

I have not yet met one person that agrees it's a good idea to locate the new hospital at Overdale let alone spend £804 million pounds to achieve it.

There is a very good reason why we need a modern hospital. The old one was so badly maintained that it was only a matter of time before someone came up with an ingenious plan to build a new one. (Perhaps it was to give ROK some purpose in life, who knows.)

However the plan was ill-conceived from the outset.

It is unbelievable that any person of sound mind would choose a site such as Overdale with its difficult and historic access.

Many people think that the site selection process was skewed by persons unconnected with the Island. Otherwise how else would they come to the conclusion that Overdale was better than say St Saviours Hospital or Warwick Farm?

Then there was the tender process. Hardly the most transparent piece of work. Even FOI requests have failed to produce the reasons why ROK was chosen as the preferred candidate. And who were the other candidates and what did they offer? Why was the French company that offered to build it for far less not considered based on their record of hospital building projects.

The tender sum is £550 million but to this is added a massive £250 million contingency sum. The writer has some experience of building projects organized by the States and has never seen such a huge sum of money as a contingency. Could it be that the tenderer cannot be sure what they will find when they start the development and have included this sum to cover themselves.

All in all it just doesn't make sense.

Next we have the problems with access. Westmount Road is full of history yet the Project Team seem totally oblivious to this. The Bowling Club that has existed there for 100 years will be bulldozed as part of the project. As part of progress. But this is collateral damage if we want a new hospital it would seem! It is disgraceful.

The road needs to be widened for no apparent reason but the planners think it's necessary. Another nonsensical observation.

We now find that the site is not big enough, so it is planed to sprawl it over the road into the field that has been growing new potatoes for hundreds of years. More collateral damage.

A few houses were planned to be compulsorily purchased as part of the development. Now it seems they need more and I have lost count of how many homes have gone.

It now seems a deal has been done with jersey Water to demolish their premises too. Everything has a price it would seem.

The irony is that states members did not even discuss the project but just voted to 'get it done'. But is that what we all want? Are they having a change of heart now but have been told not to say anything.

I'm not sure we actually voted members into the House not to say anything. We voted them in to look after the best interests of the Island and to spend our money wisely.

They have failed on both counts.

What we need is for pause to happen NOW. To take stock of where we are, to consider if the best decision was made before any more money is spent.

If necessary the project should be stopped and al, the work done moved to another more appropriate site.

We should make this a project for the people and approved by the people. Anything else is not democracy.

**Paul Troalic**