

STATES OF JERSEY

r

CHATEAU LA CHAIRE, ROZEL, ST. MARTIN: RESTORATION OF GARDENS

Lodged au Greffe on 14th October 2003
by the Connétable of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to agree that no public funds from the Tourism Development Fund should be allocated to the restoration of the gardens at Château La Chaire, Rozel, St. Martin, until a full business case supporting the expenditure has been presented to the States by the Economic Development Committee and the expenditure has been approved by the Assembly.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

Having presented to the States a petition with 17,000 signatures in support of the Millennium Town Park project I am at a loss to understand the decision of the Tourism Development Fund to commit funding to the redevelopment of a private garden in the grounds of a hotel on the north coast while the former project, notwithstanding its overwhelming support from both the public and the States (as the Island's preferred 'Millennium Project'), remains completely dormant.

At the time of the approval of the establishment of the Tourism Development Fund there was a great deal of discussion and debate about the benefits to the tourism industry of the expenditure of significant capital sums, and I have no argument with the principle involved. At the same time, with the spectre of new taxes being raised to cover States' spending, it might be argued that the wisdom of proceeding with such expenditure should be revisited by the States.

In any event, if such a large amount of taxpayers' money is to be expended on the 'garden project', in preference to its being expended on a project in the town centre (where it is likely to be appreciated by a greater number of tourists than could be the case in the Château La Chaire), at the very least the States, and the public, should be provided with robust arguments that this represents the best use of such funds in order to enhance our tourism industry and the Assembly as a whole should approve the expenditure.

There are no financial and manpower implications arising out of this proposition but, for the reasons stated above, I believe that the financial and other consequences of rejecting this proposition could be extremely serious.