



Existing Context

2. Existing Context

2.1 Public Realm and Open Space

2.1.1 Existing Open Space

According to *St Helier Open Space: Audit Summary* published in 2018, St Helier 'has approximately 13.1 hectares (ha) of parks within its boundary and a further 3.7ha immediately adjacent to its western edge, bringing the total provision of park space in town to 17.6ha.

There are a variety of open spaces within the local area with two, Les Jardins de la Mer and Marina Gardens, set within the site boundary. Les Jardins de la Mer (Figure 2.48) are part of the Waterfront area created in 1997 and are used as a gathering space at various events such as Jersey Triathlon and Pride. Marina Gardens (Figure 2.51) function as a residential pocket park and are also used for pop-up events, e.g. screening of sports tournaments.

Along Victoria Avenue, there is Lower Park and People's Park (Figure 2.54, Figure 2.55) with generous lawn provision, as well as West Park rich with mature trees and Victoria Park (Figure 2.49) and Parade Gardens (Figure 2.52) lined with decorative planting.

Further afield, there is Millennium Park (Figure 2.50), a formal park with interactive water features including water curtain sculptures and large grass area suitable for picnics and South Hill (Figure 2.56) - an environmental park with stunning panoramic views over St Helier and the south coast. There are also a number of small pockets of green space found within residential areas, which are mostly used by local residents.



Figure 2.1 Surrounding green space

Legend

- Site boundary
- Existing context
- Public gardens
- Parks

2. Existing Context

2.1 Public Realm and Open Space

2.1.2 Existing Play Space

There is little outdoor play provision with a 1km radius of the site, the closest being a small playground for ages 2-5 years old within People's Park.

Local play spaces cater largely for younger children and do not offer the active and challenging environment or social spaces used by children of ages 12+ years old. The current play provision comes in the form of equipment play with little offer for sensory or mobility learning.

South Hill Play Area is proposed to be refurbished as part of the South Hill Residential Development.

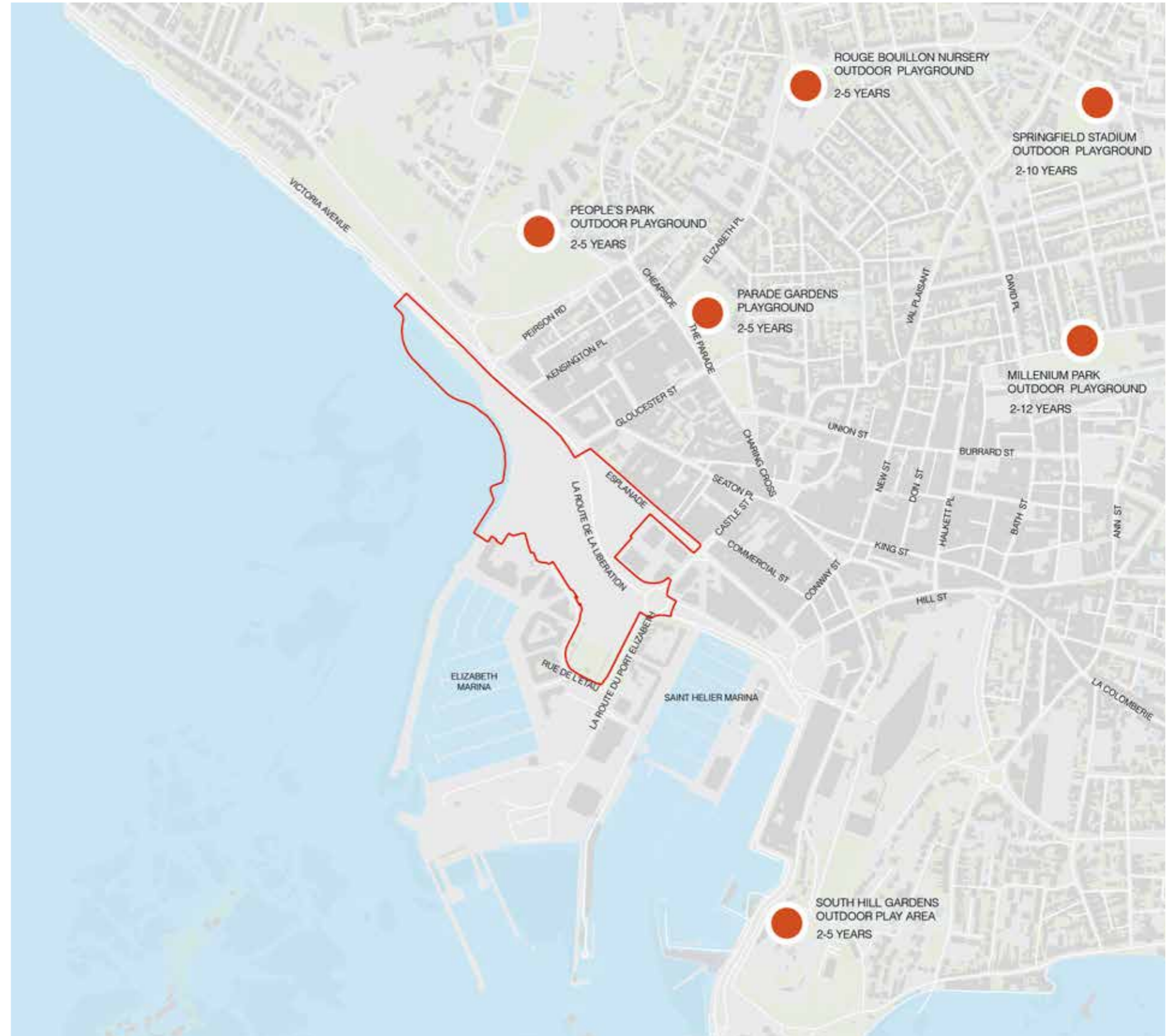


Figure 2.2 Play provision



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.1 Mix of Uses

OVERVIEW

The surrounding area comprises a variety of land uses including commercial, leisure, retail and industrial with some residential offer in immediate adjacency to the south-west of the site boundary.

The Esplanade running to the east of the site is lined with contemporary office blocks. The town centre comprises the retail core along Seaton Place, Broad Street and King Street. Further north there is some mixed urban development transitioning to predominantly residential areas.

To the south-east of the site, around St Helier Marina and Old Harbour, there is a cluster of mixed industrial uses working historically in conjunction with the port.

The leisure use is represented by the Cineworld multiplex cinema and the AquaSplash Leisure Centre within the site boundaries, as well as Fort Regent further to the south-east of the site which currently provides a play zone for children and gym facilities and is going to be repurposed in line with GoJ Inspiring Active Places Strategy.

Jersey General Hospital is located in close proximity to the site on Gloucester Street.

Legend










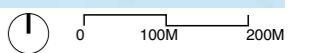
	Site boundary		Mixed industrial
	Generally residential		Business/ office
	Mixed urban		Leisure
	Public buildings		Education
	Retail core		



Figure 2.3 Surrounding buildings use



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.1 Mix of Uses

COMMERCIAL ANALYSIS

The Esplanade is the commercial core of St Helier. Based on historically low vacancy rates and a strong increase in demand for commercial office space since 2013, despite the global Covid-19 pandemic there is likely to be a continued demand for commercial use along the Esplanade going forward. Current available office spaces on the Esplanade tend to be for units of 5,000 to 6,000 square foot capacity – there is low market demand for these with office space of 10,000 plus square feet being sought by those wanting high quality office space – the Waterfront development can therefore provide this amount of space.

The retail activities including general retail, convenience stores and food and beverage. These are predominantly concentrated in the town centre along King Street, Queen Street, Halkett Place and Hilgrove Street.

The proposed development will be providing uses complementing the retail and services offer of the town centre while being cognisant not to compete or draw retail value away from the town. The existing town centre itself should ideally be strengthened and catalysed for growth by the new activities attracted to the emerging waterfront areas.

Legend

	Site boundary		Hospitality
	Office / Business		Beauty / Saloon
	Retail		Car / Garage
	Restaurant / Cafe		500m and 1000m radii from the site
	Pub / bar		
	Supermarket / Convenience		

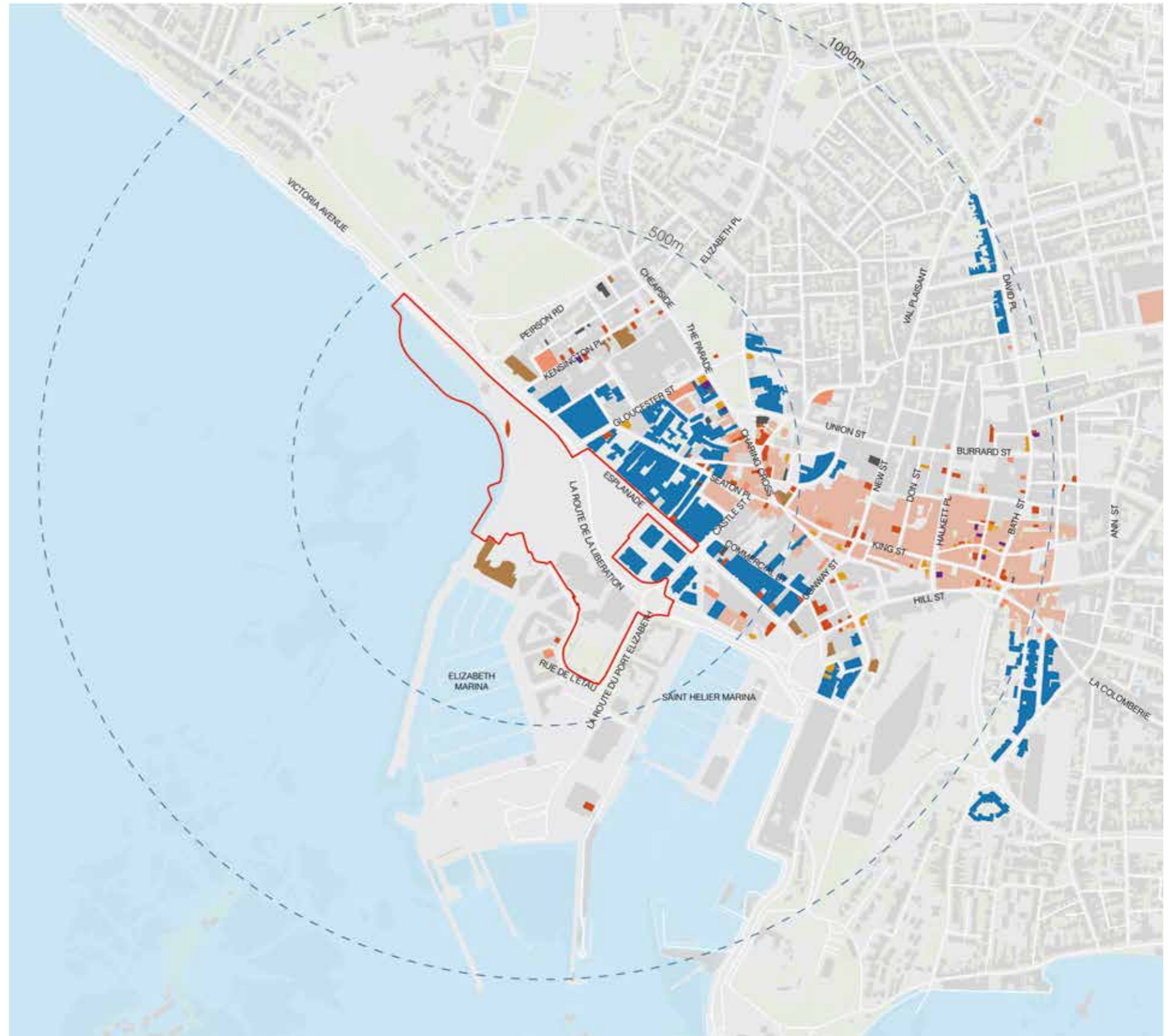
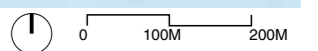


Figure 2.4 Commercial analysis



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.2 Connections and Movement

CYCLE MOVEMENT

Cycle access into the town follows a series of one way and two way road systems. The dedicated cycle route from St Aubin along the waterfront terminates abruptly opposite Gloucester Street and cyclists are encouraged to move along the shared pedestrian/cycle route adjacent to La Route de la Libération to cross at Castle Street and into the old town or continue onto Le Quai aux Marchands.

Cyclists looking to avoid traffic use the waterfront promenade, turning at the Radisson towards Marina Gardens and down to St Helier Marina where they can cross opposite Liberation Square to get into town.

Legend

-  Site boundary
-  Existing context
-  Dedicated cycleway
-  Primary cycle movement
-  Secondary cycle movement

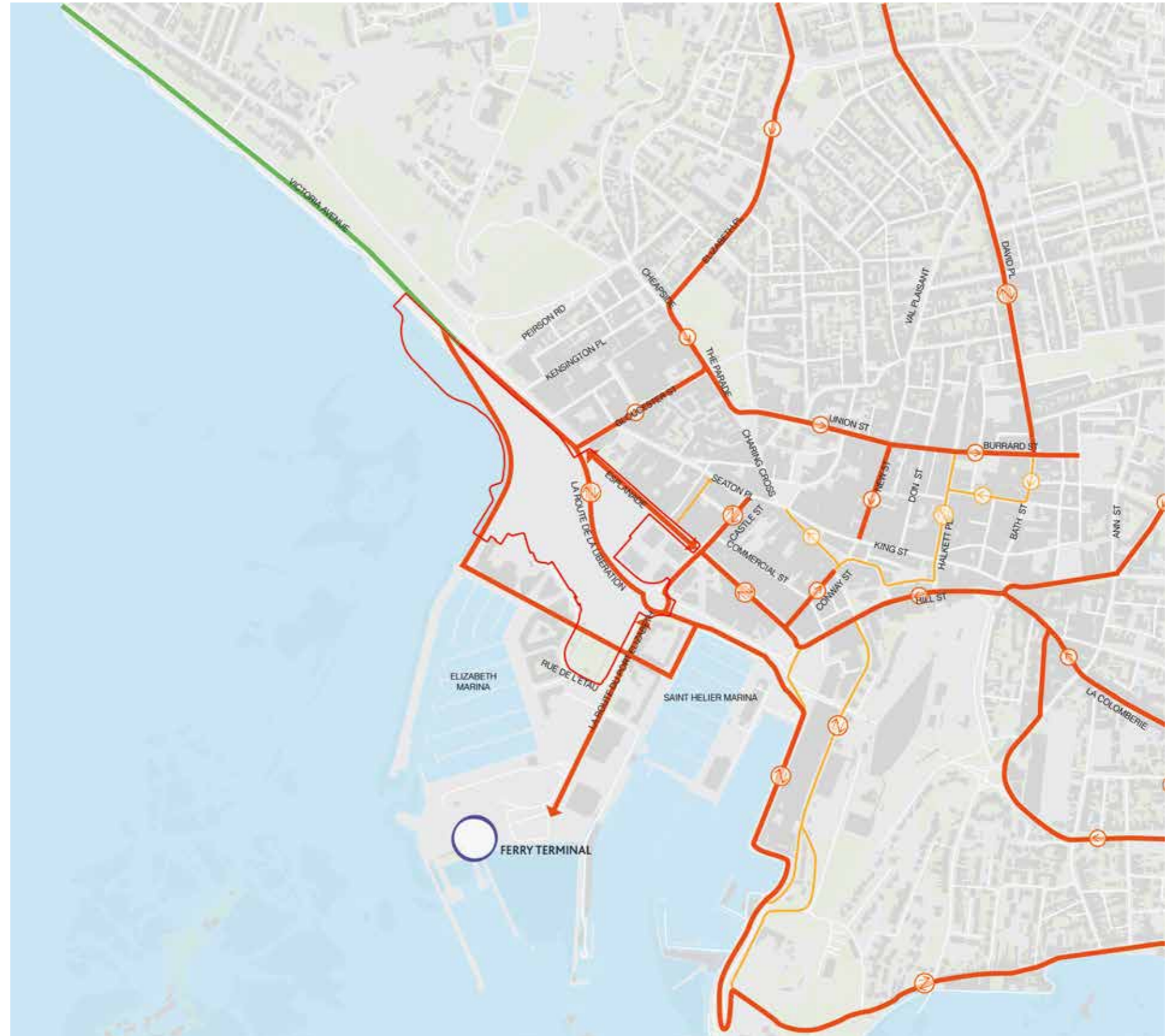
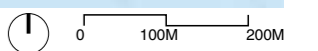


Figure 2.5 Cycle movement



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.2 Connections and Movement

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

Existing pedestrian movement is largely focused between a series of town squares such as Liberation Square, Royal Square and the Cenotaph as well as the Bus Station and several public car parks. The new green spine complements the axis of Charring Cross down to King and Queen Street.

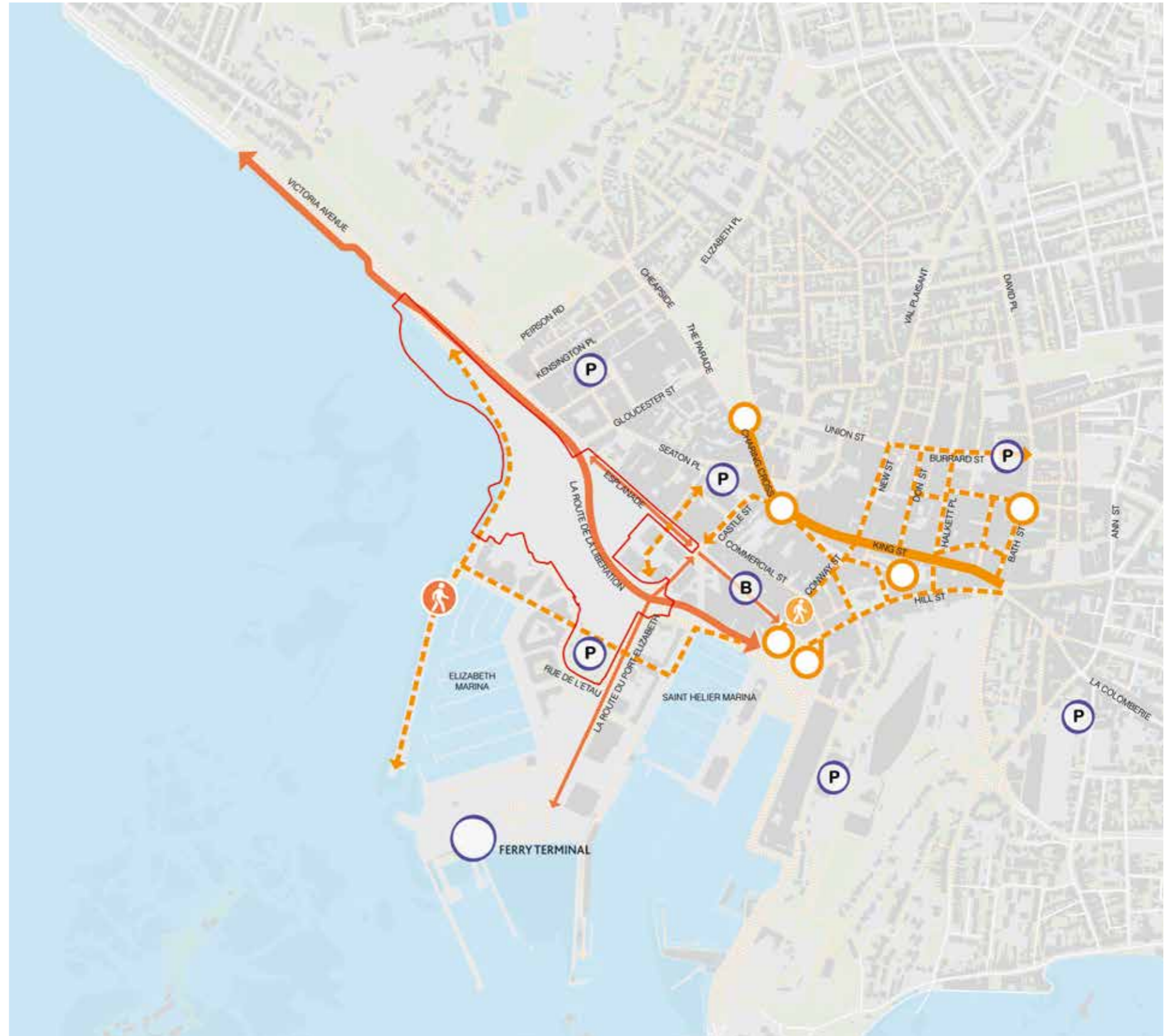


Figure 2.6 Pedestrian movement

Legend

- Site boundary
- Existing context
- Bus station
- Parking
- Focal point
- Primary movement
- Secondary movement

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.2 Connections and Movement

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The site is within 400m catchment radius (5 minutes' walk) from Jersey's central Liberation bus terminal, which is situated to the east of the site on the Esplanade. The site also benefits from closer bus stops located on the Esplanade.

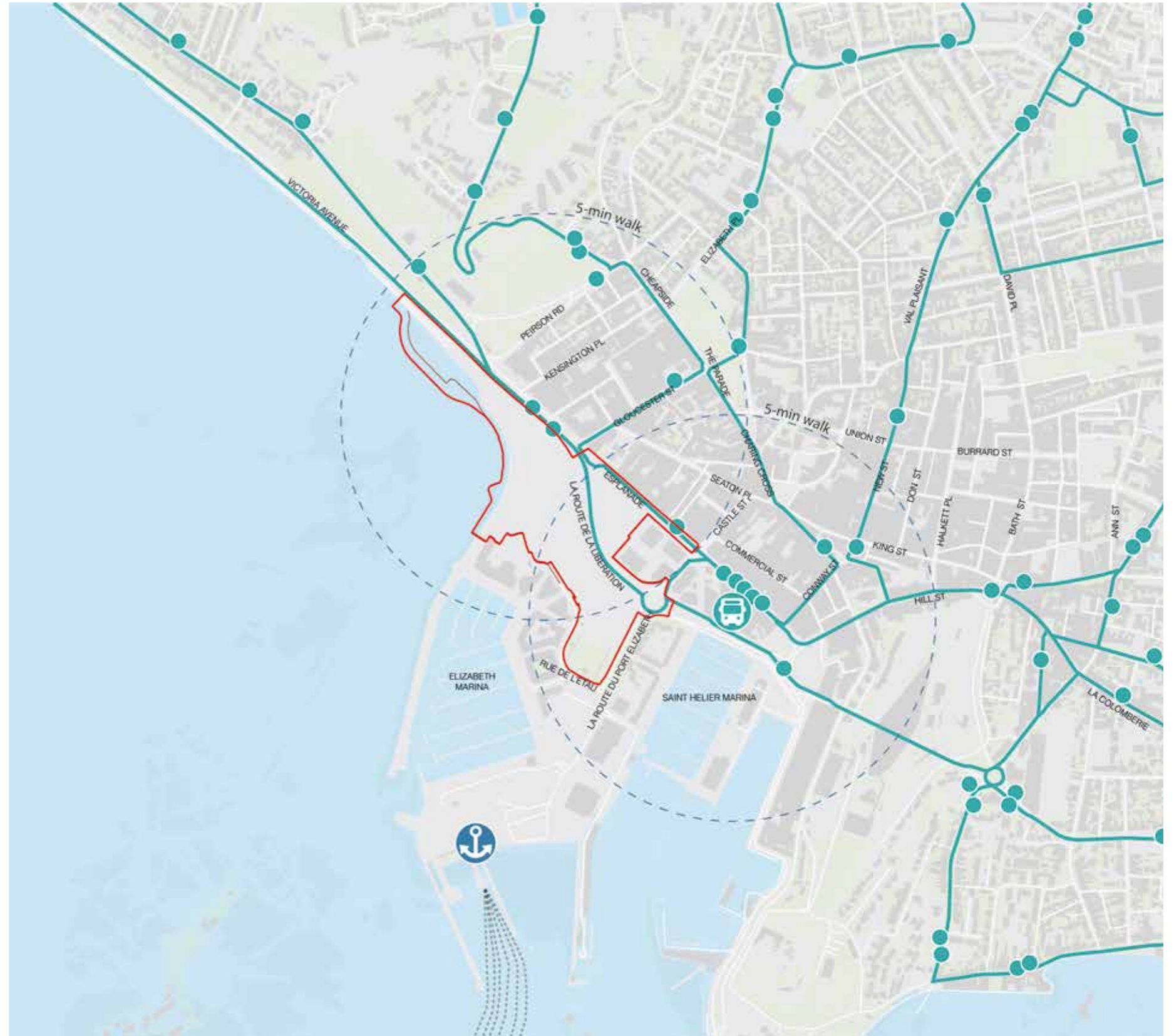


Figure 2.7 Public transport

Legend

- Site boundary
- Existing context
- Bus routes
- Bus stops
- Bus station
- Ports of Jersey
- 400m radii from the bus stop/ bus station (5 min walking)

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.3 Local Character

“The St Helier Urban Character Appraisal prepared by WMUD in October 2005 established ten distinct character areas in St Helier. This recognised that the town’s character lies in its rich mix of different scales, styles and materials enabling different periods of architecture to coexist.” - *WMUD Urban character appraisal review: 2021*

The Character Appraisal describes the process of defining character areas for St Helier using a multi stage urban design analysis of the town. Five general categories of assessment with a number of sub-categories were used:

1. Context – topography, boundaries/edges, landmarks, sea-views
2. Grain, scale and texture – figure field, frontage width, frontage setback, building height
3. Use and activity – land use, street activity, waterfront, population density
4. Spatial issues – places, green space, public realm
5. Built heritage – historic value, listed buildings, architectural character

The method of analysis was devised to acknowledge the complexity of the place but also to guide future development to ensure it is equally complex and multifaceted. By defining the Character Areas for St Helier and combining it with planning policies and design guidance the intention is to improve quality of design submitted for planning applications so that it maintains and enhances the character areas.

The appraisal acknowledged that the boundaries to the Character Areas were not prescriptive and were likely to shift and blur to reflect the nature of urban development in the town.

New Character Area boundaries have been defined in the St Helier Urban Character Appraisal Review in 2021 and the boundaries redrawn to exclude previously ambiguous areas or interstice areas.

Understanding and analysing the character areas as defined in the WMUD St Helier Urban Character Appraisal 2005 and the more recent unadopted Review 2021 is fundamental to establishing design guidelines for the new SWSH Visioning Framework.

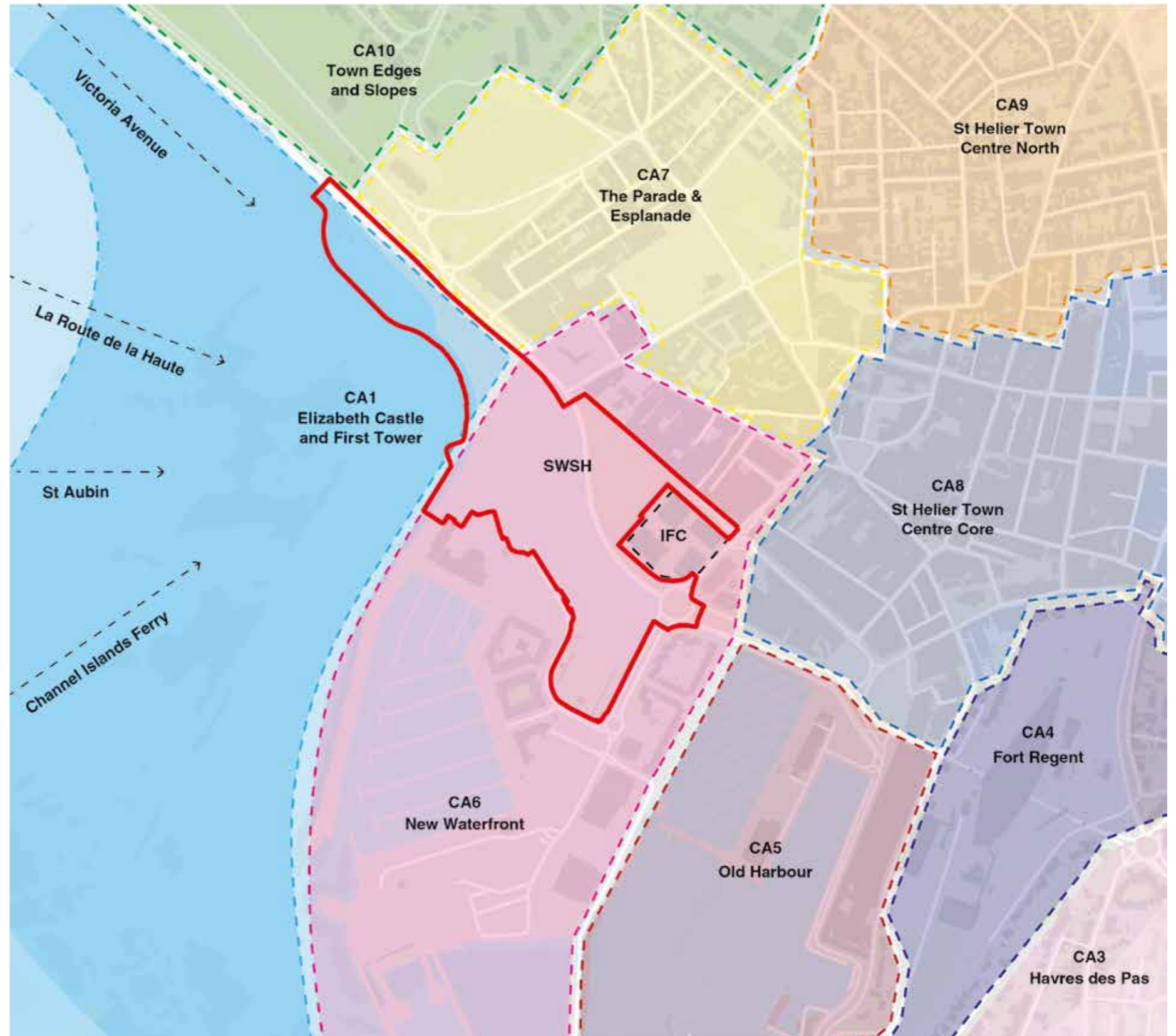


Figure 2.8 The WMUD 2005 Urban Character Appraisal map

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.3 Local Character



Figure 2.9 The new waterfront character zone

CA6 ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The new waterfront development typically consists of large floor plate buildings with a strong horizontal banding emphasised by the waterfront facing balconies and floor edges. Bold corner detailing and vertically expressed elements have been introduced to break up long façades and the roof profile stepped to reduce the impact of the scale of the development.

The grain, scale and texture of the existing waterfront development has little relationship to the architecture of St Helier and limited visual clues or take-ways to inform the SWSH Visioning Framework.

Positive aspects identified include: horizontal banding with clearly defined top, middle and bottom arrangements, façade shading and screening elements and inset terraces and balconies.

Negative aspects identified include: very long 'monolithic' façades and a limited materials palette.



Figure 2.10 Horizon Development



Figure 2.12 Castle Quay



Figure 2.14 Castle Quay



Figure 2.16 Castle Quay

GRAIN, SCALE AND TEXTURE

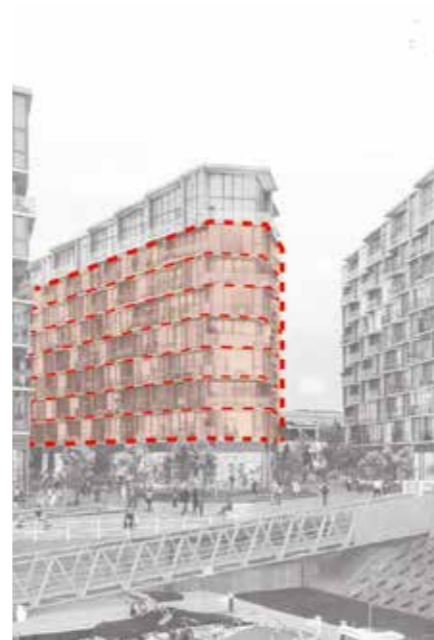


Figure 2.11 Horizon Development analysis

Strong horizontal banding to the building façades



Figure 2.13 Castle Quay analysis

Clear top, middle and bottom arrangement to the architectural parti



Figure 2.15 Castle Quay analysis

Limited materials palette to the key façades overlooking the marina



Figure 2.17 Castle Quay analysis

Inset terraces and balconies create depth and shadow as well as protection from the marine environment

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.3 Local Character



Figure 2.18 Parade and Esplanade Now the Parade and People's Park

CA7 ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The Esplanade is not homogeneous and is a mixture of contemporary and older historic buildings and elements. This creates a rich mixture of precedent façade types and materiality within the character area.

The Esplanade has a diverse range of façade types with a distinct top, middle and bottom emphasis and variable roof lines including traditional and modern interpretations of mansard roof with dormers or high level set-backs. Horizontal window rhythms dominate both modern and historic buildings and there is notable architectural elaboration and detailing at prominent corners.

Positive aspects identified include: frame and infill façade systems, vertical subdivisions, variation in the roof expression and architectural details, inset terraces, traditional mansard roof with dormers, strong window rhythms with punched openings, façades turning the corner, pronounced corner treatments and the inclusion of colonnades.

Negative aspects identified include: limited materials palette with variations in the quality and combinations of architectural systems and detailing.



Figure 2.19 No. 44, the Esplanade



Figure 2.21 No.40, the Esplanade



Figure 2.23 No.25, the Esplanade



Figure 2.25 No.18, the Esplanade

GRAIN, SCALE, TEXTURE AND BUILDING HERITAGE

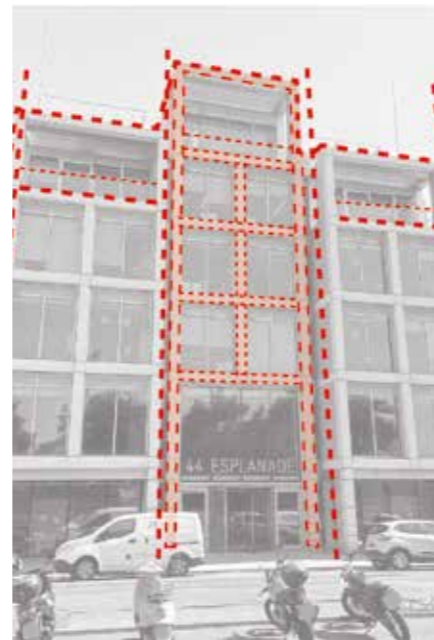


Figure 2.20 No. 44, the Esplanade analysis

Expression of the structural frame with clear vertical subdivision of the façades

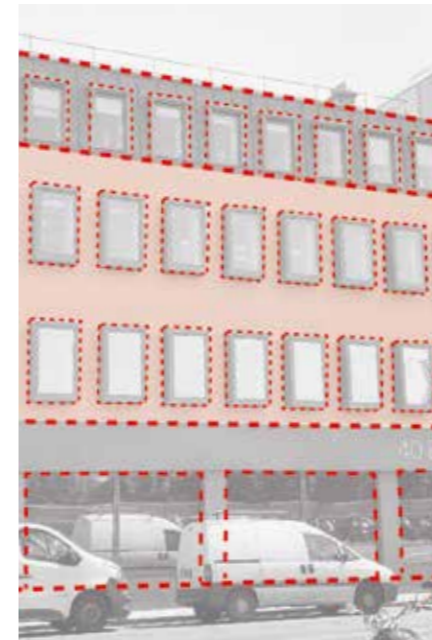


Figure 2.22 No.40, the Esplanade analysis

Clear top, middle and bottom arrangement to the architectural parti

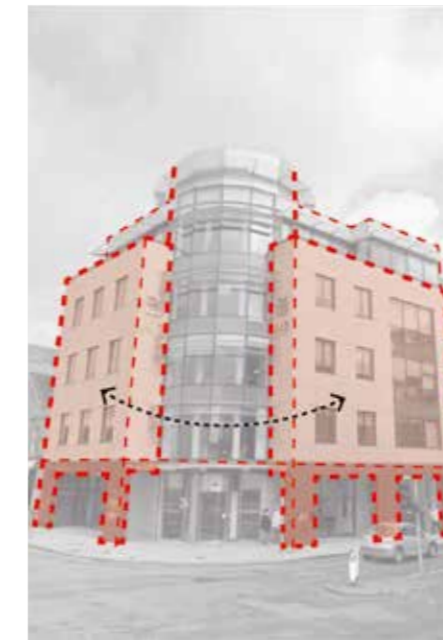


Figure 2.24 No.25, the Esplanade analysis

Pronounced architectural expression at building corners



Figure 2.26 No.18, the Esplanade analysis

Variation in the window and opening rhythms on historic buildings

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.3 Local Character



Figure 2.27 Caledonia Place

CA8 ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The St Helier town centre has a densely built-up urban form with a varying architectural grain including some historic narrow plots mixed with larger, more commercially valuable sites. The architecture has distinct horizontal banding with a clearly defined top, middle and bottom.

Horizontal window rhythms occur in both the older vernacular buildings and within the contemporary architectural additions. Variable roof lines create a grain and character at high level including traditional mansard roofs with dormers. Overall, there is a mix of architectural styles but with a strong heritage feel with elements of the old Esplanade waterfront interspersed with newer commercial development.

Positive aspects identified include: strong vertical sub-divisions of the building façades, variation in the roof expressions and architectural details, traditional mansard roofs with dormers, historic pitched roofs, strong window rhythms with punched openings, façades that turn the corner and expressed corner treatments.

Negative aspects identified include: some unsympathetic newer development that contrasts with the traditional vernacular architecture.



Figure 2.28 Esplanade



Figure 2.30 Weighbridge Place



Figure 2.32 Liberty Wharf shopping centre



Figure 2.34 The Royal Yacht

GRAIN, SCALE, TEXTURE AND BUILDING HERITAGE



Figure 2.29 Esplanade analysis

Clear top, middle and bottom arrangement to the architectural parti



Figure 2.31 Weighbridge Place analysis

Vertical subdivision to the building façades



Figure 2.33 Liberty Wharf analysis

Traditional pitched roof construction with dormer windows

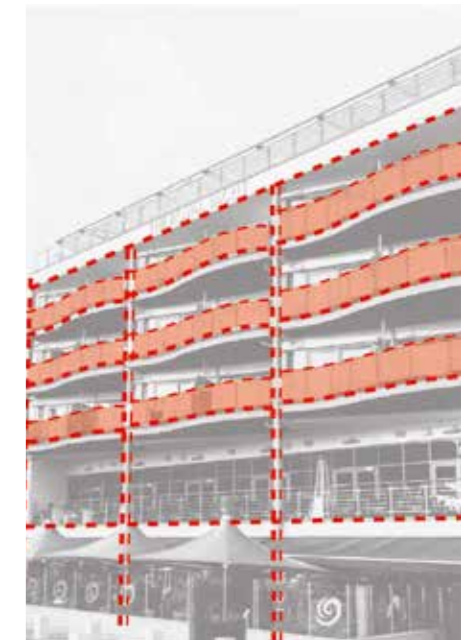


Figure 2.35 The Royal Yacht analysis

Expression of the structural frame with inset terraces and balconies

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.3 Local Character



Figure 2.36 IFC



Figure 2.37 IFC1



Figure 2.39 IFC 1 and IFC 2



Figure 2.41 IFC 5

IFC ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The IFC has large floor plate buildings with floor to floor, high performance curtain walling and expressed structural frames typical of financial centre architecture found in the UK and Europe. An additional level of detail and surface treatments creates a secondary grid of texture and colour. Local relevance is found in the tonal palette of contemporary materials, which reflect the use of traditional materials such as granite. The old sea wall is also retained within the scheme which itself incorporates natural stone types reflective of those used on the island.

Where buildings come to ground they create colonnades that create sheltered routes within the public realm.

Overall there is a strong commercial contemporary feel with a distinct larger civic grain unlike the historic character of St Helier's old town.

Positive aspects identified include: clear structural expression of the building frame coming to ground, vertical façade bay arrangements, 360 degree façades that turn the corner, a strong top, middle and bottom façade parti, high level building set backs and an activated colonnaded ground plane.

Negative aspects identified include: large building plots with large floor plates.

GRAIN, SCALE AND TEXTURE

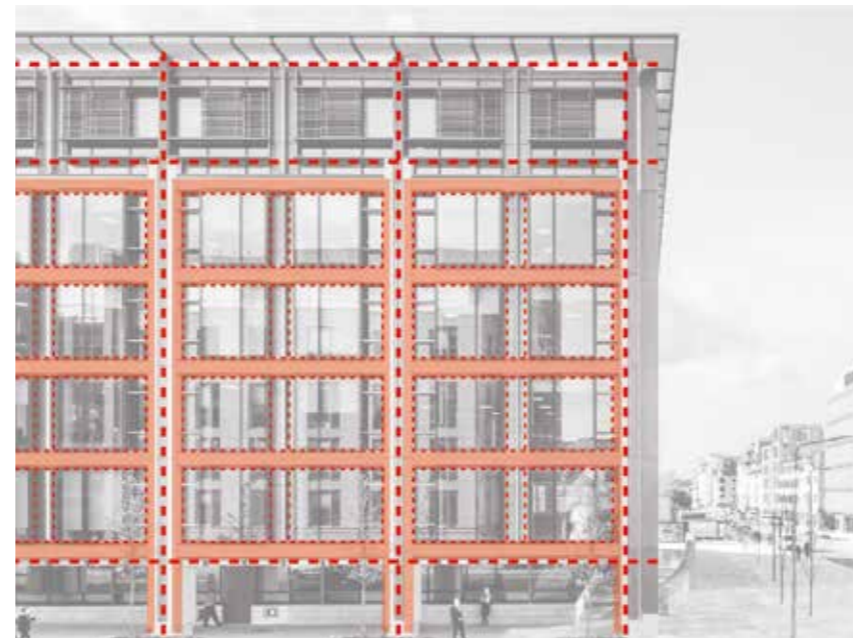


Figure 2.38 IFC 1 analysis

Clear structural expression of the building frame with a vertical bay arrangement

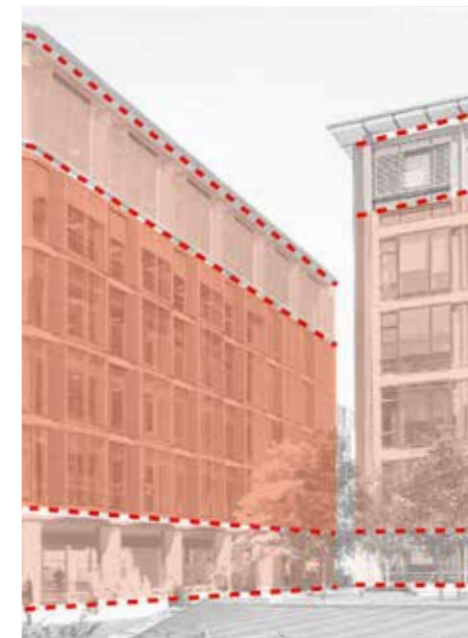


Figure 2.40 IFC 1 + IFC 2 analysis

Clear top, middle and bottom arrangement to the architectural parti



Figure 2.42 IFC 5 analysis

Activated ground plane including colonnades and high quality public realm

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.4 Heritage and Conservation and Existing Site Features

The Site is somewhat divorced from the historic core physically due to La Route de la Libération and architecturally due to the style of the Radisson Blu Hotel, Castle Quay and the existing leisure facilities. However, there are visual relationships with several important historic assets, principally Elizabeth Castle to the southwest.

From south to north, the Site includes:

- Marina Gardens which includes a basement car park beneath (incorporating 500 car parking spaces) accessed from La Route du Port Elizabeth;
- A leisure complex including Cineworld cinema, Aquasplash swimming centre, health and fitness centre and a number of restaurants and bars;
- A construction compound for the nearby Horizon construction works with adjacent 'fast and tasty food' café;
- A surface level car parking area at Les Jardin de la Mer providing approximately 580 commuter parking spaces
- A section of late Georgian seawall and promenade runs along the northern boundary of the car park on the Esplanade and is listed Grade 3
- The Waterfront Promenade and Les Jardins de la Mer, a formally landscaped sea side park
- La Frégate Café
- Castle kiosk and take away café
- Cycle hire kiosk

Legend
















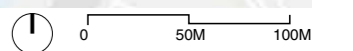
- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Site boundary |  | Victorian shelter to be relocated |
|  | Existing context |  | Slipway |
|  | Building / Structure to be Retained |  | La Frégate Cafe |
|  | Building / Structure to be removed |  | WW2 mine to be relocated and included into the design |
|  | Building / Structure to be relocated |  | Dolphin water feature in Les Jardins de la Mer |
|  | Listed building grade 2 WW2 German casemate |  | Cineworld |
|  | Listed building grade 3 historic sea wall along the Esplanade |  | AquaSplash |
|  | Sea wall along the Esplanade | | |



Figure 2.43 Existing site features



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.4 Heritage and Conservation and Existing Site Features

- A World War II (WWII) German military casemate and adjacent slip way into the sea. The casemate is listed Grade 2 (referred to as the German occupation site, Grand Hotel);
- Elizabeth Castle Ferry Kiosk and a shelter for passengers of Le Petit Train a scenic road train that travels between St Helier and St Aubin

Other site features of note include a commemorative stone, dolphin water feature within Les Jardins de la Mer and the WW2 mine, all of which should be considered for relocation.

La Frégate Cafe constructed in 1997 is located on the northern edge of Les Jardins de La Mer and is currently under consideration for listed building status. Due to the need to raise the sea wall and nearby land levels to protect the area from flooding and rising sea levels it will not be possible to retain the structure in its current location. It is proposed instead to relocate the structure to the north west to sit within the reconfigured Jardins de la Mer and be repurposed to house the new Elizabeth Castle ferry kiosk as well as a cafe.

Cineworld, the multiplex cinema on the Waterfront, would be redeveloped as part of the 12-year vision to transform the area, however only after an alternative cinema comes into operation.

AquaSplash Leisure Centre will stay in operation until 2028, when it will be demolished and re-provision will be made for the swimming pool, gym and kids zone facilities within the Framework.



Figure 2.44 The WW2 German casemate



Figure 2.45 The slipway



Figure 2.46 La Frégate Café



Figure 2.47 Victorian shelter along the promenade



Figure 2.48 The WW2 Mine



Figure 2.49 The commemorative stone

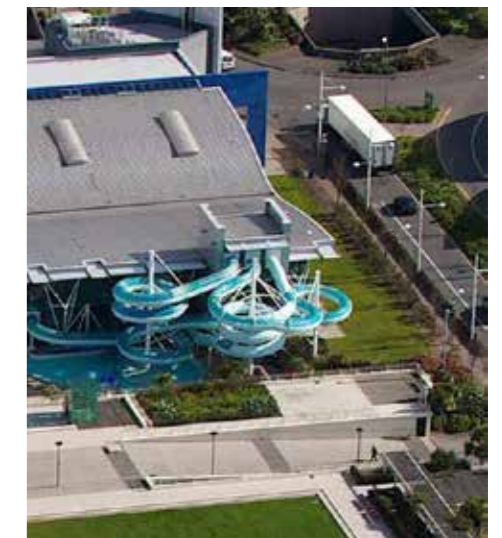


Figure 2.50 AquaSplash



Figure 2.51 Historic sea wall



Figure 2.52 The dolphin fountain



Figure 2.53 Cineworld

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.5 Building Heights

The site is surrounded by predominantly medium-tall to tall development with the heights varying from 4 to 9 storeys with the commercial buildings along the Esplanade (+18.47 to +33.70 AOD).

There is now a critical mass of higher density, taller and commercial architecture on both sides of La Route de la Libération including the emerging International Financial Centre (IFC) reaching up to +38.02 AOD in height.

The southern edge of the development site is framed with 5 to 8 storeys residential developments of Castle Quay Victoria Place and Albert Place.

To the south-west of the site boundary there is Radisson Blu Hotel of 7 storeys (+32.26 AOD). The emerging Horizon residential development comprised of the three towers of 9 to 11 storeys (+40.10 to +47.48 AOD) will become a new height dominant on the Waterfront.

The existing buildings on the Site range from 11.28m above ordnance datum (AOD) for the Elizabeth Castle Ferry Kiosk to 23.61m AOD for Cineworld.

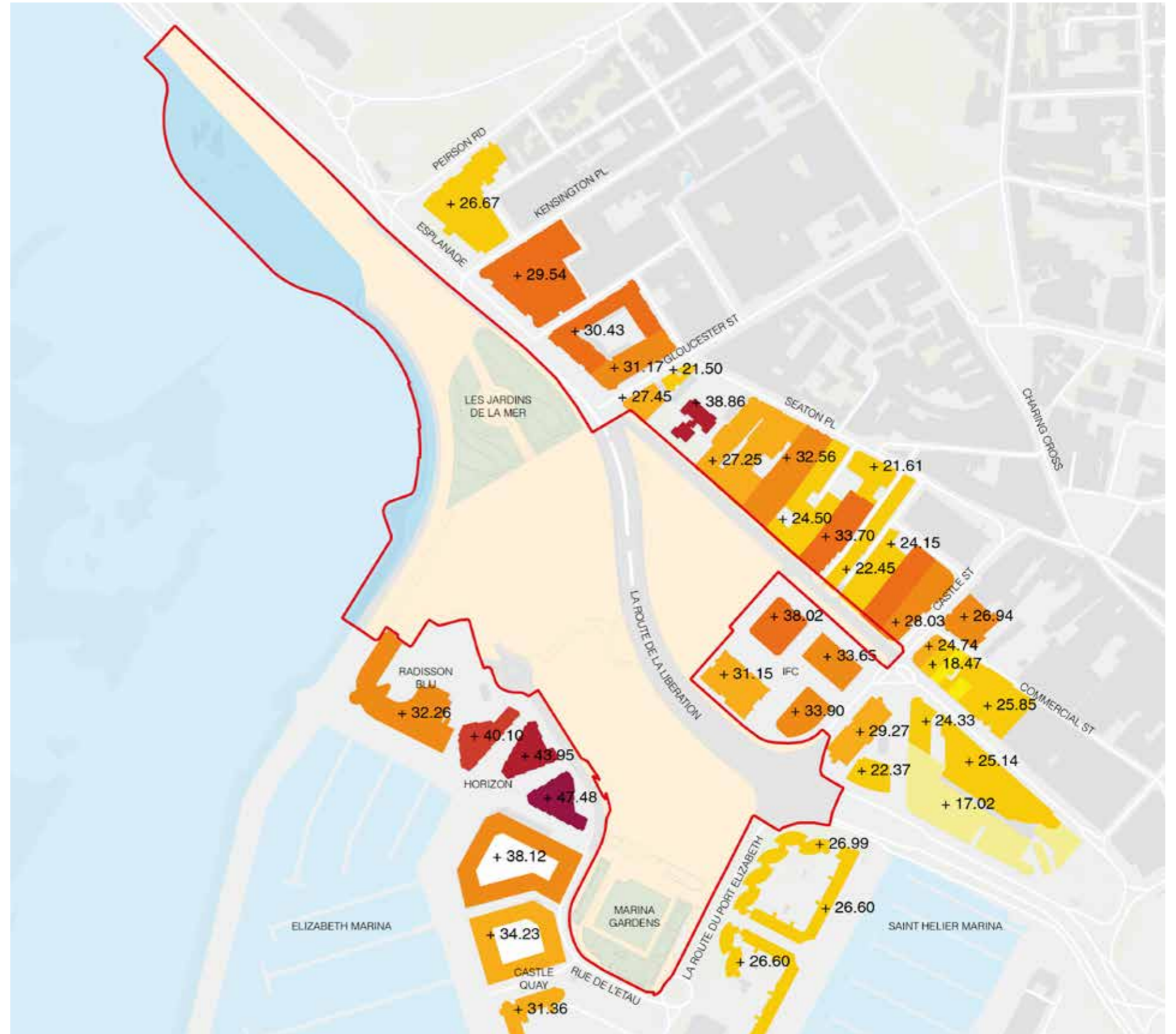
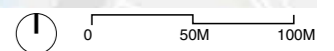


Figure 2.54 Surrounding building heights



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|------------|
| | Site boundary | | 7 Storeys |
| | 1-3 Storeys | | 8 Storeys |
| | 4 Storeys | | 9 Storeys |
| | 5 Storeys | | 10 Storeys |
| | 6 Storeys | | 11 Storeys |

2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.6 Site Constraints

The key technical and infrastructural constraints include the following;

WIND

- There is several locations to the west of the Site with instances of strong winds.

EXISTING UTILITIES

- There is an existing foul sewer and a deep surface water sewer that runs beneath the Site, the former between Rue de L'etau and La Route de La Libération and the latter between the western boundary and La Route de La Libération. The existing foul sewer will need to be rerouted to accommodate the framework.

FLOODING AND SEA LEVEL RISE

- The existing levels result in substantial flooding to Victoria Avenue and the Esplanade in the 1 in 200 year flood scenario for 2020. This begins to encroach on Gloucester Street in the 2070 scenario and up Seaton Place and Broad Street in the 2120 scenario.

Legend











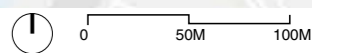
	Site boundary		Area of Victorian sea wall
	Wind S20 exceeded		Historic groundwater level
	Wind S15 exceeded		Area of Victorian sea wall
	Existing foul sewers		Areas of overtopping flooding from a 0.5% AEP (1 in 200yr return period) projected for 2020, 2070 and 2120
	Existing surface sewers		
	Existing foul manhole		



Figure 2.55 Technical site constraints



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.6 Site Constraints

There is a lack of safe and attractive pedestrian and cyclist connections between the town centre and Southwest St Helier. La Route de la Libération is one of the main barriers to achieving a good connectivity between the harbours, the Waterfront and town centre. Equally, there is a certain amount of noise pollution generated by traffic. The new development will be carefully planned in order to minimise the negative impact on the residential dwellings and to make steps to improve the pollution and severance caused by the road.

The views from and across the site towards Elizabeth Castle, Noirmont and Fort Regent are to be protected and, where possible, enhanced.

Radisson Blu Hotel parking generates an unattractive frontage and this issue has to be addressed through design of the new development.

Parts of the historic sea wall as well as the WW2 German casemate are listed and as such, will need to be retained and carefully integrated into the framework. La Frégate Café is also proposed to be listed and will need to be considered in the proposed design.

The existing AquaSplash and the Multiplex Cineworld will be retained until 2028 when the lease ends and closer to the point in which the facilities are reprovided either on site or within the surroundings. This has informed the phasing of the development to minimise disruption of these facilities. Refer to Chapter 6 of this report for further information on phasing.

Legend









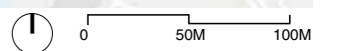
- | | |
|--|--|
|  Site boundary |  Radisson Blu hotel interface |
|  La Route de la Libération |  Listed structures (including La Frégate Café, which has Grade 2 listed status) |
|  Disrupted connections with the town centre |  Structures to be retained on site until 2028 |
|  Noise pollution |  Key views to be protected |



Figure 2.56 Urban design site constraints



2. Existing Context

2.2 Built Environment

2.2.7 Opportunities

The consolidation of Southwest St Helier's key opportunity sites provides a remarkable opportunity for the development of a waterfront precinct that enriches the existing urban fabric, celebrates local history and context, and expands on the waterfront's role as an important economic, recreational and tourism asset for St Helier and Jersey.

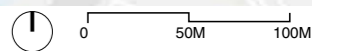
Creating a flexible and adaptable planning framework with a focus on placemaking, connectivity and restoring a sense of place, character and local relevance are key for the project.

The size and extent of the site allows for opportunities to significantly improve St Helier's movement networks, reconnecting the physical and cultural links between the town and the waterfront. A key opportunity is the transformation of La Route de la Libération from an arterial road into a place in its own right; through changes such as gradual reduction of traffic volumes and speeds, several at grade pedestrian crossings, consideration of the relationship of buildings to the road and public realm upgrades.

There is also an opportunity to enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity and create a stronger link between Les Jardins de la Mer and the Marina Gardens as well as introducing a number of new public spaces.



Figure 2.57 Opportunities



Legend

Site boundary

Key arterial road

La Route de la Libération incorporated into the framework

Waterfront

New/ enhanced connections to the town centre

Existing public spaces

Pedestrian/ cycling link connecting public spaces