

3.3 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the present roadworks at the Dicq:

Would the Minister confirm that the present roadworks at the Dicq are expected to last 8 weeks and does he not consider that the residents in the east of the Island have already suffered enough as a result of the previous J.E.C. (Jersey Electric Company) cable conduit laying?

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

The works now taking place at Grève d'Azette is the final phase of the J.E.C. pulling their cable through on the land side through the recently completed ducting. The works began on 30th May; the current projected finish date being 11th July. T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) are very well aware of the disruption this causes and are working with the Jersey Electricity Company to minimise any disruption. However, this must be weighed against the benefit to the Island of the J.E.C. having a secure electricity supply. Thank you.

3.3.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

Regrettably, I think the Minister misses the point of my question. Why was the present trench, which was not ... I mean, the road that ... the cable conduit was laid, the trench was reinstated, the road reopened. Now they are digging up what they had already reinstated to make a trench in order to make the connection for the cable. Could the Minister explain why that trench was not made when the road was closed for a couple of months originally? Why are they doing it now? Because if it had been done originally, surely it would just be a case of pulling the cable through; the road would only be closed for a few days, a week?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

It is a better system we have now as opposed to just burying the cable; the fact that the J.E.C. with the assistance of T.T.S. have built ducting through the system. Any future cables can merely be pulled through and the road will no longer need to be dug up. There will be a few points where connection manholes will need to be made to connect the various sections of cable.

3.3.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Continuing the theme of disruption for residents from the east, given the constraints to the Green Street Police Station construction site and the likely significant disruption arising from delivery of building materials such as concrete and steel to the site, what plan is being proposed by T.T.S. if it is necessary to close La Route du Fort for any significant time, bearing in mind the chaos caused recently by the closure of Mount Bingham?

The Bailiff:

I am sorry, Senator. I do not think that arises out of this question. Senator Farnham.

3.3.3 Senator L.J. Farnham:

I am sure this does arise from the question, what I am about to say. I am sure the Minister is aware that the Island ... and as well as the works that are mentioned in the question, there are a lot of works being carried out at the moment and temporary traffic lights around the Island. I wondered if the Minister had any policy in his department relating to carrying out non-essential works on the lead-up to the busy summer period? There was once upon a time an order that no works would be carried out in the main tourism season. I understand that is probably unrealistic in this day and age but it does seem that there is no regard whatsoever for the important economic activity that goes on at this time of year.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

The utility companies have a right in urgent matters to dig up any road they feel necessary. That is the state of law at the moment. But we will be having a Street Works Law coming in, I believe, late this year, early next year which will formalise everything where everything has to be approved in advance. We do have agreements with utility companies with regard to digging-up freshly laid roads. We have about a 3-year moratorium on that, but in an emergency, mains, electricity, a water main bursting, *et cetera*, or a major fault, they must go in and dig the road up, which is unfortunate, but we do keep it to an absolute minimum.

3.3.4 Senator L.J. Farnham:

Can I just ask the Minister to be clear? Is there a policy in place at present which is against non-essential works being carried out in the summer season or does that simply just not exist anymore?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

We try and, as I say, minimise. Anything that needs to be done urgently has to be done. There is a trade-off, of course, because obviously we have the schools traffic in the morning so if we can do something in the school holidays it is beneficial but there again, we would run into the tourist season so everything is very, very carefully planned.

3.3.5 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

This time I hope the Minister will answer my question. We know that the work is vital. We know that it is being laid in a conduit so if he would perhaps answer the question as opposed to reading out prepared answers from his department. My question was why was the trench which was being dug to make the connection not made at the time that the conduit was being laid? Why have they reinstated the road only to dig it up again? Why was it not done at the same time?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

They have not dug it to dig it up again. There are several pits being dug which will be the connection points. They will be the joint points. They are not digging-up the whole road. It is part of the process. It will be very hard to ... I mean, it is a major project putting this ducting in and it would be impossible to ... if I may finish? It would be impossible to liaise with the ship bringing the cable in and having an entire crew standing by ready to dig it up.

Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

Perhaps the Minister could come back at a later date and answer the question why was it not done at the same time?