



Government of Bermuda

Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism

Ministerial Statement

To the House of Assembly

by

The Hon. Jamahl Simmons, JP, MP

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism

The St. Georges Hotel Development Update

Friday, December 8th 2017

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to update this Honorable house with the progress of the hotel development in St. Georges.

For years the residents in the East have been holding out hope that some form of development would take place, which in turn could assist with reviving the ole town that will provide much needed jobs at the new hotel – from entry level to management. This development should also encourage existing businesses to prepare for the additional customers and offer opportunities for budding entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, the progress has been visible – the commitment to hiring Bermudian professionals is genuine – and the pledge to the people of St. Georges, and Bermuda's overall tourism product, is becoming more of a reality each day.



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Mr. Speaker, on the technical side, since the last update the developers have confirmed that there have been numerous soil tests, with excavation and road works well underway. In fact, there are several photos of the project posted on social media (Facebook) by area residents who are seeing progress on a daily basis.

To address and facilitate the first phases – and produce a lasting ‘roadworks’ product - Barry Road has undergone realignment, surface improvements and asphaltting. A Bermudian company, G.L Construction, was engaged by the developers and contracted to carry out this work. I would commend G.L Construction on a job well done!

Mr. Speaker, in addition to all of the roadworks the ‘Hotel Excavation and Fill’ process is well underway. I’ve had the pleasure of touring the site with the developers to witness this progress. I must say **Mr. Speaker**, it is exciting! We are well beyond the shovels-in-the-ground phase. We are now seeing real-time activity and that’s just what we have committed to deliver.

In January another Bermudian company, Crisson Construction Ltd., will begin the ‘piling’ phase. For those who may not know what a pile is, I can say it is simply a long cylinder made from a strong material such as steel that is hammered into the ground – then filled with concrete. These piles will steady support for structures built on top of it. Once the piling has been completed, the foundation works for the hotel will proceed. The progress beyond this point will be very noticeable.



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Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind area residences that the hammering of the piles does make a bit of noise. Fortunately, there aren't many residents in the direct vicinity of the piling area – but I would still like to prepare them for any added noise they may hear. The piling is expected to last for around three months.

In the first weeks in the New Year, the very foundation of a once-forgotten land will be formed. Simultaneously the site will be thoroughly prepared for the next construction phases and that implies the ring-fencing of the site, the installation of facilities for the work force, offices for the technical teams, workshops and warehouses.

Mr. Speaker, I had been made aware of concerns raised at a recent public meeting between residents and the hotel developers about the access to St. Catherine Beach. As Minister I wish to reiterate to my Honorable colleagues and the general public alike that Gates Beach, more commonly referred to as Fort St Catherine Beach, will remain open and accessible to the public, as it is stated in St. George's Resort Act 2015 – that the public shall have, free of charge, reasonable access to any beach and foreshore on the property. Let me be clear: This is a public beach. The developers are aware of this and supportive of its use by all.

I want to ensure all, that this Government and the developers remain open to keep the St George's residents and their constituency Members of Parliament apprised as the development progresses.



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Mr. Speaker, building a world-class tourism product is one of the reasons Bermuda became known for tourism. It was not just the developments of hotels, restaurants and golf courses – but a showcasing of our culture and our people.

Mr. Speaker, this development celebrates those things in clear ways, as it brings to Bermuda a renowned hotel brand, operated by a world leading hotel operator.

Through the investment in the bricks-and-mortar projects and roadworks, to the investment in our people by creating hundreds of jobs in multiple industries, we are poised to return Bermuda to the tourism apex – not just by creating jobs, but by enriching an industry and, in doing so, our islands culture.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to updating this Honorable house in the New Year with further developments at this site. The developers and my Ministry remain in constant contact and are committed to progress. We are excited of the developments to date and extremely optimistic that we will see those professional renderings become a reality for Bermudians and visitors to enjoy.

This Government is unwavering in its commitment to St. Georges, her people, and all of Bermuda.



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Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**