

2.7 Deputy T.M. Pitman of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding funding from the Economic Stimulus package to help improve Fort Regent:

Would the Minister advise the Assembly why he has not made a bid to secure funding from the economic stimulus package to help kick-start any of the potential “quick win” projects identified at Fort Regent, all of which could be undertaken by local businesses?

Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

My department has not made a bid to secure funding for Fort Regent as I am not aware that any quick win type projects have been identified which meet the criteria of the economic stimulus package. I would like to add that if such projects have been identified by either the Deputy or the panel conducting a review of the fort, I have yet to be provided with that information.

2.7.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I would probably refer the Deputy to about 20 reports we have all been reading. They identify quite a few. These might range from lift access, simple things like signage showing people where to go, rejuvenation of the gardens, removal of outbuildings, creating a small heritage centre so people know the value of that building; surely all of these could have fitted into the policy and surely they are worth the Deputy moving on.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I absolutely want to see a plan developed at Fort Regent. However, I do not believe it would be a good use of public funds to invest in quick-fix solutions unless the expenditure could be demonstrated to support, indeed, an overall plan for the fort. The criteria established to meet the requirements of the economic stimulus package are designed to be timely, targeted and temporary, and I do not believe that this particular package enables us to progress matters at the fort.

2.7.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not acknowledge that despite his publicly expressed enthusiasm, this is a very sad road we are travelling? Would he not accept that there are interim measures that could be taken and we have waited with plan after plan for the mother of all plans and we have never ever got anywhere? Could we not use some of his undoubted enthusiasm, drive and energy to put in place an interim programme? Is the simple answer it was forgotten, it was overlooked and we have to somehow rationalise it?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am quite surprised that the Deputy has come to the conclusions that he makes when he is in the process of conducting a review on Fort Regent. I, like him, am very keen to see the issue progress and I wait with bated breath to see the completed report.

2.7.3 Deputy T.A. Vallois of St. Saviour:

I would like to ask the Education Minister whether as per the Minister for Planning and Environment’s views as to someone championing the actual Fort Regent he would take on this role of championing Fort Regent over the next 2 to 3-year period?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I have had already this discussion with my Ministerial team, and absolutely if there needs to be a champion for Fort Regent I am quite prepared to step up to the mark.
[Approbation]

2.7.4 Deputy K.C. Lewis:

As Fort Regent was primarily designed to keep people out, when they scrapped the cable car it did exactly that. Does the Minister not consider it a priority to install a scenic lift from Snow Hill straight into Fort Regent?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

All I would say is that if it is proved that a scenic lift is the right particular form of transport to access the fort, clearly that will happen.