# Controversial beachfront extension ignites fierce debate in Budleigh Salterton



A fierce debate has erupted in Budleigh Salterton, a picturesque town in Devon, over a controversial beachfront extension that has drawn comparisons to a "shipping container." The situation has escalated into what some residents are describing as a 'war' of opinions, primarily involving local homeowner Ros Debenham who has made significant alterations to a historic property known as The Creamery.

The Creamery, originally an ice cream parlour, is juxtaposed against a coastal path that forms part of the East Devon National Landscape. Debenham, a self-identified longtime resident of Budleigh Salterton, claims to have invested over seven figures in restoring the building, which she asserts was in a state of disrepair when she purchased it. Despite planning officers initially recommending the refusal of her proposed renovations and extension in 2022, the project was ultimately approved during a committee meeting, shocking many residents who felt blindsided by the decision.

Local resident Lynda Benson, 79, expressed her concerns regarding the extension’s design. "When it first went up we thought it looked like a container off a container ship," she said, reflecting the common sentiment among those who oppose the extension. Benson, who lives nearby, articulated her worry that the approval of such a structure sets a "precedent" for invasive developments in a conservation area. She stated, "It's disappointing that it's on the beachfront. It will never look the same again. It's not conserving anything."

Another resident, Anne Boyle, 75, conveyed her bewilderment over how planning permission for the extension was granted, stating, "I think it's a monstrosity... Nobody can understand it as we watched it going up." Boyle highlighted the iconic views along the coastal path that are now obstructed by the extension, expressing frustration that what was once a charming area appears marred by the new addition.

In her defence, Debenham maintains that the building had been on the market for over ten years due to its poor condition. She noted that she undertook extensive restoration work, including re-establishing ornate brickwork and revealing original wrought iron features. "The rear of the building now presents a clean and tidy aspect, as opposed to its previous state, which seemed to be awaiting demolition," she explained. Debenham also stated that she received compliments for her restoration efforts, despite the pushback from some neighbours.

Further criticism has come from Joan Goodridge, another local resident, who labelled the extension a "massive eyesore" and compared it unfavourably to a storage container. She lamented the apparent ease with which the extension was approved compared to other projects in the area that were denied. "It seems as if you can do whatever you want to do if the money's there," she remarked, pointing towards a perceived disparity in the planning process.

Councillor Peter Mansfield, a local resident, shared his misgivings about the extension. Having lived in the area since 1984, he expressed his surprise at its approval, noting that had he been involved in the council at the time, he would have opposed it. "The town is quaint and people move here because it's quaint. Budleigh is a wonderful town and it needs preserving," he said.

Thus far, the debate surrounding the extension highlights the tension between development and conservation in Budleigh Salterton, a town known for its historical charm and scenic beauty. As residents continue to voice their opinions, the implications of such a controversial renovation may ripple through the community, affecting not only property values but also the aesthetic character of this historic seaside town.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://eastdevonwatch.org/category/beer/> - While this link does not directly address the specific controversy in Budleigh Salterton, it relates to local issues in East Devon and might provide context to community sentiment and development debates.
2. <https://www.booking.com/beach/city/gb/budleigh-salterton.en-gb.html> - This URL provides information on Budleigh Salterton as a tourist destination, highlighting its scenic beauty and proximity to the Jurassic Coast, which aligns with concerns about preserving its aesthetic appeal.
3. <https://www.noahwire.com> - This would be the source of the article itself, detailing the controversy over the beachfront extension in Budleigh Salterton.
4. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/land-planning-and-environment/planning/decision-notices/> - Although not specific to this case, this URL could provide information on planning decisions in Devon, potentially shedding light on how such projects are approved or denied.
5. <https://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning-and-development/local-plan/> - This link would offer insight into East Devon's local plan, which outlines development policies and could explain why the extension was approved despite initial recommendations against it.
6. <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/budleigh-salterton-creamery-extension-photos-7861006/> - Similar news articles might detail community reactions to the extension and provide visual evidence of the changes made, though this specific URL is hypothetical.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14598545/Locals-quaint-Devon-seaside-town-furious-neighbours-eyesore-modern-extension-looks-like-shipping-container.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data