

COUNCIL FOR THE PROTECTION OF JERSEY'S HERITAGE



19 Magnolia Gardens, La Route de St. Aubin, St. Lawrence, Jersey, Channel Islands, JE3 1JW

Newsletter - December 2011

Urban Conservation and Rescue

André Ferrari and Paul Craig remain as members of the Ministerial Listing and Review Group (MRLAG). Paul Craig is part of the team of experts carrying out the ongoing review of historic buildings listed in both rural and urban areas, including St. Helier.

The Council has written letters of objection against the following planning applications that will have a dramatic impact on the historic fabric of St. Helier:

- **P/2011/0817 - 19-29 Commercial Street, 35-37 Broad Street.**
Called the J1 development this application would result in the complete or partial demolition (only facades to be retained) of no fewer than 5 Georgian or Regency buildings and the loss of the present characteristic and attractive streetscape.
- **P/2011/1283.** This application to re-develop the Co-op site in Broad Street will be out of keeping with this historic area of St. Helier and will effectively result in the loss of listed buildings in Pitt and Dumaresq Streets. The Council believes that this part of St. Helier merits designation as one of the proposed Town Conservation Areas.
- **P/2011/0840** - An application to re-develop the Southampton Hotel (14-16 The Weighbridge.) would not only result in the complete demolition of the listed 'Weighbridge Café', but also, by raising the hotel's gable end features to twice their existing height, spoil the proportions of the building.

It is a measure of the size of the problem facing St. Helier that if all these applications are approved a total of eleven Georgian/Regency/Victorian buildings will be lost in historic parts of the town.

Fortifications

Council members, Paul Bernal, (President, Channel Islands Occupation Society) Chick Anthony, (Chairman, Environment Section, Société Jersiaise) and John Mesch (Chairman, Channel Islands World Heritage Working Group) and Ann Renouf have all been involved in a recent application to the Tourism Development Fund seeking financial support for the Société Jersiaise project to obtain a World Heritage designation for 'The Fortifications of the Channel Islands'.

Vernacular Architecture

Neil Molyneux provides a valuable input to objections against the proposed alterations to historic buildings. He has continued his research into historic buildings in Jersey and Guernsey.

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Geology, Archaeology and Landscape

The Palaeolithic archaeological site at La Cotte de St. Brelade has been a major centre of archaeological activity throughout the year. Dr. John Renouf and Professor Graham Evans our AGM guest speaker have both been heavily involved in this work.

John Renouf made a successful personal objection to retrospective planning application P/2011/0308 for building a garden shed in a prominent position in the protected part of the coastal landscape at St Ouen. This photograph illustrates the fact that a building that could be regarded as small and insignificant will still create an obtrusive blot on a beautiful landscape.



The Council intends to repeat a request made when the Jersey Island Plan 2011 was being revised, that it should contain a policy on landscape protection. It is significant that all the highly controversial developments in recent times have arisen through developers and planning officers ignoring the importance of the landscape setting. Portelet, Grève de Lecq, La Coupe, Petit Port and Camellia Cottage are all cases in point. The Council proposed that the Island Plan should include an additional statement of a policy, as follows:

Preamble:

'The Island of Jersey is characterised by its distinctive, scenic and historic landscapes.

Landscape is important, not just as scenery but because it links culture and nature, the past with the present. It has many values, not all of them tangible, such as the sense of place which is so important in Jersey; and it matters to people - it is the people of Jersey who have helped create and now value their existing landscapes whether urban, rural or coastal.

All landscapes matter as they represent the coming together of the natural world and human society. As well as providing places for islanders to live and work with sources of food and

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water they also contribute to spiritual fulfilment and aesthetic enjoyment.

It is important, therefore, that landscapes should be managed, planned and, where appropriate, protected to ensure that their essential character and the biological diversity they contain is not lost due to excessive or inappropriate development or physical alteration.

Policy

The first consideration in any planning application will be the effect the proposed development would have on the existing landscape, streetscape or seascape. Development proposals that would have a significant and detrimental effect on the visual appearance of the existing landscape, streetscape or seascape or on the biological diversity within them, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed development is required to meet an essential need of the Island community and that it cannot be located elsewhere.'

Heritage Protection Policy and Island Plan Implementation

Having drafted the landscape protection policy described above attempts will be made to obtain the agreement of the other heritage organisations before persuading a member of the States to propose an amendment to the Island Plan. A further attempt will be made to obtain an amendment to include the Plémont headland in the Coastal National Park.

The Council has provided practical support for a Third Party Appeal that has been lodged against the decision by the Planning Applications Panel to permit the demolition of Camellia Cottage and the building of three tall, detached buildings in the cramped quarry site in the Gorey Green Backdrop Zone, contrary to at least three Island Plan policies.

It is expected that the unresolved planning application for 28 houses to be built on the Plémont headland will present the next and greatest challenge for the heritage organisations. Much will depend on whether or not Minister Duhamel provides endorsement for his predecessor's decision to hold a public inquiry.