

23.10.03

8 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of the Chief Minister regarding the role of the Jersey Development Company in delivering projects (OQ.191/2023)

Following the announcement that their outline application for the waterfront has been rejected, will the Chief Minister advise if Government will re-evaluate the role of the States of Jersey Development Company in delivering projects like this, and consider issuing alternative instructions for any future waterfront development, which include a greater proportion of affordable housing?

Deputy K.L Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (The Chief Minister):

As the chair of the Future Places Ministerial Group, I should highlight that the current waterfront scheme was first presented as a planning application in 2021 under the guidance of the previous Government. We all want to see progress made towards the redevelopment of the waterfront, providing much-needed homes, community facilities, open space and infrastructure improvements for St. Helier. The decision highlights to me that there is a wider issue of not historically being joined up on planning and infrastructure matters, a challenge which the Council of Ministers is determined to overcome considering all elements of how we have reached our current position and, indeed, that is why we have set up the Future Places Ministerial Group. We must work together to get the waterfront development right and deliver something that Islanders will enjoy and feel that reflects our modern community and its needs. The Future Places Ministerial Group will reflect on the outcome of this planning application in discussion with S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company), including discussing this matter at length when we meet later this week. We do, however, need time to carefully consider what was a detailed report by the planning inspector and the conclusions of the determining panel. These discussions will consider the viability of a greater proportion of affordable housing. This will of course need to be considered alongside the level of community infrastructure and investment that we must also deliver for St. Helier.

3.8.1 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The Chief Minister in her answer referred to the fact that this project began under the previous Government but she has been in office for a year and there have been plenty of decisions from the previous Government that she has overturned and this could have been one of them, saving us a year of reaching this outcome which many of us regarded as inevitable. So will the Chief Minister, having apparently taken no action whatsoever in this year-and-a-bit in office to prevent this happening earlier, will she give us any assurances that work will be done to ensure that the project, this failed project, which commands no public support is properly cast aside and replaced by something which Islanders can be proud of instead?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

I think that is exactly what I just said in my previous answer. If I could repeat what I said: the planning application was submitted in 2021, a long time ahead of the election. It was put together under the guidance of a previous Government and there is no opportunity, or there has been no opportunity for this current Government to engage and modify that since the election. The Deputy obviously has a slightly different view given his gesticulations and calling across the Assembly and I look forward to his next question.

The Bailiff:

Well, there will not be one because we come to question 9 the Connétable of St. Brelade will ask of the Chief Minister.