

Abstract

Built heritage conservation and tourism planning in Antigua. The case of Fort George, Monk's Hill

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This paper will examine the implications for further development of heritage tourism in Antigua and the rest of the Caribbean. It will also make proposals for the restoration and use of Fort George in Antigua as a case study for the development of more heritage tourism products in Caribbean territories. The paper will also explore institutional and legislative matters related to the Nelson's Dockyard National Park that will influence the outcome of the Fort George Restoration Project.

Key issues include: the only moderate development of heritage tourism in Antigua to date despite the abundance of heritage resources on the island; the potential for heritage tourism to reverse the slowing growth in the country's resort-based tourism industry; and the increasing interest by tourists internationally in heritage attractions.

The study has produced a number of major findings. Heritage tourism should be further developed in the Region, as it is likely to yield tremendous environmental, economic and

socio-cultural benefits. Successful large-scale heritage tourism development will require: making heritage tourism a central concern in national development planning; full public participation in all aspects and at all levels of heritage tourism; and, integrated and anticipatory approaches to heritage tourism planning. Major challenges to surmount include the high costs and great expertise needed for restorations and ensuring that restorations are authentic. For Fort George and other major heritage tourism sites to be successful they must offer a significant amount of commercial, recreational and entertainment activities, and their resources must be managed sustainably.

The final conclusion is that large-scale heritage tourism development must be vigorously pursued in the Region.