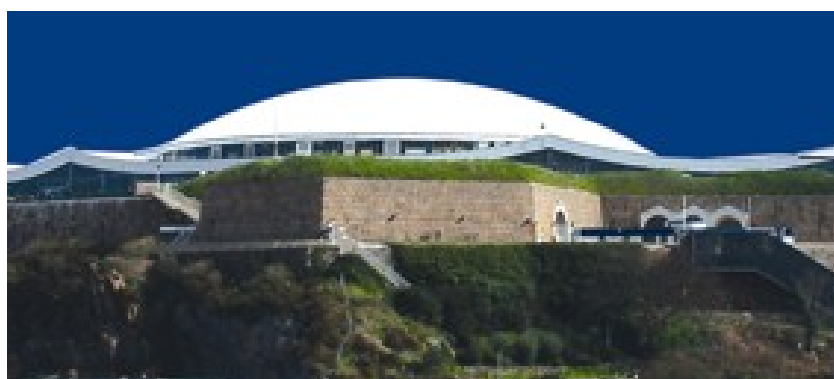


States of Jersey
States Assembly



États de Jersey
Assemblée des États

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel



Fort Regent Review

Presented to the States on 2nd November 2009

S.R.11 / 2009

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1. Chairman's Foreword

Few subjects arouse the passion of people in Jersey as much as Fort Regent. Its brooding presence over the town serves to continually remind people of its past and of what "could be".

Like many attractions involved with Tourism it suffered greatly from the decline in numbers. In the minds of many this was exacerbated by the closure of the cable car link and the closure of the swimming pool. It has lost its focus as a place where families could spend a very enjoyable and varied day. However, all is not gloom and doom. It has achieved considerable success as a fitness and "good health" centre. Concerts are increasing in number.

That said, there are now large parts of the site that are sliding into dereliction, the heritage side remains very undeveloped. Report after report has been written but we seem no further forward in terms of an overall strategy.

Our view is that the key is improved access combined with incremental change on key fronts. In today's climate the Fort is unlikely to attract vast amounts of States funding. However, there is definite room for improvement and it is the Panel's intention to move Propositions in the States to ensure that the Fort is recognised for its positive features and not allowed to enter into an irreversible decline.



Deputy Roy Le Hérissier

2. Executive Summary

The aim of this review was not to add to the extensive paperwork that has already been produced by presenting another analysis of Fort Regent with proposals for what should be in place there.

Instead the Panel wanted to communicate and analyse, what the current situation is at Fort Regent and what, in light of the assortment of disregarded reports, studies and propositions, seemed to be the barrier to development.

Throughout this review the Panel has consulted widely, with the public, the users and relevant States Departments. It has attracted much debate and support largely due to the fact that the Fort is essentially community based in its underlying approach, and the primary purpose of this approach is to encourage and maintain a fit and healthy community.

Consideration has been paid to the impact of the current multi-use nature on the Fort, bearing in mind that the Fort primarily is a historical building dating back to 1803. Its military history has seen its use as both a Fortress and Garrison; it was then demilitarised in 1927 and used again during the Second World War by the Germans. It was only in 1958 that it was sold to the States of Jersey and not until 1967 that the States agreed for the Fort to be converted into a multi-purpose leisure centre.

Since this time there has been a tricky juggling act of finding a balance which respects the original features of the Fort while using it for the benefit of the community. It is the success or otherwise of this balancing act that has raised questions in recent times.

The Review has revealed two sides to the Fort debate. The Panel has found that, in reality, there is much happening at the Fort. The Sport and Leisure Division has been successful in attracting people to use the gym facilities and attend concerts whilst housing many different sports clubs and associations. However, contrary to this is the impression of the controversial 'white elephant', a once much loved but now deteriorating site, which arguably is not being put to its optimum use, with the demise of many facilities and the "hangout factor" that was once so popular.

The review has highlighted the fact that Fort Regent has tended to encourage grandiose thinking with attempts to provide huge solutions to what have been thought to be huge problems. The Panel believes this has

significantly contributed to the delays with refurbishment and the failure of previous reports and studies to gain broad based support and finance.

This review has served to reinforce a picture of a complex web of roles and responsibilities for the site, together with the undeniably tough task of maintaining the structure and using it to its maximum potential. The Panel concluded that far greater clarity is needed as to the respective roles and responsibilities of departments. The Fort needs a patron or champion to promote it and drive development, without which further deterioration is surely inevitable.

The Panel believes that there are palpable actions for the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to implement that would go some way to restoring public belief that community facilities are a priority for the Department of Education, Sport and Culture. These include the demolition of the closed swimming pool, restoration of the ramparts and improvements to access for Fort Regent. This latter issue is seen as the key to a way forward.

However, the Panel's recommendations for improvement will need to be financed. This review has been totally coloured by the fact that nothing can happen without proper funding. The Panel was informed that development at Fort Regent would inevitably be stalled due to a lack of Funding. For many this will evoke 'déjà vu' of *Project 181* brought before the States in November 1999 to approve, in principle, the redevelopment of Fort Regent. This was passed by 37 votes to 8, but the funds for development were never found. The Panel has recommended to the Minister that immediate exploration of opportunities for funding must be implemented, opportunities that may well involve Limited Partnerships with the private sector.

3. Key Findings and Recommendations

3.1 Key Findings

FINDING 1: 4.1.3

The Panel found that there was no current formal and ongoing dialogue between the Department for Education, Sport and Culture, Property Holdings and the Jersey Heritage Trust. The Panel was concerned that this would contribute to a neglect and deterioration of the historical features of Fort Regent.

FINDING 2: 4.2.1

As a tenant the Department of Education Sport and Culture has implemented and maintains an impressive Sports and Leisure Facility despite the physical constraints of the Site. However, it is evident to the Panel that there is a lack of clarity between each Stakeholder as to their individual responsibilities for Fort Regent.

FINDING 3: 4.2.2

The existing website for Fort Regent is currently housed within the States of Jersey website. The Department of Education, Sport and Culture is working with Information Services to develop an improved website and on-line booking system across the cultural bodies, with completion scheduled for the end of 2009. It is the Panel's opinion that progress on revamping this system has been too slow.

FINDING 4: 4.2.3

Since the conversion from Pay and Play to the Active Card Scheme the Department of Education, Sport and Culture has recorded a marked increase in the number of people that participate on a regular basis. This has not only benefited Fort Regent as a Leisure Facility but the community as a whole.

FINDING 5: 4.2.4

The Department of Education, Sport and Culture has reinvested revenue gained through the success of the Active Card Scheme. Evidence of this is apparent in the new reception area and fitness section. Energy Efficiencies have been implemented throughout the site and form an environmentally compatible policy in line with the Strategic Plan 2009 – 2014.

FINDING 6: 4.2.5

While there is evidence of a steady decline in Conferences held at Fort Regent over the last five years, expansion of concert/entertainment events has proved successful. However, the multi-use nature of facilities at the Fort has meant that increasing levels of demand brought about by this rise in the number of events, has placed enormous pressure on both Sports Clubs and Centre Staff.

FINDING 7: 4.2.7

The success of the Active Card Scheme has enabled the Department of Education, Sport and Culture to provide a service to the community through promotion of Social Inclusion. By way of example, the Exercise Referral Scheme is currently making a significant contribution to the well being of many islanders who would otherwise be costing the States of Jersey much more in the long term.

FINDING 8: 4.2.8

In spite of what must be acknowledged as a 'lack-lustre' catering experience, perhaps in terms of setting rather than choice, the reality is the existing catering does meet the demands of the restricted group of mums and toddlers, who currently use it.

FINDING 9: 4.2.9

The Panel believes that it is not currently appropriate to actively advertise the Fort as a tourist destination whilst it remains limited by way of things to do or see there.

FINDING 10: 4.3.1

The Panel found that conditions agreed during the development of the AquaSplash Leisure Facility fatally undermined the future of the Fort Regent Swimming Pool, as a family based Leisure Centre, and ensured that no swimming facility could be redeveloped at the Fort.

FINDING 11: 4.3.1

A lack of strategic planning by the States of Jersey, at that time, meant little consideration was given to the consequences of closure of the Fort Regent Pool, which has subsequently hamstrung any development across the site. The Panel agrees that closure of the pool was a fundamental mistake, which has had an unquestionably negative impact on footfall at Fort Regent.

FINDING 12: 4.3.1

Currently there is a distinct failure by the States to address the redevelopment of the swimming pool site and agree to any future plans.

FINDING 13: 4.3.3

The Department of Education, Sport and Culture and Jersey Property Holdings (JPHD) are both responsible for the internal and external upkeep of the site. In the last year the maintenance schedule agreed between the Departments has highlighted that Fort Regent remains a low maintenance priority for JPHD.

FINDING 14: 4.3.4

Following the closure of many of the activities located around the Ramparts, they were left to deteriorate to such an extent that it was essential to close off several of the areas due to the risk they posed to members of the public. Closure of these facilities has, in turn, reduced Fort Regent's market share. The Centre has become less public facing and lost its attraction to families

FINDING 15: 5.1.3

Despite recommendations in previous reports and feasibility studies over the past ten years, there have been no attempts to pursue Public Private Partnerships for development purposes. Conflicting arguments were submitted with regards to the possibility of Commercial Development at Fort Regent. However, the most favoured opinion was that inviting private partners would be beneficial to developing certain aspects such as a moderately priced hotel.

FINDING 16: 5.1.4

In the search for a department or person responsible for development at Fort Regent, the Panel concluded that there was no clear political or officer accountability. The absence of a 'Champion' for Fort Regent was thought to be one of the explanations for the deterioration of the site. The Panel believed that future development of the Fort requires much greater political motivation in order for progress to be made.

FINDING 17: 5.1.5

Interpretation and care of the historic fabric has been substandard to date. Lack of consultation with the Jersey Heritage Trust and failure to address

recommendations in the Conservation Statement by Antony Gibb has meant a continued absence of comprehensive historical interpretation.

FINDING 18: 5.1.6

The Panel reviewed past reports and feasibility studies produced over the last ten years and found that follow up to the reports had been minimal despite many realistic recommendations and notable common ground contained within them. It was apparent that there was limited consensus as to future of the Fort between the different Stakeholders involved and therefore no single agreed plan despite numerous reports.

FINDING 19: 5.2.3

The Panel was not satisfied that there was enough evidence to suggest that Fort Regent would make a viable conference centre, and would not support an investment for such a development, that would be unlikely to make a viable return. They suggested that any future plans regarding development of a conference centre at the Fort would need appropriate analysis of the market for large conferences, including consultation with hoteliers to identify impact.

FINDING 20: 5.2.4

All round improvement of facilities and access would be necessary to create a suitable environment for an upgraded restaurant.

FINDING 21: 5.2.5

The Ramparts are one of the most neglected areas of Fort Regent. Regeneration of the Ramparts could be seen as a small scale project that could make a huge impact. Jersey Tourism should play a key role in the promotion of the site once it is maintained to a satisfactory level.

FINDING 22: 6.1

The Department of Education, Sport and Culture has, on the surface, shown to be successful in reducing the size of subsidy required for Fort Regent. However, the Panel believes it is not easy to provide a thorough analysis of the Fort's historical financial situation due to the lack of meaningful financial data held across several different accounting systems, as well as the time and resources that would be needed to interpret it. On this basis the Panel feels that it is hard to be conclusive either way with regards to financial justifications for closure of facilities at Fort Regent due to the barriers to appropriate analysis.

FINDING 23: 6.3

The Panel was advised that there were currently no alternative funding streams for the development of Fort Regent, thus significantly affecting any progress. In light of this the Panel found the final decision not to apply for Fiscal Stimulus Funding completely inexplicable and felt that both the Department of Education, Sport and Culture and Treasury and Resources, on behalf of JPHD, were negligent in not seeking funding.

FINDING 24: 6.4

The Panel is concerned that the new rental structure to be applied by JPHD may not take into account matters of social benefit and inclusion.

FINDING 25: 6.5

Fort Regent shares a limited maintenance budget with two other Leisure Centres (Les Quennevais and Springfield). The Fort also competes with a lengthy priority list of JPHD and suffers as a result.

FINDING 27: 7

The Panel found that Fort Regent has poor directional signage both leading up to and within the site. The Panel also concluded that access to Fort Regent is inadequate and needs to be improved.

3.2 Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: 4.1.3

The Panel recommends that the relationship between the Department of Education, Sport and Culture, JPHD and the Jersey Heritage Trust be put on a formal footing. The Panel request the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to establish a working group, lead by a politician or 'champion' and consisting of representatives from these departments and key Stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION 2: 4.2.1

The Panel requests that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture work with the Minister for Treasury and Resources to identify the exact requirements needed by the Department of Education, Sport and Culture and JPHD to maximise the potential of the Fort, including budgetary requirements, so that there can be a clear definition and transparency of roles and responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION 3: 4.2.2

The Panel recommends that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture instructs the current working group, consisting of the States Central I.T. and the Department of Education, Sport and Culture's I.T. Department, to investigate development of a standalone website for Fort Regent with an online booking system, that is no longer buried within the States of Jersey Website.

RECOMMENDATION 4: 4.2.7

The Exercise Referral Scheme is of great benefit to the community and must be supported, maintained and developed. The Panel requests that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture ensure that the scheduled Business Plan cuts, which impact on this area, are not made.

RECOMMENDATION 5: 4.3.1

The Panel recommends that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture must organise for the abandoned swimming pool on the Glacis Field to be demolished with immediate effect.

The Panel further recommends for an Engineering Condition Report to be carried out on the derelict swimming pool site together with investigations into possible future uses of the site. The Panel suggests that investigations should include consideration of a swimming pool with possible incorporation under a hotel development, taking into account the current contractual restrictions.

RECOMMENDATION 6: 4.3.4

The Panel recommends that immediate attention must be paid by the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to the maintenance of the ramparts. Tidying up of closed areas, demolishing old unused buildings such as the Cable Cars together with installation of historical interpretation are all quick wins which would make a huge impact to the attractiveness of Fort Regent.

RECOMMENDATION 7: 6.1

The Panel recommends that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture ensures attention is paid to making the historical financial data in relation to the Fort as transparent and interpretable as possible. The Panel feels that it is imperative for the Department to understand and learn from the changes over recent years especially if there is a danger of decisions being made on meaningless data.

RECOMMENDATION 8: 6.3

With regards to the limitations placed on development by the stated lack of funding available for Fort Regent, the Panel requests the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to implement the exploration of opportunities for Public/Private Partnerships and also to investigate the feasibility of redirection of money from disposal of properties.

RECOMMENDATION 9: 7.0

The Panel recommends that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture instruct that access to Fort Regent be urgently re-examined with particular attention paid to the development of a lift from Snow Hill up to Fort Regent. In addition improvements to directional signage across the site need to be made with immediate effect.

4. The Current Situation

A key focus and challenge for the Panel during this review was to establish who is responsible for looking at the bigger picture when it comes to the management and development of Fort Regent. What became increasingly apparent during the process of Public Hearings with a number of different Departments, was that the site could not be linked to any one group in particular. The multi-faceted nature of the site is such that it requires input from a variety of Stakeholders. The Panel requested for each Stakeholder to define their involvement and responsibility for the site with the aim of piecing it all together.

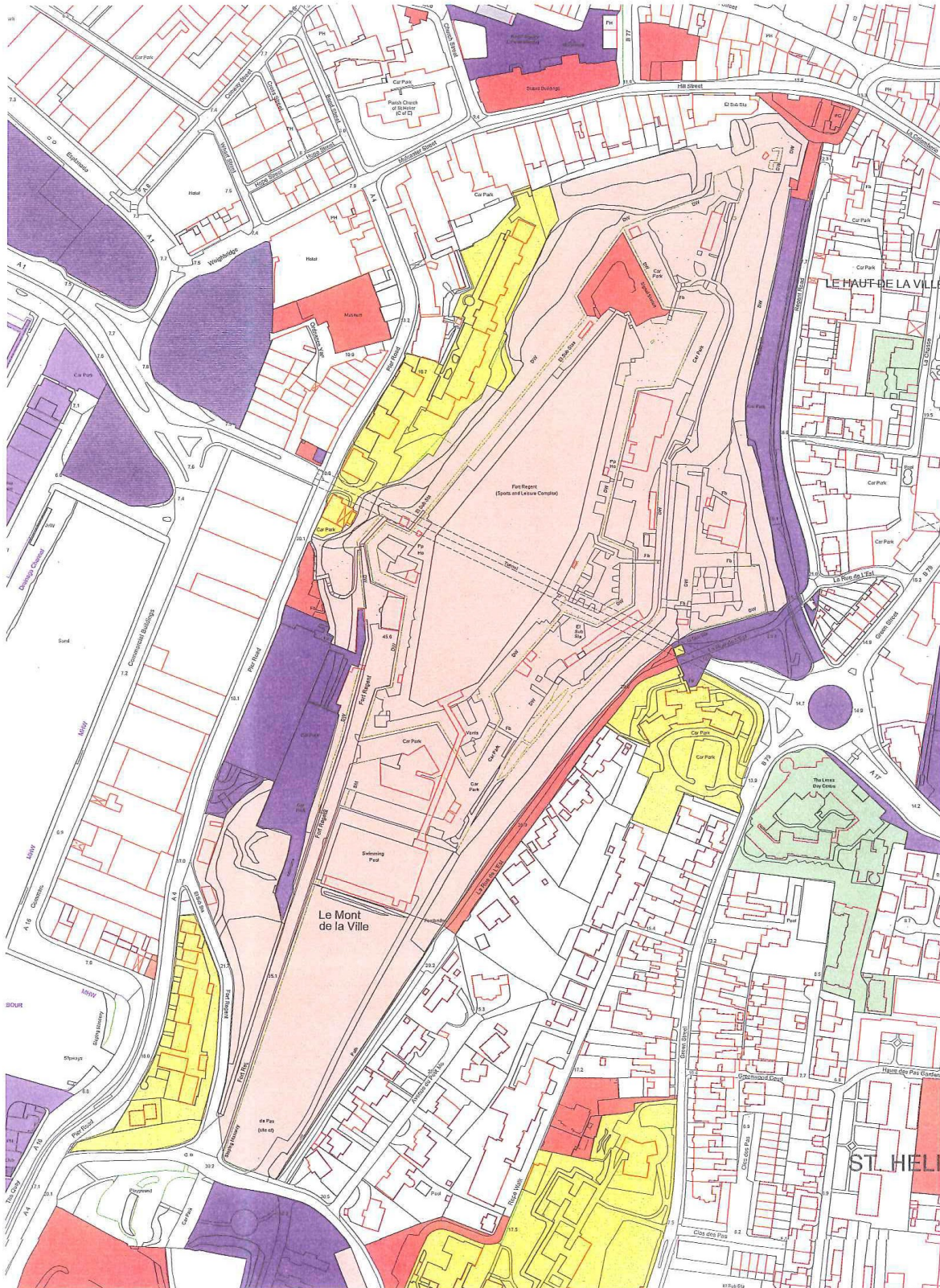
Fort Regent Site Map Key:

Pink = Administered by the Department for Education, Sport and Culture

Red = Administered by Jersey Property Holdings Department

Purple = Administered by the Department for Transport and Technical Services

Yellow & Green = Administered by the Department for Housing



4.1 Responsibility for the Bigger Picture

4.1.1 Jersey Property Holdings Department

The Panel was informed that the Jersey Property Holdings Department (JPHD) is responsible for maintaining the external structure of Fort Regent. During his attendance at a Public Hearing, the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources, Deputy John Le Fondré described the relationship between JPHD and Fort Regent.

“the public own it and we act as landlord, ...and a variety of departments, principally Education, Sport and Culture are the tenants on the site. What we call Fort Regent is also the areas that immediately border on to the Fort, for example, Snow Hill car park, which is under the administration of Transport and Technical Services.”¹

Mr Richardson, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Minister’s Department, added:

“just to put it in context, the States as we moved into ministerial government approved formally the responsibility of landlord and tenant. So all property that was previously under the formal administration of departments, be it Sports, Fort Regent, Transport and Technical Services...was formally transferred into the collective ownership of Property Holdings. So they are the formal landlord for all States property and all departments occupy those buildings under varying forms of agreement or lease.”²

4.1.2 The Department for Education, Sport and Culture

The Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DfESC) is responsible for the administration of the Fort Regent Complex. The Sport and Leisure Division which is part of the DfESC manages Fort Regent within a budget agreed by the department. The Sports and Leisure Division is responsible for all programming of activities that take place at the Fort, including the

¹ Transcript of Public Hearing with Treasury & Resources, 22nd May 2009, p2

² Transcript of Public Hearing with Treasury & Resources, 22nd May 2009, p5

Active Card Scheme, and all internal and external (grounds) maintenance of the complex.³

A Service Level Agreement operates between JPHD and the DfESC, which details the roles and responsibilities of both parties, this is reviewed annually. The DfESC transferred a small budget to JPHD a couple of years ago for the maintenance of the exterior.

“annual building maintenance requests for the Fort are submitted by the Sport and Leisure Division to Property Holdings and a schedule of works is then drawn up by Property Holdings. It should be noted that at present some landlord related works are undertaken by the Sports and Leisure technical team in agreement with Property Holdings.”⁴

4.1.3 Jersey Heritage Trust

In a Public Hearing held with Mr Jonathan Carter, Director of the Jersey Heritage Trust and Mr Roger Hills, Head of Historic Buildings at Jersey Heritage Trust, the Panel asked about the working relationship between the Trust, DfESC and JPHD with regards to Fort Regent:

“We have no formal (ongoing) role in relation to any States Department with regard to the management of Fort Regent. There have been occasions in the past where we have been consulted on specific interpretation projects, although not recently. We do of course manage the signal station under an agreement with Property Holdings. We also have a formal role in making recommendations to the Planning Minister about designation, in terms of the protection of the building.”⁵

FINDING 1:

The Panel found that there was no current formal and ongoing dialogue between the Department for Education, Sport and Culture, Property Holdings and the Jersey Heritage Trust. The Panel was concerned that this

³ Transcript of Public Hearing with DfESC, 22nd May 2009, p2

⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing with DfESC, 22nd May 2009, p3

⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing with Jersey Heritage Trust, 27th May 2009, p2/3

would contribute to a neglect and deterioration of the historical features of Fort Regent.

4.2 Responsibility: Day to Day

The Sport and Leisure Division of the DfESC is responsible for the day to day running of activities and programmes not only within Fort Regent but at Springfield, Les Quennevais, Langford, Oakfield, Havre Des Pas Bathing Pool, Haute Vallee Swimming Pool and a range of outdoor playing fields along with other administrative responsibilities. The Panel was keen to understand what is currently on offer at Fort Regent, what is working well and in contrast what issues there might be.

4.2.1 The Management

The Sport and Leisure Division is overseen by an Assistant Director from DfESC. Supporting the Assistant Director is the Head of Operations, Sport and Leisure Division and Fort Regent has a Centre Manager, two Assistant Managers and three Duty Managers.

The Minister for the DfESC commented on the management of Fort Regent:

“in the case of Fort Regent, and indeed other facilities, I think that my department has shown itself to be good administrators with good management that provides facilities that private sector might be unable to provide, or at least could be more expensive.”⁶

Mr Roy Traver, previously chairman of the Fort Liaison Group and Liaison Officer for the Fort Users' Association, who remains a regular user of the Fort, commented:

“I have no issues with anything that is going on with Fort Regent because it is being well run now. It is being run to the best of its ability in its present form. So I do not see that there are any issues with anything. I do not have the general public coming up to me and saying: “Fort Regent is terrible. Why is it still running?” I have people come and say what a fantastic complex we have. That

⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing with DFESC, Deputy J Reed, 22 May 2009, p28

is purely down to the way that it is being run now and money being invested back into the facilities up there.”⁷

Mrs Nelson, President of the Jersey Netball Association, also commented on her experiences of the Management at Fort Regent during a Public Hearing:

“During the events we have up there we have found the staff to be so friendly and they bend over backwards....nothing is too much trouble. I agree with you so far as that is the workers. As far as the top management are concerned, they are available at any time. They want the business. They want the Fort to work and they will bend over backwards... I would say they are superb.”⁸

The Centre is registered with Quest, which is a national quality and benchmarking scheme used to measure Sports and Leisure Centres. Quest covers areas such as facility operation, customer service, staffing and service development and review. Fort Regent has been placed by Quest in the highly commended category.

Mr de la Haye, Assistant Director for the DfESC referred to the Quest Scheme:

“It has been a continuous improvement system and I think enables us to justifiably say that the centre is being well operated, and that is not just us saying it.”⁹

Mr Roy Cheshire, the Assistant Director of Sport at Brighton University, who also reviews centres on behalf of Quest, visited Fort Regent in May 2009 and commented:

“The Quest accreditation demonstrates that it is meeting the aims it sets itself and has a programme of continuous improvement and having recently been through the process again still shows the progress that is expected of a sports facility.”

⁷ Transcript of Public hearing with Mr R Traver, 27th May 2009, p12

⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Nelson , 27th May 2009, p9/10

⁹ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p11

FINDING 2:

As a tenant the Department of Education Sport and Culture has implemented and maintains an impressive Sports and Leisure Facility despite the physical constraints of the Site. However, it is evident to the Panel that there is a lack of clarity between each Stakeholder as to their individual responsibilities for Fort Regent.

4.2.2 Information Services

During the process of the review the Panel received feedback from the following witness with regards to the ability to book tickets for concerts on-line:

"I have been amazed to learn of the recent explosion of activity in the events management of Fort Regent. However, this success has a downside, and I learn that the absence of on-line ticketing last week resulted in queues outside the building, angry customers and hundreds of emails and complaints. Another downside of not having on-line booking facility is economic: a website is a place for useful advertising."¹⁰

The Panel felt it was important to ask the DfESC whether any plans were being made to rectify this.

Mr de la Haye answered:

"It is a concern that we have had. Clearly, we have had a desire to have on-line bookings for a number of months if not years now. I am pleased to say that there is a lot of progress being made in that direction, and even as we speak there is a working group that is working with the States Central I.T. (Information Technology) Department and our own I.T. department,...this group is very hopeful that we will have on-line bookings be the end of this year."¹¹

It was discussed that the on-line website would most likely be accessed through the main States of Jersey website. The Panel questioned whether

¹⁰ Public Submission 2.14, Mrs Lissenden.

¹¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p11

access through the States website was the best way to advertise Fort Regent. Mr Bisson, Head of Operations for the Sport and Leisure Division, replied:

“If you ask me personally, no. I argued strongly when we issued the active brand that we should remain outside of that because we wanted to see ourselves as a... you know, we are a commercial operation and unfortunately once you go through a government website, the commercial aspects are sort of buried in lots of other information.”¹²

Mr Bisson also added that, with regards to advertising, it is important to recognise that Fort Regent is not completely unadvertised. It has a page on the www.gov.je site, a facebook page has been introduced for the younger audience, posters are put up around town and advertising time is bought on commercial radio. However, he observed that the Fort Regent page within the government site is two or three steps “back” and is not prominent.

Representatives from the Jersey Netball Association and Swimming Club both commented at a Public Hearing on 27th May 2009 that neither had ever looked up the Fort Regent section on the website, and believed that it would be beneficial if it was separate.¹³

The Panel further questioned why a separate website could not be developed. Mr de la Haye replied that he understood that it was a matter of working within the policies currently set by the States of Jersey, which are in place to create a corporate image across States Departments.

“There is an opinion that we could get a relatively simple system and just go on-line ourselves. But clearly we have got to work within the States system and all of the policies that they have and the I.T. departments have.”¹⁴

¹² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Bisson, 22nd May 2009, p17

¹³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs C Penfold, Mrs J Nelson, 27th May 2009, p13

¹⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p12

The Panel asked the DfESC if they had a management information system in place to help them record and interpret user data, for example, the number and range of visitors, types of activities that are most popular and peak times at the centre.

Mr Bisson, informed the Panel:

“we have management information systems in place which record data. To get specific data out is always slightly more difficult,.....the general usage and the visitor numbers are recorded simply by a photoelectric cell recording visits coming in, but that gives a trend over a number of years and gives us a good indication of the numbers coming in.”¹⁵

For more detailed management information, Mr Bisson, suggested that an on-line booking system for sports activities would be necessary as well, however, this was another stage further than the on-line booking for concerts.

FINDING 3

The existing website for Fort Regent is currently housed within the States of Jersey website. The DfESC is working with Information Services to develop an improved website and on-line booking system across the cultural bodies, with completion scheduled for the end of 2009. It is the Panel’s opinion that progress on revamping this system has been too slow.

4.2.3 The Active Card

The Active Card was launched in 1999 and has been a big success for the Sports and Leisure Division. In a Public Hearing Mr de la Haye described its importance to them:

“It is important because it has encouraged more people to participate on a more regular basis. There is no question about that and that is why we brought it in. The old system was that if you wanted to use the facilities on a pay and play basis you come and you pay for that visit. Now people hold a card and they are able to

¹⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Bisson, 22nd May 2009, p11

visit not just this centre but others, Springfield and Les Quennevais, it gives them the membership with a lot of benefits.”¹⁶

The Active Card Scheme is of great benefit to the community. It supports several groups which include Students (reduced rate), the Probation Service (free), Exercise Referral (reduced rate for one year), Income Support (free), Senior Citizens (Reduced Rate), Members’ Children (Free), Health and Social Services (selected groups go free).

These programmes are helping to improve the quality of life for a significant number of people by providing incentives to those who are not used to being active.

The number of Active members during 2008 was 4600 bringing in an income of £1,600,000. This income is shared proportionally between the three centres.

During the Public Meeting held at Fort Regent it was commented that:

“It was said earlier that this place does not buzz any more. I was here over last weekend and it was certainly buzzing throughout that period of time and I think has been buzzing every time I have been up in the time that I have been back in Jersey. The Active Programme, of which I am a member, would be the envy of anywhere, I suspect, in the world but certainly in the United Kingdom.”¹⁷

FINDING 4:

Since the conversion from Pay and Play to the Active Card Scheme the DfESC has recorded a marked increase in the number of people that participate on a regular basis. This has not only benefited Fort Regent as a Leisure Facility but the community as a whole.

¹⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing with DFESC, 22nd May 2009, p6

¹⁷ Transcript of Public Meeting, Member of the Public, 6th May 2009, p25/26

4.2.4 Interior Maintenance

The Sports and Leisure Division has focussed on a number of actions to help reduce running costs at Fort Regent and be more environmentally aware:

“Working through the building we have put in motion sensors,...there are energy efficient lighting systems, things like percussion taps that do turn off on their own rather than the public leaving them on, programmed heating systems, heat harvesters. That means that the heat that is going in, and it goes very high in this building, it is about bringing it back in and not just losing it, but reusing it and we do have an environmental policy in place.”¹⁸

Together with the above actions, increased revenue through the Active Card Scheme has enabled the department to build a new reception area and make substantial improvements to the fitness area, with new flooring and weights equipment.

FINDING 5:

The DfESC has reinvested revenue gained through the success of the Active Card Scheme. Evidence of this is apparent in the new reception area and fitness section. Energy Efficiencies have been implemented throughout the site and form an environmentally compatible policy in line with the Strategic Plan 2009 – 2014.

4.2.5 Conferences and Events

Interpretation of data over the last five years has shown a reduction in demand for conference business at Fort Regent, and more specifically for conferences for over 500 people. For example in 2004 the Fort housed the following:

- 18 Concerts
- 2 large conferences with attendance over 1,000, one lasting three days
- 3 Seminars with attendance ranging from 115 – 400

¹⁸ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p7/8

- 5 Small meetings including seminars, training, presentations
- 7 other conference enquiries that were received but could not be converted to actual events.

In contrast to this in 2008 the following events were held:

- 16 concerts
- 1 large one day conference with attendance over 2,000
- 3 small meetings, presentations, training sessions
- 3 other enquiries were received but not converted

A steady decline in conferences and enquiries could be tracked between 2004 and 2009, however, in 2009, although the conference business has reduced, the entertainment events have increased substantially from 16 on average to 24 in 2009.

The Panel was interested to know how Fort Regent benefits from hosting a range of conferences and entertainment events. There are a number of factors that determine the basis on which a contract is developed for each booking, so every event will bring different benefits and costs. For instance, contracts can range from simple hall hire to a more complex shared risk/percentage split and must also take into account whether an event is being run for charity or the community.

Mr E Trevor provided a submission with regards to an annual fund raising event for the Jersey Christmas Appeal held at Fort Regent:

"We use the Fort on a Sunday in late November or early December for a "car boot sale" in order to raise funds for the Jersey Christmas Appeal of which I am the 2009 Chairman. The Fort gives us the accommodation free as their contribution to the Appeal. We sell about 130 tables at £10 each and also collect with buckets and raise a further £1,000. After we have paid the girl who does the sorting out for us, receiving the cheques, allocating tables, seeing people in and out, we make a profit of about £2,000. The Fort is excellent for this as we are able to set up quickly with careful control of the vehicles and sending them into the Pier Road car park as soon as they have finished. The

*halls should be retained for public concerts, events which have a very large audience and things similar to the boot sale.*¹⁹

Although the figures for entertainment events have increased for 2009, it is important to consider the impact of a reduction in conference business. Entertainment Events are bringing in an income anywhere between £500 and £4,000 per event, depending on the popularity of the artists. Conferences can earn the centre anywhere up to £10,000 and Trade Fairs such as the Home & Lifestyle Show brought in £20,000 in 2006. So, could a focus on attracting conference business be of benefit to the centre?

Mr Reid, General Manager for the Jersey Conference Bureau explained to the Panel that Fort Regent is a member of the Conference Bureau. The role of the Bureau is to market and promote the island, while providing support to both Fort Regent as a States owned enterprise and also private enterprises, hotels and other service providers in the industry.

Facilities for Shows and Conferences include the Gloucester Hall and Queen's Hall as the main areas used, these can take up to 2,000 visitors and provide the largest capacity for shows and conferences on the island. Smaller conferences can be housed in the Don Theatre, which has adjoining rooms that are beneficial for any break out meetings or workshops. These have recently been upgraded with up-to-date projection equipment with the view to attracting some smaller meetings to return to use the facilities. The Don Theatre can also be used for meetings for Sports Clubs and Associations. Clubs can hold Annual General Meetings in the Don Theatre for free, although other general meetings incur a fee.

A submission sent into the DfESC by Mr Fryer from Star Stage Production Company, made reference to the facilities at the Fort:

"In my view Fort Regent offers excellent facilities to both myself as the company, and to the general public coming to see these shows, I think you only have to look at the calendar to see the amount of shows and events, to see how important and

¹⁹ Public Submission to DFESC 2.30, Mr E Trevor

*popular the Fort has become, I struggle to see if this facility did not exist, how companies like myself would survive.*²⁰

One particular issue with regards to the success of the increase in concerts is the impact it is currently having on Sports Clubs and Users, and regular displacement from their training areas:

*“Shows take place all the time, there is no reason to push out (we) the sports people who have kept the Fort going. We use the side rooms, which at present are used as dressing rooms for Artistes when there are visiting shows. Utilise the ones on the other side instead where the Humphrey room is. Make proper dressing rooms. Then they can always double up for small events like meetings or even small conferences.”*²¹

Mr Arthur Falle, Regent Gymnastics Club, added:

“Fort Regent is not being fully utilised, the staff and management are always helpful but due to restrictions put upon them it is difficult for them to fully satisfy everybody.

*For instance as a Gymnastics club we have always been well looked after in the 28 years we have been based at Fort Regent, but we are finding it more difficult year after year to operate our club to its full potential. As a Club we have a lot of upheaval with moving areas within the Fort due to a number of sporting and entertainment events taking place. A purpose built gymnasium for gymnastics is long over due.”*²²

FINDING 6:

While there is evidence of a steady decline in Conferences held at Fort Regent over the last five years, expansion of concert/entertainment events has proved successful. However, the multi-use nature of facilities at the Fort has meant that increasing levels of demand brought about by this rise in the number of events, has placed enormous pressure on both Sports Clubs and Centre Staff.

²⁰ Public Submission 2.30, DFESC (Mr N Fryer, Star Stage Productions)

²¹ Public Submission 2.30, DFESC (Dr. Freda Ruderham)

²² Public Submission 2.19, Mr A Falle

4.2.6 Sports Development, Clubs and Associations

There are in excess of 50 Clubs and Associations that use Fort Regent on both a regular basis and for special events. A number of representatives from these Clubs sent submissions to the Panel to provide information about their experiences and requirements.

Mr Cabaret provided a submission on behalf of the Regent Shooting Club. He informed the Panel that the Club had been using the range at Fort Regent for the past 25 years, and that there remained a firm need for this facility. Mr Cabaret did conclude that there were necessary improvements that could be made if the island wanted to progress the sport and invite other islands to travel to Jersey to compete. Improvements would also be necessary if Jersey were to host the Island Games again.²³

Mr Falle, Regent Gymnastics Club, commented:

“Regent Gymnastics Club uses Fort Regent six to seven days a week some 25 hours with all our coaches giving their time voluntarily. We currently cater for over 200 gymnasts both boys and girls from the age of three and half to sixteen to eighteen years of age. The support of our parents is also strong and many of them use Fort Regent themselves for other activities whilst their daughter and son are training with us.

I was involved in the Island Games in 1997 as General Team Manager and organised the Sport of Gymnastics since then. With Jersey looking to put forward a Bid for 2015, Fort Regent needs to be fully prepared and be able to accommodate a number of sports. What an ideal opportunity for Fort Regent to be the Sports Village for these games.”²⁴

Mr John Grady, President of the Gymnastics Association of Jersey was also keen to inform the Panel of the need for a designated venue.

²³ Public Submission 2.5, Mr Cabaret

²⁴ Public Submission 2.19, Mr Arthur Falle

“You know of my own club’s problems in finding a suitable venue for training and that we have found some sort of solution in Greenfields. The other three clubs in the Gymnastics Association of Jersey have had, and continue to have, similar problems with finding a venue that enables them to train at least on a par with their mainland counterparts and properly prepare for competition. The majority of clubs on the mainland have access to high class facilities for all or part of their training programmes. The only way that gymnastic clubs on Jersey are able to access the kind of facility that will allow the practice of high level skills is to travel off island. Given the expense of travel this is not a viable proposition.

Currently the Queen’s Hall at Fort Regent can be set up as a good competition venue. Events there have already been held successfully and the response of visitors has always been very positive. With the purchase of some additional matting for parallel bars and a proper pommel set up it would be possible to stage events with a full range of equipment at an appropriate standard and continue to invite clubs to Jersey. The Gymnastics Association of Jersey is desperate that this facility is kept available in any development of Fort Regent.

But the sport needs a training facility that will match this competition venue and again I would ask on behalf of the four clubs in Jersey that consideration is given to providing such a facility in any development of Fort Regent. A facility that is an up-to-date training venue dedicated to gymnastics all year round.”

Neil Courtney, Head of the Jersey Instrumental Service also provided a submission to the Panel with regards to their accommodation at Fort Regent:

“Since September 2006, the JIS has had use of two rehearsal rooms that were created in the site of the old aquarium when the service’s previous use of a very adequate space at the old JCG site for 5 years prior to the summer of 2006 came to an end. (It is not without some irony that we note that the latter has remained undeveloped and on our doorstep for the three years that

have elapsed!). Whilst we have been most grateful to have a dedicated space available to us at the Fort on a regular basis it has not, alas, been without some shortcomings.

The rooms are somewhat cramped, have no natural daylight and insufficient ventilation leading to quite severe ongoing damp problems meaning that we often have to rehearse with the main doors kept open to ensure a supply of fresh air. We are very concerned about the Health and Safety of our staff and students when working in such an environment. There is also an ongoing issue relating to storage of personal possessions (coats and bags go in mobile cages – an unsatisfactory arrangement) and instrument cases are stored in cupboards outside the rehearsal rooms.

Additionally we have occasional use (at extra cost) of the Don Theatre (good acoustic) and two smaller rooms (very resonant acoustic) all of which are physically separated from JIS rooms and necessitate careful supervision of pupils when moving around a busy leisure centre, and which could also be a potential problem in the event of emergency evacuation.

Ms Zachariou, Director of the UberEdge Dance Company and School commented:

"I am the founder of a dance school. I use Fort Regent studios to hold my classes. I chose this venue because of the ease of getting to Fort Regent for town workers by foot and by car. Admittedly there is still room for improvement in that area as you mention in your letter. The staff are helpful and organised, the room is always ready for me which aids in the impression of my business. Unlike some other fitness units in the island, Fort Regent is welcoming to its visitors which makes the experience a relaxing leisurely one. It's also very clean!

The future of Fort Regent is of great importance not only to me but to all the other local businesses that use it. It is unique to us and suits us which is why we have chosen to base ourselves there and

*feel it is detrimental to our business to see Fort Regent being used to its full potential. Plus the businesses being run there then in turn introduce their clients to other events happening in Fort Regent. If we get both right it's a recipe for success!*²⁵

Mr Le Corre, President of Indoor Bowls at Fort Regent also added:

"We represent Indoor Bowls at the Fort. There are in the region of 200 members using the facilities, we have been using Fort Regent for our sport for over 26 years, our age group varies from 60 to 85 years. We use the Fort 4 times during the week.

*Staff have to lay the mats down before we commence bowls and remove them after we have finished, far from ideal for our sport. Often we have a group within 10ft using the trampoline on one side and a group of toddlers using the gym on the other side. A permanent closed-in bowls arena would be ideal for our sport. Car parking is also a problem for our members, as we use the Fort during office hours on week days, we are one of the only groups who have to pay parking fees to use the Fort.*²⁶

In addition to this the Fort provides office space for Sports Development Officers of sports such as Netball, Hockey, Athletics, football and triathlon.

The President of the Jersey Netball Association, Mrs Nelson, commented:

*"That is a superb setup because we definitely do liaise together as different sports, especially when you have got talented youngsters who are good at cricket, good at hockey and good at Netball, and it does happen.*²⁷

The Panel asked Mrs Nelson if this office was setup for members of the Public to drop in with enquiries for the Sports Development Officers, to aid with the overall promotion of each sport.

²⁵ Public Submission DFESC 2.30, Ms Zachariou,

²⁶ Public Submission DFESC 2.30 Mr Peter Le Corre

²⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs J Nelson, p6

"It is something that we would definitely work at. As far as attracting the public, probably things would have to change slightly because you do not want netballers coming in talking to our netball development officer and maybe disturbing the rugby and the football, and what have you."²⁸

4.2.7 Social Inclusion

At the Public Meeting on 6th May 2009, Mr De La Haye outlined the support that is offered through schemes provided by the Sport and Leisure Division at Fort Regent for Social Inclusion and Community benefit:

"These are some of the groups we support. The J.E.T. (Jersey Employment Trust) Centre is for adults who have severe learning or physical disability. They are unable to go to work. Now... they come to this centre as a community centre, rather than going to the J.E.T. centre up at Five Oaks..... Mont A L'Abbé clearly is another school which has a lot of young people, particularly who have special needs, that we support..... I have already talked about the probation services. Exercise referral has grown. It has been in existence since 1995, we have in excess of 900 people come through the programme each year. Rather than going to the doctor for a prescription of drugs instead people now come for a prescription of health and they come for exercise and activity and we have seen some dramatic changes in the quality of life of some people.... We do work with the Alcohol and Drugs Advisory Service, we do have people who are working with them and going through the programmes, because again it is about providing opportunities for those people to turn their life around from where it is so that they do indeed have an opportunity to get back to a good quality of life...and finally the Children's Service, there is another group that we work with and we try to help."²⁹

A member of the Public also commented during the Public Meeting:

"Also, as a G.P., I think they do an excellent job in the Exercise Referral Scheme. I send patients myself and I think it is a

²⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs J Nelson, p7

²⁹ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr D De La Haye, 6th May 2009, p8/9

*brilliant idea to get people who are not wanting to go into the fitness centres themselves.*³⁰

Exercise Referral is a 10-week programme of physical activity. It is aimed at people who are not used to physical activity and who have certain medical conditions. The scheme is accessible to people from the age of sixteen although all referrals must be made by a Doctor or health care professional. Exercise Referral provides the opportunity to try some regular physical activity to help improve a person's health and well-being. There are regular sessions available throughout the week.³¹

FINDING 7

The success of the Active Card Scheme has enabled the DfESC to provide a service to the community through promotion of Social Inclusion. By way of example, the Exercise Referral Scheme is currently making a significant contribution to the well being of many islanders who would otherwise be costing the States of Jersey much more in the long term.

4.2.8 Catering

The catering at Fort Regent is currently under contract to the Modern Hotels Group. They have been operating at Fort Regent for the last 31 years. They contributed to several of the amenities added when the roof went on in 1978, such as an ice skating rink, a roller skating rink, a restaurant and bar/café.

In a Public Hearing with Mr Jonathan Segal, Director of Modern Hotels, the Panel asked for the reasoning behind the type of eatery that they are providing:

"We have to provide what the public wants. So, the only people that are up there are the toddlers and the sports people. The sports people go, work out and leave. They do not even want their own drinks bar there, and as far as providing food for anything other than toddlers and mothers, the truth of the matter is there is nobody there except toddlers and mothers.....We did a whole

³⁰ Transcript of Public Meeting, Member of the Public, 6th May 2009, p22

³¹ States of Jersey Website, Sport and Leisure Section

programme with the management up there about changing the food offered up there, salad bars, all of that. There was absolutely no demand for it whatsoever and it just got closed down.”³²

Mr Segal continued to comment on the environment created at Fort Regent:

“the truth of the matter is the problems that exist at Fort Regent have absolutely nothing to do with whether of not we have a cheese sandwich or a chicken salad. Let us look at the environment that we are asking people to sit and eat in. They are just not going to do it.”³³

The comments of Mr Segal were also re-iterated by Mr Roy Travert during the Public Hearing with the Panel on 27th May 2009:

“There were various venues that started up by the weights area to give healthy food options but then they stopped obviously due to lack of footfall. I think it is very difficult to provide the sort of catering that people want without changing a lot of their eating habits....People generally when they go up to the Fort, they go up, they do their activity and then they leave....I do not think that a catering facility purely based on health food would survive up there. I do not think that there is a footfall for it.”³⁴

FINDING 8

In spite of what must be acknowledged as a ‘lack-lustre’ catering experience, perhaps in terms of setting rather than choice, the reality is the existing catering does meet the demands of the restricted group of mums and their toddlers who currently use it.

4.2.9 Promotion of Fort Regent

As well as highlighting the need for a specific website for Fort Regent, the Panel was keen to build up a picture of how the Fort is promoted in other ways.

³² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Segal, 4th June 2009, p11/12

³³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Segal, 4th June 2009, p12

³⁴ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p24

The Panel received a submission informing them that the Fort benefits from Blue Badge Guided Tours, which fall into two types; those done for the general public that are advertised by Jersey Tourism and those done for specialist groups. Tours advertised by Jersey Tourism last two hours and take in many of the original features of the Fort, inside and out, as well as the 360 degree views of town and country. Those arranged for specialist groups last for approximately three hours, they may concentrate on, for example, the gardens, artillery, other military aspects such as parts of the outworks still with un-adapted casemates or they may include a visit to the well or signal station.

The Panel questioned the Minister for the DfESC as to what arrangements are in place between his department and the Tourism Department to ensure that Fort Regent is advertised sufficiently to visitors to the island.

The Minister stated:

“Not as much as there should be is the short answer. Clearly we should be working far more closely with the Tourism Department and indeed I have already had discussions with the Minister of that department to look at how we can work together.”³⁵

Mr de la Haye added:

“I think one of the things that I would say about that is we are not a major tourist destination. That is the first point. At the moment we operate as a sport and leisure centre, we welcome visitors; particularly we welcome visitors for events, whether they are sporting events,...whether they are conferences and so we work with Tourism particularly on those occasions to promote those activities and events. We do work with Tourism when there is a concert or a show that is going to be on most usually while that visitor is likely to be in the island. We will do some promotions outside the island so that they look at Jersey.”³⁶

³⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy J Reed, 22nd May 2009, p18

³⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p19

Mr de la Haye further highlighted the difficulty of advertising events in hotels, where visitors who see the posters are likely to have finished their holiday and left the island before the show advertised is due to begin. He talked about the importance of targeted and focussed advertising to help manage expectations. He further stressed the importance of appropriate advertising for different audiences, those that are specifically visiting Jersey for an event and those who, when they are in the island, are welcome to visit Fort Regent but are not to be misled into expecting “a fair or entertainment, ..., at 10:00am on a Friday morning.”

Mr Segal also noted changes to the Tourism industry and visitors numbers:

“When I started in this industry in 1976 there were 25,000 beds on this Island. We are now down to 13,000 or less, 12,000 beds on this island, and although the quality of the beds is good, our ability to attract tourists is reducing because as the beds fall, communication links fall,....what we have allowed to happen in this island is a reduction in the bed stock for various reasons, owners capitalising on their real estate, falling demand.”³⁷

FINDING 9

The Panel believes that it is not currently appropriate to actively advertise the Fort as a tourist destination whilst it remains limited by way of things to do or see there.

4.3 Historical Responsibility for the Site

4.3.1 The Swimming Pool

During the course of the review the Panel visited the closed swimming pool site and was shocked and saddened by the state of deterioration they encountered.

The swimming pool at Fort Regent was closed in 2003. Much debate took place in the States of Jersey during this process, some of which is detailed here.

³⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Segal, 4th June 2009, p17

As Mr de la Haye explained at a Public Meeting held during this review:

“ the States made a decision to close Fort Regent (Swimming Pool) when it put extra money into the development of the AquaSplash. That agreement is a 21 year agreement and there is an agreement that no pool, not just here but no (public) pool, can open within a 2 mile radius, of the AquaSplash.”³⁸

The following proposition in relation to the St Helier Waterfront Leisure Complex, Terms of Lease, was lodged *au Greffe* on 6th July 1999 by the Policy and Resources Committee:

Note: “The Finance and Economics Committee has studied these proposals with great care. Officers of the Treasury, in conjunction with Waterfront Enterprise Board (WEB), have analysed the financial details and the proposals are currently being examined by the States’ Auditors (PriceWaterhouseCoopers). Therefore, having thoroughly considered the proposals, this Committee supports the granting of a lease to CTP Limited (CTP) on the terms set out in the Heads of Terms of lease as detailed in the joint report by CTP and WEB. The Committee believes that the agreement will, at a cost to the States not exceeding £10.9 million, deliver the quality leisure facilities sought by the States in a cost effective manner, whilst safeguarding the interests of the States. The inclusion of a competition pool and spectator facilities avoids the potential capital cost of £4.5 million to refurbish the Fort Regent pool and removes the current revenue deficit funding requirement of £200,000 per annum. The terms also enable the States to share directly in the success of the facility operators, through a profit-sharing arrangement, whilst minimising the States exposure to risk of operating deficits. In addition to the direct financial benefits, the Committee acknowledges the positive impact that a total capital investment in the tourist industry of some £25 million will have on the economy of the Island.”³⁹

The States of Jersey later assembled on 12th December 2000 to discuss the closure of the swimming pool at Fort Regent. The following question

³⁸ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p5

³⁹ St Helier Waterfront Leisure Complex: Terms of Lease, Lodged *au Greffe*, 6th July 1999

was asked of Deputy Vibert, President of the Sport, Leisure and Recreation Committee at that time:

“Would the President advise members whether the swimming pool at Fort Regent has to be closed before the proposed leisure pool on the Waterfront is to be opened and if the answer is in the affirmative, would he give the reasons for this decision?”

The President replied, “No”

“On 27th July 1999 the States adopted a proposition of the Finance and Economics Committee (P.93/99), which authorised the transfer of £5.5 million from the Strategic Reserve to the Tourism Investment Fund. Part of that sum, £2.5 million, was to provide for a 25 metre, six lane competition pool, to replace the pool at Fort Regent. The inclusion of a competition pool was believed to avoid the potential capital cost of £4.5 million to refurbish the Fort Regent pool.

*Following the withdrawal of Cannons, the operation of the leisure pool complex was offered to Club Carrefour. The proposed lease agreement between the States of Jersey and Club Carrefour required the Sport, Leisure and Recreation Committee to close the Fort Regent pool **within 6 months** of the Waterfront complex opening. This is consistent with the decision of the States when it approved P.93/99.”*

Today, the swimming pool remains closed. Mr de la Haye described its current condition to the Panel:

“The condition of the swimming pool is not very good at all. The roof is in some considerable problem, so are the walls. But more importantly there is concrete degradation. If any other activity was to take place in the swimming pool area as it currently stands I suggest it would cost an awful lot to upgrade it and to change it around to ensure that health and safety was met. It would probably be cheaper to raze it to the ground and rebuild.

That would be something that would need to be investigated.”⁴⁰

The Panel was interested to hear just how much the closure of the pool at Fort Regent had affected the centre. Mr de la Haye explained to the Panel that their department estimated a significant loss of 200,000 visits to Fort Regent per year after the pool closed.

Mrs Penfold, President and Administrator for the Jersey Swimming Club outlined several issues that they had encountered since the closure of the pool. First was the issue of storage. The Swimming Club office remains at Fort Regent; however, it is now a logistical challenge to transport all the necessary equipment from there to whichever venue is hosting their training and competitions. Although the Swimming Club was promised that the AquaSplash would replace the Fort Regent pool, this has not been the case and Mrs Nelson provided the following reasons why:

- A lack of electronic equipment for competitions.
- AquaSplash are unable to keep the Leisure pool closed during a competition due to the money it would lose. This means that those in the Leisure pool would need to be silent during the start of each race, as this is what is required.
- It is not possible for a referee to walk up and down the side of a pool due to the positioning of the diving boards.
- A warm down area is needed, ideally the Leisure pool could be used for this if it could be closed. Although extra officials would also be needed to supervise it.
- It is also reportedly very hot for spectators watching in the seating above the pool.

Without a permanent base Jersey Swimming Club also have to manage a timetable across three different centres. This has not only affected the day to day running of the Club but also the Social side. Parents are now going to different centres for their child’s training and do not get the opportunity to meet as they would have done at Fort Regent.⁴¹

The pool hire cost is another factor the Club is having to juggle:

⁴⁰ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p44

⁴¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Penfold, 27th May 2009, p44

*"We do find that pool hire charges are absolutely horrendous. They take a lot of money. It is about £46,000 a year we pay now in pool charges. We have got to find just under £3,000 a month every month for 12 months of the year for the use of Langford, an hour a week at Les Quennevais is thrown in there, and then on top of that we have got £3,000 a term for AquaSplash. So we are finding it difficult to keep our heads above water."*⁴²

Mrs Penfold advised the Panel that the loss of access to a designated swimming pool and a swimming pool with the necessary specifications for competition had meant there were serious limitations when trying to invite teams across to compete in Jersey. Les Quennevais remained the only possible centre for Jersey Swimming Club, but this put a great deal of pressure on the Centre. Mrs Nelson also outlined that:

*"In the future what they are planning on, the A.S.A. (Amateur Swimming Association) is that swimmers going to internationals will have to qualify in a 50 metre pool. We do not have a 50 metre pool. Our closest 50 metre pool is in France. Or we have the expense of going to England."*⁴³

Mrs Penfold summed up her feelings on the closure of the Fort Regent Pool for the development of the AquaSplash:

*"We were extremely angry. We do feel misled, yes. It is like everything in life. If you are going to build new swimming pool you should be asking the people that are involved in swimming what they need. It does not happen that way and it seems to me that they just do not ask the right people the right questions."*⁴⁴

FINDING 10

The Panel found that conditions agreed during the development of the AquaSplash Leisure Facility fatally undermined the future of the Fort Regent as a family based Leisure Centre, and ensured that no swimming facility could be redeveloped at the Fort.

⁴² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Penfold, 27th May 2009, p20

⁴³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Penfold, 27th May 2009, p22

⁴⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Penfold, 27th May 2009, p24

FINDING 11

A lack of strategic planning by the States of Jersey, at that time, meant little consideration was given to the consequences of closure of the Fort Regent Pool, which has subsequently hamstrung any development across the site. The Panel agrees that closure of the pool was a fundamental mistake, which has had an unquestionably negative impact on footfall at Fort Regent.

FINDING 12

Currently there is a distinct failure by the States to address the redevelopment of the swimming pool site and agree to any future plans.

4.3.2 Covenant and Site of Special Interest (SSI)

The Panel asked if there was a legal Covenant on the Glacis Field.

Mr Flowers explained:

“There is not a Covenant, but the whole of the site has been designated as an S.S.I. (Site of Special Interest) and in my view it would be extremely unlikely that any development would be permitted on the Glacis Field except on the current site of the swimming pool. Extremely unlikely.”⁴⁵

Mr Carter, Director of Jersey Heritage Trust, explained that the Fort was designated as a Site of Special interest in 2008, this included the East Ditch, South Hill and Glacis Field, although it did not include any post 1945 elements. The S.S.I. designation does provide a framework for any sensible consideration of any changes in the preservation sense.⁴⁶

4.3.3 Existing Condition of Fort Regent

When EDAW (EDAW PLC Planning, Design and Economic Development Worldwide) reviewed Fort Regent in 2007 it summarised the condition of the site as follows:

⁴⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p18

⁴⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr Carter, 27th May 2009, p21

“Fort Regent itself is well preserved. The condition of the 1970s and 1980s leisure centre contained within and around it is becoming less fit for purpose – its poor quality structures demand regular upkeep and represent a high burden on the States. In terms of sustainability, the enclosed structure is neither thermally nor light efficient, as it requires considerable heating due to the inefficient use of space. The complexity of the edifice, its historic fabric, and the sheer size of the roof enclosing it contribute to the high maintenance costs. Nevertheless, the leisure centre has remained popular since its opening, justifying the continuation of this use within the Fort, even if not under its current guise.”⁴⁷

As detailed earlier in the report, JPHD is responsible for maintaining the external structure of Fort Regent. During a Hearing with the Panel they were asked for their priorities with regards to continuing maintenance:

“I think it would be fair to say that for this year, certainly, our priority has been office strategy, integrated property management system, charging mechanisms, backlog of maintenance, which is all very unsexy stuff but it is all very necessary stuff. So as we have said a number of times we have an £80 million backlog of property maintenance that has to be addressed.” “I suppose our phrase is not so much where does it come in our priorities, but what priorities lie ahead of it? For at least the next year.”⁴⁸

FINDING 13

The DfESC and JPHD are both responsible for the internal and external upkeep of the site. In the last year the maintenance schedule agreed between the Departments has highlighted that Fort Regent remains a low essential maintenance priority for JPHD.

4.3.4 Closed Attractions and Ramparts

Mr de la Haye provided an explanation for the closure of many of the external activities at Fort Regent:

⁴⁷ Development Brief for Fort Regent, EDAW, September 2007, p8

⁴⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy Le Fondre, 22nd May 2009, p7/18

“My experience of the Fort is that I think there were some ad hoc developments that went on over a number of years, and some of those are extremely good, but not necessarily were they always connected. There were a huge range of activities that were going on at Fort Regent, and I am sure they were extremely well intentioned, but the result of that was that we were running an extremely expensive facility, in my opinion not meeting the needs of the customer. We did not do anything very well for lots of people. That is my opinion. I think what we do now is we have reduced the number of activities that we provide but it is far more focused, and it is much better placed in terms of where we are trying to aim at certain groups of people, and I believe are doing a better job in servicing those needs.”⁴⁹

When questioned about the closure of the Skate Board Park Mr de la Haye answered:

“We did have a skateboard park at Fort Regent up in the ditch at the north end. At that time, that skateboard park was operated on.....a commercial basis where young people did pay to use the facility. Again, it was not terribly good in terms of the kind of equipment that was there and it deteriorated so it was decided that that would close down, not at our decision but rather at the decision of the operator.”⁵⁰

The Panel questioned further about the recent re location of the Skate Board park to the harbour site. Mr de la Haye informed the Panel that the DfESC made no judgement as to whether or not Fort Regent could take one, and certainly did not say no. However, it was not chosen as a preferred option by those developing the idea, perhaps due to the more central location at the Harbour.

⁴⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p8

⁵⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p21

FINDING 14

Following the closure of many of the activities located around the Ramparts, they were left to deteriorate to such an extent that it was essential to close off several of the areas due to the risk they posed to members of the public. Closure of these facilities has, in turn, reduced Fort Regent's market share. The Centre has become less public facing and lost its attraction to families

5. Future development of Fort Regent

During the review process the Panel discussed likely actions needed for development of the Fort with key departments that share responsibility for its future.

5.1 Statements of Current Thinking: Key States Departments

5.1.1 Master Plan for Fort Regent

It was apparent throughout the Public Hearings for this review that developing a master plan for any future development was a common theme across the different departments. It was also stressed that Fort Regent should not be looked at as a stand alone development, but incorporated into plans that are being developed for St Helier.

When asked by the Panel for his viewpoint, Deputy Le Fondré commented:

“It seems important to me that whatever happens or whatever views surround redevelopment of Fort Regent, they need to be linked to other work that is going on at the moment for the East of Albert redevelopment. So I think there is potentially a danger that we could be looking at Fort Regent as a project but we should be looking at a much bigger picture and a much bigger master planning exercise for that whole area.”⁵¹

Mr Flowers expanded on this:

“If you do not master plan this project you will end up with opposing views all the way through, you will never get a consensus and you will never get the project off the ground.....Fort Regent appears to be the classic, it has been on the cards for redevelopment for 15 years, I think, at least. We do not seem to have a strategy and a master plan that sets a direction everyone

⁵¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy J Le Fondré, 22nd May 2009, p3

*can buy into, that then – subject to funding and development opportunity – can be developed.*⁵²

Agreement for a focussed approach to planning and development was reiterated by Mr de la Haye:

*“Any future development must be focused and must be clear about what it is trying to do, because it is essential that the developments complement each other. We cannot be asked to do too many things, and it must be focussed.”*⁵³

Mr Travert added:

*“I think that the town regeneration plan they have at the moment to incorporate Fort Regent is the right thing to do because there is a conscious... acknowledgement that Fort Regent is integral to what is going to happen in town.”*⁵⁴

The Panel expressed concerns that having to wait for the funding and opportunity to develop a new master plan for Fort Regent and surrounding area could have the affect of freezing any further development for the foreseeable future. None of the witnesses could confirm a time scale for when they thought it would be possible to develop this master plan, mainly because they stated that there was not enough funding to do it. The Panel suggested that perhaps some smaller improvements could be made without the need to wait for a master plan. However, as Mr Carter explained, it is not thought that the piecemeal approach is the solution, although he did concede that some smaller improvements may be the answer in the short term.

Mr J Carter:

“A master plan is obviously a good idea, is it not, because piecemeal things have to add up to something. But the master plan need not be a multi-million pound effort in its own right but I think it

⁵² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p4

⁵³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p8

⁵⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p30

*is important to address things in the overall vision, is it not? I think that there probably are some relatively small steps that could be taken to improve the general public amenity up there. I think some interpretation. Some things that would help promote people's understanding of it as a heritage site could be relatively minor but it seems like signage and interpretation, relatively low thousands would get you quite a long way.*⁵⁵

The Panel discussed the same issue with Senator Maclean, Minister for the Department of Economic Development, who agreed with statements made at previous Public Hearings about the importance of a master plan which would be linked in with the East of Albert development. However, he felt that much of the progress that had been made has been halted due to issues with the Jersey Enterprise Board and W.E.B. (Waterfront Enterprise Board). He believed that it is imperative that these problems are resolved quickly to relieve the current stalemate situation.

One factor that the Panel kept coming back to was whether developing a new master plan was in a sense just repeating work that had gone before throughout the numerous reports and feasibility studies. Could a new master plan encourage action and development when all the previous ones had failed to do so?

Mr Richardson answered this:

*"A master plan if it was done properly with tending to the right level of financial appraisal would allow the opportunity of saying: 'If you look at this in totality of an area and there is an opportunity to develop this piece of land for this purpose, attracting the right funding route and the right development, then that could cross-subsidise or cross-fund another development.' That is a very good piece of work."*⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p15

⁵⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p17

5.1.2 Fort Regent Development Working Group

Having established that several departments have key roles in the maintenance and development of Fort Regent, the Panel questioned them about how they work together when considering future plans.

Senator Maclean informed the Panel:

"I believe that to move forward a concept of that type, it would require a working group to be established and it would need to be across ministerial group because, unfortunately, it is all very well to say it is falling under the remit of E.S.C. but indeed there are involvements certainly from my own department. We should be working far more closely, I think, with E.S.C in this regard and I think also Property Holdings have a degree of involvement certainly from a maintenance point of view and looking at wider implications of future development of WEB and East of Albert."⁵⁷

Senator Cohen, Minister for the Department of Planning and Environment, stated that he believed the leadership would come from JPHD:

"I am sure that Property Holdings when they apply the resource to it, will respond to the opportunities that are available in the Fort. I do not know that anyone has produced this hierarchy of objectives, and I think until somebody does that and says what the island wants out of this, is number 1(a), number 2(b), on down the list, I am not sure we are going to get anywhere."⁵⁸

5.1.3 Public Private Partnership

Two main questions remained in the Panel's focus during the Public Hearings. First, is anything going to be progressed after another master plan is developed, and secondly is the Panel chasing after something that can not be progressed? Mr Richardson responded to the Panel:

⁵⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator A Maclean, 4th June 2009, p3

⁵⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator Cohen, 27th May 2009, p15/16

“A lot depends on what the output is in terms of use. Because if the output is a use which has an attraction to a private party in terms of a development opportunity and the economic climate is such that you can attract a developer in and work in partnership, and their funding through public/private or some form of partnership arrangement can work and provide the funding for it, then the opportunity exists and could well be developed and move forward. If, on the other hand, it remains as purely a States operated organisation and facility then if that relies on the capital programme then we know where the capital programme is at the moment and funding will be very tight.”⁵⁹

Mr Richardson continued to outline that in the current market there is not much appetite from private sector developers for this sort of facility, and this was unlikely to change unless a developer could see a way of generating a return. Mr Flowers added, that if it is not possible to attract a private partner then it will require the States to make an investment.

Both Deputy Le Fondré and Mr de la Haye, at separate Hearings, made the point that it is very unusual for Sports Centres to make the return that a private developer might be looking for. Especially with regards to Fort Regent, which is regarded as a community facility rather than a profit making centre. In this case it might have to be accepted that there will be a cost attached to running it as a sports orientated facility.

Mr Bisson stated:

“I think the only way we are going to bring a halt to this whirlpool is to recognise that we need to bring investment into the Fort and I believe there are ways of bringing investment into the Fort without having to go cap in hand to the States,....I know you have discussed the various types of commercial opportunities there are, but that is the one way I believe we will bring some investment, some real investment, to the Fort to undertake the changes we need to do there.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p13

⁶⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Bisson, 22nd May 2009, p28

Mr de la Haye added to this:

*"I think my view is very firmly that we have a sport and leisure facility at the moment which is extremely well used, well loved, by a large number of the community. I think we need to retain that, but look at the opportunities around that to complement the activities that are going on there and to try and get some investment into the facility to continue that. I have heard people come in and say: "The Center Parcs kind of model; let us put it in there." I have heard the private/partnership: "Let us get an operator in", all those kind of things. I hear those things but nobody has come running to do that yet, not unless they get a whopping great subsidy, management fee, in order to do it. I think the danger of doing that kind of thing is that it could be quite short term. You have seen the figures; we run the facility at something like £560,000 a year and hidden within that is an enormous amount of social support..... If you had a person running on a management fee, while it is possible to have that kind of thing they would not be quite so social minded; the fee would be much greater. So,the cost to the public would be greater. So, I think it needs to remain very firmly in the public ownership, the community needs to use it, and we need to look to see how we can enhance those and ensure that there is a long term future for it."*⁶¹

Mr Travert explained that members of the public who he had spoken with were concerned that a similar situation could occur with Fort Regent as had occurred with the AquaSplash, where public land was sold but a subsidy is still being paid to support the private operation.

*"Do the public/private partnerships that they are putting forward work because what we see down at the waterfront is that it does not work because the public are still paying. So if you are putting forward that for Fort Regent then the fear is that it does not work at Fort Regent either and the taxpayer is still going to be paying for it. So why change something that is only costing £500,000 a year now in subsidy."*⁶²

⁶¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p28/29

⁶² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p32

During a Public Hearing with Mr Segal, he introduced the idea of another arrangement for the Public/Private partnership for the Panel to consider.

“You need to go and find private enterprise and say to them, for example, you can take the infrastructure and we are not going to charge you any rent here and as a result we are going to create an economic environment and a taxable environment up there that will enable you to be successful. Then you will pay an amount of money out of your profits, which is the kind of deal that I have up there with the Fort. I went to the Fort and I said that the truth of the matter is I cannot be here because I physically cannot make money here. There is no point me putting people up there if I cannot make money here. The deal I came to with the Fort was that I paid a nominal base rent which is a token rent and then you share my profits. I pay a nominal rent and then I pay the first amount of profit and then I give you 30 per cent thereafter. And it has worked for us both.”⁶³

A member of the public spoke at a Public Meeting for the Fort Regent review, he agreed that the Fort needs to be opened up to private enterprise as well. He felt that the government needs to let the Island know that they are willing to work with private enterprise to move projects forward.⁶⁴

Mrs Lissenden provided a submission that stated:

“I do agree the Fort should be a listed site of importance to the island's history. When it was first opened as a set of leisure spaces my family used the facilities extensively. As the place has become reduced to a scruffy and depressing site, we have used it less and less. However we do appreciate that it offers a great deal to the public in sporting and other cultural events, and we believe - as it, seems, does the Minister - that these should continue. More investment in it would improve the appearance and ambience; and if the States cannot afford it then the States should relinquish it into

⁶³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Segal, 4th June 2009, p8

⁶⁴ Transcript of Public Meeting, Member of the Public, 6th May 2009, p17

*private ownership or private-public agreements. Further years will only see further deterioration.*⁶⁵

As demonstrated above the witnesses consulted during the review provided varied opinions as to the extent of public/private partnership that should be attracted to develop Fort Regent.

FINDING 15

Despite recommendations in previous reports and feasibility studies over the past ten years, there have been no attempts to pursue Public Private Partnerships for development purposes. Conflicting arguments were submitted with regards to the possibility of Commercial Development at Fort Regent. However, the most favoured opinion was that inviting private partners would be beneficial to developing certain aspects such as a moderately priced hotel.

5.1.4 Political Champion

Frustrated by what appeared during Hearings to be constant barriers to pushing things forward, the Panel asked witnesses who they believed to be responsible for driving forward any development at Fort Regent.

The DfESC initially answered ‘the landlord’ i.e. JPHD. However, it later conceded that they (DfESC) were the most likely department to be able to make something happen.⁶⁶

Mr Bisson added:

“While we talk about Property Holdings and a sharing of responsibility, the ultimate responsibility for the future development or what happens is at a political level. At the end of the day, the decision has to come... with the advice you are given, needs to be politically driven, and that I think is where there has been an absence over the last few years. The reports have gone in, things

⁶⁵ Public Submission 2.15, Mrs Lissenden

⁶⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy J Reed, 22nd May 2009, p28

*have been said, but there has not been the political will to bring it about.*⁶⁷

Mr Travert stated that in his experience through the cycles of reports over the past ten years that ‘the only power can come from the States themselves’.

Senator Cohen, expressed similar views during a Public Hearing:

*“I think that there is an absence of project champion, and somehow or other there needs to be a champion who is prepared to prioritise and effectively put his head on the chopping block and say: “This is what I believe is the vision for Fort Regent.” I am not sure that we have identified the champion, and that means holistically taking a view of the States.*⁶⁸

Mr Segal was adamant that the lack of development had been down to the political system, which allowed caretaker management during an economic boom. He believed that it was time for courageous politicians to identify and make decisions, albeit perhaps unpopular ones, in order to make a difference:

*“you need brave, courageous, non-electoral voting visionary people, people who are prepared to say: ‘I am prepared to stand up and do this because I think it is good and the truth of the matter is I may piss off 35 per cent of the Island but at the end of the day I stand by my conviction of what needs to be done for this Island’, because other than that, we are going to have another review of Fort Regent in 5 years, 10 years and in 15 years.”*⁶⁹

Mr Carter, during the Panel’s Hearing with the Jersey Heritage Trust, highlighted a broader issue with regards to not only finding a champion for Fort Regent, but one for the management of the entire collection of historic buildings. Someone was needed who could develop and champion conservation policies to protect Jersey’s Heritage as a whole.

⁶⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Bisson, 27th May 2009, p10

⁶⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator Cohen, 27th May 2009, p20

⁶⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr Segal, 4th June 2009, p6

Mr Carter used a recent Forts and Towers project as an example of Jersey Heritage working with States departments to develop and approve a number of conservation policies, as well as ensure continued management and review of those policies. Perhaps a compromise would be possible, whereby, Jersey Heritage, if resourced, could have a role in auditing and updating conservation policies for Fort Regent.⁷⁰

FINDING 16

In the search for a department or person responsible for development at Fort Regent, the Panel concluded that there was no clear political or officer accountability. The absence of a 'Champion' for Fort Regent was thought to be one of the explanations for the deterioration of the site. The Panel believed that future development of the Fort requires much greater political motivation in order for progress to be made.

5.1.5 Heritage of Fort Regent

After discussions with many of the witnesses during this review, it was apparent to the Panel that making the most of the heritage of Fort Regent is very important to everyone involved.

"Heritage have to be part of the team who look at the redevelopment of that site."⁷¹

"There has to be a very sympathetic balance between future need, use in a modern society as we are today, and that has to be contrasted against the history of that site. You have to recognise it and its balance and certainly if master planning is going to be undertaken then Heritage are going to be one of the key players in determining how we recognise the future of that site."⁷²

The Scrutiny Panel questioned whether the DfESC is managing to maintain a balance between the leisure and heritage aspects of Fort Regent.

⁷⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p3/4

⁷¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p4

⁷² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p24

Deputy Reed argued that it was inevitable that there would be a tension between the two aspects:

*"I do think that perhaps more attention needs to be given to how we can maintain and recognise the historic value of this site as well as continuing to provide a facility that the community can make best use of."*⁷³

Mr Bisson added that he felt the leisure aspects of Fort Regent were at the moment supporting the heritage site surrounding them. He suggested that without this, it is likely that the Fort would be derelict. The DfESC are acting like custodians, respecting the architecture and heritage of the site. So in this sense the leisure use was complementary.

The Jersey Heritage Trust explained to the Panel that all historic sites do struggle with their different uses. However, in their view it is not really desirable for them to live outside of the real world. In order to be properly conserved buildings need to be used, but this has to be carefully managed. Mr Carter stated that Fort Regent is not unusual at all in having those kind of compromises, and although the heritage may currently be obscured by the leisure use, it need not be.⁷⁴

Mr Carter went on to clarify:

"However, it should be clear really that when we say that we support it as a valuable heritage attraction it does not necessarily mean that we would support running it on the same basis as the castles, as a paying to enter visitor site. We think that probably in promoting the heritage aspects of it we think that more could be made in its sort of public amenity terms. You do not need to charge people to come to a historic attraction in order to bring money to heritage.I think the problem with thinking of it in terms as a heritage attraction is it would be something which would necessarily, in those terms, compete with the War Tunnels, the castles and I am not sure that the visitor economy has enough slack in it to support

⁷³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy J Reed, 22nd May 2009, p14

⁷⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p7

*that.the overall economic impact would be probably not positive for the private and heritage sector generally.*⁷⁵

Mr Hills, Head of Historic Buildings for the Jersey Heritage Trust referred to the external structures of the Fort, specifically the domed roof:

*“As far as the actual roof within the playground is concerned, although that was not included within the S.S.I. listing last year our view and recommendation last year was that it should be part of the S.S.I listing. I think it has become a fairly iconic sort of view of St Helier now.””Interestingly, we brought over a guy called Peter Smith who is one of the senior architectural historians and investigators, at English Heritage, a few years back to look at 20th century structures and Peter’s view was that, to quote, he thought the roof at Fort Regent was an extraordinary structure of national importance and would definitely qualify for listing on the mainland”.*⁷⁶

Jersey Heritage Trust suggested that interpretation and care of the historic fabric within the walls could definitely be improved. The Leisure use is not in principle obstructive to the heritage value, however, at the moment there are areas where it is obstructive in practice. Externally at the Fort, the Heritage Trust introduced the idea of a ‘Heritage Park’:

*“For instance, a bit of living history, militia characters, whatever, and there are lots of parts of the Fort which could also be properly repaired, maintained, reopened to the public, parts of the north part of the site which is pretty much closed off to public access. People can have a look, walk around the site, understand the building and then maybe see what else is going on inside, you know, concerts, sports events, and be encouraged to go into that as well. Improving the heritage to the exterior could have a positive knock-on effect on the economic benefit of the Fort itself I think.”*⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p9

⁷⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Hills, 27th May 2009, p10

⁷⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R.Hills, 27th May 2009, p12

Asked by the Panel what, in an ideal world, would the Jersey Heritage Trust like to see removed; they replied that the swimming pool, cable car and derelict parts of the ramparts would be the first areas.

Jersey Heritage Trust also drew the Panel's attention back to policies made in the Conservation Study by Antony Gibb. It was a widely consulted document and is something that could be used in order to create a development plan to look at how some of the interpreted improvements or signage schemes could be approached.

Mrs Penfold, President and Administrator for the Jersey Swimming Club, informed the Panel that what is missing at Fort Regent is an interpretation centre, somewhere where people can go and read about the history of the Fort.⁷⁸ It would provide an incentive for people to visit.

FINDING 17

Interpretation and care of the historic fabric has been substandard to date. Lack of consultation with the Jersey Heritage Trust and failure to address recommendations in the Conservation Statement by Antony Gibb has meant a continued absence of comprehensive historical interpretation.

5.1.6 Recommendations from Previous Reports

As demonstrated in section 8, several studies and reports have been produced over the last ten years for different States Departments, each producing recommendations for future development for Fort Regent. It is hard to ignore the fact that there has been a notable lack of response to these reports, by way of actual development. The reasoning behind this was something that the Panel was keen to discuss with witnesses.

Mr Flowers advised the Panel:

“The conclusions I have reached are that progress on the implementation of any of the recommendations of the various reports has been halted due to lack of funds. I think that the States approved, for example, the Jersey Sports Village concept in 2000

⁷⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Penfold, 27th May 2009, p50

but did not subsequently approve the funds to progress the initiative. So lots of ideas, a lot of them very good, and could be put together and could form a good package but you need to invest in the feasibility to drive it forward.”⁷⁹

The Panel questioned whether departments still considered the analysis and options, suggested by work done already, to be valid.

Mr Richardson answered:

“With respect, we would not be sitting here today if it was, we would have a plan. So that is all I can say on that. Clearly there has not been consensus so we are sitting here today 10 years on from some of those reports that are there, that has not delivered the master plan.”⁸⁰

The Panel questioned further as to who was responsible for driving recommendations from previous reports forward, trying to understand the process once those reports were delivered. Mr Richardson continued:

“It was the Planning Minister who was very clear that anything that he is looking at from here on is about regeneration of areas and that whole area we are talking about, we call East of Albert, ...which should include or should certainly have cognisance with the future use of Fort Regent.”⁸¹

Mr Flowers added:

“If you read all the feasibility studies and reports that have been produced on the Fort, some elements are common but there is a lot of conflict. It is getting a single view that is important, and doing the proper financial appraisal in the context of the surrounding areas before you can move forward.”⁸²

⁷⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p11

⁸⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p15

⁸¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p16

⁸² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p16

Deputy Le Fondré explained that times have changed since many of the previous reports were produced, especially in terms of lifestyle, funding, economy and the state of the tourism industry. Mr Segal, Director of Modern Hotels, disagreed with this, stating that nothing in the reports had really changed, but that many opportunities had been missed.

Mr Carter highlighted the strength of the recommendations made in the Conservation report produced in 2006 by Antony Gibb. It is difficult to say if these have been adhered to or even if there has been an audit of them. There does not seem to be a department that is taking ownership of it.

Mr Carter's comment again highlighted a fundamental issue hindering progress, this was that there had been, and remained to be, no obvious accountability for implementation of recommendations from previous reports. The Panel's concern when considering the lack of action after all the previous reports and feasibility studies is, if a new Master Plan is produced at some cost, will this be another plan that is shelved due to lack of consensus and funding?

Similar views were expressed by Mr Bisson during the DfESC's Hearing with the Panel:

"This is nothing new. Fort Regent has been in this cycle and circle for a number of years. I have been involved for 10 years now, and since I have been involved we have been involved in a cycle of feasibility studies, redevelopment and now the EDAW report has come along and we recognise that Fort Regent needs to be considered within that plan. But of course, the future redevelopment then seems to be delayed again because it forms part of another master plan, so where do we go from here?"⁸³

Senator Cohen also expressed his frustration that for the length of time he had been with the Planning Department, three and a half years, nothing had been progressed:

⁸³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Bisson, 22nd May 2009, p9

“So it should be a high priority, but somebody needs to take charge, putting the whole thing together. It is all very well to say it is a high priority, but I have now been at Planning for 3 and a half years and nothing has happened, and we were talking about something happening the week I started, and it just seems to always be talked about.”⁸⁴

FINDING 18

The Panel reviewed past reports and feasibility studies produced over the last ten years and found that follow up to the reports had been minimal despite many realistic recommendations and notable common ground contained within them. It was apparent that there was limited consensus as to the future of the Fort between the different Stakeholders involved and therefore no single agreed plan despite numerous reports.

5.1.7 Status of the latest report: EDAW

The development brief for Fort Regent produced by EDAW in addition to their main report is the latest with regards to development proposals for the site, commissioned by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Senator Cohen indicated that it was designed to be used to invite expressions of interest for development at Fort Regent. He informed the Panel that the report now sat with JPHD to be actioned.

“They have got lots of other essential things they have got to get on with as well, and they only have a limited, finite amount of resource, and presumably they have to prioritize this within their capabilities and within their resource.”⁸⁵

The Panel asked the Minister what it meant in practice for the report to be sitting with JPHD:

Mr Thorne, Director of Planning, explained:

⁸⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator Cohen, 27th May 2009, p14

⁸⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator Cohen, 27th May 2009, p14

“The EDAW report took slightly longer to be finalised than was originally intended, by which time we had started our review of the Island Development Plan. So, what we are doing at the moment is rolling up the proposals that were put forward by EDAW in 2007 into the new Plan, which will then give them the opportunity of going to the States and obviously be considered in the context of other things that are beyond their area of concern. That study was a study which arose from concerns that all investments in town were going to the waterfront, and what would happen to the established town? So, it looked at ways and means of regenerating the town area. There was a drift of footfall for shops and so on moving down to the west and what was going to happen with the eastern and northern extremities of the town centre? That in a nutshell is why the report was commissioned. The EDAW report stands as a strategy for the town as a whole, but within that there were 2 development briefs produced at our request. One was for Fort Regent and the other one was for the town park. So the thing which is with Property Holdings at the moment is the development brief that was produced by EDAW for Fort Regent, not the whole strategy, and as I say that has been rolled up into the plan review.”⁸⁶

Mr Thorne added that the EDAW report had had a positive reaction from the public, who were reassured that it suggested that sporting facilities should remain in place at Fort Regent.

Mr David Flowers, Director of JPHD stated:

“If you are looking at definitive plans we do not have them. What we have, what we have been looking at, is all of the reports which have been produced over the many years to see what are the best parts of those reports, what would be supported, and then try and come up with a concept. We have done some informal discussions with leisure consultants mainly to see what sort of approach we should take. The view was that it should be an evolutionary approach rather than a revolutionary approach. Some of the things which are in the reports, such as the EDAW report, are

⁸⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr P Thorne, 27th May 2009, p24

*really quite significant changes and I do not think that we can recommend going down that route.*⁸⁷

5.1.8 South Hill Site

South Hill is currently comprised of buildings which accommodate the Departments of Planning and Environment as well as Transport and Technical Services.

Senator Cohen informed the Panel that development of this site could be beneficial for future development of Fort Regent:

*"I would have thought that the South Hill site has very significant value, and that is why I think you need to package it up with the whole of the Mount."*⁸⁸

Mr Thorne, Director of Planning, added:

*"the only way we are going to achieve any developments at Fort Regent is by exploiting the other opportunities that exist on the hill, like the South Hill site which is the obvious one."*⁸⁹

Correspondence received by the Panel from Deputy Le Fondré on the 4th June 2009 explained:

"I would like to clarify one matter from my perspective, which concerns the potential treatment of South Hill. My personal view would be that if the master plan for East of Albert does include South Hill, and if the master plan confirms quite early that a residential use would be appropriate on that site, I would see no problem with developing that site as an individual package, consistent with, but potentially in advance of, the main proposals arising out of the masterplan."

⁸⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p8

⁸⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator F.E. Cohen, 27th May 2009, p11

⁸⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr P Thorne, 27th May 2009, p18

Indeed the timing on the whole master plan does need to be confirmed, and I would not wish to see South Hill remain under utilized for a significant period of time.”

The Draft Annual Business Plan for 2010 included the South Hill States Offices within its schedule of Properties proposed in 2010 for disposal:

“Acquired in 1949, the site totalling 8,026 sq. metres (4 vergeés 18 perch) has historically been used for States office accommodation of 21, 483 sq. ft. net internal area including 7 portacabins, with parking for some 164 vehicles. Significant value could potentially be released through the scale of the site, subject to accommodation, are poorly configured in terms of floor layouts, are inadequate in terms of the total floor space available and represent an ongoing maintenance liability.”⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Draft Annual Business Plan 2010, p104

5.2 Stakeholder Recommendations: Public Submissions

In parallel with submissions from States Members and Departments, during the course of the review the Panel invited Sports Clubs and members of the public, including users of the Fort, to submit their experiences, views and ideas for development at Fort Regent. These opinions were extremely valuable to the Panel to provide an insight into how the community viewed the facility and what they felt was needed.

5.2.1 Sports and Entertainment Centre

Throughout this process the Panel became more and more aware of the passion and loyalty that Jersey residents have for Fort Regent. The importance of the Fort remaining as a community leisure centre was stressed time and time again.

As a regular user of Fort Regent Mr Travert expressed his views:

“Fort Regent is vitally important to Jersey as a much needed sports centre with many community based events held on a regular basis. There is nowhere else in Jersey to hold such events in a wet weather facility that can hold the number of people that the venue can accommodate. And as such it should remain so.

On a personal level I feel most strongly that Fort Regent should remain in its present form with the reintroduction of swimming facilities. It was a massive mistake to the tune of £10.7 million to build the Waterfront pool and close down the pool at Fort Regent. To date the Waterfront pool is costing twice as much to run as the Fort pool did, and in my opinion is not giving value for money to the tax paying public.

Fort Regent has seen an on going investment in facilities and this is something I would wish to see continue.”⁹¹

A submission received from Mr Le Cornu re-iterated these views:

⁹¹ Public Submission 2.23, Mr Roy Travert

“Fort Regent has served the island extremely well for the last 50 years as a sporting, community and recreational centre. It has the advantage of easy access - people can walk there from town in their lunch hour, for instance. Parking is available, easy and away from the town centre. It appears to be well used by a large cross-section of the community and if you close or move the facilities from the existing location, I suspect that many of the users (specially the older ones) would not seek to go elsewhere, but would let their activities lapse - with a consequent reduction in fitness, health and social intercourse.”⁹²

Mr Donald Filleul also added:

“I see no reason for other than upgrading and expanding the current uses of the Fort. Many of the users are more than content with the facilities and there are, I suspect, a number of other activities which could be introduced once the permanent nature of the Fort’s purpose has been sanctified by the States as Jersey’s Sports and Leisure Centre.”⁹³

Many of the Submissions talked of the ability to spend a whole day up at Fort Regent during its peak, right up until the late 1990s. There were plenty of activities, inside and out to keep family members of all ages entertained. However, the Centre appears to have changed dramatically since those days. Many of the old activities are closed and visitors to the Fort are usually there now for a specific purpose, such as using the gym or attending a club session. It is no longer seen as a place to hangout. Deputy Tadier commented on this shift:

“It seems to us as a Panel that there has maybe been a tension between an open use of Fort Regent as it perhaps was in the past and a move towards a more centre d’excellence if I can call it that, where sports are promoted individually perhaps but at the cost of a more open facility where people can just come in and do those sports and other amusements like we did in the past.”

⁹² Public Submission 2.7, Mr Christopher Le Cornu

⁹³ Public Submission 2.10, Mr D Filleul

Mrs Nelson expressed her view, that currently activities at the Fort were very structured and perhaps limited to those who can afford them. She believed the Fort should look at ways of opening up activities to become more inclusive; provide a venue where those without money to pay for activities could come and experience activities.⁹⁴

Mr Travert agreed that the Fort had developed less of an 'open to all' use and attributed this to the start of 'pay and play'. This, he felt, introduced more of a public/private mode, which was to be driven by the clubs themselves. He highlighted that there were no specific areas or rooms available for youngsters to use or hangout, however, he expressed the belief that there are many benefits for youngsters to be involved in club sports in the club environment, with structured activities and supervision rather than 'hanging out' by themselves.

The Panel could only conclude from the weight of submissions that the sports aspect to Fort Regent is essential to the Clubs that use it.

"I could only stress again..., that if we lose the Fort as a sporting venue, then we lose the future of our Association because I cannot see us getting a venue where there will be the availability of 3 indoor courts, and that will be a huge loss to us because we have got so many exciting ideas that we want to have a go at."⁹⁵

5.2.2 Swimming pool site

A general consensus throughout the Public Hearings and Submissions was that the old swimming pool site needed to be the focus of attention for the immediate future.

Two options emerged as popular choices for development on the site. The first option could be to replace the swimming pool with another pool with competition specifications. The second option is to build a hotel on the site to provide accommodation for those visiting the Fort, especially sporting teams.

⁹⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs Nelson, 27th May 2009, p18

⁹⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mrs J Nelson, 27th May 2009, p51

Mr Filleul commented in a Submission to the Panel:

“It has become clear that the existing Swimming Pool will have to go. Its condition is far beyond redemption and is the exemplar of neglect on a massive scale. It must, unfortunately, be demolished.

The States will then have the most valuable development site in their wildest dreams, family silver of unimaginable value.”⁹⁶

Deputy Maçon summarized views from his district with regards to the site:

“Every person consulted wanted the pool restored. The general opinion is that we need two pools, one for serious swimmers (or at least those that want to swim laps rather than mess about) and the other as a fun pool.

People on the “Active” programme would like to go for a swim after exercising and even when they want to use the pool on the waterfront, half of the time it’s unavailable.

Entry to the pool needs to be cheap to encourage people to use it regularly.”⁹⁷

Mr Robert Taylor submitted his views:

“I think there should be investment for sports purposes - another competitive rather than fun swimming pool for teams to train in with required length / depth (for synchro swimmers, divers or water polo players). The building itself looks great and should not be demolished. Teams and families visiting for competitions will add valuable economy to tourism and infrastructure.”⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Public Submission 2.10, Mr D Filleul

⁹⁷ Public Submission, 2.17, Deputy Jeremy Maçon

⁹⁸ Public Submission 2.3, Mr Robert Taylor

The Panel was conscious of public opinion on this matter and raised the issue of the site at several of the Public Hearings held with the key departments.

The Jersey Heritage Trust stated that the swimming pool must be removed:

“The swimming pool building in our view is a blot on the landscape to put it bluntly. It does not fit in with the architecture, vision and the rest of the Fort, including the 20th century elements of it. Really it is detrimental to the views you get at St Helier. Our view is that the swimming pool should be removed and that the Glacis Field should be retained.”⁹⁹

The Panel asked JPHD whether consideration had been given to using fiscal stimulus money for the demolition of the old swimming pool. Demolition would surely mean that savings could be made by reducing the costs currently incurred to keep it standing at the moment.

“What I would say is (a) is it a priority...If, for the sake of argument, demolition costs would be say it was £500,000 or £1 million, would it be better spent knocking that building down or would it be better spent from our perspective on employing 4 local firms to do various maintenance which we know we have to do on certain buildings to catch up.”¹⁰⁰

“John mentioned a range of demolition costs between £500,000 and £1 million, we are not absolutely certain what it may be. We simply do not have that money.”¹⁰¹

The Panel asked the DfESC what the current cost was to maintain the swimming pool as it stood at the moment. The department described this cost as minimal, about £1000 per annum for security and blocking up damaged windows.

⁹⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Hills, 27th May 2009, p10

¹⁰⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy Le Fondre, 22nd May 2009, p20

¹⁰¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr D Flowers, 22nd May 2009, p20

The Minister for the DfESC informed the Panel that consideration had been given to the site:

"I know that an opportunity or an option is being considered regarding the creation of a hotel linked to the Fort utilising the pool site as a commercial partnership type arrangement that might, depending on the design detail of the proposal in the form of the hotel, enhance the existing facility."¹⁰²

Mrs Nelson, representing Jersey Netball Association, informed the Panel that if a hotel was developed on site it would be useful for Netball tournaments.

Mr Travert expanded on this:

"I think it is a great idea. I think it should have been done a long time ago. You have volleyball tournaments that come over. It would be central to the site. They would be on site. I think that would draw a lot of people to booking sports event led tourism which I think has got to be a key market that Jersey should be aiming at."¹⁰³

Deputy Le Fondré warned that it would be important to check viability of opening another hotel, in case it had a negative impact on existing ones.

Mr Segal added:

"If you put a hotel up there, if you have got housing up there, if you put a swimming pool, if you put bowling up there, put a sports centre up there, it is quid pro quo. It is important to provide more than one attraction so that you provide multiple reasons to be there."¹⁰⁴

However, when asked if a hotel at Fort Regent would affect other hotels in the area. Mr Segal answered:

¹⁰² Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy J Reed, 22nd May 2009, p7

¹⁰³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p23

¹⁰⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Segal, 4th June 2009, p18

*"We should embrace competition because it will make us sharper, it will make us think hard and it will make us work harder."*¹⁰⁵

Senator Maclean outlined that a 3 or 4 star hotel, which would fit into the mould of a conference centre, attracting suitable conference style business would, most likely, be the most suitable style of facility. However, viability and competition with other hotels would have to be assessed thoroughly beforehand. Mr Reid added that with the huge amount of investment that had recently been made into the 4 star market, there was always a danger of displacing the existing market. However, with a conference facility it may be attracting different types of events and clientele.

Members of the Public took their chance to comment further on a way forward for this site at a Public Meeting up at Fort Regent. It was explained to the Panel:

*"I really think we should be doing something with that area of the pool. What I would like to see is something like a sports tourism facility because we have lots of facilities throughout the island and I think it would lend itself to some sort of village or hotel there where we could use the facilities of the Fort and other facilities like Springfield and F.B. Fields."*¹⁰⁶

Following on from this it was stated:

*"the pool complex, as was, should be offered for sale to a hotel leisure partnership. That will bring in money for Fort Regent. You can build on the pool site, coming down partway into the Glacis Fields, a very useful 3 tier hotel which will not dominate the skyline.....Having done that, the Fort will receive the sale proceeds from the pool area."*¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Segal, 4th June 2009, p19

¹⁰⁶ Transcript of Public Meeting, Member of the Public, 6th May 2009, p14

¹⁰⁷ Transcript of Public Meeting, Member of the Public, 6th May 2009, p15

One member of the public was very clear that a standard hotel was all that was needed, so that sports people could visit and stay in lower price accommodation on site.

5.2.3 Conference Centre

In the course of the review, the Panel considered previous reports commissioned to look at the viability of developing a specifically tailored conference facility within Fort Regent. The information from these reports was combined with the picture built up through Public Hearings and Submissions to provide an unclear conclusion as to whether a custom built conference centre would be successful.

The Panel held a Public Hearing with Senator Maclean, the Minister for Economic Development, whose department is responsible for overseeing the development of Conference Business. When asked about the viability of a conference centre at Fort Regent Senator Maclean stated:

“We are catered quite well for small and medium sized conferences. The big question is if we were to put or invest in – and it is a significant investment – conference centre alone up at Fort Regent, first of all it would be public money that would need to go in because you would not get a return on something of a stand-alone nature like that. Is it going to be viable? I have not got the answer. Certainly, the reports suggest it is questionable. I do not think that that alone is going to be the answer and I think rubbing to the heart of Fort Regent, there is no one single function or activity that is going to work. It is going to be a multiple of things that are going to make it function.”¹⁰⁸

Mr Reid, General Manager of the Jersey Conference Bureau, agreed with this statement and added that most of the centres that would be of potential competition in the U.K. are multi-use, i.e. sporting event, concerts and comedians. None of them exist as a stand alone facility.

Senator Maclean was keen to draw the Panel’s attention to the fact that it is important when considering the hotel/conference centre concept that it is

¹⁰⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Senator Maclean, 4th June 2009, p6

going to start attracting business in an area which the island currently does not cater for. In this case, the facility would have had to be big enough to take large conferences, so that a gap could be filled without displacing other centres. Mr Reid also expressed that most revenue that comes through a conference is from accommodation, nearly all the conference centres in the UK and Europe are created to bring economic development through accommodation, particularly during spring and autumn.

A submission was received from Mr Anthony Kendall, Convention Manager for the International Bible Students Association (IBSA). This provided the positive aspects of the Fort as a conference centre as it is today:

“The Fort Regent has been the chosen location for IBSA conferences since 1985, and continues to be an excellent facility for our kind of event. It is conveniently situated for the 2,000 off-island delegates who now travel to Jersey, combining the conference with their vacation.”

Mr Kendall helpfully outlined what they, as conference organisers, see as positive about the venue as well as possibilities for improvements:

- Excellent location for travel from hotels and guesthouses.
- The combined seating layout on the ground floor and balcony provides sufficient seating for the three-day conference.
- The use of ancillary rooms within and adjacent to the Queen’s Hall provide suitable locations for administrative requirements.
- Negotiated car parking spaces in the Pier Road car park addressed previous access difficulties for delegates.
- Excellent support and courteous cooperation from all members of staff throughout the year of preparation and during the conference.
- The food franchise for refreshments and beverages provides very suitable arrangements for the delegates throughout the conference.

Improvements that could be made were focussed on additional chairs for the balcony seating arrangements to save transporting 300 – 400 chairs from the Kingdom Halls, as well as curtaining to the large windows either side of the balcony to allow for better projection of images.

Mr Segal, Director of Modern Hotels, thought the rotunda was an ideal place for a multi level conference centre however he was not sure that demand would be high enough to make it viable. He did state that, if the decision was taken to develop a Conference facility, Modern Hotels would be fully supportive.

FINDING 19

The Panel was not satisfied that there was enough evidence to suggest that Fort Regent would make a viable conference centre, and would not support an investment for such a development, that would be unlikely to make a viable return. They suggested that any future plans regarding development of a conference centre at the Fort would need appropriate analysis of the market for large conferences, including consultation with hoteliers to identify impact.

5.2.4 Restaurant

The Panel received a number of suggestions for a restaurant to be incorporated at the Fort which made the most of the views of the Island.

Ms Chamier, a member of the Fort User's Association commented:

"Furthermore, if there was a really good restaurant up there with a view over St Aubin's Bay (one of the best views in the island in my opinion!) business people could entertain their clients up there."¹⁰⁹

Deputy Maçon added:

"With the fantastic views from Fort Regent, it's incredible that a decent restaurant which capitalises on the views has never been available there. This would also encourage a different clientele who perhaps would not ordinarily visit the fort to go there. People could have a nice meal prior to a concert for example or have a meal after an event. There used to be beautiful rose gardens at

¹⁰⁹ Public Submission 2.13 Ms A Chamier

the fort – after a good lunch, older people might enjoy this sort of facility again.”¹¹⁰

Further reference was made to the benefit of having a restaurant on the premises by Mrs K Dowling:

“Also would it not be possible to have catering there for pre theatre shows with perhaps Jersey Pottery or some similar catering company hiring space at the Fort just for when there is going to be a show on. On recent visits my friends and I have found it very difficult to get into the car park before a show and so we have started parking at the Fort early and walking down to the Museum for a meal before a show. On the last occasion, the Museum was closed for food and we found it very difficult to find another restaurant so close to the Fort. We have been to the Portsmouth Guild Hall for several concerts and it was great to be able to make a night of it by having a meal on the premises and know that we would be in time to see the show.”¹¹¹

FINDING 20

All round improvement of facilities and access would be necessary to create a suitable environment for an upgraded restaurant.

5.2.5 Ramparts

The Ramparts used to be an area busy with people and activities, however, since the activities and Cable Cars have been closed much of the access to the ramparts is now restricted for the safety of the public. What is unclear to visitors is just how much remains accessible to walk around.

A submission received from Mrs Bugbird explains:

“I recently went up to the Ramparts with my 5 year old son, his first thoughts were “Wow! You can see the whole of Jersey from here!” So many people refused to go on the Jersey Eye last year saying “why would I want to pay for a view that I can get for

¹¹⁰ Public Submission 2.17, Deputy Jeremy Maçon

¹¹¹ Public Submission 2.30, Mrs K Dowling

free up at the Fort” but how many do? Whenever we have visitors over, one of the first places we take them is the Fort, it is a unique place. A Roof top restaurant and café would be fantastic (possibly even a rotating one?). Something which makes the most of the views but caters for both ends of the spectrum. We found hidden gardens and a kiosk/hut up there that I’d never seen before! They are obviously still being well maintained and there’s so much space up there, what about making a mini maze and a proper Ramparts walk. A bit like walking the walls of St Malo but on a much smaller scale, with observation stops and information about the view. More should be made of the Signal Station, there are a couple of signs up there about it and some information in the Museum but I’m always being asked what they mean.”¹¹²

A Submission received from Ms O’Connor added to this:

“ Sort out the gardens - there used to be beautiful gardens, rose garden etc. and I think I remember some very exotic fish there at one time. Seating and picnic areas- BBQ- would be popular - the views across St. Helier and out over the coast are lovely and it's a great place to sit and relax. This does not have to be a huge expensive operation - many people are keen gardeners but do not have their own patch, get the community involved, a lot of semi retired people would jump at the chance to go up there and make a difference, make it a school project - groups of school children could be allotted a small area to look after and plant up with shrubs, plants etc. It could be a competitive thing between schools.”¹¹³

FINDING 21

The Ramparts are one of the most neglected areas of Fort Regent. Regeneration of the Ramparts could be seen as a small scale project that could make a huge impact. Jersey Tourism should play a key role in the promotion of the site once it is maintained to a satisfactory level.

¹¹² Public Submission 2.34, Mrs H Bugbird

¹¹³ Public Submission 2.31, Ms R O’Connor

5.2.6 Summary of Submission Suggestions

The Panel was pleased by the public's response to an invitation to submit their views and suggestions for Fort Regent. It became clear that there is great support for Fort Regent to remain as a Sports and Leisure facility. However, many people remembered how the Fort used to be with a variety of sports on offer as well as other attractions, enabling young people and families of all ages to enjoy a full day out. A general feeling across many submissions was that new attractions and activities need to be developed. The Fort needs an upgrade to make it more popular once again.

Listed below are some of the main suggestions received by members of the Public.

Climbing Wall

*"What about an indoor climbing wall the roofs around the fort are so high you could easily accommodate one minimum, and people who are experienced could use it to hone their skills, people who want to get fit could use it. Youngsters could use it and even those who just want to give it a go to see if they would like to take it further could make use. In fact those who are just intrigued might have a go. It would outstrip the current one in St Ouen on the basis you could go higher and even split it into levels of difficulty and height."*¹¹⁴

Ski Slope

*"Change the old swimming pool and its surrounding changing area into an indoor ski area, i appreciate it may involve heightening the roof or digging lower. Change it to a proper skate park for the kids both young and older. You could then use it to host international skateboarding events or bmx or rollerblades aka like the extreme games. This would have an impact on tourism and be a show point for Jersey."*¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Public Submission 2.1, Mr Paul Syvret

¹¹⁵ Public Submission 2.1, Mr Paul Syvret

Casino

"We have been spending millions of pounds in the last decade to keep it going as a Sports Centre, we do not need anymore we have got enough sports centres all over the island, we don't need as well more retail shops, but what about giving a little though to turn this beautiful building to a state of the art casino with hotel facility. It would be a great opportunity for the state to save a lot of money and plus making a lot more."¹¹⁶

The Fort Users Association presented a report, "The Future Use of Fort Regent" to the States in September 2003. This report provided the following comment on the development of a Casino:

"In May 2003 the University of Salford released the Gambling Control Committee's "report on the reform of gambling law in Jersey", this study contains recommendations that Fort Regent is used as the location for a single licence Casino in Jersey. We would not support the inclusion of a casino into any future development at Fort Regent. It is evident that private and commercial players have an interest to develop this public land for the benefit of private investors, and have not considered the long-term effects for the island's community as a whole. The Fort Users Association feels that if this were to happen it would be to the detriment of the Fort and its users, the general public would certainly lose an important piece of island heritage and an important social venue."¹¹⁷

Restore the Military Fort

"For me, future use should be determined, as its name implies, namely that it was a military fort. In that sense it is no different to Mont Orgueil, Elizabeth Castle, St Aubin's Fort and the many other Forts and Towers that are scattered around Jersey. Kate Clark's report of 18th August, 2008, "Valuing the Heritage of the Channel Islands" probably better expresses many of the

¹¹⁶ Public Submission 2.4, C Bachelet

¹¹⁷ Public Submission 2.23 Appendix 1, p6

aspects of cherishing Fort Regent in its former guise along with the other fortifications than I can, but in terms of the Island's historic timeline, the Fort, along with the old South Hill Battery, effectively covers the last two centuries of the need to defend Jersey, never mind that it was only put to use "in anger" by the German occupying forces. Although Miss Clark's report was aimed towards seeking World Heritage Site status and I understand that any such approach might be stillborn, the Fort's historical significance will be of greater importance in the centuries ahead than might be, say, its use for housing to meet a ridiculous population figure of 100,000 in the next 20 years. After all, no one has sought to develop Mont Orgueil or Elizabeth Castle in the same manner, and the latter is only some 200 years older than the Fort!"¹¹⁸

Mr Bertram provided the following pictures (with thanks to the King's Own Museum in Lancaster) to show the Fort in its original form.



¹¹⁸ Public Submission 2.8, Mr B H Bertram



Permanent Concert Hall

"In my opinion, this is a prime place for a concert hall. The Island needs one and would bring lots of people to the Island. Concerts can be of any form, from Classical music to pop and even various shows. I realise that at the moment, a temporary stage is often set up, but if a permanent fixture on the Island was available, then people from all over the country and possibly the world would be attracted to the Island, to see famous shows and famous pop stars etc. If Jersey was known to have a permanent

*concert hall, just like Liverpool and Manchester, then stars would be able to then add it to their concert dates. Jersey being a holiday Island, I am sure a permanent concert hall would be an added bonus for those wishing to come to the Island for a holiday and see their favourite band or show etc. The building is certainly under used and could be out to some use in such a prime location with a great view.*¹¹⁹

Ice Rink

The Panel noted that developing an ice rink on the old pool site has been seen as a popular choice amongst islanders.

*“The roller disco was extremely popular and the ice skating rink in the winter over here is very busy. If this facility was perhaps split between the two, summer and winter, maybe the novelty factor wouldn’t wear off so quickly but people would still get the chance to perfect their skills with the facility being in situ for longer periods. Again, this is something that would be good for non-sporty people too.”*¹²⁰

*“Tourism is trying to encourage people to come to Jersey for their holidays. An ice rink is an attraction for good or bad weather that can be enjoyed by all ages. Kieran Bracken quotes; “Skate for fun!, Skate to keep fit!” He is our local celeb who is not only famous for rugby but also for his skating. If we do not make a rink permanent he will probably continue to loan his rink to the island for special times of year, but we should have one on a permanent basis. A rink over here would also give another sport to Jersey enabling people to form clubs and then people could maybe compete within the island and overseas.”*¹²¹

One particular young islander, 10 year old Rowan Château, has started a petition to raise awareness for this idea, even receiving the backing of Kyran Bracken. Rowan hopes to bring this petition to the States to

¹¹⁹ Public Submission 2.9, Kim Hanson

¹²⁰ Public Submission 2.17, Deputy Maçon

¹²¹ Public Submission 2.30 DFESC, Ms N Le Rougetel

persuade Members that an ice rink would be beneficial for the island and should be considered as part of any redevelopment of the area.

Computer Gaming

“Not everyone is “sporty” but there are few facilities for anything else. Many youngsters (and older) enjoy playing computer games, however this is often a solitary pursuit and they miss out on socialising. They do however link up with other people for tournaments and feel that if there was a room at the Fort set up with consoles etc they would be socialising, could watch other peoples’ tournaments and make new friends and spend time going for a drink or bite to eat as well.

This need not be at all expensive to set up and businesses might even donate computers as they replace older models, free of charge. Youngsters have already volunteered to help set the systems up if necessary. The public could even be asked to donate games – youngsters get bored of playing the same games after a while and would definitely contribute these.”¹²²

“Similar to the above you have room to do computer games tournaments whereby people bring their own pc or games machine, hook into a network and play against each other either for fun or for a prize. This is also one of the latest things going on around the world and provides tv coverage (as does poker and skateboarding competitions).”¹²³

Children’s Activities

“The Children gave me a list of all the different things to suggest that they would like to see here too. Trampolining, which used to be, I understand. A children’s gym, because they have to be escorted with an adult to the adult’s gym. They would like to keep fit, all the younger girls and boys; rollerblading, ski slope, a Velcro wall, a mud trail around the outside; an assault course;

¹²² Public Submission 2.17, Deputy Maçon

¹²³ Public Submission 2.1, Mr P Syvret

*singing and dancing classes and talent contests. Those were all the things that 160 families asked me to put forward this evening.*¹²⁴

Mr de la Haye responded to some of the suggestions raised at the Public Meeting:

"I think some of them are covered. You have talked about trampolining which is here. If I recall some of it was the junior gym. There is a junior gym up here, it is accessible. It is not possible to allow young people into the gym, and that is on health and safety grounds, without some form of supervision, but that does not mean that they need to have their own parent or guardian with them. So we do have those things. I have to say we have looked at the ski slope but ski slopes are extremely expensive to run. They require an extremely large catchment area, many of those on the mainland that have been developed have closed down because of the fact that they are just not viable to run and operate. Those indeed that are operating are just super duper fantastic facilities and really it would be very difficult to justify that in Jersey, I think.

*I'm not sure about the Velcro Wall. I mean those ideas certainly could be looked at. It is not that we have not and would not look at those kinds of things. Rollerblading indeed was here at some stage and has been here. I guess one of the reasons at that time that stopped it would have been to do with the popularity of it. But these things do go in phases, and clearly it is those kind of ideas we would look at.*¹²⁵

Television Studios

"If the Fort was developed into a studio audience television production facility it could continue doing what it does; in terms of performing arts, but diversify; increase takings and with it, the potential for all sorts of other benefits.

¹²⁴ Transcript of Public Meeting, Ms. G. Nicholson, 6th May 2009 p33

¹²⁵ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p34

It could provide the following benefits:

A potentially larger income per day of hire, compared to entertainment shows (?) – Companies take over these facilities with their own staff expertise and often their own 'hardware'. Longer booking slots; a television show could run to weeks rather than days. Regular bookings; a show may come back for series 2, series 3 etc. Gaps between bookings would still be available for entertainment shows. These slots could be regular slots and scheduled in advance. If managed properly the facility would be more attractive to entertainers and customers. Artists may actually choose to record their performance for DVD sale.

Having a venue for the 21st Century will get Jersey on the entertainment circuit for all manner of shows along with short stay, (long weekend), holiday makers, (the studio audience), with guaranteed entertainment. It keeps air routes populated and hotels ticking over but does not add to general road congestion or population increase.¹²⁶

The Panel was impressed by the range of alternative suggestions. However, some of the suggestions would have major financial implications and if they are to be considered would need further investigation.

¹²⁶ Public Submission 2.40 Mr Jeremy Thomas

6. Financial and Staffing Arrangements

6.1 Subsidy

Mr de la Haye provided the following information at a Public Meeting with regards to the Subsidy currently provided for Fort Regent:

“Fort Regent expended last year (2008) nearly £1.781 million. The income was £1.202 million. ...I showed you a figure of £1.6 million income from the Active Scheme before, as I say we apportion that out between 3 centres, hence the reason it is not quite as much as that. Clearly Fort Regent takes a significant amount but in addition obviously has other income. Therefore you come out at a figure just below £600,000 as a subsidy. I firmly believe that it is a centre that does need some subsidy. Some people might have asked why does the facility cost that much money to run? Let me tell you that there are no leisure centres of this kind that run without subsidy. That is not just in Jersey; that is across the United Kingdom. There is a centre that operates on the Waterfront which is just a fitness centre and that does make money. But if you are running a facility like this, not only in terms of size but also in terms of the range of activities that were operated, the number of subsidised groups that we offer, then that is the sort of levels that we would be operating at.”¹²⁷

Mr de la Haye continued to explain that during the period (up to the 1990's) where Fort Regent ran funfairs and additional entertainment that subsidy levels had been in the region of £1.4 - 1.5 million a year, and what the DfESC had successfully managed to do over time is reduce these subsidy levels significantly.

The Panel was interested to know what the running cost for Fort Regent was at its peak usage when areas including the swimming pool and external activities were open.

The DfESC provided the following information:

¹²⁷ Transcript of Public Meeting, Mr de la Haye, 6th May 2009, p12

The total income budget for the whole of Fort Regent in 2002 was £1,394,000 (including swimming pool income) and the expenditure for that year was £2,443,300 therefore the net expenditure was budgeted to be £1,049,300.

Financial analysis of figures provided by the DfESC, for 2006 – 2008, indicated that considering the small population catchment for the Fort, it is receiving a high level of use across the fitness and hall based sports.

However, the Adviser to the Panel explained:

“Historical financial figures dating from 2002 indicate that the net subsidy of Fort Regent has almost halved from £1.1 million in 2002 to £0.58 million in 2008. If inflation were to be taken into account, then the reduction in subsidy would be even higher. A look at the summary accounts shows that this reduction is largely due to savings on staff costs and operational expenditure, not an increase in income, which in 2008 has only just returned to 2002 levels. It is probable that this reduction is as a result of the closure of the pool, and quite possibly a cut back on maintaining the external expenditure, but the level of financial detail on both staffing and operational expenditure is simply too sparse to arrive at a conclusive evaluation.”¹²⁸

As stated by the Adviser the main difficulties the Panel found in respect to analysis of the financial data for Fort Regent were the uniqueness of the centre and consequently the inability to find comparable centres in the UK to benchmark the Fort against, and also the lack of meaningful data from which to make a thorough analysis due to the use of three different accounting procedures over the period of 1993 – 2008.

These difficulties can be highlighted by the following points:

There is a significant change in staff expenditure of approx £400k from 2003 -2004 (at which time the swimming pool closed) however, there is no

¹²⁸ Advisers Report, Appendix 2, p4/5

idea as to whether these funds were actually just transferred over to the budget of Les Quennevais or Springfield to compensate.

The saving made on non-staff expenditure during these years of approx £200k falls out, with no explanation, due to the reduction of approx £200k in income that year.

The DfESC did provide the Panel with historical data recovered from the Department of Treasury and Resources, however, although it appears to have more detail than later accounts, the department explained:

"When looking at these reports and comparing to the later reports the user needs to be aware of the following:

- *1993 & 1994 accounts are on a different basis from 1995 onwards and it is extremely difficult to pinpoint directly comparable data for these two years.*
- *1995 until 2001, data has been directly extracted from the Millenium achive. This data is broken down on a different basis to that on JDE for 2002-2008.*
- *Data prior to 2002 includes support units that were not solely dedicated to the Fort (at the bottom of the first page of each report) these have been excluded from the JDE reports relating to 2002-2008*

The system of commitment accounting was abolished in 2004 (we think) and therefore the accounting policies will be slightly different prior to this date."

FINDING 22 6.1

The DfESC has, on the surface, shown to be successful in reducing the size of subsidy required for Fort Regent. However, the Panel believes it is not easy to provide a thorough analysis of the Fort's historical financial situation due to the lack of meaningful financial data held across several different accounting systems, as well as the time and resources that would be needed to interpret it. On this basis the Panel feels that it is hard to be conclusive either way with regards to financial justifications for closure of facilities at Fort Regent due to the barriers to appropriate analysis.

6.2 Staffing

With regards to staffing levels, Fort Regent has 32.48 full time equivalent staff. These staff members cover opening hours from 6:30am to 11:00pm during the week and slightly reduced hours at weekends depending on scheduled concerts and events. Opening hours are split into a three shift system for staff that cover reception, the main body of the Fort and the fitness area. It also takes into account holiday leave and other absences.

The 2009 Staff budget was set as per the staffing levels tabled below, in addition there are 3 people employed through Social Security Workwise schemes which are not included in these figures. Most staff are paid a shift allowance. This is exclusive of Technical and Commercial Staff Costs which although based at Fort Regent operate across the whole of the Sport Division. In addition Exercise Referral Staff, currently paid for by Health & Social Services, are excluded although there are proposals to transfer the service to DfESC in the Future.

2009 Fort Regent Staff		
Position	No of Appointments	FTE
Centre Manager	1	1.0000
Assistant Manager	2	2.0000
Duty Manager	3	3.0000
Bookings Officer	1	0.8108
Position	No of Appointments	FTE
Leisure Supervisor	4	4.0000
Leisure Assistant	17	16.6800
Customer Services Assistant	7	4.4500

The Panel was advised that:

“Looking at expenditure, staff costs are around £1.3million, providing a Staff Recovery Rate (i.e. percentage of staff costs recovered by income) of 100%. This is relatively low when compared to modern, new build leisure centres where ratios closer to 180% to 200% may be expected. However, the inclusion of gross income for shows and events would improve this. The actual number of staff posts (as opposed to expenditure) does look high,

although the Fort is a large building requiring greater than usual levels of supervision.”¹²⁹

6.3 Funding for Development

During the Public Hearing with the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources, the Panel felt frustrated by what seemed like a continuous barrier to further development for Fort Regent. The witnesses stressed that it was currently not possible to progress with a master plan due to a lack of any available funds.

Deputy Le Fondré stated:

“I think my first response would be, where is the money coming from? I am sorry, because the reason I phrase it that way is because we know what we have in front of us for the next few years. It is all very well, there may well be some fantastic ideas around there, but if they either are not revenue generating or even if they are, are not in any way liable to generate the money, it may not be sufficient, then my view would be you would have to seriously look at that as a starting point.”¹³⁰

Mr Richardson added:

“We are going to come to a particular point which says, to take this project forward, be it redevelopment of the interior or master planning for the whole area, is a substantial piece of work requiring substantial funding which does not exist. So we can talk about vision, we can talk about ideas, but the next step is significant work and there is no funding and certainly, I think we are talking about a very significant sum of money.”... “I would not want to put a number on it in terms of a hard number but I think if you are looking at the overall area you would certainly be well over £1 million.”¹³¹

During a later Hearing with the DfESC, Mr de la Haye spoke about Funding:

¹²⁹ Adviser’s Report, Appendix 2, p4

¹³⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy Le Fondré, 22nd May 2009, p4

¹³¹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p6/17

“Clearly there is an issue about finance, and there seems to be a bit of a block now. In order to get a plan around those particular issues, some funding needs to be released in order to do that, and that, is where we are.”¹³²

The fact that funding is creating a barrier to development at Fort Regent is not a recent problem. The Panel was informed during a Public Hearing with Mr Roy Travert that funding had been a stumbling block ten years ago when discussions took place to decide what to do with Fort Regent. Project 181 was approved by the States of Jersey in November 1999. This provided an in principle decision to approve redevelopment at Fort Regent to create a modern leisure centre to serve the community, as per Roger Quinton’s report. However nothing more was done due to lack of available funds.

“I think Fort Regent should be developed along the R.Q.A. report. There is no doubt in mind that was put forward as a master plan, so to speak, and nothing has changed in the last 10 years from when that was written in 1999. Nothing has changed as far as we keep running around in circles. I think Deputy Vallois said it quite rightly..... We keep looking at the same thing and coming up with the same answer. Until funds are found and made available to do this, this is going to keep going round and we are going to keep going back on the same subjects.”¹³³

Mr Travert added the following:

“If the funds cannot be found then it should be left as it is. There is no reason to push forward or to give Fort Regent away to a private developer when we have a perfectly good, usable facility at the moment.”¹³⁴

¹³² Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p9

¹³³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p25/26

¹³⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p28

FINDING 23

The Panel was advised that there were currently no alternative funding streams for the development of Fort Regent, thus significantly affecting any progress. In light of this the Panel found the final decision not to apply for Fiscal Stimulus Funding completely inexplicable and felt that both the Department of Education, Sport and Culture and Treasury and Resources, on behalf of JPHD, were negligent in not seeking funding.

6.4 Rent

The responsibility for setting rents at Fort Regent has been transferred from the DfESC to JPHD. JPHD have advised that the cost of the rooms available for hire at Fort Regent varies considerably (as highlighted by the examples below) depending on the facilities available. The cost to a new sports club for the rental of a room at Fort Regent depends on the area being vacated and is based on a square footage. JPHD estimate that any new areas becoming available would be charged at an annual rent of £5 to £10 per sq foot (before any subsidies are applied).

Examples of room hire at Fort Regent		
Area	Examples of a selection of current Annual Rental amounts	JPHD commercial rent estimate
1273 sq ft	£3,628.32	£6365 - £12730
1259 sq ft	£6,153.54	£6295 - £12590
813 sq ft	£3,958.44	£4065 - £8130
551 sq ft	£ 719.89	£2755 - £5510

The above examples of current rents are existing licences which were negotiated some time ago therefore it is not possible for JPHD to comment on whether subsidy was allowed in the rental. If these rooms became available the new rental would be calculated without subsidies.

It is argued that if the commercial rent estimates were applied to the above clubs they would not be able to continue, current rents are based on the size of the membership and their ability to pay (as detailed in the 'factors' table below). Subsidies in one form or another will need to

continue to be applied recognising that the Sports Division's strategic aim is to increase activity in sport and leisure related activities. It is questionable whether the commercial rent estimates would attract other businesses to take up the rooms in the current climate.

All rents from Sports Clubs and Associations are currently paid to the DfESC (rather than JPHD). The DfESC are in the process of developing a formal policy documenting the methodology used to calculate subsidies which will be applied to any new rental arrangements in conjunction with JPHD. The Fort Management may consider offering incentives by way of a rental free period in exchange for upgrading the faculties.

JPHD do not record any subsidies in relation to licences or leases as clubs seek grants from the DfESC or private sponsorship in order to offset their rents. Subsidies are individual to the clubs concerned.

The proportion of subsidy to turnover is calculated on an individual basis by the DfESC taking into account factors such as:

Factors	
Strategic fit	Whether the applicant meets the department's strategic priorities.
Community need	The perceived community benefits and the demonstrated need and support from the community for the activity.
Track record	Whether the group (new or existing) has a proven commitment to and track record in the community. If a current lessee, whether the group has complied with their lease terms in the past, and have maintained their facility in an appropriate manner.
Organisational structure and legal status	Whether the group is a not-for-profit organisation and an incorporated society or charitable trust.
Membership profile i.e. General Membership base of the organisation	Membership aims, numbers, demographic profile, target groups, composition (i.e. active versus social members), exclusiveness (i.e. high cost of membership fees, costs per user) and whether the group has an open membership. Geographic area served by the organisation, main services and activities of the organisation and any proposed services and activities.
Sustainability Organisation's ability to meet financial and other obligations	The ability of the prospective lessee to fund, resource, and manage a lease, including asset ownership and ability to access external funding.

under the lease or licence agreement	
<p>Sources of income Amount and source of any funds received by the organisation</p> <p>Where funding is not received: the eligibility to receive funds if any and the reason(s) for funds not being made available</p>	The anticipated sources of income, whether these are related to the use of the reserve and the applicant's membership, and whether they are open to the public (for example gaming machines, bar, cafe etc).
<p>Optimal use of resources Benefits of occupancy to be gained by the Organisation, DFESC and the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the level of use anticipated by the applicant • the level of public access to be available • the ability and willingness to share the facility with other groups (this maybe a condition of the lease) • The contribution the applicant makes to enhancing the use of the reserve • whether the building or facility is suitable for the applicant's purposes • Improvements to the premises that the organisation may be able to provide • Restrictions in type of use if any
Environmental impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the level of impact the activity will have on the public space, other users and surrounding area
Need for a lease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the functional need to be located on public open space, if applicable the need to have a lease rather than other arrangement

The Panel received a number of submissions informing them of issues with the rent charged:

“In my view having the Compton Cinema Organ installed in Fort Regent is a total waste of a wonderful instrument with a great Jersey connection, as it was originally installed in the Forum Cinema, and I along with many other islanders have great recollections of Edward O’ Henry, and Stanley King playing it. I do appreciate that at the time the Forum was demolished that Fort Regent was probably the only suitable place it could be installed.

The main problem for our Society when organising a Concert at Fort Regent is the rental of the Queen’s Hall, which when our

Artistes fee, travel etc are taken into account makes the event totally unviable.

A possible alternative would be to have the rental almost zero for one day, when tea dancing could be organised with a local dance club in the afternoon, then a Theatre Organ Concert to take place the same evening, or a possible joint effect with a local Charity in order to attract a wider audience.”¹³⁵

Mr Robert Fernandes commented on his Club’s situation:

“Our martial arts club “Cho’s Tae Kwon Do Jersey”, has been training and using the Fort Regent for 20 years, we currently have 65 members. We want to be able to rent “Room A” on a full time basis, but have been told that they require them for the use of shows occasionally, whereas some other clubs have permanent rooms and pay nearly 40% less than we do, which is really unfair, especially as we have had training there for many years now and have always supported Fort Regent by using their facilities.”¹³⁶

Similarly Mrs Parkes, Honorary Secretary for the Elite Company of Bowmen added:

“We consider the Fort to be in an ideal location situated as it is in St. Helier and although could do with some improvements is the best place for a sporting centre. We do find the cost of rental to be high, as ours is a minority sport, membership is quite small and we always struggle to meet the rental; we utilise the range for seven months of a year, the rest is outdoors at Crabbe.”¹³⁷

FINDING 24

The Panel is concerned that the new rental structure to be applied by JPHD may not take into account matters of social benefit and inclusion.

¹³⁵ Public Submission 2.22, Mr C.R. de la Mare

¹³⁶ Public Submission from DFESC2.30, Mr R Fernandes

¹³⁷ Public Submission from DFESC 2.32a, Mrs Parkes

6.5 Maintenance

Backlog Maintenance

The DfESC provided a schedule of required maintenance (as shown in appendix 2, Building Maintenance Data, p112) drawn up by the Sport and Leisure Division for Property Holdings for 2008. The work identified in italics, for example, item 1 -"Checking of electric heaters" is work carried out annually by the Technical Team working for the Sport Division. The other work, for example, items 2 - 5, is annual work carried out by contractors employed by Property Holdings. The 'Programmed Maintenance' items are the requests put in annually by the Sport Division to Property Holdings for building improvements, these have a line through them due to the fact that the department was advised by Property Holdings that the work could not be carried out due to a lack of funding.

Deputy Le Fondré informed the Panel:

"When it was transferred to us I think we were given a budget of £65,000, which is what Education had identified as their external maintenance budget for the Fort. We are having a number of discussions with different departments as to whether all of their calculations are entirely as accurate as they could have been."¹³⁸

FINDING 25

Fort Regent shares a limited maintenance budget with two other Leisure Centres (Les Quennevais and Springfield). The Fort also competes with a lengthy priority list of JPHD and suffers as a result.

¹³⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy Le Fondré, 22nd May 2009, p22

7. Access to the Site

The issue of the accessibility of Fort Regent has been debated for some time. The Panel encountered differing opinions during the review with regards to what should, if anything, be done to remedy the situation.

7.1 Cable Cars

Mr de la Haye provided information on the effect that the closure of the Cable Cars had on visitors to Fort Regent:

“The best information that we have is that when the cable car closed, in the year following that, there was about a 12 and a half per cent reduction in the number of visitors to Fort Regent. We are fairly certain they are accurate figures.”¹³⁹

Mr Richardson provides an explanation for the closure:

“for many years it has been recognized that the cable cars were very old, had to be decommissioned from a safety point of view, but they were no longer viable and serviceable and there has been a recognition that there does need to be an improved linkage, without question”¹⁴⁰

Mr Carter highlighted that when the Cable Cars closed in 1992 visitors to Fort Regent dropped by 12%, this is actually relatively small when you consider that the remaining 88% were still managing to access Fort Regent.

¹⁴¹

7.2 Snow Hill Access

The Minister for DfESC suggested a possible opportunity for the car parking area at Snow Hill to be developed to provide a multi-storey car park, which at the same time as creating additional parking in town, could also provide an access point to Fort Regent. He suggested that the funds for this development could be diverted away from a possible car parking development on the Ann Court site.

¹³⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr de la Haye, 22nd May 2009, p20

¹⁴⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p9

¹⁴¹ Transcript of Public Hearing Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p26

Deputy Lewis made the following recommendations at the Public Meeting held by the Panel at Fort Regent:

*"I would like to see greater access from Snow Hill. What I would like to see is either a bridge from Regent Road, which would be the cheaper option, going straight into the side or a nice scenic glass lift, redevelop the whole area of Snow Hill, a nice glass scenic lift coming right up Snow Hill up to the top, into Fort Regent, have rooftop restaurants and private development up that end. That money can then be put towards a lift and back into Fort Regent."*¹⁴²

Mr Richardson commented:

*"Building an additional level in Snow Hill has a number of problems just because of the pure nature of the site. It is not to say it cannot be done, but it is a very, very expensive option for a pure car park, it just will not work financially. If it can be worked as part of another development then clearly one could cross-subsidise the other."*¹⁴³

Mr Carter also spoke of issues with a multi-storey at Snow Hill.

*"we would not necessarily be very enthusiastic about filling the ditch. There would be various sorts of proposals around that and the use of car parks in the ditch. I mean, I think our view from a heritage perspective would be that the ditch is part of the defences of the castle and filling in the moat is not the best way to conserve the historic interest."*¹⁴⁴

Miss Chamier, a member of the Fort Users' Association commented on the access via Snow Hill:

¹⁴² Transcript of Public Hearing, Deputy K.C. Lewis, 6th May 2009, p37

¹⁴³ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr Richardson, 22nd May 2009, p10

¹⁴⁴ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p14

“I would emphasise that quick access from the town area via Snow Hill would enable people to use the Fort for their particular activity during their lunch hour, or before or after their work day.”¹⁴⁵

7.3 Access is Adequate

It was stated that current access to Fort Regent was sufficient. Lift access from the ground floor of Pier Road car park is easily accessible from town by foot.

Mr Travert informed the Panel:

“If access was bad we would not have the numbers of people visiting Fort Regent...400,000-odd people are visiting. We have concerts up there that cater for 2,000 people. Now, those 2,000 people drive to Pier Road car park; they park; they have direct access straight into Fort Regent; up the escalators, straight into the Fort. That is extremely viable access.”¹⁴⁶

Jersey Heritage Trust believed that Fort Regent actually has quite good access.

“It has already got one multi-storey car park on one side of the Fort with parking level with the Fort. There is a slow sloping road up to the Fort, there are escalators, there are lifts, there are staircases...”¹⁴⁷

“Clearly an enormous number of people do get up there for concerts and sometimes I wonder if the access problems are overblown.”

Mr Carter added to the debate on access by asking the question of why improve access unless you can give people a reason and motivation to go to Fort Regent:

“At the minute when you walk around the outside and it is all a bit sort of 1970s concrete paving and railings, unless you were

¹⁴⁵ Public Submission 2.13, Miss Ann Chamier

¹⁴⁶ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p7

¹⁴⁷ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Hills, 27th May 2009, p14

going for a concert or to play squash or whatever, why would you go? I think what we are saying really is if you concentrate on making it a nice place to go, so it is interesting, all that heritage stuff, you could learn something, there are some decent cafés there, maybe a bit of living history, there is some stuff to do in the general leisure sense, over jungle gyms and a can of coke, then maybe the access problem will begin to sort itself because clearly thousands of people can go there.”¹⁴⁸

Mr Reid, General Manager of the Jersey Conference Bureau, added that the issue of access is often only one for people who live in Jersey. When compared with what would be competing venues in the UK, such as the Bournemouth International Centre and the Brighton Centre, which in their own right are not the easiest places to get to from local hotels, the access issue for Fort Regent is more of a local issue than it would be to potential visitors.

7.4 Directional Signage

In a number of Hearings it was suggested that improved signage would help to improve access.

“Access-wise, I think the signage you brought up is a good idea. We notice the big monolith on the hill but a lot of people do not know that. They do not know what it is. So signage I think for people to get up there is a good idea to improve that definitely.”¹⁴⁹

7.5 Minibus System

It was suggested that a minibus could be used to run a shuttle between Snow Hill and Fort Regent to make the journey between the two much quicker and more efficient for people wanting to use the Fort.

“Fort Regent is always going to have a busy time after 5.00pm until 10.00pm. When the facility ends. What happens up there during the day is going to be school events, maybe conferences if they are coming over. But as far as the population of

¹⁴⁸ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr J Carter, 27th May 2009, p25

¹⁴⁹ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Traver, 27th May 2009, p34

*the Island is concerned, we all have to work every day. That is 40,000 to 50,000 people all in their jobs, doing their work, picking the kids up from school, et cetera. So a minibus service into town, who is going to use it? That has got to be the question.*¹⁵⁰

FINDING 26

The Panel found that Fort Regent has poor directional signage both leading up to and within the site. The Panel also concluded that access to Fort Regent is inadequate and needs to be improved.

¹⁵⁰ Transcript of Public Hearing, Mr R Travert, 27th May 2009, p33

8. Previous Reports and Feasibility Studies

Fort Regent has been the focus of several reports, feasibility studies and debates over the past years. These form an important part of the background to the Panel's own review. A great deal of time, energy and money has been spent producing these reports and much of the information contained, and recommendations made within them, are still relevant to the current debate of how Fort Regent should be developed. This section provides a brief summary of the purpose and key observations of these reports.

8.1 Fort Regent: A Battle for the Future (Edinburgh/Rotterdam May 1995)

The purpose of this study was to examine the operation of Fort Regent, including a physical survey of the site and review of the access to Fort Regent. It was also to formulate a potential future use for Fort Regent in line with government strategies at that time.

The report recognised that Fort Regent was a community lead centre, providing accessible sports facilities for all islanders, rather than a commercially driven operation.

It observed the 'ad hoc' nature to the addition of attractions over the years, highlighting the lack of a strategic goal for the facility. It noted that the varied attractions distracted from a clear identity and made it impossible to package for the market.

It uncovered a lack of interest by users in the historical surroundings, technical aspects were considered much more important than visual surroundings.

The report stated:

'Fort Regent breathes 'low quality' instead of 'warm welcome' to visitors and users by poor access, out of date interior, bad

signing and poor presentation and service, far too much space is available. The attention and care given per metre squared is below standard”¹⁵¹

It provided a SWOT Analysis :

Strengths

Unique site

Volume of site

Close to St Helier

Historic Value

All weather facility

Opportunities

Restore historic values

Improve quality of goods and services

No competition on the market

Weaknesses

Social character of the Fort

Non-utilisation of historic values

General low quality of goods and services

Bad access

No clear concept

Threats

Social and political involvement

Financial

The report concluded that profitable development of Fort Regent was dependent on the Tourism Industry. This was seen as the only possible way to work with the issues of the catchment area in Jersey, despite the industry’s seasonal nature.

8.2 Consultation Report, The Future of Fort Regent, The Jersey Sports Village, Community Sports Centre, Into the Millennium with 20:20 vision. (Roger Quinton Associates Ltd, April 1997)

This study was commissioned by the States of Jersey Sport, Leisure and Recreation Committee in August 1996, who invited RQA (Roger Quinton Associates Ltd) to express interest in and then bid for the completion of an initial Feasibility Study of Fort Regent Leisure Centre becoming a Community Sports Centre for the island’s Population.

The report provides a detailed methodology of how they conducted the study, an appraisal of the future of Fort Regent as a Community Sports

¹⁵¹ Fort Regent: A Battle for the Future (Edinburgh/Rotterdam May 1995) p7

Centre and conclusions and recommendations which focus on development of a Jersey Sports Village.

The report takes a holistic approach, and themes within it suggest that it is important to strike a balance between maintaining the Fort as a reminder of history, whilst also creating an exciting modern sports facility. It also states that improved access from the town is vital to help the centre's rejuvenation and would go some way to help Fort Regent to be linked back into St Helier.

The report offers four options:

- “(a) Do nothing, continue as is, with or without new access
(likely to suffer increased maintenance and operating cost as well as decreasing visitor numbers)*
- “(b) Refurbish existing facilities, with separate pool facility and dry sports in all or part of the Fort
(Lower costs than redesign, however local expectations of higher standards not entirely met, face high costs for two separate old fashioned buildings and vulnerable to competing facilities)*
- “(c) Focus all indoor sports into a redesigned interior, with improved access, circulation and operational control
(straightforward concept, easy to market, large capital costs but reductions in net revenue costs annually, increase in visitors, inviting and convenient to arrive)*
- “(d) as above but with the present pool site used for a sports hotel linked with the Centre for Excellence.
(potential for investment and operation of facilities by commercial sector, prime site, other benefits as above) ¹⁵²*

8.3 Proposed Redevelopment of Fort Regent (Saville Jones Architects, March 2000)

The Proposed Redevelopment of Fort Regent was a feasibility study that built on earlier studies prepared by Saville Jones Architects and Roger Quinton Associates Limited in 1996 and 'Proposals for the Millennium' in

¹⁵² Roger Quinton Associates Limited (April 1997), p25

1997. It provided information and diagrams about a proposed scheme to make Fort Regent the island's home of sport and healthy living centre.

The study suggested the development of new access from Snow Hill, walkways and viewing platforms and a visitor centre. It also presented designs for new sporting facilities.

The report summarised the intentions for these studies:

“to remove the conflicts that have existed at the Fort, in trying to be ‘all things to all people’, resulting in a mixture of entertainment, sport, arts and administration. Facilities on the island have improved significantly in recent years. Fort Regent Leisure Centre has, however, remained very much as it was in the early 1970’s and requires upgrading to meet current demands and expectations.”¹⁵³

8.4 Proposed Conference Facility Fort Regent (Saville Jones Architects, April 2002)

After previously being commissioned by the States of Jersey to produce feasibility studies for the future of the Fort as a leisure centre, this feasibility study was requested by the States of Jersey in reaction to an identified need for a new conference facility.

The study concluded that Fort Regent could be a suitable site for a conference facility. It has the infrastructure in place already i.e. car parking, roads, services, this could present a considerable cost saving compared to developing a new site. A mix of conference and sporting facilities could be attractive to delegates and few conference facilities (at this time) had such a mix of facilities on offer. The swimming pool site would also be a potential site for a budget hotel.

8.5 Jersey Conference Centre Study (The Tourism Company, Amended June 2004 & May 2003)

This report explores the implications of developing a new conference centre in Fort Regent (specifically for 500+ delegates). It was commissioned by Jersey Conference Bureau and carried out by The Tourism Company.

¹⁵³ Proposed Redevelopment of Fort Regent (Saville Jones Architects March 2000) p2

Positive findings in the report suggest that the conference sector is highly attractive to Jersey due to its potential for growth, high spending, high impact and ability to complement leisure tourism in terms of seasonality and using surplus capacity. If successful this facility could generate additional £8m direct spend into the economy, become a symbol of regeneration and the tourism sector, and create publicity that will raise Jersey's profile. A postal survey suggested there could be a receptive audience to a new conference facility.

In contrast the report goes on to state that the conference market is a very competitive market (UK and Europe) and older traditional centres are finding it hard to compete against new purpose-built centres. At the time of the report Jersey only held 5 large conferences a year, and had 7 conference venues (including hotels), four of which had suitable facilities for 500 or more. Fort Regent was a 'last resort' and unable to compete.

Negative views of Jersey as a conference centre include; lack of modern, good quality facilities for large meetings, costs and difficulties of travel arrangements and lack of experience of clients using Jersey.

It's anticipated that any refurbishment of Fort Regent to include conference facilities would need a significant capital injection (Isle of Man spent £20 million on a similar project at the time of the report) and would incur a yearly subsidy of £0.5 million. Different management options would also have to be considered. It would be essential to get the design and mix of facilities right.

The report suggests that the feasibility study needs to be revisited.

8.6 Fort Regent Conference and Events Venue (PMP Nov 2004)

In this report PMP highlighted the significant primary research and consultation carried out so far, as well as the lack of recommendations implemented as a result of these studies. The factors causing this were seen to be a combination of reasons including lack of States, public and other stakeholder support and lack of funding. PMP recognised that any

development options that they put forward in their study had to be realistic and deliverable.

After consultation, PMP concluded that the development of a major conference and events venue would merit serious consideration by the States. It was perceived that Jersey would need to find new sustainable opportunities to help rejuvenate the island's economy due to the gradual decline of its traditional industries, and this development opportunity was likely to bring a positive monetary contribution to the island as well as job opportunities and social benefits.

On the other hand the research revealed that to be successful and capture significant market share the venue would need to be purpose built, aggressively marketed and managed in the most commercial and professional way possible. A compromise 'me too' structure adapted with the current Fort facility would fail to achieve the necessary economic impact, and require an ever increasing revenue subsidy.¹⁵⁴

8.7 A Conservation Statement for Fort Regent, Jersey (Antony Gibb Jan 2006)

The Conservation Statement was commissioned by Education, Sport and Culture to consider issues of Fort Regent's future maintenance and use. The report determined what was important about the site and why, so that any threats to that significance could be identified.

After a thorough study the report outlines a series of logical and relevant 'Conservation Policies' or recommendations in relation to the following aspects of the site; Ownership and Management, Understanding (of the historical significance of the site), Interpretation and Presentation, Condition of the Fabric, Access, Protection, Landscape, Ecology and Intrusions.

This report is now available on the States of Jersey Website.

8.8 Development Brief for Fort Regent (EDAW Sept 2007)

This report forms part of the wider strategy for the development and regeneration of St Helier. Its intention was to set out a framework for future

¹⁵⁴ Fort Regent Conference and Events Venue (PMP Nov 2004) p83

development and management of Fort Regent that would reveal the most efficient, resourceful and cost effective use of the land and assets. Its purpose was to provide a development brief from which to invite expressions of interest for the development and operation of new facilities at Fort Regent.

The report draws specific attention to the recommendations made in the Conservation Statement by Antony Gibb, before setting out its own aims and objectives for each aspect of the site.

Similar themes emerge again with regards to improving access, exploiting the landmark and heritage value of the Fort, enhancing the sports facilities and redeveloping the swimming pool site.

9. Appendix 1 – Panel Membership and Terms of Reference

9.1 Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel:

DEPUTY R. G. LE HERISSIER (Chairman)

DEPUTY T.M. PITMAN (Vice Chairman)

CONNETABLE G. F. BUTCHER

DEPUTY M. TADIER

For the purposes of this review the Panel decided to co-opt an additional member:

DEPUTY T. A. VALLOIS

9.2 The following Terms of Reference were established for the review:

1. To clarify the current situation regarding the Fort Regent facility.
2. To consider the plans for, and implications of, future development of the facility.
3. To assess the current and future financial and staffing arrangements of the facility
4. To consider current access to the Fort Regent Site.
5. To examine any further issues relating to the topic that may arise in the course of the Scrutiny Review and which the Panel considers relevant.

10. Appendix 2 – Evidence Considered

The following documents are available to read on the Scrutiny website (www.scrutiny.gov.je) with the exception of those documents that were provided to the Sub-Panel on a confidential basis

Documents

- 1) ESC Building Maintenance Requests 2008
- 2) Fort Regent Redevelopment (States Proposition) 3rd March 1998
- 3) EDAW's reports on regeneration of Fort Regent (March & Sept 2007)
- 4) A conservation statement for Fort Regent, Jersey (Anthony Gibb, January 2006)
- 5) Fort Regent conference and events venue, A Stage 1 Report (PMP, November 2004)
- 6) Jersey Conference Centre Study (The Tourism Company Updated version June 2004)
- 7) Jersey Conference Centre Study (The Tourism Company May 2003)
- 8) Proposed Conference Facility, Fort Regent for Jersey Conference Bureau (Saville Jones Architects, April 2002)
- 9) Proposed Redevelopment for Fort Regent (Saville Jones, Architects, March 2000)
- 10) Proposals for the Millennium: The Key to Unlock the Future of Fort Regent (Saville Jones Architects, April 1997)
- 11) The Future of Fort Regent - The Jersey Sports Village - Community Sports Centre into the Millennium with 20:20 vision (Roger Quinton Associates April 1997)
- 12) Fort Regent: A Battle for the Future (Edinburgh/Rotterdam) May 1995

Written Submissions

- 1) Public Submission 2.1 - Paul Syvret
- 2) Public Submission 2.2 - Denise Carroll
- 3) Public Submission 2.3 - Robert Taylor
- 4) Public Submission 2.4 - C Bachelet
- 5) Public Submission 2.5 - A Cabaret
- 6) Public Submission 2.6 - Mr Walton
- 7) Public Submission 2.7 - Chris le Cornu
- 8) Public Submission 2.8 - B Bertram
- 9) Public Submission 2.9 - K Hanson
- 10) Public Submission 2.10 - D Filleul
- 11) Public Submission 2.11 - Alan Haines
- 12) Public Submission 2.12 - Jackie Nelson

- 13) Public Submission 2.13 - A Chamier
- 14) Public Submission 2.14/15 - S Lissenden
- 15) Public Submission 2.16 - Simon Abbott
- 16) Public Submission 2.17 - Deputy Macon
- 17) Public Submission 2.18 - Carol Penfold
- 18) Public Submission 2.19 - Arthur Falle
- 19) Public Submission 2.20 - Mr Le Maistre
- 20) Public Submission 2.21 - Ms C O'Malley
- 21) Public Submission 2.22 - Mr C R de la Mare
- 22) Public Submission 2.23 - R Travert
- 23) Public Submission 2.23 - R Travert Appendix 1
- 24) Public Submission 2.23 - R Travert Appendix 2
- 25) Public Submission 2.24 - Mel de la Haye
- 26) Public Submission 2.25 - John Grady
- 27) Public Submission 2.26 - C McBride
- 28) Public Submission 2.27 - S&D Gallichan
- 29) Public Submission 2.28 - Robbie
- 30) Public Submission 2.29 - I Le Breton
- 31) Submissions received by and forwarded from the Department of Education, Sport and Culture 2.30
- 32) Public Submission 2.31 - Rosemary O'Connor
- 33) Submissions received by and forwarded from the Department of Education, Sport and Culture 2.32
- 34) Public Submission 2.33 - Newman Family
- 35) Public Submission 2.34 - Heather Bugbird
- 36) Public Submission 2.35 - Captain Nibbs
- 37) Public Submission 2.36 - Joy Anthony
- 38) Jersey Heritage Submission 27th May 2009
- 39) Public Submission 2.40 - Jeremy Thomas
- 40) Public Submission 2.41 - Heidi Toporis

Public Hearings

Friday 22nd May 2009:

- 1) Deputy J. G. Reid, Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

Mr. D. de la Haye, Assistant Director, Education, Sport and Culture

Mr D. Bisson, Head of Operations, Sport Division of Education, Sport and Culture

Ms Angie Boucheré, Fort Regent Centre Manager

- 2) Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré, Assistant Minister for the Department of Treasury and Resources and Chief Minister's Department

Mr J. Richardson, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Minister's Department

Mr D. Flowers, Director of Jersey Property Holdings Limited

Wednesday 27th May 2009:

- 3) Mrs Carole Penfold, President and Administrator, Jersey Swimming Club

Mrs Jackie Nelson, President, Jersey Netball Association

Mrs Yveline Sheldon, Senior Vice President, Jersey Netball Association

- 4) Mr Roy Travert, former chairman of the Fort Users Association

- 5) Senator F. E. Cohen Minister for the Department of Planning and Environment

Mr P Thorne, Director of Planning

- 6) Mr J Carter, Director of the Jersey Heritage Trust

Mr Roger Hills, Head of Historic Buildings, Jersey Heritage Trust

Friday 4th June 2009:

- 7) Mr J Segal, Director of Modern Hotels

- 8) Senator A.J.H. Maclean, Minister for the Department of Economic Development

Mr H Reid, General Manager for the Jersey Conference Bureau

Building Maintenance Data (Ref: 6.5 Maintenance)

Building Maintenance Requests 2008								
SPORTS FACILITIES: FORT REGENT (FAERF0)								Appointed Maintenance Officer:
Item No.	Description of Work	Object Account	MS	AM	FM	RM	PM P1 P2	Appointed Contractor
1	<i>Annual maintenance: Checking of electric heat emitters</i>							<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
2	Annual maintenance: 6-monthly monitoring of piped water system(s)	701200	0					F.O.R.M. Ltd.
3	Annual maintenance: Main Fire Alarm system(s)	702200	0					C.I. Fire & Security Ltd.
4	Annual maintenance: Fire Alarm system(s) to La Petite Ecole	702200	0					C.I. Fire & Security Ltd.
5	Annual charge for monitoring fire alarm system by G4S	702200						G4S
6	Annual maintenance: Intruder Alarm system(s) in Main Entrance	702200		0				G4S
7	Annual maintenance: Fire Extinguisher equipment	702200	0					Island Fire Extinguisher Co
8	<i>Annual maintenance: Testing of Emergency Lighting system(s)</i>							<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
9	Annual maintenance: Air Conditioning system(s)	701200		0				Ideal Conditions Ltd.
10	<i>Annual maintenance: Queen's Hall ventilation system(s)</i>							<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
11	<i>Annual maintenance: Gymnasium & Fitness equipment</i>							<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
12	<i>Annual maintenance: Sun beds</i>							<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
13	Annual maintenance: Drainage installation and land drains (Contract 8235)	701200		0				Dyno-Rod Drain Services
14	Annual maintenance: Upper Carpark Escalator (ref. K3802)	701400	0					Otis Channel Islands
15	Annual maintenance: Lower Carpark Escalator (ref. K3801)	701400	0					Otis Channel Islands
16	Annual maintenance: Gloucester Hall passenger lift (ref. B2687)	701400	0					Otis Channel Islands
17	Annual maintenance: Disabled passenger lift in Forecourt (ref.	701400	0					Otis Channel Islands

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	Q0264)								
18	Annual maintenance: Queen's Hall passenger lift (ref. Q0262)	701400	0						Otis Channel Islands
19	Annual maintenance: Routine Safed Lift Testing Inspections	701400		0					Otis Channel Islands
20	Annual maintenance: Fire sprinkler system	702200							
21	Annual maintenance: Fire sprinkler system desiel generator	702200	0						Rabey's Universal Ltd.
22	<i>Annual maintenance: Heating System Control Panel(s)</i>								<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
23	<i>Annual maintenance: Radios</i>								<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
24	<i>Annual maintenance: Piano</i>								<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
25	Annual maintenance: Emergency lighting electricity generator	701300	0						Computer Protec Ltd.
26	Annual maintenance: Fork lift trucks	701100	0						Rabey's Universal Ltd.
27	Annual maintenance: Lifting equipment	701400							
28	Annual maintenance: Entrance signage	701300							
29	Annual maintenance: Drainage pump(s)	701200							
30	Annual maintenance: Security Roller Shutter Door(s)	701100	0						K.C. Engineering
31	Annual maintenance: Carpark Access Gate	701300		0					K.C. Engineering
32	Annual maintenance: External play frame inspection	702100	0						Consus International
33	Annual maintenance: Internal play frame inspection	702100	Maintained by Café Operator						
34	Annual maintenance: Seating Inspection	701100							
35	<i>Annual maintenance: Seating Maintenance</i>								<i>Sports Division Responsibility</i>
36	Routine maintenance: Quarterly Internal Play Equipment Inspection	702100	0						Consus International
37	Routine maintenance: Quarterly External Play Equipment Inspection	702100	0						F.O.R.M. Ltd.
38	Annual maintenance: Automatic Sliding Door(s)	701100							
39	Annual maintenance: Portable Appliance Testing to programme	701300	0						P.H.S.
									F.O.R.M. Ltd.
	REACTIVE MAINTENANCE BUDGET								C.I. Fire & Security Ltd.
40	Allowance for Building Services repairs (subject to SLA)	701200				0			C.F.M. Electrical Contractors
41	Allowance for Building repairs (subject to SLA)	701100				0			Otis Channel Islands

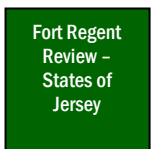
Building Maintenance Requests 2008									
SPORTS FACILITIES: FORT REGENT (FAERF0)						Appointed Maintenance Officer:			
Item No.	Description of Work	Object Account	MS	AM	FM	RM	PM		Appointed Contractor
	Totals Carried Forward from Sheet 'hca2'		0	0	0	0	P1	P2	
	PROGRAMMED MAINTENANCE (contd)								
52	Demolish former Swimming Pool Complex and landscape grounds							0	
53	Commence upgrading programme to replace fire escape crash bars							0	
54	Commence rolling programme of external decorations to Sea Cadet base							0	
55	Continue panelling in Escalator access corridor							0	
56	Continue programme of water tank replacement							0	
57	Remove asbestos from former Swimming Pool Complex							0	
58	Commence upgrading programme to renew mains water distribution							0	
59	Demolish former Cable Car housing and landscape grounds							0	
60	Investigate option for Building Management System installation							0	
61	Carry out survey on membrane roof							0	
62	Continue rolling programme of decorations to Gate F							0	
63	Carry out remedial repairs and non-slip coating to Pier Rd access steps							0	
64	Commence fencing around West Bastion fire escape							0	
65	Carry out scaffolding, re-glazing and replacement of doors to escalators							0	
66	Commence rolling programme of painting to Ditch rails							0	
67	Resolve water ingress to Referral Rooms (treatment of slabs)							0	
68	Commence rolling programme of replacement flooring to Piazza							0	
69	Continue rolling programme of hogging to Ramparts							0	
70	Waterproofing to Sea Cadets parade grounds							0	

11. Appendix 3 – Expert Advisers Report

Review of Fort Regent
A Report to the States of Jersey Education and
Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

September 2009

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11.1. INTRODUCTION

Torkildsen Barclay is an independent sports and leisure consultancy that advises on the provision, management, planning and funding of sports and leisure services and facilities both nationally and internationally.

In May 2009 the States of Jersey Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel appointed Torkildsen Barclay to act as its expert adviser in its investigation of the future of Fort Regent. The terms of reference for the Panel were:

- To clarify the current situation regarding the Fort Regent facility;
- To consider the plans for, and implications of, future development of the facility;
- To assess the current and future financial and staffing arrangements of the facility;
- To consider current access to the Fort Regent Site;
- To examine any further issues relating to the topic that may arise in the course of the Scrutiny Review and which the Panel considers relevant.

Torkildsen Barclay acted as an adviser to the Panel in this process, reviewing the background documentation, assessing available financial data, attending appropriate hearings, and evaluating and assessing the current issues and future options.

As the process progressed it became clear that there were many different strands and perspectives that the review could pursue – the marketing of the site, the centre’s IT systems, its financial performance, future planning, funding, dispersal of management, heritage and interpretation, quality of catering, impact of the AquaSplash pool, pricing and booking policy and many, many more. However, without wishing to play down the importance of any of these, some are better considered as “operational” or day to day management issues. They are valid in their own right and merit inclusion within the review, but are not the major and fundamental items that need to be addressed by the States if anything meaningful and long lasting is to be achieved.

Our report, therefore, provides a summary of Torkildsen Barclay’s view on what we consider to be the *key* issues facing the future of Fort Regent. It does not attempt to replicate or repeat the detail contained within the excellent analysis within the Panel’s own report to which this report is appended, but rather to provide a “high level” overview of the position and recommended future actions. The evidence upon which these conclusions are based is set out in detail within the Panel’s main report.

What we do hope is that the Panel’s report stimulates decisive action to address the very real issues facing Fort Regent.

11.2 FORT REGENT – THE CURRENT POSITION

The Fort Regent Centre – Performance and Perception

Fort Regent has a long and chequered history of use and development, as set out in the Panel's report. In the past the whole site – the Fort and its surrounding grounds – were intensively used for a wide mix of leisure, entertainment and tourist activities, drawing large numbers to use the portfolio of indoor and outdoor facilities on offer.

Today, much has changed. The focus on provision is now on the indoor facilities, where investment has been made to improve elements of the interior, including the fitness facilities and the reception. The swimming pool is now closed and swimming has relocated to the AquaSplash and Les Quennevais Swimming Pool.

As of 2008, the annual operation of what are effectively dry sports facilities totalled just under £1.5 million (£1,469,481). This figure excludes gross revenues from the shows and entertainment that takes place at the Fort, and excludes gross revenues from the catering and soft play facilities, both of which are operated as a private concession.

By its very nature, the Fort is unique in terms of the mix and type of facilities it provides, with the management having had to adapt and innovate to create the spaces available for public use. To make direct comparisons with other leisure facilities elsewhere in the UK would, therefore, be both difficult and misleading. However, we can look specifically at some of the main income streams for which comparison is possible. These are:

Fitness (including memberships and aerobics)	£980k
Dry Sports (hall based)	£122k (plus £37k from Amenity Room Use)

By any benchmark, and given the relatively small population catchment in and around St.Helier, these are good performance figures and indicate that the Centre is receiving a high level of use in these areas.

Looking at expenditure, staff costs are around £1.3 million (£1,338,059), providing a Staff Recovery Rate (i.e. percentage of staff costs recovered by income) of 110%. This is relatively low when compared to modern, new build leisure centres where ratios closer to 180% to 200% may be expected, and in particular as there is now no operational swimming pool. However, the inclusion of gross income for shows and events would improve this. The actual number of staff posts (as opposed to expenditure) does look high, although the Fort is a large building requiring greater than usual levels of supervision.

In terms of other, non staffing expenditure the figures provide a very cursory breakdown from which little can actually be deduced. In reality the size, age and unusual structure of the Fort would make any comparisons of utility costs, maintenance expenditure etc. largely worthless.

Historical financial figures dating from 2002 indicate that the net subsidy of Fort Regent has almost halved from £1.1 million in 2002 to £0.58 million in 2008. If inflation were to be taken into account, then the reduction in subsidy would be even higher. A look at the summary accounts shows that this reduction is largely due to savings on staff costs and operational expenditure, not an increase in income, which in 2008 has only just returned to 2002 levels. It is probable that this reduction

is as a result of the closure of the pool, and quite possibly a cut back on maintaining the external environs of the Fort, but the level of financial detail on both staffing and operational expenditure is simply too sparse to arrive at a conclusive evaluation. This is also true of older historical data, and we would need to be certain we were comparing apples with apples, not pears. If a more accurate evaluation of the historical financial performance of the Fort is required, then a more detailed and forensic analysis of the accounts will need to be undertaken, provided the relevant data exists.

In any case this may prove to be a largely irrelevant task. “We are where we are”, and how the Fort has performed in the past, or indeed performs now, will only have a limited bearing on its future development. Clearly, the areas in which it is currently performing well need to be considered within a future vision for Fort Regent, as do the direction of the present and future leisure and sport markets. What worked ten years ago may well not work now.

Irrespective of any financial analysis, what has come across clearly from the Hearings and the public feedback is that there is generally a high level of regard amongst the public for the facility and that the Fort Regent centre is popular and well used for community and elite sport, and for entertainment events and shows. This is despite the inherent design challenges posed by a structure that was not created for this purpose.

The Ramparts and the Site

However, turning to the external facilities, there appears to be a growing public perception that the site as a whole is being neglected and left to deteriorate.

As a visitor to Jersey, to follow the brown signs for the Fort in the centre of St. Helier –with some expectation of visiting a site of interest – and to be confronted with access either via a multi storey car park or an unappealing climb up steep and worn steps, is both disappointing and discouraging. To undertake access by either route, then to find at the top no directional signage or interpretation, is equally frustrating.

Touring the site, walking around the Ramparts, continues to reinforce this impression. The abandoned and derelict pool; the once vibrant and thriving external areas surrounding the Fort that have now fallen into disrepair – its gardens, heritage interpretation points, amusements and attractions; the redundant cable cars; the hotch potch of parking and temporary structures within the Fort's ditches. To an outsider (and no doubt to most residents) all indicate a lack of care and vision for what is for Jersey an important site.

However, in reality vision is the one area that is not lacking..

11.3 THE VISIONS FOR THE FORT

There has been no shortage of excellent studies setting out the options for the future of Fort Regent – both the centre and the surrounding land. These include:

- Fort Regent: A Battle for the Future (Edinburgh/Rotterdam May 1995)
- Consultation Report, The Future of Fort Regent, The Jersey Sports Village, Community Sports Centre, Into the Millennium with 20:20 vision. (Roger Quinton Associates Ltd, April 1997)
- Proposed Redevelopment of Fort Regent (Saville Jones Architects, March 2000)
- Proposed Conference Facility Fort Regent (Saville Jones Architects, April 2002)
- Jersey Conference Centre Study (The Tourism Company, Amended June 2004 & May 2003)
- Fort Regent Conference and Events Venue (PMP Nov 2004)
- Conservation Statement for Fort Regent, Jersey (Antony Gibb Jan 2006)
- Development Brief for Fort Regent, St. Helier (EDAW Sept 2007)

As far as we are aware over nearly 15 years not one of these reports has been acted upon. Whilst the proposals may have varied there is no question that they offered options that could have been refined and developed.

Our perception is that the lack of action is a result of a combination of factors:

- a) Initial paralysis caused by the sheer scale of capital cost for the scheme originally proposed in the RQA report;
- b) Subsequent political debate and indecision on whether to sell off the site for commercial gain or retain it for community use;
- c) The impact on the proposals for the site as a result of the waterfront development and ultimately the transfer of the swimming function from Fort Regent to the new AquaSplash pool;
- d) The absence of any multi-disciplinary task force to drive forward the development and future plans for the centre and site;
- e) The absence of any political champion to fight the corner for investment and future development;
- f) The fragmentation of ownership and responsibility for Fort Regent, spread across a range of government departments and political entities, with no real coordinating function to drive forward action;
- g) The lack of any sense that addressing the future of Fort Regent is a States priority, and conversely a sense that any development may be seen as potentially conflicting with the development or sale of other assets within the government's portfolio or wider strategic planning for St.Helier.

We suggest that currently d, e and f are the main reasons why action on the Fort has petrified. It may be argued that lack of funding is a major factor, but our view is that until a revised and agreed vision for the site (which pragmatically has to realise that public swimming will no longer form part of it) has been agreed, then the level of funding required – and indeed its phasing – cannot be known, nor budgeted for. So lack of an agreed final vision, coordination and action – not funding – are currently the main inhibitors.

11.4 MOVING FORWARD

So how can momentum for much needed change be initiated?

- Firstly, it is important for there to be a general acceptance that the primary use for the Fort Regent site into the foreseeable future is as a sports, leisure and entertainment venue for the island, its residents and visitors. Other developments that compliment or extend this role should be considered (this could include conference and commercial facilities), those that compromise it should not.
- Secondly, the Fort is a significant facility in the heritage and history of the island and much more should be done to interpret and explain this to the users, residents and visitors.
- To progress the future of the Fort and the site, with a clear and unambiguous vision for the future, a working group comprising all key partners with an interest in the ownership, management and development of the site should be established. This group/sub committee/task force should be constituted to have real status and decision making powers (not just be a talking shop), and be chaired by a political “champion” who can fight its corner within the Assembly.
- Work should take place on an agreed Master Plan for the Fort and its environs, taking account of the best of the previous studies and arriving at firm decisions on the long term aim, where enabling funding may be required, and short term actions which can progress the overall plan in agreed phases. There should be a deadline for the working group to produce this Master Plan to prevent accusations of further delay and prevarication. Much of the work has already been done, but a budget for updating and refining the architectural and financial feasibilities should be provided.
- Take action now. Demonstrate that inertia on this matter is now in the past. Demolish the old pool building, open up the gardens, improve signage and interpretation, “tidy up” the site and make it worthwhile for people to visit its environs. The Anthony Gibb report contains many simple and practical recommendations on these matters. It need not cost a fortune, and even if some of the improvements may need changing again in the future as a result of the final Master Plan, it demonstrates that the future of the Fort is being taken seriously now, and will not be the victim of further inaction for another fifteen years.

11.5. APPENDIX 1 – A WORD ON PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Whilst determining the future vision for the site is the priority, at some point the funding options will need to be considered. Public Private Partnerships (PPP) provide one source of funding, ranging from low level capital to high levels of investment. This appendix briefly reviews the different options and methods of PPP used in general throughout the UK. It is not specific to Fort Regent, and the funding options for the Fort, including State investment, will need to be explored once a clearer picture of the scale of development is obtained.

Sub Contracts and Franchises

This is one of the oldest forms of PPP, where a publicly owned and run leisure centre (such as Fort Regent) may sub contract out certain elements of its services which it feels can be better or more economically delivered by the private sector. Typically this may include:

- Catering
- Vending
- Cleaning
- Health and Fitness Sales and Direct Debit Management
- Building maintenance/grounds maintenance
- Operation of a specialist leisure function

Sometimes the sub contractors will invest a degree of capital to assist in improving the services and making them more profitable.

At Fort Regent this form of PPP is used, notably for catering and the soft play. It is a common model often found in centres across the UK, although it is not a source of significant capital.

Management Contract

This form of PPP developed rapidly in the UK following the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) by the Thatcher Government in the early '90's. Under this model a private sector operator will take on the full management of the leisure centre for a fixed annual fee from the local authority (normally a payment to the contractor, but sometimes the reverse). The contractor will normally take income and expenditure risk, although items of major maintenance and building lifecycle responsibilities typically remain with the public body.

In Scotland the majority of local authorities, which were Labour authorities, circumvented CCT by setting up Leisure Trusts to manage their facilities. When CCT was repealed by the current Labour Government, more public local authorities in England began to explore the creation of Leisure Trusts to manage their facilities, particularly in view of the financial savings these trusts could obtain on VAT and National Non Domestic Rates. At the current time around 35% of public sector sites in England are managed either by the private sector or a leisure trust.

This form of PPP will often lead to revenue savings and/or capital investment in the facilities being managed. Typically this investment would be for upgrading facilities internally (creation of new fitness areas, addition of soft play, improvements to catering and ancillary facilities), rather than major investment in rebuilding centres.

PFI

Under leisure PFI's (Private Finance Initiative) in England, a consortium of management and maintenance operators and funding institutions will combine to design, build, operate, maintain and fund a new leisure centre for a local authority, and sometimes part refurbish an existing leisure centre.

The agreement to do this normally covers a 25 to 30 year period, during which the consortium is responsible for operating and maintaining the facility to a pre-defined standard. In return for doing this the local authority pays an ongoing Unitary Charge to the consortium that encompasses capital repayment, maintenance, management and profit for the consortium. With a PFI in England the Government makes a contribution to the local authority to help it pay the Unitary Charge.

There have been around a dozen leisure PFI's to date, most involving capital development in the region of £10m to £15m. The government funding stream for these is drying up, as the cost of procuring and setting up leisure PFI's is disproportionately high for the level of capital investment involved (most other types of PFI – hospitals, roads etc. – involve substantially larger amounts of capital).

There have been a number of successful PFI type leisure schemes which do not rely on government PFI credits to fund the Unitary Charge. In these instances the local authority has decided that the revenue savings it will make on the operation of a brand new facility will significantly help to cover the Unitary Charge, and/or the authority will directly contribute towards the capital cost of the building.

Enabling Development

Finally, the other main form of PPP is where a local authority provides a site for the development of commercial facilities (this could be commercial leisure, housing, hotel, retail, offices) in return for the private sector developer providing a new leisure facility.

The details of these arrangements can vary, but there are many examples of this, including on Jersey itself with the provision of the AquaSplash pool. Clearly the level of enabling funding received will depend on the commercial market conditions appertaining at the time.

Sometimes, as part of the planning process, the authority requires contributions from developers towards off site community facilities. In this way contributions from a number of private sector developments can contribute to a single new leisure facility.

