
STATES OF JERSEY



FORT REGENT POLITICAL STEERING GROUP: INTERIM REPORT

**Presented to the States on 8th November 2011
by the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture**

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

Steering Group members:

Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (Chairman)
Senator P.F. Routier
Connétable J.M. Refault of St. Peter
Deputy R.C. Duhamel of St. Saviour
Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier
Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier

Executive Summary

Two issues have dominated past discussions about the future of Fort Regent – funding and access. Realistically, there can be no development of the centre on a major scale until these 2 issues are addressed.

Accordingly, the Steering Group has compiled an action plan that identifies the next steps. It was clear from the start of this process that further detailed work would be required and it was also clear that this would take time. The Steering Group has been able to pinpoint the next investigations that will be required and the bodies who are able to move this project forward.

We have also identified realistic actions that can benefit Fort Regent immediately, be achieved in the short term and do not require significant expenditure. These steps, although small, will help improve the current facility while more detailed work is carried out on medium- and long-term objectives.

All the points are set out in an Action Plan in section 5 of this report according to the timescale in which they are achievable.

Over and above this plan, the Steering Group has been able to identify a set of guiding principles to use in determining the future of the facility –

- **Sport, leisure and club facilities:** maintain and enhance the existing provision and improve social facilities;
- **History:** ensure the historic nature of the site is conserved and made more accessible to the general public;
- **Architecture:** retain the iconic nature of Fort Regent structures;
- **Private finance:** explore opportunities for adding development to current structure in partnership with private sector.

The Steering Group concluded that there is scope for redevelopment, if funding and planning issues can be resolved. In the meantime, it should be acknowledged that the facility fulfils a valuable function for the Island. It already meets significant demand from a wide range of community groups and will continue to host an impressive variety of activities until and if other development can take place.

1. Introduction

The future of Fort Regent has been under consideration for many years. In November 1999 the States approved, in principle, the redevelopment of Fort Regent by 37 votes to 8 but, despite numerous subsequent reports, funding has not been available and no major development has taken place.

In November 2009 the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel presented a report to the States that further supported the redevelopment of Fort Regent. As a result, the States approved proposition P.188/2009, as amended, which tasked the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to –

- (a) establish and lead a political steering group, consisting of representatives from the Education, Sport and Culture Department, Jersey Property Holdings, the Economic Development Department, the Planning and Environment Department, the Parish of St. Helier No. 1 District, who would consult with other interested parties, including the Jersey Heritage Trust and the Fort Users Association, with the aim of producing a cohesive and realistic plan for the future development of Fort Regent;
- (b) to take the necessary steps to form the political steering group immediately, and to provide quarterly updates to all States members of its progress regarding the formulation of a development plan for Fort Regent.

This report aims to set out the process and action plan needed to produce a cohesive and realistic plan to enable future development of Fort Regent to take place.

2. Background

Fort Regent was built in 1803 and has been used as both a fortress and garrison. It was demilitarised in 1927 and used again during the Second World War by the German forces.

In 1958 it was sold to the States of Jersey and a decision was taken in 1967 to convert the site into a multi-purpose leisure centre. It was then developed to include the Gloucester Hall, the Queen's Hall and the swimming pool. For many years Fort Regent tried to be 'all things to all men' and balanced the needs of many community groups. In recent years it has concentrated more on providing facilities for sport, concerts, conferences and events.

The swimming pool was closed in 2003 when the Aquasplash was built on the Waterfront. The building has remained unused since then and its condition is deteriorating. Its unsightly appearance in a very prominent position means a decision about its future use is becoming more urgent.

A cable car that provided access from Snow Hill was closed in the early 1990s, with the result that Fort Regent visitor numbers fell considerably. Improved access has been a consistent theme in all reports that have been commissioned.

3. Current use

In 2010 Fort Regent attracted more than 480,000 visits. The expenditure was £2,099,633 and income of £1,486,889 was generated. A subsidy of £612,744 was provided from the Education, Sport and Culture budget.

In 2011 the anticipated subsidy is £498,954. This reduction has been achieved mainly through management restructuring, increased income and reduction in general expenditure.

Fort Regent hosts a wide range of clubs and organisations. It is home to many martial arts clubs who lease rooms to carry out their activities. The Queen's Hall is used by the Regent Gym Club and Little Monkeys. Regent Bowls Club and the over-50s bowls clubs meet several times a week and each have their own clubroom.

The halls are used by schools and sports clubs and associations for football, badminton, netball, basketball, trampolining, cricket, table-tennis and volleyball. Many sports organise major events which attract visiting and local participants. The 6 squash courts are used on a casual basis and also by the Jersey Squash and Racquetball Association for regular local competitions, as well as for the annual squash festival, which attracts visiting clubs and is always fully subscribed.

The halls are multi-use and, as well as pay-and-play activities, they host more than 30 concerts and events each year with up to 2,000 people attending each time. The capacity exists for conferences with the same number of delegates. There is at least one conference each year which attracts this number of people, most of whom come from outside the Island.

The Home and Lifestyle Show takes place every other year and attracts more than 10,000 visitors over 4 days. For a number of years the Jersey Awards for Enterprise dinner has been held in the Queen's Hall, attracting 800 diners.

Offices are provided for the Jersey Swimming Club, AIB Tigers and the Jersey Cricket Board, and one office is shared by the development officers for athletics, netball, rugby, triathlon and the administration officer of the Jersey Commonwealth Games Association.

The Jersey Instrumental Music Service occupies the area that was formerly an aquarium. Tuition is provided for young people and they join together to practice each night after school during term-time.

A nursery operates from the old Quasar building in the East Ditch and a small number of artists have a room which is used as a studio. The children's play area in the Piazza area is very popular, especially during the winter, and on wet summer days.

Other community groups regularly use the facilities. Le Geyt Centre are based at Fort Regent each Monday; Mont à l'Abbé School use trampoline facilities on a regular basis; the Probation Services arrange football sessions for some of their clients each week; the Alcohol and Drugs Services have access to gym facilities for some of their clients; the Children's Service use facilities for many of the children in their care; and some schools and Highlands College access facilities during term-time.

In order to promote social inclusion and increase participation and opportunities for all, the majority of these groups use the facilities free of charge or at subsidised rates.

The Active Card scheme has been successfully developed to enable its members to use facilities across the 3 States sports centres – Fort Regent, Les Quennevais and Springfield. The gym and fitness classes are popular, and overall there are more than 5,000 Active members generating an income in 2010 of £1,737,000. £995,173 of this figure was apportioned to Fort Regent, and the balance between Les Quennevais and Springfield.

In addition, the Exercise Referral Scheme has operated successfully for 16 years and has nearly 1,000 referrals each year. After an initial assessment, clients take part in 20 supervised sessions of activity before being re-assessed. They then have access to a programme of supervised classes and activities in the hope that they will continue with their activity and improved quality of life. Fort Regent is the main centre for this scheme and, whilst some income is received from the participants, it is subsidised.

4. Methodology and conclusions

The Steering Group met formally on 10 occasions and received presentations on –

- the history of Fort Regent bringing together information on past reports and demonstrating the importance of Fort Regent to St. Helier;
- uses of Fort Regent since it has been a leisure centre with information on current users, operating costs and subsidy levels;
- benefits of Fort Regent from an economic development point of view;
- policies which guide the Environment Department, and also reports that impact on Fort Regent and the surrounding area;
- site surveys that have been commissioned by Property Holdings;
- views from Property Holdings on possibilities for development at Fort Regent and surrounding areas;
- the implications for the demolition of the pool structure;
- consideration of all previous reports on Fort Regent.

In addition, the Chairman met representatives of the Fort Regent Users Association and the Jersey Heritage Trust, who support the guiding principles that have been agreed by the group.

The Steering Group has been supported by officers from Education, Sport and Culture, Economic Development, the Environment Department, Jersey Property Holdings and the Parish of St. Helier. These officers presented papers in their areas and provided much background information to inform the decision-making process.

In July a stakeholders' workshop was held at Fort Regent with an invited group representing organisations from across the community with direct and indirect interest in Fort Regent. Two short presentations were made and participants were asked for their views on the short-, medium- and long-term future of Fort Regent. There was

strong support for maintaining it as a sport and leisure centre for the community and also for the need to develop it.

Taking account of all information gathered and after the consultation event, the Steering Group agreed the following guiding principles to be used to determine any future development of Fort Regent –

- maintain and enhance the sport leisure and club facilities with improved social facilities;
- ensure historic nature of the site is conserved and made more accessible to the general public;
- retain the iconic nature of Fort Regent structures;
- explore opportunities for adding development to current structure in partnership with private sector.

It is proposed that this will be achieved by –

- improving access and enhancing usage by integrating Fort Regent into the town;
- promoting development which complements, enhances and supports the primary uses;
- promoting commercial opportunities for capital and income generation to enhance the facilities and increase footfall.

5. Action Plan

Having considered the evidence and views expressed by consultees, the Steering Group proposes the following plan to develop Fort Regent.

5.1 Communication

It is clear that Fort Regent is well used by many locals and visitors in a wide range of activities. However, there is scope to better inform the public about current activities and opportunities to raise awareness and to encourage more users. Currently, the online information is found on the www.gov.je website, which lacks its own identity and is difficult to find. There has been consistent comment that there will be much benefit in developing a standalone website. At the end of 2010, online bookings for concerts were implemented. After a slow start, many concerts have more than 50% of the bookings made online. Recent further improvements to the site will hopefully increase these percentages and encourage more people to attend events.

Through consultation, it is evident that the general public are unaware of the extent and range of activities offered at the Fort. When they are informed, their perception changes and many comments on the great value that Fort Regent has in the community.

Despite recent efforts, it is apparent that signage to and within Fort Regent does not provide clear and useful information. This needs to be reviewed and a plan put in place to upgrade it as soon as possible.

Action i: New website

The Department for Education, Sport and Culture to work in partnership with States IT Department to arrange for the introduction of a standalone website for Fort Regent by March 2012.

Action ii: Marketing

The Department for Education, Sport and Culture to develop a marketing campaign to be implemented by March 2012.

Action iii: Improved signage

The Department for Education, Sport and Culture to arrange for improved signage to and within Fort Regent by June 2012.

5.2 Heritage

Fort Regent is an iconic building which has played a key role in the history of Jersey. Until a few years ago the signal station was fully operational. The cost of having dedicated staff prohibited this from continuing, and now the Jersey Heritage Trust provide a daily service which means that the site remains operational with daily visits which cover the main events of the day. The heritage of Fort Regent is currently undervalued, and there is a real opportunity to enhance this so that more people are able to appreciate the historic importance of the site both internally and externally, and, at the same time, to enjoy the spectacular views of the Island. An interpretation centre has been suggested and this, along with guided tours, has the potential to attract many more locals and visitors to use and enjoy Fort Regent.

Action iv: Promote history

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to arrange a working group, led by the Jersey Heritage Trust, to develop a plan to include Fort Regent in the promotion of heritage on the Island. The report, identifying all financial implications to be presented to the States Assembly by June 2012 so that any recommendations can be included in 2013 Business Plan.

5.3 Development sites

Several sites have been identified that could be used to support the redevelopment of Fort Regent facilities. There is some uncertainty as to the value of these sites, but it is important that this is determined and decisions made about potential future use. Options include residential and tourist accommodation, restaurant and bars, and new community activities.

The sites and possible uses are –

- The area behind Hill Street at the foot of the northern side of Mont de la Ville, which could potentially provide office or residential development. It may also be possible to incorporate a new access point into this development.
- The former crazy golf area at the northern redoubt could potentially provide a commercial catering opportunity or tourist accommodation. This site is also a potential new access point from Snow Hill,

- The former cable car station and the rose garden could also be potentially used to develop a commercial catering opportunity or a new sport-related activity. The site is also a potential for new access from the Snow Hill car park.
- The swimming pool and Sea Cadets building could potentially be used for a commercial development, tourist accommodation and/or catering, or a sport-related use.
- The Sea Cadets store on Pier Road could potentially provide a site for residential development.

Action v: Development opportunities

Jersey Property Holdings to undertake an evaluation of the sites, then promote and explore opportunities within the private and public sectors to determine the interest and potential financial benefits to be derived from developing these sites.

A report to be provided to the States Assembly by March 2012.

5.4 Access

Improving access has consistently been recommended as being key to the future development of Fort Regent in all reports. There are several potential locations at the north end of Fort Regent which would allow quick and easy access from the heart of St. Helier. The feasibility and costs need to be determined.

Action vi: New access

Jersey Property Holdings to undertake a feasibility study into access opportunities and alternatives and to present a proposal to the States for consideration together with all financial implications by June 2012.

5.5 Sea Cadets

Options for relocating the Sea Cadets to a more suitable site, closer to the sea, have been considered for nearly 20 years. The current facility is now in urgent need of refurbishment and is less than satisfactory. The latest proposal is to develop a facility for them on the Les Galots site. It is vital that priority should be given to finding a future home for the Sea Cadets so that they can continue their good work and plan for a successful future.

Action vii: Move sea cadets HQ

Plans to be developed by Jersey Property Holdings for the relocation of the Sea Cadets completed and agreed by June 2012.

5.6 Swimming Pool site

The swimming pool has remained unused since December 2003. As a result, it has fallen into a poor state of repair and has become unsightly, a problem which is exacerbated by its prominent position. It is one of the potential sites for development. In the event that Jersey Property Holdings do not identify an alternative use for this site, it is suggested that the old swimming pool needs to be demolished.

Action viii: Swimming pool

Jersey Property Holdings to bring forward proposals for the redevelopment of the swimming pool site, including the demolition of the current facility and any planning and financial implications by March 2012.

5.7 Reinvestment

It is accepted that the States do not have significant capital available to develop Fort Regent in the short term. However, if development sites are identified as having value, the money they generate should be used for the development of the access and upgrade of other facilities, including internal sport, leisure and catering. To ensure that any work carried out is beneficial to the long-term development of Fort Regent, an overall plan for the whole site and surrounding areas should be agreed by Education, Sport and Culture, the Environment Department and Jersey Property Holdings.

Action ix: Master Plan

Jersey Property Holdings in partnership with the Environment Department and Education, Sport and Culture, to develop a master plan for future internal and external developments at Fort Regent which clearly identify priorities and funding implications by March 2012.

Fort Regent Steering Group

Action Plan 2011

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
<i>Short-term</i>			
i	New website Create standalone Fort Regent website	ESC, ISD	March 2012
ii	Marketing Develop campaign to promote the facility and raise awareness	ESC	March 2012
iii	Improved signage Both to and within Fort Regent	ESC	June 2012
iv	Promote history Creation of working group led by Jersey Heritage Trust to promote historic aspects of the Fort	Minister for ESC and JHT	June 2012 Report to States
<i>Medium-term</i>			
v	Development options Evaluation of development sites and opportunities	JPH	March 2012 Report to States
vi	New access Feasibility study on options for improved access	JPH	June 2012
vii	Move sea cadets HQ Finalise relocation plan	JPH	June 2012
viii	Swimming pool Prepare proposals for swimming pool site, including demolition	JPH	March 2012
<i>Long-term</i>			
ix	Masterplan Create masterplan for future internal and external developments which clearly identify priorities and funding implications	ESC, JPH, EnvD	March 2012

APPENDIX 1**List of attendees at Consultation event 16th July 2011**

<i>Attendee Name</i>	<i>Post held/Organisation</i>
Rod McLoughlin	Education, Sport and Culture Department
Angie de Carteret	Former Manager, Fort Regent
Alan Le Breton	Jersey Arts Trust
Tom Dingle	Jersey Arts Trust
G. Ruddigay	
Chris Sands	Arts
Frank Falle	Société Jersiaise
Yvonne Aston	Société Jersiaise
Ian Ronayne	Société Jersiaise
John Mesch	Jersey Heritage
Roger Hills	Jersey Heritage Trust
Peter Grainger	Jersey Sea Cadets
Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade	
Miss Chamier	Fort Regent User Association
Ms J. Davies	Fort Regent User Association
Hugh Raymond	Jersey Sports Council
Jasmine Hendy	Jersey Opera House
Helen Evans	La Petite École
Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour	
Ray Shead	Chamber of Commerce
David Dodge	Chamber of Commerce
David Warr	Chamber of Commerce
Deputy A.T. Dupré of St. Brelade	Assistant Minister for Education, Sport and Culture
Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen	Minister for Education, Sport and Culture
Deputy R.C. Duhamel of St. Saviour	Minister for Planning and Environment
Kevin Lemasney	Economic Development Department
Senator P.F. Routier	Assistant Minister for Economic Development
Tracy Ingle	Environment Department
Derek De La Haye	Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure, Education, Sport and Culture Department
Jo Mousedale	Manager, Fort Regent
Chick Anthony	Société Jersiaise
Brian Ahier	Advisory Council for Sport and Leisure
Marilyn Lard	
Connétable J.M. Refault of St. Peter	Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources
Anthony Gibb	Architectural Heritage Consulting

Summary of Consultations

16/07/2011

Fort Regent

Phase 1: Enhancement Break Out

How can we enhance the existing resources we have?

1. To improve the communication of all activities and events – the suggestion of a region radio station that broadcasts in whole of St. Helier
 The improvements in signage within the building – overcome the unknowing of where to go/what is going on – to have obvious advertising of current activities happening in the Fort
 Panoramic operations – to take advantage of tourism and locals – walking around the site (ref. London eye) – the Fort offers spectacular views of the Island
 Develop sport offerings and capacity
 Rationalize areas of building – cosmetics? (e.g. waterfall)
 To market Fort Regent as a heritage site, as well as being a place for sports and recreation

 2. To provide historic tours, which will improve the heritage interpretations of the building – offer this to education for the students, for tourists – provide a scavenger hunt and activities/sports social clubs – to encourage more people to Fort Regent
 Improve access – bus/walking
 Make full use of rooms for studios for local artists/recording/rehearsing
 Pool area – sound stage
 Improve the promotion – sales resource – get on the streets and tell people about the venue and what is going on – activities
 Tidy up the place – the removal of redundant fixtures that are no longer needed
 Campaign to adopt the Fort, i.e. a garden – for support and provides more awareness
 To improve the branding of the Fort – Active brand is overpowering – this will provide more awareness
 Change image/perceptions and focus of the building
 Value for money – do we sell/market ourselves well?

 3. To market the brand and promote it well – enhance the understanding of what the building is – again the suggestion of historic tours
 Provide easier access for visitors – bus/pedestrian
 To provide a wider offer that is more than just sport – to change the perceptions of the brand of what the Fort is
 Signage to be improved – locally and town
 To ensure the funding generated within the Fort stays in the Fort
 ‘Sweat the heritage asset’ – how can we harness that?
 Longer term enhancement – seek sponsorship from businesses/organisations – reflect business aspiration
 Does Fort Regent have its own website? No – through States site
 What generation are we aiming at?
-

Smartphone App of how to get around the Fort? – map/locations/directions
 Sustainable Transport Policy? – Improvements to put more information on buses
 Currently the branding/marketing of the Active programme overshadows the historical/heritage meaning of the building
 To have the community leisure and heritage meaning to work in synergy – opens up to a wider audience and creates more opportunities
 Sell assets equally – Active programme and Heritage
 Able to access a timetable of rooms within the Fort to know when they are available/unavailable – online booking system for courts – is there one already? Webcams? Live feed and updates of what is going on – Twitterific

Phase 2: Access Development

Making Fort Regent more accessible to its customers

1. Access:
 Pedestrian access via Snow Hill – connecting Fort with town
 South Hill – vehicle access
 Development – need a wider strategy for the entire site – heritage is integrated with current use of sport/leisure
 Have sufficient funding that is being identified for complete site

 2. Access:
 Three types of access:
 - Virtual – how do people find out about Fort Regent – have an interactive website which gives the Fort more presence
 - External – how to get there
 - Internal – how to move around within Fort Regent once here
 Fort Regent is currently accessible, however it has a shabby car park and lifts on site
 Make more effort to make the Fort attractive – integrate with access point – Pier Road car park needs improving but is ideal location – glass elevator?
 Development – restaurants/coffee lounge/decent facilities
 Better signage inside and outside and better information – improve access without spending vast amount of money

 3. Achieve access – sites A and B – raising funds for access to site
 Southern end wouldn't achieve sufficient monetary gain
 Use Planning gain to fund access
 Access to north of site
 Lift/cable car
 Visitor centre
 Cultural uses – diversify from current sports
 Rationalization of use – brand site as an entity
 Adjacent sites – snow hill car park to sites A and B – achieve sufficient planning gain to achieve access to site – longer term to develop site

 Look at entire site and take an integrated approach
 Developments – commercial and focus on the best of what it can be
 What are we? We need to confirm aims and objectives
 What funds do we need?
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Where is the current operational strategy and action plan that will address all the points above?

Who is leading the initiative and taking ownership of delivery?

We need an immediate, short-term and medium-term plan

We need a younger focus group to contribute

Phase 3: Fit for Purpose

What would we build with no constraints and where would it be?

It still has to stay within the principles of the steering group:

- Community centre
- Heritage site
- Control development

1. To retain a multi-purpose venue – have an integrated and diverse use because of the different activities that are offered
 Research and data is needed to find out why people are coming and who is coming – approach the core target market
 Define the current and future needs
 Identifying what is happening inside and outside of the building – define essential inside activity of whole site
 Potential of having a botanic garden
 Redefine the sporting and conference activities
 Enhance the heritage experiences
 To connect with activities happening at the Harbour (sports/sea sports)
2. To retain with what we have and modernise and enhance it with the right access to relevant areas of business and communities
 Making more of the unique heritage attractions
 Development:
 - New concert hall
 - New restaurant with Wi-Fi
 - New sports and leisure area
 - More cultural activities and resources associated solely with the Fort
3. To become the premier health and activity centre
 Redevelop the swimming pool with a modern feel and almost Olympic style
 Buy out lease of ex-waterfront swimming pool?
 Provide new and diverse community uses
 Dual access – existing car park and Snow Hill (pedestrian access) – will enable more access points into the building and encourage more people
 Enhance the existing structure with diverse uses
 Promote heritage of structure by modern communications means
 The existing structure should remain but should be enhanced – the appearance in the construction and energy efficiency
 High-class restaurant on old cable-car site
 Structure – improvements in internal visuals and communications
 Reinstate the historical integrity of the military design

Fort Regent needs a political champion and a community champion

Reports and documents considered

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)

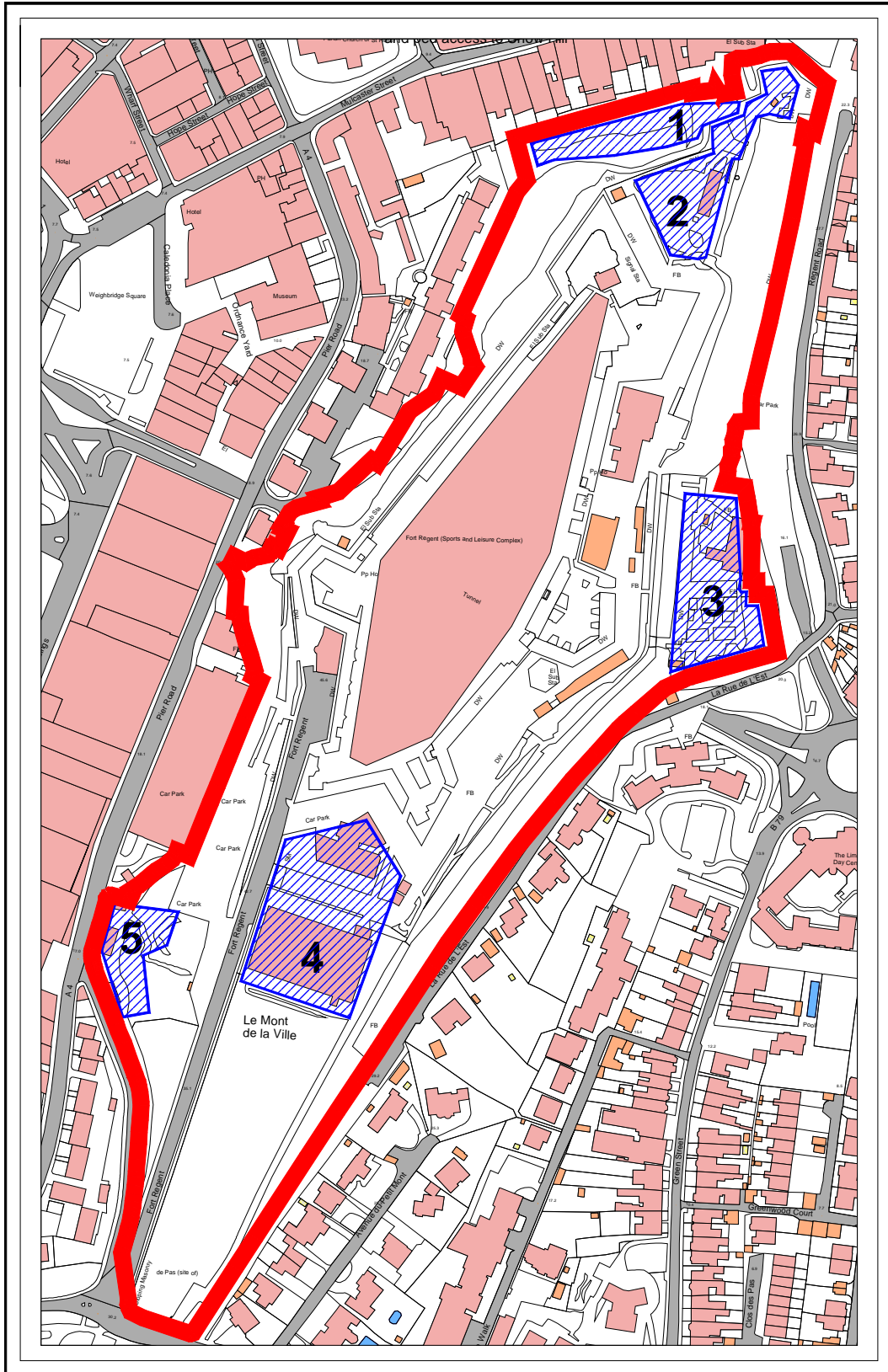
Jersey Conference Centre Study (The Tourism Company, amended June 2004 and May 2003)

Fort Regent Conference and Events Venue (PMP, November 2004)

A Conservation Statement for Fort Regent, Jersey (Anthony Gibb, January 2006)

Development Brief for Fort Regent (EDAW, September 2007)

Fort Regent Review (Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel, November 2009)



Possible Sites Fort Regent

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Area behind Hill Street | 4. Swimming Pool and Sea Cadets |
| 2. Former Crazy Golf area | 5. Sea Cadets Store Pier Road |
| 3. Former Cable Car Station | |