

A MATTER OF INTEREST

Roger Hills continues his description of some of the Island's listed historic buildings

Since 2005, Jersey Heritage has added to its role of protecting and promoting the Island's rich heritage and cultural environment by making 'listing' recommendations to the Minister for Planning and Environment. The whole of our built heritage contributes to local character and a sense of place, so how do we identify which buildings are of such 'special' interest to merit protection?

Recommendations for historic building protection are considered on a case-by-case basis, and are the result of detailed research and discussion within Jersey Heritage, and also with a forum of other partner heritage organisations - working within a framework set by local historic building policies, planning legislation, and international conventions.

There are a number of matters to be considered when looking at any historic building, in order to establish the story of the building and to reach an understanding of its importance. How old is the building? What is its history? Does it have any significant historical associations? What makes the building architecturally interesting? Is the building of an unusual or rare type? How does it relate to its locality and landscape?

The intrinsic architectural interest of a building is one of the principal factors to be addressed. This is judged by looking at the building itself - its design and the quality of decoration and craftsmanship displayed. It is also crucial to understand whether it is an important example of a particular building type, or if the structure is of interest because of a distinctive building technique or technological innovation.

An appreciation of the historic interest of a building is also of fundamental importance. Old buildings have an inherent historical value by virtue of their age, but they can also illustrate past cultural influences and aspirations, the practical and functional requirements of particular trades and occupations, the craftsmanship and artistic expression of past populations, and the military necessities of more turbulent and unsettled days. This history can be understood through an investigation of a building's fabric and function, and by examination of historic maps, photographs, archive records and publications.

The age and rarity of a building is influential on its perceived historical importance, as the older a building is, the fewer examples of its kind are likely to survive. The value of Jersey's traditional vernacular buildings is undeniable, as they are of great age, illustrate



The Hermitage, Jersey by P J Oules

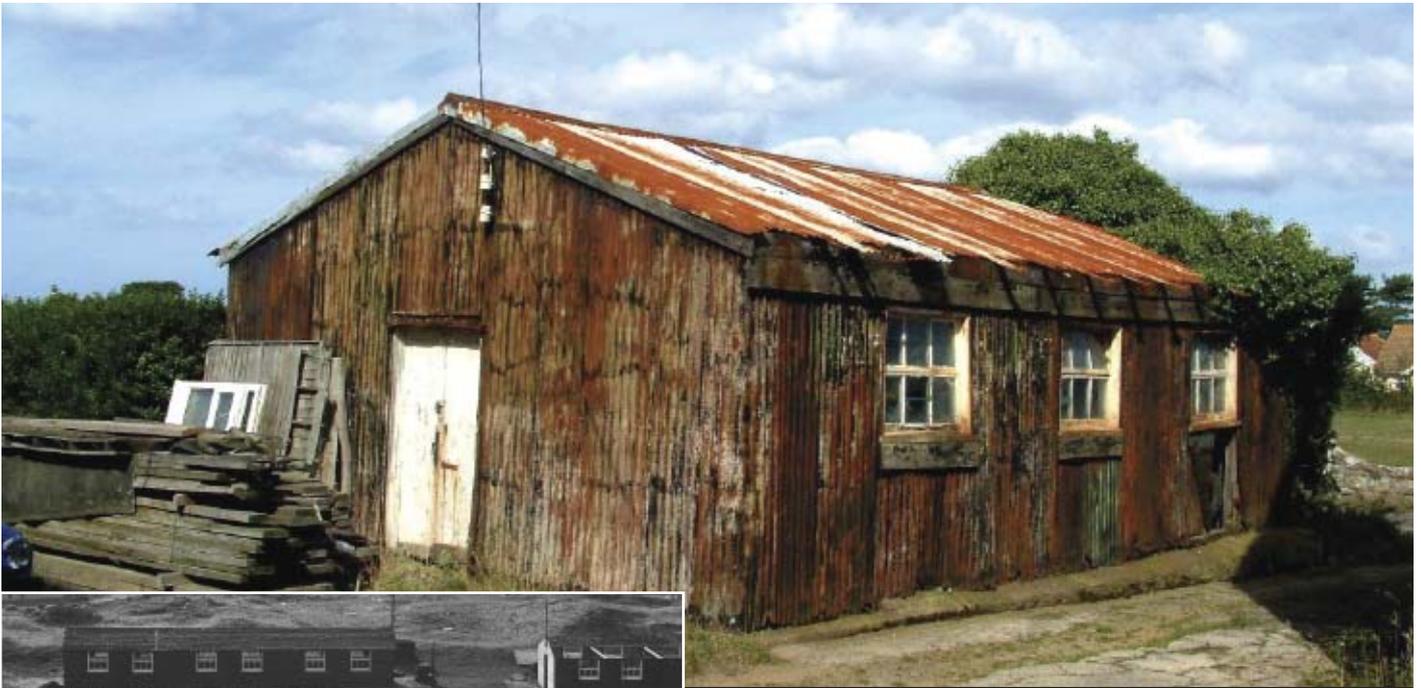
distinctive local traditions, and are rooted in the character and history of the Island. Judgements can be more testing with buildings from later periods. For instance, when considering buildings dating to after the middle of the 19th century, greater selectivity is required, as there were many more buildings constructed at that time, with a much larger proportion surviving today. The historical interest of these buildings, the quality of the architecture and the contribution the buildings make to local character therefore become more significant. Buildings constructed post-1945 have to be of exceptional importance to be listed, and those less than 30 years old are rarely, if ever, considered for protection

as their significance can only properly be understood with the passage of time.

The location and setting of a building needs also to be pondered. The extent to which a building contributes to the rural character of an area or to the weft and weave of the historic streets of town can enhance or detract from its interest. It is also necessary to consider whether a building has an interesting historical or architectural relationship with other nearby historic buildings (known as 'group value'), perhaps because it is part of a planned architectural composition or shares an historical functional relationship with its neighbours.

An historical association with significant people or past events also adds to the interest of a building and furthers the argument for their protection. The fact that St Saviour's Rectory was the birthplace of Lillie Langtry, that the exile home of French Royalist and politician Comte Narcisse-Achille de Salvandy can be found in St Saviour's Road, and that Lieutenant-Governor Sir Tomkyns Hilgrove Turner - the man who delivered the Rosetta Stone from Egypt to the British Museum - had a residence in Gorey, enhances the interest of each of these buildings.

There are many factors to be taken into account when considering whether an old building is so remarkable as to merit particular attention, and this process must always be undertaken with care and thought to ensure that the rich legacy of Jersey's built heritage is properly recognised. "These old buildings do not belong to us; they have belonged to our forefathers and they will belong to our descendants unless we play them false. They are not our property, to do as we like with. We are only trustees for those that come after us." William Morris, 1889.

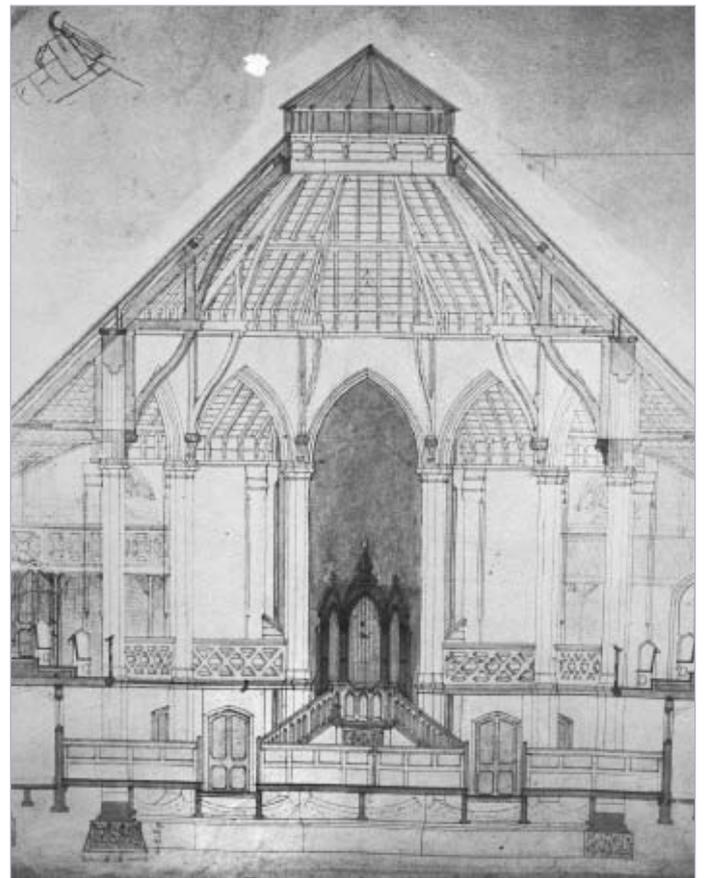


First World War POW Hut, St Brelade



The Prisoner of War camp in 1915

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in May 2007. This timber-framed building was originally part of the Prisoner-of-War camp built at Blanchés Banques in 1915. Following the end of the Great War, it was moved and used as a farm shop until the early 1990s. The building is of significant historic interest as well as having rarity value as one of the few surviving military buildings from this period.



Halkett Place Evangelical Church drawn by Poulton and Woodman in 1855.



Halkett Place Evangelical Church, St Helier

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in June 2007. The church was built in 1855 in the early-decorated Gothic style and is of significant architectural interest. It has an unusual polygonal interior with a gallery carried on fourteen tall columns of Caen stone, divided by pointed arches with foliated capitals. There is a painted stone pulpit with ornate railings, and a concealed 'singing pew' behind the pulpit. A central roof lantern is carried on timber hammer-beams.



Seafield House, St Lawrence

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in June 2007. This Regency villa was built in 1808-1809 for François Giffard, a leading Jersey banker and merchant. It is one of the earliest and most ambitious examples of Regency architecture in Jersey and includes a rotunda to the south front.



Sun Bowls Club pavillion in the 1920s.

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in September 2007. Built in 1928 as the Sports Pavilion and Bowling Green for the Sun Works Sports Club (The Overseas Trading Corporation). The pavilion is a rare example of 1920s recreational architecture, which has changed little since first built, and is reminiscent of an earlier age. The interior is notable for its barrel-vaulted tearoom.



Sun Bowls Club, St Helier



Chateau La Chaire Hotel and Gardens, St Martin

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in March 2008. Built around 1920, this is one of Jersey's finest Arts and Crafts style houses with an interesting composition and features such as tile hung gables, a medieval inspired stone porch, and an inglenook fireplace and oak panelling to the interior. The house is set within extensive and historic gardens that were landscaped principally between 1841 and 1860 by renowned Victorian horticulturalist Samuel Curtis.



The Hollies, St Aubin



New North Quay Level Luffing Crane, St Helier

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in March 2008. This 7-ton rail-mounted level-luffing crane was manufactured by renowned crane-makers Stothert & Pitt Ltd of Bath and installed on the New North Quay in 1949. It is of special historical importance as the oldest surviving crane in St Helier harbour.



Listed as a Site of Special Interest in May 2008. This former merchant's house dates to the late 17th Century and contains features of particular significance to the architectural history of Jersey – most notably the earliest known surviving examples of timber sash windows in Jersey, and one the earliest surviving timber staircases in the Island.

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