

FRIENDS OF OUR NEW HOSPITAL
P O Box 442
Jersey JE4 5RE

The Future Hospital Review Panel
Morier House
Halkett Place
St Helier
Jersey JE1 1DD

Via email & Post 19 January 2021

Dear Sirs

Re Review of the Preferred Access Route to Overdale

We are pleased to submit our review as follows:

I. Proposition P.167

The States are scheduled to consider the following Proposition at its sitting on Tuesday, 9th February 2021:

OUR HOSPITAL: PREFERRED ACCESS ROUTE
Lodged au Greffe on 14th December 2020
by the Council of Ministers

“THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion – to approve Westmount Road, as a two-way roadway with areas for active modes of travel, such as walking and cycling, as the preferred primary access option for a new hospital at Overdale. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.”

II. Summary of Friends of Our New Hospital Position on Overdale

The Council of Ministers (“COM”) have failed to adequately consider the implications of P.167. Until further information is provided, it is our view that consideration of P.167 must be deferred. Specifically:

1. P.167 fails to address the Future Hospital Review Panel’s Amendment to “Our Hospital Site Selection P.123/2020” passed by the Assembly on 17 November 2020. The Amendment specifically requires the COM:

“. . . to present a report to the States prior to lodging any proposition seeking the Assembly’s approval of the Outline Case for the New Hospital”

2. P.167 fails to address the Connetable of St Helier’s Amendment to “Our Hospital Site Selection P.123/2020” passed by the Assembly on 17 November 2020. The Amendment specifically requires the COM:

“. . . prior to its acquisition of land or properties required to facilitate access to the preferred site for the new hospital, to present to the States Assembly for approval a report on alternative access strategies designed to maximise sustainable modes of travel to and from the new hospital, and to minimize the impact on homes, leisure facilities and the surrounding environment”

3. P.167 fails to address the Comments by the Minister for Environment to “Our Hospital Site Selection: Overdale P.123/2020. Specifically, the Minister has made it clear that the site and plans for the new hospital will require planning applications. Appendix One to the Report accompanying P.123 states that three separate Planning Applications will be required for:

- “Demolition of Existing Overdale Hospital suite and residential building site and Bowling Club
- New Westmount Road and car parking along St Aubin’s Road at Peoples’ Park
- Main Hospital works.”

III. The Case for Deferring P.167

1. Impact of the Proposed Westmount Road Access

The Report accompanying P.167 incorporates a review carried out by Ove Arup & Partners (“Arup”). The review sets out 71 options for accessing the Overdale new hospital site. Arup recommends Option 7, described as “widening Westmount Road”, which is noted in blue in the following extract from P.167:



The recommendation has agreed by the COM. The proposal is not a simple plan to widen Westmount Road as described in the P.167 Report. The plan will irretrievably alter the area between Victoria Avenue to the top of Westmount Road opposite the existing Overdale Hospital site. There will be substantial alterations to the roads commencing at the Esplanade. St Aubin’s Road and Peirson Road will be widened, the parking on both roads eliminated and the trees lining St Aubin’s Road and Peoples’ Park removed. Starting at the junction with Cheapside, Westmount Road will be widened from 6m-8m to over 12m.



Peoples’ Park parking on St Aubin’s Road



Peoples’ Park childrens playground



Peoples’ Park above Playground



Jersey Bowling Club

The planned works will extend Westmount Road beyond the existing foot path in Peoples’ Park starting at Cheapside. The Children’s Playground will be eliminated. The road will then divert through the top end of Peoples’ Park and run straight through the Jersey Bowling Club. The Club will be relocated.



Gallow's Hill



Top of Westmount Road

The new access road will eliminate the park incorporating Gallows' Hill and the location of Major Peirson's troop rendezvous before the Market Square battle of 1781. The new road will then carry on to the present Overdale Hospital site. The entire road network from the Esplanade to Overdale will become a four-lane highway, unlike any road network in Jersey aside from the Esplanade itself.

P.167 makes the case that the proposed road widening is necessary for patient and emergency traffic. The reality is the widening is only needed for the HGV and other construction vehicles during the build phase of the new Hospital at Overdale. In answer to Connetable Crowcroft's Amendment to P.123, there must be another way to approach this without inflicting the planned permanent damage.

2. Transportation Policy

The COM has presented P.167 as a response to the Connetable of St Helier's Amendment and the request for:

"... a report on alternative access strategies designed to maximise sustainable modes of travel to and from the new hospital, and to minimise the impact on homes, leisure facilities and the surrounding environment ..."

In our view P.167 does not fulfil the requirements of the Amendment. The Report states that a vehicular solution is required but the possibility of a one-way system is not feasible. The Report ignores the fact that the General Hospital on Gloucester Street has been adequately serviced by a one-way road system for many years. The existing Westmount Road provides more than adequate access to the present Overdale Hospital:



Public bus routes to and from Overdale and St Helier have been operating frequently and satisfactorily for many years. Motor vehicle traffic also transits Westmount Road in significant numbers with a minimal accident. The are adequate pavements for pedestrians.

It is clear that the primary reason for the major road works outlined in P.123 and P.167 is to accommodate the requirements of ROK/FCC, the Hospital contractor, for HGV and equipment access. This requirement will not be needed when the new Hospital is complete. It is our view that rather than explore 71 options for an access

route to Overdale, ROK/FCC and Arup should develop alternative means of providing site access for their construction requirements.

3. The Acquisition of Private & Public Land Will be Extensive

P.167 does not refer to “Our Hospital Project: Acquisition of Land at Overdale P.129-2020” approved by the Assembly on 17 November 2021. P.129 states:

“In order to delivery Our Hospital on the Overdale Site, land currently outside public ownership will need to be acquired, either through negotiation and agreement or through compulsory purchase.”

P.129 Appendix 2 confirms the extent of the property under consideration for acquisition:



The property to be acquired includes the right of way for the proposed four-lane highway starting at the Esplanade, going through Peoples’ Park, the Bowling Club, Gallows’ Hill, the park land adjoining the upper Westmount Road, private residences on Westmount Road, two agricultural fields, residences between the two fields and the Jersey New Water Works headquarters.

P.167 seriously understates the number of properties that will be affected by the proposed Westmount Road Access plan:

“The proposed preferred primary access option minimises the impact of property acquisition for access purposes to three residential properties.”

A survey of property owners in the Westmount/Overdale area indicates that in addition to the three homes to be purchased noted in P.167 there that more properties will need to be acquired including up to 14 homes, two fields and the Jersey Water headquarters building and land.



Homes on Westmount Road Hill



Westmount Terrace Homes between fields



Field numbers opposite Overdale



Jersey Water Headquarters

4. Historic Sites & the Environment

The enlarged Westmount Road access plan will eliminate or seriously alter a number of historic sites, nature reserves and countryside as well as Peoples' Park. This is no mention of these amenities and sites in P.123, P.129 or P.167.



Major Peirson's Rendezvous Site (above)

Some of the park and nature reserve to be removed (right)



What does the COM plan to do about ameliorating the disruption?

5. Financial Implications of P.167 and P.123

P.167 and P.123 state that the financial commitment for site-specific costs will be £38.7 million. P.167 provides a further breakdown of £15.1 million for highway works and £23.6 million for other costs. In our view the costs have been underestimated. The COM needs to provide further details.

IV. Other Considerations

The Friends have these broader concerns:

1. The COM has failed to provide a design brief for the new Hospital;
2. The COM has failed to incorporate plans for separate Mental Health facilities in the Reports for P.123, P.129 and P.167.
3. The COM has failed to review the cost of building the new Hospital at other sites where construction could be started earlier and at a lower overall cost in comparison to Overdale.

4. The COM has not given due regard to the financing of the new Hospital and the long-term impact on the Government's projected debt.
5. The COM as failed to openly consult with the health community, the Assembly and the public regarding the Our Hospital Project since the project was relaunched by the Chief Minister in May 2019.

V. Conclusions

It is the view of the Friends that the Assembly should defer its debate on P.167 pending firm responses and further information from the COM.

We would be pleased to provide you with further information on our views. We thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully
FRIENDS OF OUR NEW HOSPITAL

Peter C Funk
Interim Chair

cc Friends Steering Group

A Non-Profit Organisation NPO1277
Email: Friends@ournewhospital.org.je
Website: <https://www.ournewhospital.org.je/>