

**MAGISTRATE'S COURT, UNION STREET, ST. HELIER: APPROVAL OF DRAWINGS**

---

**Lodged au Greffe on 5th November 2002  
by the Finance and Economics Committee**

---



**STATES OF JERSEY**

**STATES GREFFE**

150

2002

P.202

Price code: B

## PROPOSITION

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion -**

(a) to approve revised architects' drawings Nos. -

B/2002/0260/

A: Location plan  
D: North elevation  
L: Section C  
R: North elevation  
T: Union Street elevation  
AA: Landscaping  
CC: Section D-D  
DD: Section B-B  
EE: Section E-E  
FF: Section F  
GG: Ground floor plan  
HH: Mezzanine floor plan  
II: First floor plan  
JJ: Second floor plan  
KK: Roof plan  
LL: Lemprière Street elevation  
MM: Section A  
NN: West elevation

showing the proposed Magistrate's Court and Probation Offices;

(b) to authorise the Greffier of the States to sign the said drawings on behalf of the States.

**FINANCE AND ECONOMICS COMMITTEE**

## Report

The No. 1 Magistrate's Court (the old Police Court) has been in continuous operation for over 100 years and in this century of use, society has changed beyond recognition. The prevalence of drug-related crime and its increasing seriousness coupled with public order offences, offences involving paedophiles and crimes of violence means the present accommodation is no longer able to cope with the work for which it was originally intended.

It is also becoming increasingly difficult to reconcile the present accommodation with the legislation on health and safety, the impending Human Rights legislation and valid concerns on security of Magistrates, staff and the general public.

Operationally there are very real concerns regarding the application of justice within all jurisdictions. Sir John Stevens, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, has said that the failure to protect the interests of victims and witnesses was leading to "a public disengagement from the courts". This situation leads to less detected crime and more failed cases, which in turn leads to the reinforcement of the offenders' confidence to commit more crime. Senior officers launching a campaign to reform the Criminal Justice system quote a case where the mother of a murdered child was left to sit inches from the man who admitted killing him as there were no separate facilities within the courthouse.

The current Magistrate's Court facilities cannot provide separate facilities for the defence and prosecution witnesses for most cases. The Youth Court suffers particularly as the only acceptable accommodation is No. 2 Court at Cyril Le Marquand House. This can, and does, lead to a young custodial aged between 11 years to 18 years being moved across a public area, a times handcuffed. The waiting/interview facilities at No. 2 Court are almost non-existent and it is not unusual for advocates to interview clients in the kitchen, cells or corridor. Separation is particularly difficult because of the number of cases and the rooms available. At present, No. 3 Court is used as the waiting room, if available, but inevitably the corridor is the main waiting area for the accused, families, advocates, police and other professionals.

The new Magistrate's Court will address all these issues with dedicated defence and prosecution waiting rooms, secure interview rooms and separate and secure access points for users of the Magistrate's Court. The Lord Chancellor's Guidelines (2000) have been consulted extensively to ensure that requirements of the impending Human Rights Law are met and any concerns arising from current legislation are addressed.

The functionality of the new courts will ensure that modern technology will be able to be used to its greatest advantage - computer terminals available in court for the Magistrate's Bench and all associated court users and access to home offices and expert text via the inter/intranets to name a few. There will also be a built-in facility to allow remote witnesses and video-conferencing to expert witnesses.

The site of the parish/States car parks to the north of Cyril Le Marquand House has been recognised as the most suitable of the sites available for the new Magistrate's Court. The P.70 Project Group recognised that the site would not only satisfy all the essential criteria but would also be as close as possible to the centre of the Island's transport infrastructure. As there are a large number of court users who walk to the present Magistrate's Court - defendants, advocates, litigants-in-person, walk-ins, Viscounts, Probation Officers, to name but a few - this site ensures that the Island's justice system is accessible to as many Islanders as possible.

The significance of this important civic building has been acknowledged by the façade being granite-faced, ensuring the new Magistrate's Courts will be a landmark building for the Island of Jersey.

The provision of new Magistrate's Courts has been a source of debate for a number of years with the need for new premises being identified in 1967 when a site was identified in Hue Street. Apart from the production of schematic diagrams, the matter lay dormant until 14th June 1983 when a proposition, "Magistrate's Courts and Superintendent Registrar: New Accommodation" was lodged au Greffe by the Public Works Committee. The site identified, Hue Street, was subsequently found to have significant limitations. A period of research was entered where Home Office standards were consulted, courts in Plymouth and Bodmin were visited and 11 potential sites in Jersey were evaluated. This activity saw the Project Group being reconstituted in April 1994 under the chairmanship of the Magistrate's Court Greffier. The Project Group presented their report to the Finance and Economics Committee on 20th May 1994, with a site being identified to the west of the old Abattoir.

On 18th September 1995, the Finance and Economics Committee considered that the uncertainties surrounding the siting of the court were a significant cause of the low priority rating which the project received when the matter had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee as part of its current resource plan. The disputed ownership of the site with Les Pas Holdings Limited had also contributed to the delay in the planning of this project.

On 26th January 1998 the Finance and Economics Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Cyril Le Marquand

House Working Group which identified the Magistrate's Court as having the highest priority for accommodation. Provision for the project had also been made within the 1999 Capital Programme by means of a loans sanction. For various funding and design change requests, the project was further delayed.

The Magistrate's Court and Probation Offices project has been included within the 2002 Island Resource Plan. The plans, as approved by the Finance and Economics Committee and Planning and Environment Committee, and having complied with the Building Bye-Laws, are now presented to the States of Jersey for their approval prior to receiving tenders for the construction of the Magistrate's Court and Probation Offices.