

4.4 Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding the progression of the Island Plan policy commitment in relation to the future development of the Port of St. Helier:

Will the Minister inform the Assembly whether he has progressed the Island Plan policy commitment requiring a feasibility study for the future development for the Port of St. Helier and produce a land use master plan for this regeneration zone? If not, why not? In its absence how will he avoid piecemeal development with its potential for adverse impact on the future development of St. Helier Waterfront?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel of St. Saviour (The Minister for Planning and Environment):

The Island Plan refers to a feasibility study, East Development and Elizabeth Project, which was carried out at the time by the Chief Executive Officer of the States. There is, in fact, no commitment within the 2011 Island Plan to produce a feasibility study of the port. However, the study produced by the Chief Executive Officer of the States will inform the work I will do in the regeneration plans, Island Plan Proposals 12. Work on the regeneration zones is presently underway and the study has been widened to include the areas of South Hill, Fort Regent and the Weighbridge areas, all of which present unique land use challenges and how the areas could and should be integrated. In the interim, however, the 2011 Island Plan has adequate policies, TT15 - "Operational development of the Port of St. Helier", to ensure that operational developments for the port can be permitted and to resist non-operational development. I recognise the Deputy's concern that piecemeal development could compromise the future development of the St. Helier Waterfront and port but believe that prior to the adoption of a regeneration plan for the port the Island Plan policies are adequate to enable me to resist inappropriate non-operational development.

4.4.1 Deputy J.H. Young:

I think the Minister has confirmed that this commitment is important to ensure that the future port facilities are in accordance with our long-term needs. He has told us that he is able to deal with developments in the existing port for now but will he tell us when he thinks this masterplan can be put together to ensure that we provide for the long-term of our port which is clearly a commitment in the Island Plan?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

Obviously I will be advised, and the department will be advised, by the Economic Development Department and others who have a specific responsibility for the port area. However, I must emphasise on page 315 of the Island Plan, under 8.159, that it reads: "Significantly, revenues from the current port operation cannot support a major capital improvement. A new port is, therefore, only achievable if it can be funded by the realised value of development in the Elizabeth Harbour area as part of the next phase of the redevelopment of the St. Helier Waterfront. Such significant change is not envisaged during the plan period but will be kept under review." For those persons who have seen the feasibility documents will note that the estimates of the redevelopment work were of the order of £1,200 million. Obviously with the other financial commitments that the Island is facing at the moment for strategic projects - that is hospital, liquid waste and housing - this does represent huge sums of money which, perhaps, eclipse the total of all monies that are going to be spent on those other projects. So, in short, the regeneration plan has been identified as being required at some point in time but not necessarily within the plan period which is the next 8 years.

4.4.2 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:

I am going to change my question because I was hoping that the Minister would tell us when this masterplan or regeneration plan will be brought forward and if his last comment is, it is going to take him 8 years; that is not good enough. Could he tell us when Members of the States and members of the Parish will see draft proposals for this area so that they can have some feedback into them?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

As I said the work is being undertaken at the moment in short order and the timetable is to present something to the States for the autumn quarter of this year.

4.4.3 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Could the Minister repeat the estimated cost of this? Was I hearing correctly £1.2 billion?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

Absolutely, and for those that do not like billions, because there is a difference between American billions and English billions, it is £1,200 million.

4.4.4 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Back to my original question. The Minister, I hope, will be familiar with the Island Plan amendment that agreed to carry out a feasibility study into allowing access to La Collette reclamation site in spite of the previous concerns about Buncefield. Could he advise what progress has been made either by his department or his colleagues at T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) in doing this feasibility study?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

I will give the Constable and the other Members of this Assembly a written answer to that effect.

4.4.5 Connétable P.J. Rondel of St. John:

Within the Island Plan and within the Waterfront area encompassing the Esplanade Quarter in P.111 of 2008 this House agreed at 40 to one that the Esplanade Quarter element of it would come back to this House at some future time for the Assembly to assess whether or not to move forward. Is that still in the Minister's mind when he is working on these plans?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

I think whether that does come back to the House or not is not necessarily within my remit and we did have an assurance from the Minister for Treasury and Resources in that regard that he would in fact do what was being asked for.

4.4.6 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

I can recall, going back probably over 30 years, many masterplans being made for this area at enormous expense and they have all either been abandoned or overtaken by events. Can the Minister assure us that we are not going to be spending a vast fortune on consultants only to have another report that sits on a shelf somewhere for 10 years and followed by another report and so forth?

[10:00]

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

I would agree with the Deputy, that is absolutely right and if one looks at my budget as to the monies that I have a remit to see that are being spent people will see that I do not have

substantial funds for masterplanning so obviously I will have to do whatever the money can afford and eke out the funds appropriately.

4.4.7 Deputy J.H. Young:

Despite the huge costs without a masterplan, as the Minister has confirmed, he or successive Ministers for Planning and Environment will have no choice to make piecemeal planning decisions in this area in the future. Could he give this Assembly an assurance that now we have the shadow board for the Ports of Jersey that he, as Minister, is working with that body to ensure these major issues are taken into consideration when these operational decisions are made?

Deputy R.C. Duhamel:

Members will know that the body has not received lands that are in the ownership of the States which would include the expansion areas into which a port may or may not be realised. Whether or not it is the long-term intention of the States of Jersey to pass over those lands to enable this new port authority to deliver a new port, bearing in mind that they have no monies to do so, is something that no doubt will be discussed at a future date within this Assembly.