

National Trust 'fails to see how certain projects got approval'

Modern design has its place - and should stay there

THE National Trust of Guernsey shares concerns about the design of some modern buildings.

Trust councillor Ian McCathie said the group failed to see how some projects had been approved.

'We have been concerned over the last year or so that some developments have gone through for which we find it very difficult to see how planning permission was given,' he said.

'There are examples of good modern design and we are not a group of old fogies who don't want change. Change happens, but it has to be sensitive to the surroundings,' he said.

The 'snail house' at Le Bigard, Forest, was a nice looking place but the 'large slab of glass' that had suddenly appeared near Clifton overlooking Town was not, he said.

'One of the difficulties with the old planning system was that you didn't always have time to make your views known,' said Mr McCathie.

'We were horrified when that one [Clifton] appeared and at the sort of development that the Environment Department was allowing.'

The trust had been success-

ful in asking for the original plans to be reviewed for the construction of apartments at the back of its Cornet Street property. This has now been done with assistance from the developer and the new design was much better, he said.

It did have concerns over an application to demolish and rebuild a property on the headland at La Neuve Rue, Albecq. 'We recognise that the existing building is not an area of architecture that needs protecting but we are

not happy with what has been proposed and we have appealed against it,' said Mr McCathie.

Rob McGhee and Robin Penna have started a petition in protest at 'architectural eyesores' appearing in sensitive locations.

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Mr McCathie said the trust could not sign the petition en bloc because some members might not agree with it.

'But we do share some of the concerns that it raises.'

Mr McCathie said the trust was keen to work with the planning authority and that some progress had been made.

'The new website is a bonus as it allows people to study planning applications in a more effective way,' he said.

La Societe Guerneslaise conservation officer Jamie Hooper said the body had spoken about the matter but felt its mandate was more about the environment, wildlife, record keeping and suchlike.

'This is more to do with public perception of new buildings and how they fit into the landscape, which is not really part of our remit,' he said.

'We have worked closely with the National Trust on things such as The Town Markets to ensure that the historic value of the building was preserved.'

'We would encourage members to have their say on these modern buildings as individuals if they feel that strongly about them.'

Where to sign 'eyesores' petition...

The petition is available at the following places:
Vauvert Shopper, Fishy Bites [Model Yacht Pond], Sam's Barber, Ogier's [St Martin's], Valpy, The Last Post, St Peter's Post Office, Venture Garage, Longfrie Inn, Les Sablons Tearoom, R. H. Gaudin & Sons, John Hurst Butchers, Buttonhole Florist [St Sampson's], Tozer's, Johns the Butchers, Bougourd and Harry, French Accents, Hansa Wholefoods, Cobo Tearoom, Cobo Village Centre, Grandes Rocques Garage, Cobo Butchers, Island International Travel [Route de Cobo], Smilers, The Imperial Hotel, Torteval Stores, Forest Stores, The Venture Inn and Le Mont Saint Garage.

■ Copies of Rob McGhee and Robin Penna's petition are also available from eyesores@cwgsy.net.