

3.3 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the Northern Sewer Network Upgrades (OQ.82/2026).

Will the Minister advise whether any traffic and road-safety impact assessment has been undertaken of the Northern Sewer Network upgrades, hospital construction works and other planned developments in St. Helier North and if so, will he publish it; and if not, will he commission such an assessment, including consultation with residents and schools, before further temporary traffic arrangements are approved?

Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I thank the Deputy for the question, which I think gets to the point of the cumulative nature of the work that is going on in that area of the Island. There is no single cumulative impact assessment covering all the planned works that are underway in St. Helier North, but cumulative traffic road safety and access impacts are considered through the assessment and approval of each individual scheme. In other words, each scheme must take account of what is already going on in putting forward its own traffic management plan. This approach has been applied to both the Northern Sewer Network upgrades and the hospital project, and officers will continue to co-ordinate future traffic arrangements and engage with affected stakeholders as works progress. On that basis, I do not propose to commission or publish a separate overarching assessment, but would reassure Members and the public that the nature of the interactions between the different schemes are fully considered.

3.3.1 Deputy V. Li:

First of all, I thank the Minister for visiting Abbey Close, and that really gave the residencies the reassurance. I also visited the site yesterday trying to understand whether the commitment from the contractors that they are pushing forward with the works faster and also the ... I was delighted to see that the parking issues have all been solved as well. Considering how much effort that we have been putting together as Deputies from St. Helier North, Connétable and also yourself, will the Minister agree that this kind of approach taken at the Abbey Close, meeting residencies on site before restrictions take effect, should become the standard for all works in St. Helier North or even further across the Island? If not we are going to have the cumulative assessment, will he commit to that?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I have a vision of my diary suddenly filling up with meetings for every traffic scheme in the Island. I would commit to maintaining an engagement with all the representatives in the areas and with residents, whether it is through me or through officers. I have further meetings planned in the north to do with the northern sewer upgrades connection with meeting businesses who have been affected and also a separate meeting with residents. I have a meeting tomorrow night with residents in St. Peter's in connection with that scheme. I am trying my best to stay across these issues. I think the Deputy's question to me though raises an important point, which is that these schemes are dynamic. They change and the adjustments change in response to that.

[10:00]

So these schemes are continually adapting to the changed circumstances. I am very pleased and grateful to the Deputy for her work in co-ordinating with the residents of that particular area in St. Helier North that I visited at the end of last week. Because I think that shows how we can adapt schemes when we understand the particular concerns that people have in a particular area. I will certainly commit to continuing to try and do that to the best of my ability.

3.3.2 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

First of all, I would like to say thank you to the Minister, because the Minister did engage, and also to his team that attended the public meeting as the first instance. I am welcoming further meetings that will be put in place. My one question is very quick, if the Minister has a response. Work area 8 by Greenacres and

Sion is due to finish mid-October but we know that it is delayed, do we have final revised day and how residents will be told.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think the Constable is referring to what is known as phase 1(b) of the works, which was delayed by a conflict that was identified with a Jersey water main, and that led to a stop work notice being issued to the contractors because the conflict with the water main was meant that it was unsafe to work without the risk of damaging that water main. I have to say the co-operation with Jersey Water was excellent. They attended immediately and a new water main was put on the surface ... a temporary water main on the surface and every property connected up, and work was restarted earlier this month in fact with that having been done. So the answer to the Constable's question is that the current total completion date for that area, we think is going to be the end of May, and that is a slight improvement on the end of June, which is what we thought when this conflict was first identified. So the end of May is the current conclusion date.

3.3.3 The Connétable of St. Helier:

As the Minister indicated, everything is dynamic, so we expected to end mid-October, now it is May, but this is going back to Deputy Li's question, how we ensure that the new traffic management plan would be created for that part of the Island. Because the beginning of the hospital construction now will meet with the major roadworks in St. Helier that were not planned to be undertaken at the same time. So there are 2 schemes now coming together. Would the Minister present to residents, to Deputies, to the public, how these 2 teams will interact now?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Well, I can certainly say that the officers connected with the hospital project and with the infrastructure teams will be liaising very closely to ensure that we make sure that the projects are co-ordinated. I would make a broader point. I understand the disruption is considerable for residents and it is going on longer than we anticipated, and that is obviously very difficult for the people concerned, and I apologise for that. But these works are, first of all, essential. I think everybody accepts that. It is work that has to be done. We are catching up with backlogs. We are also trying to enable essential developments to take place and so on. So I think that is important to say. But I think the other important thing to say is that although projects like this reveal themselves and experienced by the public as extreme disruption, they are routine in the sense of officers dealing with these kinds of matters. It is not unusual for major infrastructure projects to overlap. We often have private developments take place alongside public developments, and the aim is to continually monitor them, continually assess what is happening in each one. Traffic arrangements change for each one on a week-by-week, sometimes day-by-day basis. We will stay across it. I do commit to stay involved and in contact with Members of the Assembly who bring problems to me, and I will do my very best to ensure that we deal with them.

3.3.4 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John:

The Minister confirmed that there was some 7 public meetings held before works commenced, and will he also agree with me that it is not good in 2026 to have 28 per cent of homes in St. Mary, 26 per cent of homes in Trinity, and 23 per cent of homes in St. John not connected to mains drains when there are only 2 per cent in St. Helier?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I will take the Constable's word for the 7 meetings; I was not Minister at that time. But in relation to the broader question, I think it is certainly important that we do extend the networks. The drains network is obviously under our control directly. The water network is under the control of Jersey Water, but we obviously also have significant influence. I think that is a question that will be addressed through Investing in Jersey and the Capital Investment Fund, and I very much hope we are able to see some progress.

3.3.5 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

I wondered if the Minister would give some thought to whether or not we are now at a point where they may need to be a strategic review of all of the arrangements around construction and infrastructure works in that area. Given that we have got the upgrade to the sewer network, we have got the hospital construction site coming on, it seems to me as though we have got quite a lot of people trying to replace a lightbulb, and I just wonder whether or not to co-ordinate and make sure that there is a better oversight and co-ordination of the works, that there is room for some discussion or even exploration as to whether there is a different way to undertake this work?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think I have addressed quite a bit of that in the answers I have already given. I think there are 2 levels to address this at. One is at the level of officer working, which is the level of making sure that the right people are talking to each other, they are following the processes, which by the way are available on the Government website. So you can see what the process is that the officers go through. I think the other aspect of it is political in the sense that it is clear from questions and the correspondence I receive that this is a significant public issue. Deputy Andrews just suggested an idea that I might meet regularly, maybe once a month, with representatives of the affected areas. I think that could be one potential way of doing it. I think the key thing is that most of these things get resolved when we keep talking, and certainly that was the case in relation to Abbey Close. It was a period of intense engagement, and my inbox was happily empty this morning on Monday when that particular closure took place. So I would hope that we can manage it that way, and I hope the Deputy can see that there is plenty of work going on to try and ensure that we do respond to people.

3.3.6 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I understand the position that the Minister has taken in relation to resolving issues on a one-to-one basis at this moment in time, but we are about to enter a phase of development that is significant for the Island in terms of accommodation, transport, building works, connections across the Island for people getting to school, work, *et cetera*, and also supplies coming into the Island. Would he give some thought as to whether or not the current processes that he outlines are sufficient, or does he believe that there is time for a strategic review of how we are going to manage this going forward?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think I can happily commit to the first part and perhaps express more caution about the second. I do think the Deputy is raising an important point here. There is going to be a lot of work going on, and I think we need to accept it is going to be disruptive. There is absolutely no question about it. Building the biggest construction project in the Island's history is going to involve disruption. It is going to be difficult for people, and I fully understand and accept that. The question of whether we should strategically review that is one I would hesitate with. I think the processes we have in place to manage the conflicts that will arise are good, and I would rather have a dynamic response rather than one that sits at an overarching strategic level which would quickly potentially become out of date. So I would rather go down the route that I have suggested. As the Deputy referenced in the first part of her question, I will continue to give thought to the matter and to respond as the situation develops, but that is the best I can offer at the moment.

The Bailiff:

Final supplementary, Deputy Li? No?