

Dear Members of Scrutiny,

I am responding to your call for evidence over the proposed preferred access route to Overdale. I have grave concern regarding the use of Westmount Road for primary access.

The significant work and unknown costs that would be required for the proposed access route are difficult to justify on many grounds. A new hospital and its access should be developed on the most cost effective site, minimising impact on local residents and the environment. The site and its access does not achieve these ends.

Westmount Road has significant historical value and the access proposals will cause irreversible damage, and impact negatively on People's Park as a facility for the community. Who is going to want to use the park when it will be surrounded by roads with no parking facilities.

The compulsory purchase and demolition of various houses is unjustifiable as they are quality properties and this flies in the face of planning that opposes the demolition of suitable living accommodation.

I was shocked, concerned and appalled by the lack of time the States Assembly took to discuss the proposition of Overdale as the preferred option last November. There appears to be a lack of transparency and factual information, not only with the sites that were dismissed for a hospital, but also with regard any joined up thinking as to the costs of the proposed access route.

All members of the States Assembly and particularly scrutiny, should join the daily walks that start at 11am from People's Park and follow the proposed route so that they can see for themselves the devastation this access proposal will generate. This proposal appears to have been driven by a small group and rushed through with opposition cast aside. Such an approach does not serve the Island well and insults the population when poor decision making is allowed to reign in financial and environmental terms.

Given the work involved and the unknown costs of the proposed access route, it is highly unlikely that this project can be completed anywhere near the quoted budget. The impact on the bowling club; the amenity reduction of People's Park; destruction of the historic aspects of Westmount Road; the negative impact on people living in the new apartments opposite People's Park; destruction of homes and quality of life for local residents; negative impact on the local environment; traffic congestion due to the proximity of the crematorium and a complete disregard of the green Island plan are all aspects that should confine this proposal to the bin.

Pedestrians and cyclists will not walk up a very steep hill or steps, particularly if they are ill or aged, so there is going to be a significant increase of vehicles, parking for which means the destruction of two agricultural fields.

Jersey is facing a severe economic crisis following Covid 19 and spending on such a scale, particularly with the unknown costs of the proposed access route cannot be justified. More viable sites with better access that don't require compulsory purchase of homes seem to have been dismissed out of hand, compounded by the lack of information in the public domain. Anywhere in Jersey is easily accessible in an emergency, so why, with the costs involved (unknown in the case of the access road) and what appears to be the forcing through of this one site without proper debate has resulted in poor politics and leadership from those elected.

*The headline in today's local media: [Calls For Investigation Into Government Decision-Making 'Cabal'](#) and the call by the Head of Scrutiny for an investigation into how decisions are being made within Jersey's Government could not be more true with regard to the Overdale scenario and the ill thought through Westmount Road access route proposal.*

I do hope that scrutiny will be able to do its job and not be sidelined, as has been the case, whilst ensuring that common sense in financial, environmental and human terms is put to the fore. Interestingly, surveyors were working on the route yesterday and taking measurements so the forthcoming scrutiny review could already be seen to be compromised as more money is being spent on pursuing this access proposal even before the committee has responded to its investigation.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Cook, 19 Links Court, Grouville, Jersey.