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# DESIGN, HERITAGE & FLOOD RISK STATEMENT

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- 1) Appendix 1 –Town Centre – Conservation Area Appraisal

## INTRODUCTION

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The application seeks full planning consent for a deck (as an extension from the existing), link span (bridge) and pontoon.

## DESIGN

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The design (and scale) is somewhat a form of its function. There are many similar examples in close proximity, including at Cowes Corinthian and Tides Reach.

The pontoon will remain in a fixed position, albeit will rise and fall with the tide. It is secured by a range of tubular piles which also attach to the linkspan (or bridge). It is likely that the materials will consist of steel and timber to give a high quality robust finish.

A-typical details are shown within the illustrations below and are of a construction that are expected within the marine environment.

The siting of the pontoon has been positioned carefully so that it does not interfere with existing pontoons and slipways and will retain sufficient space for all existing boats and moorings.



Example of a Pylon



Example of Link Bridge

## HERITAGE ASSETS

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The proposal is within the Conservation Area of Cowes as defined by figure 1.

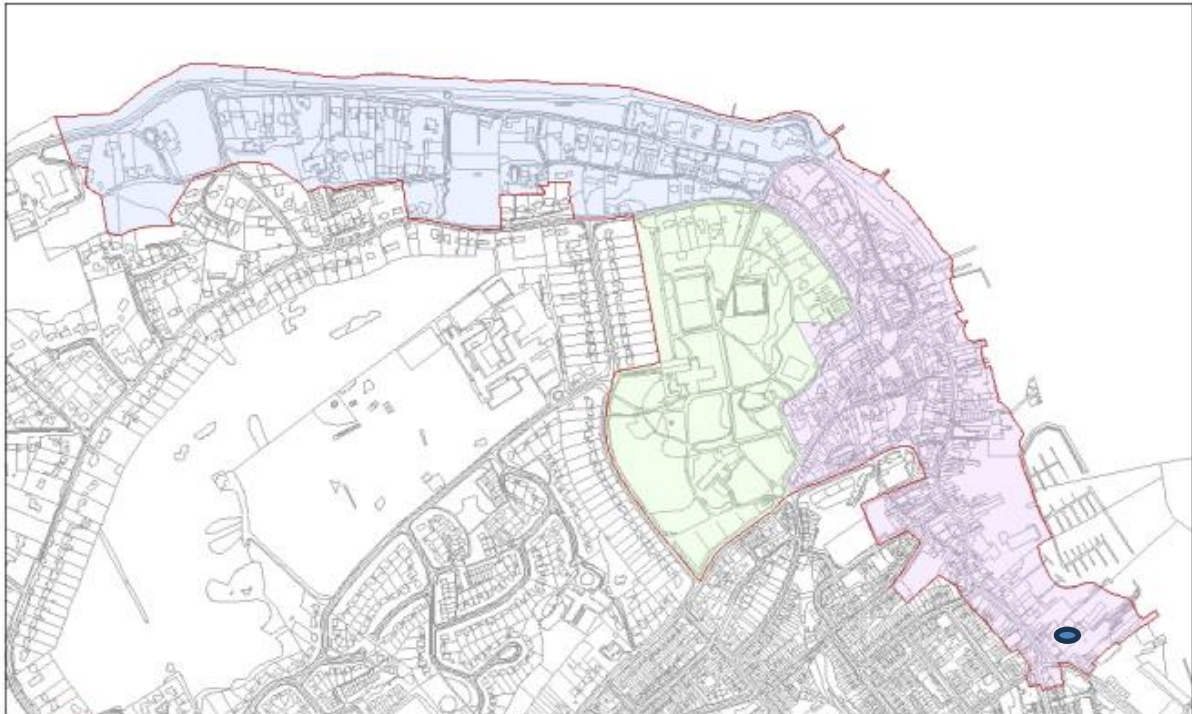


Figure 1 – Conservation Area

In accordance with the Character Area, the proposal sits within the Town Centre (Character Area 3) as outlined in detail within Appendix 1.

The proposal sits adjacent to the curtilage of Westbourne which is a Grade II listed building (list entry 1222655). The listed description confirms:

*“BIRMINGHAM ROAD 1. 5270 West Cowes (north-east side) No 43 (Westbourne House) SZ 4995 NE 3/23 17.8.51. II 2. Built in 1752. Built of grey headers with red brick window dressings, stringcourse cornice and pilasters flanking the front. Two storeys and attics. Four windows and 3 modern dormers. Glazing bars missing. Roof covered in corrugated iron sheeting. The parapet has been renewed in modern brick. Dilapidated porch with mutilated cornice. Plaque recording that "Thomas Arnold, D.D., Headmaster of Rugby School 1828-42, was born in this house on 13 June 1795”.*

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR HERITAGE ASSETS

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The following criteria have been used to assess the importance of the setting of the Heritage Asset. As sitting adjacent to a Listed Building and located within a Conservation Area (CA) it is given high importance.

*Criteria for Grading the Importance of Heritage Assets*

Heritage Importance	Criteria
Very High	<p>Heritage assets of international importance. World Heritage Sites and the individual attributes that convey their Outstanding Universal Value.</p> <p>Areas associated with intangible historic activities as evidenced by the register and areas with associations with particular innovations, scientific developments, movements or individuals of global importance.</p>
High	<p>Scheduled Monuments, <u>Listed Buildings</u>, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens and Battlefields. <u>Conservation Areas</u> and historic townscapes with strong coherence. Also includes unscheduled sites and monuments of scheduable quality and/or importance discovered through the course of evaluation or mitigation.</p> <p>Undesignated historic landscapes of outstanding interest, or high quality and importance and of demonstrable national value. Well-preserved historic landscapes, exhibiting considerable coherence, time-depth or other critical factors.</p>
Medium	<p>Conservation Areas and historic townscapes and landscapes with reasonable coherence, time-depth and other critical factor(s). Unlisted assets that can be shown to have exceptional qualities or historic association. Archaeological deposits and features of regional importance.</p> <p>Undesignated historic landscapes that would justify designation at regional level, landscapes of regional value. Averagely well-preserved historic landscapes with reasonable coherence, time-depth or other critical factors.</p>
Low	<p>Heritage Assets with importance to local interest groups or that contributes to local research objectives. Locally Listed Buildings and Sites of Importance within a district level. Robust undesignated assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor contextual associations.</p> <p>Robust undesignated historic landscapes. Historic landscapes with importance to local interest groups. Historic landscapes whose value is limited by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations.</p>
Negligible	<p>Assets with little or no archaeological or historical interest due to poor preservation or survival.</p> <p>Landscapes with little or no significant historical interest.</p>
Unknown	The importance of asset has not been ascertained from available evidence.

The setting is defined as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

The setting of the proposal is an interesting one because the context of the CA is dominated by the marine related environment; split between domestic and commercial boating/sailing. This creates a pleasurable and active environment which is symbolic of Cowes and its heritage.

Given that relationship the marine environment and the historic environment work in positive composite with each other. The proposal, as a matter of strategic principle is not contrary to the grain and character of the CA. The Councils CA appraisal (Appendix 3) recognises this context.

The curtilage/setting of Westbourne dissipates very quickly and so its sphere of historical importance is curtailed to a tight area. Arguably the proposal has a very limited visual or historical relationship with Westbourne because the intervening land (being a concrete slipway and peripheral modern buildings) frame a more commercial/urban feeling and so the appreciation of the setting is mixed between various buildings (modern and historic), access routes, slipways and pontoons.

*Criteria for establishing the contribution made by a setting to a heritage asset*

Contribution of Setting to Heritage Significance	Criteria
High Contribution	A setting which possesses key attributes that make a strong positive contribution to the understanding and/or appreciation of the values that embodies its importance.
Medium Contribution	A setting which possesses key attributes that make some positive contribution to the understanding and/or appreciation of the values that embodies its importance.
Low Contribution	A setting which possesses key attributes that make little positive contribution to the understanding and/or appreciation of the values that embodies its importance.
Negligible	A setting which does not contribute to the understanding and/or appreciation of the values that embodies its importance.

The setting has a high contribution to the Conservation Area (as recognised in Appendix 1) and a medium contribution to Westbourne because it has some contribution.

*Criteria for Assessing Magnitude of Impact*

Magnitude of Impact	Physical	Setting
High	Complete destruction or a fundamental, substantial change of an asset or historic environment feature. Change to most or all key elements of the historic environment, such that the resource is totally altered.	A comprehensive and fundamental change to the key positive attributes of a heritage asset's setting, such that the setting is substantially or totally altered.
Medium	A considerable change or appreciable difference to the	A considerable change to the key positive attributes of a

	existing baseline. Changes to many key elements of the historic environment, such that the resource is clearly modified.	heritage asset's setting such that its contribution to the importance of the asset is appreciable reduced.
Low	A minor change to the baseline condition of a heritage asset. Changes to the key elements of the historic environment, such that the asset is slightly altered.	A limited change to the key positive attributes of a heritage asset's setting resulting in a slight but discernible reduction to its contribution to the asset's importance.
Imperceptible	A barely distinguishable change to the historic environment baseline.	A very slight change to the key positive attributes of a heritage asset's setting such that the change is barely distinguishable.

The significance of effect is determined to be imperceptible because 'the change' would barely be distinguishable to the Conservation Area or Westbourne. There is a change, but one which is only slight. That slight change would not affect (negatively) the key positive attributes of the CA or Westbourne.

*Matrix for determining the significance of effect (magnitude of change (impact) x importance of heritage resource)*

	Magnitude of Change (Impact) (Adverse or Beneficial)			
Heritage Importance	High	Medium	Low	Imperceptible
Very High	Major	Major	Moderate to Major	Minor
High	Major	Moderate to Major	Minor to Moderate	Negligible to Minor
Medium	Moderate to Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible to Minor
Low	Minor to Moderate	Minor	Negligible to Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible to Minor	Negligible to Minor	Negligible
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Overall, the impact would be negligible to minor. It would not create an adverse impact to the setting or character of the CA or Westbourne

## LOCAL POLICY

Policy DM11 (Historic & Built Environment) generally correlates with the National Planning Policy Framework as a catalyst to positively conserve and enhance the (special) character of historic and built environment.

Due to the scale, position and orientation against the Conservation Area, there is little discernible change against baseline conditions to warrant a demonstrable impact. It does not erode the quality, enjoyment and characteristic that makes up the core elements of the Conservation Area.

### **DM11 Historic and Built Environment**

**The Council will support proposals that positively conserve and enhance the special character of the Island's historic and built environment. Development proposals will be expected to:**

- 1. Deliver economic led regeneration.**
- 2. Relate to the continued use, maintenance, rescue/refurbishment, repair and re-use of heritage assets and historic places, especially where identified as being at risk, or likely to become at risk.**
- 3. Relate to the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the Island's heritage assets and public realm.**
- 4. Consider and balance the relationship between the quality of place, economic, social and environmental characteristics.**
- 5. Be informed by sufficient evidence to reveal impacts upon the significance of heritage assets and their settings which may include the Council's Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and the Local List Supplementary Planning Document.**

**The demolition or substantial harm to non-designated heritage assets and their settings, which make a positive contribution to the special character and/or local identity of an area, will be resisted.**

**Demolition or substantial harm to designated heritage assets and their settings will only be permitted in exceptional or wholly exceptional circumstances. Depending on their significance; and only once a lack of appropriate viable alternatives to demolition or substantial alteration have been demonstrated.**

**Consent will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:**

- (i) the substantial harm to or loss of significance is necessary in order to deliver substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss; or**
- (ii) (a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and**
  - (b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term that will enable its conservation; and**
  - (c) conservation through grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is not possible; and**
  - (d) the harm or to loss of the heritage asset is outweighed by the benefits of bringing the site back to use**



## FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

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The purpose of this flood risk assessment is to determine the appropriateness of the development in relation to the flood risk and whether permission should be granted or whether a sequential or exception test must be applied.

The relevant flood zones are subdivided as follows:

- Flood zone 1 -** low probability. This zone comprises of land assessed as having a less than 1:100 annual probability of river or sea flooding. Within this context all uses of land are appropriate.
- Flood zone 2 -** medium probability. This zone comprises of land assessed as having between a 1:100 and 1:1000 annual probability of river flooding or between a 1:200 and 1:100 annual probability of sea flooding in any year. As determined by the technical guidance appropriate uses within this zone include water compatible, less vulnerable and more vulnerable uses. Highly vulnerable uses are only appropriate if the exceptions test is passed.
- Flood zone 3a –** high probability. This zone comprises of land assessed as having a 1:100 or greater annual probability of flooding, or a 1:200 or great annual probability of flooding from the sea in any year. Appropriate uses include water compatible and less vulnerable uses of land. Highly vulnerable uses should not be permitted in this zone. More vulnerable uses and essential infrastructure should only be permitted if the exceptions test is passed.
- Flood zone 3 –** functional flood plain. This zone comprises of land where water has to flow and to be stored in times of flood. The technical guidance defines that appropriate uses comprise of water compatible uses and essential infrastructures listed in table 2. Essential infrastructure in this zone should pass the exceptions test.

As identified by the flood risk maps, outlined by the SFRA (on behalf of the Environment Agency) it is clear that the site sits within the flood zone 2 & 3. The proposed use is 'water compatible' and so there is no need to undertake a sequential or exceptions test. The development is appropriate in flood risk terms.

**Water-compatible development**

- Flood control infrastructure.
- Water transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sewage transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sand and gravel working.
- **Docks, marinas and wharves.**
- Navigation facilities.
- Ministry of Defence, defence installations.
- Ship building, repairing and dismantling, dockside fish processing and refrigeration and compatible activities requiring a waterside location.
- **Water-based recreation** (excluding sleeping accommodation).
- Lifeguard and coastguard stations.
- Amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms.
- Essential ancillary sleeping or residential accommodation for staff required by uses in this category, *subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan.*

**CONCLUSION**

The proposed development seeks full planning consent for a deck (as an extension from the existing), link span and pontoon.

The design (and scale) is somewhat a form of its function. There are many similar examples in close proximity which form part of the context and character of Cowes. The proposal will integrate well into this character.

The proposal has been assessed against the importance, setting and character of the Conservation Area and Westbourne and it is concluded that there is no adverse impact against baseline conditions. The proposal is sympathetic and appropriate. It is also appropriate in flood risk terms.

## Appendix 1

**COWES CONSERVATION AREA REVISION – TOWN CENTRE CHARACTER AREA****AS APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE****The legal background**

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 69 also requires authorities to review their areas from time to time to see if further designation or alteration to existing designations is necessary.

Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) deals in some detail with the assessment and designation of conservation areas in section 4, and the adopted planning policy documents for the Island contain sections relating to development within such areas.

**Character**

This is the small scale, historic and lively centre of a town which is tied strongly to its waterfront and to waterborne activity in many forms. Its steep streets leading off the High Street afforded views to the Solent and mainland.

NB this expression of 'character' is derived from the study below.

**History of development**

Cowes has thrived as a town, port and centre for ship and boat building since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This part of the conservation area relates generally to the core of the town which developed from that time through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Archaeology**

The archaeology of the town centre is remarkable in that the old sea wall appears to follow the line of what is now the High Street. This would have been the focus for much of the activity in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when trade links with the American colonies made Cowes a prosperous centre of commerce.

**Setting**

The town forming this part of the conservation area is set on a northeast facing slope at the entrance to the river Medina. The waterfront and Cowes Roads form a vital part of the towns' character and thus the setting provided by the waterway is crucial.

To the southwest the town continues but the character here is of residential streets which become more modern the further out one goes from the centre.

To the southeast, along Medina Road, the historic character has been lost by clearance for boatyard use and with the construction of modern apartment blocks. Isolated early buildings remain leading to the floating bridge, but there is no consistent strength of character

remaining until one nears the floating bridge.

The conservation area continues to the northwest, but the character changes and this is recognised in the other 2 character areas forming part of the overall proposal for this conservation area revision.

### **Materials**

There is a mix of materials used in this area, but the palette is one which relates to buildings in the wider area. The local red and sand bricks are used, along with blue/blacks, there is some use of stone and plain render, but there is little sign of timber frames as early buildings have been refronted.

Roofs are either slate or red plain tile, and timber windows are predominantly double hung sliding sashes or modern replacements.

There are exceptions to this, most notably the 'art deco' buildings with their distinctive rendered finish and metal casement windows, but these are few, as are other oddities which all add to the variety of the area.

### **Height, mass & form**

The key features of this area are the small plots and narrow streets and the way buildings address the waterfront. From this the height, mass and form are dictated and lead to terraces of narrow buildings of 2 or 3 stories. Many have rear extensions over part of their width and to a lesser height than the frontage block. Small back yards, frequently without access to a road, exist but have often been built over, especially where the buildings are in commercial use. Where buildings back onto the water rather than a road, they often have slipways, pontoons and davits and toward the east boatsheds and piers.

Some modern insertions have spread over more than 1 plot and have failed to recognise the rhythm of the streets in their design leading to over large buildings which do not sit comfortably in the streetscape.

### **Typical details**

Given the variety of ages and styles of buildings in the area, it is difficult to identify details which are typical.

Windows to upper levels have a mainly vertical emphasis, and were often timber double hung sliding sashes with a painted finish. Doors of accommodation above commercial premises were also painted and usually 4 or 6 panelled where early examples remain.

Surviving shopfronts have applied pilasters and some have blind boxes built in to their fascias. Stall risers are traditionally quite deep with various finishes.

### **Paving**

A large part of the centre including Shooters Hill and High Street have been repaved in the recent past. This repaving made use of red brick pavements which have little relevance to what might have been used in the past. They are difficult to reinstate convincingly when works are carried out and do nothing to enhance the character of the area.

The remainder of the area retains a traditional footway / carriageway treatment with some natural stone kerbs and gutters and mainly blacktop surfacing with some areas of PCC slabs on the footway. On the Parade there are areas of concrete paving.

**Trees and open space**

This area is notably dense, with its open spaces being mainly the surface car parks and yacht haven. The Parade is an open space which is usually dominated by parked cars, but is used for displays when events such as Cowes Week happen.

There are some trees on the edges of the area, especially towards Northwood Park, but generally this is a tight town centre area with little space to spare.

**Day & night / summer & winter**

This area of the town does change through the day, but more in summer than winter. In winter the area is quiet, with local people going about their business during the day, and perhaps going to a pub or restaurant in the evening. The town is also affected by the closure of a number of shops completely during the winter months.

In summer the town is busier during the day with visitors, and during the sailing season with masses of yacht crews. During the day the visitors wander round the shops and restaurants, while the sailors buy provisions, frequent the breakfast and sandwich bars and look for new kit in the specialist shops before disappearing back to their boats for the day.

In the evening the town is much livelier with pubs and restaurants bursting out onto the streets until the early hours.

**For detailed information on policies, legal background and national advice, please refer to**

The Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan  
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Planning policy guidance 15 – Planning and the historic environment.

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