

STATES OF JERSEY



PLÉMONT HEADLAND, ST. OUEN: PRESERVATION FOR THE PUBLIC ENJOYMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 19th September 2006
by the Connétable of St. Ouen

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

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

- (a) to agree that it would be in the public interest for the headland at Plémont, as shown in Drawing Number 1505/06/101, namely the site formerly occupied by Plémont ('Pontin's') holiday village complex and surrounding associated land, to be preserved as open space for the enjoyment of the public of the Island;
- (b) to request the Council of Ministers to consider all options to preserve the land described in paragraph (a), and to recommend a preferred option to the States with the least possible delay;
- (c) to request the Minister for Planning and Environment to defer determination of any application relating to the redevelopment of this site pending States' consideration of the Council of Ministers' recommendation.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. OUEN

REPORT

In making this proposition, I would refer Members to Article 2(1) of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002.

“The purpose of this Law is to conserve, protect and improve the Island’s natural beauty, natural resources and general amenities, its character, and its physical and natural environments.”.

A substantial house was first constructed on this site late in the 19th century. By the 1920s, this house was being used as a hotel and was added to by the construction of a number of wooden chalets for use as holiday accommodation. The original house was burned down late in the 1930s and was never re-built. The present building was constructed in the 1970s and remained as a holiday camp complex until the mid-1990s. Since then, it has been redundant and has deteriorated to the extent that it is today an eyesore and a blot on the landscape.

In December, 1998, an application was made to the Planning Department for a development consisting of 117 houses together with one small retail unit. This application was subsequently refused in March 1999.

A new application has recently been made for a substantially reduced development consisting of 35 dwellings. One large granite farmhouse, a second large granite farmhouse together with outbuildings (3 dwellings) and 2 hamlet-type developments, one of 15 dwellings and one of 16.

It is my belief that 4 of the original 5 reasons for refusal in March 1999 are still relevant to this application, but nevertheless, I am concerned that refusal on planning grounds might be difficult to sustain.

At a public meeting held recently in St. Ouen’s Parish Hall, where the developers presented their plans, there was unanimous support from the 150+ persons present that the headland should be returned to and retained in its natural state, with no new buildings erected. At this meeting, the developer indicated that he would be prepared to consider any alternative proposals, which might achieve the aims of the meeting.

I am therefore bringing this proposition to the House to ask Members to support the view expressed at the Public meeting, a view shared by the large number of people who have voiced their concerns about the loss of this unique headland of great natural beauty to building development.

This proposition is not unique in that a similar proposition, P.75 of 1985, which asked the States to approve the purchase of the former Bouley Bay Hotel site for the public of the Island, was accepted by the States of the day. In the report which accompanied P.75, the objective was to preserve the open character of this prominent site and to use it as a public viewpoint over the coastal scenery of the north. The report went on to say that if it was not acquired, a large new dwelling would be erected on the site as the I.D.C. had a commitment towards such a development.

This is the last occasion on which the Island will have the opportunity to preserve the unique character of this headland for future generations. Once permission for development has been granted, it will be lost forever.

Financial and manpower implications

The consideration by the Council of Ministers of a recommended option would not, of itself, give rise to significant costs. However, the decision to request the Council of Ministers to consider the matter gives a signal that the States wish to look at options, one of which may realistically mean an acquisition, which will have financial consequences.

There may be more than one viable option to resolve this matter. There are likely to be various costs associated with reaching the objective of the proposition, some of which can be phased –

1. At worst, from a financial perspective, would be the outright purchase of the site from the current owners. The cost of this would exceed the recent purchase price for the site. There are other options, such as land swap, some kind of fund-raising such as part public subscription, which would lessen the

financial impact. It is too early to speculate on the possible solution and its impact.

2. It is to be anticipated that the public will wish to see the buildings removed and the area restored to nature in the long-term best interests of the community. This will carry a capital cost.
3. If the land comes into public ownership and is administered by a States department, then some resource implication will follow, and that would be researched in the event that it was the recommended option of the Council of Ministers.



Drawing No. 1505/06/101
13 September 2006

LOCATION PLAN

SCALE 1: 2500