



<b>Scope of work</b>	Heritage Statement
<b>Site address</b>	The Old Thatched Cottage Restaurant, 14 Knightstone Rd, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2AN
<b>Grid Ref.</b>	ST 31643 61795
<b>Client</b>	C/O Mr Matt Tyler or Dowlas Property Group Ltd
<b>Report Ref.</b>	HS/WestonSuperMare/LWBHM/12/23
<b>Prepared by</b>	Laura Wigg-Bailey
<b>Date</b>	December 2023

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Plate 1 The Old Thatched Cottage Restaurant frontage (south elevation)



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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 LW Bailey Heritage Management (LWB) has been commissioned by Mr. Matt Tyler of Dowlas Property Group Ltd who is the agent of the owner of 'The Old Thatched Cottage Restaurant', Knightstone Road, Weston-Super-Mare, to prepare a Statement of Significance in relation to a planning application, to be submitted to North Somerset Council (the LPA). The proposals considered in this plan include xxx to the Application Building, hereafter referred to as the AB.

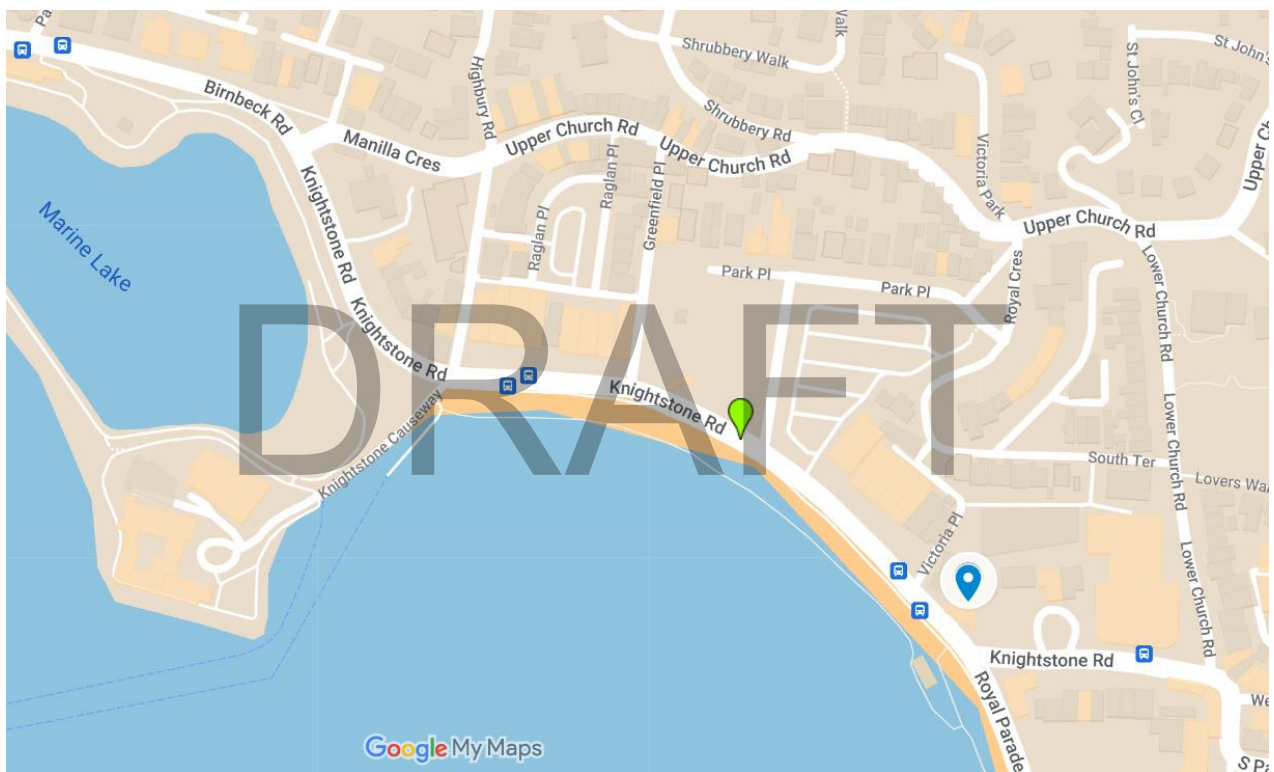


Figure 1 Location Plan with the AB identified with a blue pin. Source: Google Maps ARU: Weston-Super-Mare 1:1.500. Google Maps [online] accessed 23.12.23

- 1.1.2 The AB is a grade II listed building, the Old Thatched Cottage, situated on the historic seafront in Weston-S-Mare. This area also sits within the Conservation Area for the town. Therefore, the primary aim of this report is to appraise the character and significance of the AS so that the LPA/decision maker is appropriately informed when assessing impacts of the proposed scheme on the significance of the AS when making their planning decision.
- 1.1.3 This report has been undertaken with reference to guidance prepared by the Institute for Historic Building Conservation and Historic England including:



- Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment, Good Practice in Planning 2 - Historic England 2015.
- Statements of Heritage Significance: Historic England Advice Note 12 2019.
- The Setting of Heritage Assets, Good Practice in Planning 3 Historic England 2017.
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance April Historic England 2008.
- Standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Cifa 2014, rev 2017.
- Code of Conduct, Cifa 2014. Rev. 2019;
- Understanding Place Historic Area Assessments, Historic England 2017.
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) rev. 2021.
- Planning Practice Guidance 2021.

1.1.4 The following sources have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- The Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). 2021
- The Staffordshire Record Office
- Lichfield District Council Local Plan 2008 – 2029
- Historic Environment Character Assessment (Lichfield District Council 2009)
- Online sources including British History Online.
- The National Heritage List (Historic England).
- Historic OS maps online.
- The Genealogist (thegenealogist.co.uk, for census and birth, death, and Tithe map info).

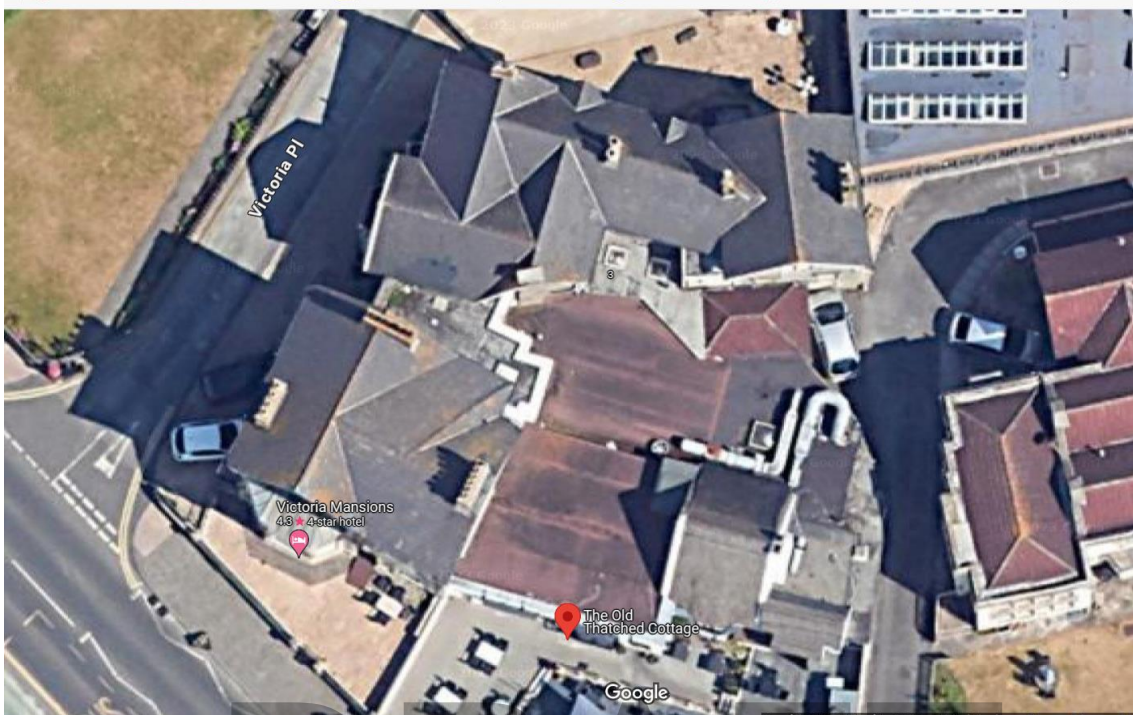


Figure 2 Site plan of the AB outline in red showing the conglomeration of existing structures within the block associated with the Old Thatched Cottage.  
Source: Google Maps ARU: Weston-Super-Mare 1:1.500. Google Maps [online] accessed 23.12.23

- 1.1.5 A site visit was undertaken on 13.11.2023 by the authors of this report, in order to assess the significance and condition of the AB, as well as to understand the wider historic environment in which it is located. Conditions on the day were overcast and occasionally wet. The visit included access to all internal areas of the AB and the south and east elevations but the northern parts of the site are inaccessible except through buildings to the north of the site which are in separate ownership. The conclusions reached in this report are the result of historic research, the walkover survey of the site and the buildings, map studies and the application of professional judgement.
- 1.1.6 This report has been written by Laura Wigg-Bailey, B.A., M.A. who is the founder and Principal Heritage Consultant at LW Bailey Heritage Management and has over 20 years of experience working within the historic environment, especially in the field of reading and interpreting historic buildings. She is supported by Gemma Chapman, B.A., M.A., Research Associate at LW Bailey Heritage Management.



## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 NPPF and PPG

- 2.1.1 NPPF requires that the LPA/decision-maker should judge the impacts of a proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, whether designated or undesignated, from a proposed scheme and that they can take account of evidence regarding that significance provided by the applicant.

*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (para. 194).*

*Local Planning Authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking into account the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal (para. 195).*

- 2.1.2 The Planning Practice Guidance makes it clear that understanding the significance of a heritage asset from an early stage in the design process, can help to inform the development of proposals which avoid or minimise harm. Such early appraisals can identify alternative development options and sensitive approaches to development proposals which, whilst allowing change, will serve to conserve heritage assets in a way which sustains their heritage significance.
- 2.1.3 Therefore, in accordance with the guidance contained in the NPPF and PPG, this report provides a Statement of Significance which will examine the historic development of the heritage asset concerned, drawing upon any relevant available archival and cartographic evidence, augmented by the findings of a site visit and will draw conclusions regarding the key factors which make up the significance of the heritage asset. It is anticipated that this Statement of Significance will aid the LPA in making its planning judgement on the impact of the proposed scheme on the heritage significance of the relevant designated and non-



designated heritage asset/s.

- 2.1.4 It is anticipated that the Heritage Statement can be incorporated into the applicant's Design and Access Statement which will demonstrate how the historic and special architectural importance of the AB will be preserved or enhanced under the proposals and what measures have been taken by the applicant/applicant's architect to minimise any adverse impacts on significance.
- 2.1.5 This Heritage Statement does not constitute a building recording report, such as would be attached as a condition of planning consent, but in accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF, is an assessment of what heritage values, both tangible and intangible, including associations and relationships, make up the significance of the AB.
- 2.1.6 We understand that the applicant has had plans drawn up to a RIBA Stage 3 level of detail and it is anticipated that the information contained in this report will contribute to the finalisation of those plans and aid the Conservation Officer in the assessment of impacts.

## 2.2 Assessing Significance.

- 2.2.1 The NPPF glossary describes significance as the value of a heritage asset to present and future generations because of its heritage interest. It also states that within a planning context, significance may arise from the archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic values of a heritage asset or a combination of those heritage values. The Glossary of the NPPF defines those values as follows:
- archaeological interest refers to a heritage asset holding, or potentially holding, evidence of past human activity.
  - architectural and artistic interest are defined as interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art of science or design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
  - historic interest is an interest in past lives and events (including prehistoric). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a



place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

2.2.2 NPPF also provides a definition of setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and states that 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 the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

2.2.3 In its publication *The Setting of Heritage Assets, Good Practice in Planning* 3 Historic England also defines setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced but goes on to say that elements of a setting can make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, potentially affecting the ability to appreciate the significance of the asset or having a neutral effect.

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### 3. Planning Context

**3.1 National Planning Policy Framework** sets out the Government's policies in relation to development and the following section is most relevant to this proposal:

**3.1.1 Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

The following paragraphs should be considered with regard to this proposal:

**3.1.2 Paragraph 190** - advises that in the determination of planning applications local planning authorities should take account of:

- a. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b. The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d. Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

**3.1.3 Paragraph 194** - of the NPPF requires that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

**3.1.4 Paragraph 197** - of the NPPF advises that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:



- a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b. the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

3.1.5 **Paragraph 199** - of the NPPF goes on to say that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

3.1.6 **Paragraph 201** - of the NPPF sets out that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- 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 through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

3.1.7 **Paragraph 202** - of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

## 3.2 The North Somerset Core Strategy (adopted 2017)

- 3.2.1 The Development Plan for the area comprises the North Somerset Core Strategy, the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (adopted 2015) and the Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan.
- 3.2.2 We are aware that North Somerset Council are preparing a new local plan to take the place of the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Plan called Local Plan 2038. It was submitted for examination in Autumn 2023. The owner of the AB should take care that if an application is submitted after this plan has been adopted the planning section of this report should be reviewed.

### North Somerset Core Strategy Policies

- 3.2.3 The starting point is the North Somerset Vision as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS):

*‘Sustainable, inclusive, safe, healthy, prosperous communities thriving in a quality environment.’....*

*“By 2026 Weston town centre will be a good quality, diverse year-round shopping and leisure destination set within a high-quality built environment which has retained its historic identity and capitalises on its seafront location and the natural beauty of the area. More people will live and work in the town centre which will add vibrancy during the day and into the evening, resulting in a safe and desirable place for its residents and visitors.”*

### 3.2.4 Policy CS5: Landscape and the historic environment

*“Historic environment*

*The council will conserve the historic environment of North Somerset, having regard to the significance of heritage assets such as conservation areas, listed buildings, buildings of local significance, scheduled monuments, other archaeological sites, registered and other historic parks and gardens. Particular attention will be given to aspects of the historic environment which contribute to the distinctive character of North Somerset, such as the Victorian townscapes and seafronts in Weston and Clevedon”*

### 3.2.5 Policy CS12 – Achieving High Quality Design and Place Making

This policy seeks high quality design of buildings and places, in particular to support comprehensive regeneration at Weston-Super-Mare.

Proposals are expected to be designed sensitively to the local character of an area and enhance the sense of place, including the historic built environment.

### **3.2.6 Policy CS20: Supporting a successful economy.**

*“Weston-super-Mare*

*The focus of employment development will be at Weston-super-Mare primarily through town centre and gateway regeneration and the new development at Weston Villages, where new residential development will be provided in step with employment opportunities and with an emphasis on new B1(a) office employment. Within the gateway area office provision will be focussed on a limited number of key sites in addition to any specific redevelopment opportunities that contribute to the regeneration of the town centre.”*

#### **Area policies**

### **3.2.7 Policy CS28: Weston-super-Mare**

New development proposals at Weston super Mare within or adjoining the settlement boundary should take into account the following objectives.

*“Support the focus of the town centre as the location for higher order facilities and services, including retail, tourism and leisure opportunities;*

*Support existing community hubs of local retailing and other services located within the town;*

*Respect the characteristic heritage of Weston super Mare;*

*Provide high quality design.”*

### **3.2.8 Policy CS29: Weston-super-Mare town centre**

The Weston-super-Mare town centre, as defined on the Key Diagram Inset 1<sup>1</sup> will provide the focus for retail, leisure and entertainment facilities.

#### **Seafront**

*“Alongside and adjacent to the seafront priority will be given to entertainment and leisure uses, tourist facilities and accommodation.*

*Development proposals in this area should:*

*3) be of the highest quality design which will enhance the visual appearance of the seafront and promenade.”*

#### **Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies**

The following Development Management Policies (Part 1) policies are relevant to the proposals.

### **3.2.9 Policy DM3 – Conservation Areas**

States the Council will seek the following for proposals in Conservation Areas:

*“Secure the retention of the existing buildings, features, hard and soft landscape that contribute to its special character.*

*Ensure that new development will not cause harm to the existing character and appearance*

<sup>1</sup> [Layout 1 \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](http://n-somerset.gov.uk) P115

*of the Conservation Area and wherever possible positively enhance it.*

*Repair harm caused through past unsympathetic development whether previously authorised or not.*

*Ensure that development conforms to published guidance as set out within Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan”*

### **3.2.10 Policy DM4 – Listed Buildings**

States developments will be expected to enhance the character, appearance and special interest of listed buildings and their setting.

### **3.2.11 DM32 – High Quality Design and Place Making**

*“Developments should contribute to the creation of high quality, distinctive, functional and sustainable places. The design and planning of development proposals should demonstrate sensitivity to the local character, including the setting, and enhance the area taking into consideration any specific opportunities present.”*

### **3.2.12 DM60 – Town Centres**

States the vibrancy, vitality and community focus provided by the town centres will be maintained and enhanced.

*“Proposals for main town centre uses within these areas will, in principle, be supported where they meet a range of criteria. These include making a positive contribution to the centre’s identity and heritage and securing the redevelopment or improvement of buildings, features or areas which detract from the quality or appearance of the centre.”*

## **Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan**

The following policy is considered relevant to this application:

### **3.2.13 Policy SA11 – Weston Regeneration Area**

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide detailed guidance for the design and layout of development within the Town Centre.



## 4. Heritage Baseline

### 4.1 Conservation Area



Figure 3. Character Area 1, Seafront, in the Great Weston Conservation Area

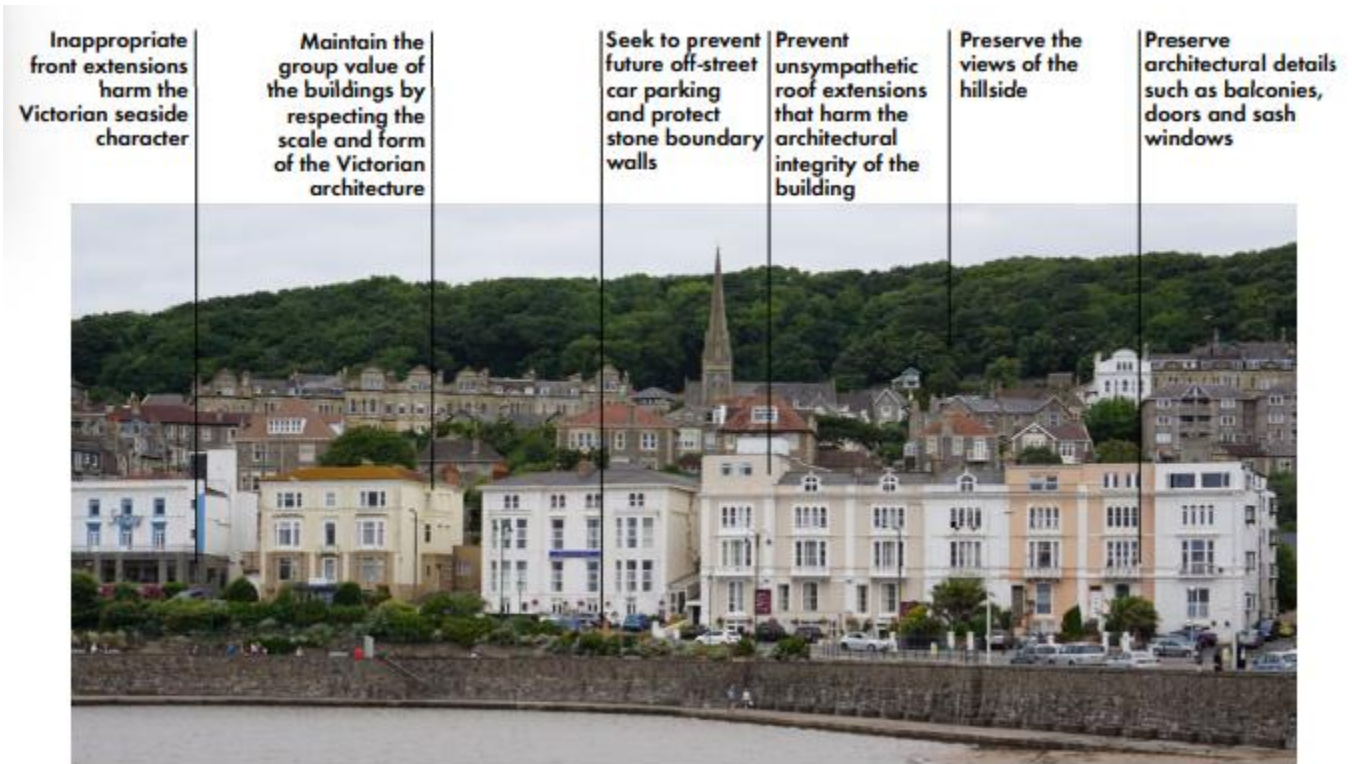


Figure 4. Sub area 2, Knightstone

- 4.1.1 A review of existing conservation areas in 2018 led to the merging of five former conservation areas into one Great Weston Conservation area, with four distinct Character Areas. The AB is located within the Great Weston Conservation Area, Character Area 1: Seafront, sub-area Knightstone (See Figures 3 and 4).
- 4.1.2 The Old Thatched Cottage Restaurant is noted as a ‘building of special note’ within the Character Area, alongside Birnbeck Pier, Claremont Crescent and the Royal Hotel.
- 4.1.3 The Seafront Character Area showcases a wide variety of architectural styles, including Gothic, Regency and Classical. The Seafront Area reflects two centuries of development and change as Weston flourished into a popular Victorian seaside destination.
- 4.1.4 Key characteristics of the Seafront Character Area are as follows:
1. Seaward facing Victorian villas, stone terraces and Weston's earliest hotels;
  2. Formal Beach Lawns;



3. Panoramic views across the bay and towards the town;
  4. Contrast between open and enclosed spaces, formal and informal spaces;
  5. Changing seasonal character, bustling with activity in the summer months;
  6. The enclave of Knightstone Island; and
  7. The contrasting form of the Birnbeck and Grand Piers
- 4.1.5 Within the Seafront Character Area, the AB is situated in the sub-area Knightstone. The Knightstone sub-area has been assessed as having 74% historic and architectural integrity (Knightstone Road has been assessed at 64%).
- 4.1.6 Positive features of the Knightstone sub-area include largely intact smaller Victorian buildings and terraces close to the Esplanade, the mix of modern and historic fabric of Knightstone Island, the promenade as a recently improved key public space, and the popular beach at Marine Lake.
- 4.1.7 Negative feature of the Knightstone sub-area include the loss of historic features when larger houses have been converted to flats, unsympathetic alterations and extensions to historic buildings (often to provide additional accommodation), poor maintenance and use of inappropriate materials on historic buildings, issues with oversized signage, traffic, off street parking, and some overscaled development.
- 4.1.8 The Conservation Area Character Appraisal highlights the main risks for Knightstone Road as Alterations, Extensions and other Accretions, and Loss of Historic Features on Buildings. These risks have been assessed at level 4 - Significant - serious and requiring action.
- 4.1.9 The following figure shows the main objectives of the Great Weston Conservation Area in the Knightstone Sub Area (See Figure 5).



**Knightstone sub area**

Figure 5. Knightstone sub area main objectives from Character Area 1, Seafront, from the Great Weston Conservation Area

4.1.10 The main Seafront Character Area objectives are listed below:

1. To restore the sense of grandeur and composition of the Seafront – through restoring tired buildings and spaces.
2. To respect the special space the bay, beach and lawns create and ensure this open quality is maintained for generations to come.
3. To recognise that the natural assets require balanced management to maintain and to encourage the sustainability of the seafront character.
4. To breathe new life into the spaces along the seafront – exploring future enhancement to the Beach Lawns and the future role of the hard spaces along Marine Parade.
5. To address insensitive additions, in particular to buildings fronting on to the seafront.
6. To address the loss of boundary walls.
7. To ensure that the grand sweep of the seafront develops in a positive manner.



## 4.2 Listed Buildings

4.2.1 The AB is a Grade II listed building, the listings read as follows:

Name: The Thatched Cottage

List Entry Number: 1129729

Location: The Thatched Cottage, 14, Knightstone Road

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

**County:**

**District:** North Somerset

**District Type:** Unitary Authority

**Parish:** Weston-Super-Mare

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 19-May-1983

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Asset Groupings:

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description:

ST 3161 NE 9/23

KNIGHTSTONE ROAD No 14 (The Thatched Cottage)

(Formerly listed as No 14 (The Thatched Cottage Cafe))

Grade II

Possibly 1774 or more probably 1791. Rendered, thatched roof. Two storeys. One bay window, with original casements. Later extensions to either side of thatched part not included. The remaining section of a much larger house built for Reverend Leeves. Thought to be Weston-Super-Mare's oldest building.

Listing NGR: ST3164661786

**North Somerset HER record – Leeves Cottage:**

<b>Name:</b>	Leeves Cottage, Knightstone Road
<b>Type of record:</b>	Monument
<b>NSHER number:</b>	MNS3708
<b>Preferred Ref.:</b>	41267

**Protected Status/Designation:**

- Listed Building (II) 33209: THE THATCHED COTTAGE CAFE

## Summary

Late 18th century cottage, now a restaurant

<b>Grid Reference:</b>	ST 316 617
<b>Map Sheet:</b>	ST36SW
<b>Parish:</b>	Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset

## Monument Type(s):

- (Post Medieval - 1540 AD to 1900 AD)

## Description and Sources

*Cottage overlooking the sea built by Revd William Leeves, Rector of Wrington, and a friend of Hannah More. The earliest illustration of this building appears in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1805. An 1847 guidebook described it as 'a quaint and curious structure with a high thatched roof and square-headed windows ... On the ground floor are two little odd-looking gabled projections, like porches, one of which has a window inserted in front and attached to the dwelling is a stable, and coach house or barn'. Its rustic charm may have been an attempt to reflect contemporary cottage orné architectural ideas, though its haphazard form suggests simply a reflection of vernacular traditions. William Leeves died in 1828 and the cottage was sold to a retired East Indian merchant, Mr Clements. (2)*

*Possibly 1774 or more probably 1791. Rendered, thatched roof. Two storeys. One bay window, with original casements. Later extensions to either side of thatched part not included. The remaining section of a much larger house built for Reverend Leeves. Thought to be Weston-Super-Mare's oldest building. (3)*

<1> 1804, *Weston plan* (Document). SNS444.

<2> **Historic England**, 2020, *Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset: Historical and Architectural Development* (Grey Literature Report). SNS6784.

<3> **Historic England**, *National Heritage List for England* (Digital archive). SNS131.

4.2.2 The Historic Environment Record (HER) for North Somerset contains details on local archaeological sites and finds, historic buildings and historic landscapes. The following listed and unlisted sites of historic importance are located in the immediate vicinity (1km) of the AB.

4.2.3 The following listed buildings in Table 1 are recorded on the National Heritage List for England within 100m of the AB. There are five Grade II listed buildings/sites.

*Table 1 Listed sites within 100m of the AB on the National Heritage List for England*

Historic Buildings	List entry no.	Date	Grade Listing	Description
Royal Terrace	1129728	1860	Grade II	No. 1 Grosvenor House, Nos. 3 and 5, No. 7 Grosvenor Hotel, and Nos. 13-15 (part of Cabot Court Hotel). Three storey terrace on Knightstone Road with advanced central and end pavilions with pediments.
18 Knightstone Road	1129730	1840	Grade II	Originally Victoria Buildings. Two storey painted ashlar property with a concealed roof behind blocking course. Features three sash windows at front, with an elaborate cast iron veranda of a later date.
Sunningdale	1129731	1840	Grade II	Originally Victoria Buildings, included for group value. Two storey rendered property. Features three sash windows at front.
Former School of Science and Art	1129733	1892-1893 and 1899-1900	Grade II	Built in late Tudor/Classical style by Price and Wooler. Coursed rubble with Bath stone dressings and ceramic bands. On two storeys with five bays with panelled and balustraded parapets.
2-10 South Terrace	1312111	Late 1840s	Grade II	Terrace of five ashlar fronted, three storey houses with slate rooves. No. 6 features an original cast iron balcony at the first floor. No. 2 and 10 break forward and have Dutch gables and small cusped windows.

### 4.3 Unlisted buildings of Historic Significance

4.3.1 The following unlisted sites of historic significance are recorded within 100m of the AB on the North Somerset Heritage Environment Record.

*Table 2 Unlisted sites within 100m of the AB on the North Somerset Heritage Environment Record*

Historic Buildings	List entry no.	Date	Description
Site of Farmer John Sheppards house	MNS3707	Post medieval	Shepherd's Cottage was demolished and replaced in 1831 by 1 - 2 Beachfield Villas, built by Thomas Harrill.
Window heads originally from the parish church	MNS4325	Late medieval	When the medieval church of St John's was pulled down in 1824 some features were rescued or re-used. Parts of the windows at Park Villas are alleged to have come from the parish church.
Site of National School	MNS4388	1845	Opened in 1845 on the corner of Lower Church Road and Knightstone Road. Moved to new premises in 1897.
Drinking fountain	MNS7765	Victorian	Site of a Victorian fountain, Promenade
Site of WWII Nissen huts & air raid shelter	MNS9261	Second World War	WWII site of unclear function - may have been used by the military or Home guard as a depot or temporary camp. Demolished by 1948.
Victoria Buildings	MNS9596	1838-40	Terrace of seven houses. The northern five houses are shown on the 1838 tithe map. Originally of only two storeys, most houses have been raised by a storey. The two unaltered two-storey houses are listed (number 18 and 20)
Lauriston Hotel (formerly Beachfield Villas)	MNS9597	1831? Extant by 1838	Pair of two-storey villas with parapets and Tudor-style window with labels. Some of the bay windows have been altered (see 1886 OS). Extant by 1838; said to have been built by Thomas Harrill on the site of Sheppards farmhouse or by Henry Davies who only moved to Weston in 1834. Described by 1847 guide as having square porches support Doric columns with lawns and gardens in front.

## 4.4 Weston Super Mare Archaeological Finds

4.4.1 The two historic excavations listed in Table 3 are the excavations recorded within 100m of the AB on the North Somerset Heritage Environment Record.

*Table 3 Excavations within 1km of the AB recorded on the North Somerset Heritage Environment Record*

Historic Finds	List entry no.	Date	Description
Roman Building and associated finds	MNS126	2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> Century	A Roman building, likely timber framed superseded with a stone one, was investigated by G. Rogers and D. Rye in 1959. Bones, shells, 2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> century potsherds, a 2 <sup>nd</sup> century brooch, and 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> century pottery were found in the surrounding area. The archaeology suggests a lower status, late Roman rural settlement that utilised the local marine and saltmarsh resources.
Animal bone find spot	MNS2966	Unknown date	Animal bone finds from alluvium.
Roman coin, of Vespasian find spot	MNS3822	69-79 AD	A Roman coin of Vespasian (69-79 AD), was found in the field immediately west of the parish church, Weston by the rector.





## 4.5 Weston Super Mare Historical Background

- 4.5.1 The earliest settlement at Weston super Mare was prehistoric, with notable extant remains of an Iron Age Fort dating to 1000BC situated to the north of the town at Worlebury Hill (0.38 miles north of the AB). This site was excavated in the 1850s to reveal deep pits cut into the rock and human remains with evidence of violent death (not uncommon in Iron Age hillforts across southern Britain).<sup>2</sup>
- 4.5.2 Further early finds were found during Westons development as a Victorian seaside town, including Iron Age and Roman pottery, animal bones, and human remains. The location of these finds suggests that there was a sprawling early settlement from Worlebury Hill Fort down the hill to Weston. The land at the base of Worlebury Hill was the centre of early settlement at Weston, and the hill itself was used for grazing livestock until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup>
- 4.5.3 The name 'Weston' is formed from two old English or Saxon words - the west 'tun' or settlement. There were several Westons in Somerset, but Weston super Mare is unique in the area for retaining its Latin name rather than becoming 'on sea', super the Latin preposition for on or above, and mare the Latin for sea.<sup>4</sup>
- 4.5.4 Following Roman occupation, Weston existed as a small rural community reliant mainly on farming and fishing. The settlement is not recorded in the Domesday book. The first written reference to Weston comes in 1226, where the parish Church was recorded in the registers of the Dean and Chapter of Wells.<sup>5</sup>
- 4.5.5 This medieval settlement at Weston would have been cottages concentrated around what is now the High Street, flanked by streams and withy beds. At this time before the development of the promenade the beach and sandbanks would have stretched further inland.
- 4.5.6 Industry arrived in Weston in Elizabethan times with the development of metallurgy. Deposits of Calamine were discovered in 1568 at Worle Hill which led to an increase in mining activity.<sup>6</sup>
- 4.5.7 By 1600, Weston had its own manor held by William Arthur of Clapton, which then passed

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<sup>2</sup> Bowden, Mark, *Worlebury hillfort and the linear earthworks to its east*, Historic England, 2019

<sup>3</sup> Brodie, Allan, *Weston Super Mare – The Town and its Seaside Heritage*, Historic England, 2019

<sup>4</sup> Robinson, Stephen, *Somerset Place Names*, Wimbourne: Dovecote Press, 1992

<sup>5</sup> Brodie, Allan, *Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset: Historical and architectural development*, Historic England, 2020

<sup>6</sup> Poole, Sharon, *Weston-Super-Mare – Then and Now*, The History Press, 2012



to the Winter family. In 1696 the estate was sold to the Pigotts, and the estate continued to be held by the Smyth Pigotts until 1914 when the estate was sold off.

- 4.5.8 The Smyth Pigotts also had a summer holiday cottage the Grove.<sup>7</sup> Alongside Glebe House (originally the rectory and dating to the 17th century) and a section of the AB, this is all that remains of an earlier Weston.
- 4.5.9 The turning point for Weston Super Mare came after 1800 when the health benefits of sea bathing were well established in Britain and began to draw visitors from Bristol and Bath. Weston Super Mare grew rapidly from a small village of roughly 100 inhabitants living in thatched cottages to a bustling Victorian seaside resort town with piers, promenades, boarding houses, and hotels.<sup>8</sup>
- 4.5.10 The first hotel opened in 1808-10 but Weston continued to grow when the railway developments of the 1840s brought passengers to the town in larger numbers.

## 4.5 Leeves Cottage Historical Background

- 4.6.1 Leeves Cottage was likely erected on the site of a primitive hut made of materials gathered from the beach, pebbles, rock, and mud, by a squatter called Light from the Locking area. The hut appears to have been very basic, with a hole for a door and no windows.<sup>9</sup>
- 4.6.2 According to the historian Francis Knight, Leeves Cottage was erected in 1791 (the date '1774' painted on the current facade might refer to an earlier structure, but a 1790s date appears more likely).<sup>10</sup> The date stone within the restaurant itself states 1797, which deepens the uncertainty. The cottage was built by Reverend William Leeves, Rector of Wrington and once famed composer of the ballad Auld Robin Gray. Leeves used the cottage as his summer holiday residence and for social entertaining (See Figures 6, 7 and 8).

<sup>7</sup> Brodie, Allan, *Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset: Historical and architectural development*, Historic England, 2020

<sup>8</sup> North Somerset Council, *Great Weston Conservation Area appraisal 2018*

<sup>9</sup> Bailey, John. *Famous Ballad's Link with Weston Cottage*. Round About Somerset (30.12.1966)

<sup>10</sup> Knight, Francis. *Sea-board of Mendip*. Dent, 1902

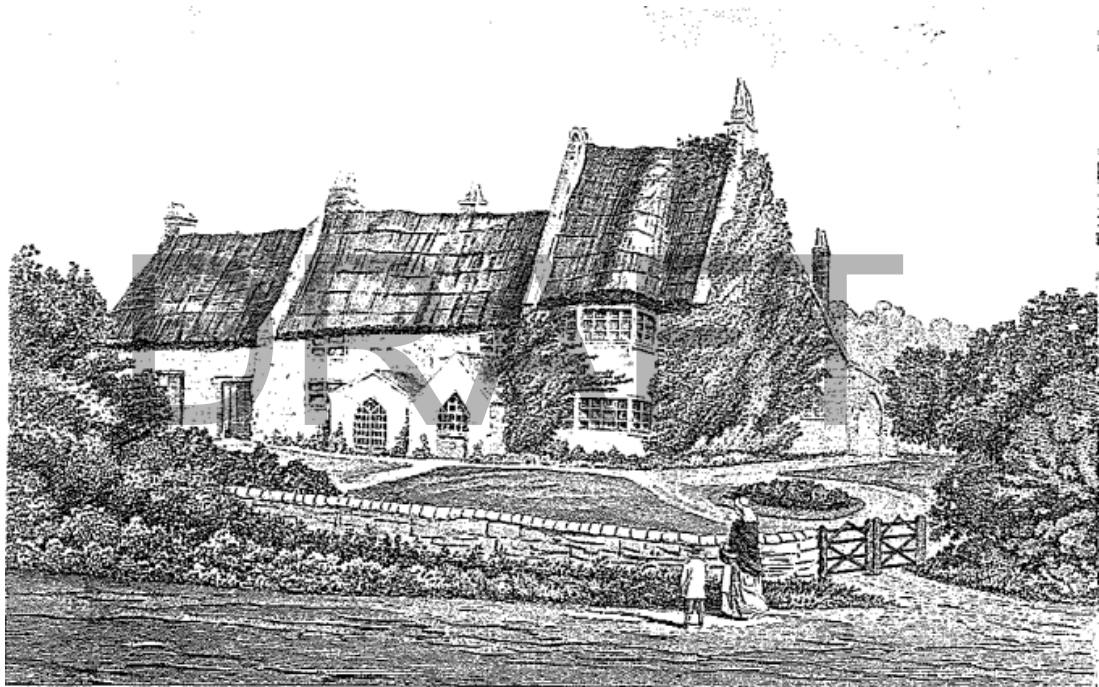


PARSON LEEVES' COTTAGE.

Figure 6. Illustration from Brown's Guide of 1854



Figure 7. Illustration showing the original setting of Leeves Cottage



Bridge Engraver, Brighton.

"LEEVES COTTAGE" WESTON-SUPER-MARE.  
*Built by the Rev W Levese, Composer of "Huld Robin Gray."*

Figure 8. Illustration of Leeves Cottage from 1820

4.6.4 Leeves' cottage was larger than the building we see today (See Figure 8). The only extant section was originally the easternmost end section of the cottage with a high-pitched thatched roof. The original cottage extended over the site of the present restaurant and the adjoining Victoria Hotel.

4.6.5 Following Leeves' death, the cottage remained unaltered for several years and appears to have remained in the family until at least 1838. The 1838 tithe map records the cottage as owned by William Levese (William Henry Levese, the eldest son) and occupied by Thomas Taylor Clerk. The cottage is then believed to have been sold to a retired East Indian



merchant, Josiah Clements.

- 4.6.6 By 1841, the cottage was inhabited by the Reverend Charles Taylor and his family.<sup>11</sup> The cottage and its contents were auctioned in 1842, and the building was used for the following decade as a holiday home.
- 4.6.7 The AB remains a unique example of purely local materials (limestone, clay and thatch) in Weston construction. In 1842 Improvement Commissioners (the town's first council) decreed, in a health & safety edict, that thatched roofing was to be banned on all new buildings.<sup>12</sup>
- 4.6.8 A local farmer and businessperson, Joseph Glossop, potentially bought the cottage in 1852 and lived in there until a series of disasters, including severe storm damage to the roof and further damage which led to consideration of the complete demolition of the cottage.<sup>13</sup> Parts of the cottage were pulled down before 1854 as land increased in value as Weston began to develop into a seaside resort. Some of the stones were re-used to build nearby houses.
- 4.6.9 Between 1861-1865, Glossop continued to own the AB, but began to rent it to dairyman James Barnes who used it to sell dairy products. The dairy business was taken over by Thomas Reed in 1865, who renamed it the Whitecross Dairy. The alterations to the AB likely took place during this time. Bailey suggests the property was 'adapted after part of the original building had fallen into ruin.' An image, likely dating to 1883, (Figure 9) shows the AB in its modern planform as Whitecross Dairy.
- 4.6.10 By 1902 in his 'Seaboard of Mendip' the historian Knight refers to the cottage as Reed's Dairy. Following the death of Glossop, the AB was sold to another dairyman, Mark Minifie, who continued to run it as Whitecross Dairy. A 1903 photograph shows signage with Grove Park, and Cross United Dairies (Figure 10). Minifie also ran a tearoom, 'Ye Auld Robin Gray Tea House' from the AB.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://theoldthatchedcottage.com/our-story>

<sup>12</sup> Weston Super Mare Town Council, Blue Plaque Guide - <https://wsm-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/The-Old-Thatched-Cottage-guide-JCH-2023-Nov.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://theoldthatchedcottage.com/our-story>



Figure 9. Photograph from 1883 as Whitecross Dairy



Figure 10. The AB with signage for Grove Park and Whitecross United Dairies

4.6.11 By the 1920s, the AB had found a new life as The Promenade Café owned by local businessman Reginald Puddy, and again as the Old Thatched Cottage Restaurant by the 1954 (See Figures 11 and 12).

4.6.12 The AB suffered substantial damage from tidal flooding in the 1980 (over its lifetime, the AB has survived at least ten major floods, storms and fires).

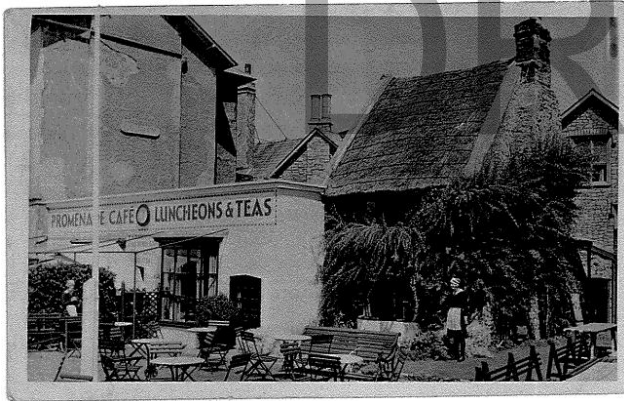


Figure 11. Photograph of the AB as the Promenade Café



Figure 12. Photograph of the AB as the Thatched Cottage Restaurant in the 1950s.

4.6.10 As a result of restoration work following the 1980s flooding, builders were working around the earliest foundations on the site and found they comprised of tree trunks laid on sand with elm planking over them. There were also remains of early building with straw in it, likely a wattle mixture used in early cottage construction.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Bailey, John. *Auld Robin Gray and the cottage by the seashore*. March 26 1982

## 4.5 Cartographic Evidence



Figure 13. Pre-1840 North Somerset Enclosures Map, Know Your Place

- 4.6.11 The pre-1840 North Somerset Enclosures Map shows Weston before its significant development as a seaside destination (See Figure 13). The AB is located on The Strand, with clear sea views, and no interference from other houses. At this time, the AB would have been remote and rural.
- 4.6.12 Here, the AB shows a similar planform to the 1838 and 1840s tithe maps. The extant historic section, AB1, is present to the southeast, with AB2 in its original form to the northwest. There appears to be a small extension to the north elevation of the property. Likely an outbuilding or shed.
- 4.6.13 The 1838 and 1840s tithe maps show a more detailed view of the planform which fits with the original 'three section' design of the cottage (See Figures 14 and 15). By this time Victoria Buildings had been built to the northwest, as well as Beachfield Villas (now the Lauriston) to the east.

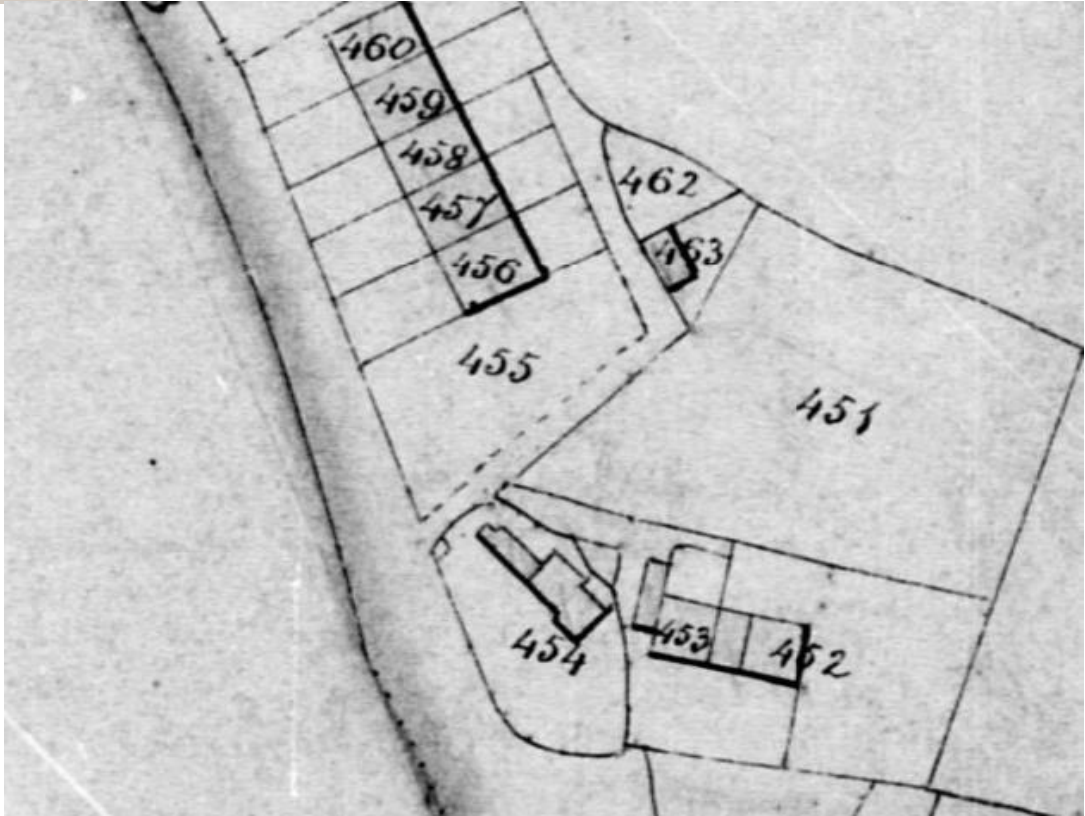


Figure 14. 1838 Tithe Map, North Somerset

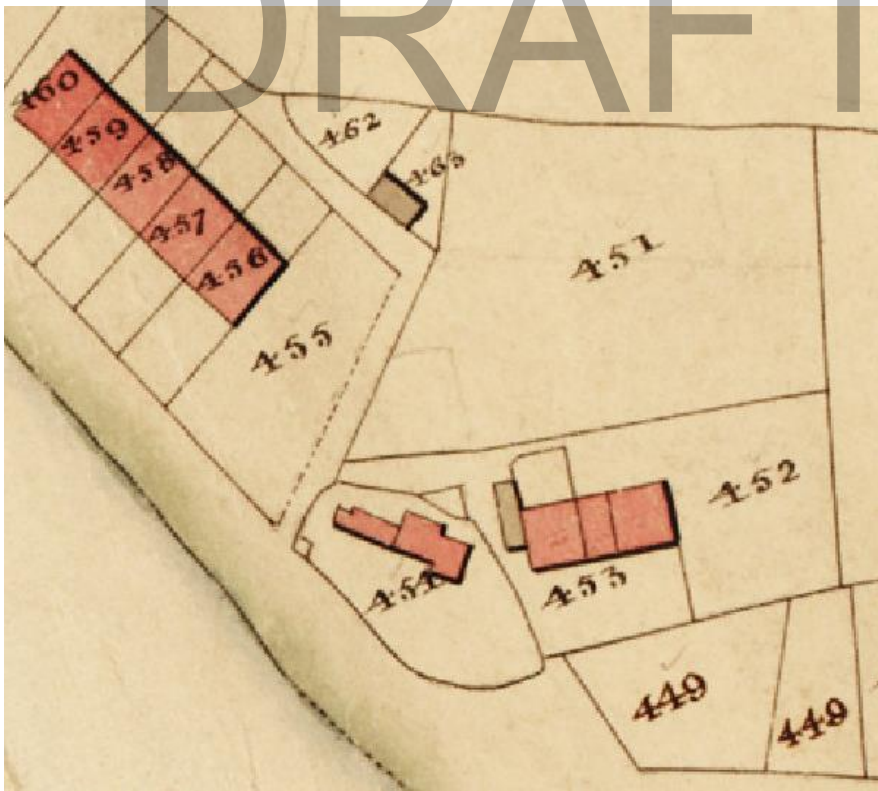


Figure 15. 1840s Tithe Map, North Somerset

4.6.14 Between 1840 and 1883, the AB underwent significant alteration in its change of purpose to Whitecross Dairy (See Figure 16). The planform is significantly altered to give more space

to the rear. This appears to have been the date of the construction of Victoria Lodge, now Victoria Mansions to the west and rear of the AB.

4.6.15 The sections of the building in Figure 16 marked in carmine red were made of brick or stone, and the sections in grey were made of wood or iron. Blue and or cross hatched sections were made of glass. A fountain is marked to the front of the AB in the 1885 OS map and the 1879-1888 town plans (See Figures 16 and 17).

4.6.16 The 1885 OS map shows the rapid development of buildings around the AB, including the Lauriston Villas and Park Villas row of properties (See Figure 16).

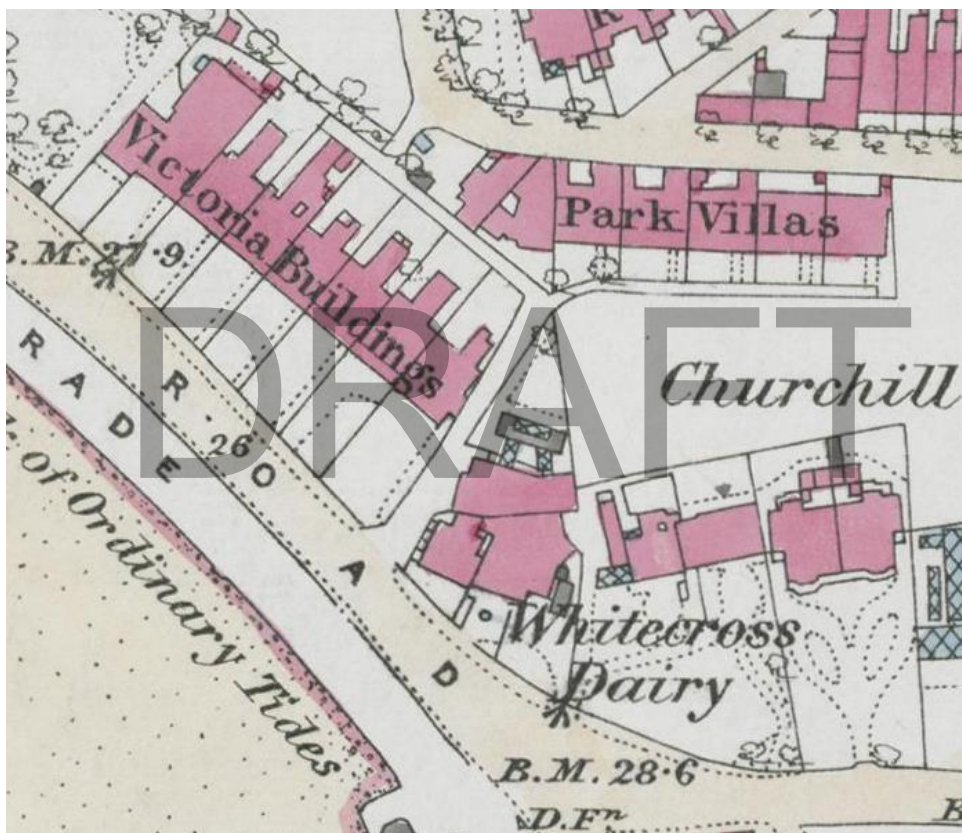


Figure 16. 1885 OS 25" 1st edition



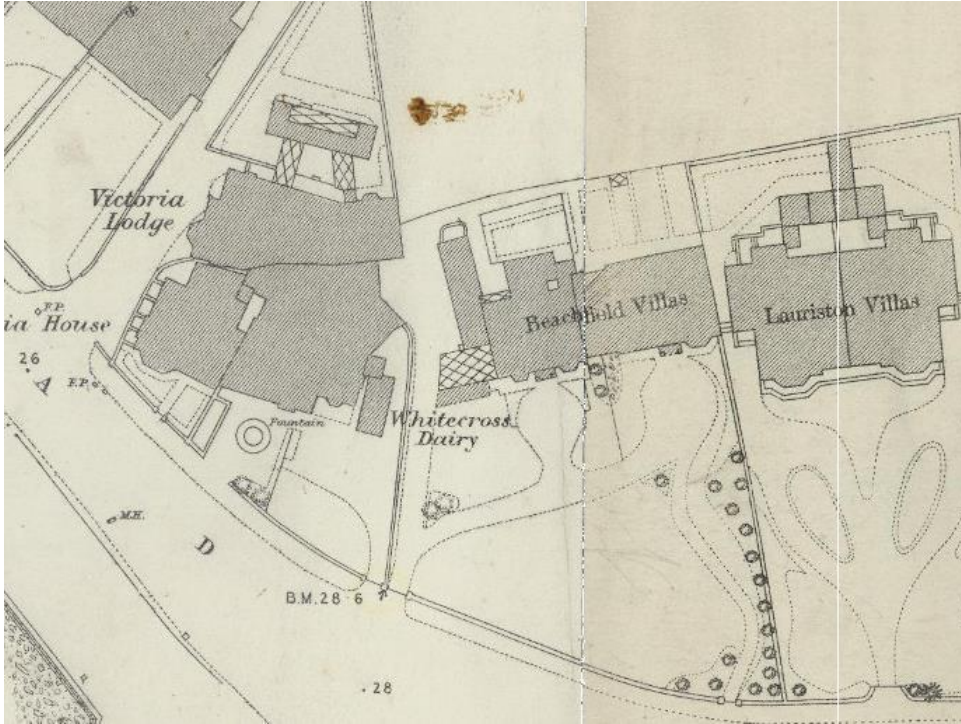


Figure 17. 1879 – 1888 Town Plans

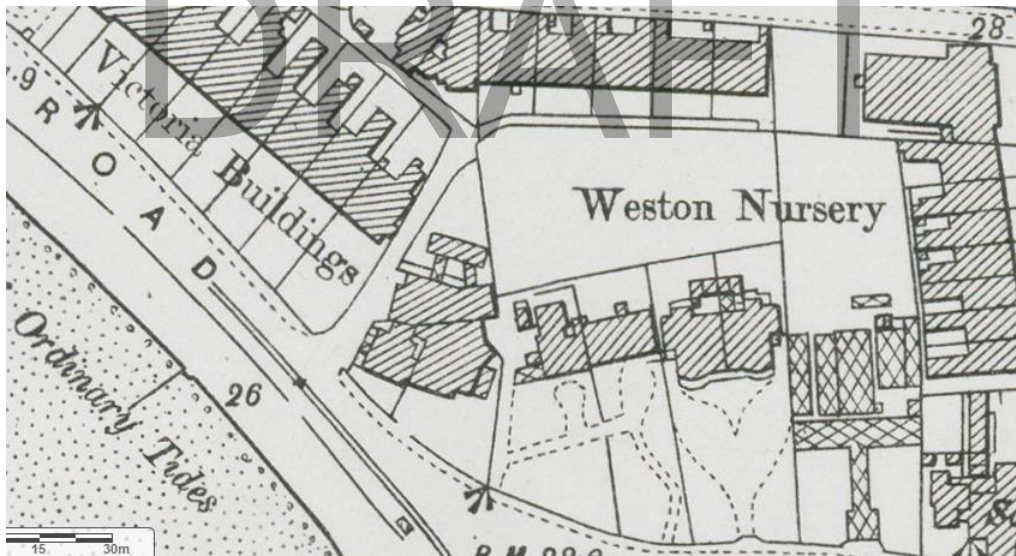


Figure 18. 1902 OS 25" second edition Somerset

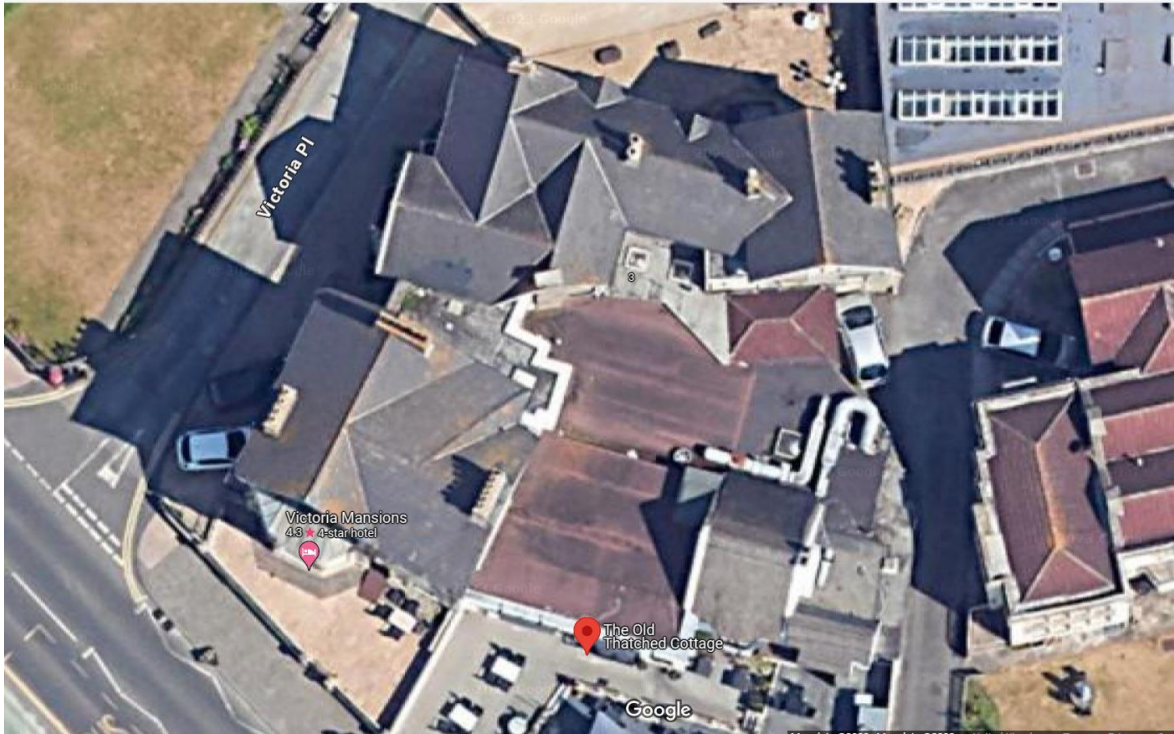


Figure 19. Aerial view of the current planform. Source: Google Maps ARU: Weston-Super-Mare 1:1.500. Google Maps [online] accessed 20.12.23

4.6.17 Figure 19 shows the current planform of the whole conglomeration of buildings which matches that of the dairy and the separate dwelling known as Victoria Lodge, now known as Victoria Mansions.

## 5. Description of the AB

### 5.1 Setting

- 5.1.1 The AB is located right on the Weston Super Mare seafront promenade. The AB is a unique remnant of the older Weston Super Mare, surrounded by Victorian developments of seafront hotels and other guesthouses, including the Lauriston Hotel to the right. Both the Grand Pier and Knightstone Island are within eyeline of the AB (See Plates 2 and 3).
- 5.1.2 The whole site reads from the front as a restaurant with outdoor seating areas and boundary modern walls which tie-in with the seafront. However, from an aerial perspective the site reads as the 20<sup>th</sup> century dairy site which includes a number of additional buildings which appear to match up with the planform of the dairy as shown within section 4. Cartographic Evidence.
- 5.1.3 We have given a rough plan of the two main buildings under consideration within this report i.e. AB1 – the original Leeves Cottage and AB2 – the dairy and tearooms which was

located on the site of earlier building associated with Leeves Cottage, for ease of identification (See Figure 20).

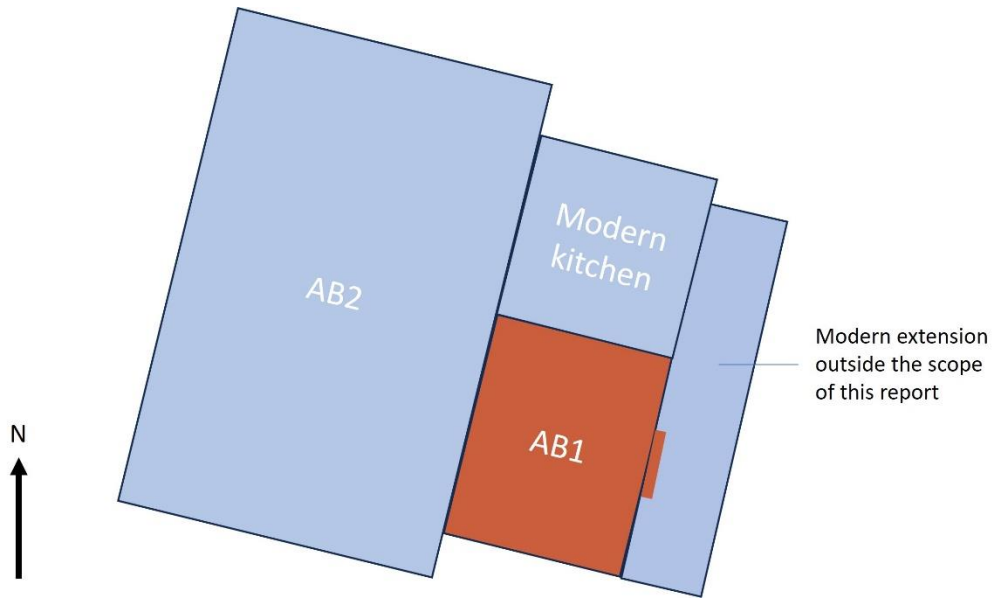


Figure 20. Planform of the sections of the AB relevant to this report

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Plate 2. View from the AB north to Knightstone Island



Plate 3. View of Grand Pier and beach opposite the AB



Plate 4. The AB in its setting of Victorian homes, hotels and guesthouses

## 5.2 AB1

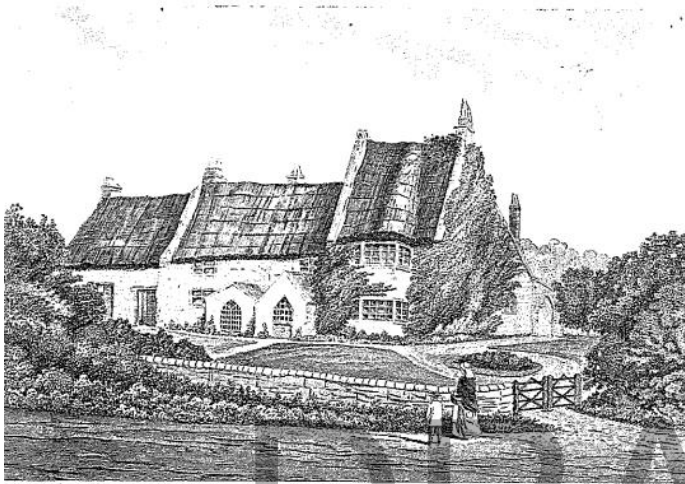
5.2.1 AB1 is the only part that remains of the original Leeves Cottage. AB1 features a modern thatch which is not fully in keeping with the original roof (the thatch should be double, not single sided). To the right of AB1 is a modern extension with modern thatched projections over its flat roof and entrance (See Plate 5). This is a tradition which began in the 1950s with a 'Walls' Ice cream kiosk positioned close to the road (See Figure 11) which was also thatched in a similar style.



Plate 5. AB1 exterior with modern extension to the east (right of image)

5.2.2 AB1 retains its external chimney stack and the original shape of the bay windows to the south elevation, but the windows themselves and all other external features are modern.

5.2.3 Whilst the pitch of the roof appears accurate, the original shape on the roof has likely been lost. Illustrations from the 1800s suggest that the roof originally featured protruding thatch above the bay window, in the style of a thatched dormer window (See Plate 6). Artistic license may have been taken with the illustrations given the difference in eave design.



Engr. Englebert Strubbe.

"LEEVE'S COTTAGE" WESTON-SUPER-MARE.  
*Built by the Rev W Leeves, Composer of "The Robin Song."*



PARSON LEEVES' COTTAGE.

Plate 6. 19th century illustrations of Leeves Cottage featuring a different roof shape

### 5.3 Internal AB1

5.3.1 The internal space of AB1 retains its original planform but has undergone significant changes. The downstairs room retains a low ceiling and bay window shape within the south elevation but very little remains of the original interior (See Plates 7 and 8).



Plate 7. AB1 Downstairs restaurant space



Plate 8. AB1 Downstairs restaurant space and the connection to AB2

5.3.2 The pitch of the roof reads as at least partly original in the upstairs room – see 5.2.3 for discussion on earlier roof shape (See Plate 8). The window is a replacement in a different style to the original. The original box frame of the property is likely intact. The sloped pitch of the roof to the rear can also be read in the back storeroom area (See Plate 9).



Plate 10. AB1 upstairs room, showing some original roof pitch#



Plate 9. AB1 upstairs back room showing roof pitch to rear

## 5.4 External AB2

5.4.1 AB2 has undergone a complete change from its past as a section of Leeves Cottage (See Plate 11). The planform and roofline were entirely changed when the Cottage became the Whitecross Dairy. This change can be seen on the 1885 O/S map (See Figure 16). The change from pitched to flat roof and altered planform (extending in a different shape, further to the front and rear) mean that none of the previous cottage can be read.



Plate 11. AB2 exterior, with major alterations from its usage as Whitecross Dairy

## 5.5 Internal AB2

- 5.5.1 The interior of AB2 was heavily changed when the building became a dairy (See Plate 12). There are beams of an uncertain date which appear to have been clad with something (See Plate 14). The restaurant features a possibly original wall with date stone, found in a wall in October 1903 (See Plate 13 and Figure 21). The 1797 dating adds further questions about the age of the building, and the initials IFL are unclear but possibly refer to Leeves.



Plate 12. Interior of AB2



LW Bailey  
Heritage Management



Plate 13. 1797 date stone in the wall of AB2



Plate 14. Beam in AB2 with apparent cladding



Figure 21. Copy of the date stone found in a wall in October 1903



## 6. Interpretation and Assessment of Significance

### 6.1 Methodology for Assessing Significance

- 5.1.1 This section of the report should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement/Planning Statement, which describes how the proposed scheme has responded to the significance of the heritage asset, and with the architect's drawings submitted with the application.
- 5.1.2 Only those heritage assets recorded on the HER which have a visual, physical, or other type of connection to the proposal will be considered in the following section.
- 5.1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) glossary describes significance as the value of a heritage asset to present and future generations because of its heritage interest. It also states that within a planning context significance may arise from the archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic values of a heritage asset or a combination of those heritage values.
- 5.1.4 The Glossary of the NPPF defines those values as follows:
- Archaeological interest refers to a heritage asset holding, or potentially holding, evidence of past human activity.
  - Architectural and artistic interest are defined as interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place; They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art of science or design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
  - Historic interest is an interest in past lives and events (including prehistoric). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
  - Communal interest is an interest derived from the value of the place to the people or community which relate to it or whose collective experience/memory is shaped by it.

- 5.1.5 NPPF also provides a definition of setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and states that 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 the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
- 5.1.6 In its publication *The Setting of Heritage Assets, Good Practice in Planning 3 Historic England* also defines setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced but goes on to say that elements of a setting can make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, potentially affecting the ability to appreciate the significance of the asset or having a neutral effect.

## 6.2 Significance of the AS

- 5.2.1 The Archaeological significance of the AB is high. The foundations of the AB have been exposed in the past due to renovations post its damage through flood and this has exposed an extremely early and makeshift form of building technology.
- 5.2.2 The fact that the foundations and potentially the core of the building materials contain such information about the way people were building their homes in past centuries is extremely significant.
- 5.2.3 The Weston-Super-Mare Heritage Environment Record does not identify any particular find sites within the setting of the AB but we must assume that given the fact that there is anecdotal and physical evidence of a dwelling here since the earliest times of Weston-super-mare as a settlement potential for below ground archaeological evidence is high.
- 5.2.4 The reports of a crude dwelling made of mud and stones with only a hole for a door is intriguing but so far unsubstantiated by the authors of this report. However this story cannot be ignored and so the archaeological significance of the site is even further enhanced by this local legend.
- 5.2.5 The aesthetic value of the AB is vested in the consistency of the local vernacular which it presents to the streetscape of this key section of the Weston-super-Mare Conservation Area. The aesthetic of AB1 has been undermined by the addition of an unsympathetic extension to the east elevation which obscures the original chimney stack. However, as this took place as part of the site's conversion to a dairy and restaurant it is part of the story of the rise of Weston-super-Mare as a Victorian seabathing resort.

- 5.2.6 This extension acts to further undermine the aesthetic of AB1 with the inclusion of a faux thatched roof. The size and shape of this faux roof is completely inappropriate in this context but is an example of the changes that were made in a misguided attempt to accentuate the early origins of AB1 and took place at a time prior<sup>15</sup> to the NPPF planning guidance for heritage protection and the understanding of character distinctiveness.
- 5.2.7 AB2 is also a significant part of the story of the rise of Weston-super-Mare as a Victorian seabathing resort and the flat roof which exist today tells the story of that change from one of the only dwellings on the Strand in the late 1700s to a restaurant within the busy Victoria Seafront we see today.
- 5.2.8 The historical significance of the AB is found in the archival evidence that remains and the many artistic representations of the building since it was first built by Rev'd Leeves. Its recent inclusion within the local Blue Plaques scheme is testament to its significance within the history of Weston-super-Mare.
- 5.2.9 The communal significance of the AB is high owing to its continued use a restaurant which provides ongoing access for local people and visitors alike to not only one of the earliest buildings in Weston-super-Mare but also one which embodies so much archaeological significance. The clear change in architectural style between AB1 and AB2 should also be noted as representing the story of change within the town itself in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>15</sup> The North Somerset Council Planning Portal shows that retrospection planning a 'Kiosk extension' was approved with conditions in 1967 but no documents are available online.

## 7. Consideration of the Proposals

To be completed.

## 8. Conclusion

- 6.1.1 On behalf of the applicant, this Heritage Statement has fulfilled its role of providing the LPA/decision maker with a sufficient and proportionate level of information for the decision-making process by describing the significance of the AB and of designated and undesignated heritage assets within the environs of the AB
- 6.1.2 It has also highlighted factors which should be considered by the LPA/decision maker during their assessment of the potential impacts of the scheme on the significance of the AS and on that of other designated heritage assets which have a visual/physical/historic connection to the AB.
- 6.1.3 It is anticipated, therefore, that the LPA/decision maker will be able to come to a balanced judgement about the proposed scheme as well as being able to form a view on whether the scheme will constitute no harm, less than substantial harm or substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets discussed in this report, as required by NPPF.

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