
Design Access and Heritage Statement

EDWS Architects

1-3 Union Street
Brighton
BN1 1HA



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Executive Summary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This heritage report outlines the historic and architectural interest of the charming Georgian shop at 1-3 Union Street Lanes in Brighton, in one of the oldest parts of Brighton, East Sussex. We offer a glimpse of its story, based on the historic map evidence and site inspection. We explore its building form, based upon its original Ground Floor retail and upper floor current office use (former residential). While it has been altered on the first Floor over the centuries for office use, it could be modestly updated to bring it back to its original residential use.

Update –February 2024:

Further to our recent planning / listed building Approval at 1-3 Union Street – dated 12th January 2024 – BH2023/01887 –We now re-apply via a new standalone Listed Building Application due to a revised internal plan arrangement as per updated scheme proposals now before the council for review.

Ewan Stoddart -Ba Hons Dip Arch - RIBA Chartered Architect

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BACKGROUND: THE SITE, SETTING AND LOCATION

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Site and Location

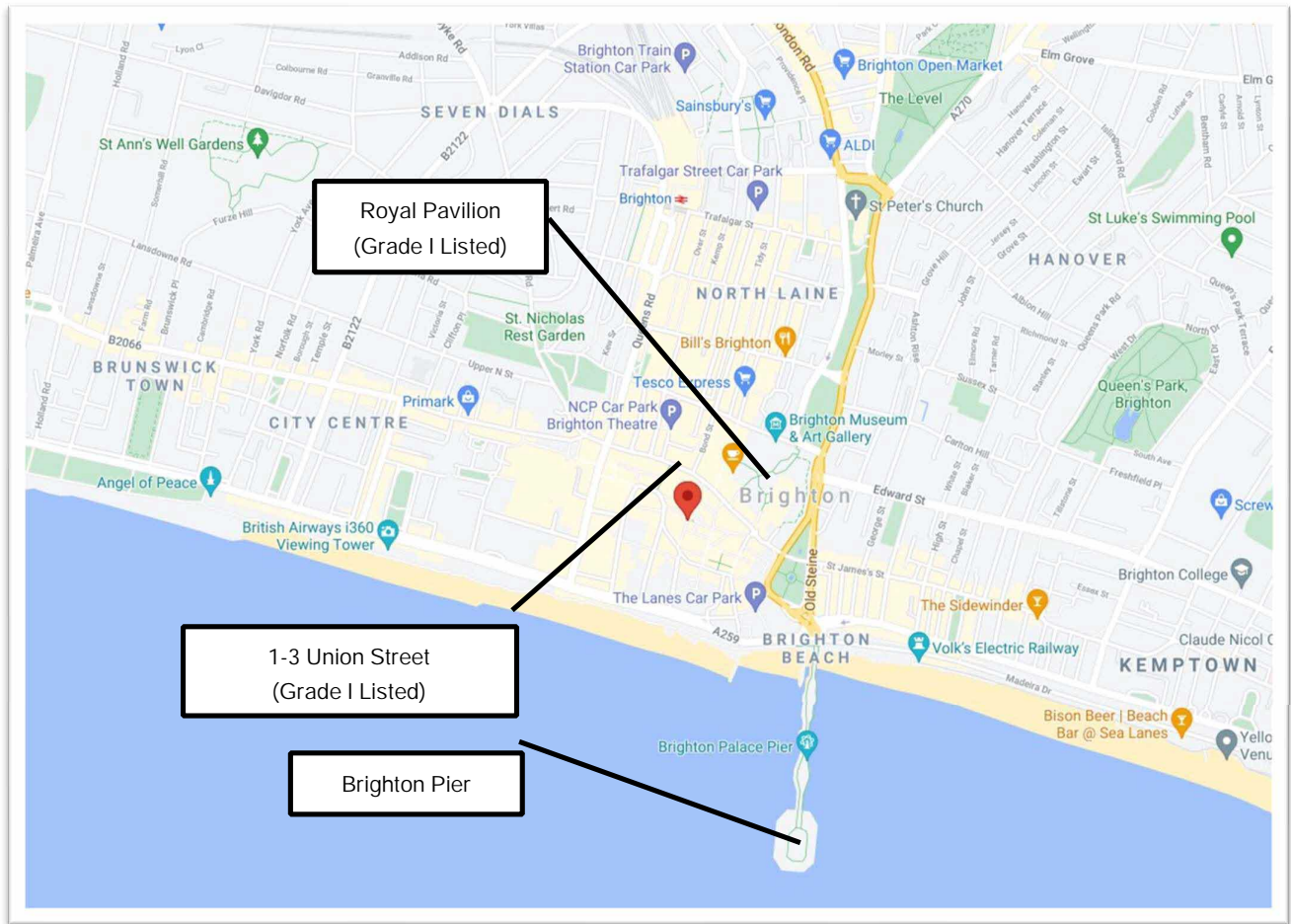


Image 1 –Site Plan –Google Maps 2023

Context: The old Town and Conservation Area

Old Town Conservation Area lies at the heart of Brighton, and 1-3 Union Street is sited within one of its oldest neighbourhoods.

Just to the south runs Meeting House Lane. It is nestled within “The Lanes” - the area bounded by North, East and West Streets and King’s Road. It is a surviving core in the old town of “Brightelmston” as it existed until the 18th-C. This is called The Lanes because it is composed of many small lanes or “twittens” that run across it. These

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narrow lanes snake between the larger, principal streets: Middle Street, Ship Street, Black Lion Street and Market Street- all running north to south. Defined by West Street, bounded by North Street and East Street- it runs south to the beach, and is bounded by King’s Road. This established boundary follows the medieval extent of Brighton, then known as Brighthelmstone.

1-5 Union Street Lane lies within the prestigious Old Town Conservation Area

Brighton & Hove Council’s “Character Statement” for the Old Town Conservation Area notes: *“Summary: The Old Town area has formed the economic, social and civic core of Brighton throughout its transition from fishing settlement to city. It still provides evidence of this process that has resulted in a distinctive character and identity.”*

Character Feature / Contribution to Significance

Street plan and distinctive hierarchy of streets.	The network of interconnecting intimate narrow streets and lanes are the hallmark of the Old Town and Lanes area. They illustrate the development of the Old Town from the medieval plotlands of the historic fishing settlement to the popular seaside resort of the 18th, 19 th and 20 th centuries. The busy commercial city centre grew out of the cardinal streets that define the area.
Key views, including long street views to the sea.	These provide the visual connection between the spaces of the Old Town and the sea, illustrating the historic drivers of the town and later city’s development from fishing village to seaside resort.
Public Realm	The Lanes and smaller roads of the area are characterised by <u>red brick pavements</u> , distinguishing the historic core of Brighton from surrounding areas.

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HISTORY OF SITE / HISTORICAL MAPS

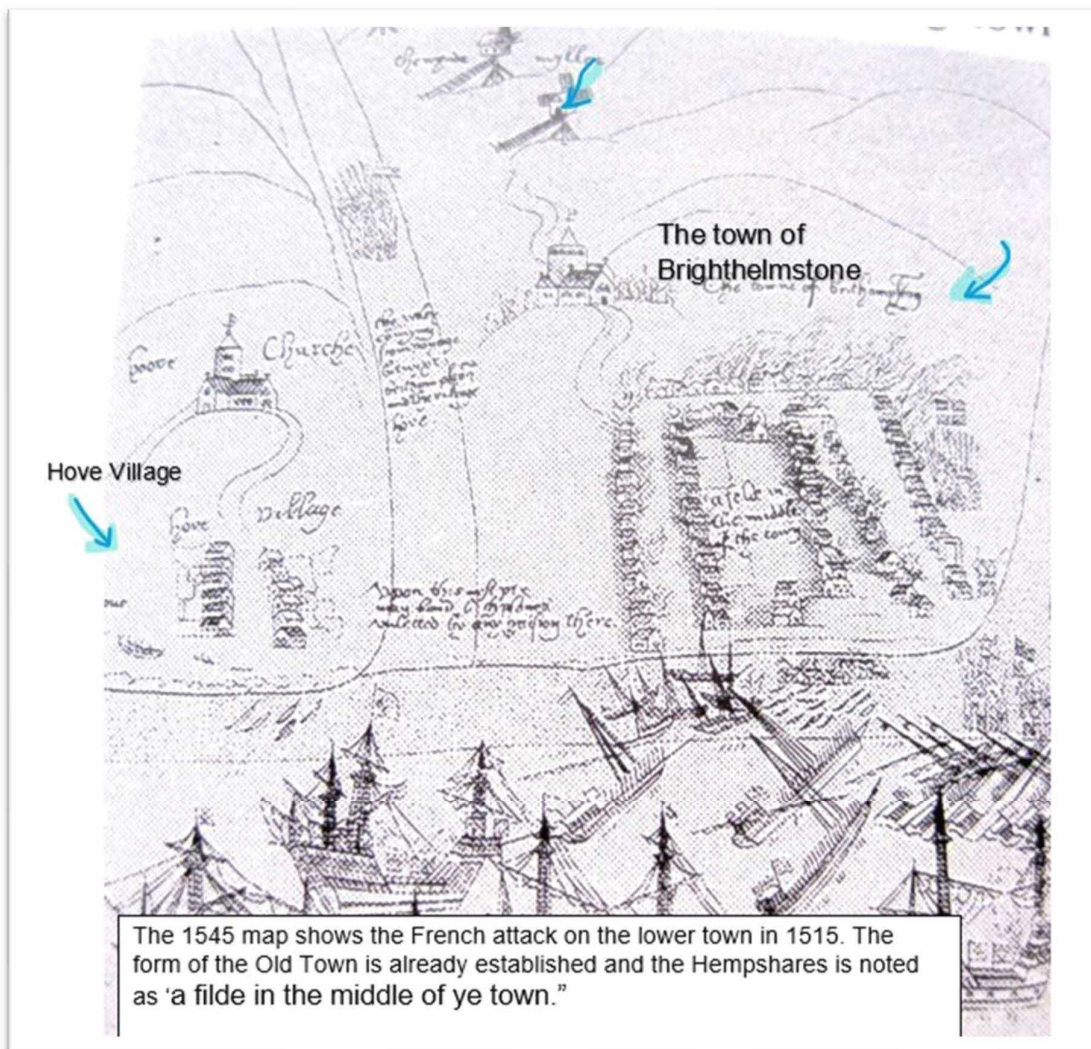
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The 16th-Century Map of Brighthelmstone, Sussex.

The earliest known map of Brighton is likely the 16th-C. depiction, seen below. The RIBA "[*A Guide to the Buildings of Brighton*](#)" notes: "Little is known about the early history of Brighton before the beginning of the 16th century. The scant surviving evidence suggests that it was a small agricultural and fishing community called Brighthelmstone, more important than neighbouring villages... but totally eclipsed by the town of Lewes 11 miles away to the north-east. At the beginning of the 16th century the upper town was located on a low cliff to the west of the Steine and consisted of three principal streets arranged around the three sides of the Hempshares, a rectangular open space facing the sea."

The Wynde Mylles



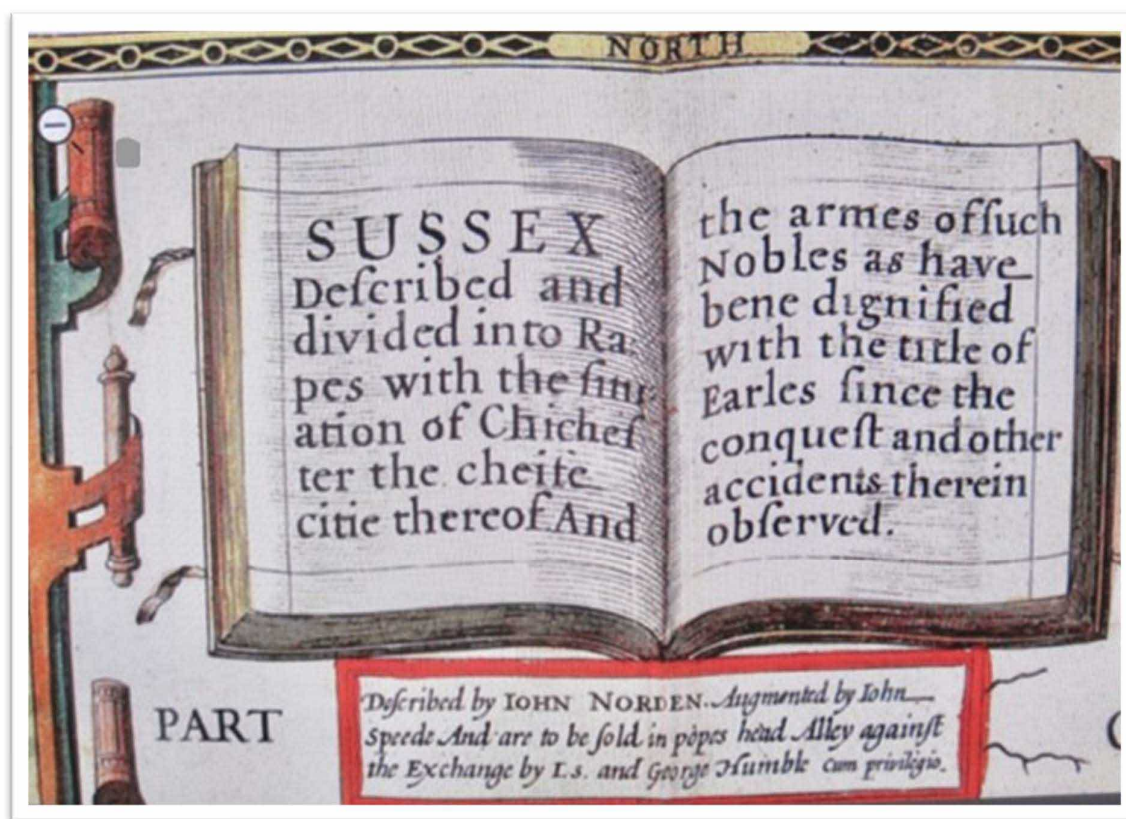
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The RIBA guide continues:

“A market place stood at the cliff’s edge and nearby a group of buildings formed the beginnings of Ship Street and Black Lion Street, both of them named after inns. Paths led down the cliffs to the broad beach which was a unique feature on this stretch of the coast. Here stood a collection of cottages surrounded by narrow wooden net houses, herring houses and large capstans which were used to haul the boats out of the English Channel and onto the beach.”

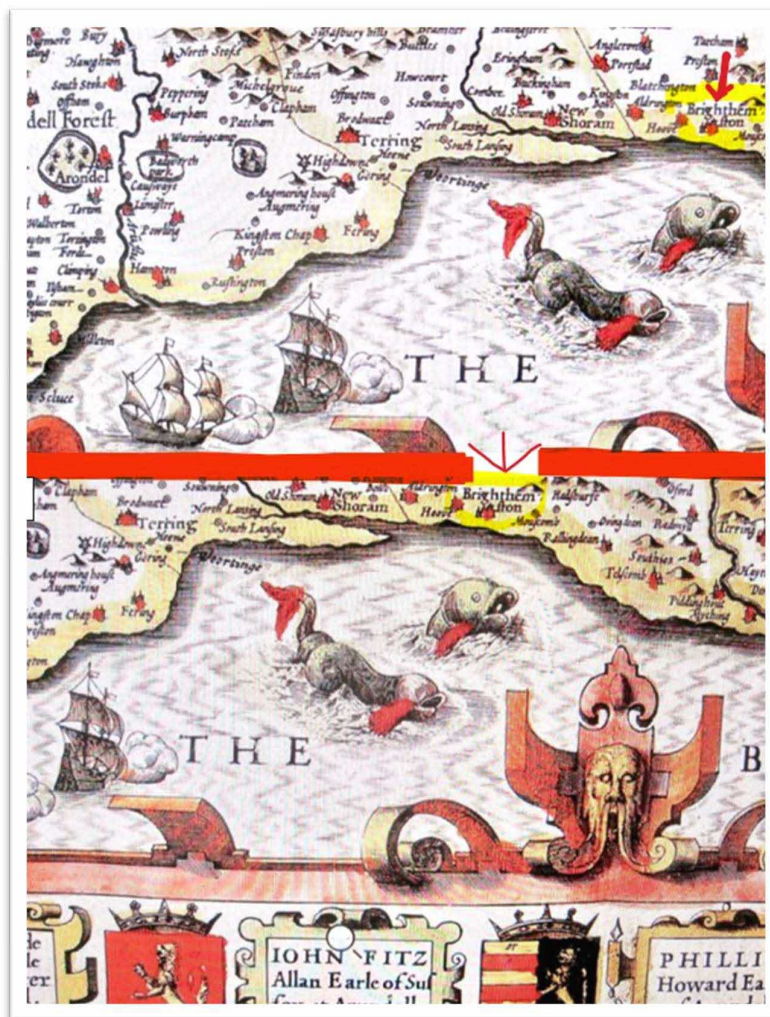
“The town was surrounded by its own farmlands, which occupied the rest of the parish. ...Between 1550 and 1640 the town’s population increased from about 1,000 to 4,100. ...During this period the grid of streets which today forms the old town became firmly established within the square contained by North Street, West Street, East Street and the cliff front. These streets enclosed an area of about 25 hectares and defined the limits of urban development until the end of the 18th century.”



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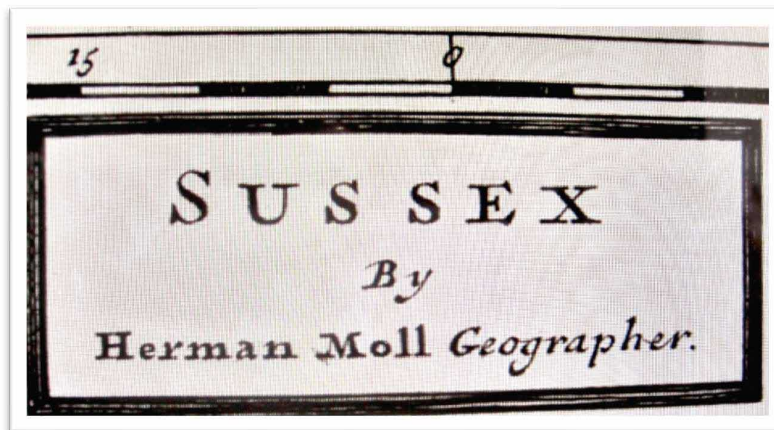
The early 17thC. map of Brighthelmstone- the 1610 John Norden Map, seen above. The town's fishing trade rapidly declined in the 17thC, so that during the 1680's, only 30 boats remained. Brighton had the biggest trading cargo fleet on the south coast by the end of the century. However, competition from the east coast saw the industry decline, and coastal erosion forced the market place to move to a site in Black Lion Street. By 1700, the fortunes of the town were at a low ebb and didn't recover until the Mid-18thC. Above: the 1610 John Norden map of Brighton, and on the next page



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This page: Details from the 1610 John Norden historical map of Brighton. The importance of the coastal trade is shown by the sailing ships and mythical beasts.



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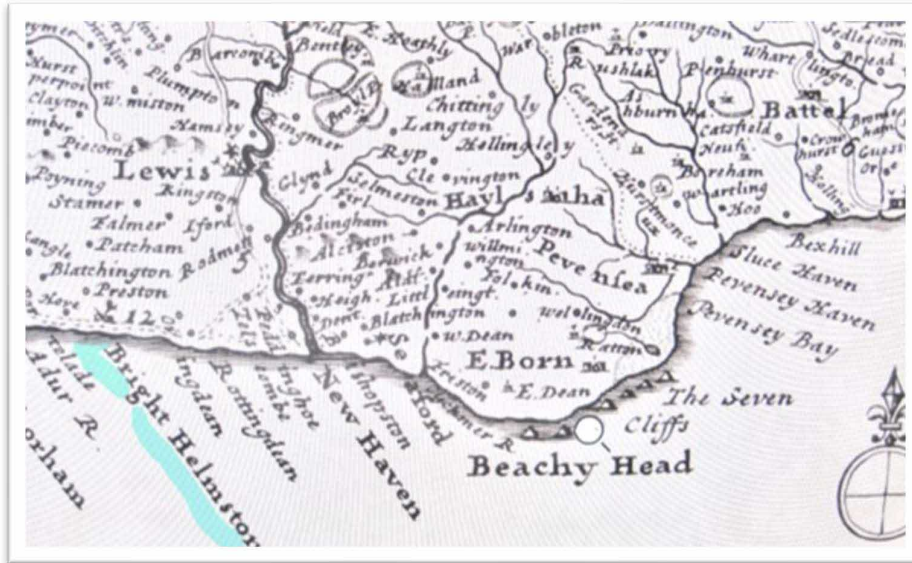
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The 1724 Map of Brighton

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During the Georgian era, sea-bathing caught on as a fashionable past-time. Brighton first evolved into a resort in the 1730's just after this 1724 Moll map. Like Margate, Hastings, and Weymouth, Brighton was able to develop as a health and holiday resort and overtook the inland spas such as Bath, adapting it to the sea-side. Also, Brighton was much cheaper than Tunbridge Wells nearby. It benefited from being the nearest sea-side town *en route* to London the Continent, making it popular. Between 1750 to 1780, bathing houses, lodging houses and libraries sprung up in the old town. After 1780, the new arrivals and development spread out to farmland to the east and north side, so the old town became the business and resort centre for Brighton.



The 1794 Map of West Grinstead

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This historic Georgian map of Sussex [above] is fascinating. It still shows the Sussex coast with Brighton originally named as: Brighthelmstone, east of Shoreham and Worthing, and south-west of Lewes - a Medieval settlement. The ancient town of Petworth lies to the north-west, Arundel to the west on the Old Shoreham Road, with Cuckfield and East Grinstead directly north and the market town of Horsham to the north-west, also.

The 1810 Map of “Brighthelmstone.”

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Above: 1810 map of “Brighthelmstone” by J. Marchant shows how developed the city had become by the late Georgian period. However, it was mainly confined to the coastal fringe and the area around North Street and The Steyne.

Sir Nikolaus Pevsner* notes that in Brighton:

“The seaside story starts towards the mid C18 with sea bathing recorded as early as 1736. From the 1740s Brighton sea water was prescribed by doctors...“ Visitors first began to appear as early as 1753 after Doctor Russell published ‘Dissertation Concerning the Use of Sea Water in Diseases of the Glands.’ “Dr Russell also discovered a chalybeate spring in St. Ann’s Well Gardens, Hove was discovered around the same time.” Visitors began to appear and there must have been quite a number and of a genteel kind ...if The Castle Inn built a ballroom in 1766, and The Ship Inn its Assembly Room in 1767. Then, the Duke of Gloucester came in 1765, the Duke of Cumberland in 1771, 1772 & 1779; the Prince of Wales in 1783, 1785, and 1786.”

**The Buildings of England: Sussex*, Brighton: pages 426- 454. Yale University Press, rev.2003, edited by Ian Nairn

At this point, it is worth noting briefly, why Brighton became so fashionable. Pevsner reminds us that:

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“The Prince of Wales had met Mrs. Fitzherbert in 1784 and secretly married her in 1785. She took a house at Brighton, and he, in 1786, leased from Thomas Read Kemp Senior, a farmhouse facing the Steine. This in 1786 -7 he had converted and enlarged into a Marine Pavilion by Henry Holland, the most refined of architects in London then. ...in 1802 already he had converted Holland’s chaste and elegant interiors into thorough-going chinoiserie...”
The RIBA’s “Guide to the Buildings of Brighton” published and written by the School of Architecture and Design (McMillan Martin Ltd.) notes:

“Although Brighthelmstone had a long history as a fishing town, there are no secular buildings which predate the 16th century. In earlier times, many of the town’s buildings had been constructed of mud and wattle and clay tiles... However, during the latter part of the 16th century, there was a shift to more durable materials of flint and cobble. The traditional Medieval “Hall House” form was gradually displaced by storied houses with brick chimneys. A few of these 17th-century buildings remain to this day although they have been altered.” [One can be seen near Pecksniff’s in Meeting House Lane.]

“In 1740, there were 450 houses in the town. Most of these were built along the north south streets, and generous areas of land remained behind them to serve as garden allotments and open ground for drying nets. Transverse pathways served to give access to gardens, and to neighbouring streets.”

Just such an early path in the old town is Meeting House Lane.

“The growing popularity of Brighton after 1750 led to development outside of the old town, but much redevelopment also took place within it. New houses and workshops came to be built in the backland areas along the transverse pathways and these developed into the narrow alleyways which are now referred to as the twittens.

“... One consequence of the developments which accompanied Brighton’s transformation from a fishing town to a fashionable resort is the fact that a large proportion of the buildings which stand today date from the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries.”

The Victorian period brought tremendous change in Brighton with the coming of the railway. Nikolaus Pevsner explains [see page 150- below, and see pg. 217 for Para 2]:

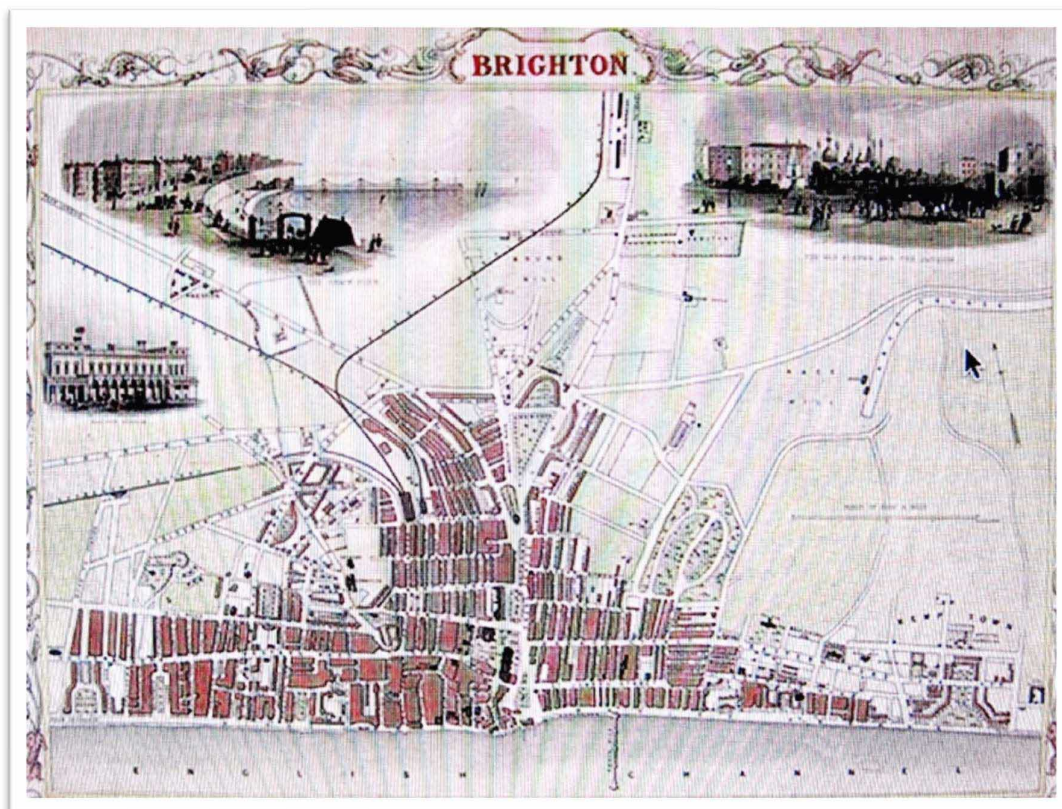
“In the second decade of the C18 Brighton was the fastest-growing town in Britain. Between 1801 and 1831 the population had increased 550 per cent to 40,634. Indeed, the Brighton one thinks of is the creation of the 1820s and 1830s, when the seafront developments of Kemp Town and Brunswick Town were carried out... In 1822, Kings Road was opened along the West Cliff and the seafront promenade replaced the Steine the focus of fashionable

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life. From the 1840's any remaining gaps in the seafront were filled and the Hove seafront was extended W to Adelaide Crescent (begun in 1830 but not completed until 1850). ...By 1851, the population of Brighton & Hove was 69,673... Victorian and Edwardian Brighton & Hove is no less rewarding architecturally than the Late Georgian town..." according to Pevsner:

"The Western seafront: The seafront W. of the pier is everyone's picture of a resort with its almost continuous run of hotels and places of entertainment. Before the C19 the buildings of Brighton's Old Town extended down to the cliff edge and there was little or no development W. of West Street until the last decades of the 1790s. After 1800 Thomas Kemp began to acquire land in the West Laine (open field), selling or leasing in blocks to builders and developers, enabling development of a generous and consistent layout with a series of squares facing the sea, developed over the first two decades of the C19. The road along the cliff edge was improved as a broad promenade (renamed King's Road) in 1818-26 and extended W. to Hove in 1834... From the 1860s the advent of the Victorian super hotels and piers drew, as now, the day-trippers and holiday-makers." While the 1851 Map of Brighton (below) does not show in any great detail, it indicates the town's growing prominence and density



The 1873 Ordnance Survey Map

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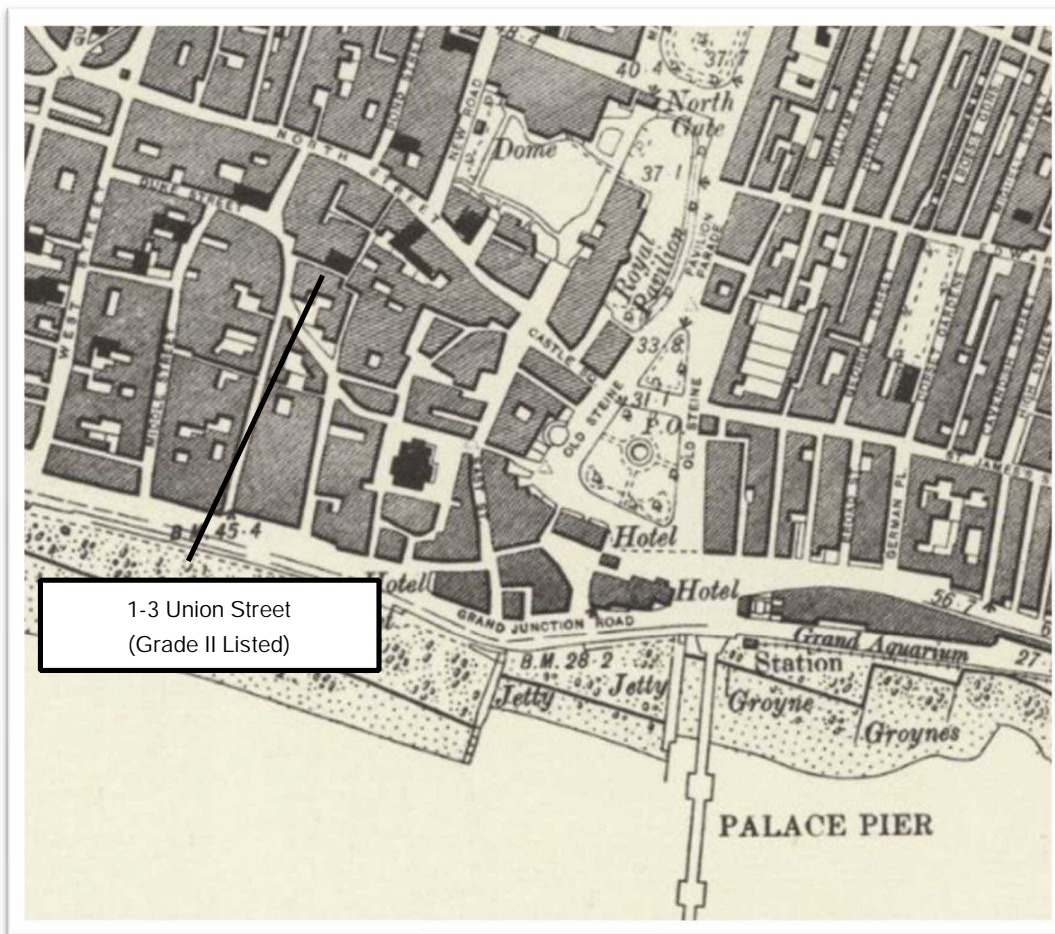
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This 1875 O.S. Map, shows how Brighton developed along the square town plan of the 16thC “Hempshare”. The Lanes are still nestled in the old town, just a stone’s throw from the Royal Pavilion and gardens. Meeting House Lane is shown above in dark yellow, and it becomes apparent that this “twtitten” or narrow lane ran along the lines of the paths from the 17th and 18thC cottages to Brighton beach. As Section 2.7 notes, many houses were built from the 1750’s-80’s here in the transverse paths between the main roads in the twittens. The backland areas for gardens and drying nets are visible here. Indeed, this calls to mind the fishing net huts in Hastings, that still survive not far away in East Sussex.

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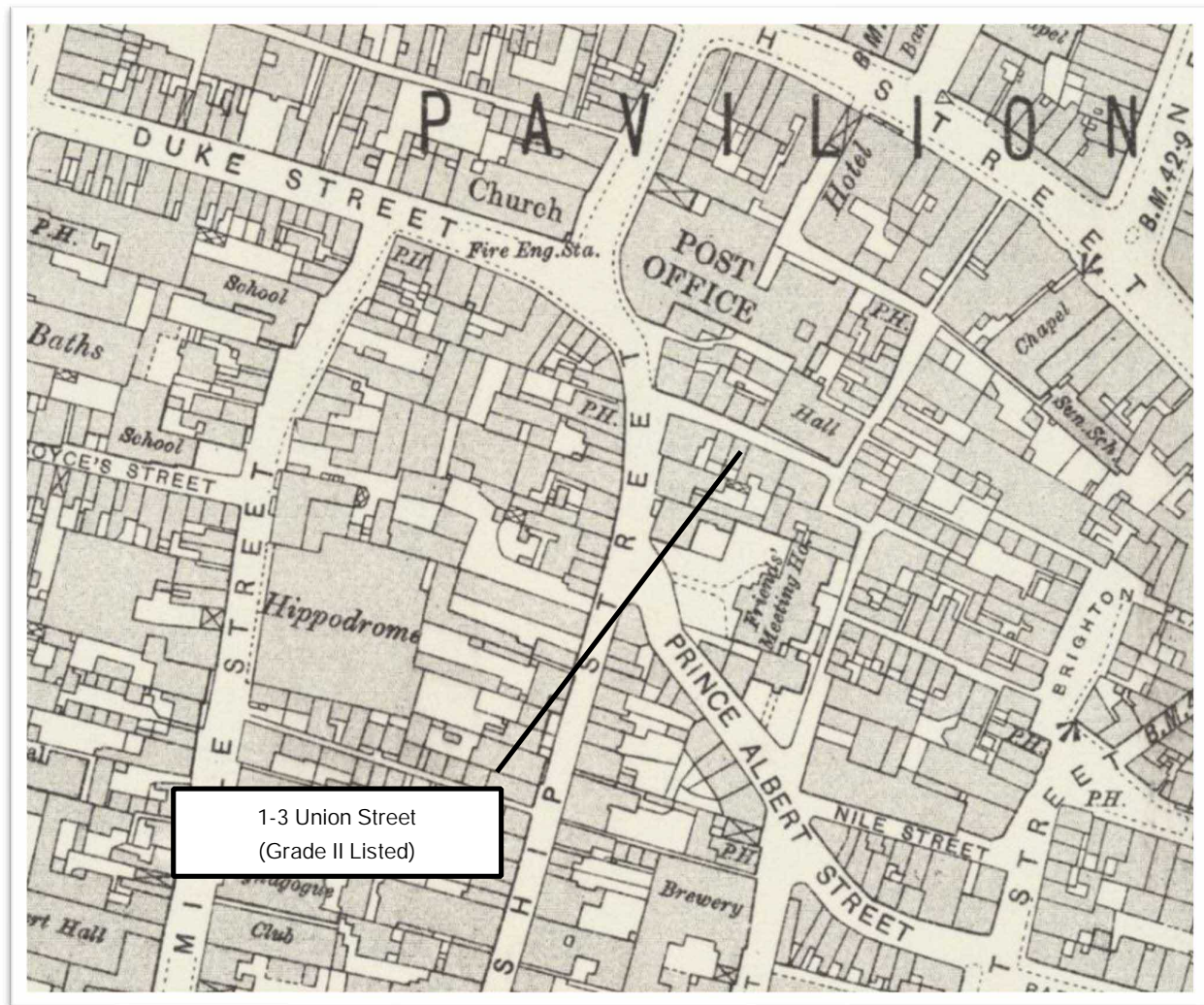


The 1897 O.S. Map shows the vital importance after the arrival of the railway. There was even a coastal railway special to the resort running along the beach. Grand hotels were well-established.

The 1909 Ordnance Survey Map

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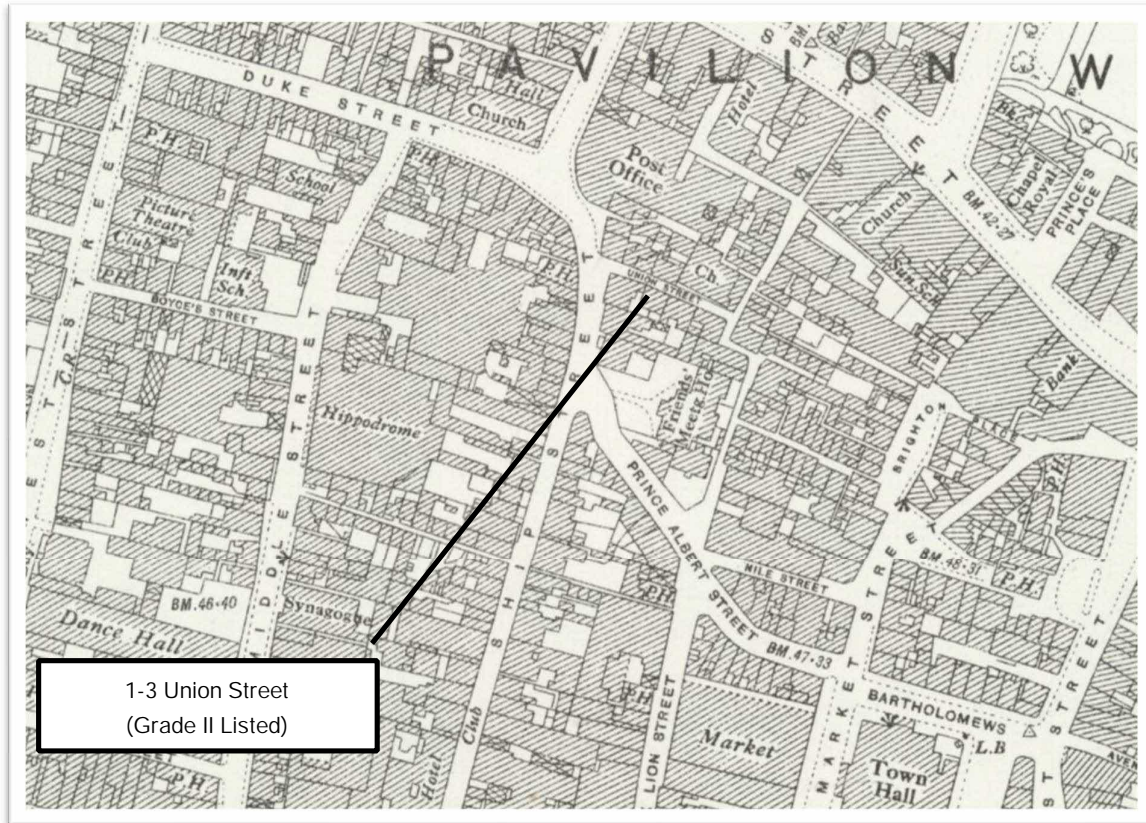


It appears little significant change in town plan occurred between the 1909 O.S. Map and the 1933 O.S. Map we see below, on the next page. The main street pattern was well-established, with The Lanes located between the Palace Pier on the east near the Steine, and the West Pier. The Coastguard Station and Fish Market are shown lying between the piers on the beach, as seen above. The prominence of the Victorian piers shows how far Brighton had developed as the main resort here in Sussex on the south coast.

The 1933 Ordnance Survey Map

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The 1929 Ordnance Survey Map.

These slightly later maps put The Lanes into context and shows the established town plan.

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HERITAGE VALUES

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Heritage Values

When developing suitable policies for the Historic Environment, within a planning context, Local Authorities may refer to the guidance produced by the statutory advisors, such as Historic England. This guidance informs planners and other decision makers on the most appropriate way to manage, interpret and implement any changes to our historic sites.

Historic England published the *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance* (2008), which sets out six high-level principles:

- The Historic environment is a shared resource
- Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
- Understanding the significance of a place is vital
- Significant places should be managed to sustain their values
- Decisions about change should be reasonable, transparent and consistent
- Documenting and learning from decisions is vital.

The principles offer a clear, over-arching philosophical framework of what conservation means at the beginning of the 21st century. In order to manage the changes and the impact of those changes, we need to fully understand the significance of the site.

The significance of a site or building is measured using the four value categories:

- Evidential values
- Historical values
- Aesthetic values
- Communal values

Each site needs to be assessed individually based on these criteria. Below, a considered assessment touches on these values, [not in this order]. A note on the setting's wider significance follows.

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Development and Significance of 1-5 Union Street –Brighton

Notable Persons.

None evident

Historical Values

Typical Georgian period plan form, double sash fronted with mid Victorian bay window inserts (front / back) to No 3 Union Street.

Evidential Values

N/A to this application

Extensions and Alterations

Possible mid to late 19th century rear extension. Extensive internal alterations resulting in 3 separate dwellings being interconnected with original staircase positions being removed (2 out of 3) when the first floor and above was changed from residential to office space.

Later first floor insert Victorian Bay frontage to original single Georgian sash fronted property (thinner plan property) at No 3 Union Street.

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SCHEME PROPOSALS AND IMPACT

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Design Principles

It is our clients wish to sensitively convert the current empty first floor office space over no's 1-5 back into residential use by creation of a generous floor area 5 bedroom 7 person dwelling, which historically would have been its intended use when constructed in the early 19th Century.

This has been done by maintaining all period survived room proportions and only looking to remove all modern insert features such as staff toilets and cubicles, which should be seen as giving overall heritage gain.

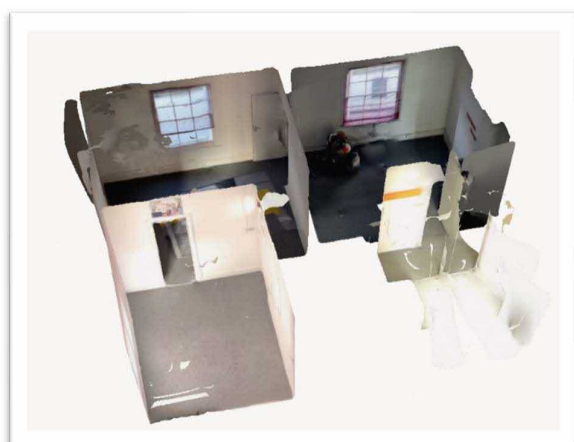
We note there are no period survived features to be found internally within the first floor space (eg skirtings / cornice runs / panelled doors etc).

Lidar Scans available to all first floor spaces by way of demonstration as below Polycam Web links:

<https://poly.cam/capture/01D96F83-FDF0-4FEB-AA98-240F10C1260B>

<https://poly.cam/capture/A5CAEDF8-6D85-4FF5-9805-700820BBA2F3>

<https://poly.cam/capture/8391B775-D14C-4382-A208-199D66D4F8C6>



Out client's intention will be to replace all standard flush modern fire doors with period correct panelled doors and architrave profiles, for which we will be happy to provide 1:5 details as part of any future pre commencement planning conditions.

All services to new proposed en-suite and kitchen / utility space will be to existing rear main SVP downpipes and service connections (no disruption to existing buildings historic fabric).

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Planning Update –February 2024:

Further to our planning approved scheme proposals from January 2024 (ref BH2023/01887) we now re-apply due to a revised internal plan layout to the first floor unit, which we feel now represents a better overall internal plan layout.

We have now upon further design consideration looked to locate the proposed Kitchen, living and dining room to the righthand side of the first floor (all open plan), with 2 number double bedrooms then being located on the left hand side via the re-introduction of original historical plan form walls front to back. The location of the now lost staircase now being a localised communal utility space.

All service and waste collections as per our previously approved scheme designs, will be via the existing rear mounted SVPs.

We have also proposed 2 number modest internal wall openings between the proposed Living, dining and Kitchen spaces from the current single door openings located between the rooms. All new proposed internal wall openings to be surrounded by period correct architraves.

Scale and Overall Appearance

There are no external material changes to the property, all period survived sash windows and doors will be fully restored in situ.

Access / Ecology and Trees

Access has been made no worse by the present proposed internal alterations and improvements, given the historic nature and fabric of the property it has not been possible to apply the full criteria of Part M. Nil impact to Ecology and Trees.

Overall Impact

As described in the above sections of this Design Access and Heritage Statement these proposals offer a holistic scheme to both modernise and repair this historic fabric of 1-5 union Street, to give it a new practical use from office to residential in the years ahead.

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CONCLUSIONS

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Guidance and philosophy followed

The alterations proposed within the scheme that we submit for consideration, as set out in this document, are necessary in order to provide a sustainable solution for 1-5 Union Street in improving the general internal and external arrangement and improving and recreating sympathetically the current surviving period features within the structure wherever possible, through to the affected area as illustrated, we have carefully followed Historic England's **Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance (CPPG) 2008** document. Item 1.5 states:

“Advice and assistance should be available from public sources to help owners sustain the heritage in their stewardship”

Having explored the options available during the early stages and considered not only the client's requirements, the sustainability of each option and the impact upon the wider heritage assets and conservation area, considering Local and National Planning Policy along with guidance from the statutory bodies this scheme was evaluated and considered to be a low impact on the existing significant heritage assets, with highest level of sustainability in the long term.

Outline of Proposals

Description of proposals –As listed in above sections

Impact upon Heritage Values

The focus of your decision should be on the significance and the overall impact, balanced with the investment proposed by the client for the conservation and repair of this building. This scheme will only enhance the property and allow enough modernisation that will not negatively impact upon the heritage values, so it should therefore be supported.

Conclusion

In considering the contents of this application in full, it is respectfully requested that this application is supported as the enclosed demonstrates that the scheme proposes less than significant harm on the overall significance of the existing heritage asset buildings or its setting within the immediate conservation area and adjacent Listed buildings also as above described.

“Proportionality should govern the exercise of statutory controls” (CPPG: 2008)

If there are any areas within the application that require further information we would encourage feedback, in order to amend any aspect within the proposals prior to a decision being made.



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