



Europa Nostra / EIB Institute « The seven most endangered heritage sites »

The Vauban Fortifications, Briançon, France

Draft Techno-Economic Report

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1. Summary

The aim of the project is to restore a group of internationally recognised historic fortifications which sit above the small French alpine town of Briançon. These were allowed to decay over several decades when they were considered no longer essential to the French Army's mission. Although some stabilisation works have been carried out, they remain at risk. Most have now been transferred to the town and commune of Briançon which, with the Réseau Vauban (a charitable trust), is seeking to return the fortifications to a sound condition, to form part of the cultural and historic infrastructure of the town, of the region and of France.

The project comprises four sites with limited water, limited electrical power and no other utilities:

- ❖ Fort des Têtes Site area 41 Ha; Usable built area – 10 040 sq.m.; Readily accessible; Only site still owned by the government which is undertaking basic works to keep it safe.
- ❖ Fort du Randouillet Site area 15 Ha; Usable built area – 5 051 sq.m., Cut off in winter; Cost to stabilise secure: EUR 15 million¹
- ❖ Fort Dauphin Site area 4 Ha, Built area – 1 420 sq.m., Usable Built area – 660 sq.m.; Cut off in winter; Cost to stabilise: EUR 6.5 million;
- ❖ Fort des Sallettes Site area of site – 4 Ha, Built area – ? sq.m., Usable area – ? sq.m. Cut off in winter; Stabilised;
- ❖ Communication Y Site area 4 Ha; Usable built area – 835 sq.m.; Readily accessible; Cost to stabilise: EUR 5.5 million;

Until 1994, Briançon was a garrison town and it is still adapting to its relatively new role. Over and above the fortifications the Communal authorities have a legacy of army buildings and a town which needs to undergo an economic transformation to allow it to develop its changed role. With a population of only 12 000, it does not have the resources both to carry out its town centre works and to manage and finance the redevelopment of the fortifications.

Potential uses for the sites have been presented, but to stabilise the sites and put them into a condition where they could be redeveloped would require EUR 40 – 50 million. Funding could be available from a variety of sources, but this would require additional funding and a set of skills which the Commune and Réseau Vauban do not currently possess. Two principal lines of action are recommended:

- ❖ Firstly, the scale of the project is such that they should be seen as a new, fourth “Quarter” of the town, and be the object of a full urban planning and zoning review;
- ❖ Secondly, a Development Agency should be established to carry out the whole stabilisation process and manage the redevelopment activity, incorporating experienced staff from the Commune but also importing new skills such as professional fundraising, urban and wider economic development and tourism, which is the principal mechanism by which the sites can become sustainable.

There is little doubt that the fortification sites are important, and it would be unrealistic just to abandon them, but there is a choice to be made by the interested parties. Either the sites are stabilised, or they are fully developed, but neither simple stabilisation nor a compromise development would generate the desired economic and financial benefits needed for long term sustainability.

¹ All costs are quoted **excluding VAT** and other taxes and are based on analysis carried out in 2007.



2. Purpose, location

The objective is to restore and renovate the fortifications surrounding the historic alpine town of Briançon, France, and to turn them into economically useful, self-sustaining assets which will help develop both the town and the wider region.

The town and commune of Briançon can be dated at least to Roman times, and sits in a strategically important position at the intersection of four alpine valleys, close to the Italian border. Its critical role in defence against invasion was recognised in the 17th Century when the surrounding hills were fortified by Vauban on the orders of the King of France. The main elements of these fortifications sit above, and dominate, the old town, which is itself fortified.

3. Context

Briançon is a small commune of some 12 000 people. The town itself is split between the upper, old, walled town, the *Cité Vauban*, and the newer town below. Although Briançon has an historic past, it is relatively unknown internationally, and despite all of the main fortifications being listed as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO, it is its ski-resort neighbour, Serre Chevalier, which is better known. In the past, the town benefited economically from its strategic location on key trade routes through the alps, the downside of which being that they were also the routes invading armies would choose to take. Apart from a silk spinning industry in the lower town, which died out in the 1930s, Briançon did not develop a diversified economy. With two exceptions, it has been dependent on the transit of goods and people and small scale agriculture.

The first, and less significant exception, was the development of health tourism which led to the establishment of the town as a health resort in the early 20th century. Briançon has the air and light quality of the alps, combined with warm airflows from the South. These mitigate the worst of the winter weather, and help give the town the highest number of annual sunshine hours in France². This activity fell into decline, but this may have been due to changing fashions and a lack of investment, rather than a lack of potential demand. It should also be noted that although the slopes on the three sides which are ideal for defensive fortifications are less suitable for skiing development, there is mountain access on the fourth (West) side. This links in to the Serre Chevalier ski area.

The second exception is one which played a major role in the life and economy of the town. Following the construction of the fortifications, Briançon became a garrison town: initially seasonal, based on the high forts, but later permanent with barracks and other military installations in and around the town. The legacy of the withdrawal of the armed forces in 1994 can still be seen in the town. From an external perspective, it might be supposed that the presence of the garrison forces cushioned, or insulated, the town. It was not exposed to the pressures which led similar towns across the alps to develop summer and winter tourism to pull local populations out of poverty. Briançon's tourism potential is significant, but there has been a lack of development. Recent investments in infrastructure have increased the potential still further, but there is a lack of hotel and self catering accommodation, and only limited services. The current tourism industry is focused on the summer and on second homes which means that the town is not realising its full potential.

Although the Briançon commune is small, it is already responsible for some significant historical structures which need to be redeveloped and put to economic use, in addition to the very substantial structures which form the project. These include a former courthouse and *L'Eglise des Cordeliers* in

2 On a shadow adjusted basis.



the old town and a group of three major buildings: former barracks, in the centre of the lower town. The local authority also has the task of maintaining the historical and cultural integrity of the old town. These responsibilities represent a heavy financial and administrative burden for the *Mairie* even before the redevelopment of the fortifications is considered.

4. Description

See Appendix I for a map of the town with the site locations marked.

There are five main components to the fortifications, not including an historic bridge and a small fort high above the town.

Fort des Têtes The largest of the structures, and the only one still owned and kept secure by the Ministry of Defence.

- Total area of site – 41 Ha, Built area – 22 380 sq.m., Usable area – 10 040 sq.m.
- Currently habitable area – 0 sq.m.: Utilities – Limited power available. Limited water available. No other utilities
- Altitude³ – 1 460 m Accessibility – Metalled road access from Briançon; potentially two routes but one currently closed for security. Road could easily be kept open year round but is currently closed in winter. Was originally provisioned by an aerial ropeway from Briançon Old Town.
- Estimated cost to make secure and suitable for further development: no figures available but with if the current works being funded by the Ministry of Defence are completed, then the site could probably be made suitable for development with minimal additional expenditure.
- No current public access except for occasional open air concerts and tours. No other economic activity.

Fort du Randouillet The highest structure.

- Total area of site – 15 Ha, Built area – 10 570 sq.m., Usable area – 5 051 sq.m.
- Currently habitable area – 0 sq.m.: Utilities – Limited power available. Limited water available. No other utilities
- Altitude – 1 600 m Accessibility – graded but unmade road access from Briançon: the original route laid by Vauban. Passable in summer by off-road/high clearance vehicle, closed in winter. Difficult to maintain access in winter. Was originally provisioned by an aerial ropeway from Fort des Têtes.
- Estimated cost to make secure and suitable for further development: EUR 15 million⁴
- No current public access. No economic activity.

Fort Dauphin

- Total area of site – 4 Ha, Built area – 1 420 sq.m., Usable area – 660 sq.m.
- Currently habitable area – 0 sq.m.: Utilities – Limited power available. Limited water available. No other utilities

3 Briançon is the highest town in France, at 1 326 m, measured from the old town centre.

4 All costs are quoted **excluding VAT** and other taxes and are based on analysis carried out in 2007..



- Altitude – 1 540 m Accessibility – graded but unmade road access from Briançon: the original route laid by Vauban. Passable in summer by off-road/high clearance vehicle, closed in winter. Difficult to maintain access in winter.
- Estimated cost to make secure and suitable for further development: 6.5 M.EUR
- Summer use of site by a small tourist operation for the kennelling and breeding of huskies for a winter sleigh business. No other economic activity.

Fort des Sallettes The closest site to the town

- . Total area of site – 4 Ha, Built area – ? sq.m., Usable area – ? sq.m.
- Currently habitable area – 0 sq.m.: Utilities – Limited power available. Limited water available. No other utilities
- Altitude – 1 538 m Accessibility – graded but unmade road access from Briançon: the original route laid by Vauban. Passable in summer by off-road/high clearance vehicle, closed in winter. Difficult to maintain access in winter.
- Estimated cost to make secure and suitable for further development. Not significant.
- Regular guided walks in summer and snowshoe trail destination in winter. No other economic activity.

Communication Y Not a defensive structure as such – provided safe communications between Fort des Têtes and Fort Randouillet, as well as partially barring valley access. It also acted as a water collector.

- Total area of site – 4 Ha, Built area – 1 800 sq.m., Usable area – 835 sq.m.
- Currently habitable area – 0 sq.m.: Utilities – Limited power available. Limited water available. No other utilities
- Altitude – 1 460 m Accessibility – Metalled road access from Briançon. Road could easily be kept open year round but is currently closed in winter.
- Estimated cost to make secure and suitable for further development: EUR 5.5 million
- No current public access. No economic activity, except a municipal water collector is being built on the site to service dwellings at the top of the town.

The total cost to stabilise the structures prior to development is therefore approximately EUR 27 million, excluding access roads. As a working estimate, and before considering any further development, a budget of the order of EUR 10 million might be required for access roads and utilities. There is no estimated cost for annual maintenance of the structures but, considering only the built area of the sites, an annual maintenance budget of at least EUR 400 thousand could be projected, and at least the same again for the actual fortifications.

An indicative figure is available to bring Randouillet, Dauphin and Communication Y into reuse: EUR 31.5 million. This represents a cost per square metre of usable area of EUR 2 – 2.5 thousand, which would be realistic for basic reconversion and simple landscaping.

5. Technical aspects

Apart from climate limitations: the higher sites are only viable for construction works for 6 – 7 months per year, but except for the possible availability of suitable trained and experienced artisans, the proposed works pose no technical problems. The stabilisation works carried out in recent years appear to have been well thought through and sympathetically implemented. However, the scale of the works remaining should not be underestimated, and would need to be completed before any real



economic benefits could be generated. Large areas of the sites are unsafe and unsuitable for public access. To put the scale of project into perspective, pre-development works would require some 400 person years of labour. To bring the sites into active economic use would require at least the same again.

The principal components of the project have been the object of multiple surveys and analyses, and it must be assumed that the problems are well understood by the interested parties. The technology and techniques involved in the original construction are well understood and, apart from the sheer scale of the project, there are no technical problems associated with the initial reconstruction work.

There will, however, be technical issues if the existing structures are to be brought into modern use. The only conduits in any of the buildings are chimneys. All utility conduits and disabled access routes would need to be led through thick walls and solid rock. However, the main issues will be related to the protected nature of the buildings and the extent to which internal and external design features can be modified to allow the buildings to be put to modern use. It should be possible to retain the appearance of most of the elevations, including most of the fenestration, but some buildings will require flexibility over door openings and the interconnections between buildings – particularly in view of the winters and the sites' elevation.

There are unlikely to be risks from the military history of the sites. Some have already been surveyed for ordnance and pyrotechnics. Very little was found and it was mostly associated with the second world war.

6. Implementation

As already noted, apart from the scale and climate limitations, neither the stabilisation nor the redevelopment works pose particular implementation problems. However, there may be a problem over who is managing the various components of the project, at least for the stabilisation phase. Interested parties include: the Commune of Briançon, the Department of the Haute-Alpes, the Region of Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Culture, the Réseau Vauban, and UNESCO.

The Commune is technically the owner of most of the sites, the main exception being the largest site: Fort des Têtes, and has planning responsibility and authority. However, it is a small organisation and does not have the human or financial resources to manage⁵ the required works, even if actual project management were to be outsourced.

To date there has been no difficulty in finding regional contractors to carry out the works. However, the tasks are relatively specialised, involving different techniques and materials from current construction practices: large baulks of timber and lime mortar, rather than steel and concrete. The availability of skills, and the seasonality of the works, may make it difficult to attract sufficient labour to carry out all of the works within a reasonable timeframe.

There are therefore a number of risks associated with the implementation of the stabilisation works. The development phase will also suffer from the seasonality problem, which will need to be factored in when dealing with potential commercial/private sector parties. However, the main constraint is likely to be from planning and conservation authorities and UNESCO. UNESCO has shown itself to be reasonable in responding to the needs of developers when redeveloping sensitive sites. They recognise that some change may be needed to small parts to allow the major parts to be viable and

5 The scope would include: surveys to define the specific works to be carried out under each contract, preparation of the tender specifications, organising and managing the tendering process, agreeing contractual arrangement with winning bidders, overseeing the work of the contractors, and evaluating claims, for payments, etc.



sustainable. However, the planning process will require a series of compromises which will take time to develop. This process will need to be started, and ideally completed, during the stabilisation phase of the project.

Any planning for physical works would need to take account of the availability of funding. Realistically, the structuring of funding and the establishment of relationship with developers for the individual sites is likely to be lengthy and time consuming for the parties concerned. The scenarios presented in §9. are therefore timed from a theoretical financial close date. If all parties were willing, and had available budgets, then this theoretically could be 31st December 2015. In practice, it could take several years.

7. Procurement

Unless there is actual transfer of ownership of the assets to the private sector – which is neither likely nor foreseen in the scenarios considered in §9., the stabilisation works will be subject to public procurement rules under the relevant EU Directives, and under French Law. Most of the contracts awarded for works to date would not have required publication in the EU or French Official Journals, but an accelerated programme of works would almost certainly require this administrative step. The time needed for this process would form a significant part of Project Management planning. Public procurement is a lengthy process, and nine months would be a reasonable estimate for the time required, once the works are fully defined.

Assuming two years for the stabilisation works to reach a stage at which redevelopment could begin, the development phase might be able to start in Year 3, i.e. 2019 at the earliest. Again, the size of the contracts would require public procurement for public sector activities, with similar lead times to those noted above. However, development works promoted and funded by the private sector could be procured much more quickly: possibly in as little as three months.

8. Environment, sustainability, social

All of the sites under discussion are included in the UNESCO world heritage listing. If this listing is important then there will be constraints on the scope and type of development work to be undertaken. The authorities might consider delisting: balancing the value of the UNESCO “brand” against the restraints and constraints it imposes. However, that would be an extreme step with a possible impact on other World Heritage sites in the wider region. Assuming therefore that there is a case to maintain the listing, then the permitted development on each site will be limited and it is likely that there will be cost penalties to convert these historic structures into revenue generating assets, e.g. the use of tunnels to link buildings rather than simple sheltered walkways.

The provision of water, energy and telecommunications to the sites should not be a serious problem: with all conduits being buried. Waste water and surface water management will require greater consideration, along with solid waste in the case of sites which are cut off in winter. However there are existing technical solutions for all of these.

Any significant development of the sites is likely to have a strongly beneficial social impact, through the provision of employment in the region during the construction phase, and local direct and indirect employment during the operational phase. In particular, there should be a reduction in rural depopulation, and wider development through the provision of goods and services to the redeveloped sites.



9. Use, market, demand

Even assuming that the stabilisation costs could be supported by grants, they should be seen as economic investments, capable of showing a yield of the order of 5%. If the cumulative costs are, say EUR 37 million, and annual maintenance will be EUR 0.4 million, then the site must be able to show an annual economic benefit of over EUR 2 million to justify the investments. At present, the sites are visited by a few hundred paying visitors every year. In simple terms, if each visitor to the sites were to contribute an additional EUR 10 to the local economy directly, then over two hundred thousand visitors per annum would be needed to justify the proposed stabilisation programme. Based on current visitor numbers, this would require an increase of such a magnitude that it would far exceed the capacity of the commune, even if that number of tourists could be attracted. It is worth noting that the visitor pattern to Briançon is quite different to the pattern for France as a whole. France remains the biggest international tourist destination, but, excluding Italy, foreign visitors only represent some 10% of the town's visitors and the majority of visitors are not only French, but from the immediate region. Any significant increase in demand would mean being able to attract new visitors from outside the region, and outside the country.

It is difficult to argue a financial case for the investment in the fortifications, but the lack of capacity, at least in the short term, suggests that it would also be difficult to make an economic argument. There are no mechanisms by which the economic benefit could be realised. However, there may be a stronger economic justification if the economic boundaries are expanded to the national level in France and to the wider alpine region. It is quite possible that a study could demonstrate these benefits and be used to justify funding from public and private organisations, including discretionary EU regional development funding under the control of the French national government.

However, a general economic benefit which cannot be monetised locally will not have a significant impact on the town of Briançon itself or on the wider region. To achieve that would require additional investment in developments on each of the individual sites. There have been a number of studies into alternative uses for some of the structures, but these have typically been student exercises. While interesting, and often innovative, these have been function oriented without consideration of market, economic or financial issues. What will be required is the development of feasibility studies, based on a candidate set of uses for each of the sites. The following outlines should be seen as the starting point for this process, with the suggestions made being presented to trigger thoughts of alternative uses by the organisations responsible for the sites.

Communication Y

This structure is a long narrow building with a central entrance and two long wings rising on each side, one room deep. It was built to provide safe passage for messengers and troops moving between Randouillet and Tête. It is also the lowest of the structures.

- Private Option This is not a huge structure and is built as two narrow, but very long, rooms with sloping floors. Although not ideal, it could be used for Retail or Catering, but would suffer from its location on the outskirts of a quiet, small town.
- Public Option The original "communication" function suggests its future use as a visitor centre for the complete Vauban experience. There is good road access, and enough space for parking. This would be the focal point for visitors, with presentations on the history of the site and the showroom for value added services such as guided tours and dedicated transport between the sites. It would be possible to combine these services in one wing, with the second still being used as a combined visitor shop and café/restaurant.



Fort du Randouillet

This is the highest and most remote structure. It also has three former barracks which would lend themselves to conversion to accommodation, with other spaces being used to provide common social spaces and operating areas (offices, stores, etc.).

- Public Option – Summer “internat” for school groups to learn about the social economic and military history of the site and region, the environment, flora and fauna, sports activities, etc. These would have to draw school groups from across the country.
- Private Option - An “eyrie” hotel. The site could be the basis of super-luxury hotel of 50 suites, to operate cut off from the rest of the world in winter. Access at those times would be via a dedicated cable car from the Fort des Têtes based on the line of the previous freight lift. There are limited number of operators for hotels of this class, but they do exist and investors may be interested in the uniqueness of this site. However, taking up this option would mean that the site would not be available for visits by the general public.

Fort Dauphin

This is a small usable site: high but with potential year round access.

- Public Option – Again, an “internat”, but Winter and Summer, for school groups to learn about the social economic and military history of the site and region, the environment, flora and fauna, sports activities, etc. These would have to draw school groups from across the country.
- Private Option – A combination of self catering accommodation (Gîtes) and small tourism service operations operating throughout the year: “close to nature” in the summer, and “snow adventure” in winter (climbing, snow-shoe trekking, dog-sledding).

Fort des Sallettes

This is a small site with limited opportunities for development and should probably remain as a destination in its own right, except for the provision of value added services to the increased numbers of visitors driven by the other sites. It has the advantage of offering the best views of the other sites and their positions, putting the overall planning of the defensive structures into perspective.

Fort des Têtes

This property remains the property, and hence civil responsibility, of the State. It represents the biggest redevelopment challenge and any moves to transfer ownership, and responsibility and liability, to the Commune should be delayed as long as possible. As a site it is too large to attract the highest value development: if developed it would be able to offer 2 - 300 accommodation units, i.e. double bedroom equivalents. This may make it too large for use as a super-luxury resort, and the development costs of such a resort would be circa EUR 1 million per accommodation unit: too high to be financially viable. Also, as the most important site of the defences, it should remain accessible to the public. This leads to the proposal for mixed use: a combination of accommodation and services to be developed by the private sector, and visitor services to be provided by the public sector.

However, the scale of the site – equivalent to 5 - 10% of the town, suggests that this development should not be undertaken in isolation. It needs to part of a much wider urban development plan which could envisage the site being a mix of residential, second-home and tourist accommodation, with all the services and social infrastructure that such a development would need. The Fort des Têtes is an important national, cultural and historic asset but its scale means that it cannot be considered as a single site simply to be restored and presented as a visitor attraction. Before considering accepting



responsibility for the site, it is strongly recommended that the Commune, in close collaboration with interested public parties and civil society, should commission an independent study into the future use of the site, along the lines indicated above.

Although this site has good access, full implementation would take at least five years from the point at which a development plan has been agreed.

Meeting the Needs of Potential Visitors

A recent study carried out by respected consultants on behalf of the Commune (in the context of a possible Conference/Congress Centre) highlighted the lack of available hotel and short term accommodation in the town and its surrounds. To be financially and economically sustainable, the fortifications will require substantially higher visitor numbers than the town currently receives. It is for this reason that the suggested options above propose the conversion of many of the available structures to accommodation. It is also observed that the accommodation which exists is limited to small three star hotels, which will not attract higher value tourists, particularly foreign tourists and particularly not tourists booking through tour operators. This suggests that much of the accommodation, whether self catering or hotel based, should be of a much higher standard than is currently available.

France is the world's most important inbound tourist destination, supported by high levels of domestic tourism. There is no reason why there should not be sufficient numbers of tourists to support the proposed investments. However, the attractions to be provided must be matched not only by available accommodation and tourism services, but also by transport and other economic infrastructure.

10. Investment cost

As already noted, based on existing studies, the stabilisation investment required is of the order of EUR 37 million. These investments need to be put in place before any redevelopment can be considered, and can only be funded through public budgets and public subscription, i.e. charitable and altruistic donations by individuals, cultural organisations and private sector operators. It may be possible to borrow for a significant proportion of the redevelopment works, to be repaid out of rents or concessions from private and public operators concerned in the redevelopment process. However, neither commercial nor promotional banks would lend on a non-recourse basis and the sites themselves would probably not be considered as adequate security. Guarantees would therefore need to be offered by the public sector.

However, to put the project into perspective, although redevelopment costs have been evaluated at EUR 31.5 million as a base case, working from a revised redevelopment rate of EUR 2 500 per sq.m. of useable area, plus the costs of landscaping, internal roads and on-site utilities, would indicate a true project cost in the region of EUR 50 million for the types of development proposed above. With a real estate value of EUR 4 000 per sq.m.(net), the total value of the sites after redevelopment would be of the order of EUR 65 – 70 million, which would allow a significant proportion of the stabilisation costs to be recovered.

11. Financing Possibilities

It should be clear that there are two distinct types of funding required: "cultural" and "commercial". The "cultural" funding is needed to make the total project financially viable and sustainable: many of the redevelopment activities will not generate enough revenues to cover operating costs, quite apart from capital costs. It is also unrealistic to expect commercial activities to cross subsidise public costs, other than through the normal tax regime. The cost to commercial operators of access (site rents,



concessions, etc.) must be competitive with other sites they might choose. There can be no premium for the location until private investors can be persuaded that a) the pre-development works can be funded and implemented, and b) that there will be a market for the products and services to be offered. Bearing in mind the gap between current visitor numbers and the numbers needed to make these sites sustainable, it will be very difficult to persuade private investors to risk their capital until the sites are ready for redevelopment and there is a marketing operation in operation which will draw large numbers of new visitors to the town and region.

However, provided potential commercial operators and developers have a sound track record, the funding of their investments should not be a significant problem and they would either organise it themselves or in conjunction with a public agency: see §12. This will be true whether the funding is sourced from commercial banks active in the region, or promotional banks such as bpifrance or the European Investment Bank. However, it may be desirable or necessary to offer capital incentives to invest in what is a relatively weak local economy, with uncertain future demand. The possibility of capital or employment related grants should therefore be pursued if the overall project as presented in §12. goes ahead.

The critical factor is whether there is a realistic prospect of “cultural” funding being available. The costings presented in Appendix 2 are based on estimates from 2007. These should therefore be increased to reflect inflation, partly balanced by the works which have since been carried out. However, the order of the magnitude will remain the same, so “cultural” funding of at least EUR 27 million is likely to be required, plus whatever public, non-commercial works are to be carried out. The public and not-for-profit funding might realistically be EUR 40 – 50 million. This is the level of funding which needs to be in place before any commitment can be made to launch a full restoration programme. This translates to an annual expenditure of EUR 8 – 10 million: substantially higher than existing levels of investment. There are a number of potential sources of funding:

- ❖ Commune budgets/borrowing – While the commune may be able to devote some resources, it is not realistic to expect this to be more than nominal. The Commune is not wealthy and it is already faced with substantial development projects which are more likely to have a direct, short term impact on the town.
- ❖ Department/Region – Budgets here are relatively larger, and the proposal would be in line with an orientation to develop the tourism industry. However, again, the funds may be limited due to existing and competing commitments. The parties involved will, of course, be fully aware of what funding might be available and on what terms.
- ❖ Regional Development funding: managed and allocated by the French government, based on EU resources. In theory, this could provide up to 50% of eligible costs. Again there will be competition for these resources, so any approach must be professionally managed with a well argued economic and cultural case being made to the department responsible.
- ❖ Loan funding from promotional banks, as outlined for the private sector. Again a professional case needs to be made: this time one which presents suitable guarantees and repayment mechanisms.
- ❖ Private patronage: Internationally there are wealthy individuals, trusts and commercial companies with Corporate Social Responsibility objectives which can be approached for backing. Once again, the approach needs to be tailored to suit each potential donor, which requires financial resources and professional skills which are not currently available to the project.
- ❖ Public collections: Might form part of a wider fund raising programme, but may not be the most efficient or effective way of raising funds.



12. Conclusion: Proposed Action Programme and recommendations

The proposed stabilisation and redevelopment project is too large to be seen in isolation, and it should be recognised that Briançon is already heavily committed to existing projects. In the upper, old town these include the rehabilitation of the old town facades, the courthouse, the Cordeliers' church and the parking. In the lower town existing structures such as the silk factory are lying empty, and the town is taking over responsibility for three empty barracks which are substantial buildings which will need to be put to economic use. The magnitude of the Vauban sites when measured against the limited resources available within the local administration and the demands already being made by the current projects, suggest that there has to be a major review of the Commune's development strategy. The representatives of the Commune which assisted in the site visits were all committed, experienced and qualified for their responsibilities. However, they are too few to carry out all the necessary work and the teams need either to be reinforced or parallel teams established to take over some of the responsibilities.

It is therefore suggested that an action plan be developed which would incorporate, but possibly not be limited to, the following stages:

- ❖ A complete review of Commune's urban planning. The Commune already has three zones: Cité Vauban (old, upper town), Ste. Catherine (new, lower town) and the ex-urban areas. The proposed development should be classed as a new suburb of the town: a fourth zone.
- ❖ A tourist demand analysis based on two scenarios: a) simple stabilisation of the sites, allowing public access with minimal value added services, and b) redevelopment along the lines mentioned in §9.0
- ❖ A demand analysis for real estate development in the Fort des Têtes.
- ❖ The setting up of a new organisation, a development agency, to manage the redevelopment process, possibly to be funded separately from the Commune. The agency would have two functions.
 - Firstly, it would be responsible for raising funds to carry out the stabilisation works. A process which has worked in other countries is to subcontract fundraising to a specialist company with experience of this type of work, being paid a retainer plus a performance payment based on the amount raised.
 - Secondly, it would manage the stabilisation and redevelopment processes. A core of existing Commune staff might be transferred to the new Agency.
- ❖ The Development Agency would be guided by a board made up of representatives of the Commune and the Region, civil society e.g. the Réseau Vauban, and the Ministries of Culture and Defence. In addition to the Commune staff, the Agency should employ a number of project executives with experience in a) tourism and leisure, b) commercial real estate development, and c) project implementation.
- ❖ The Development Agency would then take over responsibility for the fortification sites, allowing the Commune to focus on its other heavy commitments.
- ❖ The Development Agency should commission feasibility studies for each of the available sites, to identify the most appropriate developments for each.
- ❖ Working from the feasibility studies, the Development Agency should identify individual developers or consortia to manage the physical development process. It would then be



responsible for managing the commercial relationship between the Commune and the concessionaires/leaseholders, and facilitate, manage and supervise the redevelopment process.

- ❖ Once the sites are developed, the Development Agency should be wound up.

NB This approach will require a long term commitment and It is unlikely that the Development Agency could achieve its objectives in less than ten years. The parties concerned must therefore also be prepared to make a commitment of more than a decade. However, to put this into perspective. The forts were built over a period of many years, and have lasted 300 years. The current generation is only being asked to make the same commitment to its own future.

There is little doubt that the fortification sites are important, and it would be unrealistic just to abandon them, but there is a choice to be made by the interested parties. Either the sites are stabilised, or they are fully developed, but neither simple stabilisation nor a compromise development would generate the desired economic and financial benefits needed for long term sustainability.



Appendix I





Appendix II

Summary Costs of Repairs and Redevelopment (EUR millions)

a) As at 06/2007

b) Excluding VAT

	Fortifications	Buildings	Redevelopment	
<u>Fort de Randouillet</u>				
Phases				
1. Entrance	2.350	0.160	0.700	
2. Dungeon	1.400	0.620	1.500	
3. Main terrace	2.750	3.700	17.700	
4. Lower terraces	1.900	0.520	1.400	
<u>Fort Dauphin</u>				
Phases				
1. W. Entrance & N-E. Facades	1.320	0.000	0.480	
2. W. Entrance, S-E. & S-W. Terraces	0.970	0.000	0.270	
3. Internal works (Terraces)	1.300	0.000	0.250	
4. N-W. Facade + SE Terraces	0.710	0.000	0.150	
5. Buildings/roads	0.000	0.750	1.600	
<u>Communication Y</u>				
Phases				
1. W. Facade	1.520	0.000	0.700	
2. E. Facade	1.100	0.000	0.260	
3. N-E. Works	1.080	0.000	0.260	
4. Buildings/roads	0.000	1.150	3.900	
<u>Feasibility Studies</u>			0.500	
<u>Project Management/Sundries</u>	2.040	1.605	1.830	
TOTAL				
=	18.440	8.505	31.500	58.445