

Item No:

Date:

Department of the Environment

Listed buildings and places

States of Jersey Airport (1937 building)

L'Avenue de la Commune, St Peter

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Minister with specific advice about those factors which should be material to his decision in the determination of the special interest of the 1937 building at Jersey Airport and the respective weight which might be given to them.

Background

The architectural and historic significance of the 1937 building at Jersey Airport has been the subject of consideration for some time: it has previously enjoyed the status of a proposed Site of Special Interest up until February 2002 when the previous Planning and Environment Committee resolved to remove this designation entirely.

The basis for the Committee's decision at this time is not entirely clear (see officer report at appendix 1 and minute at appendix 2). What is apparent is that a range of issues were conflated in the making of this decision including the potential of the building's restoration; the potential for its re-use; and the fact that it had been identified as an obstacle to aviation safety.

The heritage significance of the building has been revisited in recent times and, on the basis of expert opinion (Price (2010) *Jersey Airport Heritage Assessment* at appendix 3) and a recommendation from Jersey Heritage (at appendix 4), the Minister has expressed his intent to add the building to the List of Sites of Special Interest.

In response a representation has been submitted by Jersey Airport (dated 06 September at appendix 5).

Discussion and conclusions

In light of the representation from Jersey Airport there are a number of issues that require consideration by the Minister in the determination of this matter relating to;

- the materiality of the representation received; and
- the weight attached to the substance of the representation relative to a decision about the building's heritage value.

Materiality

In determining whether to include a building or place on the List the Minister is usually confined to the consideration of representations in so far as they relate to the special interest of the site in question.

In this case, the only reference to the heritage value of the site raised by Jersey Airport concerns the extent to which the original building has been altered: this matter is dealt

with by Jersey Heritage in its supplementary report (dated 02 November 2012) at appendix 6.

The principal substance of the Jersey Airport representation relates to the fact that the 1937 building represents a physical obstacle to aviation safety relative to Aerodrome Licensing requirements and this is supported by various ancillary papers attached to the representation.

Whilst unrelated to an assessment of the heritage value of the building, the Minister is obliged to take these representations into account given that the building falls within an area of responsibility of the Minister for Economic Development as required to do so under law (at Article 52(4)(b)).

Substance and weight

The heritage value of the building is dealt with by the reports of Jersey Heritage and is clearly set out.

The representation from Jersey Airport, whilst material to the Minister's determination, sets out, as the principal tenet of its argument, that to List the building would frustrate the intention of the Minister for Economic Development to demolish the structure in order to comply with the Island's obligations under international convention. The basis of this argument is not considered, however, to be entirely correct.

As the Minister will be aware, the Listing of a building or place does not prohibit the change or the loss of that building or place, rather it simply provides the Minister with the ability to have a greater degree of control over operations that affect the special interest of that building or place, and, most significantly, to recognise and give appropriate weight to the consideration of its heritage value during the determination of any proposals that affect it. In this respect, therefore, whilst the Minister might be mindful of the implications of the building's retention relative to aviation safety, this should not preclude him from identifying the fact that the building is of heritage value and placing it on the List.

The Minister will be aware that there is currently an application pending for the demolition of the 1937 building (P/2010/1729) and it is considered appropriate that, if the Minister is minded to accept the recommendation of Jersey Heritage that the building does have significant heritage value, that this ought to be appropriately recognised, considered and weighed, relative to the issues of aviation safety, at the time of the determination of that application.

It is also relevant note, in any consideration of this matter, that the former Planning and Environment Committee made the decision to remove any heritage status from the building in 2002: it is quite evident that this heritage value remains today, some ten years later, and also that the heritage value of the original building may have been enhanced following the recent removal of the modern extensions and accretions that had been added to it over time.

On this basis, it is considered appropriate that any recognition of the building's heritage value ought to be recognised not only at this time, but continued even in the event that planning permission to demolish the building is awarded on the basis that the intent of the Economic Development Minister to give effect to his aspiration may not be realised until sufficient resources are made to available to do so, if at all.

Recommendation

On the basis of the above, if the Minister is minded to accept the recommendation of Jersey Heritage that the building is of significant heritage value that, notwithstanding the representation of Jersey Airport, the Minister adds the 1937 building to the List.

Reason(s) for Decision

Notwithstanding the representations received, which have been duly taken into account and considered by the Minister, the special interest of States of Jersey Airport (1937 building) L'Avenue de la Commune, St Peter as set out in the schedule and relative to the published criteria for selection, justifies its Listing in accordance with the provisions and purposes of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002.

Legal and resource implications

Article 51(2)(b) of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002 enables the Minister to include on the List of Sites of Special Interest those buildings and places that the Minister is satisfied has public importance by reason of the special archaeological, architectural, artistic, historical, scientific or traditional interest that attaches to the building or place.

Action Required

1. Serve Notice of the decision to List on owners
2. Update the List

Kevin Pilley

Director: Policy, Projects and the Historic Environment

Attachments

- Appendix 1: Minute of the Planning and Environment Committee (07 February 2002)
- Appendix 2: Report to the Planning and Environment Committee (January 2002)
- Appendix 3: Price (2010) *Jersey Airport Heritage Assessment*
- Appendix 4: Report of Jersey Heritage (02 February 2012) and schedule
- Appendix 5: Representation from Jersey Airport (06 September 2012) and associated papers
- Appendix 6: Supplementary report of Jersey Heritage (02 November 2012)

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Date 15/11/2012



PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

7th February 2002

Jersey Airport,
St. Peter: 1937
building: appeal
- proposed Site
of Special
Interest
designation
1060/58/57
(128)

H.A.C.(2)

A14. The Committee, with reference to its Act No. B12 of 29th March 2001, received a report dated January 2002, from Mr. R.S Fell in connexion with an appeal against the registration of the 1937 Jersey Airport building as a proposed Site of Special Interest.

The Committee welcomed Deputy D.R. Maltwood in his capacity as President, Harbours and Airport Committee together with Mr. A. Durham-Waite from the Airport Engineering Department to the meeting.

The Committee received a comprehensive visual presentation which depicted other buildings of historical merit and viewed pictures showing the construction of and additions to Jersey Airport. The Committee was advised that English Heritage was of the opinion that the 1937 building merited retention although the Twentieth Century Society was less confident in this assessment.

The Committee was further advised that the 1937 building was located too close to the runway and thereby penetrated the 1:7 slope, this being an aeronautical surface through which nothing should penetrate. The Committee viewed related diagrams which concisely portrayed the slope. Information was provided regarding the existence of asbestos within the building and the Committee viewed a diagram which showed the location of the same.

The delegation withdrew from the meeting.

Having given serious consideration to all aspects of the appeal, the Committee decided to remove the designation of the building as a proposed Site of Special Interest.

The Greffier of the States was directed to send a copy of this Act to the Harbours and Airport Committee.

Connétable P.F. Ozouf was absent for this item.

CPT Heuzorade

Greffier of the States

2

REPORT TO THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

January 2002

JERSEY AIRPORT

Appeal against the registration of the 1937 building as proposed Site of Special Interest

Members will be familiar with this building but I append a photograph for clarification. The building is currently included in the Historic Buildings Register as a pSSI. An appeal against registration was rejected at the meeting of the Jersey Building Heritage Sub-Committee on 26th November 2001.

An appeal letter from the Airport Director dated 14 December 2001 is attached, setting out five points in support of demolition.

Had the 1937 airport building survived in anything like its original form, it would undoubtedly deserve protection as a Site of Special Interest, being one of only a handful of historic airports of this architectural quality in Europe. It is acknowledged that successive additions to the building have seriously compromised its original architectural form and there have also been extensive internal alterations. The Twentieth Century Society, the leading pressure group in England which campaigns for the protection of modern architecture, feels that the building has been too heavily altered to warrant listing against UK standards. There are direct parallels here with the Inn on the Park, which should clearly have been preserved if the building had not been so extensively modified.

But in Jersey terms, the 1937 building is unique and there is no doubt that it still retains significant architectural, historical, cultural and symbolic significance. It seems to me that the key question here is whether there is any realistic prospect of recovering the form and character of this building. This would involve stripping away successive additions, repairing the original shell and interior, and finding a beneficial use. This would clearly be difficult and potentially costly, though the cultural and tourism benefits could be considerable. The obstacle to aviation safety would remain.

What the Committee needs to determine now is whether the case for the conservation of this building is so hopeless that there is no point in maintaining its pSSI status, or whether serious consideration should be given to the practicability of its restoration before total demolition is conceded.

The President of the Harbours and Airport Committee and officers will attend the meeting to assist the Committee in reaching a conclusion.

Stuart Fell

Stuart Fell
Assistant Director Design and Conservation

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