



JAMAICA NATIONAL HERITAGE TRUST

GUIDELINES FOR OBTAINING APPROVAL TO RESTORE & DEVELOP HISTORIC SITES AND DISTRICTS

MAY 2000

INTRODUCTION

Jamaica's architectural heritage is one of the most tangible and diverse examples of our people's creativity and skills. This heritage consists of buildings such as churches and courthouses, industrial structures such as factories and aqueducts, Great Houses and small vernacular houses among others. We need to protect this heritage for its historic and architectural value, as well as for its aesthetic appeal.

The responsibility for preserving the nation's heritage rests with the Jamaica National Heritage Trust (JNHT). However, to effectively carry out our mandate, we need the cooperation of everyone, especially the owners and occupiers.

The following guidelines have been prepared to assist in the preservation and development process. If the recommendations listed are carefully followed, the amount of time and money spent in seeking approval will be kept to a minimum.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The JNHT legally protects the nation's architectural heritage in two ways:

1. Declaring a site a national monument
2. Designating a site protected national heritage.

Under the JNHT Act, a site is declared a national monument, if in the opinion of the Trust, its preservation is a matter of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic, aesthetic, scientific or archaeological value.

The Act also defines Protected National Heritage as any place name, species of animal or plant life, or any place or object designated by the Trust.

THE NEED FOR APPROVAL

When a site is declared/designated or has a preservation notice placed on it, the JNHT has to give written approval for development.

It is therefore illegal for the owner or occupier of the property to demolish, remove or alter the monument without this JNHT approval.

THE HARB

To assist in the development process, the Trustees of the JNHT created an advisory body called the HERITAGE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD (HARB). This body consists of qualified architects, archaeologists and technical support staff of the JNHT.

The objectives of the HARB are to ensure that the integrity of historic sites, buildings and districts is maintained; and to see that the preservation and development of our historic sites proceeds in a systemic and careful manner.

The HARB achieves its objectives by assessing development applications and making appropriate recommendations to the Trustees.

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

The following four steps must be followed when seeking approval:

1. THE APPLICATION -

- An application to develop the property must be submitted either:
Directly to the JNHT Office at the same time with the application for the building approval to the Parish Council (with two sets of accompanying documents);
Or
Through the Parish Council - In this case an additional copy of your application is to be submitted along with the Parish Council's required number of copies. This is to be sent to the JNHT.
- **DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED**
 - Application Form (properly filled out)
 - Photographs of the site and the surrounding sites and buildings.
 - Location plan
 - Working drawings showing:
 - a) Site layout plan ;
 - b) Measured survey of existing building (1:50);
 - c) Proposed floor plan(s);
 - d) All elevations;
 - e) Sections;
 - f) Roof framing plan and details;
 - g) Window and door schedule and details
 - h) Foundation plan
 - i) Electrical plan
 - j) Plumbing plan
 - k) Details of decorative finishes to the façade e.g. columns, handrails, eaves, architrave, mouldings, pediments etc.(Applications will not be processed and will be returned to applicants if all documents are not submitted.)
- **DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES**
The JNHT WILL NOT permit the demolition of historic structures as a first option. However, in extreme cases demolition might become necessary. The same process as described above will be used to determine whether or not to demolish

the structure. In this case, the documentation required is slightly different and includes:

- 1. Letter requesting the demolition of the structure giving reason(s) and the history of the site
- 2. Measured Survey drawings showing (1:50)
 - a) Site layout plan.
 - b) Floor plan(s) existing building
 - c) Four (4) Detailed Elevations
 - d) Minimum four (4) Sections through building
 - e) Roof framing plan and Details
 - f) Window and Door Schedule and Details
 - g) Details of decorative finishes to the façade e.g. columns handrails eaves, architrave mouldings pediments etc. by drawings with measurements and photographs with details.

NOTE: In designing any new work within a historic district, it is important that the work blends in with the design of the existing historic fabric. To ensure a properly designed building, it is recommended that the applicant consult a registered architect. Architects are advised to look at the buildings around the site and use design features from them to enhance the proposed building. Submissions that do not comply with this principle will not be considered for approval.

- Applications should be addressed to the:
Heritage Architectural Review Board
Jamaica National Heritage Trust
79 Duke Street
Kingston
Tele: (876) 922-1287-8/922-3990

2. PRE-EVALUATION

The technical staff of the Estate Management Division of the Trust initially assesses applications. If all the guidelines are followed then they will be sent to the HARB for evaluation and recommendation.

It might be necessary at times to invite the client to a meeting with the technical team to discuss the proposal or to arrange a visit to the site.

3. EVALUATION AND APPROVAL

The HARB meets once per month to do its evaluation. Its recommendation is communicated to the JNHT Trustees. Project approval is then communicated from the JNHT to the client and the parish council. The approval letter will include a statement of the conditions of the permission.

4. POST APPROVAL EVALUATION

Once the project commences the technical team of the JNHT will make periodic site visits to ensure that the work is being done in compliance with the stated conditions.

ENFORCEMENT

To carry out any work on a declared or preserved site without the written approval of the JNHT is a contravention of the JNHT Act

1985 Section 16

Under this section the offender is liable to summary conviction before a Resident Magistrate, the charging of a fine(s) up to \$20,000.00 or imprisonment up to 2 years or both and or the payment of the cost for restoring the offended site or monument to its original state.

Approval must be sought for the restoration or development of declared/preserved sites, or the erection of new building within a declared historic area/zone.

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