

**From:** ANTHONY Rowland  
**Sent:** 27 February 2015 10:39  
**To:** Scrutiny  
**Subject:** Waterfront

The Chairman, Corporate Service Scrutiny Panel.

Dear Deputy Le Fondré,

I was a member of the Waterfront Design Advisory Group set up by the then Environment Minister, Senator Cohen. This group met often until the Minister was replaced, and it then lapsed. I therefore have some knowledge of the complex history of this site and feel that I may have some useful comments.

The Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference put as a first topic the consideration of whether the 2008 Masterplan for the Esplanade Quarter continues to represent the best socio-economic value to the States of Jersey. I presume that the term 'socio' covers the environmental aspects of the Plan. If so, although referring to the area as the 'Esplanade Quarter', the area is often now referred to as 'the proposed Jersey International Finance Sector'. These different names may or may not be covering the same area. I suggest that, when dealing with this subject, the Panel first considers exactly what area it has under consideration. Although it is a relatively small area that is now being referred to as the Finance Sector, I believe that the remainder of the undeveloped reclaimed land should be born in mind, particularly because the history of the wider area is relevant.

The 2008 Masterplan is based upon the approach of Jim Greaves, the Hopkins architect working for the developers Harcourt. He claimed that the requirement to integrate the Waterfront development with the Town of St Helier justified the use of a grid road pattern covering the whole area. He did not accept that any semblance of a grid pattern covering St Helier was subsidiary to the general appearance of a town that had developed at random extension by infill between key roads that lead in several directions out of the Town and into the neighbouring parishes.

The proposed development is thus an area that makes no reference to the character of the neighbouring Town. The grain has none of the variety that characterizes the Town and has a rigidity that is foreign to the Island: the immediate impression is of unsympathetic planning.

The latest scheme that has been published continues the rectilinear approach to the disposition of six cubic blocks, with four facing the Esplanade. The first to receive planning permission appears to have followed the requirements of the 2008 Design Guide, particularly that developments should reach to the edge of the site. The document's provisions have also been exploited so as to provide the largest possible volume. It has, however, not evolved from public consultation.

What consultation that has taken place has often been too late. Proposals have been developed in detail, and after considerable expense has already been incurred. Consequently there is a reluctance to make changes: those making comments are put in a position where their suggestions are seen as criticisms that are then ignored rather than treated as positive contributions.

Future consultation would be more likely to obtain responses if not only were the invitation issued at an early stage but a summary were to be published at the end of the consultation period together with – similarly important – an explanation of action taken or why it has been rejected.

The terms of reference of the Panel are largely concerned with economic factors and appear to me to be comprehensive and incontestable. Although I have no professional experience in that field, there are a few points that I suggest should be explored.

1. Who owns the whole Waterfront area? If it is publicly owned, to whom is the JDC answerable?
2. What authority does the JDC have and how can it enforce its requirements?
3. The earlier attempts by WEB to engage a developer were said to have failed because they could not get planning permission. The Planning Department were said to be unwilling to give permission unless finance was agreed. Each party was blaming the other: could such an impasse happen again?

R. Anthony  
27.2.15