

3.1 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour of the Minister for Planning and Environment regarding the lowering and re-routing of La Route de la Liberation:

Will the Minister advise whether it is envisaged that when La Route de la Liberation is sunk, the road will be redirected through Les Jardins de la Mer and if this is the case, will the Minister give assurances that the gardens will be recreated?

Senator F.E. Cohen (The Minister for Planning and Environment):

The Hopkins master plan is in the final stages of completion. I have seen the work in progress 10 days ago and it is simply stunning. The plan rests on the lowering of the highway that presently separates the town from the Waterfront. The area comprising Les Jardins, Esplanade Square and the present road is treated as one. The new area will have 3 new public squares and many smaller public areas in total the size of 3 Royal Squares. In addition to this, the present Weighbridge area will be replaced with a Hopkins-designed soft landscape public area incorporating the proposed National Gallery. The Hopkins master plan does involve excavating the Les Jardins garden area. However, as part of the development agreement, the Les Jardins gardens will be reinstated with a Hopkins-designed new public garden at the developer's cost. The Hopkins master plan will be presented to the States' Members in the coming weeks. The whole of the Hopkins master plan will be taken to the States for debate in the autumn of this year. I will only bring forward the Hopkins master plan on the basis that it delivers a lowered road paid for by the developers at no risk to the States in addition to a significant capital payment to the States much of which must be used to reinvigorate the town.

3.1.1 Deputy K.C. Lewis:

A supplementary, Sir? Would the Minister confirm that the La Fregate cafeteria will remain untouched?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

Absolutely, Sir.

3.1.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

The Minister mentioned "at the developer's cost". Either now or in the future, will the Minister reveal what the developer's profit margin is likely to be?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

That will not be for me to reveal because the negotiations clearly are between the Waterfront Enterprise Board and the developer. What I can assure Members is that a complete package will be presented to Members in the run-up to the debate on the Hopkins master plan that will apprise them of all the necessary details in relation to the financial package.

3.1.3 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement:

I notice the Minister referred to a National Gallery being built. When will Members have full details of that matter?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

At the time that the Hopkins master plan is presented to the States.

3.1.4 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:

Would the Minister confirm that, in fact, the question should be "if" rather than "when" the road is sunk and that this matter is all due to be debated. Would he also confirm that there must be full public consultation into these extremely major proposals for the town?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

As far as I am concerned the only solution for the Waterfront is to lower the road. There is no question of "if". It is "when" and I can confirm that there will be a full consultation, a full presentation to States' Members and States' Members will have the opportunity of expressing their views on all matters relating to the Hopkins master plan.

3.1.5 Deputy G.P. Southern:

When the proposals come forward for the National Gallery, will they come complete with the future running costs and the need for public subsidy that is usually the case in small museums elsewhere?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

I think that a National Gallery is something that we should all aspire to. Anyone who has knowledge of small galleries that have been established in recent years in other places will know the extraordinary economic benefit that can be derived from such investment but I can confirm that the full details of the running costs will be presented to States Members at an appropriate time.

3.1.6 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Supplementary, Sir. The Minister mentioned the economic benefits associated with small museums. Will he give me and other Members such details?

Senator F.E. Cohen:

A National Gallery, or a significant gallery of any sort, gives residents pride in their community. It gives them the ability to see works of art that otherwise they would have had no opportunity to see. It has tourism benefits. You only have to look at the work, the increase in numbers in St. Ives to give you an idea of just what difference it can make to the numbers of people coming to our jurisdiction.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

If I may, Sir, my question may not have been clear. I did intend to say economic benefit and in writing.

Senator F.E. Cohen:

Could I ask for the question to be repeated because I have not understood it?

The Bailiff:

Well, I thought you had answered it but the question was...

Deputy G.P. Southern:

I did intend that the Minister explain to Members, with examples which he mentioned, of the economic benefits in writing of exemplars of small museums being good for the economic well-being of the Island.

Senator F.E. Cohen:

I think the Deputy has led to the correct way to answer the question, which is that I will prepare a paper and distribute it to Members.

3.1.7 The Connétable of St. Helier:

I broadly support the Minister's proposals and I would not want to see any further delay in implementing the Waterfront master plan but I was troubled in his answer to my previous question where he appeared to be suggesting that there would be no public consultation into these proposals and that would seem to me to be an error, given the amount of public involvement there has been in the past.

Senator F.E. Cohen:

That is not what I said at all. I said there would be full consultation, including full presentations to States Members. I am planning on endeavouring to deliver an interim update to Members before the recess and then a fuller presentation from Sir Michael Hopkins to explain the proposals. There will be a very full and frank consultation and there will be significant details made available to Members, some of which may, for commercial reasons, have to remain in confidence but Members will certainly get all the necessary information.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Sorry, Sir, point of clarification. I am looking for that word “public”.

Senator F.E. Cohen:

I have given the undertaking that has been requested. There will be full consultation. That will be public and States Members. I cannot really say any more.