



West of Town Community Association

68 King Street
St Helier
Jersey JE2 4WE.

To

The Future Hospital Scrutiny Review Panel

From John Baker – as Chairman of WOTCA – (the principle community group for the area)

Regarding Scrutiny undertaking a review of the Preferred Access Route to Overdale.

(Future Hospital)

Dear Scrutiny Panel

As you are no doubt aware I am quite active in the Parish of St Helier and also in the community generally but I write as Chairman of the West of Town Community Association (WOTCA) in addressing your questions emailed to me recently by Janice Hales, Committee and Panel Officer. So my answers and comments below relate to WOTCA. I should add that WOTCA was heavily involved in the community engagement which took place over the plans for a new Hospital at Gloucester Street and myself and my colleagues attended many meetings both public and private with the Future Hospital; team and were able to have significant input into the Future Hospital Group as it then was, led by Bernard Place. There has been a significant lack of communication from the Hospital team over both the proposed site, Overdale and access to it.

As you will see we have had no contact or dialogue whatsoever with Gov.I e.g.. Property services the new Hospital team or any other body in respect of either Overdale or Westmount Road approach to the proposed Overdale site.

To get to your questions, specifically

1. Were you consulted in regard to the proposed access route, if so, at what stages?

- A. Neither myself nor WOTCA have been consulted at any stage by any Government agency in respect of either Overdale or the Westmount, or any other route to Overdale.

2. How will you be affected by the proposed access route to Overdale?

- A. The many Routes to Overdale will have a significant impact on the residents of the area which we represent as a Community Association. Clearly we should have been consulted in such matters

3. Were you given the opportunity to request clarifications if required?

A. No as there has been no contact whatsoever

4. Are you content with the level of engagement you had from the OH Team and GoJ throughout regarding the proposed access route?

A. Clearly the answer is NO - I am Very Disappointed at the complete lack of consultation.

5. Do you feel the plans offer easy access using bus, bicycle or walking and take into account appropriate sustainable methods of transport?

A. No plans have been made available despite a personal request to the Hospital panel via a States member – I am therefore unable to form an opinion

6. How will the proposed access route change and impact on the work you currently undertake?

A. Again no detail has been given but there will be a significant impact on People's Park, Westmount, Victoria Park and surrounding areas – I am heavily involved in making improvements to the park having obtained £60,000 (from private funding) to refurbish the Children's play area spent some £8,000 planting spring Bulbs (Parish funds) and I have an ongoing interest, through WOTCA in the area.

7. What do you think the key challenges will be for the preferred access route?

A. To provide an access route, for purpose that does not impact local residents and take away amenity value of People's Park and Westmount. A difficult task but not impossible without consultation with the Parish and residents (via Associations such as WOTCA)

In respect of Community Planning - Could I remind the panel that:

Active **community participation** in project **planning** and implementation may improve project design through the use of local knowledge; increase project acceptability; produce a more equitable distribution of benefits; promote local resource mobilization; and help ensure project sustainability. Community planning would form part of the natural process of a similar planning application in the +UK – sadly Jersey is behind the times in this and as Chairman of the new Parish Council Environment Committee I hope to address this issue in the future as it will be a great benefit to the Island as a whole to bring this process in to our planning system.

Westmount Road width (12m?)

It must be pointed out that the designers of the route (ARUP) clearly have the build stage in mind having decided to make the (Westmount) road 12m wide and easily accessible by large vehicles as a specific priority. Whilst I accept that there are some challenges

The road width could easily be contained to 8m (currently around 6m) with the use of lorries of Jersey sizes rather than large and would be even more practical were a partial one way system be adopted, which would be a good compromise and reduce traffic volumes on the lower part of Westmount.

It should also be noted that travellers to the new Overdale hospital will be approaching from many other routes and a holistic approach should be taken to managing access (possible one way systems for instance) which could alleviate the problems of addressing the Westmount hammer to crack a nut plan that we are currently presented with.

It is also important to appreciate that the community will expect any amenity e.g. The Children's playground, the parking for commercial Vehicles to the East of Peoples Park. The facility of the bowling club and indeed the trees and street furniture to be not just compensated for but replaced.

Also, as there a number of trees at the edge of the park dedicated as memorials these need to be moved if these areas are required to expand the width of road and their memorial stones properly re-sited – e.g. the red oak sapling at the edge of the park commemorating when the park was saved from the hospital shortlist by a peoples protest. Note:- I have a personal interest in this as I was part of the group whom helped save the park and was personally responsible for the installation of this memorial. Clearly as the road will be much busier the playground should for health and safety reasons be moved further away from what will become a busy road – again not at the Parish's expense.

Lastly there is potential loss of biodiversity with many rare species e.g. raptors (barn owls etc.,) using the area. A full survey needs to be undertaken in this respect – An environmental impact assessment is a normal planning requirement. I have seen no mention of such.

Constable Simon Crowcroft's amendment to P123/2020 which was passed:-

P123/2020 Second amendment - Constable Simon Crowcroft

At the beginning of the proposition insert the following paragraph: "(a) 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 to the States Assembly for approval a report on alternative access strategies designed to maximize sustainable modes of travel to and from the new hospital, and to minimize the impact on homes, leisure facilities and the surrounding environment of the access interventions currently proposed;"

I hope that this (amendment) will be fully implemented and that we will not be fobbed off with a piecemeal attempt to side-line this. There are many options to make the route more viable and acceptable to the Parish as a whole and the residents in particular and I hope that some dialogue will take place both with the community and the Parish to make this a successful option. Community (and Parish) involvement in this project is vital in a modern democracy!

**John Baker
Chairman
The West of Town Community Association**