

MEDIA RELEASE

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La Mare de Carteret Schools to get much-needed rebuild

The Education Department has published its long-awaited plans for the redevelopment of La Mare de Carteret Schools site.

Plans to rebuild the schools were first approved by the States in 2002 and were finally prioritised for funding in the States Capital Prioritisation Debate last year and reconfirmed as a priority pipeline project by the Assembly earlier this year.

The Department is proposing to rebuild both La Mare de Carteret High School and La Mare de Carteret Primary School on the current school site, and in line with States wide strategic aims and objectives, social policies and resource and land-use plans, we have also included additional sporting, special needs and community facilities.

‘The full details of what we are proposing to build is included in the States Report which will be debated at the end of November but what I want to highlight is that I believe this regeneration of La Mare de Carteret site will positively benefit everyone across the Island in some way or another,’ said Education Minister, Robert Sillars.

‘The schools take pupils from seven of our ten parishes, the new communication and autism base will be for children with these difficulties from across the Island, the proposed pre-school will fill a much needed gap in this part of the Castel parish and the community facilities and enhanced indoor sports facilities will also fulfil an identified need.’

The Culture and Leisure Department has supported the plans to provide enhanced indoor sports facilities for club and match level play for netball, basketball and volleyball.

‘The Culture and Leisure Department is very pleased that the Education Department is thinking beyond its own mandate in regard to this development, and we share that commitment to ensuring that the broader objectives of the States also form an important consideration,’ said Culture and Leisure Minister, Mike O’Hara, in a letter of support for the proposals.

‘Overall, the proposed facilities represent a key step in opening up school venues to the wider community. As detailed, they support sports development in the Island and help underpin the aims of the Culture and Leisure Department and the wider objectives of the States.’

Education Department Board Members acknowledge that not all States Members are currently supportive of the proposals.

‘As a Board we were surprised and disappointed to see Treasury and Resources’ letter of comment on our proposals,’ said Deputy Sillars.

‘It has taken us a long time to get to this point; we have reviewed the need for these two schools, considered many other options for providing the places required, scrutinised and

questioned our decisions and worked through the comprehensive States project planning and business justification process to get to where we are today,' said Deputy Sillars.

'I am delighted that the Treasury & Resources Department's independent Project Assurance Review has recommended that "this is an exceptionally well planned and managed project with strong stakeholder support providing a compelling business justification for proceeding". This makes the content of their letter even more surprising.

'We recognise that we have not yet convinced the Treasury and Resources Board of the compelling case for this project and are working hard to address all of T&Rs outstanding questions.

'However, all five members of the Education Board are determined to fight for this and deliver on the promises made to the children of La Mare de Carteret schools, their parents and the staff and also the many future generations of children that will reap the benefits from the facilities that these new schools will provide for the next sixty years and more.

'We mean what we say when we talk about wanting to provide equality of opportunity, centres of excellence and an inclusive education system that puts our children at the heart of what we do. We are also determined to ensure that our plans provide value for money for the Island as a whole. The redevelopment of the La Mare de Carteret schools is not extravagant, it's not 'gold-plated', it's not too big and it's not too soon. We can afford it, we must afford it; it is what these children and future generations deserve and we believe we have made a compelling case for this project to go ahead,' said Deputy Sillars.

Note to Editors: members of the media are invited to attend at La Mare de Carteret Schools at 9.30am on Thursday 16th October when the Minister, the two headteachers, students/pupils and project team members will be available for interview. You will also be able to film/photograph the schools at this time. Please note all interviews are subject to the embargo.