

AJW-CS

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Heritage Statement for:

37-39 High Street Queenborough Kent ME11 5AA

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This application is to allow for the above address to have a new disabled access ramp and door installed at the community's local convenience store.

Application 21/506275/FULL has been submitted.

The Queenborough Store 37-39 High Street is located within the Queenborough Conservation area. As such the impact of the proposed development upon the area needs to be considered.

Queenborough Conservation Area:

Queenborough is a small maritime town of Medieval origin situated to the south of the mouth of the River Medway in Kent. The Isle of Sheppey is separated from the mainland by a sea channel known as the Swale, and Queenborough is strategically positioned near to the meeting of the Swale and the River Medway. It offers a sheltered harbour at Queenborough Creek to the south of the town.

Queenborough is located about 3 kilometres south of Sheerness on Sea, at the northern tip of the Island and 8 kilometres north of Sittingbourne, across the Swale Crossing on the mainland. It has a railway station on the branch line from Sittingbourne to Sheerness.

The Medieval town of Queenborough was strategically planted on the Isle of Sheppey to command the western approaches to the Swale from the River Medway to the sea. Water has shaped the history of the town through

fishing, maritime trade, yachting and the ongoing control of flooding and drainage of the surrounding marshes. It is a key characteristic of the conservation area and defines its setting.

Modern Queenborough includes the old town of the waterfront to the north of The Creek and a largely twentieth century extension to the north and east of the railway line.

The south edge of the old town is its Medieval quayside and sheltered harbour in The Creek, which drains into the Swale just to the west. The Creek, and its saltings (an area of open grassland and mudflats), is a key element of the landscape setting and maritime history of Queenborough. As a measure of its importance this open space is largely included within the conservation area boundary. It contributes an important area of green buffer between the quayside and the Klondyke Industrial Estate further to the south.

Queenborough has a long and rich history. Queenborough Castle (also known as Sheppey Castle) is central to an understanding of the origins and historical significance of the town. The castle was first built in 1361 by Edward III and completed in 1367. The castle: was only once besieged in 1450 during the rebellion of Jack Cade, and successfully defended. It was refortified in 1545 as part of Henry VIII's programme of coastal defences.

In the 17th century, following the Civil War, the Royal castle was razed to the ground. The railway cut through part of the east moat and the school built over its northwest quarter, both in the 19th century. However, it still survives today as a low circular grassy mound and remains a distinctive feature of the conservation area.

Queenborough is significant as an uncommon example of a planned town in England. It is the only town to be newly founded so late in the Medieval period and the only one to be planned by a king in the period between the Black Death and early 17th Century.

The site of Queenborough Castle and the distinctive plan layout of the maritime and market town, with its High Street, pattern of burgage plots, Parish Church and town quay provides clear physical evidence of its Medieval origins. However, the Parish Church is the only standing building which dates from the time of the Royal foundation.

It appears that after an initial rapid expansion the growth of the town stalled in the late Medieval period. Despite its Royal borough status and strategic location, Queenborough failed to become the flourishing market town and seaport as envisaged by the King. The town found new prosperity in the second half of the 19th century as a variety of new industries were established on the Creekside, such as lime kilns, cement works, and the Sheppey Glue and Chemical Works on the site of the former Copper Works in 1886.

Within the conservation area there was a selective infill and replacement development on plots along the High Street, North Road and South Street right up until the 1960's, mostly as part of public programmes to clear some of the older and poorly maintained housing stock. By the 1980's a general downturn in manufacturing and industry caused the economy of the town to decline. It was in 1978, however, that the old town was designated by Swale Borough Council as a conservation area and the restoration of several key listed buildings on the High Street were undertaken by the Council. The quayside was also improved as part of an enhancement scheme in 1988.

Queenborough is a Medieval market town and port with a rich maritime history and distinctive character. It enjoys strong connections to the Swale and The Creek, as well as its wider marshland and estuarine landscape setting. Queenborough is historically significant as a planned and laid out port settlement planned by Royal charter in 1368 between the west Swale and the Royal Castle. Although almost all the buildings of the early town have been successively replaced or rebuilt through the centuries, the Medieval plan form of the town remains clearly legible today.

Queenborough is a linear settlement. The High Street was originally laid out to lead directly from the castle gate to the 'hard' or jetty on the waterfront in the west. The building of the school on part of the castle site in the 19th century severed the original visual and physical link at its east end.

The western half of the High Street is discernibly wider than the east and is swelling of the space marks the location of the Medieval marketplace; first granted by the 1368 charter. The original pattern of burgage or tenement plots to the north and south of the middle of the High Street can be deciphered in the width and considerable depth of some pots.

All along the High Street glimpsed views can be gained between buildings and along alleyways looking south down to the quayside below, The Creek and the saltings. These views from the High Street are narrowly framed by buildings and contrast pleasingly with more open views of the Creekside landscape to the south gained when one emerges onto the quayside. They ensure that the sights and sounds of the harbour are never far away and reinforce the distinctive maritime character of the conservation area.

The proposed development will have the following construction:

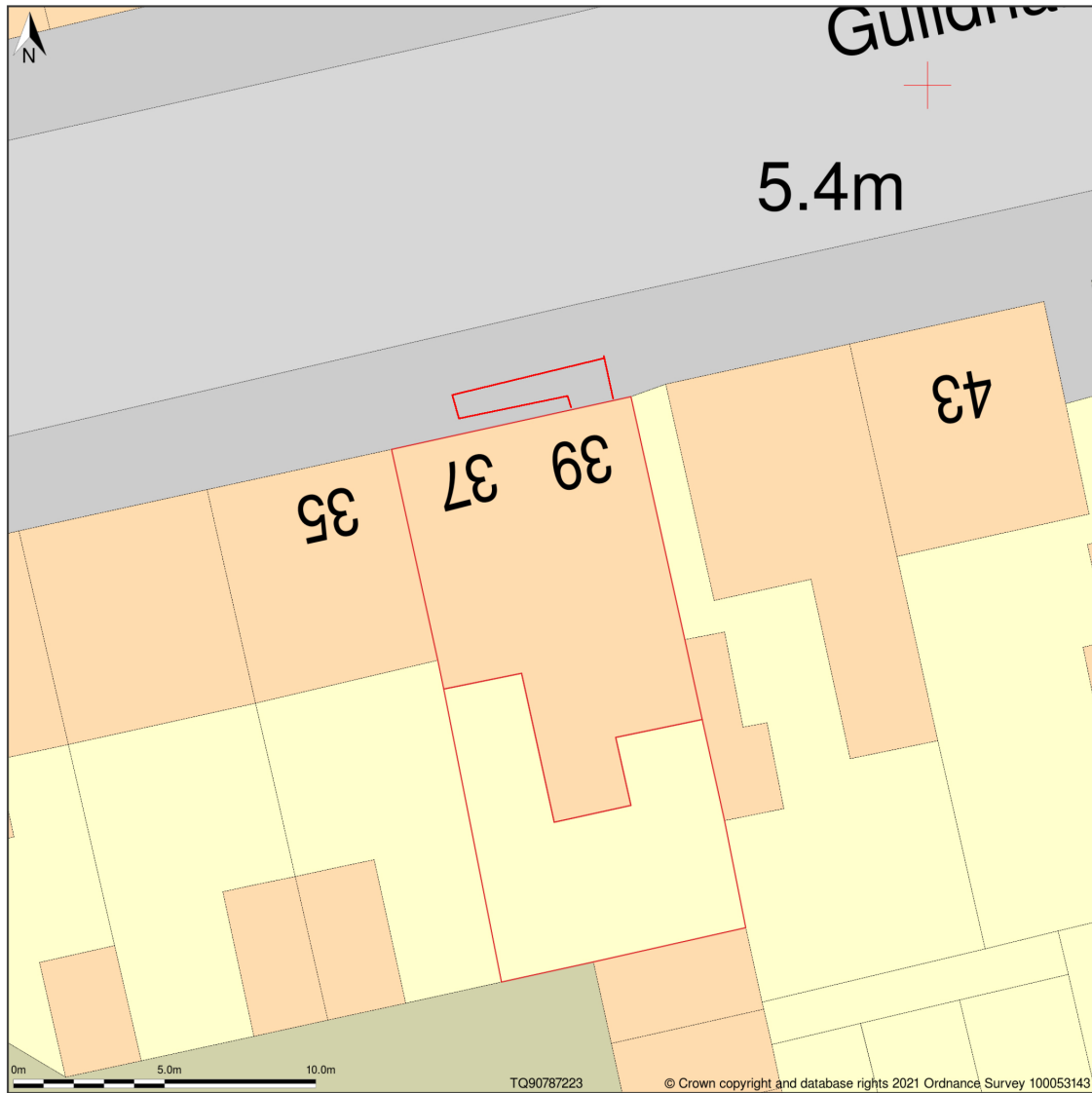
A permanent ramp made from cement and fixed metal. A new aluminium framed double glazed commercial front door with window.

Quality of the proposal:

The installation of this disability ramp will make independent living more feasible for people in the local community suffering from a disability or mobility issue.



37-39, High Street, Queenborough, Kent, ME11 5AA



Block Plan shows area bounded by: 590763.24, 172216.62, 590799.24, 172252.62 (at a scale of 1:200), OSGridRef: TQ90787223. The representation of a road, track or path is no evidence of a right of way. The representation of features as lines is no evidence of a property boundary.

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