

National Trust Position on HSBC proposal for the old Trimingham's store site

There has been much discussion about the HSBC proposal for the Trimingham's site on Front Street and speculation about the Bermuda National Trust's decision not to object to the application.

The Bermuda National Trust participated in the design charrette conducted by Architects' Cooper & Gardner because, mindful of the scant protection afforded buildings within the City of Hamilton, the Trust believe that this gave us the best chance of having a positive impact on the design process. The Trust's statement regarding this project demonstrates that what we endorsed was an open dialogue between the BNT, the architects and a wide variety of other stakeholders and the design concept that resulted from those meetings.

The Trust is satisfied that the unique character of Front Street is retained in the proposal for the frontage and that it has to accepted that it is inevitable that a multi storey structure is permitted by the City of Hamilton Plan 2001. The design charrette preserved the iconic western side of the old Trimingham's store and provided for a Chancery Lane-like walkway through on the western side. The site has also been saved from having a blank, multi-storey side wall facing the Smith's building.

There are certain triggers which prompt action from the Trust; where legally protected listed buildings and or conservation zonings are threatened, and these did not occur in this case. We have to let the planning process take place and the Government's Historic Buildings Advisory Committee perform its function. Questions of aesthetics must be decided by the individual and guided by the precepts set out for Front Street in the City of Hamilton Plan 2001.

The Trust will continue to lobby for the historic listing protection to be extended into the City so that the protection has to be recognised by developers and also publicly identify buildings worthy of being saved.

Bermuda National Trust
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