

2024.09.10

## **2.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the role of the Jersey Development Company in the redevelopment of Fort Regent (OQ 166/2024):**

Will the Minister clarify the role of the States of Jersey Development Company in the redevelopment of Fort Regent, including details of who will finance any work, under which specific budget it will fall, what deliverables have been agreed with the company, and when the Assembly will have sight of any proposed plans?

### **Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John (The Minister for Infrastructure):**

I thank the Deputy for her question. The Fort is at a crossroads in its life, and successive Governments have grappled with bringing forward a viable plan that will ensure its future as an asset for Islanders and visitors to enjoy. We are working along similar lines to the previous Government. At the Regeneration Steering Group's first meeting in May this year, it was agreed that the States of Jersey Development Company would take on the role of project manager to develop new plans aimed at breathing life back into Fort Regent in a way that is both sustainable and viable. At this time, States of Jersey Development Company's role is to progress plans for essential refurbishment works to the structure, while simultaneously developing a viable plan for its future use, which will be consulted on. That planning work is being funded by the States of Jersey Development Company, utilising the remaining funds from the College Gardens development, and the longer-term funding for the delivery of the project remains under consideration and will be brought to the Assembly in due course.

### **2.4.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Could the Minister confirm whether all the land currently comprising Fort Regent will remain under public ownership once the regeneration of Fort Regent begins, and whether any part of it is planned to transfer to S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company)?

### **The Connétable of St. John:**

It is my belief that all of the land will belong to the Government. There have been no discussions about transferring any of the land.

### **2.4.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

What consultation or input will the likes of Jersey Heritage and perhaps other organisations, like the National Trust, but predominantly the former, have in the plans for developing or regenerating Fort Regent?

### **The Connétable of St. John:**

The organisations mentioned by the Deputy clearly are key stakeholders. The Fort is not only a great asset to us, it is an important historical monument for the Island. In fact, it is one of the best examples in Europe. We will be consulting widely with key stakeholder groups, including the 2 mentioned by the Deputy, and a wider group as well.

### **2.4.3 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Has consideration been given to the somewhat radical idea of reverting Fort Regent to become primarily, and perhaps even exclusively, a historic fort and nothing else?

### **The Connétable of St. John:**

I believe that the Fort can provide a lot more than being an historic monument. There is lots of opportunity for both Islanders and visitors alike at the Fort, and for us to maintain the Fort and make sure that it is viable, we need to make sure that it is revenue incoming, thank you.

### **2.4.4 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:**

The Minister said that the project would use funds from the College Garden development. Does the Minister agree it would be better for S.o.J.D.C. to return profits from any developments to the Government who could then redisperse either to S.o.J.D.C. or other developers for Fort Regent with greater transparency?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

It is an interesting question. We were looking for funding for this project and we have identified the monies from the College Gardens development as being suitable to carry on with the work. What we want to do is proceed as quickly as we possibly can.

**2.4.5 Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

Will the Minister commit to ensuring then that any proposed costs borne by the States of Jersey Development Company for feasibility, planning and predevelopment work are published in advance of that work and shared with Members of the States Assembly, in the same way that feasibility projects within the Government are on page 54 of the Budget 2025?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

I think that is an important point that the Deputy raises. As I mentioned earlier, the longer-term funding for the delivery of the project remains under consideration before it is brought back to the Assembly, and I would imagine when it is brought back to the Assembly we will explain what has been spent by this Government to date.

**2.4.6 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:**

Does the brief given to the S.o.J.D.C. include the return of sport to the Fort and, if so, in what capacity?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

It is certainly my intention that there will be an element of sport at Fort Regent. I think it is too early to say the details of that but certainly I know an area that the Deputy and I are both keen on is having some skate facility in St. Helier, and that is certainly part of the brief.

**2.4.7 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Does the Minister believe that there is still a need for large, flexible indoor public spaces such as those currently provided at the Fort by the Queen's and Gloucester Halls for our sporting community as well as for others?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

I do.

**2.4.8 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:**

Following the brief that was given to S.o.J.D.C., the brief identified that the ramparts and outdoor spaces will continue to be freely accessible as a public space in St. Helier.

**The Connétable of St. John:**

The ramparts give a great opportunity to view both the east and west of the Island as well as St. Helier, and I would like to think that they would get far more usage from both residents and visitors alike.

**2.4.9 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

The question was: would it be continued in the brief to be freely accessible whatever development will be done?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

Discussions about the funding for Fort Regent are ongoing. Thank you. Ideally, it would be free, but I cannot make that commitment today.

**2.4.10 Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Has there been consideration to any other publicly-owned land that would be beneficial for S.o.J.D.C. to support the Government with their regeneration plans?

[10:00]

Could the Minister provide an idea of what these could be?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

Today we are talking about Fort Regent, and that is what I am here to talk about.

**The Bailiff:**

Yes, I was about to say that was, I think, so perilously close it actually crossed the line to not being directly relevant to the question, so I do not allow that.