

20.11.30

**7 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier of the Chief Minister regarding Our Hospital site selection (OQ.349/2020):**

Following the adoption of my amendment to Our Hospital Site Selection, P.123/2020, will the Minister explain how the Parish of St. Helier, including the Deputies and residents of St. Helier Districts 3 and 4, are to be involved in the investigation into alternative access arrangements to Overdale and the consideration of mitigating the destruction of property and natural amenity, as well as potential financial savings?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister):**

This is also going to Senator Farnham.

**Senator L.J. Farnham (Deputy Chief Minister - *rapporteur*):**

The Our Hospital Project Team will shortly be consulting with the Constable and the relevant Deputies about the further options for access arrangements and the criteria upon which those options will be evaluated, including any third-party acquisitions, changes to amenity, spaces, cost, and programme. The programme of neighbourhood engagement that has begun will also provide means of discussing the methodology and outputs of the access strategy with the residents. We hope to do that in close co-ordination with the Constable and the Deputies. In addition, the representative panel of health workers and blue-light services will be consulted also about the options and the criteria.

**3.7.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

Would the Deputy Chief Minister reassure the Parish and other stakeholders that his team are not merely going through the motions in this respect but that they are seeking to think outside the box? In other words, that they have not been instructed to “show us why alternative access will not work”, but rather they have been instructed to show us how an alternative access could be made to work?

**Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I hope I can reassure Members. There are currently, in the programme, 9 different routes looked at: options 1, 2, 3, and 4, 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 2(a) and 2(b), 3(a) and 3(b) and 4(a) and 4(b). The fifth option will include, as I understand it, a number of options, so we could have 5(a), (b) and (c), all based around the Constable’s idea of the one-way proposition. I know that all aspects of the possibilities are being thoroughly explored. We are under no doubt whatsoever that we have to come back to the Assembly with a comprehensive and well-thought-out and well-studied report on the different traffic strategies. I am completely aligned with the Constable that, when we finally decide on the correct traffic and access infrastructure, we have made the right decision.

**3.7.2 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Would the Minister confirm what are the different instructions that were given to the officers following the adoption of the Constable’s amendment in engagement with stakeholders, or if they were different?

**Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I am not sure we have given any specific instructions other than we must consult and engage closely with the Constable and the Deputies and the relevant neighbours around the access. We are

currently considering the best way to do that. As I said earlier on, we will be in touch with the Constable and Deputies imminently. I also will ensure that States Members, once we have gone through that stage, States Members will also be consulted prior to bringing the proposition later in December.

### **3.7.3 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Would the Minister not find it strange that the amendment brought a different perspective into the approach and not changing instructions, following this amendment, is not ... how the Minister can consider seriously the amendment if the instructions will not change to the officers following the adoption of the amendment?

### **Senator L.J. Farnham:**

Sorry, what instruction is the Deputy referring to?

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Do you want to clarify your question, Deputy?

### **Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Yes. Since the amendment was adopted by the States, the amendment changed the approach or at least changed the approach how the access road should be examined. Would the Minister not find it strange that the officers continue to work as they used to work before the amendment or the change should be? Basically different instructions should be given to the officers following the amendment how to approach the road.

### **Senator L.J. Farnham:**

So the Constable's amendment was to request the Council of Ministers, prior to its acquisition of land or properties required to facilitate access to the preferred site for Jersey's new hospital, to present the States Assembly for approval a report on alternative access strategies designed to maximise sustainable models of travel to and from the hospital. That is what our specialist transport and traffic engineers are working on now. As soon as they are in a position to start presenting the ideas and the methodology, they will do so. I do not think it has changed any instructions or created new instructions. It is just a common sense and natural approach to the process we are following now.

### **3.7.4 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:**

Can I just confirm with the Deputy Chief Minister that all of the emergency services, police, fire and ambulance, are all being consulted in relation to all of the access routes in relation to the potential new hospital site at Overdale?

### **Senator L.J. Farnham:**

Yes, I can confirm that all blue-light services are being consulted. There was, as I understand, considerable consultation on the previous 9 schemes that were included in the original proposition. Of course it is absolutely vital that we work closely with our blue-light services on the access opportunities.

### **3.7.5 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

I am sorry I was not in earlier because our internet was down. Is the working group going to also consider the proposal made last Friday in a letter to the *Evening Post* by Bruce Willing? I have read it

and it sounds very sound and viable to me and it would also, in the end, be the least damaging for the park and everybody around.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Is that your question?

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Yes.

**Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I do recall seeing a number of items of correspondence from Mr. Willing but could the Senator just give the detail of what the proposal was that appeared in the letter in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* from Mr. Willing. I cannot recall it off the top of my head.

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Well he was not going to knock down the bowling place. It was a ramp that kind of started by the children's play park and took the curve around. It took the steepness of the hairpin bend away. I would suggest that there are some very good ideas in the *Evening Post* in the letters column. Perhaps the working party and the Senator would like to have a look at it.

**Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I certainly undertake to have a look at those ideas. But I would also add that the whole concept of creating new access routes to Overdale are based upon those sort of ideas, improvements, improvements to gradients, much better cycle and footpath access. So I am confident that our teams are using those ideas as the guiding principles of improving the access.

[15:45]

**3.7.6 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Would the Minister like to give us an assurance that they will look at it and he will come back with it in the report about access?

**Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I cannot promise that we will allude to Mr. Willing's letter in the report but I will certainly bring it to the attention of the team.

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Yes, well when you come back with your report on the access ...

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Senator Ferguson, you have had your supplementary question now and the Minister has responded to it.

**3.7.7 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

Yes, please. I am relieved to have the opportunity to distance myself from, quite honestly, the nonsense that the Senator has just proposed. It is all very well for out-of-town people to talk about ripping up People's Park and the playground but certainly St. Helier residents do not want that to happen. Will the Minister simply reassure residents in particular, also the Jersey Bowling Club, that he and his team are going to make a real, genuine and sincere effort to find an alternative to the

alien U.K. traffic scheme that we were in danger of having imposed upon us and that we can find a Jersey solution for access to the hospital that will save money and save the damage to the environment and people's homes?

**Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I can assure the Connétable and Members that it is our intention to find the very best and most suitable transport scheme that is appropriate for Jersey, appropriate for our new hospital and has minimal impact on the environment, including the very valuable green space known as People's Park. We want minimum intrusion, we want minimum environmental impact and we want maximum opportunity for access to our hospital, not just for cars, but especially for pedestrians and other modes of transport.