

**REPORT**  
**of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the**  
**Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda**  
**(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)**

**25-28 March 2024**



The Town of St George (photo: Alfredo Conti)

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## List of abbreviations:

DCMS: Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
EIS: Environmental Impact Statement  
HIA: Heritage Impact Assessment  
MP: Management Plan  
Operational Guidelines: Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention  
OUV: Outstanding Universal Value  
SGPA: St George Preservation Authority  
SOUV: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value  
WHSMC: World Heritage Site Management Committee

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The mission team would like to express its gratitude both to the State Party (The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and the Government of Bermuda for inviting and hosting the joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the 'Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda'. The mission is particularly grateful to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Bermuda's Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Cabinet Office, and Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sports for their hospitality and for the excellent arrangements put in place to ensure the smooth running of the mission. The combination of meetings with various actors with on-site visits and discussions, allowed the mission team to gather first-hand information on the issues and challenges of protecting and managing the property, as well as the projects already implemented or planned.

The mission team would like to convey Its special thanks to Henry Reed (DCMS), Alexandra Warr (Historic England), Jessica Dill (Ministry of Cabinet Office, Department of Planning, Bermuda) and Stephen Symons (Ministry of Public Works, Bermuda) for their presence and support throughout the mission. Additional thanks are due to Quinell Francis, the Mayor of the Town of St. George and all representatives of the Corporation of St. George, Francine Trott (Acting Forts Curator), Peter Barrett (Chairman of the St. George's Foundation), and Kristin White (Historical Guide) for their hospitality, valuable contributions to discussions and site visits.

Most importantly, the mission team would like to express its heartfelt gratitude to all those involved in the mission (representing the State Party and the Government of Bermuda and its authorities, the NGOs, volunteers, and the local community of the Town of St George), for the open and candid discussions and for their sincere engagement and determination to protect the 'Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda' World Heritage property.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND MAIN CONCLUSIONS**

The World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the World Heritage property Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), was carried out from the 25 to the 28 March 2024. Its main objectives were:

- Conduct an overall assessment of the state of conservation of the 'Historic Town of St. George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda' World Heritage property, with a view to providing advice and recommendations to the State Party on the maintenance of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
- Visit and review the current development of the St. Regis Resort and Residences in the buffer zone of the World Heritage property, including related planned and ongoing projects, and provide advice in relation to this project and any necessary related measures that may be required to ensure the maintenance of the OUV of the property;
- Review the protection and management measures currently in place as set out in the current draft updated World Heritage Management Plan and current legislation. Provide advice on current vulnerabilities and feedback on proposed improvements as they relate to the management of the property;
- Engage with decision makers and relevant stakeholders involved in the maintenance and preservation of the World Heritage property regarding current permits within the property's buffer zone.

### Protection and management measures concerning the World Heritage property

In terms of legislation and planning tools, the mission noted that while the Government of Bermuda has a clear and well-defined legal framework for managing change and development, that takes into account cultural assets of national significance within Bermuda, World Heritage-specific protection and conservation measures are not adequately embedded within this framework. Therefore, the mission advises that the Government of Bermuda revise and enforce its relevant legislation to ensure the full protection of the property's OUV and its underlying attributes.

Concerning the current management arrangements, the mission found that its most significant weakness is the lack of a management body to ensure the implementation of a strategic World Heritage focused management system, coordinate the overall management of the property with both governmental agencies, NGOs and the local community, and to oversee the implementation of a World Heritage Management Plan. The mission therefore considers that the major current deficiency of the property is the lack of systematic management by the competent Bermuda government agencies. The mission advises that the Government of Bermuda appoint, as a matter of priority, a competent management body, ensure stable financial and human resources for the management system, and continue to work towards finalising the World Heritage Management Plan for the property, taking into account the comments and recommendations of the mission.

### St. Regis Resort and Residences development project

With regard to the St Regis Hotel and Resort development project, the mission considers that, following the demolition of the old hotel facilities near Fort Victoria (in 2008), the Government of Bermuda did not exercise due diligence in preparing for a new hotel resort infrastructure project in the immediate vicinity of the components of the property, within their buffer zone, and did not assess carefully enough in advance all the potential impacts of new projects on the OUV of the property before issuing a Special Act for a new resort hotel. The mission agrees in principle with the findings of the 2018 and 2020

ICOMOS Technical Reviews and considers that the hotel and condominium buildings already built have a negative impact on the OUV of the World Heritage property and its underlying attributes and in particular on Fort St Catherine, Fort Victoria and Fort Albert. In this context, the mission considers that the project to construct five additional condominium buildings should be reconsidered and, if it could not be avoided, the decision on their final location, scale and design needs to be accompanied by an iterative impact assessment process to ensure that the implemented project does not result in a large negative impact on the OUV of the property and its underlying attributes.

The mission advises the Government of Bermuda to approve only those developments within the World Heritage property, its buffer zone and wider setting that are fully consistent with the sustainable development policies and fully compatible with the preservation of the OUV of the property. The Government of Bermuda is also advised to promote and support policies, plans and actions that adopt a sustainable tourism approach.

#### Assessment of the state of conservation of the property

The mission found that the overall state of conservation of the Town of St George can be considered very good and that this component part of the serial property retains a remarkable degree of integrity and authenticity. However, it is important to consider the potential adverse impact that tourism could have on the property's authenticity, both the tangible and intangible attributes that convey the contribution of the Historic Town of St George to the OUV of the property.

With regard to the fortifications, although not all of them were visited by the mission, it was possible to verify that the current state of conservation of these elements varies from acceptable to very poor, depending mainly on their location, their use, as well as the degree and nature of the modifications made over time and the measures taken to preserve them. The authenticity of most of the fortifications can be considered acceptable, but many of them are in a condition of complete neglect due to the lack of a responsible governmental body that would take systematic action to preserve these structures. Some of the forts are in urgent need of conservation and restoration work to ensure their integrity.

The mission considers that the property as a whole is in urgent need of a responsible management body and a comprehensive management plan to guide its actions. It also recommends that the Government of Bermuda develop both an Emergency and Risk Preparedness Plan and a Sustainable Tourism Plan for the property and integrate them into its World Heritage Management Plan.

The fortifications in the eastern area of St George's Island, with the exception of Alexandra Battery and Gates Fort, have a common buffer zone that encompasses all of them and the Historic Town of St George. The other fortifications included in the serial World Heritage property do not have buffer zones, although several of them are located within national parks or protected areas. The mission considers that the buffer zone of the serial property should be reconsidered and extended around the Town of St George. In addition, all component elements should benefit from an additional layer of protection through a buffer zone.

The full list of recommendations related to all the above topics is provided in Chapter 3. of this report. The implementation of the mission recommendations will require a strong and long-term commitment from all stakeholders, both public and private, as only a concerted and strong effort can ensure the long-term preservation of the OUV of the property and thus a sustainable contribution to the well-being and social and economic development of the inhabitants of Bermuda.

## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

The serial property 'Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda' (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), which is to date the only World Heritage property in Bermuda (therefore often referred to in this report as 'the property'), was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000 on the basis of criterion (iv), by Decision 24 COM X.C.1 of the World Heritage Committee. The serial property is made up by 22 component parts and includes the town of St George and 21 fortifications located on several of the islands of the archipelago.

By Decision 38 COM 8E (2014), the World Heritage Committee adopted the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, recognising that the Town of St George is an authentic and the earliest example of the English colonial town in the New World and that its associated fortifications graphically illustrate the development of English military engineering from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, adapted to take into account the development of artillery during this period. A management plan for the property was adopted in 2000, updated in 2014 and is currently under review.

In 2015, the St George Resort Act was issued to regulate the leasing of land for the development of a luxury hotel and condominium project to be located south of St Catherine's Point, in the buffer zone of the World Heritage property, and to be developed in five phases. Section 7 of the Act requires the project to be compatible with the UNESCO World Heritage status of the property. Previous planning approval was granted in 2011 under the Park Hyatt (St George's) Resort Act 2008 for a more extensive resort development on this site, but this scheme did not proceed and the Act was ultimately repealed. Based on plans provided by the developer, a Heritage Impact Assessment was conducted in 2016, and the documentation was submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS in 2017.

Following correspondence with the State Party between 2017 and 2020, ICOMOS prepared two Technical Reviews of the proposal, both concluding that the development planning did not take into full consideration the need to protect the OUV of the property and that the development, if implemented, would have a negative impact on the OUV and attributes of the property. ICOMOS also advised the State party to invite an Advisory mission to the property to assess the hotel resort proposal and the effectiveness of the management system of the property. In 2019, the World Heritage Centre received information from the State Party confirming that the first phase of the project had been approved and that the construction of the St Regis Hotel was underway. In 2022, the opening of the resort was brought to the attention of the World Heritage Centre through a media article and a letter was sent to the State Party in July transmitting the information for verification in accordance with paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines. In May 2023, the Government of Bermuda confirmed that the St Regis Resort had been open since May 2021 and that the second of the two adjacent residential buildings was nearing completion and welcomed the suggestion to begin discussions on an Advisory mission to the property. An official invitation followed on 21 June 2023.

The joint UNESCO-ICOMOS Advisory mission, whose Terms of Reference (ToR) are included in **Annex 2** of the present report, was carried out between 25 and 28 March 2024, with the agreed programme that is available in **Annex 3**.

The objectives of the mission were set as follows:

1. Conduct an overall assessment of the state of conservation of the 'Historic Town of St. George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda' World Heritage property, with a view to providing advice and recommendations to the State Party on the maintenance of the property's OUV;
2. Visit and review the current development of the St. Regis Resort and Residences in the buffer zone of the World Heritage property, including related planned and ongoing

projects, and provide advice in relation to this project and any necessary related measures that may be required to ensure the maintenance of the OUV of the property;

3. Review the protection and management measures currently in place as set out in the current draft updated World Heritage Management Plan and current legislation. Provide advice on current vulnerabilities and feedback on proposed improvements as they relate to the management of the property;
4. Engage with decision makers and relevant stakeholders involved in the maintenance and preservation of the World Heritage property regarding current permits within the property's buffer zone.

The findings and recommendations of the Advisory mission presented below must therefore be understood in this context. It is important to note that, to date, information and documentation has been exchanged between the State Party, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre as Secretariat of the World Heritage Convention and the Advisory Bodies of the World Heritage Committee. The state of conservation of the property has never been reviewed by the World Heritage Committee.

## 2. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 2.1. *Protection and management measures concerning the World Heritage property*

Bermuda is a British Overseas Territory in the North Atlantic Ocean. The archipelago is a self-governing parliamentary democracy with a bicameral parliament. The premier is the head of government and is formally appointed by the governor, who is nominated by the British government as the representative of the British monarch. The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is responsible for the foreign affairs and defence of Bermuda. This latter is important to note with regard to understanding the process and lines of communications with regards to the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

#### 2.1.1 *Legal provisions and planning tools*

The protection and preservation of the property is aimed to be assured by the following legal framework:

The **Development and Planning Act** of 1974, which provides the legislative framework and processes on the following areas that fall under the responsibility of the Department of Planning (Ministry of Cabinet Office):

- Preparation of land use plans
- Determining planning applications
- Appeals
- Planning enforcement
- Environmental protection
- Compiling a list of listed buildings
- Designation of Historic Protection Areas
- Development Orders
- Building Control functions

The **Bermuda Plan 2018** is the main Development Plan for Bermuda (with the exception of the City of Hamilton). It is a policy and zoning document used in the assessment and determination of planning applications.

#### Development Orders and Special Acts

**Development Orders** are legislative tool under Section 15 of the Planning Act. Orders can be used to grant planning permission or allow the Development Application Board (DAP) to grant planning approval where not in conformity with development plan. They can only be issued for projects of national significance. The department has a guidance note setting out the procedures to be followed.

**Special Acts** are standalone legislation, not referenced within the Planning Act. They are generally used to grant planning permission which does not conform to the development plan and to set out details of customs duty reliefs and other concessions.

#### Other relevant legislation

The **Town of St George (Protection of Special Buildings) Act** of 1950 is the principal legislation for the protection of the Town of St George. This Act includes the formation of the St. Georges Preservation Authority, which power is limited to only a certain area of the Town of St. George component of the World Heritage property.

The **Bermuda National Parks Act** of 1986 provides protection for the fortifications, as all of these falls within the category 'protected areas' as defined within this Act. This Act includes the provision that all the protected areas must be protected from deterioration and should be maintained for public enjoyment. In addition, it includes measures concerning research.

The **Municipalities Act** 1923 establishes legislative measures for the municipalities under the Government of Bermuda, including the Corporation of St George.

**The Corporation of St. George's (UNESCO World Heritage Fund Levy) Act** of 2013 provides the main financial resource for the site management. It is entrusted to and managed by the Corporation of St. George.

Other Legislation pertaining to heritage management, but not specific to the World Heritage property:

- **Bermuda National Trust Act** of 1969
- **Aquarium and Museum Regulations** of 1997

The mission has also been informed that a guidance note exists for developing Environmental Impact Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements, which include reference to World Heritage in Bermuda.

#### Control of new development proposals and maintenance, restauration, alteration of existing built structures

The **Bermuda Plan 2018** is the main Development Plan for Bermuda (with the exception of the City of Hamilton). It is a policy and zoning document used in the assessment and determination of planning applications.

The majority of the buildings in Town St George are listed buildings. It is also the town where the oldest emblematic, historic buildings are located in Bermuda. With regard to new development proposals in the Town of St. George, the mission had been informed that demolishing existing buildings, construction of new buildings, changing windows and doors, roofs of listed buildings all require a permit. It was also stated that there are very few empty building plots in the town where new buildings would be possible to be built. The majority of applications are window changes. Building material in general is very expensive in Bermuda, as the majority needs to be imported, therefore house owners often wish to opt for the use of cheaper building materials (like plastic windows), which is currently not possible in listed buildings, as the owners are obliged to repair or install new windows in the original style and material (wood) that is much more expensive. Incentives are not provided for private owners in relation to maintaining or restoring listed buildings.

The Bermuda Plan 2018 includes measures related to protected areas that need to be respected during the planning process. The Plan recognises the 'Town of St. George Historic Protection Area', providing development regulations among others to the appearance of buildings, preserving historical characteristics and maximum building heights (not exceeding three storeys), and also the 'World Heritage Site and buffer zone', with the general consideration that the proposals should not adversely impact the property (for the buffer zone, the provisions aim to protect the view of the Historic Town and fortifications and maintain its characteristic, as well as their 'visual integrity').

The planning application process and the relevant authorities involved in this is included in Figure 1.

# Planning application process

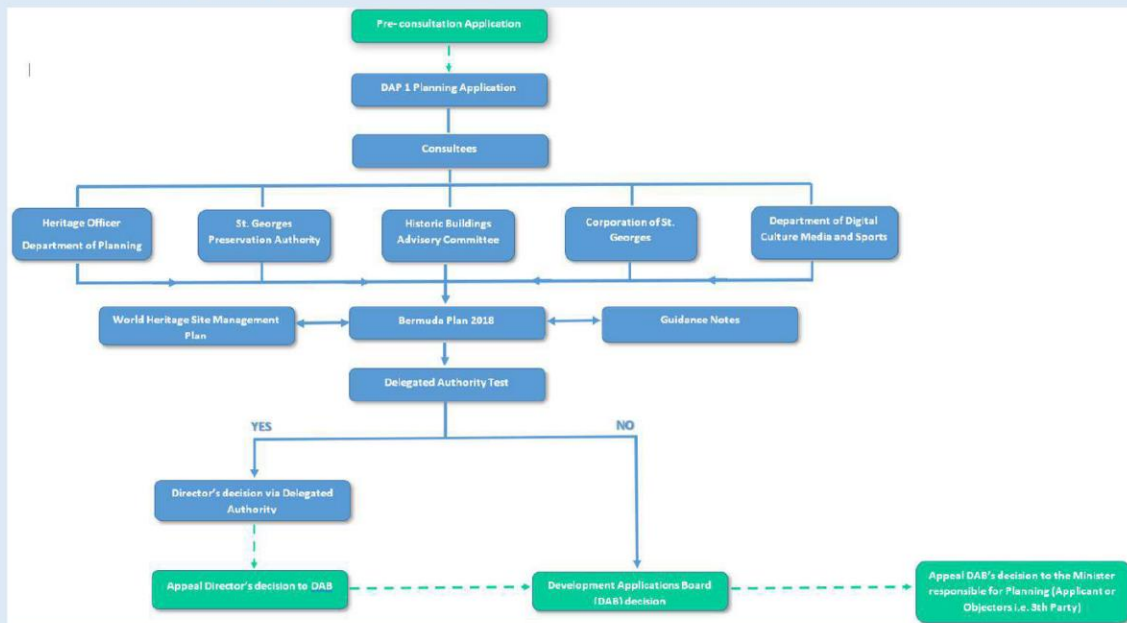


Figure 1. The process of planning applications (source: State Party presentation)

The mission considers that while the Government of Bermuda has a clear and well-defined legal framework for managing change and development that takes into account cultural assets of national significance, the protection of the World Heritage property is not embedded in this legal framework on an adequate level. The mission is of the view that the legal measures currently in force in Bermuda do not ensure the full protection of the property's OUV and the attributes that convey it, indeed, very few of them make direct references to this need. The Mission therefore recommends that the Government of Bermuda revise and enforce its relevant legislation to this end.

## Recommendations of the mission

1. The mission recommends a comprehensive review of the legal framework in order to ensure that the means of protecting the property are well grounded in the legal system of Bermuda and that decisions regarding changes and developments within the property, its buffer zone and wider setting are based on a full understanding of the property's OUV and the attributes that convey it, and fully respect their long-term preservation.
2. It will be important to ensure that all parts of the World Heritage property (both the Town of St George and the fortifications) are subject to the same legal regulations and are under the auspices of no more than two legal entities as the main bodies responsible for their protection and management (one for the Town of St George and, if necessary; another for all the fortifications).
3. The buffer zone of the site should also be subject to uniform regulation. This would provide clarity for the management bodies and the public as to the type of protection and management regime should be applied throughout the property and its buffer zone.
4. Impact assessment processes need to be integrated in the relevant planning levels, aligned with 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the*

*World Heritage Convention*<sup>1</sup>, and the impact assessments (Heritage Impact Assessments, Environmental Impact Assessments, and Strategic Environmental Assessments) should be developed in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* (2022).<sup>2</sup>

5. Development Orders and Special Acts (with Government commitments for development projects) should only be approved and issued for areas within the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting (i.e. within wider setting areas where changes may have an impact on the property's OUV) after an appropriate impact assessment has been carried out, with the outcome that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and its underlying attributes.

### **2.1.2. Management system and current draft Management Plan**

#### Management system:

The responsible governmental bodies for the protection and management of the property are:

- Ministry of Public Works (strategic responsibility— also through the Department of Public Land and Buildings, Department of Parks, and Department of Works and Engineering)
- Ministry of Cabinet Office through its Department of Planning (main responsible for planning decisions within the property and buffer zone)
- Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sports through its department of Culture (Intangible Cultural Heritage)
- Historic Building Advisory Committee (providing Advice to the Department of Planning)
- St George Preservation Authority (SGPA)
- Corporation of St. George, which is the municipal body for the Town of St George, taking care of public works and other necessary measures for the town;

Non-Governmental Organisations with tasks related to the protection and management of the property:

- Bermuda National Trust
- National Museum of Bermuda
- St George Foundation (which is more or less the manager of the fortifications of the property) has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Parks, which falls under the Ministry of Public Works of the Government of Bermuda.
- World Heritage Site Management Committee (WHSMC), founded in 2000, was a crucial focal point for the management of the site, bringing together all stakeholders. (See Figure 2 for the structure of the governance and management system)

The governance system concerning the World Heritage property is illustrated by Figure 2.

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<sup>1</sup> The most up to date version of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention is available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>

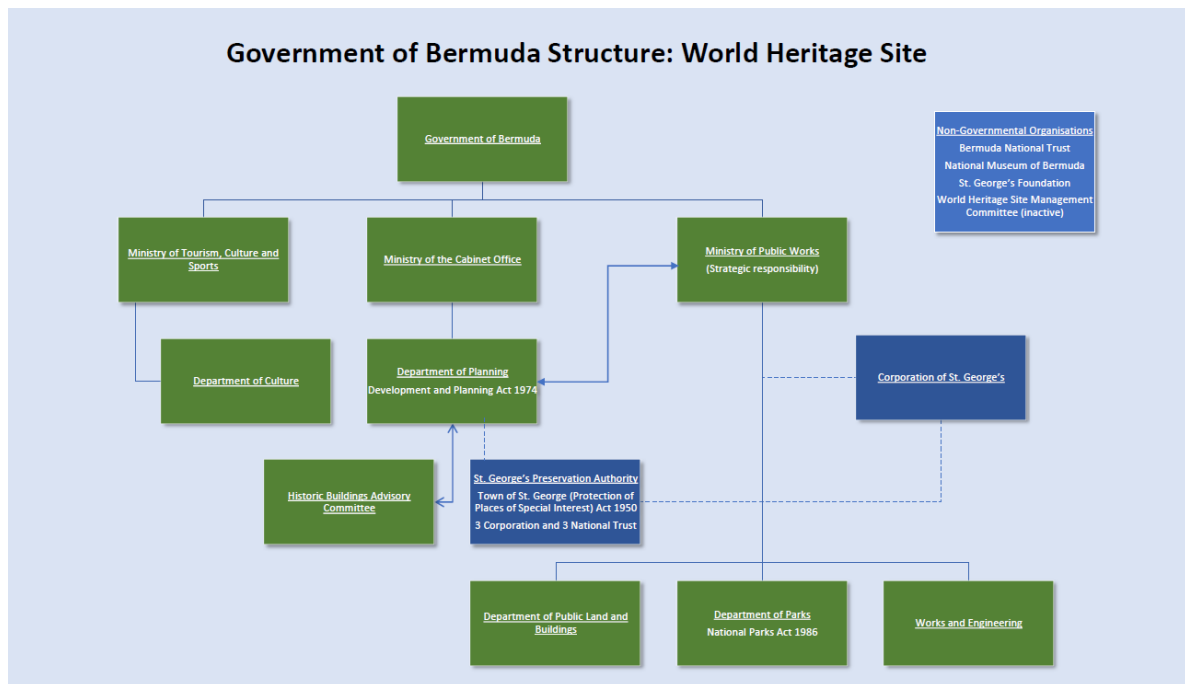


Figure 2. Governance system of the World Heritage property (source: State Party presentation)

With regard to funding the World Heritage related activities, the mission was informed that the main source is the so called 'UNESCO World Heritage Fund', established under the Corporation of St. George's (UNESCO World Heritage Fund Levy) Act 2013. The purpose of the fund is to maintain, develop and promote the property. Its source is the levy (0.25 BMD cents/l) applied to products (petroleum oils and gases) imported via the Oil Docks in St. George (the available amount seems to be changing from year to year). The Corporation of St. George is responsible for the financial management of the fund, and the recipients are:

- Corporation of St. George
- Bermuda National Trust
- St. George's Historical Society
- St. George's Foundation
- Friends of St. Peter's Church
- Salvation Army
- St. George's Crown Newspaper

Concerning the current management measures, the mission noted that in addition to the Corporation of St. George's, which ensures public works and services within the Town of St. George and the distribution and overseeing of the funding provided through the Bermudan 'UNESCO World Heritage Fund', the daily management of the property is carried out by NGOs (mostly the Bermuda National Trust, St. George's Foundation, St. George's Historical Society, and Friends of St. Peter's Church) and volunteers of the local community. This includes the maintenance of major historic buildings in the Town of St. George and ensuring their accessibility for visitors with good quality exhibitions, as well as the maintenance and in some cases, restoration works of forts that are components of the property. Fort St. Catherine (as the only fort opened to the visitors all year around, hosting also a museum with a permanent exhibition about the fortifications of the property and of Bermuda) is operated by the Department of Parks. Awareness raising and public relations for the property is ensured by the local community and the work of volunteers.

The mission noted that the biggest deficiency for the property is the lack of a management body, which would ensure the implementation of a strategic World Heritage

focused management system, coordinate the overall management of the property towards both the governmental bodies, the NGOs and the local community and oversee the implementation of a World Heritage Management Plan. The mission also noted that the Government of Bermuda does not provide financial means to ensure the continued maintenance and preservation of historic structures in the Town of St George and for the fortifications that are components of the property. In the view of the mission, the Levy Fund alone, could not be considered adequate funding as its amount seem to be changing from year to year, and therefore, could not be considered as the basis of predictable, strategic operations. In addition, it does not provide adequate funding for all the necessary works. It is also worrying that there is no responsible government authority who would have the obligations and means to carry out works to maintain and preserve the fortifications that are components of the World Heritage property, and also to safeguard them from degradation and vandalism. In this respect, the mission noted that the Department of Parks does not have the means and the obligations to carry out these tasks.

Concerning the WHSMC, the mission was informed that it had not met for the last two years, and the State Party representatives consider that this inactivity has been to the detriment of the property and has resulted in a disjointed management structure. The Ministry of Public Works and the Department of Planning have been exploring options to provide legislative authority to a single, coordinating entity who would be responsible for the implementation of the updated World Heritage Management Plan. A potential candidate would be a refashioned SGPA incorporating the following changes:

- Amend the Town of St. Georges (Protection of Buildings of Special Interest) Act to include the whole of the property and its buffer zone within its area of responsibility;
- Include specific responsibilities for SGPA regarding the protection and management of a World Heritage property, detailed within the UNESCO Operational Guidelines;
- Amend the Act to ensure that the SGPA appointees have the necessary expertise for protection of the property and include seats for ex-officio Government Officials;
- Amend the World Heritage Fund Levy Act to be accessible to a 'new' governing body.

The mission considers that the plans to upgrade the SGPA to become a fully operational management body for the property could work as a feasible solution, nevertheless, strongly recommends ensuring that all options are checked in this respect, and that the future management body is well placed within the governance structure for operating the management system of the property and that it is provided both with adequate staff as well as stable, yearly funding from the Government in addition to the Levy Fund to be able to fully carry out the necessary management tasks. The mission, nevertheless, noted the recent appointment of a Trainee Heritage Officer within the Department of Planning of the Ministry of Cabinet Office as a very positive improvement to reinforce the management system of the property. This position could be considered as a national focal point for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention within the Government of Bermuda, which the mission advises to safeguard in the long term along the creation of a dedicated management body for the property and upgrade the position into a full 'Heritage Officer' post.

The mission was also informed that an important element of revising the management of the property would be to better incorporate community engagement, under which the following plans were listed:

- A single, coordinating entity with legislative powers could be responsible for marketing and promotional activities within the local community to raise awareness and generate buy in;

- Revisit the narrative of the site with the local population and promote an understanding of what the site can do for the local area;
- Explore opportunities to enhance awareness of the site and its importance through the community
  - cohesion of WHS signage between all museums
  - free entrance to forts for locals or students
  - walking trails between mainland forts.

The mission considers that these are important objectives, especially the elements to ensure the support of the local community and to raise awareness about the values of the site. Nevertheless, it needs to be emphasised that marketing and promotional activities should not have priority over the objective for protecting and preserving the property's OUV and its attributes.

With regard to the above, the mission considers that the property's current largest deficiency is its lack of systematic management ensured by the competent government organisations of Bermuda.

### ***Recommendations of the mission***

6. As a matter of the utmost urgency, establish a single, coordinating body with legislative recognition for the overall management of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone and, if possible, at least advisory powers in relation to its wider setting, and with a stable annual funding from the Government of Bermuda for its operation. Ensure that the management body of the property has an adequate number of dedicated staff trained in World Heritage matters to plan and carry out management tasks;
7. Ensure that the management body of the World Heritage property gives priority to its protection and preservation for future generations and has the means to influence in this respect the decision making on changes and developments that may have an impact on the property's OUV;
8. The Government of Bermuda should provide an adequate budget (in addition to the Levy Fund) for the maintenance of historic buildings that serve public functions within the Town of St George and for the maintenance, preservation and long-term restoration of the fortifications that form the components of the property;
9. Ensure that NGOs and volunteers continue to operate under the coordination of the management body of the World Heritage property, and that the financial resources of the Bermudan 'UNESCO World Heritage Fund' (that is based on the imposes levy on gas and petroleum products landed at the Oil Docks in St. George's Parish) for the NGOs are maintained in the long term, also in the light of the renewable energy transition. Nevertheless, the Government of Bermuda needs to ensure that NGOs and volunteers provide an additional support for the management of the property but do not replace the currently lacking responsible government agency that needs to be the main actor in this regard.
10. Consider renaming the main funding instrument provided by the Government of Bermuda, currently called the 'UNESCO World Heritage Fund', to avoid confusion with the 'Fund for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of Outstanding Universal Value', also known as the 'World Heritage Fund', which was established in 1977 under Article 15 of the World Heritage Convention and is available for eligible applications from all World Heritage properties under the World Heritage Convention.
11. Ensure the functioning of the management body of the World Heritage property through a participatory approach with the involved NGOs, the local community of the

Town of St George and the residents of the areas where the forts of the property are located;

#### Current draft Management Plan

A Management Plan had been prepared at the time of inscription of the property on the World Heritage List (2000). The plan has been updated in 2014, and the Department of Planning within the Ministry of the Cabinet Office is in the process of preparing a new updated management Plan since 2018.

A draft of the updated plan has been prepared, however the process to circulate the draft for consultation had been continuously postponed due to issues within the governance of the property and the advice from DCMS for organising the Advisory mission in order to allow taking the mission's view into consideration before finalising the updated plan.

The mission team received the draft Management Plan prior to the on-site mission and noted that the document that likely dates back to 2019 and is currently 26 pages long, is a work in progress. The draft is divided into the five following main chapters:

1. Context to the Plan
2. Description and Significance
3. Current State of the World Heritage Site
4. Protection and Management
5. Management Objectives and Action Plan.

The mission noted that according to information provided, this is the first document that identifies the attributes that convey the OUV of the property. As the attributes play a crucial role in the tasks of protection and management, as well as assessing impacts of planned/proposed changes, the mission wishes to reaffirm the State Party their importance and first of all advises the State Party's all relevant stakeholders to acknowledge this important role.

The attributes identified by the State Party in the draft Management Plan currently under updating:

- **Intact and Continuously Occupied Town**
  - retains its early street plan
  - high density of early structures and large range of vernacular architecture
  - low level of intrusive development within historic town boundary
- **Fortifications and Military Sites**
  - one of the most complete collections of British coastal fortifications
  - early 17<sup>th</sup> century to the end of coastal defense 1950's.
- **Maritime Heritage**
  - key to the existence and role of Bermuda on the global stage
  - sites and buildings within boundary reflect life as a vital port town
- **Associated Intangible Values**
  - sense of community and tradition
  - multi-racial and multicultural melting pot
  - protected views

With regard to the importance of the attributes, the mission wishes to highlight its most up-to-date definition, included in the Glossary of the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*<sup>3</sup>:

*"Attributes are the elements of a heritage place which convey its heritage/conservation values and enable an understanding of those values. They can be physical qualities, material fabric and other tangible features, but can also be intangible aspects such as*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>

*processes, social arrangements or cultural practices, as well as associations and relationships which are reflected in physical elements of the property.*

*For cultural heritage places, they can be buildings or other built structures and their forms, materials, design, uses and functions but also urban layouts, agricultural processes, religious ceremonies, building techniques, visual relationships and spiritual connections. For natural properties, they can be specific landscape features, areas of habitat, flagship species, aspects relating to environmental quality (such as intactness, high/pristine environmental quality), scale and naturalness of habitats, and size and viability of wildlife populations.*

*Attributes, and the interactions between them, should be the focus of protection, conservation and management actions.*

*The term ‘attributes’ is particularly used for World Heritage properties and a clear understanding of the attributes that convey their Outstanding Universal value is critical for their long-term protection. The spatial distribution of those attributes and respective protection requirements should inform the boundary of the property and other management actions.”*

The State Party in this respect is advised to continue working on identifying and mapping the tangible and intangible attributes that convey the OUV of the Bermuda World Heritage property and put this in the focus of all protection and management actions.

Comments for the Management Plan (MP):

- The MP needs to describe the management and governance system of the property (organigrams, procedures and processes), the roles and tasks of the management body;
- The main objective of the MP should be the protection and preservation of the property for future generations;
- The wording and content of the MP is advised to be aligned with that of the World Heritage Convention and the *Operational Guidelines* (concerning basic World Heritage vocabulary);
- The MP needs to provide a full description of the property with all the components (and its buffer zone), making clear their current state of conservation and the responsible body(ies) for their management (include the most updated official map);
- Make sure that the full Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)<sup>4</sup> is used in the document with criterion, integrity, authenticity, protection and management requirements and not just the brief synthesis;
- As the result of the attribute mapping that needs to be included in the MP, it should also include the considerations related to any suggestion for revising its SOUV or its boundaries (including that of the buffer zone);
- The current state of conservation of the property is an important element of the MP; the baseline used should be the property’s state of conservation during its inscription on the World Heritage List. This section of the MP needs to include the factors affecting the property<sup>5</sup>;
- Development plans/projects, if included in the MP, needs to be referenced with regard to the factors affecting the property; in addition, the MP needs to integrate in its entirety the sustainable development approach<sup>6</sup>;
- Regular monitoring tools and indicators need to be developed with regard to
  - Monitoring the state of conservation of the property

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<sup>4</sup> Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/983>

<sup>5</sup> The standard list of factors is available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/>

<sup>6</sup> See World Heritage and Sustainable Development at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabledevelopment/>

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the MP (See *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0* in this respect as a self-assessment tool<sup>7</sup>);
- The MP needs to recognise and formulate how the local community benefits in the long-term by protecting its heritage through the protection of the OUV of the property.

The mission considers that the Management Plan is a crucial document for all stakeholders, and that the draft in its current stage, aiming to update it, needs extensive reworking and a large degree of supplementation. While the mission sees it as a huge challenge that currently there is no responsible stakeholder for the updating of the document, the State Party is advised to continue working on updating it as a priority and in parallel with establishing a solid management system for the property. Its updated version should become a living document available for all stakeholders and rightsholders (could be also presented as a special website), which efficacy is regularly monitored and updated.

### ***Recommendations of the mission***

12. Identify, as a matter of urgency, a single management body responsible for coordinating the World Heritage property management system and updating the Management Plan. For the latter, the *Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0* and the forthcoming World Heritage Management Manual should be used;
13. Continue to work on identifying and mapping the tangible and intangible attributes that convey the OUV of the Bermuda World Heritage property and make these the focus of all protection and management actions;
14. The Management Plan should become a living document, accessible to all stakeholders and rightsholders of the property;
15. The management of the property should follow a well-defined cycle of planning – implementation – monitoring – review. The timeframe of the cycle should be defined by the site managers, based on the characteristics of the property (usually 5 year cycles are established);
16. The World Heritage Management Plan should be recognised by embedding it in the relevant legal framework so that it can guide and influence decision making in order to protect and preserve the property's OUV;
17. It is recommended that a sensitivity assessment of the property's OUV and attributes that convey the OUV in the face of planned/foreseen changes/developments is carried out. The result can be used to develop guiding principles for development strategies that are compatible with the World Heritage status;
18. It is recommended that the management plan be integrated with other management tools, in particular an Emergency and Risk Preparedness Plan (particularly with regard to hurricane events, but also to other foreseeable adverse effects of climate change)<sup>8</sup>, as well as a Sustainable Tourism Management Plan;
19. Ensure that in line with the retrospective inventory launched by the World Heritage Centre 2023an up-to-date map of the property and its buffer zone clearly showing their delimitation as inscribed by the Committee is available to all stakeholders, including UNESCO and Advisory Bodies;

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<sup>7</sup> Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eoh20/>

<sup>8</sup> See in this respect the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage (2023), available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/climatechange/>

## **2.2 St. Regis Resort and Residences development project**

### **2.2.1 Current status of the project**

#### Background of the project

Tourism constitutes one of the main activities supporting the economy of Bermuda. Although Bermuda is considered an expensive tourist destination, after the restrictions derived from the COVID-19 pandemic the sector experienced a return to the previous situation, showing even an increase in the number of visitors. The Bermuda Tourism Authority reports that in 2023 185,335 visitors arrived by air, most of them coming from the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom, and 525,413 arrived on cruise ships, whose port is situated next to the Royal Naval Dockyard. Even though Bermuda welcomes visitors the whole year, the high tourism season extends between May and August.

The tourism development in the northeastern area of St George's Island had an impulse in the 1960s, with the construction of a large hotel in the area of St Catherine Beach, which extends along Gates Bay and next to St Catherine's Point, the northernmost tip of the island and of the whole archipelago. The beach bears historical significance since it is considered the place where the first British settlers arrived in the archipelago after the shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* in 1609. A memorial monument located next to Barry Road recalls this significant historical event. Subsequently, three important fortifications protected this part of the island and the Town of St George: St Catherine Fort, erected in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and later rebuilt and extended, Fort Albert and Fort Victoria, both from the early 19th century and located on a hill next to seacoast.

The hotel was located on the top of Retreat Hill and opened in 1973. The project incorporated Fort Victoria, whose keep was demolished to accommodate a swimming pool and a nightclub. The hotel was purchased by the Club Med Group in 1985 and renovated into a 630-room hotel. After the damage caused by Hurricane Emily in 1987, the hotel was closed and abandoned until its demolition in 2008.



*Photo 1. Former Club Med Hotel, Fort St Catherine and St Catherine Beach. (source: document provided by the State Party)*

The project of constructing a new hotel next to St Catherine Beach was based on the intentions in general, of boosting tourism in the island and promoting the creation of jobs and, more specifically, enhancing the economy of the Town of St George and its neighbouring area. Already in 2008, the Government issued the Park Hyatt (St George's) Resort Act, which granted in-principle planning permission for a hotel, fractional units, condos, golf course and staff housing and draft subdivision approval. Subsequently, the government made a request for proposals and the St George's Resort Act 2015 was issued to regulate the leasing of land to develop the project for a luxury hotel and condominiums to be located in the south of St Catherine's Point, in the buffer zone of the World Heritage property, and to be developed in five phases. The proposed development area includes three parcels of land, the largest of which covers the former St. George's golf course, the undeveloped coastline, two fortifications (Fort Albert and Fort Victoria), and a small undeveloped islet known as Catherine Rocks, which lies immediately offshore. Section 7 of the Act established that the project should be compatible with the UNESCO World Heritage status of the serial property. The Act granted the 'in principle' planning permission and subdivision approval, which established the roads and rights of way and the location and general land use pattern for the resort. The project was presented to the public in June 2016.

In November 2016, the project was communicated to the World Heritage Centre with a link to access the Heritage Impact Assessment and its Annexes. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is dated November 2016 and based on the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011). The study focused on the heritage assets located in the area, namely forts Albert, Victoria and St Catherine, and the *Sea Venture* landing site, and also included Fort William and surrounding derelict forts and the historic Town of St George. The study concluded that the development would "not adversely affect but benefit the monuments immediately adjacent to the Development. From an economic point of view, the document assumes that the development should do much to help improve the economy of the Town of St George and thus attract more investment in the dozens of historic homes and other structures that comprise one of the most intact and important eighteenth and nineteenth century urban areas of the British Empire and diasporas subsequent to the settlement of Bermuda in 1612", and proposed some mitigation measures for the key issues identified. The archaeological assessment annexed to the HIA concluded that the construction of the hotel in the proposed area would not significantly impact *in context* archaeological resources.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) conducted in 2016 acknowledged that the hotel would introduce a substantial new development with environmental effects. The assessment found that the impacts are "generally with acceptable bounds and/or they can be effectively mitigated by relatively straightforward environmental management procedures during construction or operation of the proposed development". Community inputs to the study focused on the issues of public access to the beach and the proximity of the hotel to Fort St Catherine. The EIS acknowledged that "the site is of considerable sensitivity because of its relationship to the World Heritage Site" but mentioned that the Heritage Impact Assessment had determined that the proposals are compatible with the World Heritage property and that at least one of the forts was expected to be restored.

Full planning permission was granted by the Development Applications Board in December 2016. In 2018, The St. George's Resort Act 2015 was superseded by The St. George's Resort Act 2018 which included the 'Definitive Boundary Plans of the Property'. This resulted in a more prescriptive 'in-principle' planning permission.

The State Party submitted the documentation of the St Regis Resort Development in February 2017, and an ICOMOS Technical Review has been prepared on its evaluation and transmitted to the State Party in January 2018. This ICOMOS Technical Review concluded that the HIA had not properly considered the importance of the individual forts

and the impact of the project on their setting and on the wider setting of the Town of St George and thus had a high negative impact not only on those attributes but also on the OUV of the property and suggested that the State Party reconsider the whole project. The State Party responded that, given the time elapsed between the submission of the documents and the technical review, the recommendations by ICOMOS could not be fully implemented, that phase 1 of the project had been approved with conditions, and that further Heritage Impact Assessments would be required ahead of detailed planning consent for future phases of work.

Following correspondence with the State Party, a teleconference took place in October 2018 with representatives of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS International, and the State Party to discuss the developments of the resort. In 2019 the World Heritage Centre received information from the State Party confirming that the first phase of the project had been approved and that the construction of the St Regis Hotel was underway. A second ICOMOS Technical Review, dated February 2020, confirmed that the St Regis project compromises the setting of St Catherine's Fort on its promontory, and its relationship to other neighbouring forts. ICOMOS stated that the approval of the first phase of the St Regis development raises doubts as to the effectiveness of the current legal protection and planning controls in relation to conservation areas that are meant to provide protection to the setting of the component parts of the property.

The World Heritage Centre became aware of the opening of the resort through a media article, and in line with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*, a letter was sent to the State Party in July 2022 transmitting the information for verification. In a document dated 31 May 2023, the Government of Bermuda confirmed that the St Regis Resort was open since May 2021 and that the second of the two adjacent residential buildings was nearing completion.

#### Current status of the project

The construction works started in May 2017 and the hotel opened in May 2021. The development project foresees five phases, three of which have already been completed: construction of the hotel and spa, redevelopment of the golf course in the nearby area and construction of two condominium buildings adjacent to the hotel. Next phases include the construction of five condominium buildings, to be located on the hill overlooking the hotel, and construction of estate lots. The original project included the renovation of Fort Albert to house a spa, which has been postponed. The Government of Bermuda provided a 262-year lease for the developer over the area of the project, including the two forts (Fort Albert and Fort Victoria), nevertheless, the developer has no legal obligation to maintain or restore them.



*Figure 3. The St Regis Hotel development area in 2012 and in 2023 (source: State Party presentation)*

Unlike the previous hotel, the St Regis is located not on the hill but by St Catherine's Beach, on the grounds, according to the developer, that the location needs to ensure the economic viability of the development investment. The main hotel building is situated 60 meters from Fort St Catherine and consists of a five-stories block housing 120 rooms and related services for guests, which include restaurants, bar, spa, and fitness centre. The space between the building and the direct beach access to the sea has been transformed to a garden containing two swimming pools for guests. The public access to the beach is maintained by a narrow informal footpath located between the hotel and St Catherine fort, nevertheless, there are no public facilities for visitors on the beach. The mission has been informed by the representatives of the developer that the fact that the location of the St Regis resort was adjacent to an area and includes components that are World Heritage, was an important positive factor in the decision making of the investors to proceed with this project. The National Museum of Bermuda carried out archaeological surveys on the beach area before the construction started but did not find significant finds or features.



*Photo 2. On the left, the St Regis Hotel and condominiums seen from Fort St Catherine (Photo: A. Conti)  
On the right St Catherine Beach and Fort St Catherine from the St Regis Hotel (Photo: UNESCO)*

The building design includes some aspects that could be related to Bermudian traditional architecture, such as gabled roofs and the verandas. The main block has been divided into three parts, by means of the blocks of lifts and staircases, with the purpose of recreating the proportions of traditional buildings on the island.

Next to the hotel two six-stories buildings containing two- and three-bedrooms flats have been constructed. The southernmost of the two residential buildings is located 25 meters from Fort Albert. In addition, at the time of the mission, works of refurbishment of a building behind the hotel, looking over a smaller rocky bay (Achilles Bay and Beach) were carried out, with the purpose of housing a restaurant. The golf course has been restored by the developer and buggies are provided by the hotel; a parking area for cars and golf buggies is located in front of the hotel's main entrance. Even though the forts within the lease of the project, namely Albert and Victoria forts, have not been used to house functions for guests. The original plan to locate a spa in Albert Fort (strongly opposed by ICOMOS in its 2018 Technical Review) has been abandoned, due primarily to the problematic structural conditions of the fort, even though the developer could reconsider the proposal in the future.



Photo 3. The St Regis Hotel and condominiums and Fort St Catherine from the sea (Photo: UNESCO)

According to the developer, the average tax of occupation of the hotel is 60%, reaching 90% during the high season (May-August). Bermudian stakeholders express diverse reactions in relation with the development project; on the one hand, the impact on the site is acknowledged but, on the other hand, they also acknowledge that the project implies the creation of jobs and the increase of the number of visitors in St George, which implies, at the same time, more people using commercial and gastronomic infrastructure available in the town. The developer has acknowledged that the condition of World Heritage of the fortifications next to the hotel constituted an additional attraction for the project and stated that the project planning considered the property's OUV.

In relation to the decision making for a new resort hotel project near Town St George, the mission noted several issues:

- The ICOMOS evaluation of the property at the time of nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List (dating September 2000)<sup>9</sup> included that *“the integrity of Fort Victoria has been compromised by its conversion to a hotel recreation facility so that it no longer retains the authenticity necessary for inclusion on the World Heritage List”*;

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<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/983/documents/>

- The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2014 by Decision **38 COM 8E**; available as **Annex 1**) repeated the statement that the authenticity of the property is damaged by the hotel recreation facility (the swimming pool) at Fort Victoria, which was considered as a cautionary example highlighting that further forts should not be adapted for reuse in similar ways (ICOMOS rightly drew a parallel between this old project and the proposed spa instalment in Fort Albert);
- Based on information provided by the government representatives to the mission, the competent authorities of the Government of Bermuda, responsible for the development planning procedure and for the protection of the property, while were involved in minor consultation before issuing the 2015 St George Resort Act, did not have the opportunity to exert significant influence on the decision-making.

With regard to the above information, the mission considers that following the demolition of the old hotel facilities nearby Fort Victoria (in 2008), the Government of Bermuda did not exercise due diligence in the preparation for a new hotel resort infrastructure project in the immediate vicinity of the components of the property, within their buffer zone, and had not assessed carefully enough in advance all the potential impacts of new projects on the OUV of the property before issuing a Special Act for a new resort hotel. In this respect, the notification sent to the World Heritage Centre in February 2017, was already too late and had not left time and possibility for dialogue in order to identify development alternatives, and to recommend mitigation measures against degradation or other negative impacts on the OUV of the property, in line with Paragraph 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines*.

While the mission noted the efforts for mitigation measures by the competent Bermudian planning authorities and the developer as well for the final project design of the already implemented project elements that considers maintaining the view corridors between the forts around the St Regis Hotel and Resort, it also agrees with the findings of the ICOMOS technical reviews of 2018 and 2020: the hotel and the two residential buildings produce an adverse impact on the OUV and attributes of the World Heritage property and, especially, on Fort St Catherine, Fort Victoria, and Fort Albert. Although both the 2015 and 2018 St. George's Resort Act includes a section on protection of the World Heritage site, this section focuses mainly on the protection of the tangible components of the forts, and only a brief note to their environment is mentioned. Nevertheless, this mention has been apparently not considered or misunderstood for the approval of the project and for the Heritage Impact Assessment conducted in 2016, which also focus on the physical attributes of the forts themselves, that are significant attributes of the World Heritage property's OUV, with no appropriate consideration for the adequate preservation of their setting from a World Heritage perspective (the relationship of the forts with each other and their environment, which is important for expressing the property's OUV).

In addition to the negative impacts, the mission also noted positive elements of the St Regis project, which are the following:

- Upkeeping and restoring of the golf course in the buffer zone of the property (Five Forts Golf Club) that ensures that a large part of the area surrounding the forts of St Catherine, Victoria, William (Western Redoubt), George, and to a certain level Albert as well, are well kept but not constructed in. This also provides an ideal backdrop for the Town of St George as well, especially as the areas around the town and the forts were kept clear of dense vegetation in historic times, in order to upkeep its defensive military purpose;
- The possibility to mobilise voluntary contributions and perhaps resources for the maintenance and restorations of the forts in the area (the cleaning up and

maintenance work done at Fort Albert by the St George Foundation is a good example of this);

- Restoration of the St George's Club, also a resort with a smaller hotel and rental apartments in the western side of the Town of St George, which, in the understanding of the mission belongs to the same owner and developer as the St Regis Resort. The St George's Club was originally built also in the 1970s-80s in a much smaller scale than the hotel next to Fort Victoria, using an architectural language resembling in style and scale the historic buildings of the town. It became derelict and run down in the course of time, but now it is restored (the works are partly still ongoing) and modernised in a sensitive way, providing quality accommodation and services for visitors in the area.



*Photo 4. St George's Club (Photos: left - A. Conti, right - UNESCO)*

### **2.2.2 Upcoming phases of the project**

The St Regis project in its upcoming phases (based on economic viability) foresees the construction of five further residential buildings, to be located on the hill behind the hotel main building, in the vicinity of Fort Victoria. As for Albert Fort, the developer foreshadowed that in the future an appropriate use could be proposed, which would require the approval of relevant authorities.

The St. George's Resort Act 2018 sets out the possibility of further residential condominiums to be constructed in the specified lots, in the framework of the 'Definitive Boundary Plans of the Property', which denotes specific lots designated for resort residences, detached residences, spa and golf course development. Even though the in-principle permission derived from the 2018 Act is more prescriptive, future development still requires a full application.

According to the site plan of 2016, three of the future condominiums will be located on the top of the hill next to Fort Victoria, partly on the land previously occupied by the hotel demolished in 2008, enjoying views to the sea, to the golf course. The other two will be located on a nearby area, at an approximately same distance from Fort Victoria and Fort Albert, with views towards the Town of St George. The roofs plan allows verifying that the project foresees the same plan for the new buildings as the already built two ones. The mission was informed that the project foresees the height of the future buildings similar to that of the already built, which means six-stories structures. In any case, the height of these will need to respect the restrictions linked with the air corridor in the

area, which allows a maximum elevation of 165' AMSL (above mean sea level) for the height of all potential developments.



Figure 4. St Regis site plan (source: document provided by the State Party)

While the already implemented elements of the St Regis project are a fait accompli, and as the mission explained in 2.3.1, already has a considerable negative impact on the OUV of the property, and especially on the components Fort Catherine and Fort Albert, the addition of further large constructions in the buffer zone and wider setting of the property in the frame of this project would enhance this negative impact adding up to it in a cumulative manner. Although the five residential buildings foreseen in the original project are intended to be located on the sides and on the top of the hill, in the location of the previous hotel demolished in 2008, and would have a similar height as this previous structure, the mission considers that the addition of these buildings would increase the adverse impact on the setting of the forts located in the area, especially by breaking again the visual and special connection between Fort Catherine and Fort Albert with Fort Victoria, which has been reestablished after the demolition of the former hotel building. The new hotel building, and the nearby two residential blocks are located now on the beach area, leaving a much-needed open space towards the hill where Fort Victoria is located, mitigating in a certain level the negative impact of these new structures towards Fort St Catherine and Fort Albert.

### 2.2.3 Potential ways forward for the project

While in principle, in order to protect the buffer zone and the setting of the World Heritage property, and especially the fortifications and the views from the fort components in the area and the Town of St George, the ideal situation would be for the St Regis project to halt at this stage and do not proceed with constructing the further foreseen residential buildings, the mission's understanding is that in the framework of the 2018 Resort Act the following phases of the project already have an in-principle approval. Therefore, halting the project would likely have grave legal consequences for the Government of Bermuda. Nevertheless, the mission in principle advises that the Government of Bermuda does all in its power to avoid the further negative impacts that the continuation of this project might have on the OUV of the property, and especially on the values and

attributes of the Town of St George and the fortifications in the area. Preserving the OUV of the property in the long term, is also in the interest of the investors of the St Regis resort.

It is advisable, therefore, that the project be reconsidered before the final permission for the construction of any further buildings through an appropriate impact assessment process, regarding it as an iterative process, which serves to inform any further decisions. The impact assessment process should be conducted fully in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context*, issued by UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies in 2022<sup>10</sup> (The mission was informed that an Environmental Impact Statement and a Heritage Impact Assessment for the construction of the five residential buildings are under preparation.). The impact assessment procedure should focus not only on the fortifications but also on their setting, considering the prescriptions of the Bermuda Plan 2018 in relation to the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, contained in Policy HSC.11. The World Heritage Centre needs to be informed in the major stages of the impact assessment process for review by the Advisory Bodies, and the State Party is to use the process also to conduct dialogue in the project options with the Centre and ICOMOS. In any case, the State Party will need to ensure that the implemented project does not result in a large negative impact on the OUV of the property and its attributes.

Without prejudging the findings and mitigation measures provided by the impact assessment process, the mission considers that the careful siting of the planned further residential buildings, the reduction of their height and a more spread plan could allow the developer to obtain a similar surface with a less negative visual impact. The mission also advises that if there is no absolute need for leverage in the project from an economic point of view, not all five buildings are to be constructed.

The mission also wishes to highlight that as the St Regis Resort project includes components of the World Heritage property, and historic areas that are important to understand its OUV and attributes, the leaseholder of the developer should ensure the accessibility of the historic structures and locations (including Fort Victoria and Fort Albert if the necessary safety measures could be guaranteed, and also the historic beach of St Catherine). Concerning St Catherine Beach, the leaseholder should be encouraged to maintain and provide in the long term both access, suitable parking for vehicles (especially for more ecological transportations, like bicycles), and sanitary services for the public in general, but specifically for the local community.

#### **2.2.4 Tourism related developments and tourism management**

Throughout its site visit, the mission had been informed both by the representatives of the Bermudan government, as well as the local actors and community members of the Town of St George that tourism constitutes one of the main activities that support the economy of Bermuda. As mentioned already above, the mission was also informed that a major point in the decision-making process for the St Regis Resort project was the need to boost and invigorate the tourism industry in the Town of the St George area, and that the Government of Bermuda continues to work on updating the tourism strategy of the islands.

The mission was carried out in March, which is not the high tourism season, and no significant impact, in terms of number of visitors or uses of natural or cultural spaces, have been observed. The mission has rather been informed that both the Government of Bermuda and the local community of the Town of St George are worried about the progressive decline in visitor numbers at this part of the island, since the years 2000s

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<sup>10</sup> Available at: [World Heritage Centre - Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context \(unesco.org\)](https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance)

and the potential to upkeep local small businesses. This is also due to increase of the size of the cruise ships, which are not able anymore to enter the St George harbour due to their size, and therefore, dock at the main cruise ship station, near the Royal Navy Dockyard. A smaller number of visitors are then brought to the Town of St George by smaller ferry boats. (With regard to this issue, the mission appreciated the information that there was consideration to widen the entrance to the port of St George at Town Cut, but that this idea had been abandoned. In the mission's view the right decision was made in this respect, aligned with the aim to conserve the property's OUV on the long term.)

The mission considers that the property's values (its OUV and attributes) are a unique and significant resource for Bermuda in the long term. Therefore, in order to prevent potential negative impacts in the future from unsustainable and potentially harmful tourism, there are certain measures that need to be considered by the State Party and the national and local authorities:

- A sustainable development<sup>11</sup> and a sustainable tourism<sup>12</sup> approach should be at the focus of all policies, plans and actions for the whole of Bermuda, and with specific attention to the area of the World Heritage property, its buffer zone and wider setting;
- A sustainable management plan should be developed for the property as an integrated part of its management, which should include a sensitivity assessment with regard to the property's OUV and attributes, in order to have a clear idea about its carrying capacity for any future plans and projects;
- Any future larger scale projects and plans to increase significantly the visitor numbers, should be aligned with the new updated management plan of the property (that includes also a sustainable tourism management plan);
- The relevant governmental agencies will need to take into account the necessity of planning the development of tourism in order to prevent and eventually mitigate potential impact, that could put at risk the integrity and authenticity of the property and the liveability of the area for local residents (as an example, the mission was informed that there are no restrictions in relation to the use of local housing for short term rentals, like Airbnb);
- The relevant organisations of Bermuda (including the National Museum of Bermuda and the National Trust) should be encouraged by the Government and provided with adequate financial support to enhance the offer of information and exhibitions in relation to the history of the area (considering also its multicultural nature of history) of the property and its values.

### **Recommendations of the mission**

20. Reconsider the project of the five residential buildings to be constructed in order to mitigate the adverse impact on the setting of the fortifications and the buffer zone of the World Heritage property.
21. Conduct the Heritage Impact Assessment for the further phases of the project (the five additional residential buildings and any other planned new elements) in accordance with the Resource Manual Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context (2022) and submit them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to any further construction.
22. In the case of proposed interventions and/or assignation of new uses for Fort Victoria and Fort Albert, conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the Resource Manual *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage*

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<sup>11</sup> UNESCO's World Heritage and Sustainable Development related advice and relevant documents are available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabledevelopment/>

<sup>12</sup> UNESCO's World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme is available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/>

*Context (2022)* and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to the approval of any projects.

23. Planned or proposed projects in the wider setting of the property will also need to be considered with regard to their potential impact on the property's OUV and on the attributes that convey the OUV, particularly as currently most of the forts that form part of the property do not currently have a buffer zone.
24. Approve only those developments within the World Heritage property, its buffer zone and wider setting that are fully consistent with sustainable development policies and are fully compatible with the preservation of the OUV of the property.
25. All new projects which may impact the OUV of the property should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Centre and ICOMOS in the early stages of planning, before final decisions are made that would be difficult to reverse, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.
26. Promote and support policies, plans and actions that adopt a sustainable tourism approach. Consider the development and implementation of policies and specific instruments to prevent and, eventually mitigate potential impacts of tourism on the integrity and authenticity of the property.

### **2.3 Assessment of the state of conservation of the property**

The 'Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda' is a serial World Heritage property, consisting of the Town of St George and twenty-three associated fortifications, which were inscribed as military structures aiming to defend the Town and port of St George.

The Town of St George is of Outstanding Universal Value as an authentic and the earliest example of the English colonial town in the New World. Its associated fortifications graphically illustrate the development of English military engineering from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, adapted to take into account the development of artillery over this period. Some of these are unique as surviving examples of the first defensive works built by early European colonists, few examples of which now remain intact. The later associated forts represent an excellent example of a continuum of British coastal fortifications. (See the full retrospective Statement of OUV in **Annex 1** and the location of each component on the map provided in **Annex 4**.)

#### **2.3.1 Town of St George**

The overall state of conservation of the Town of St George can be considered very good. Both open spaces and buildings are properly preserved and maintained through the action of the Corporation of St George's, non-profit organizations and private owners. The town has retained its original urban layout and the features of the urban fabric, consisting partly in the alignment of buildings along some streets, especially York Street, producing a continuous line of facades, and partly in the presence of detached or semi-detached buildings, resulting a more open urban fabric. The predominant height of the buildings is one to two stories.



*Photo 5. Water Street, the Town of St George (Photo: A. Conti)*

The roads and pavements of the historic town exhibit modern materials, asphalt, or pieces of stone in some roads and bricks in a few of them, and generally have a good state of conservation. The vehicular traffic was moderate at the time of the visit and, although this was not the tourism high season, it becomes apparent that it is not a factor that could put at risk the appropriate conservation of the town. No infrastructure elements are visible, the urban furniture is adequate, and the advertising signs do not produce a negative impact on the general features on the quality of the townscape.



*Photo 6. King Street, the Town of St George (Photo: A. Conti)*

The main public buildings in the town are the St. Peter's Church and the Town Hall, and both exhibit a very good state of conservation. The present condition of St. Peter's Church is the result of several stages of construction and extension that started with the first British settlement in Bermuda. The establishment of the charity The Friends of St. Peter's Church in 2007 implied the development of several projects oriented not only to the conservation of the building and related garden and graveyard but also to the

organization of visits by both Bermudians and foreigners, guaranteeing that the historic building is open to the public. Although the charity has carried out activities related to fundraising, it acknowledges that the lack of adequate funds is the main challenge to develop its objectives. The Town Hall, erected at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is managed by the Corporation of St. George's. Part of the building is open to the public, namely the Council Hall, and the state of conservation of both exterior and interior is very good.



*Photo 7. St Peter's Church and Town Hall, the Town of St George (Photos: A. Conti)*

The traditional residential buildings are characterised by their gabled roofs, the external masses of chimneys and the use of a wide range of colours. It is noticeable (and the regulations make it obligatory for all residential buildings) the use of the roofs to collect rainwater, which is stored for domestic uses. This takes to the permanent maintenance and cleaning of the roofs, something that could be observed during the mission. Some of former residential buildings are currently dedicated to museums; the mission visited two of them, the Globe Museum and Mitchell House Museum, which present a very good state of conservation and well organised exhibitions.



*Photo 8. Traditional houses, Town of St George (Photos: A. Conti)*

Some minor modifications in the aspects of the buildings are related to the change of materials of windows, in the cases when replacement becomes necessary. Because of the higher costs of using wood, there is a tendency to the use of cheaper materials. The mission had the opportunity of holding an interesting discussion on the use of colours. Even though there is no precise information on when it started, this became a typical feature of St. George's townscape. There are not prescriptions on the use of colours, which are selected by the buildings' owners. Advertising does not impact negatively the townscape and is regulated through guidelines for advertising signs produced by the St George's Preservation Authority and the Department of Planning.

In the meetings with local stakeholders, they expressed that generally the inhabitants of the St George are aware of the heritage values of the town and of its condition of a World Heritage property. They consider, however, that further awareness is required for visitors. The mission has also been informed that in pursuit of the need for renewable energy transition, the Government of Bermuda is currently testing possibilities for installing photovoltaic panels on buildings (including historic buildings), in order to formulate related regulations.

In summary, as stated at the beginning of this section, the overall state of conservation of the town of St George can be considered very good, and the component part of the serial property conserves a remarkable degree of integrity and authenticity. However, it is important to consider that the potential impact of tourism could have an adverse impact on the authenticity of this component part, in both tangible and intangible attributes that convey the contribution of the Historic Town of St George to the OUV of the property. Some considerations and recommendations related to the development of sustainable tourism have been included in the section related to the St Regis Hotel above.

### **2.3.2 Fortifications**

The ensemble of fortifications, located in several islands of the archipelago, play a significant role in the history of Bermuda, in the overall history of British defence system, and in the serial property's OUV, exhibiting the defence strategies and the evolution of military architecture over a span of 400 years. The mission visited some of the fortifications, especially those located on St George Island and Paget Island. In addition, the boat tour on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March has allowed observing from some distance Martello Tower on St. George Island, and Ferry Island Fort.



*Photo 9. Ferry Island Fort (left) and Martello Tower (right) (Photos: UNESCO)*

Generally, the structures of the fortifications are constructed in Bermuda stone, in some cases complemented by metallic elements. The current state of conservation of the elements varies from acceptable to very poor, depending mainly on their location, use over time and degree and nature of modifications over time, as well as measures taken for their conservation.

Because of the variety of situations, it becomes difficult to proceed to a general description of the current state of conservation and the types and degrees of deterioration observed. A common sign of deterioration is the presence of cracks in walls, usually produced by the intrusion of roots of trees or plants, especially casuarinas (*Casuarina equisetifolia*), an imported species that expanded widely on the islands. The cracks are, at the same time, one of the causes for the entrance of water into the walls.

Water is also visible on roofs and floors and has caused deterioration of materials and the presence of fungi and lichen. Inappropriate uses and interventions and vandalism have also played a role in the deterioration of some structures.

In 2003 the Government of Bermuda commissioned a survey of the historic forts. The final document, 'Fortifications Heritage at Bermuda. A Conditions and Management Survey of the Historic Forts, 2003', presents a detailed description of each of them, including their state of conservation, and recommendations for their conservation. The mission considers that this is a useful document that, with an appropriate updating, could serve as the basis for a conservation and management plan of the military structures.

The fortifications are located within the protected areas system. The Bermuda National Parks Act, 1986, establishes that one of its objectives is to protect and maintain the historic buildings, protecting them from deterioration, and providing public enjoyment, research, and educational opportunities. A prominent role in the maintenance of the fortifications is played by the St George's Foundation, a non-profit organization that fosters volunteerism to support the World Heritage property through education, awareness, and collaboration with relevant stakeholders. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Parks and the Foundation was signed in 2021 to provide a framework for collaborative work among the two organizations for the maintenance, preservation, and restoration of heritage sites under the remit of the above-mentioned Department. On this basis, the Foundation is responsible for the cleaning up of heritage sites to ensure that they are presentable, and organising restoration works.

Nevertheless, in spite of the committed work done by the St George's Foundation, the forts are in general in a very derelict state (with the exception of Fort St Catherine which is the only fort open all year long for visitors with a dedicated exhibition), due to the lack of an active and dedicated governmental organisation that would have the means and measures to maintain and restore them.

Due to inappropriate interventions and/or to the poor state of conservation, the integrity of the component parts is in some cases at risk. As for the assessment of authenticity, it is necessary to acknowledge that the present situation of the structures is the result actions of rebuilding and modifications that occurred over historic times, and that practically none of the fortifications have kept their original form or design. On this basis, the conditions of authenticity of most of the fortifications can be considered acceptable, except for a few cases that will be mentioned below.

The fortifications visited by the mission are:

**a. *St George's Island***

Fort St Catherine: located in the northernmost tip of the island, it is the best-preserved military structure visited by the mission. The original fort was erected shortly after the British occupation of the islands, was rebuilt at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and underwent actions of rebuilding, extensions and modifications throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The present fort is thus the result of that series of interventions, is easily accessible and houses a museum dedicated mainly to the military history of Bermuda. The overall state of conservation is good, although some deterioration is noticed, caused mainly by the presence of water in parts of the structure. The setting of the fort has irreversibly been altered by the construction of the St Regis Hotel, which generates a negative impact on the views from the fort to St Catherine Beach. This component part of the serial nomination preserves a high degree of integrity and authenticity.



*Photo 10. Details of Fort St Catherine (Photos: left - A. Conti; right – UNESCO)*

**Fort Victoria:** located on the hill next to St Catherine beach, it was constructed in the 1820s and underwent some modifications throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The main modifications, however, occurred when the fort was used by the hotel constructed in the 1960s and later demolished. As a result, the layout of the original fort has been modified, especially the inner court, where the Keep was demolished to construct a swimming pool and a nightclub, which remnants are still visible despite that fact that the hotel building itself had been demolished in 2008, although the surrounding platforms have been preserved with no significant modifications. The structure exhibits an overall poor state of conservation; the deterioration signs observed include cracks in several walls, entrance of water and humidity and presence of vegetation. The modifications and the state of conservation indicate that the integrity of the fort is at risk and that the authenticity has been compromised.

As this fort is included in the St Regis lease, the Government of Bermuda is advised to develop a special agreement with the leaseholder, including the maintenance and potential restorations works needed to upkeep the structure and a frame for its potential and prohibited uses.



*Photo 11. Details of Fort Victoria with the remnants of the former swimming pool on the left (Photos: left - A. Conti, right – UNESCO)*

**Fort Albert:** located on the hill next to St Catherine beach, the layout of the original 19<sup>th</sup> century structure and its later modifications of the 1870s has been preserved with no significant changes. The fort was used by the hotel demolished in 2008, which introduced some minor changes, mainly on the courtyard's floor and in the area dedicated to kitchen. The observed deterioration of the tangible substance is similar to other fortifications. The

St. George's Foundation carried out recently important cleaning works, that include remotion of invasive growth, remotion of vegetation and waste from the moat and reconstruction of the entrance bridge. The conditions of integrity and authenticity can be considered acceptable, although repairs should be undertaken.

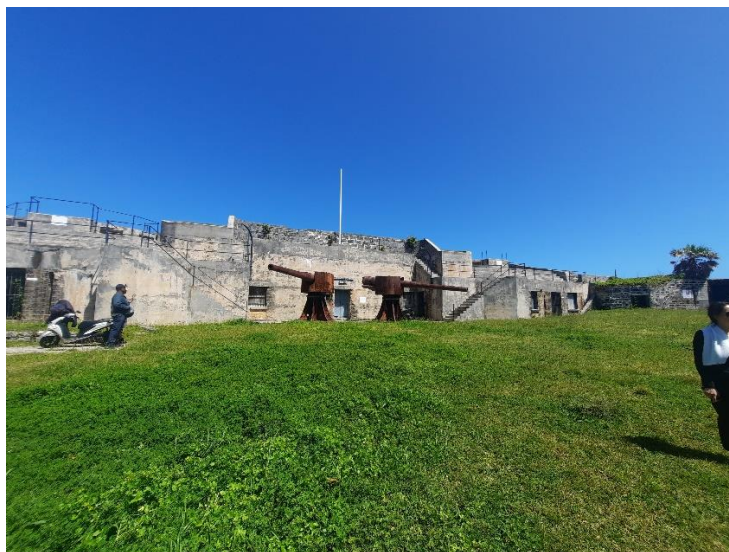
The mission considers that the plan for using this fort as the spa facility of the nearby luxury hotel was completely inappropriate both with regard to the characteristic of the structure and the threat that such a use would pose for its long-term state of conservation.

Again, as this fort is also included in the St Regis lease, the Government of Bermuda is advised to develop a special agreement with the leaseholder, including the maintenance and potential restorations works needed to upkeep the structure and a frame for its potential and prohibited uses.



*Photo 12. Details of Fort Albert (Photos: left – UNESCO, right - A. Conti)*

Alexandra Battery: located on the eastern coast of St George's Island, it was rebuilt in the 1870s to protect the entrance of Narrows Channel. The site is open to the public and presents acceptable state of conservation, although some deterioration is noticed in the interior due to the presence of water and humidity, and vandalism. The conditions of integrity and authenticity are acceptable.



*Photo 13. Alexandra Battery (Photo: A. Conti)*

Western Redoubt (Fort William): located towards the northeast of the Town of St George, the fort was erected in the 1840s and altered in the 1880s, when the ditch and the central

barracks were roofed. The structure is not currently used, and the interior exhibits deterioration caused by some leaking from the roof and lack of ventilation. The interior woodworks are in bad state of conservation. The fort was used as a restaurant and night club during the time of operation of the former hotel demolished in 2008 next to Fort Victoria, and the remnants of this use (furniture, interior building elements, etc.) are still visible inside, nevertheless, they are in a very poor condition. The integrity of the structure should be preserved by means of the necessary conservation works and the conditions of authenticity can be acceptable taking into account the processes of **changes that the fort has undergone.**

Gates Fort: located at the southeast corner of St George's Island, the fort was constructed at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and consists of two buildings and the gun rampart. In the main building, a wooden stair leads to the roof. The buildings are in acceptable state of conservation and the site is open to the public. The conditions of integrity and authenticity are acceptable.



*Photo 14. Gates Fort (Photo A. Conti)*

Fort George: this fort is located on the top of the hill next to Town of St George and was constructed in the 1820s. The main part consists of a central barrack or keep surrounded by a deep ditch. On the roof level, the Bermuda Harbour Radio station was constructed and is still operated in here. The central building exhibits an acceptable state of conservation. Dense vegetation is observed around the main structure. The mission has not visited the interior. On the basis of the observation from outside, it is possible to state that, especially on account of the construction of the radio station, the conditions of integrity and authenticity are compromised.



*Photo 15. Fort George (Photo: A. Conti)*

### ***b. Paget Island***

Fort Cunningham: one of the most impressive military structures, exhibiting two stages of construction, the original of the 1820s constructed of massive stone and the 1870s upper part characterised by its iron structure, which makes this fort unique. Surrounded by dense vegetation, the fort exhibits a poor state of conservation, especially the 1870s sector, where the vegetation surrounding the structure, and the entrance of water produces deterioration similar to that observed in other forts plus the corrosion of the metallic components and the presence of fungi and lichen. The fort is not open to the public. The poor state of conservation and the increasing deterioration put the integrity of the fort at risk, whereas the conditions of authenticity can be considered acceptable to high.



*Photo 16. Fort Cunningham (Photos: A. Conti)*

Paget Fort: the vestiges of this fort, the first one constructed in Bermuda in 1612, constitute an important testimony to the Bermuda's first military works. Currently an archaeological site, some parts are cut into the bedrock. The dense vegetation surrounding the site constitutes a threat for the remaining vestiges. The conditions of integrity and authenticity must be assessed on the basis that only a small part of the structure remains.



*Photo 17. Paget Fort (Photos: left – UNESCO, right- A. Conti)*

### **Recommendations of the mission**

In several cases, conservation and restoration works are required urgently in order to guarantee the integrity of the most affected fortifications. The mission understands that the implementation of an overall conservation plan would imply a significant effort in technical and financial terms, but invites the State Party and the Government of Bermuda to consider the following recommendations:

27. Consider the preparation of a comprehensive conservation and management plan for both the historic buildings (especially those in public use) of the Town of St George and the fortifications. The 2003 survey provides a valuable basis for diagnosis but should be updated in view of the more than twenty years that have elapsed since it was conducted.
28. The updated survey should consider the current state of conservation of each structure, including a detailed identification and description of the nature and degree of deterioration observed and its causes. Updated graphic documents showing the condition of each structure should be prepared. This survey will make it possible to set priorities and plan a timeframe for the work to be carried out and the resources required.
29. Develop procedures for the maintenance of the fortifications and their cannons, and training or sourcing crafts people to carry out the maintenance and restoration work, and or providing the necessary elements and materials to maintain the integrity of the property's components.
30. As component parts of a serial World Heritage property, each fortification should benefit from a buffer zone providing an additional layer of protection (see the detailed advice in the next chapter).
31. The assignation of uses must be in accordance with the characteristics of the structures, the specific typologies and the dimensions of the available indoor and outdoor spaces, while maintaining appropriate conditions of integrity and authenticity. The reuse of the forts should be assigned only after full consideration of the above and in respect of its historic spirit.
32. Any structural alteration or removal of parts of the forts should only be considered if they pose a risk to the stability of the structures and are not a significant part of the history and evolution of the fortifications. In most cases, a Heritage Impact

Assessment or similar risk assessment study would be required prior to any such decision.

33. Identify the natural and human factors that could have an impact on the integrity of the structures and provide a risk management plan as part of the Management Plan of the serial property.
34. In accordance with the future management system of the property and the advised unified management body responsible for the management of the entire property, identify a governmental body or bodies responsible for the maintenance of the historic buildings in public use in the Town of St George and for all the fortifications and provide this body with adequate means and measures to organise and coordinate the necessary works. Provide for the articulation between the relevant actors in the framework of the Management Plan for the serial property. Given that the conservation/restoration work will require considerable financial and human resources, encourage this articulation and the participation of volunteers to carry out some of the necessary work.
35. With regard to renewable energy generation infrastructures (including photovoltaic panels) to be installed within the property, its buffer zone and wider setting, the existing regulations should be aligned with the primary objective of protecting and preserving the property's OUV and its underlying attributes.
36. Promote awareness among residents and visitors of the significance and value, as well as the World Heritage status of the fortifications, through presentation and interpretation policies and specific projects and tools.

### **2.3.3 Adequacy of the property's boundary and buffer zone**

The system of defence of Bermuda, was designed to protect the archipelago and in the case of the World Heritage property, specifically the Town and harbour of St George, from attacks from the sea and also to prevent eventual conflicts inland, which explains the location and features of each fortification. The entrances to St George's Harbour were protected by fortifications located in St George's Island (eastern and western sectors), Paget Island, St David Island, and Governor's Island. Other fortifications are located on the Castle Islands (the South-Eastern part of the property) and on Coney Island and Ferry Island (in the Western part of the property, guarding another entrance to the harbour). See the maps of property and buffer zone included in **Annex 4**.

The fortifications located in the eastern area of St George's Island, with the exception of Alexandra Battery and Gates Fort, are provided with a common buffer zone that encompasses all of them and the Historic Town of St George. The rest of the fortifications included in the serial World Heritage property have no buffer zones, but several of them are located within national parks or protected areas.

With regard to the important role of buffer zone, which according to Paragraph 104 of the *Operational Guidelines* is an area "surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development in order to give an added layer of protection to the property" (including the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection), the mission considers that the existing buffer zone that encompasses the Historic Town of St George and the nearby fortifications (Fort William and Fort George, as well as the ones in the proximities of St Catherine Beach), plays an important role as an additional layer of protection in the protection of the property. Nevertheless, the mission noted that the outline of the buffer zone does not include the eastern part of the Town of St George, and in addition, there are exclave areas within the buffer zone, without clear justification why these were not included in the original nomination.

The mission advises the State Party to reconsider the existing buffer zone of the property and extend it to the Eastern part of the Town of St George, eliminate the exclave area in order to achieve a unified buffer zone and also extend it to the Southwest in order to incorporate all the fortifications in the St George's Island (Alexandra Battery and Gate's Fort). As for the rest of the component parts, it is advisable that each of them be provided with a buffer zone, whose dimensions and form would depend on each specific situation. For the forts situated on smaller islands, it is advisable to establish the whole island as a buffer zone. This will imply a minor boundary modification process for the property, explained in Annex 11 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

An extended buffer zone would ensure a better control of potential impacts derived from eventual development projects in the future. While the existing measures of the Bermuda National Parks Act could be a useful tool to regulate some parts of the existing and future buffer zone, the case of the St Regis Hotel demonstrate, that the regulations for the buffer zone are currently not fully sufficient allowing to accomplish its role, it is advisable, thus, that these regulations are revised and enhanced.

The mission noted that the State Party considers that the boundaries of the property are adequate as they are, and that the recommendation made by ICOMOS in 2000 at the time of the evaluation of the nomination to include the remaining fortifications on the other islands (in particular the major fort at the Dockyard) in the property is not relevant. Based on the information received by the mission during its site visit, the fortifications included in the property are all related to the town of St George and its harbour, which they protect from attack from the sea. The fortifications on the other islands of Bermuda and the Dockyard Fort are not directly related to this role. It is therefore not the intention of this mission to insist on a recommendation to the State Party to work towards extending the boundaries of the property.

The mission noted that several stakeholders believe that the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) of the property, as adopted in 2014 (See **Annex 1**), does not adequately reflect all the values of the Town of St George (including the harbour) and the fortifications related to their maritime heritage and the layered, multicultural history of the attributes. The Mission considers that it is essential that this reflection takes place among all the stakeholders and rightsholders of the property, so that an informed decision can be taken either to revise the SOUV and therefore prepare a new nomination dossier according to the procedures in force, or to ensure that the updated Management Plan takes due account not only of the OUV of the property and the attributes that convey the OUV, but also other values and attributes that are considered of significance by the property's rightsholders, even if they were not considered by the Committee to be part of the property's OUV.

### ***Recommendations of the mission***

37. Reconsider the existing buffer zone of the property, both to extend it to the western part of the Town of St George, to close the existing exclaves, and to incorporate the forts in the south-eastern areas of St George's Island.
38. Establish a buffer zone around each component part of the property and develop and implement regulations to ensure their appropriate protection, especially in the case of future development projects.
39. Revise the regulation of the buffer zone of the Historic Town of St George and the nearby fortifications to ensure the additional protection of the component parts of the property located in this sector of St George's Island, especially in the case of future development projects.

40. Include a reflection exercise among all the stakeholders and rightsholders of the property in the reconsideration of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property as part of updating of the Management Plan, in order to take stock of all other values and attributes that could be considered of significance and decide if as a result of the exercise, the revision of the SOUV is needed.

### 3. LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are extracted from the respective parts of the report, in order to provide an overview for the relevant stakeholders. The mission, nevertheless, advises that when considering and planning the implementation of the recommendations, such considerations and planning should be based on the assessment of the respective topics with their full background and context. In addition, the mission advises the Government of Bermuda to set up an Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations, with a timeframe and actors responsible for each action.

#### **Protection and management measures concerning the World Heritage property**

##### Legal provisions and planning tools

1. The mission recommends a comprehensive review of the legal framework in order to ensure that the means of protecting the property are well grounded in the legal system of Bermuda and that decisions regarding changes and developments within the property, its buffer zone and wider setting are based on a full understanding of the property's OUV and the attributes that convey it, and fully respect their long-term preservation.
2. It will be important to ensure that all parts of the World Heritage property (both the Town of St George and the fortifications) are subject to the same legal regulations and are under the auspices of no more than two legal entities as the main bodies responsible for their protection and management (one for the Town of St George and, if necessary; another for all the fortifications).
3. The buffer zone of the site should also be subject to uniform regulation. This would provide clarity for the management bodies and the public as to the type of protection and management regime should be applied throughout the property and its buffer zone.
4. Impact assessment processes need to be integrated in the relevant planning levels, aligned with 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*<sup>13</sup>, and the impact assessments (Heritage Impact Assessments, Environmental Impact Assessments, and Strategic Environmental Assessments) should be developed in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* (2022).<sup>14</sup>
5. Development Orders and Special Acts (with Government commitments for development projects) should only be approved and issued for areas within the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting (i.e. within wider setting areas where changes may have an impact on the property's OUV) after an appropriate impact assessment has been carried out, with the outcome that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and its underlying attributes.

#### **Management system and current draft Management Plan**

##### Management System:

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<sup>13</sup> The most up to date version of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention is available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

<sup>14</sup> Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>

6. As a matter of the utmost urgency, establish a single, coordinating body with legislative recognition for the overall management of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone and, if possible, at least advisory powers in relation to its wider setting, and with a stable annual funding from the Government of Bermuda for its operation. Ensure that the management body of the property has an adequate number of dedicated staff trained in World Heritage matters to plan and carry out management tasks.
7. Ensure that the management body of the World Heritage property gives priority to its protection and preservation for future generations and has the means to influence in this respect the decision making on changes and developments that may have an impact on the property's OUV.
8. The Government of Bermuda should provide an adequate budget (in addition to the Levy Fund) for the maintenance of historic buildings that serve public functions within the Town of St George and for the maintenance, preservation and long-term restoration of the fortifications that form the components of the property.
9. Ensure that NGOs and volunteers continue to operate under the coordination of the management body of the World Heritage property, and that the financial resources of the Bermudan 'UNESCO World Heritage Fund' (that is based on the imposes levy on gas and petroleum products landed at the Oil Docks in St. George's Parish) for the NGOs are maintained in the long term, also in the light of the renewable energy transition. Nevertheless, the Government of Bermuda needs to ensure that NGOs and volunteers provide an additional support for the management of the property but do not replace the currently lacking responsible government agency that needs to be the main actor in this regard.
10. Consider renaming the main funding instrument provided by the Government of Bermuda, currently called the 'UNESCO World Heritage Fund', to avoid confusion with the 'Fund for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of Outstanding Universal Value', also known as the 'World Heritage Fund', which was established in 1977 under Article 15 of the World Heritage Convention and is available for eligible applications from all World Heritage properties under the World Heritage Convention.
11. Ensure the functioning of the management body of the World Heritage property through a participatory approach with the involved NGOs, the local community of the Town of St George and the residents of the areas where the forts of the property are located.

Current draft Management Plan:

12. Identify, as a matter of urgency, a single management body responsible for coordinating the World Heritage property management system and updating the Management Plan. For the latter, the *Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0* and the forthcoming World Heritage Management Manual should be used.
13. Continue to work on identifying and mapping the tangible and intangible attributes that convey the OUV of the Bermuda World Heritage property and make these the focus of all protection and management actions.
14. The Management Plan should become a living document, accessible to all stakeholders and rightsholders of the property.
15. The management of the property should follow a well-defined cycle of planning – implementation – monitoring – review. The timeframe of the cycle should be defined by the site managers, based on the characteristics of the property (usually 5 year cycles are established).

16. The World Heritage Management Plan should be recognised by embedding it in the relevant legal framework so that it can guide and influence decision making in order to protect and preserve the property's OUV.
17. It is recommended that a sensitivity assessment of the property's OUV and attributes that convey the OUV in the face of planned/foreseen changes/developments is carried out. The result can be used to develop guiding principles for development strategies that are compatible with the World Heritage status.
18. It is recommended that the management plan be integrated with other management tools, in particular an Emergency and Risk Preparedness Plan (particularly with regard to hurricane events, but also to other foreseeable adverse effects of climate change)<sup>15</sup>, as well as a Sustainable Tourism Management Plan.
19. Ensure that in line with the retrospective inventory launched by the World Heritage Centre 2023an up-to-date map of the property and its buffer zone clearly showing their delimitation as inscribed by the Committee is available to all stakeholders, including UNESCO and Advisory Bodies.

### **St. Regis Resort and Residences development project**

20. Reconsider the project of the five residential buildings to be constructed in order to mitigate the adverse impact on the setting of the fortifications and the buffer zone of the World Heritage property.
21. Conduct the Heritage Impact Assessment for the further phases of the project (the five additional residential buildings and any other planned new elements) in accordance with the Resource Manual Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context (2022) and submit them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to any further construction.
22. In the case of proposed interventions and/or assignation of new uses for Fort Victoria and Fort Albert, conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the Resource Manual Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context (2022) and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to the approval of any projects.
23. Planned or proposed projects in the wider setting of the property will also need to be considered with regard to their potential impact on the property's OUV and on the attributes that convey the OUV, particularly as currently most of the forts that form part of the property do not currently have a buffer zone.
24. Approve only those developments within the World Heritage property, its buffer zone and wider setting that are fully consistent with sustainable development policies and are fully compatible with the preservation of the OUV of the property.
25. All new projects which may impact the OUV of the property should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Centre and ICOMOS in the early stages of planning, before final decisions are made that would be difficult to reverse, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.
26. Promote and support policies, plans and actions that adopt a sustainable tourism approach. Consider the development and implementation of policies and specific instruments to prevent and, eventually mitigate potential impacts of tourism on the integrity and authenticity of the property.

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<sup>15</sup> See in this respect the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage (2023), available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/climatechange/>

## **Assessment of the state of conservation of the property**

### Town of St George and fortifications:

27. Consider the preparation of a comprehensive conservation and management plan for both the historic buildings (especially those in public use) of the Town of St George and the fortifications. The 2003 survey provides a valuable basis for diagnosis but should be updated in view of the more than twenty years that have elapsed since it was conducted.
28. The updated survey should consider the current state of conservation of each structure, including a detailed identification and description of the nature and degree of deterioration observed and its causes. Updated graphic documents showing the condition of each structure should be prepared. This survey will make it possible to set priorities and plan a timeframe for the work to be carried out and the resources required.
29. Develop procedures for the maintenance of the fortifications and their cannons, and training or sourcing crafts people to carry out the maintenance and restoration work, and or providing the necessary elements and materials to maintain the integrity of the property's components.
30. As component parts of a serial World Heritage property, each fortification should benefit from a buffer zone providing an additional layer of protection (see the detailed advice in the next chapter).
31. The assignation of uses must be in accordance with the characteristics of the structures, the specific typologies and the dimensions of the available indoor and outdoor spaces, while maintaining appropriate conditions of integrity and authenticity. The reuse of the forts should be assigned only after full consideration of the above and in respect of its historic spirit.
32. Any structural alteration or removal of parts of the forts should only be considered if they pose a risk to the stability of the structures and are not a significant part of the history and evolution of the fortifications. In most cases, a Heritage Impact Assessment or similar risk assessment study would be required prior to any such decision.
33. Identify the natural and human factors that could have an impact on the integrity of the structures and provide a risk management plan as part of the Management Plan of the serial property.
34. In accordance with the future management system of the property and the advised unified management body responsible for the management of the entire property, identify a governmental body or bodies responsible for the maintenance of the historic buildings in public use in the Town of St George and for all the fortifications and provide this body with adequate means and measures to organise and coordinate the necessary works. Provide for the articulation between the relevant actors in the framework of the Management Plan for the serial property. Given that the conservation/restoration work will require considerable financial and human resources, encourage this articulation and the participation of volunteers to carry out some of the necessary work.
35. With regard to renewable energy generation infrastructures (including photovoltaic panels) to be installed within the property, its buffer zone and wider setting, the existing regulations should be aligned with the primary objective of protecting and preserving the property's OUV and its underlying attributes.

36. Promote awareness among residents and visitors of the significance and value, as well as the World Heritage status of the fortifications, through presentation and interpretation policies and specific projects and tools.

#### **Adequacy of the property's boundary and buffer zone**

37. Reconsider the existing buffer zone of the property, both to extend it to the western part of the Town of St George, to close the existing exclaves, and to incorporate the forts in the south-eastern areas of St George's Island.
38. Establish a buffer zone around each component part of the property and develop and implement regulations to ensure their appropriate protection, especially in the case of future development projects.
39. Revise the regulation of the buffer zone of the Historic Town of St George and the nearby fortifications to ensure the additional protection of the component parts of the property located in this sector of St George's Island, especially in the case of future development projects.
40. Include a reflection exercise among all the stakeholders and rightsholders of the property in the reconsideration of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property as part of updating of the Management Plan, in order to take stock of all other values and attributes that could be considered of significance and decide if as a result of the exercise, the revision of the SOUV is needed.

### Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

#### Brief synthesis

The Town of St George is of Outstanding Universal Value as an authentic and the earliest example of the English colonial town in the New World. Its associated fortifications graphically illustrate the development of English military engineering from the 17th to the 20th century, adapted to take into account the development of artillery over this period. Some of these are unique as surviving examples of the first defensive works built by early European colonists, few examples of which now remain intact. The later associated forts represent an excellent example of a continuum of British coastal fortifications.

The permanent settlement of St George began in August 1612. The inscribed area consists of the Town of St George on St George Island as well as fortifications on the Island and on a number of small islands commanding access to the Town and to the anchorage of Castle Harbour, at the eastern end of the Bermuda Islands in the North Atlantic. The layout of the Town is one that has grown organically over nearly four centuries. At its heart is King's Square (or Market Square), adjacent to the harbour, and providing the link between the harbour and the two main east-west roads that connect the Town with the rest of Bermuda: Water Street, giving access to the quays, and York Street to the north, the main street of the Town. The streets to the north provide a network of what began as narrow, winding lanes and alleys. The architecture of Bermuda is unique, and has changed little in its basic elements since the end of the 17th century. Different from other European-founded cities of the New World, St George has maintained the individually separated house for habitation, so typical of the English settlements in North America. Because of the nature of the soft limestone that continues to be used for construction, walls, including roofs, are white-washed. Buildings rarely exceed two storeys and many are only one storey in height. Since sources of water are scarce on the island, the white colour of the roofs and pitch are designed to collect rain water into cisterns through gutters and other conduits adding to the unique appearance of the Town.

St George was a garrison town from its earliest days, and military installations developed on the eastern side of the Town. The first of many barracks were built on Barrack Hill in 1780, and ancillary buildings, such as residences for senior officers, officers' messes, hospitals and a garrison chapel followed during the course of the 19th century. These were constructed in the standard British military style but using local materials. The related fortifications began in the early 17th century, with forts on Paget, Governor's, Charles, and Castle Islands. These were repeatedly reconstructed and strengthened during the course of the 17th and 18th centuries. At the end of the American Revolution, Britain made St George's Island its main New World naval base. The existing fortifications were radically redesigned and rebuilt in the 1780s and 1790s. Work began on the dockyard at the turn of the century, necessitating further drastic changes in the system of fortifications, with the construction of Forts George, Victoria, St Catherine, Albert, and Cunningham (on Paget Island). The advent of rifled artillery in the 1850s led to yet further modifications and strengthening of the fortifications.

**Criterion (iv):** The Historic Town of St George with its related fortifications is an outstanding example of a continuously occupied, fortified, colonial town dating from the early 17th century, and the oldest English town in the New World.

## **Integrity**

The inscribed property contains all the elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value and is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features which convey its significance.

To complete the continuum of fortifications in Bermuda, consideration should be given at a future date to adding the remaining fortifications to the list, especially the major fort at the Dockyard. The integrity is high but work is needed on the maintenance of some of the forts.

## **Authenticity**

The town is of high authenticity, as are some of the fortifications, especially those built early in the 17th century. The Historic Town of St George is picturesque and distinct, typifying what is characteristic of Bermuda both in form and design and in its materials and substance. Today about 65% of the buildings in the town date from before 1900. Of these early structures, about 40% were built prior to 1800. Many of the significant buildings fall into this last category. St George is one of the few founding cities of a colony that has remained small, containing a high percentage of its early structures, while maintaining a continuity in its character, retaining its use and function to the present day.

Of the forts on the isolated islands, Southampton Fort, dating from 1621, stands unaltered for the most part, though a ruin. In comparable condition on Castle Island are the impressive remains of King's Castle and the Devonshire Redoubt, built by 1621. Much of the early masonry construction of these forts remains, with only additional 18th century batteries added nearby. With the exception of the Landward Fort on Castle Island, dating from the later part of the 17th century, and the 1612 archaeological remains of Paget Fort, the other forts in the property are mostly 19th century and many are accessible to the public. It will be important to ensure that further forts are not adapted for re-use in ways which damage their authenticity, as has happened at Fort Victoria converted into a hotel recreation facility.

## **Protection and management requirements**

As a self-governing colony of the United Kingdom, Bermuda has enacted laws protecting historic and cultural properties throughout the islands. As early as 1950, the Bermuda legislature enacted legislation for the protection of buildings of "Special Interest" and in 1974 passed the Development and Planning Act, since revised, that called for the listing of buildings of "special architectural or historical interest" and for the appointment of "historic areas" in which controls were implemented for development. There are currently 176 listed buildings in the inscribed area.

The 2008 revision of the Bermuda Plan replaced the previous development plan for the Island, the Bermuda Plan 1992. The Bermuda Plan 2008 greatly expanded the policies relating to the Island's historic environment. The Bermuda Plan 2008 was given final approval by the Legislature in 2010. Historic Protection Areas were added to four sites within the World Heritage property: St David's Battery, Paget Fort, Smith's Fort and Fort Cunningham, to ensure that all parts of the World Heritage property were protected. In addition, policies relating to listed buildings, archaeological sites and the World Heritage property were added to the Bermuda Plan 2008 Planning Statement, which also included design policies specific to the Town of St George and the World Heritage Site Buffer Zone (WHSBZ). To coincide with the publication of the Bermuda Plan 2008, planning policy guidance notes were also prepared including guidance notes on the submission of Archaeological Assessments, Alterations or Additions to Listed Buildings and/or buildings located within Historic Areas and Development in the Town of St George.

The Development and Planning Act 1974 and the Bermuda Plan 2008 therefore provide effective control over the development of land and buildings within the World Heritage property. The

Development Applications Board makes decisions on planning applications and is advised by the Historic Buildings Advisory Committee. The Development Applications Board must be satisfied that any development proposal located within the World Heritage property or its buffer zone will not adversely impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property. In addition, the St George's Preservation Authority is consulted on all planning applications within the historic area under the jurisdiction of the St George's Corporation including any property located in the World Heritage property.

Furthermore, the Bermuda National Parks Act 1986 was amended to include additional national parks and to offer more protection to the historic terrestrial environment by regulating activities, such as metal detecting and treasure seeking within historically designated areas.

The Government has made it a priority to conserve and promote the historic fortifications within the World Heritage property. The property has a Management Plan, which provides the framework for managing change in a way that preserves and enhances the integrity of the World Heritage property. The Plan has been divided into nine specific task areas which range from managing the forts, town, traffic, to preservation and enhancement. Each task has a set of objectives which provides a broad work plan for each relevant stakeholder where proposed actions are outlined. The Management Plan requires that an annual action plan and progress report be produced for the World Heritage property. The Management Plan contains conservation management guidelines for the forts and historically significant sites within the National Park System. This plan includes all of the main fortifications within the World Heritage property, with the exception of Fort Albert, William and Victoria, which is under lease. Developed in two parts, the first part of the Management Plan sets out the vision, management, guidelines and priorities for restoration; the second part sets out guidelines for treatment and maintenance procedures for historic sites.

Additionally, management plans are prepared for significant fortifications to provide detailed guidance and direction. As examples, a comprehensive design brief was completed for the restoration of the Martello Tower and a phased management plan for Fort St Catherine was developed in 2009. These were followed by major restorations, which included restoration of Seawalls, roof and window restorations, the restoration of the artillery collection, new exhibits including the Carronade Room, Artillery Exhibit, Magazine Exhibits and Victorian Soldier Room. Management plans are developed for Castle Island and Southampton Island as they are vulnerable to storm damage and invasive plant species.

In order to oversee and effectively manage the World Heritage property and related fortifications, the World Heritage Property Committee was formed in 2000, which is made up of a selection of technical officers from various Governmental departments and representatives from the Corporation of St George's, the Bermuda National Trust, the St George's Foundation and other such relevant organisations. During its monthly meetings, the World Heritage Property Committee reviews a standard order of business and addresses various matters. Given the multitude of stakeholders involved, the Bermuda Government appointed a Heritage Officer since 2005 to provide the necessary coordination. Further, this officer is mandated to ensure that the Management Plan is implemented and specific projects are on track.

The care and conservation of the forts is currently undertaken by the Government Parks Department and the Department of Conservation Services, which includes the enhancement and upgrading of a number of fortifications located within the World Heritage property. Forts which have recently undergone restoration works include the Martello Tower in Ferry Reach, St David's Battery, Fort George, Alexandra Battery, and Fort St Catherine as well as Fort Scaur (located outside of the property). These works range from structural repairs, interpretive signage, development of exhibits, restoration of cannons, culling of invasive vegetation, graffiti removal to

general site improvements. Additional maintenance measures involve the review of fortifications after every major storm event to ensure that the structural integrity of the forts remains intact.

### Terms of Reference

Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Advisory mission  
Historic Town of St. George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda  
24 – 28 March 2024

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The ‘Historic Town of St. George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda’ was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000 under criteria (iv). The Town of St George, founded in 1612, is an outstanding example of the earliest English urban settlement in the New World. Its associated fortifications graphically illustrate the development of English military engineering from the 17th to the 20th century, being adapted to take account of the development of artillery over this period. The World Heritage Centre was informed in November 2016 by the State Party, in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, of the proposed project of the Saint George Resort and the development of the Saint Regis Hotel. Following further exchanges, at the request of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS prepared a review of the information and documentation submitted in the form of a Technical Review of the St Regis Hotel Development in January 2018. Following the submission of additional information by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre, a second ICOMOS Technical Review was prepared and transmitted to the State Party in March 2020. The January 2018 and February 2020 Technical Reviews expressed concerns about the perceived negative impact of the St. Regis Resort and Residences development on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage property, and the *‘effectiveness of the current legal protections and planning controls’* within the boundary (the World Heritage management plan available to the World Heritage Centre dates to 2014). In July 2022, in accordance with paragraph 174, the World Heritage Centre transmitted to the State Party a media article which alerted it to the opening of the St Regis Hotel. In June 2023, the State Party provided further information, including a full response from the Government of Bermuda’s Ministry of Public Works.

In light of the concerns raised by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, the Government of Bermuda has invited the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to visit the property and advise on the ongoing development and implementing methods to maintain the OUV of the World Heritage property.

The objectives of the mission:

1. Conduct an overall assessment of the state of conservation of the ‘Historic Town of St. George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda’ World Heritage property, with a view to providing advice and recommendations to the State Party on the maintenance of the property’s OUV;
2. Visit and review the current development of the St. Regis Resort and Residences in the buffer zone of the World Heritage property, including related planned and ongoing projects, and provide advice in relation to this project and any necessary related measures that may be required to ensure the maintenance of the OUV of the property;
3. Review the protection and management measures currently in place as set out in the current draft updated World Heritage Management Plan and current legislation. Provide advice on current vulnerabilities and feedback on proposed improvements as they relate to the management of the property;

4. Engage with decision makers and relevant stakeholders involved in the maintenance and preservation of the World Heritage property regarding current permits within the property's buffer zone.

The Government of Bermuda will facilitate all the necessary consultation with personnel, State Party agencies and key stakeholders of the property, including the managers of the property. It will also arrange for site visits to key locations within the property as well as its surrounding setting. To ensure the preparation of the Advisory Mission, the Government of Bermuda and the State Party will provide all relevant documentation requested by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, as available, no later than weeks prior to the proposed mission. The documentation to be provided to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Body in advance of the mission shall include in particular the following documents or substantial summaries:

- The current planning regulations, protection and management measures and legislation;
- Impact Assessment regulations/legislation relevant to World Heritage at national and local levels;
- The draft World Heritage property Management Plan.

If further information is requested during the mission, it will be provided by the State Party no later than ten days after the mission, if available.

The Advisory mission should prepare the draft mission report (in electronic format) and submit it to the State Party no later than eight weeks after the completion of the mission. Thereafter, the World Heritage Centre and the State Party will agree on a method and timetable for the final mission report to allow for any factual corrections required for the subsequent finalisation.

In accordance with UNESCO and ICOMOS policy, experts participating in the mission will not engage with the media and will not discuss the findings or recommendations of the mission, which will only be included in the final report.

**Programme of the mission as implemented, with the mission experts and the list of people met**

**UNESCO ADVISORY MISSION ITINERARY**

		<b>Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Day 2)</b>
<b>ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024</b>		

Travel to Governor of Bermuda Residence

7:45am

Meeting with the Governor of Bermuda

8:30am – 9:00am

In line with item 4 of the ToR

In Attendance:

**Her Excellency Rena Lalgie**,  
Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Islands of Bermuda

**Henry Reed**  
Senior International Policy Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media & Sport  
The Government of the United Kingdom

**Alexandra Warr**  
Head of International Strategy  
Historic England

**Jessica Dill**  
Trainee Heritage Officer  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Stephen Symons**  
Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America  
Unit, World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

**Alfredo Conti**

Expert  
International Council on  
Monuments and Sites  
(ICOMOS)

Travel to Grotto Bay resort

9:00am – 9:45am

Boat Tour of Fortifications in Eastern  
Area

10:00am – 2:30pm

In line with item 1 of the ToR

In Attendance:

Namely:

Pageť Fort  
Fort Cunningham  
Burnt Point Fort (from waterside)  
Martello Tower (from waterside)  
Ferry Reach Magazine (from  
waterside)  
Ferry Island Fort (from waterside)  
Coney Island Kiln (from waterside)  
Fort St. Catherine (from waterside)  
Fort Albert (from waterside)  
Alexandra Battery (from waterside)  
Gate's Fort (Town Cut Battery) (from  
Waterside)

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America  
Unit, World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

**Alfredo Conti**

Expert  
International Council on  
Monuments and Sites  
(ICOMOS)

**Henry Reed**

Senior International Policy  
Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media  
& Sport  
The Government of the United  
Kingdom

**Alexandra Warr**

Head of International Strategy  
Historic England

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Francine Trott**

Acting Forts Curator  
Department of Parks  
The Government of Bermuda

**Peter Barrett**

Chairman  
The St. George's Foundation

Lunch

2:30pm – 3:15pm

Tour of Historic Town of St. George's

3:30pm – 5:30pm

In line with item 1 of the ToR

In Attendance:

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America  
Unit, World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

**Alfredo Conti**

Expert  
International Council on  
Monuments and Sites  
(ICOMOS)

**Henry Reed**

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Senior International Policy  
Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media  
& Sport  
The Government of the United  
Kingdom

**Alexandra Warr**

Head of International Strategy  
Historic England

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Kristin White**

Business Owner and Historical  
Guide  
Long Story Short

Return to Hotel	5:30pm – 5:45pm	
Dinner and End of Day.	6:30pm – 7:45pm	

## UNESCO ADVISORY MISSION ITINERARY

		<b>Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Day 3)</b>
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIME	COMMENTS
<b>Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024</b>		
Travel to Ministry of Public Works Headquarters	8:15am – 8:50am	
Meeting with Government of Bermuda Ministers and Technical Officers	9:00am – 10:30am	<p>In line with items 1, 2 and 4 of the ToR</p> <p>In attendance:</p> <p><b>Lt. Col. The Hon. David Burch, OBE (Mil), ED, JP, MP</b> Minister of Public Works The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>The Hon. Vance Campbell, JP, MP</b> The Minister for the Cabinet Office The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>The Hon. Owen Darrell, JP</b> The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Kirk Outerbridge</b> Acting Permanent Secretary Ministry of Public Works The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Pandora Glasford</b> Permanent Secretary Ministry for the Cabinet Office The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Marva O'Brien</b> Permanent Secretary,</p>

Ministry of Tourism, Culture  
and Sport  
The Government of Bermuda

**Steven Conway**

Director  
Department of Public Lands &  
Buildings  
The Government of Bermuda

**Adrian Dill**

Acting Director  
Department of Parks  
The Government of Bermuda

**Victoria Cordeiro**

Director  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Dr. Kim Dismont-Robinson**

Director  
Department of Culture  
The Government of Bermuda

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Kenneth Campbell**

Acting Senior Planner  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Jane Brett**

Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Tourism, Culture  
and Sport

		<p>The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Réka Viragos</b> Programme Specialist, Europe and North America Unit, World Heritage Centre UNESCO</p> <p><b>Alfredo Conti</b> Expert International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)</p> <p><b>Henry Reed</b> Senior International Policy Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy Department of Culture, Media &amp; Sport The Government of the United Kingdom</p> <p><b>Alexandra Warr</b> Head of International Strategy Historic England</p>
Travel to Town of St. George's	10:45am – 11:30am	

Meeting with the Corporation of  
St. George's

11:30am –  
1:30pm

In line with items 1 and 4 of the ToR;

Attendees:

**Quinell Francis, JP**

Mayor of the Town of St. George  
Corporation of St. George's

**Elizabeth Christopher, JP**

Resident Councillor  
Corporation of St. George's

**Jari Ming**

Resident Councillor

Corporation of St. George's

**Lynwood Trott**

Resident Councillor  
Corporation of St. George's

**Renee Ming, JP, MP**

Representative for Constituency 1 –  
St. George's North  
Member of Parliament

**Hubert 'Kim' Swan, JP, MP**

Junior Minister of Tourism, Culture  
and Sport  
Representative for Constituency 2 –  
St. George's West  
Member of Parliament

**The Hon. Tinee Furbert, JP, MP**

Minister of Youth, Social  
Development and Seniors  
Representative for Constituency 4 –  
St. George's South  
Member of Parliament

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America Unit,  
World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

**Alfredo Conti**

Expert

International Council on Monuments  
and Sites (ICOMOS)

**Henry Reed**

Senior International Policy Adviser,  
Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media &  
Sport  
The Government of the United  
Kingdom

**Alexandra Warr**

Head of International Strategy  
Historic England

Travel to St. Regis Hotel and  
Resort

1:30pm – 1:45pm

Meeting with HotelCo Bermuda  
Holdings Ltd.

1:45pm – 4:45pm

In line with items 1, 2 and 4 of the ToR

Attendees:

**Miguel Purroy**

Director  
HotelCo Bermuda Holdings  
Ltd.

**Laura Purroy**

General Manager  
HotelCo Bermuda Holdings  
Ltd.

**Annie Glasspool**

Vice President  
Bermuda Environmental  
Consulting Ltd.

**Colin Campbell**

Manager  
OBMI Bermuda Ltd.

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America  
Unit, World Heritage Centre

		<p>UNESCO</p> <p><b>Alfredo Conti</b> Expert International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)</p> <p><b>Henry Reed</b> Senior International Policy Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy Department of Culture, Media &amp; Sport The Government of the United Kingdom</p> <p><b>Alexandra Warr</b> Head of International Strategy Historic England</p> <p><b>Steven Conway</b> Director Department of Public Lands &amp; Buildings The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Victoria Cordeiro</b> Director Department of Planning The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Stephen Symons</b> Consultant Policy Analyst Ministry of Public Works The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Jessica Dill</b> Trainee Heritage Officer Department of Planning The Government of Bermuda</p>
Travel to Town of St. George's	4:45pm – 4:50pm	

Free Inspection Time	4:50pm – 6:00pm	UNESCO Free inspection time around the Town of St. George's
Dinner and End of Day.	6:00pm – 7:15pm	

## UNESCO ADVISORY MISSION ITINERARY

		<b>Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Day 4)</b>
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIME	COMMENTS
<b>Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024</b>		
Travel to Ministry of Public Works Headquarters	8:45am – 9:20am	
Meeting with Technical Officers of the Government of Bermuda regarding Draft Management Plan	9:30am – 11:30am	<p>In line with items 1, 2 and 4 of the ToR</p> <p>In attendance:</p> <p><b>Pandora Glasford</b> Permanent Secretary Ministry for the Cabinet Office The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Dr. Kim Dismont-Robinson</b> Director Department of Culture The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Steven Conway</b> Director Department of Public Lands &amp; Buildings The Government of Bermuda</p> <p><b>Adrian Dill</b> Acting Director Department of Parks The Government of Bermuda</p>

**Victoria Cordeiro**

Director  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Kenneth Campbell**

Acting Senior Planner  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer,  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America  
Unit, World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

**Alfredo Conti**

Expert  
International Council on  
Monuments and Sites  
(ICOMOS)

**Henry Reed**

Senior International Policy  
Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media  
& Sport  
The Government of the United  
Kingdom

**Alexandra Warr**

Head of International Strategy  
Historic England

Travel to Town of St. George's

11:35am –  
12:00pm

Lunch

12:00pm –  
1:30pm

Meeting with St. George's  
Business Stakeholders

1:30pm – 3:30pm

In line with items 1 and 4 of the ToR;

Attendees:

**Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America Unit,  
World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

**Alfredo Conti**

Expert  
International Council on Monuments  
and Sites (ICOMOS)

**Henry Reed**

Senior International Policy Adviser,  
Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media &  
Sport  
The Government of the United  
Kingdom

**Alexandra Warr**

Head of International Strategy  
Historic England

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer,  
Department of Planning

**Quinell Francis, JP**

Mayor of the Town of St. George  
Corporation of St. George's

**Elizabeth Christopher, JP**

Resident Councillor  
Corporation of St. George's

**Alfonso Harris**

Business Councillor  
Corporation of St. George's

**Marico Thomas**

President  
The Bermuda Chamber of  
Commerce

**Danielle Riviere**

Chief Executive Officer  
The Bermuda Chamber of  
Commerce

**Erica Smith**

Executive Director  
Bermuda Economic Development  
Corporation

**Jonathan Starling**

Economic & Cooperative  
Development Officer  
Bermuda Economic Development  
Corporation

**Tashae Thompson**

Vice-President of Experiences  
Bermuda Tourism Authority

**Dennie O'Connor**

Business Owner  
St. George's Business Stakeholder  
Group

**Kristin White**

Business Owner and Historical Guide  
St. George's Business Stakeholder  
Group

Refreshment Break

3:30pm – 4:00pm

<p>Meeting with Local Non-Governmental Organizations and Heritage Stakeholders</p>	<p>4:00pm – 6:00pm</p>	<p>In line with items 1 and 4 of the ToR</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <p><b>Réka Viragos</b> Programme Specialist, Europe and North America Unit, World Heritage Centre UNESCO</p> <p><b>Alfredo Conti</b> Expert International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)</p> <p><b>Henry Reed</b> Senior International Policy Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy Department of Culture, Media &amp; Sport The Government of the United Kingdom</p> <p><b>Alexandra Warr</b> Head of International Strategy Historic England</p> <p><b>Stephen Symons</b> Consultant Policy Analyst Ministry of Public Works</p> <p><b>Jessica Dill</b> Trainee Heritage Officer Department of Planning</p> <p><b>Elizabeth Christopher, JP</b> Committee Member St. George's Preservation Authority</p> <p><b>Henry Ming</b> Committee Member St. George's Preservation Authority</p>
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**Elena Strong**  
Executive Director  
National Museum of Bermuda

**Karen Border**  
Executive Director  
Bermuda National Trust

**Dr. Charlotte Andrews**  
Head of Cultural Heritage  
Bermuda National Trust

**Peter Barrett**  
Chairman  
St. George's Foundation

**Kyle Swan**  
Director  
St. George's Foundation

**Rev. Dr. Lorne Bean**  
Friends of the St Peter's  
Church

**Alison Outerbridge**  
Friends of the St Peter's  
Church

**Lyn Llewellyn**  
St. George's Historical Society

**Kristin White**  
Business Owner and Historical  
Guide  
Long Story Short

**Rashida Godwin**  
Business Owner and Historical  
Guide  
Titan Express Ltd.

		<b>Winston Godwin</b> Business Owner and Historical Guide Titan Express Ltd.
Dinner and Return Travel to Hotel	6:15pm – 8:30pm	End of Day.

## UNESCO ADVISORY MISSION ITINERARY

		<b>Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Day 5)</b>
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIME	COMMENTS
<b>Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024</b>		

Travel to Fort St. Catherine 8:45am – 9:00am

Land Tour of Forts around St. George's: 9:00am – 2:00pm

Fort St. Catherine

Fort Victoria

Fort Albert

Fort William

Fort George

Alexandra Battery

Gates Fort (Town Cut Battery)

In line with item 1 of the ToR

Attendees:

### **Réka Viragos**

Programme Specialist,  
Europe and North America  
Unit, World Heritage Centre  
UNESCO

### **Alfredo Conti**

Expert  
International Council on  
Monuments and Sites  
(ICOMOS)

### **Henry Reed**

Senior International Policy  
Adviser, Cultural Diplomacy  
Department of Culture, Media  
& Sport  
The Government of the United  
Kingdom

### **Alexandra Warr**

Head of International Strategy

Historic England

**Stephen Symons**

Consultant Policy Analyst  
Ministry of Public Works  
The Government of Bermuda

**Jessica Dill**

Trainee Heritage Officer  
Department of Planning  
The Government of Bermuda

**Francine Trott**

Acting Forts Curator  
Department of Parks  
The Government of Bermuda

**Shaun Wainwright**

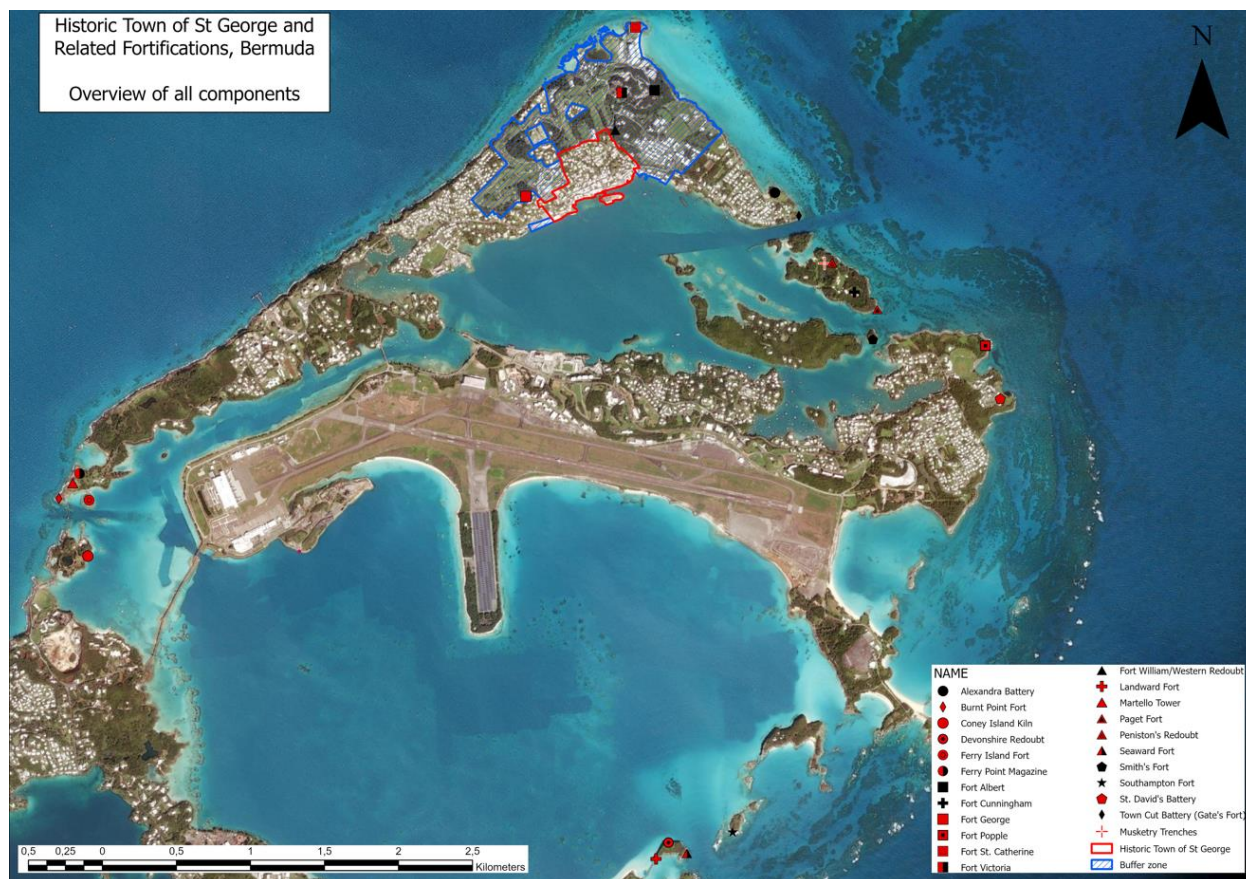
Tour Guide  
Department of Parks  
The Government of Bermuda

**Peter Barrett**

Chairman  
The St. George's Foundation

Lunch and UNESCO Free Inspection/Discussion Time	3:00pm – 6:15pm	UNESCO Free inspection time to walk around the Town of St. George's and internally discuss Advisory Mission between Experts.
Travel to L.F. Wade International Airport	6:30pm – 6:45pm	State Party Team and UNESCO representative Travel to Airport
Travel to Hotel	6:45pm	ICOMOS representative travel to Hotel
UNESCO representative departs	9:15pm	British Airways Flight 158

## Maps of the property with the component parts<sup>16</sup>



<sup>16</sup> These are not the official maps of the property (available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/983/maps/>), but prepared by the WHC for the report's purpose.



**Documentation requested after the mission**

General information:

- final mission programme, with the list of peoples met at each programme item,
- the presentations and handouts provided to the mission (in electronic format or scanned),
- the map of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, considered to be the official map by the State Party,
- information about the Bermuda World Heritage Fund (the source of the funding, available sum per year, distribution mechanism with the concerned decision makers, any related legal measures).

Information specifically related to the St Regis Hotel and Resort project:

- a detailed map showing the St Regis hotel project location with its boundaries and with the already built elements (hotel, residential buildings, swimming pool, parking),
- the design development showing the originally proposed and the design options until the final design that was implemented,
- photos and drawings showing the details of the design of the St Regis hotel and residential buildings (architectural elements of the built structures),
- location and design of the further residential buildings of the St Regis project, with visualization in relation to the existing hotel and residential buildings and the neighboring fort components of the World Heritage property,
- a map showing the boundaries of the St Regis golf course.

*(All the above requested maps need to show also the exact boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone.)*