

11 January 2021

## **Jersey's New Hospital Access Road.**

Dear Scrutiny Panel members,

I know that your remit is the selection of the access road to the new hospital. Please bear with me, I will come to that in a moment.

Over the past several years I have listened with increasing despair to the interminable debate over the new hospital and in particular, the matter of where it should be built. Everyone has a favoured site and I kept thinking this is all irrelevant, we have a hospital, at Gloucester Street, and we should be refurbishing and redeveloping its various parts to bring each up to modern standards. This process should have begun 25 years ago, of course, and it should be a continuous process. This is true of all large, complex, highly serviced institutions. Typically, The States of Jersey has not kept up maintenance or investment and now we are in a situation of all the parts reaching a point of desperation at the same time.

During a radio discussion during the morning of 16<sup>th</sup> December, on the access road to the Overdale Site for "Our Hospital" (how patronising is that moniker?), I heard Environmentalist Nigel Jones speaking with sense for the first time in this long and tedious saga. He spoke of the huge carbon footprint of this, the largest building project that Jersey has ever undertaken, measured in steel and concrete and the transport costs of bringing materials to the Island together with the vast amount of waste material that will go to landfill from the demolition of the Overdale buildings (and presumably the old hospital too). Mr Jones observed that he had not seen any attention paid to the environmental impact of the design of "Our Hospital".

Now we come to the **road**. We are witnessing the same lack of attention to the environmental impact of the new road that will need to be made in order to serve the hospital, but in the first instance, simply to construct such a large complex of buildings. It has been estimated that a heavy vehicle will ascend this road every eight minutes, to remove demolition waste or to deliver materials, for the duration of the contract.

As an environmentalist Mr Jones is rightly concerned about the impact that the proposals will have on our local and the global environment, pointing out that by the time the project is complete we will be close to the States of Jersey's Climate Neutral target date and we will have created an edifice that will have consumed more energy and produced more carbon than any project in Jersey's history. He also reminded us of the environmentalists' mantra REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE which, I realised, neatly describes the approach to this project that I felt we should be following and set out at the beginning of this letter.

I am also reminded of the changes that take place in all professional disciplines, including medicine. Nothing stays the same for ever. Are the changes proposed in the new care model the beginning of a greater evolution in health care? Do we really need a *new* hospital at all? If we do build a new "state of the art" hospital, it will be

beginning its journey into obsolescence from day one and in 25 years we will be having this conversation again.

Please listen to Mr Jones' contribution to the radio programme.

Yours faithfully,

Jeremy Barnes

Apartment 3  
2 Almorah Crescent  
Lower King's Cliff  
St Helier