

2019.03.26

15 Deputy K.F. Morel of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the impact of joining Liberation Square and Weighbridge Place on traffic in the area: [OQ.83/2019]

Given that, in 2007, the Minister's predecessor stated that joining Liberation Square and Weighbridge Place will only be achieved within a co-ordinated traffic plan, only possible once a new traffic remodelling system has been prepared and the implications are fully assessed, will the Minister confirm that such a co-ordinated traffic plan exists and, if so, advise what assessment it provides of the effects of the joining of the 2 squares?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Infrastructure):

In the summer of 2018, the department's traffic engineers inputted the Liberation 75 proposals into the department's traffic model, to assess the impact of the proposed road closure. The model predicted that journey times in the evening peaks would be extended by up to 6 minutes for vehicles exiting to the east, via the Weighbridge area. While delays were predicted, the model also determined that it would be possible to build the proposed works without gridlocking the road network. Further work was commissioned in 2019 on a micro-simulation traffic model, which is a more detailed model than the first one, which would give greater and more refined detail on the impacts of closing the road. As I have mentioned previously, in light of proposition P.34/2019 which calls for the cessation of the project, everything is on hold at the moment, except for the planning application.

3.15.1 Deputy K.F. Morel:

Given that the Minister's predecessor was talking about this project in 2007, could the Minister confirm when the current version of this project was given to the D.f.I. (Department for Infrastructure) to undertake and when the work was begun?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Originally, in 2007, that would have been 4 Ministers ago, so that would be the original Minister for what was then Transport and Technical Services. This is something that was decided upon by the previous Government, or should I say green-lighted by the previous Government and it came to my attention, just after my election as Minister for Infrastructure.

3.15.2 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Would the Minister confirm that it was him, who was the Minister for Transport and Technical Services, in 2007?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Indeed, following on from the Constable of St. Brelade, yes.

3.15.3 Deputy K.F. Morel:

I am just concerned that, given this has been going on since 2007 and in a briefing from the department I, among other Members, were told that there was not enough time to undertake public consultation properly on this matter; I am concerned as to why this is the case, given that we have a 12-year history to this project, why is there no proper public consultation taking place?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Things were done in a rush that is for sure. The immediate vicinity of the development was consulted, which were the major hotels that overlook the proposed square. There was some consultation with the Chamber of Commerce and it went public. It was the other week, when I went on to Radio Jersey to announce the project and the plans, which then became available for States Members and, I believe the following day, for the public of Jersey to view. As to why it was not done sooner, it did not appear on the radar.