems of control over, or effective management of, the project. The Public cannot fail to see that in the U.K., major hospital projects have been built at a significantly lower cost than our project.

These Planning and financial concerns are strongly connected. The Planning Inspector reported that a decision could be made to allow a development which was contrary to the Island Plan policies in the overriding public interest, but only if he was satisfied by the evidence, after due process, that no suitable alternative was available for the development. Yet the Inspector's terms of reference ruled out such examination of alternative sites. Many people believe that an alternative unencumbered site has the potential to deliver a better, fully fit-for-purpose Hospital faster and more cheaply, views which those with major development experience have expressed.

Unfortunately, Ministers have so far responded to these concerns by denial and continuing to expose our Island to financial risk and costs, in what is seen as a flawed project; their reaction has served only to reinforce public concerns.

The purpose of my Proposition is to put a hold on avoidable commitments, and to pause the project to take stock of the evidence which all States Departments already have available about the front-running alternative sites for the new Hospital. The evidence is unco-ordinated and has not been subject to a proper decision-making process. It is clear that there has been a breakdown of communication at Ministerial level, and the legitimate concerns of the Planning Officers have not been listened to by Ministers. This needs to be put right.

I propose a review by a team to include a Planning Inspector, an independent financial expert, and a professional with experience in procuring major projects. Their task would be to carry out an evidence-based review, and to inform the Assembly and the Public of the benefits and disadvantages of each of the alternative sites compared with the current project. Such a report will enable the States to either confirm their previous decision or set a new direction.

My Proposition sets out the fundamental purpose for a review, the terms of reference for which would need to be decided by the Chief Minister in consultation with the Public Accounts Committee and the Future Hospital Review Sub-Panel. It is a prerequisite that the review needs to have available a specification of requirements for space and facilities which fully meets an approved statement of clinical needs for a new Hospital which meets all present and reasonably anticipated Health Service needs.

All States Departments would be required to disclose all information they hold on the project to the Inquiry Team and attend on them to answer questions. It is suggested that part of its proceedings would need to be held in public, and public representations should also be encouraged, in order to restore public support.

Financial and manpower implications

The financial implications of this proposition are hard to quantify exactly, as more work would need to be done with the relevant Ministers to establish the appropriate size for the independent team, but £200,000 would be a realistic upper estimate of cost. I believe this cost is well worth incurring, as it could save us many millions of pounds. The cost should be met from the new Hospital capital budget.