



86 Promenade, Blackpool

Heritage Statement



July 2021

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WCS Project Reference: P5047
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1. Introduction, scope and methodology

- 1.1 Williams Conservation Surveying Limited have been commissioned by Mr David Moseley to complete a concise Heritage Statement in support of an application for planning permission for the demolition of the existing building at 86 Promenade, Blackpool FY1 1HB and the construction of a new part commercial, part residential building on the site. The Ordnance Survey grid reference of the site is SD 30597 36240.
- 1.2 The site falls within the Blackpool Town Centre Conservation Area as designated by Blackpool Borough Council. Although the building on the site is not listed, it forms part of the setting of a number of listed and locally listed buildings, most notably the locally listed Roberts' Oyster Rooms at 90-92 Promenade. As a result of these statutory designations, the proposed development has the potential to affect both the character of the conservation area and the settings of the listed and locally listed buildings.
- 1.3 In light of this a heritage statement has been requested by Blackpool Borough Council in its capacity as Local Planning Authority, as a validation requirement in respect of the application for planning permission. The heritage statement is submitted for consideration alongside the planning stage drawings which detail the proposals.
- 1.4 The purpose of the heritage statement is to concisely set out the historic, architectural and landscape value of the conservation area and the affected listed and locally listed buildings, and the contribution (if any) made to these by the site itself. The report goes on to state the impact which the proposals would have upon these characteristics, and to note any mitigation which is provided by the quality and sensitivity of the proposals in conservation design terms. Finally, the heritage statement summarises the relevant primary legislation, national and local policies and confirms that the development proposals would not be contrary to these as far as impacts upon the statutorily designated conservation area and upon the settings of the listed and locally listed buildings are concerned.
- 1.5 The report has been informed by proportionate local and national archival research and where directly relevant and permissible under copyright law historic mapping has been reproduced. A site visit was undertaken on Tuesday 29th July 2021, during which photographs and notes were taken along with a walk-over around the site, surrounding areas and the streets around the front and rear of the site. The interior of the building was also inspected. Weather during the site visit was warm and overcast with occasional sunshine.
- 1.6 The scope of the physical survey was limited by poor environmental conditions and low light levels within the building at the time of the inspection. The scope of archival and historical research was limited by the closure of the Blackpool Archives centre at the time of completion of the report due to storm damage, limiting research to suitable, verified online sources.
- 1.7 Following this introductory section, the report is structured as follows: (2) Description of the site; (3) Discussion of Blackpool Town Centre Conservation Area; (4) Listed and locally listed buildings affected by the proposals (5); Historic development of the site; (6) Building description; (7) Assessment of significance; (8) Impact of the proposals and conservation design considerations; (9) Policy discussion and conclusion; and (10) Key sources / bibliography. Appendices comprise: (A) The location plan; (B) Blackpool Town Centre Conservation Area plan; (C) Planning stage drawings; (D) Historic Ordnance Survey mapping of the site; (E) Historic photographs of the site; (F) Site photographs from July 2021; and (G) Google Streetview image capture from 2009.

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2. Description of the site

- 2.1 The site at No. 86 Promenade is tightly constrained on all sides by adjacent streets and properties. The building is bounded to the south by Nos. 82-84 Promenade, to the north by Nos. 90-92 Promenade (Roberts' Oyster Rooms), to the east by the rear of No. 3 West Street, and to the west by the Promenade itself, beyond which lies the seafront and beach. There are no areas of attached open grounds, gardens or other open areas attached to the property and as such the visual assessment of the site and buildings is largely restricted to the eastern elevation of the building and its surroundings. The site location is shown on the location plan (Appendix A).

3. Blackpool Town Centre Conservation Area

- 3.1 *Pevsner's Buildings of England: Lancashire* highlights the relatively slow development of Blackpool and notes that in 1788 only around six houses were "appropriated for the reception of company". Even by 1840 buildings were only loosely scattered along the coast and the arrival of the railways in 1846 did not precipitate an immediate boom in development. Only with the construction of Central Station in 1863 and the Winter Gardens in 1875 – 1878 did the commercial seaside town begin to take shape.
- 3.2 Pevsner quotes the *Morning Post* in 1887 to the effect that by this date "Blackpool has discovered the lost art of entertaining...[and offers] more fun for less money than anywhere else" This observation remains perceptive in 2021 and it is the town's distinctive mixture of commercial exuberance, seaside kitsch and mid-20th century glamour which is at the heart of the conservation area's historic and contemporary interest. The "Golden Mile" of Blackpool Promenade is unique in its scale and ambition as a British seaside resort.
- 3.3 The historic development of the town centre is thoroughly detailed in the 2009 *Historic Townscape Character Assessment* from the Architectural History Practice. This research formed the basis for the decision in 2015 to extend the Town Centre Conservation Area from its original 1984 boundaries to include the site of No. 86 Promenade. The revised conservation area is now defined by the supporting 2015 Conservation Area Appraisal and mapping (Appendix B) which notes Roberts' Oyster Rooms as one of the oldest buildings within the designated area.
- 3.4 The character of the conservation area within the immediate vicinity of No. 86 Promenade is dominated by the expanse of the Promenade itself including the road, tramways, tram station and beach, with the imposing dominant feature of the Blackpool Tower (completed in 1894) to the south. No. 86 forms part of a varied terrace of 19th and 20th century buildings which marks the boundary between the open character of the Promenade and the densely packed network of secondary streets to the rear.

4. Listed and locally listed buildings affected by the proposals

- 4.1 Two nationally listed buildings have been identified as being potentially affected by the proposed development of No. 86 Promenade. These are the Grade II listed New Clifton Hotel, to the north of the site on the Promenade, and the Grade I listed Blackpool Tower, which lies a similar distance to the south. Both buildings can be seen in conjunction with the site in views across the Promenade looking north-east and south-east from locations opposite the site.
- 4.2 It should be noted however that the buildings are at some distance from the site and that the site forms only a small portion of the setting of the listed buildings. The locations of the two affected

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nationally listed buildings in conjunction with the site have been annotated on the conservation area plan (Appendix B).

- 4.3 Two additional nationally listed buildings are in proximity to the site, both lying to the north-west, the Grade II listed North Pier and the Grade II* listed Blackpool War Memorial. It is not considered however that these buildings could be affected by the proposals as they lie beyond the Promenade and cannot be seen in conjunction with the site, as a result their settings could not be affected by the proposals. For this reason the North Pier and Blackpool War Memorial have been scoped out of any further analysis within this report.
- 4.4 Blackpool Borough Council operates a system of local listing and two locally listed buildings have been identified as being potentially affected by the proposed development of the site. These are No. 3 West Street, the Mitre public house, and No. 90 Promenade, Roberts' Oyster Rooms. It is not considered that the proposals could have a meaningful impact upon the Mitre public house as a result of the limited width of West Street and the configuration of the buildings. For this reason the Mitre public house has been scoped out of further analysis within this report.
- 4.5 Any development of No. 86 Promenade will have an effect upon the immediate setting of Roberts' Oyster Rooms. The latter is an unusual example of an oyster bar remaining in use for its original purpose of the sale of seafood and also retaining its early external signage scheme. Within the north-west of England, one of the few comparable examples is Sinclair's Oyster Bar in Manchester, which despite being heavily altered and not as closely aligned to its original function is nationally listed at Grade II.
- 4.6 Roberts' Oyster Rooms has decorative rendered exterior including a ground floor in imitation of rusticated blockwork beneath a first and second floor having double height rendered pilasters with a Greek Key pattern within the capitals. The rendered window surrounds are emphasised with decorative roundels at the corners and at mid-height. The building retains one-over-one timber framed sash windows. Of particular interest is the early signage which is in free carved render, painted black to stand out against the main walls, reading "ROBERTS' OYSTER ROOMS" to the front and both side elevations.
- 4.7 Although the decorative scheme to Roberts' Oyster Rooms is in the style of the early 19th century Greek Revival, late 19th century photographs show that this was pre-dated by a plain rendered exterior (Appendix E). As a result of this evidence, it is clear that the pilasters and other decorative features, along with the attached signage scheme, are all much later additions dating to the early 20th century. The Oyster Rooms were first established in the present building in 1876.
- 4.8 Until at least 1998 a panelled interior and rooms providing full table service also survived within the Oyster Rooms however it is understood that these have now been lost and seafood is now only served on a takeaway basis from a small unit facing the Promenade. The location of Roberts' Oyster Rooms as the sole affected locally listed building in conjunction with the site has been annotated on the conservation area plan (Appendix B).

5. Historic development of the site of No. 86 Promenade

- 5.1 Although the site forms part of the earliest settlement of Blackpool and was within the then village centre as shown on the Blackpool Tithe Map of 1838, West Street had not yet been laid out at that time. Later Ordnance Survey map evidence, alongside details contained within the Title Register to the property, suggest that the first development on the site of No. 86

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Promenade took place in 1863 with a terraced shop and rooms of this date being replaced by the present building in 1894.

- 5.2 Early references to the site are provided by the Title Register (Land Registry reference LA921281) which notes a conveyance of the land which took place between John Braithwaite (and other individuals not named) and George William Sharples on 2nd November 1863. It is likely that this agreement marks the date of the construction of the first building on the site, visible in the earlier of the historic photographs below, and later replaced by the present building on the site.
- 5.3 The Title also references a later agreement pertaining to the site which was made between John Marsh, William Clarke Richardson and the Lancaster Banking Company on 25th July 1894. This agreement contained “provisions relating to the windows cornices and other matters affecting the northerly side of the land in this title”.
- 5.4 It is likely that the agreement of 1894 corresponds with the construction of the present building on the site, as the Ordnance Survey map of 1896 is the first to show the bay window of the current property by contrast with the plain elevation recorded within the 1891 edition (Appendix D) and corresponding with the earlier of the two historic photographs identified.
- 5.5 The original building on the site is recorded and can be compared with the present building with two surviving late 19th and early 20th century photographs (Appendix E) dated to pre-1894 and post-1894. Both photographs show that the long-term occupier of the shop at ground floor level during this period was Richardson’s Chemist. In the later image the first floor of No. 86 Promenade was occupied by a millinery business.

6. External and internal building description

- 6.1 No. 86 Promenade comprises a simple ground floor shop front with two floors of office accommodation above and occupies a single bay within a wider terrace. Due to the configuration of the surrounding buildings which meet the boundaries of the site, only the principal elevation facing the Promenade is visible. At the time of the site visit in July 2021, photographs taken of the principal elevation (Appendix F) were substantially obscured by scaffolding, therefore the clearest available view of the façade is provided by historic Google Streetview data capture from 2009 (Appendix G).
- 6.2 The ground floor shop front of the building is entirely modern, formerly obscured by signage and at the time of writing covered with a security shutter. At first and second floor levels the building is faced with decorative dark red terracotta with motifs referencing 16th and 17th century Dutch and Flemish precedents. This influence is particularly evident at roof level where there is a decorative crow-stepped gable and applied dwarf columns with an exaggerated entasis or “bulge” within the column shaft, typical of the late Renaissance and Mannerist reinterpretation of classical architecture in the Low Countries.
- 6.3 The decorative scheme is less distinctive at first and second floor levels where there are segmental round-headed windows, at first floor level paired with smaller rectangular windows above. Between first and second floor levels there is a series of spandrel panels containing decorative classical carvings, also in terracotta. Directly beneath the roof level gable end there is a projecting bay window which extends across both first and second floors, a typical feature of commercial building on both large and small scales in the north-west of England during the late 19th century.

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- 6.4 Internally, the building comprises a ground floor shop with offices and storage at first and second floors. No features of any historic interest remain as the photographs taken in July 2021 confirm (Appendix F). The roof can be seen from aerial images to comprise a simple double pitched roof of traditional form with a ridge line running parallel with the Promenade. An attached gable extension, also of double pitched form but running perpendicular to the Promenade, extends outwards to meet the decorative gable end.

7. Assessment of heritage significance

- 7.1 It is not considered that No. 86 Promenade would be suitable for either national or local listing as a building of historic interest. As such the importance of the building in heritage terms lies in the contribution which it makes to the overall character of the conservation area in which it is located. The building makes a modest contribution to the character of the Blackpool Town Centre conservation area as a late 19th century shop and offices with a decorative façade to its upper floors. Its severely dilapidated condition, however, considerably detracts from this.
- 7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) further requires the significance of a “Heritage Asset” to be considered under three headings: Archaeological Interest; Architectural and Artistic Interest; and Historic Interest. It is not considered that No. 86 Promenade retains any Archaeological or Historic Interest, however the building may be regarded as displaying modest Architectural and Artistic Interest. Its overall level of heritage interest is considered to be low.

8. Impact of the proposals and conservation design considerations

- 8.1 The proposals involve the demolition of the existing building at No. 86 Promenade and the construction of a new building on the existing footprint comprising a basement kitchen, ground floor café, four floors of residential accommodation and a rooftop terrace as detailed in the planning stage drawings from Keystone Design Associates (Appendix C).
- 8.2 The proposals represent the demolition of a building which makes a modest contribution to the significance of the Town Centre Conservation Area, and to the setting of the identified nationally and locally listed buildings, i.e. the New Clifton Hotel, Blackpool Tower and Roberts’ Oyster Rooms. The proposed building will nevertheless introduce high quality new design into the conservation area. In particular, the proposals reference the Promenade location of the site in their use of white render, sea-facing balconies and a Modernist aesthetic sympathetic to the commercial traditions of the Promenade.
- 8.3 In respect of the setting of Roberts’ Oyster Rooms in particular, the proposed building would be sympathetic to and reflect the white rendered appearance of the Oyster Rooms. The structure would also be stepped back from the pavement line in order to allow the south facing signage of the Oyster Rooms to remain visible, as shown in the architect’s rendered visualisation. The presence of a café at ground floor level will improve the setting of the Oyster Rooms by contrast with the present dilapidated building and previous poor quality shop front.
- 8.4 In light of this, it is not considered that the proposed development would harm the character of the Blackpool Town Centre Conservation Area. In addition, it is not considered that the new building would have any meaningful impact upon the settings of the Grade II listed New Clifton Hotel or the Grade I listed Blackpool Tower, as a result of the relative size and distance of the building on the site against the listed buildings. Finally it is considered that the proposed building

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will respect the existing setting of Roberts' Oyster Rooms and at ground level that it will improve the immediate environment around the locally listed building.

9. Policy discussion and conclusion

- 9.1 When determining applications for planning permission, Local Planning Authorities are obliged under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to consider the impact upon the character of any conservation areas and, where relevant, the setting of listed buildings. Separate arrangements under the same act apply for physical works to listed buildings in the form of Listed Building Consent, which is not required in this instance.
- 9.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (the NPPF) guides local authorities in their implementation of primary legislation and obliges them to consider whether proposals affecting statutorily designated assets such as conservation areas and listed buildings might cause "harm" to their special interest including the character of a conservation area. If any such "harm" is deemed to be incurred, this must be justified.
- 9.3 In light of the discussion set out in Section 8 above, however, it is not considered that the proposed development would have any adverse impact upon the character of the Blackpool Town Centre Conservation Area, nor upon the identified Listed and Locally Listed Buildings in the vicinity. As such, no "harm" is considered to be incurred as a result of the proposals for the purposes of the NPPF. Therefore, in respect of historic buildings and areas the proposed development accords with the relevant primary and secondary legislation.
- 9.4 As regards compliance with local policies on heritage and listed buildings, in 2016 Blackpool Borough Council published its Built Heritage Strategy. Section 3.6 of the Strategy addresses conservation areas however this does not set out detailed design advice or comment upon the criteria for assessing applications for planning permission.
- 9.5 As noted in Section 3 above, the 2015 Town Centre Conservation Area appraisal covering the extended area as designated in that year provides the current working document through which the local authority manages development in the designated area. Section 11 of the document discusses "Opportunities for Enhancement". This section identifies the following aspirations in respect of new development within the conservation area:

Development should respect the scale and height of nearby historic buildings, and in particular should not extend beyond the historic building line of the street. It should draw inspiration from local historic building design and materials whilst providing good quality modern buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

- 9.6 It is considered that the proposed development meets these aspirations as the new building would follow the existing building line, act as a step up between the Roberts' Oyster Rooms and the adjacent building to the south, and respond positively to the local Promenade context and to the Oyster Rooms in the use of white render and sea facing balconies. The proposed development is well designed and would make a good contribution to the existing street scene.
- 9.7 As such the proposed development is considered to comply with national and local planning policies concerning the heritage impact of new development, and as no harm will be incurred to the conservation area no additional heritage or public benefit justification is required within the prescribed methodology of the NPPF.

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10. Key sources / bibliography

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Historic England (2017): *The Setting of Heritage Assets*

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Lancashire County Council: lancashire.gov.uk/environment

National Heritage List (Historic England): <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Pevsner Architectural Guides (1969): *North Lancashire*

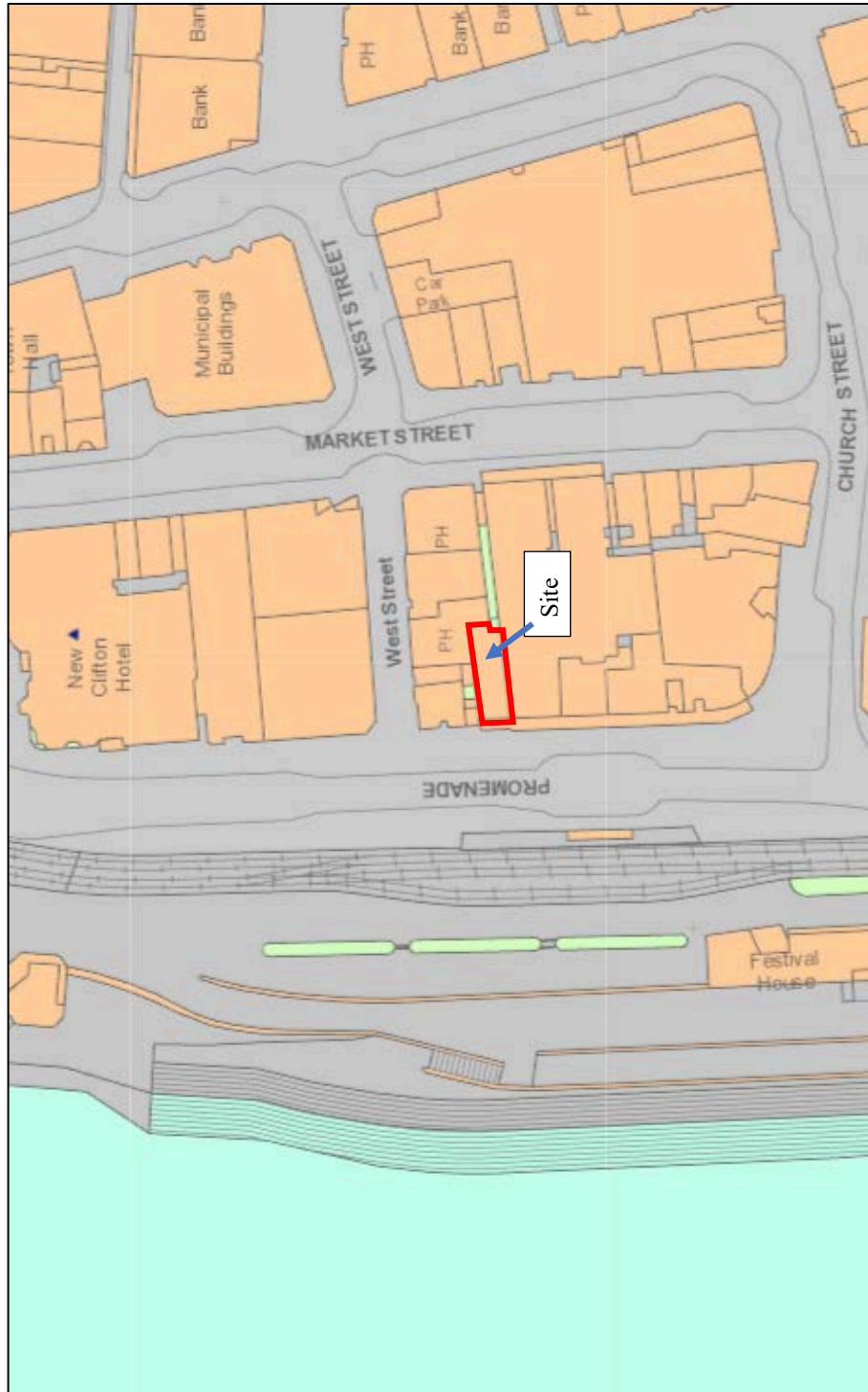
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Appendix A: Location Plan (Historic England / Ordnance Survey with WCS annotations)



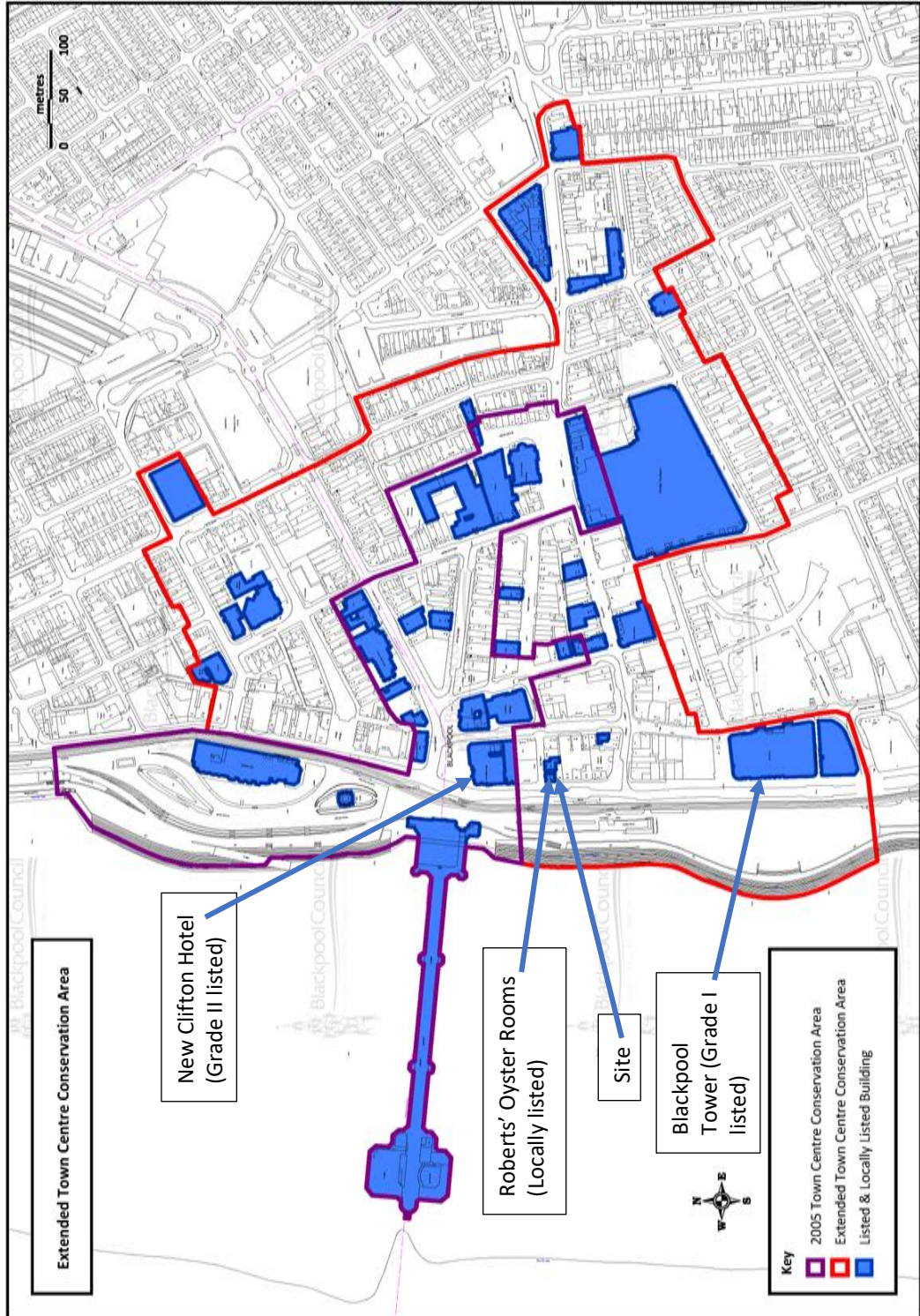
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Appendix B: Blackpool Extended Town Centre Conservation Area Plan (Blackpool Borough Council / Ordnance Survey with WCS annotations)



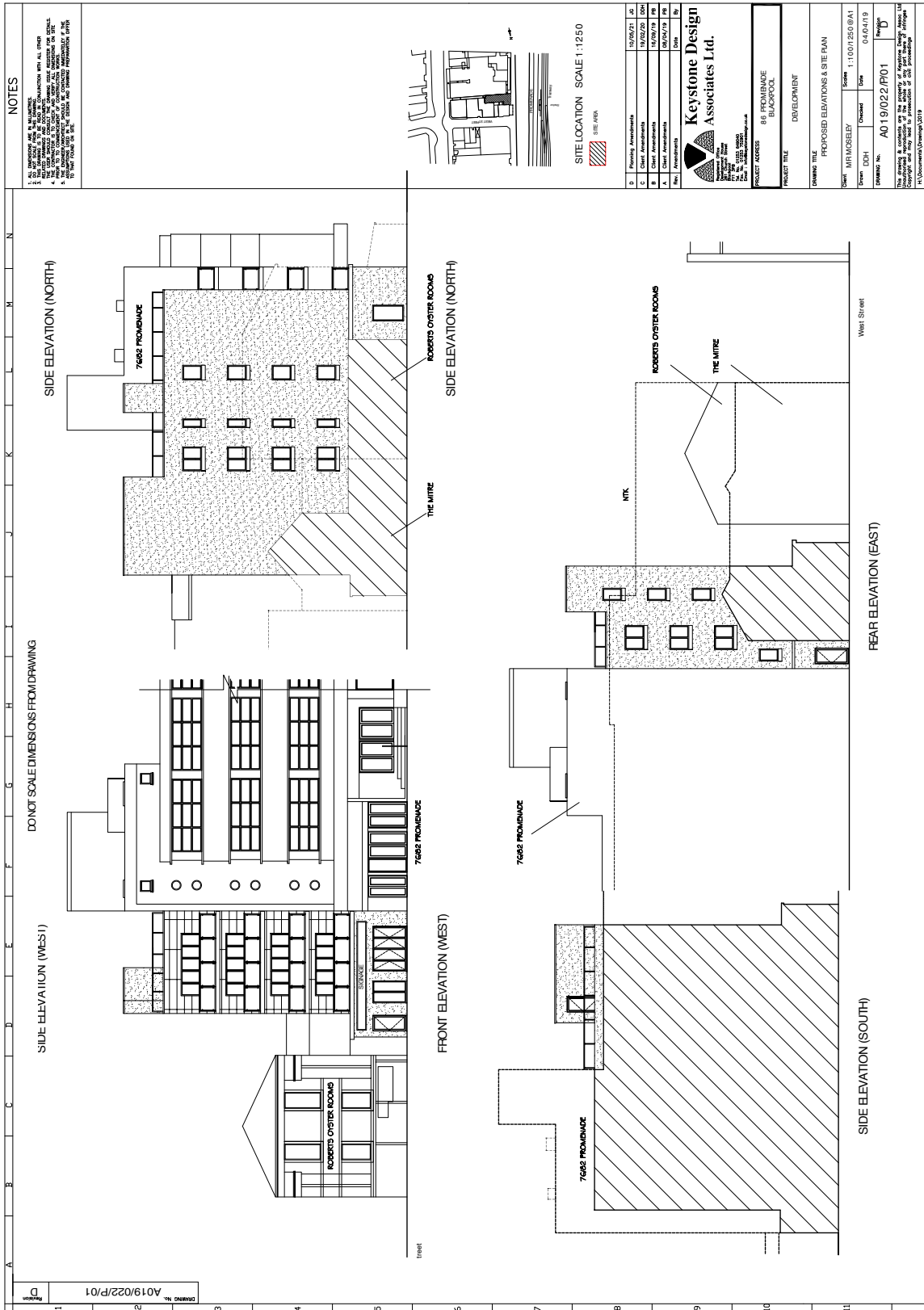
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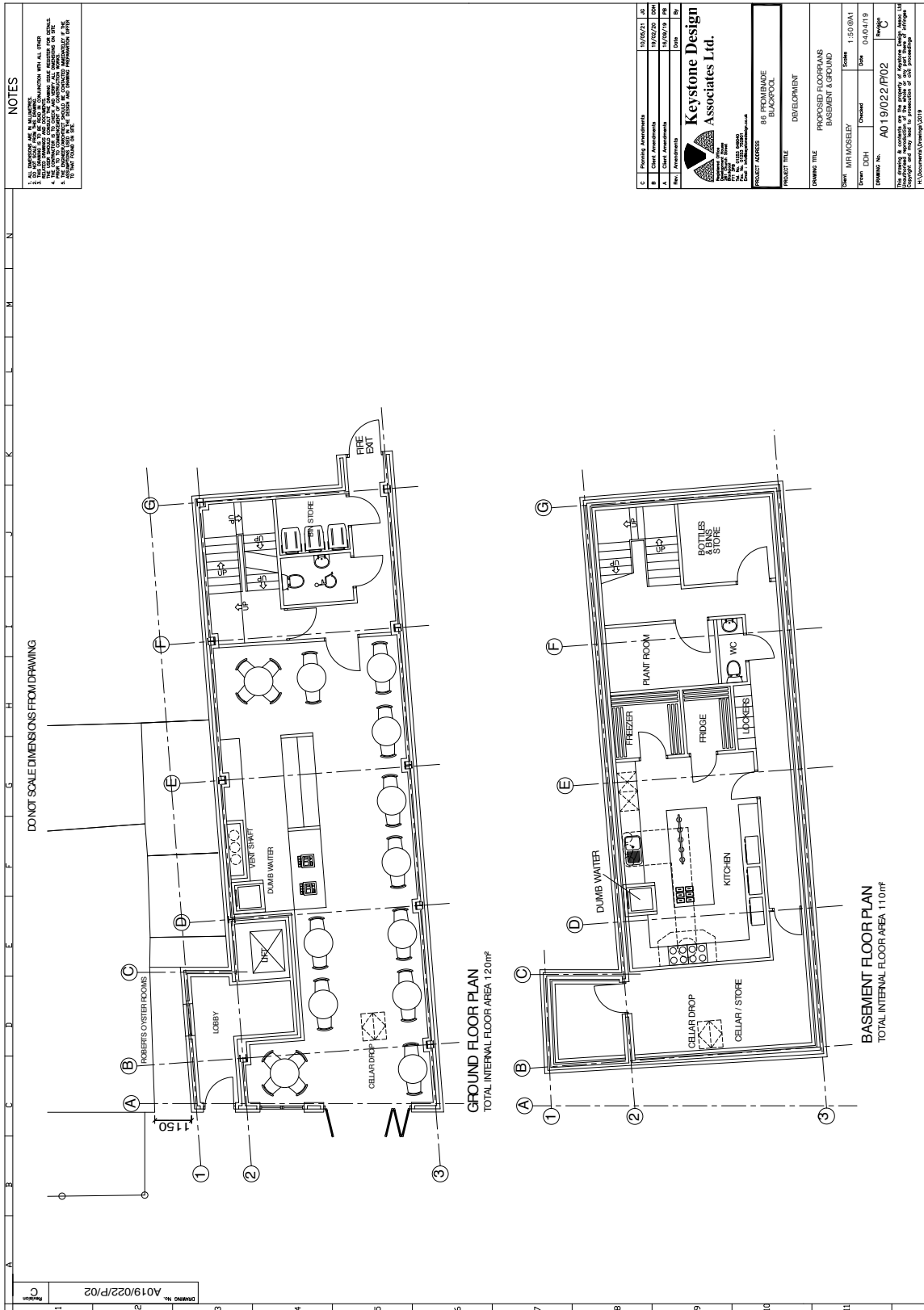
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Rev	Description	Date
1	Issue for Information	19/07/21
2	Issue for Information	19/07/21
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6	Issue for Information	19/07/21
7	Issue for Information	19/07/21
8	Issue for Information	19/07/21
9	Issue for Information	19/07/21
10	Issue for Information	19/07/21

Keystone Design Associates Ltd.
 PROJECT ADDRESS: 86 PROMENADE BLACKPOOL
 PROJECT TITLE: DEVELOPMENT
 DRAWING TITLE: PROPOSED ELEVATIONS & SITE PLAN
 SCALE: 1:1000 (250:80A1)
 DATE: 04/04/19
 DRAWING NO: A019/022/P/01
 PROJECT NO: D

Rev	Description	Date
1	Issue for Information	19/07/21
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<p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Project: 10</p> <p>Date: 10/10/19</p> <p>Drawn: M. ROBERTS</p> <p>Checked: M. ROBERTS</p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Sheet: 01/01/19</p> <p>Drawn No: AO19/022/P/06</p> <p>Revision: -</p> <p>This drawing is the property of Williams Conservation Surveying Ltd. It is not to be used for any other project without the written permission of Williams Conservation Surveying Ltd. 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Company Number: 12208512; VAT Registration Number: 333 6688 79; RICS Firm Registration Number: 835009

Registered Office and correspondence address: 13 Chorlton Villas, 105 Hardy Lane, Manchester M21 8DN

web: www.williams-cs.co.uk email: matthew@williams-cs.co.uk phone: 0161 706 0526 mobile: 07305470041



Appendix D: Historic Ordnance Survey mapping of the site

Reproduced under Perpetual Commercial Licence; Site identified in red.

Original maps surveyed at 1:1,250; Not reproduced to scale.



1891

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1912

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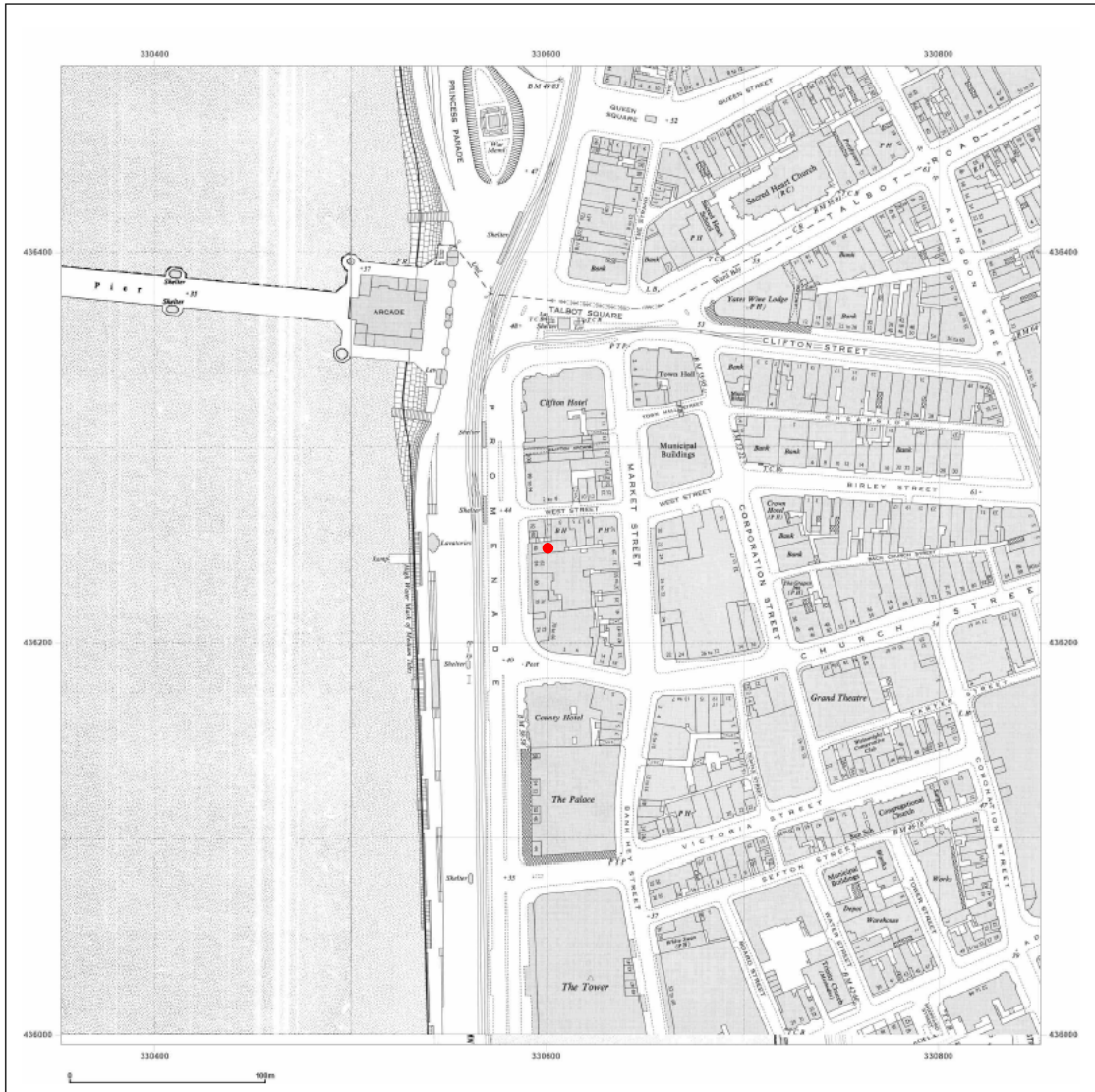
1932

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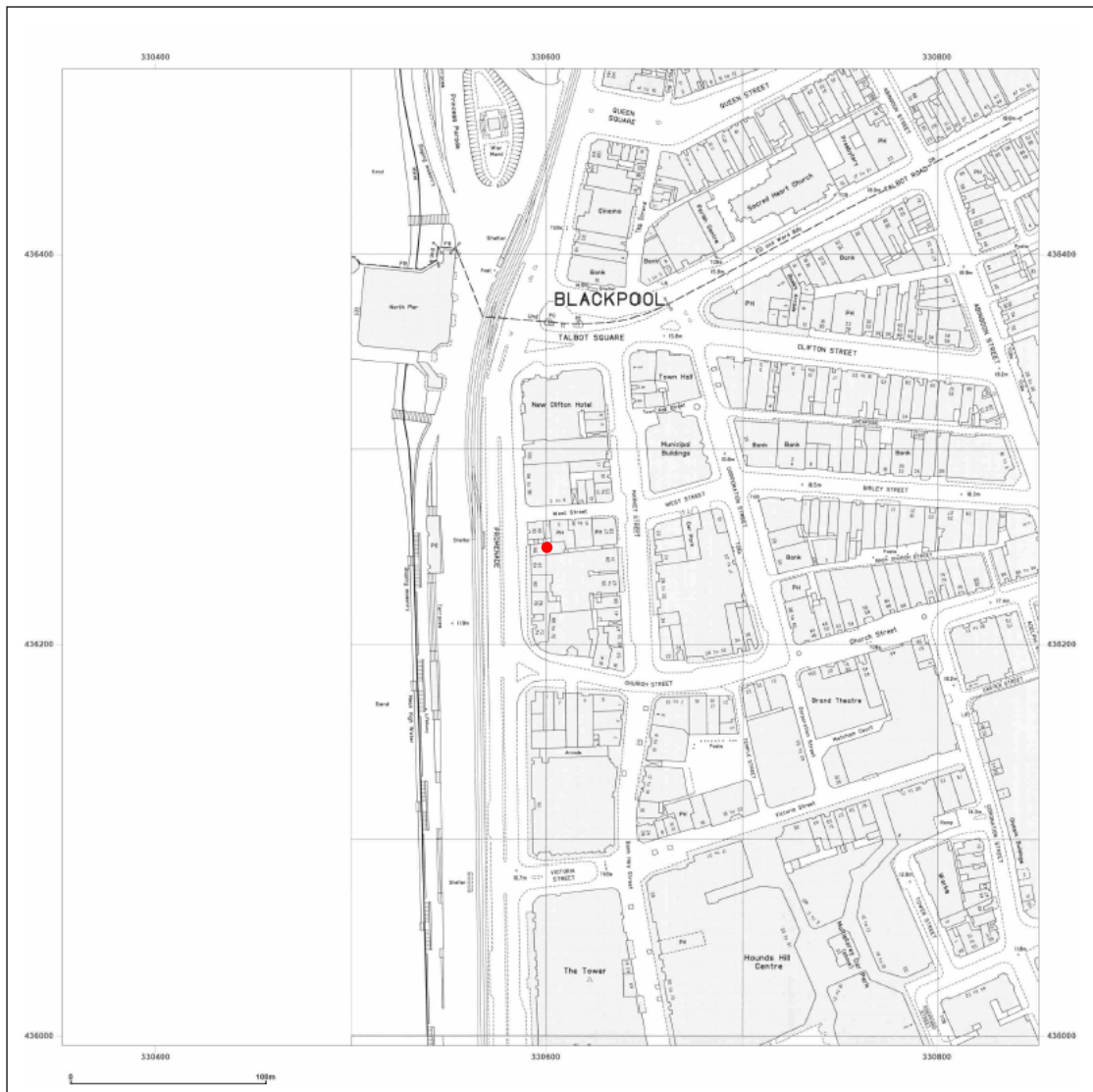
1962

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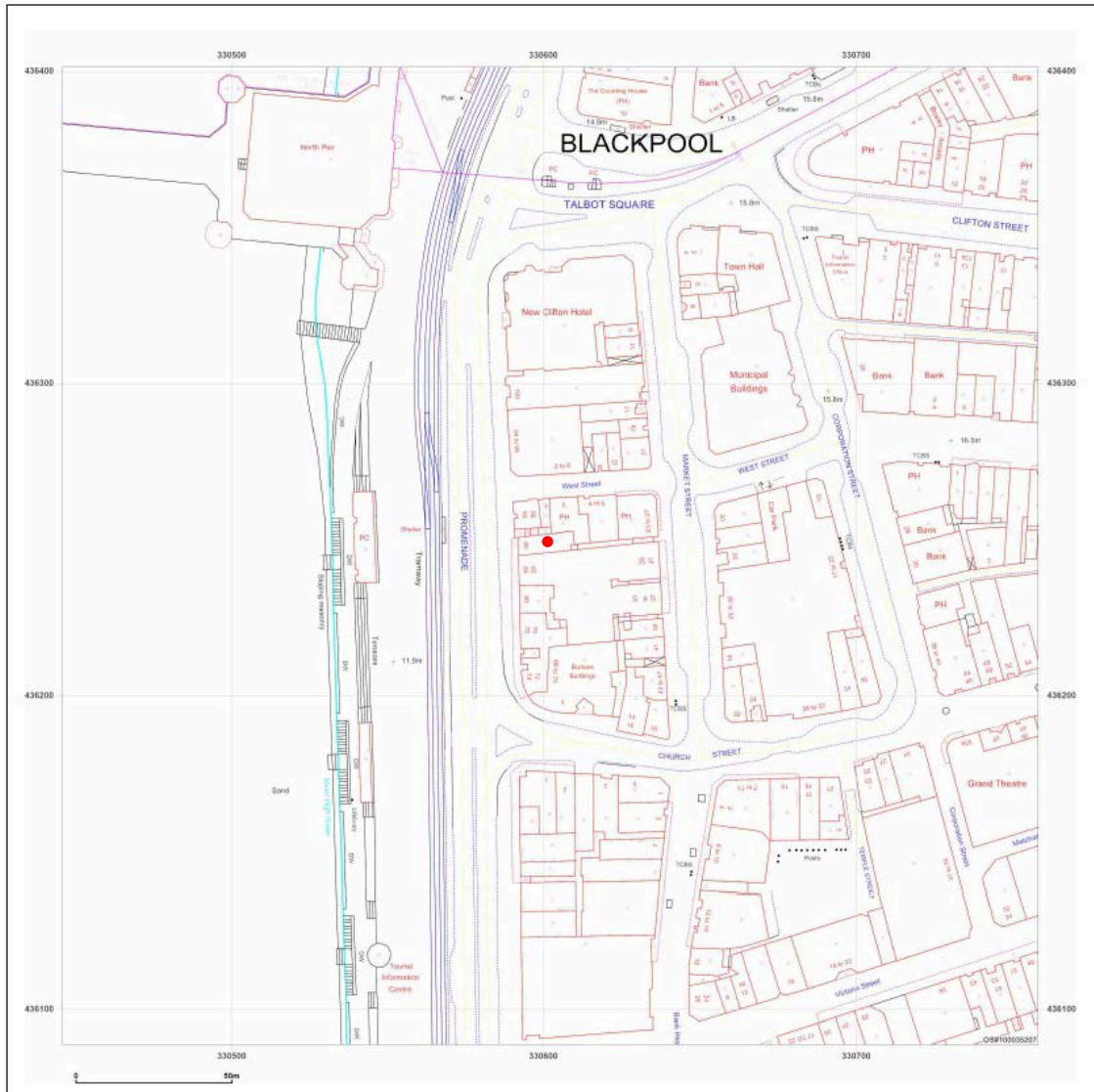
1988

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2003

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Appendix E: Historic photographs of the site



1. Late 19th century photograph of Roberts' Oyster Rooms (left centre) and the earliest known building at No. 86 Promenade (right). The Clifton Hotel is also visible to the rear of the image. The photograph pre-dates the construction of the present building at No. 86 Promenade in 1894. Richardson's Chemist can be seen trading from the building, as in the later photograph below. (Heritage Blackpool).



2. Late 19th or early 20th century photograph of the shop fronts of Roberts' Oyster Rooms (left) and No. 86 Promenade (right) where Richardson's Chemist continued to trade. The photograph post-dates the construction of the present building at No. 86 Promenade in 1894. (Heritage Blackpool).

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Appendix F: Site Photographs (July 2021)



1. The site as seen at pavement level from the Promenade, adjacent to the locally listed Roberts' Oyster Rooms.



2. The site looking eastwards across the Promenade with Roberts' Oyster Rooms.



3. Contextual view of the site looking south-east across the Promenade with Roberts' Oyster Rooms in the foreground and the Grade I listed Blackpool Tower visible to the rear.



4. Contextual view of the site looking north-east across the Promenade with the Grade II listed New Clifton Hotel visible to the rear, identified by a blue arrow.

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5. Internal view of the ground floor of No. 86 Promenade confirming no features of historic interest remain.



6. Internal view of the rear portion of the first floor of No. 86 Promenade confirming no features of historic interest remain.



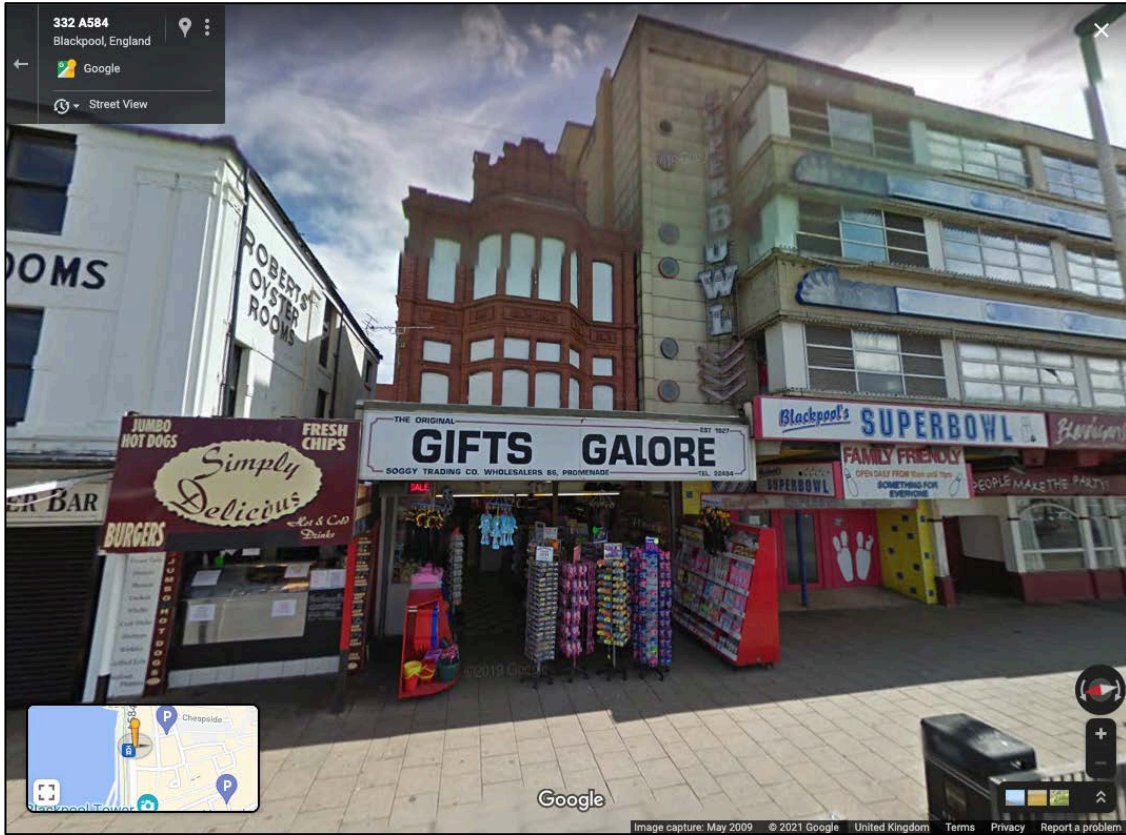
7. Internal view of the front portion of the first floor of No. 86 Promenade confirming no features of historic interest remain.



8. Internal view of second floor of No. 86 Promenade confirming no features of historic interest remain.



Appendix G: Historic Google Streetview image capture (May 2009)



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