

STATES OF JERSEY



FUTURE HOSPITAL: RESCINDMENT OF GLOUCESTER STREET AS PREFERRED SITE (P.5/2019) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 12th February 2019
by the Chief Minister**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

As Chief Minister, I welcome the proposition of Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier ([P.5/2019](#)).

I have been consistently clear that the newly-elected Assembly should take the decision as to whether to proceed with delivering the new Hospital on the existing site, as approved by the previously Assembly, or to opt for a different path.

Many of us have been closely involved with this project for many years, and most of us will have had constituents approach us expressing concern. We therefore have a responsibility to consider the issues carefully, whilst at the same time also ensuring that the current Hospital is funded and fit-for purpose, throughout the life of the project.

For myself, I have been involved through Scrutiny, commissioned the Policy Development Board, and now, having received the second planning application refusal, we need to look at other sites as part of a new, open and collaborative process. This does not mean a significant delay to the project. Our aim is to speed up the process of site selection, re-using existing work where possible, and to ensure that the future Hospital project is delivered in a timeframe in line with the existing project.

I therefore support the proposition of Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier.

Background

To inform this decision, one of my first actions on assuming office was to establish the Future Hospital Policy Development Board, comprising Connétables C.H. Taylor of St. John (Chairman) and R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen; and Deputies R.J. Renouf of St. Ouen, C.S. Alves of St. Helier, T. Pointon of St. John, and R.E. Huelin of St. Peter. The Board's report was published in November 2018 and concluded that they had *"... not been assured that the evidence supports the current site as the optimal site – although it could deliver an acute general hospital facility provided the full range of health strategies are fully funded and proper mitigations put in place around patient safety."*

The Deputy of St. Ouen, as Minister for Health and Social Services, dissented from the findings of the other Board members, and produced a 'minority' report which concluded that *"... the site for the hospital was properly evaluated and sufficient and accurate information was provided"*.

What is clear is that all of the Council of Ministers, and the Policy Development Board, fully support the provision of a new Hospital.

In any event, and whatever the merits or otherwise of the decisions of the previous Assembly, matters have progressed, as in January 2019 the Minister for the Environment refused the outline application for the scheme on the site approved by the previous Assembly. In doing so, he concluded that *"... this application site is not quite large enough to comfortably accommodate the proposed scheme. A different application may overcome these issues."* The Minister for the Environment was also unable to conclude that there existed an overriding public interest benefit providing sufficient justification for making a decision which is inconsistent with Island Plan policies.

As such, we now need to consider the next steps for the benefit of our Island.

This means not just moving forward with the existing site – this Assembly, and the Public, understandably, need more assurance given the importance of the project and the money involved. We need to do this constructively, working together and valuing the contributions we each make.

With this in mind, this Council of Ministers is committed to the following actions:

1. Facilitating a new, transparent site selection process

This will be done in an open and transparent manner, re-using previous studies where appropriate, but not relying on conclusions reached by previous reports. This is why I have lodged a minor amendment to Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence’s amendment to the third amendment ([P.5/2019 Amd.\(3\)Amd.\(2\)](#)), just to ensure that matters are clear, and that work can progress thoroughly, efficiently, and in a timely fashion (*see* [P.5/2019 Amd.\(3\)Amd.\(2\)Amd.](#)).

In developing the site selection process, we will work with States Members in workshops, and in consultation with healthcare staff and other stakeholders, to determine which sites should be appraised, seeking to focus on a small number of deliverable and supported sites.

To be clear, approving the proposition does not exclude the existing Gloucester Street site, it merely rescinds the decision to proceed on the site – essentially leaving a blank slate as to where the Hospital should be. The only Assembly decision remaining would be [P.82/2012](#): “Health and Social Services: A New Way Forward” and its commitment to a new Hospital.

This site selection process will be based on the current brief for a new General Hospital, but in the spirit of thinking afresh, the consultation with States Members will raise issues such as the specification for the General Hospital, and what this might mean for the site selection process.

The contract to undertake the site selection process will be subject to competitive tender, applying the appropriate professional standards to the selection of advisers in accordance with Government of Jersey procurement processes, as part of delivering a fresh approach.

2. Considering public interest issues and increasing assurance around a future planning application

The Chief Minister, and Ministers for Infrastructure and Health and Social Services, will explore with the Minister for the Environment how we can provide greater assurance that any future application is in the public interest – so that we reduce the chances of a future refusal, having spent more time and public money.

The Minister for the Environment, in particular, believes that greater assurance can be secured by way of increased stakeholder engagement (extensive pre-application consultation on major schemes is a routine requirement in other jurisdictions).

The Minister for the Environment is also exploring other options to support the future planning applications process. This includes amending subordinate legislation so that the States Assembly can be asked to consider the public interest of a specific scheme that might challenge Island Plan policies, before any planning application determination is made by the Minister. The Minister has considered the introduction of new legislation to enable the provision of significant public infrastructure, and initial advice is that such legislation is likely to result in longer planning determination timescales than currently exist.

3. Committing to maintaining a good standard of care for patients

Until such time as a new Hospital is delivered, we must ensure that the current Hospital receives sufficient investment. Work is currently being undertaken to review and deliver a programme of works to enable the existing Hospital to continue to work safely until a new Hospital is developed. This will be developed for consideration in the next Government funding cycle, as outlined in the Comments presented by the Minister for Treasury and Resources (P.5/2019 Com.).

The Council of Ministers commits to keeping the current Hospital fit-for-purpose throughout the life of the future Hospital build, with funding put in place to enable this to happen.

4. Review, producing and publishing an indicative timeline for site selection

The timetable published as part of the report of the Policy Development Board (Figure 1) will be reviewed to identify whether the delivery of a new Hospital can be expedited, while still going through proper processes, including substantial engagement with States Members, consultation with staff and the Public, Scrutiny, and debate in the Assembly.

Figure 1: programme of works comparing the existing States of Jersey approved site and a potential new site

Item/time	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Existing SoJ approved site - Clinical Programme of Works											
Planning Permission & enabling works											
Current Hospital Build programme		Westaway court			Phase 1b						
			Phase 1a						Phase 2 -entrance		
New Site - Clinical Programme of Works											
Pre-approvals process											
New site selection process											
Planning & OBC approval											
Procure new Contractor & design team											
Enabling works											
Revised Hospital Build programme											

This timetable is being reviewed and will need to be adjusted – notably, proceeding with the existing site will now take longer, as a new application is now needed; and the time and cost of site selection will depend on specifications, length of shortlist, and depth of analysis. The staging should also not be forgotten, in so far as the existing site was designed to deliver some operational areas before full completion.

Nevertheless, based on all the information received, a new Hospital, whether on the existing site or a new site, can still be completed in the late 2020s, and before 2030.

5. Publishing an explanation and outline of costs

Inevitably, on a project of this size, which has taken as long as it has, and had so many inputs, costs have been considerable. The Minister for Treasury and Resources has presented Comments (P.5/2019 Com.) outlining these costs, as well as the costs associated with winding down the current scheme if the proposition is approved.

As to future costs, to undertake site selection, and to progress thereon, the Minister for Treasury and Resources will need to lodge a new proposition to secure funding, as the Hospital Construction Fund expenditure was linked to the approved scheme (and cannot be spent on a new scheme without a new permission from the Assembly). How much is needed in the initial stages is dependent on the scope of the site selection, as outlined in point 2 above.

Conclusion

When the Minister for the Environment refused the latest planning application, he said the current site was not big enough, and that public interest did not justify going against the Island Plan. At the same time, any site would have its own challenges, and we need a new Hospital.

So we need to bring people together – and much as we should value all the work and contributions to date, we need a fresh start to achieve this.

This will involve assessing a shortlisted selection of sites, considering the public interest issue, maintaining a good standard of care at the existing Hospital, and considering how we can speed up site selection, while still going through proper processes. Deputy R. Labey's proposition is an important first step toward this.

Statement under Standing Order 37A [Presentation of comment relating to a proposition]

These comments were submitted to the States Greffe after the noon deadline as set out in Standing Order 37A in order for final review processes to be completed.