

2021.10.05

5 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier of the Assistant Chief Minister regarding the design of the new hospital (OQ.206/2021):

Further to reports from the project team that, in the development of the new hospital, digging into granite would cost £10,500 per square metre and clinical and non-clinical space would cost £5,500 and £3,500 per square metre respectively, will the Assistant Chief Minister provide the total planned square meterage within the new hospital of each of these three categories??

Senator L.J. Farnham (Assistant Chief Minister):

I believe the Deputy may be referring to some remarks made during a recent Scrutiny hearing. These remarks were examples of high-level comparisons to illustrate that some elements of the works are more expensive than others. The works cost for the project have been informed by the cost plan, which has been provided to the Scrutiny advisory team, and which explains line by line the build-up of the main works cost. The cost plan follows the industry standard guidance on construction cost plans and is split into element heading. For example, the substructure, the frame, the upper floors, the roof, the stairs, the ramps, external walls and breaks the cost down for each of these. Given the stage of the project, this is, I believe, or the team believes, is a more detailed way of working out costs and has been used to develop the costs, rather than just using an average cost for clinical and non-clinical space. Because clinical space is not just one cost, there are lots of different layers of costs for clinical space, whether it is very high specialist cost, such as operating theatres or wards or clinical corridors. However, information on all the areas is provided in the schedule of accommodation.

4.5.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Because it was stated by Professor Handa, and it was published, so the question from my perspective was not answered because it was a very simple question. Now my supplementary, it is the costs that were mentioned across 3 categories and the question was how many square metres were allocated in the hospital for each of the categories or if it is not why the 3 costs were mentioned?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, I can answer that and thank the Deputy for the clarification. Those were, as I said, a high-level example of the fact that there were different costs for non-clinical and clinical. The hospital project does not just break it down into those 2 categories or 3 categories.

[11:00]

They break it down into lots of different subheadings because there are different layers of costs; for example, for diagnostic, it is pathology, pharmacy, mortuary, they are all different costs. Engineering functions is different to a non-clinical corridor or storage area, so it is just not that simple. All of the square meterage under these headings is available and have been made available to the Scrutiny Panel. It is possible, although difficult, to work out what is clinical and what is non-clinical because of the sort of the overlap and the different usages of many of those different categories.

The Bailiff:

Is the answer, for clarification, Minister, that you are not able to provide these figures at this time?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I cannot provide a figure of what is clinical and what is non-clinical, Sir. It is a lot more complex than that. All of the square meterage of areas has been provided and it could technically be worked out. But what I would say is that an updated schedule of accommodation will be provided when we get to the detailed planning application later this year. I am sure it would be possible for us to work out a figure of non-clinical and clinical space, and I shall certainly put that to the team.

4.5.2 Connétable A. Jehan of St. John:

I think the original question referred to the cost of digging into granite. Can the Deputy Chief Minister tell us what percentage of the building will be on granite footings?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

No, I cannot and groundworks are ongoing. The chances of digging into granite increase with the amount of excavation and the recent designs have reduced basement areas to reduce the amount of excavation required and reduce the chance of digging into granite or other material, which is more costly, but we cannot give those exact figures because the groundworks are still continuing. But it is not anticipated to be a figure that is unexpected or cause problems or additional costs to the scheme.

4.5.3 The Connétable of St. John:

Would the Deputy Chief Minister agree with me that it is unfortunate that the panel were given that figure, just as it was unfortunate yesterday to be told 40 per cent of Islanders have private health, yet the week before the Minister for Health and Social Services wrote 25 per cent had private health?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

No, I disagree. I disagree with both of those comments. The figures for the number of Islanders having public health were taken from a social survey in 2018 and we still believe those to be reasonably accurate. That social survey stated that 87 per cent of people working in the financial services sector had private health and we still believe those figures to be accurate. In relation to the previous question I started; I think the question was taken of the comments of Professor Handa at a Scrutiny hearing in response to questions, where he used these figures as examples. They were not based on anything, they were examples to demonstrate that different levels of the building come with different costs.

4.5.4 Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin:

Given that the Minister obviously saw the list of oral questions before today's sitting, can he explain to us why he is not in a position not to give better answers to the question?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Could the Deputy elucidate that, please, or perhaps be a bit more specific because I feel I have given a detailed explanation as to why it is not possible to simply give the square meterage of clinical and non-clinical space at this stage of the designs? Perhaps he could be more specific, please.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Yes, I am happy to be more specific ...

The Bailiff:

I think this is a supplemental question because that is an answer from the Minister, so this is your supplemental, the Deputy of St. Martin.

4.5.5 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay, thank you, Sir. One of 3 items asked for in the question was the square meterage that might be dug into granite. Can the Assistant Chief Minister tell us approximately what the square meterage of the current hospital proposed development is?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The current approximate square meterage construction figure for the whole hospital is in the region of 68,000 square metres. That is going to change as the final designs are approved for the detailed planning application and at this stage we expect the final square meterage to be in the region of 65,000 square metres. These figures are widely available and if Members, which I am sure they have, and I am sure the Deputy of St. Martin has done plenty of reading of the reports, the figures are all there in black and white. I do stress we are on stage 3 of a 7-stage RIBA 2 process to complete the project and all of these figures will continue to change until such time as the detailed planning application is presented. I will undertake to keep Members informed every step of the way.

4.5.6 Deputy I. Gardiner:

I do agree with the Deputy Chief Minister that with the progress figures will be changing. My last question will state 2 figures and I would be grateful if the Deputy Chief Minister can explain the difference. On 27th August the Assistant Chief Minister stated in his response to the Scrutiny Panel at appendix 1 that 1 square metre will cost approximately £4,497, including preliminaries, costs and risks. At the beginning of September at the public hearing the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources stated that 1 square metre will cost £6,200. What is the difference? What has happened between 27th August and September and if £6,200 is including all costs?

The Bailiff:

Are you able to answer that, Assistant Chief Minister?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I am sorry, I am not really understanding what the question is. Could you just repeat that, please, sorry?

The Bailiff:

Perhaps you were comparing 2 figures given at different meetings or in different circumstances and asking the Minister, I think, to explain the distinction or difference between them. Could you repeat the 2 figures, Deputy?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

27th August appendix 1 letter to the Scrutiny Panel, 1 square metre cost £4,497, including preliminaries, costs and risks. I think it was 7th September the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources stated £6,200 per square metre. What is the difference that happened within this time and was £6,200 included as an extra?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I would have to review my letter to get the context of those figures but I could put in the letter. It would appear that the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources and I were referring to different aspects of the scheme but I will clarify that. What we can be sure of is we will know the exact square metre costs of the project, as we have done all the way through and, again, it is an evolving and moving figure. But what we do know is that when we do have the final square meterage figure, when the final detailed planning application is ready, the costs will be within the accepted industry figures in brackets.