

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
BY DEPUTY A. HOWELL OF ST. JOHN, ST. LAWRENCE AND TRINITY
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 24th APRIL 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 2nd MAY 2023**

Question

“Further to the closure of La Motte Street to vehicular traffic whilst public realm works are undertaken, will the Minister advise –

- (a) what consideration, if any, was given to the access to Customer and Local Services (CLS) at Philip Le Feuvre House for vulnerable Islanders, such as the elderly or those with disabilities and/or mobility issues, during this period;
- (b) whether any exceptions and/or arrangements have been put in place for those Islanders who would ordinarily either be dropped outside the CLS offices or arrive by bus;
- (c) what confidence he has that the timing of the closure will not have a detrimental effect on the completion of paper tax forms, coinciding as it does with the deadline for submission of these forms and the potential need by some Islanders for assistance with their completion; and
- (d) whether there is any possibility that the closure could be deferred until next year when CLS is relocated at the new Cyril Le Marquand House?”

Answer

The Infrastructure Department is sensitive to the effects of disruption when work is carried out on the highway network and has, to the greatest extent possible, put measures in place to alleviate any access difficulties while the La Motte Street work takes place. Such changes cause inconvenience by their nature, so as much as possible has been put in place to ensure for vulnerable Islanders, such as the elderly or those with disabilities and/or mobility issues can continue to get to Customer and Local Services (CLS) at Philip Le Feuvre House. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and will closely monitor the project and deal with any issues that islanders report.

Once in place, the street improvements and crossings being installed will make access safer and easier for pedestrians using La Motte Street in future, particularly those with a disability or mobility issues, as well as providing an onward link from the Hill Street contraflow cycle route.

In the past, ad-hoc parking and drop off in La Motte Street has caused problems for buses, obstructs footpaths and creates risks to pedestrians trying to cross the road between vehicles stopped in undesignated areas. The current street paving consists of concrete slabs which are not up to modern standards and problematic to maintain.

- a) For the seven weeks of phase 1 of the works the following mitigations will be in place to help people access:
 - Public access by foot will always remain available.
 - Disabled parking facilities on Hilary Street will be increased from 2 spaces to 4 spaces for the duration. This is situated approximately 30 metres from the CLS front door and drop off letter box.
 - Snow Hill and Minden Place short stay parking are both approximately 4-5 minutes’ walk from CLS (300m and 400m). Green Street is slightly further being 6 minutes’ walk (500m).
 - Vehicular access remains available to within 30 metres of CLS, via La Motte Street West and Hillary Street diversion.

- Temporary traffic management effectively means La Motte Street stops being a main feeder link to the ring road and becomes a local access route, meaning that traffic levels are likely to reduce as drivers become familiar with the diversion.
 - As normal, updates will be provided to the public through radio ads, social media, the Government website, media bulletins and letter drops.
 - CLS and I&E will monitor impacts and issue additional communications as required to manage issues such as the tax return deadline.
- b) There is no provision for unstructured parking and drop off now. The Department will monitor the traffic throughout the period of the works and adapt traffic management measures as required, being sensitive to circumstances. The number of disabled parking spaces available on Hilary Street has also been doubled.

For bus users travelling into town there are no changes. Bus users travelling out of town on the 4, 13, 21 and 23 will need to use the preceding or following stop. Advance notice has been provided at the La Motte Street stop. There are no changes for the Island's other 21 services.

- c) I am confident that the submission of paper tax forms can continue. Public access by foot will always remain available, disruption to Island bus routes is minor, disabled parking remains available and in the immediate vicinity has been increased. As drivers become familiar with the diversion, traffic flows on La Motte Street are anticipated to reduce, potentially improving access in some instances. Traffic management measures will be coordinated with CLS to ensure disruption to clients is minimised, including during the deadline for tax submissions. Islanders who have concerns about their tax forms should contact the CLS department.
- d) La Motte Street will be the first part of town to see improvements as part of the Government's Public Realm Movement Strategy to make town a better place for walking, cycling, and spending time in. Delaying the project until CLS relocated would mean that St Helier's public realm programme could not be started until 2024, and the summer and Christmas restrictions La Motte would likely be postponed until spring 2025.

In respect of La Motte Street, the Department is confident that access requirements can be managed. The works have been broken down into a series of phases that will run from now to later in the year, to reduce the impact of the works and ensure access to CLS, businesses and properties are maintained. These arrangements are set out the gov.je website in the road closures and delays section.