Chapter 1
Introduction

1 INTRODUCTION

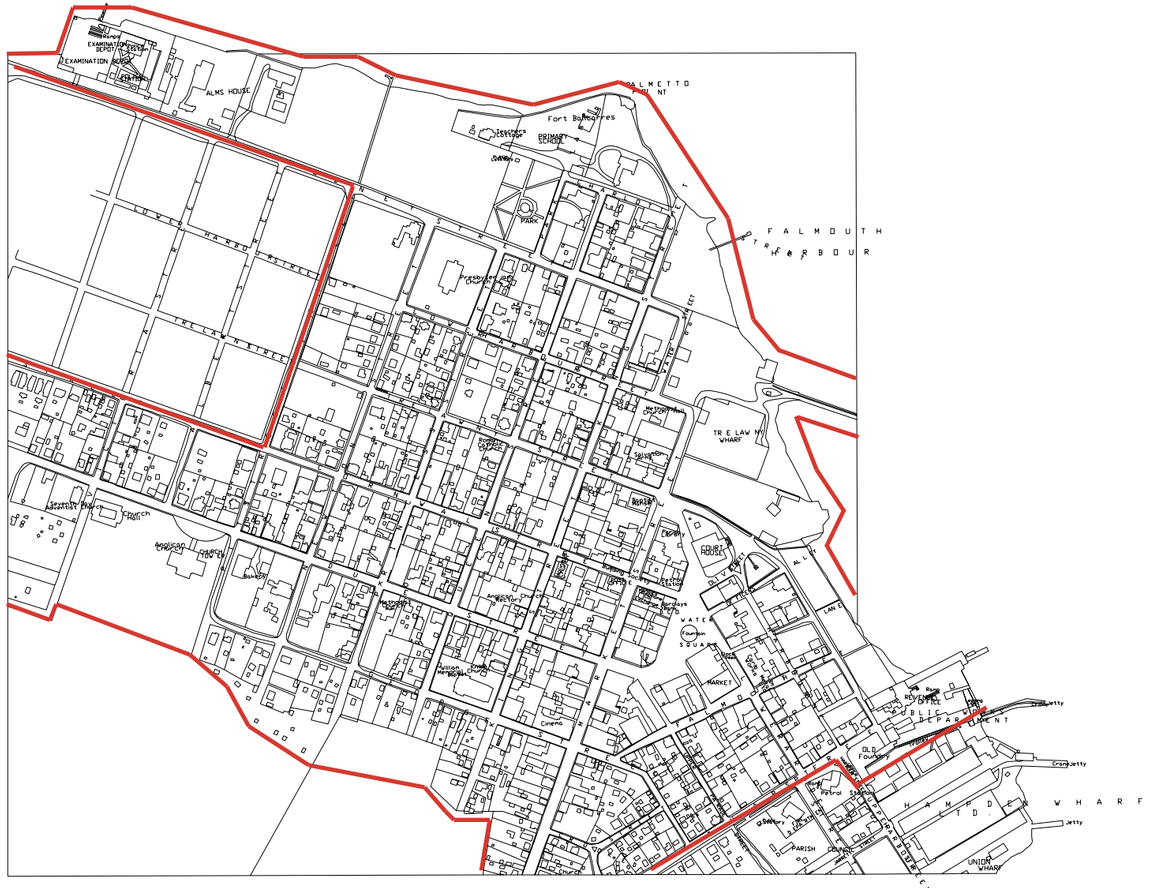
A. OVERVIEW

Falmouth has a rich and diverse architectural heritage dating back to its founding in the eighteenth century. Each subsequent generation has left their mark on the community's visual and historic character as the town developed and grew. Many of the surviving older structures create Falmouth's distinctive sense of place and contribute to the cultural and economic life of the town.

Under the Jamaica National Heritage Trust Act of 1985, a section of Falmouth, recognised as rich in architectural and archeological heritage, was declared a Protected National Heritage Site. This section, known as the Falmouth Historic District (FHD), was declared a National Monument by the Jamaica Government in 1996. The FHD is protected and administered by the Trelawny Parish Council and the Heritage Development Review Committee (HDRC), an advisory body created by the Trustees of the Jamaica National Heritage Trust.

1 INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW



The original boundary for the Falmouth Historic Distruct is outlined in red on this map. The boundary for the historic district now encompasses this entire map, including the empty blocks west of Pitt Street.

B. DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

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, plantation 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 of historic buildings.

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 the required approval for development 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 HDRC

To assist in the development process, the Trustees of the JNHT created an advisory body called the Heritage Development Review Committee (HDRC). This body consists of qualified architects, archaeologists and technical support staff of the JNHT.

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

B. DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

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:

a. 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

b. 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.

* <u>DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED</u>

a. Application Form (properly filled out)

b. Photographs of the site and the surrounding sites and buildings.

c. Location plan

d. Working drawings showing:

i. a) Site layout plan ;

ii. b) Measured survey of existing building (1:50);

iii. c) Proposed floor plan(s);

iv. d) All elevations;

v. e) Sections;

vi. f) Roof framing plan and details;

vii. g) Window and door schedule and details

viii. h) Foundation plan

ix. i) Electrical plan

x. j) Plumbing plan

xi. 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 Development Review Committee

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 HDRC for evaluation and recommendation.

It may be necessary at times to invite the applicant to a meeting with the technical team to discuss the proposal. It may also be necessary to visit the site.

3. EVALUATION AND APPROVAL

The HDRC 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 applicant 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. To this end, it is required that the JNHT be informed when work is about to commence.

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.

C. BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

Monumental buildings in Falmouth consist of governmental buildings such as the Courthouse (c. 1815), religious institutions such as the Baptist Manse (c. 1798) and St. Peter's Anglican Church (1796), and industrial complexes such as Hampden Wharf (c. 1915) and the Phoenix Foundary (c. 1810).

The image on the top right is of the Falmouth Courthouse. Below, from left to right: The Baptist Manse, Hampden Wharf, St. Peter's Parish Church, Falmouth, and the bottle kiln at the Phoenix Foundry.

Commerical buildings in Falmouth can be found primarily along Market Street and Duke Street and share a common building typology consisting of multiple roof systems, two-stories with shop below and living space above, and recessed ground floors.

Aerial view of Market Street and Water Square.

Residential buildings include both large and small dwellings. The Tharpe House (c. 1790) is a masonry structure and example of a plantation owner's townhouse. The small to mid-size historic homes constituting the post-Emancipation residential landscape of Falmouth consist primarily of timber frame houses of various massings with porches and decorative detailing.

The Tharpe House is shown on the left and 3 Lower Harbour Street, a mid-sized timber frame house, is shown on the right.

D. MATERIAL PALETTE - STONE

The dominant material palette for buildings in Falmouth consists of timber, local cut limestone, and brick. Most of the historic commercial buildings along Market Street employ a masonry ground floor and timber frame second story, although some are nogged frame.

The Falmouth Courthouse is constructed of local cut block limestone.

This commercial building on Market Street possesses a masonry ground floor and timber frame second story.

Two types of stone are found in masonry structures throughout Falmouth; local cut block limestone and Coquina. Coquina is a sedimentary stone with heavy shell deposits and is clearly evident at the Barrett House.

From left to right: The Barrett House in 1984; the ground floor of the Barrett House today showing the Coquina stone; a detail of the Coquina stone found at the Barrett House.

Slate also can be found with some frequency. The stone is not indigenous to Jamaica and was imported from Wales in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was most often used as a damp-proofing element, called a damp-course, set between courses of masonry near the ground. The slate course was usually 1/8" to a 1/4" thick.

The image above shows a thin layer of slate used as a damp-course to prevent the upward movement of moisture.

D. MATERIAL PALETTE - BRICK

Brick is the most common building masonry material found in Falmouth. It is used for both structural massing and infill for nog frame buildings, and comes in a variety of colours and qualities. The two most common bonding patterns are Flemish and 2 to 1 common bond.

The image above shows a typical nogged building.

This early 19th century Flemish bond brick house was red washed to look like common red brick buildings.

There are three types of brick found in Falmouth, all of which are slop molded. The yellow brick with black flecks is thought to come from England and is frequently red washed to imitate common red brick.

The second type of brick is a red brick with inclusions that was made near Kingston.

The brick in this fireplace was constructed of locally made brick.

The third type of brick, made locally, is a grey/brown color.

D. MATERIAL PALETTE - TIMBER FRAMING

Floor and roof framing systems are often left exposed in historic buildings in Falmouth in order to promote greater air circulation and keep interiors cool.

The most common roof framing systems are king post truss or lone rafters joined at the ridge by a lap or bridal joint. The lone rafter systems are seen both with and without collar ties.

The roof framing system on the interior of the Baptist Manse (c. 1798) is left completely exposed to help cool the inside.

An exposed king post truss roof framing system.

The inside of this small board house also has an exposed roof system to promote greater air circulation.

D. MATERIAL PALETTE - MORTAR

Detail of brick work and mortar joints of a house in Falmouth.

Historic mortar in Falmouth is lime based. Mixtures are estimated to be 3 parts sand to 1 part lime putty. The lime putty was produced from local limestone and the sand would have been local as well. Mortar color generally varies from grey to brilliant white.

This house had been damaged by the application of Portland cement in the mortar joints, which trapped moisture in the bricks and caused the faces to deteriorate and pop out.

A brick building recently repointed with an historically appropriate lime mortar.