

2.17. The Connétable of St. Helier of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the works proposed for the Havre des Pas promenade:

Would the Minister agree to make a statement or publish a report explaining to the public what works are proposed for the Havre des Pas promenade, the cost and timetable for the works and the consultation that has taken place on the matter?

The Connétable of St. Brelade (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

It is probably best that I answer the Connétable's question by saying what I am going to say now. This will obviously be public. The department does intend to make minor modifications to the existing La Collette promenade and Green Street slipway to enable it to be used as an alternative emergency service access road to the La Collette reclamation site. While this emergency route is not intended principally to serve the Island's Energy from Waste plant, its implementation was attached to the planning obligation for the Energy from Waste plant, and was therefore included as part of the public consultation. The emergency services have been consulted during the design stage, and construction work should commence in January 2011. The work is expected to cost approximately £300,000 and be completed by June 2011. I have, in fact, put up a plan in the Members' room, and have an early draft design of this route with me here. It is, as yet, incomplete. Consequently we have not yet gone to the public with it, because there is further work to be done. Clearly as soon as that takes place it will be publicised.

2.17.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:

With respect to the Minister, and I am grateful to him for his openness, does he not believe that this matter does require a proper report, a proper explanation to the public, given that it is a third of a million pounds that is being proposed to be spent, and that this is a very historic and attractive part of St. Helier, which is going to be radically altered by these works?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I mentioned the figure of £300,000 not a million. The local commerce - the cafés thereabouts - have been spoken to, and I have a letter dated 3rd June with regard to that. We are waiting for completion of the drawings with regard to the top of the Green Street slipway area, and until those are completed there seems little point in putting it out. Certainly as soon as we have achieved that we will go public with it.

2.17.2 Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier:

I would have liked the residents to have more consultation. My worry on hearing this today- and it was part of a planning application, as you say - is will it not be a very convenient way to get to the Energy from Waste plant from the east of the Island. It will be overused and it will not just be used by the emergency services.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I would disagree. No, the intention is it is going to be an emergency road, purely for the emergency services. It will not be a public road as such. I think the Deputy will understand that if, in the instance of a serious fire at La Collette, there is a risk that the approach road from the west could be compromised. Thereby emergency service vehicles will be unable to access it. This is purely the reason for the creation of this

road, so that an alternative access road, particularly to the fuel farm area can be created.

2.17.3 Deputy J.A. Martin:

Sorry, supplementary. Will T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) be banning other vehicles over a certain size using that part of the road?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The road is designed for the Bronco Aerial Platform, which is the biggest vehicle the fire service have. So, clearly smaller ones will be able to go there as well. We can introduce a system of rising bollards or some such automated system to prevent other vehicles accessing the road and that may be a sensible approach.

2.17.4 Deputy A.K.F. Green:

The sum of £300,000 on top of the costs of the Energy for Waste plant. Are there any other small alterations to be made, such as the removal of the fuel farm that we have yet to hear about?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The figure I quoted is included in the Energy from Waste plant costs. The work will be done by in-house labour, but it does involve some serious concrete work, and if Members wish to look at the drawings it will be quite obvious what is needed.

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

The Minister did not answer my question, are there other plans, such as the removal of the fuel farm?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Not that I am aware of.

2.17.5 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I think the Constable was very diplomatic with his language. One of the residents who phoned me described what was going to happen as the rape of a very attractive area. Nevertheless, given what has happened with residents reeling from 5 months of congestion and related problems, does the Minister concede that really a greater consultation should have been undertaken with residents in the area, to put their minds at rest, such as can be done.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think it is appropriate to consult with the local residents once the designs have been completed. I think there is always a risk when the survey teams go out to try and design the work that people get alarmed, but my impression is that the area will be improved and there will be no detracting from the amenities there presently.

[11:30]

2.17.6 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

When we were undertaking Scrutiny on this issue we were quite aware there was going to be the need for an emergency access road and it was mentioned during the debate on several occasions. Conducting Scrutiny on this issue we looked into whether or not, from the Buncefield experience, the Jersey States Fire Department was going to be able to handle an incident. Having spoken to them, one of their

member's opinion at the time was: "We stand back and manage the burn." Is that the case now? If that is the case now, although it is nice the Minister has shown us these plans, is it wise to spend £300,000 on an access road that will not be used? Would that not be better spent on a fire services being merged with the ambulance services?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think it is important we have a considerable area down at La Collette, which includes the fuel farm. I think it is important that the advice of the emergency service is taken and acted upon.

2.17.7 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Just following on from Deputy Green's question, there are rumours circulating that the chimney at the J.E.C. (Jersey Electric Company) site at La Collette is not up to dealing with the temperatures that the Energy from Waste will need and that there are problems with it. Will the Minister either discount those rumours or tell us what is going on?

The Deputy Bailiff:

That question does not seem to me to relate to the question of the cost and timetable for works proposed and I disallow it.

2.17.8 The Deputy of Grouville:

With regard to the Minister saying that this is going to be in-house work, I am a bit sceptical of this in these economic times. Should there not be some form of obligation to put the work out for tender?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

My department are well experienced in dealing with seawall work as this is undertaken as part of their regular duties. There seems little point in engaging outside contractors for that when we are perfectly capable of dealing with it ourselves.

2.17.9 The Connétable of St. Helier:

The work does involve the demolition of a granite structure at the widest point of the promenade. I would ask the Minister to consider with his officers whether that is necessary, given that there is going to be another passing place for the vehicles created a short distance towards the east. Would the Minister undertake to look at the preservation and perhaps the enhancement of this granite structure for the use, for example, of young people? Will he undertake to bring his final plans to the St. Helier Roads Committee and to pay more attention to them than when the Committee commented in 2008: "The Roads Committee has examined plans for the above submission and does not give approval."

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Clearly we put the St. Helier Roads Committee's noses out of joint. I regret that and will agree to consult in future. With regard to the granite structure, there is a rather vandalised shelter down on the promenade and the plans indicate its removal. Notwithstanding that if the Roads Committee, or if it is felt generally that there ought to be another created, I think it could be considered. But the policing of that shelter, I think, is something the Parish need to consider seriously before it is constructed.