

STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES ON TUESDAY 14TH JUNE 2015

A new hospital is desperately needed:

- the current buildings, plant and services are reaching the end of their lives
- the clinical environment does not meet current standards
- the buildings are either fully utilised or overcrowded.
- the ageing infrastructure is letting us down.

And as I've said before, our excellent and hardworking staff are trying to provide a first-class service within the confines of Victorian infrastructure. We need a new hospital to deliver the healthcare that the people of Jersey deserve and would wish to see for themselves and their families.

At the same time, we need to continue the expansion of community-based healthcare services – as approved by this Assembly in P82/2012 – to meet the challenges posed by an ageing population.

But I come back to the fundamental question – where to put the new hospital that is so desperately needed? Members of this Assembly and the people of Jersey told me that building the hospital on the People's Park was a step too far. That facts were never going to triumph over emotion. When the proposal was withdrawn, States Members indicated that they would work with us to deliver the much needed new hospital. My officers arranged workshops for States Members. These workshops explained the technical assessments and included discussions of the pros and cons of site options.

Nearly all Members attended one of the workshops or had a one to one briefing where they could give their views. What has become clear from Members is an acknowledgement that the future hospital should be seen as:

- 'a special case' as befits its status as...
- 'a special place' where...
- 'special events' happen.

They recognise that this is a 'once in a generation' decision. Therefore they said we should be prepared to look again at potential constraints – for example, planning rules when considering the height of any new building. Members agreed they would look sympathetically, within reason, at sensible ways of working with or removing these constraints if it meant a more acceptable solution could be forthcoming.

Operating within these new parameters has meant new thinking on our part.

The future hospital project team has come up with early stage proposals that would retain the hospital in the built up area of St Helier.

It would remain easily accessible to the bulk of the Island's population and those who work in it, while not infringing on the Island's open space. In proposing a way forward, we stressed that any successful project would need to:

- Maintain safe operation of the hospital during project delivery
- Deliver a new, fit-for-purpose hospital
- Be deliverable in eight years in a single main construction phase
- Be comparable in cost to 'clean' new build options.

The team has responded with a creative approach based on the general hospital site.

This involves developing the areas of the current site occupied by the Gwyneth Huelin Wing and Peter Crill House, together with some adjacent properties on Kensington Place. This cleared site would allow a whole new hospital to be built in a fast and efficient single main construction phase. There would be a distinct border between the area of construction and the continuing hospital. This would minimise disruption – far more so than under the earlier proposal.

Building on the existing site only works because it uses Patriotic Street multi-storey car park to enable easy direct access to the hospital on a number of levels from the car park. Therefore a smaller site, but higher building, would work on this site where it would not in other locations.

The proposal would deliver a new hospital – not a refurbished one – on a familiar and recognised site. I'm pleased to say that the Council of Ministers has given its support for this as the preferred site option. Further work will now be undertaken in the coming weeks as the future hospital team moves beyond the preliminary scoping work to finalise the proof of concept. Once this work is complete in a month or so, the intention is to lodge a Proposition confirming the preferred site. I will continue to liaise with the Scrutiny Sub-Panel as the project moves forward. The intention would be for enabling works to be undertaken in 2017-2018, with the main construction commencing in 2019.

To conclude, I'd like to thank all Members once again for their assistance.

I am determined to see us build a safe, sustainable and affordable hospital for Islanders on a site that has widespread political and public support.

- A future hospital that is:
- A safe place
- A special place
- A place which we can all be proud of.

Islanders expect nothing less.