

STATES OF JERSEY



MONT ORGUEIL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXPERT

**Lodged au Greffe on 18th February 2003
by Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to charge the Policy and Resources Committee to appoint an independent expert, acceptable to both the Jersey Heritage Trust and the Friends of Mont Orgueil, to prepare a report for the States on the differences between the two bodies in respect of the Trust's Development Strategy for Mont Orgueil Castle.

DEPUTY R.G. LE HERISSIER OF ST. SAVIOUR

Note: The Finance and Economics Committee's comments are to follow.

REPORT

For some considerable time now, there has been an increasingly acrimonious “debate” between the Jersey Heritage Trust (J.H.T.) and various parties (largely centred around the Friends of Mont Orgueil, “F.O.M.O.”, as to the nature of the work which should take place at Mont Orgueil as a result of the granting of £3 million from the Tourism Investment Fund for its conservation and appropriate development.

Despite impressions to the contrary, there is agreement on several aspects of J.H.T.’s plan. However, considerable controversy has arisen in respect of the work proposed for the area known to some as “The Tudor Great Hall”.

There have already been various reports and experts commissioned by both sides to the debate which, cumulatively have had the effect of entrenching positions rather than advancing the debate. Furthermore, it has been alleged, almost continuously, that the experts so far involved bring their own agendas and histories to the project and that, perhaps unwittingly, there has been strong bias in some of the subsequent reports and comment.

Usufruct

Under the terms of the Usufruct (5.03.1), a considerable responsibility is placed upon the States, “to ensure that the Trust is complying with its obligations to (3.01.4) “preserve the historical and archaeological integrity of the site of the Castles for future generations”.

The differences between the parties are now so fundamental that only an independent third party can hope to disentangle the key issues and provide the States with clarification on the ways forward.

Appointment of an independent third party

It may be questioned, given the large number of experts already involved, whether such a person or organisation can be identified. Fortunately, there are organisations and/or individuals who have a national, indeed international, reputation and who are unconnected to the key parties and experts hitherto involved in this Project.

However, it is proposed that such an expert should be appointed only with the approval of both parties viz, the J.H.T. and F.O.M.O.

In order that the findings can be of use to the planning process, it is hoped that the Environment and Public Services Committee will extend the timeframe for consideration of the J.H.T.’s application.

Ideally, a report will be called for within two months of the approval of this proposition. It is suggested that the Policy and Resources Committee should make the appointment as the Committee will be seen as an independent body.

Financial/manpower implications

The Policy and Resources Committee will be asked to request the Finance and Economics Committee to pay for the cost of the independent expert(s). I estimate the total cost to be approximately £20,000. There are no manpower implications.