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STATING CASE: Architects Anne Niemann and Johannes Ingrisich with a model of their sculpture before last night's meeting in the Columbine Centre at Walton on the Naze

Photographs:
OWEN HINES

Architects tell of their dream

North Sea 'sculpture will revive town'

By Juliette Maxam

THE German architects of a project to build a dramatic sculpture in the North Sea last night presented their dream to locals.

Anne Niemann and Johannes Ingrisich have designed a church-like structure made out of 41 shiny stainless steel piles to be built 800 metres off the coast of Walton on the Naze.

The sculpture, to be facilitated but not paid for by the East of England Development Agency, is supposed to be a landmark for the East of England to rival the Angel of the North at Gateshead.

Last night, the architects told a meeting of between 120 to 150 people in the Columbine Centre, Walton, of their vision and asked residents for their views.

Miss Niemann said they were inspired by the east coast's "lost towns" such as Dunwich, where they had originally hoped to build it, and wanted to build a memorial to the places lost because of coastal erosion.

Mr Ingrisich said the project would bring huge financial benefits to the town, bring new year-round visitors and regenerate business in Walton.

The project was mainly welcomed



ALL EARS: The audience at last night's meeting in the Columbine Centre at Walton on the Naze, left

attending the meeting. Roger Evans, of Walton Forum, said: "This is a great opportunity to help us to regenerate the town. We believe it will attract more visitors to the town."

David Gager, of the Naze Protection Society, said: "We owe it to our past and future generations to go ahead with this splendid project."

Gerry Russell, of Walton Heritage Trust, commenting on negative comments by some audience, said: "I'm totally disappointed by the reaction of people sitting in the hall here.

"You'd think we are being asked to pay for this. We are being offered something which can be to the advantage of the town." Opponents included Terry Norman, a resident

got a landmark - it's called the Naze Tower, on land, not 800 metres out at sea. It's been here since 1720. Before that, there was a wooden tower on the same sight.

"We know about landmarks. We've got one. We've also got a major memorial to coastal erosion. It's called the Naze. This will not protect or enhance it."

Other residents were concerned about traffic problems caused by the construction and extra visitors, problems it would cause to sailors, who would pay for its maintenance.

After the meeting people were asked to fill in forms with all of their comments and concerns about the project.

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