



Amended heritage statement

Site of 2-4 Waterloo Square and Beach/Mud Club, The Esplanade, Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

Construction of 5 and 6 storey buildings to form retail/café/restaurant units and car parking at ground floor level with apartments above (amended scheme).

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April 2020

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Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 189 requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development proposal. This statement is in accordance with this guidance.

1.0 Site and surroundings

1.1 Comprises a vacant site located at the junction of The Esplanade, Waterloo Square and Norfolk Street. There are substantial late twentieth century buildings to the north in Waterloo Square and the east just beyond Norfolk Street.

1.2 Three buildings previously existed on the site, including the former Beach Hotel. They were recently demolished.



Figure 1. 1950s view of site from Waterloo Square Gardens.



Figure 2. Current view of site looking through to Norfolk Street.



Figure 3. Current view from The Esplanade.

2.0 History

2.1 Inhabitants of the Saxon village of Bognor Regis traditionally made their living from farming, fishing and smuggling until Richard Hotham, a hatter from London, came to stay in the 1780s. Sea water was thought to be a cure for many ills at that time and, as a result, seaside resorts were becoming fashionable. Indeed, since the Prince of Wales' visit to Brighton in 1783, visitors flocked had there; so Hotham decided to create such a resort at Bognor. He envisaged a more genteel destination though. One that would not encourage the rowdiness of other resorts.

2.2 Hotham purchased 1,600 acres of land in Bognor and began building and developing premises that would be attractive and useful for visitors. These included a 17 room hotel and two terraces – Hotham Place and Long Row – in what was to become Waterloo Square. Bognor as a resort did not, however, boom as Hotham had hoped. The royal visitors, thought to be so vital to a resort's success, did not come immediately and, only then, spasmodically. Prince George came to stay for a month with his mistress in 1796. Princess Charlotte, George III's daughter, came in 1808 and

1811 and Queen Victoria visited as a child, in the 1820s.

2.3 Wealthy people did come though and, after Hotham's death in 1799, Bognor continued to slowly grow until the 1820s when it developed more rapidly. Russell Place, Landsdowne Place, the Sussex and Claremont hotels, two chapels and a bathhouse in Steyne Street, where people could bathe in warm seawater for their health, were all built in the 1820s. Sadly, Hotham's first hotel burned down in 1826 but it was replaced by the Norfolk Hotel in 1829. Development continued throughout the 19th century. Marine Parade was built in the 1840s and, in the mid-1860s, the pier and a mile long esplanade constructed as part of measures to defend the coast from continual erosion by the sea.

2.4 In 1893 Bognor was described as: 'a quiet little place of eminent respectability and unimpeachable sanitary record'. Perhaps this prompted future generations to turn their attentions to the introduction of entertainments. In 1902 a pavilion opened at the shore end of the pier where seven years later Bognor's first cinema opened. The Theatre Royal opened in 1910; and 1911 saw the opening of the Kursaal, an entertainment 'palace' with roller skating rink, theatre, shops and a tearoom. When a company making seaplanes folded in 1919, Sir Walter Bount bought the site and used it to build New City, an exclusive holiday camp with 200 bedrooms with central heating, a dance hall, hairdressing room, library, putting green, billiards hall and tennis court. In the early 1920s Waterloo Square was turned from a field where livestock grazed to gardens and a bowling green. There was also a pavilion there for dances and plays.

2.5 While King George V convalesced at Craigwell House (the private home of Sir Arthur du Cros) in Aldwick for four months in 1929, a number of royal visitors came to Bognor. These included his three year old grand-daughter, Princess Elizabeth (later to become Queen Elizabeth II). Once the King's health was restored the council successfully applied for permission to add Regis to the town's name.

2.6 After WW2 visitors were encouraged to come to Bognor with the opening of Hotham Park to the public in 1947, Rainbows End in 1950 and the Butlin's Holiday Camp in 1960. However, British seaside holidays in general suffered a decline during the 1960s and 1970s. They may have been replaced by package holidays abroad.

Bognor's fortunes fell from that time and the once genteel town became impoverished. By 2000 the average earnings there were 10% lower than in the rest of South East England.

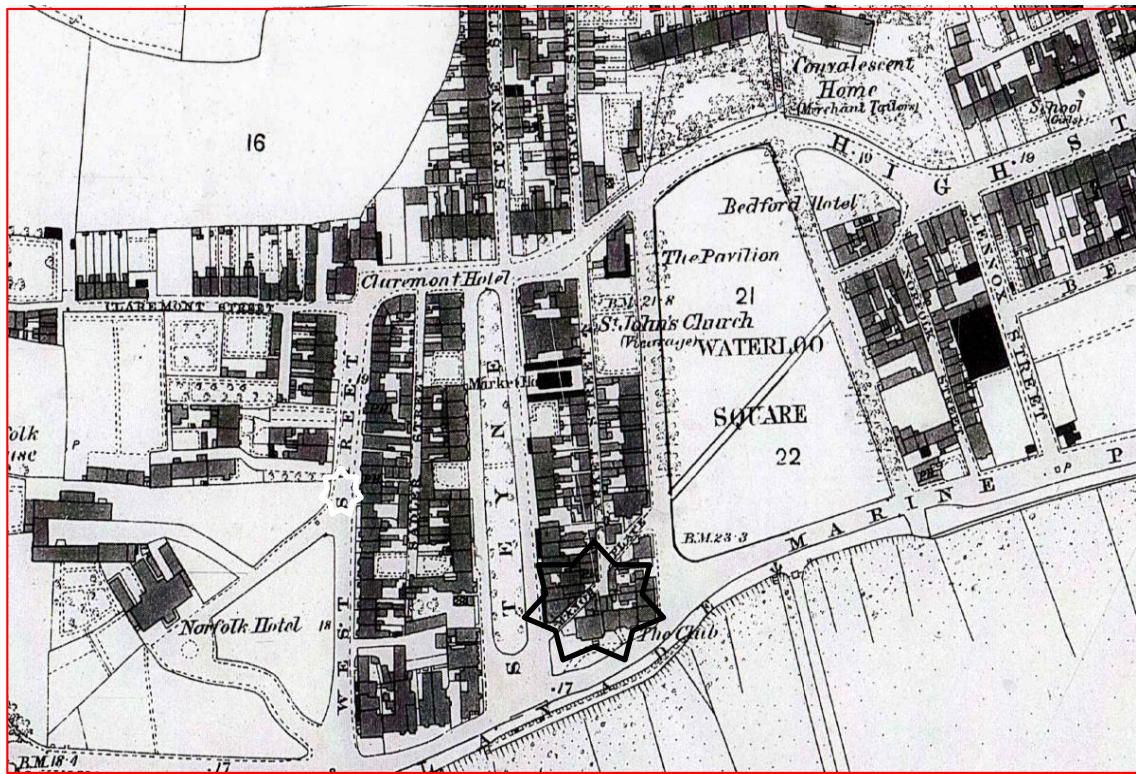


Figure 4. Extract from map of 1875 showing application site and context.

3.0 Pre-application

3.1 Following the submission of a pre-application proposal in late 2018 a response was received from the Council on 25 April 2019 (LPA Ref: PAA/151/18). The proposal was for an eight storey development of 55 apartments above three retail units. A comprehensive reply set out the planning parameters for the development of this key site. In respect of the built heritage it outlined the requirement for a heritage statement to be provided to assess and explain the heritage impacts of the proposed development. It was suggested that a lower built form would be preferred, unless there was proper justification in heritage terms. Furthermore, brick was not favoured as the predominant external material having regard to the prevalence of rendered buildings in the locality. Durable windows and doors (aluminium or similar) should be utilised and a nodal feature to define the corner to Waterloo Square should be considered. Furthermore, the desire to deliver a built form that would both be respectful to the surroundings and of high design quality would be an essential requirement of any scheme.

4.0 The proposals

4.1 The original planning application (LPA Ref: BR/282/19/PL) sought planning permission to construct a building comprising two commercial units and ancillary accommodation at ground floor level and 49 apartments above. A basement car park was proposed to be constructed below ground level. The built form was shown as rising from 3 to 7 storeys.

4.2 Following extensive discussions and comments from planning and conservation officers the planning application has been amended and now comprises two separate buildings one of 5 storeys and the other 6. The ground floor would remain commercial with ancillary accommodation and car parking and the number of apartments above has been reduced from 49 to 35. A wide pedestrian path would be formed between the two buildings linking Waterloo Square and Norfolk Street.

4.3 The amended scheme has evolved taking into account the comments from the Council's planning and conservation officers. Briefly, the common view was that the original scheme, in respect of the built heritage, was excessive in terms of its mass, there was too much variation in height from 3 to 7 storeys, one single built form would not sit well given that three separate buildings previously existed on the site and architecturally the various components of the design did not relate well to the existing built context. It was concluded that substantial harm would be caused to the heritage asset that is the nearby conservation area and as such the scheme, as originally submitted, could not be supported in heritage terms.

4.4 Importantly this amended scheme has been modified to take its design references from nearby historic buildings within conservation area, for example; canted bay windows, covered canopies, set back rooflines, horizontal and vertical banding and window proportions and spacing. These are further referenced in the revised design and access statement. Furthermore, the external materials would also echo those found on historic buildings nearby.

4.5 The separation of the built form into two blocks and the insertion of a strong pedestrian route would assist in the permeability of the scheme and the promotion of active frontages and pedestrian activity within this public space.

5.0 Relevant legislation

5.1 Section 16 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)

Act 1990 requires local planning authorities, in determining applications, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Listed Building Consent is required for the demolition or alteration of a listed building in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

5.2 Section 72 of the Act requires that, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

6.0 Heritage assets

6.1 The site is located within The Steyne and Waterloo Square Conservation Area, made in 1994. This is a designated heritage asset as defined in the NPPF. Bognor Pier is a grade II listed building that is nearby to the south-west of the application site and Nos. 7-15 Waterloo Square, located on the west side of the western leg of Waterloo Square, are also grade II listed buildings. These are also designated heritage assets. There do not appear to be any locally listed buildings or structures (non-designated heritage assets) in the vicinity of the application site. The Historic England list descriptions are included in Appendix A.

7.0 Significance of heritage assets

7.1 The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest. The English Heritage (now Historic England) document titled *Conservation Principles* identifies four types of heritage value that an asset may hold: aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential.

The conservation area has values covering all of these areas.

7.2 The conservation area was first designated in 1979 and then extended in 1994 to include Waterloo Square. A description of the area was set out by the local authority and is repeated below:

Bognor Regis (The Steyne and Waterloo Square)

Description of the character and appearance of the conservation area

The Steyne is situated on the seafront just west of the town centre. The area around The Steyne was designated a conservation area in August 1979 and this was extended in July 1994 to include Waterloo Square.

Dating from the 1820s, The Steyne is an area of modest terraces, imitative in style of the earlier resorts and with a jostling vitality quite different in character from the formal buildings of Sir Richard Hotham's resort about a mile away and the brashness of the modern seaside activities nearby. The Steyne is an open ended rectangle at right angles to the sea, lined with two and three storey terraced houses with bay windows and balconies. To the east of The Steyne, terraces of a similar type form the western edge of Waterloo Gardens. To the west stands the imposing Royal Norfolk Hotel, dating from the 1840s, which is set back diagonally across the corner of Aldwick Road and West Street.

Waterloo Square developed around a space, intended to protect views from Richard Hotham's Fitzleet House. It therefore represents an historically important space in the growth of Bognor Regis as a resort. As an inland, landscaped space, fronting the seafront, it complements The Steyne, and the Pier forms a strong focal point at the southern end. Typical of such seaside resorts' open spaces, the central space is flanked by nearly continuous, street fronted development. There is a variety in age, style and size of buildings. Remnants from the early development of the Square exist in Nos. 7 – 17 Waterloo Square, a fine formal group of buildings in a Regency style dating to 1815 – 1820. The Beach Hotel (four storeys in height and dating to the mid-19th Century), acts as an important focal point at the south eastern corner of the Square, as does the large Bognor Regis Methodist Church at the northern end.

Norfolk Street and Little High Street are typical of the several small service streets or roads in the area and their scale contrasts with the large, formal space of the main square.

Within the conservation area there are some brick buildings but the predominant

material is stucco. Chimneys are important features on the skyline.

Opportunities for Improvement/ Enhancement

- *Renovation of Bognor Regis Pier (a Listed Building).*
- *Restore original softwood timber sash or casement windows and doors, shop fronts, etc. where replaced with later, inappropriate features.*
- *Reinstate original natural slate or plain clay tiles, where replaced with inappropriate modern materials.*
- *Repair/re-surface pavements in the area. Retain any granite kerb-stones.*

7.3 Of course the former Beach Hotel, mentioned in the conservation area description, has since been demolished and there are no buildings or structures that currently exist on the application site. In terms of significance, this part of the conservation area is dominated by the Waterloo Square Gardens and the view southwards towards Bognor Pier. The eastern leg of Waterloo Square contains a variety of built forms but none that have any particular heritage interest. The Bognor Methodist Church forms the northern end of Waterloo Square and is an imposing brick structure that contrasts in terms of its external material and scale with other buildings to the south. Norfolk Street and Old High Street have a more intimate mews style character, the narrow streets forming a marked different to the wider spaces around Waterloo Square. The more characterful and interesting buildings are found on the western leg of Waterloo Square, and in particular Nos. 7-17. These buildings date from the early nineteenth century and form a pleasing and attractive group. The application site is located at the eastern edge of the conservation area and it is considered that this part of the area is in most need of regeneration and enhancement. The neighbouring buildings are of mediocre design quality and overall the significance of this part of the conservation area could at best be described as moderate.



Figure 5. Bognor Methodist Church.



Figure 6. Nos. 7-17 Waterloo Square

8.0 Impact on heritage assets

8.1 As already mentioned there are no listed buildings in this part of Waterloo Square and The Esplanade, except for Bognor Pier. The pier's setting has remained largely unaltered because the Waterloo Square Park has remained a constant feature since the mid-nineteenth century and provides an uninterrupted view from West Street to the north. There are also longer views of the pier from The Esplanade both eastwards and westwards. The proposed development of the application site, as amended, would help to frame and focus the view of the pier from the north. East and west views would change to some extent, more particularly from the east with the proposed development forming a backdrop. This contextual change from the existing and past should be seen as an evolvement of the built form as would be expected over the passing of time. Adding some additional height, but much reduced in the amended scheme, compared to the previous buildings on the site, would help to give some visual strength on this prominent corner to Waterloo Square and provide the nodal feature suggested in the pre-application comments from the Council's Conservation Officer.

8.2 It is not considered that the listed buildings located on the western leg of Waterloo Square would be harmed by the proposed development, as amended. They are a good distance away from the application site and therefore do not sit within purview of the proposed development.

8.3 In respect of the conservation area it is quite clear that the present appearance as a vacant site enclosed with a temporary hoarding detracts from the character and appearance and consequently is causing harm to the significance of this part of the conservation area. It follows therefore that an appropriate development of the site would have positive benefits in respect of the character and appearance of the conservation area. Having regard to the comments from planning and conservation officers it is considered that the amended application proposals have properly addressed the concerns expressed. As such it is considered the character and appearance of the conservation area would be enhanced. The overall height has been reduced, and the mass significantly reduced. The top floor of both proposed buildings would be in the form and appearance of a roof. The splitting of the development into two blocks and the reinforcement of the vertical emphasis, that is a characteristic of the locality, would ensure an improved relationship with the existing built context. The use

of light coloured brickwork, dark framed windows and doors, together with a set-back top floor in grey standing seam cladding would result in a distinctive built form that would enhance this seafront site whilst respecting the existing character and appearance of the conservation area.



Figure 7. Late 19th century view of pier.



Figure 8. Bognor Pier as existing.

9.0 Heritage and planning policy

9.1 There are a number of policies in the Arun District Local Plan that have some relevance to the application proposals in respect of the built heritage, these are:-

HER SP1 - The Historic Environment

HER DM1 - Listed Buildings

HER DM 3 - Conservation Areas

HER DM 6 – Areas of Archaeological Interest

All of these policies follow advice set out in Chapter 16 of the NPPF. In respect of the application proposals there are requirements to ensure the setting of listed buildings are respected and development within a conservation area should preserve or enhance the character and appearance.

9.2 It is not considered there would be any archaeological implications resulting from the proposed development given the relatively recent age of the previous buildings that existed on the site.

9.3 In August 2015 *The Bognor Regis 2015-2030 Neighbourhood Development Plan* was adopted. Amongst other matters the plan identifies key priority sites and provides specific guidance for them. The application site does not appear to be specifically identified in the plan.

9.4 The amended application proposals would, it is considered, comply with advice in Chapter 16 of the *NPPF*. Paragraphs 193, 194 and 195 suggest that where development would cause substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets there must be clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 196 states that where less than substantial harm would occur this should be weighed against public benefits, including securing the asset's optimum viable use. Paragraph 192 asserts that new development can make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. It is not considered the proposed development, as amended, would cause

any harm, substantial or otherwise to the significance of the heritage assets for the reasons set out in this statement. Quite the opposite in fact, it is considered the conservation area would be enhanced, particularly taking into account its present appearance, which quite clearly detracts from the character and appearance.

9.5 *The English Heritage (now Historic England) Conservation Policies and Guidance* (2008) provides comprehensive guidance on the built heritage.

Paragraph 138 advises that *New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:*

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*
- d. the long term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.*

9.6 *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2015) is the most up to date guidance relating to setting. The extent of setting is explained in this document as follows:

The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is 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.

Paragraph 12 of this document sets out a method to assess the impact of development on heritage assets as follows:

Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected:

Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);

Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;

Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

9.7 Overall it is considered that the proposed development, as amended, would enhance the heritage asset that is the conservation area, compared to the existing appearance of the site, by a well-designed and respectful new development. The setting of the listed building that is Bognor Pier would be protected by reinstating a built form on this important seafront site. Views of the pier from the north and through Waterloo Square Gardens would be suitably enclosed by the proposed development, as amended, thereby focusing and framing this important view. Other views from the east and west would also be enhanced by the proposed development. This part of the conservation area would benefit from the development of this corner site in the manner now proposed. The modulation of the frontage would reflect the vertical emphasis that is prevalent in the area and the external materials would be both robust and sympathetic to the surroundings.

10.0 Assessment

10.1 The application proposals, as amended, have been carefully adjusted following the comments from planning and conservation officers, to ensure that a sympathetic and harmonious appearance would result and as such the character and appearance of the conservation area would be enhanced.

10.2 The height of the proposed building facing The Esplanade is considered appropriate and would form an effective bookend echoing taller buildings at the eastern end of The Esplanade, including Compass Point and Butlins.

10.3 The listed building, that is Bognor Pier, would be protected in terms of its setting.

10.4 The more traditional design proposed in these amended proposals is considered to be a more respectful approach that would ensure harmony and respect to the

existing built form within the conservation area.

10.5 Including projecting bay windows and appropriate horizontal banding well as vertical emphasis windows throughout the scheme would reinforce the prevalent vertical character of existing historic buildings in the conservation area.

10.6 The siting of the proposed development would reflect the grain and layout of existing buildings in this part of the conservation area.

10.7 Although slightly higher than the previous buildings on the site there is considered to be justification in heritage terms to increase the height in the manner proposed having regard to the seafront location where higher buildings already exist. Furthermore, a key characteristic of the conservation is the variety of building heights.

10.8 The stepping back of the top floor would help to articulate the frontages and is considered an effective method of reducing the apparent height of the buildings.

Appendix A

BOGNOR REGIS THE ESPLANADE

7/131 Bognor Regis Pier

First listed 27.4.89

Grade II

Pleasure pier. 1865 for the Bognor Promenade Company Ltd; shore end enlarged and large pavilion housing theatre, arcade with shops, theatre and picture-house added 1912 for Bognor Pier Company architect G C Smith; alterations mid- and late-C20. A former small pavilion at the sea-ward end collapsed into the sea 1965; former wooden stage tower dismantled 1972; foreshortened by storm damage 1999. Pier built of iron posts with wooden decking and cast-iron railings. Roughcast pavilions at shore end with roofs of slate, roofing felt, and felt tiles. Arcade facing promenade is of 2 storeys with hipped roof. Central round-headed pediment with round-headed window flanked by ornate pilasters with swags. On either side, two further 3-light mullioned and transomed casements and central on light windows with good Art Nouveau-style stained glass. Ground floor is supported on 5 piers with triglyph frieze above and modern shop fronts and doors below. Side elevations have blank round-headed pediments, pilasters, friezes and cornices. To the rear is the former theatre. This has 2 square towers on the landward side with flagpoles; keyed round-headed

arches with bracketed hood moulds and former oculi replaced by door (left tower) and window (right tower); modillioned cornices. At centre, between towers, former entrance is masked by flat-roofed addition, and has keyed oculus in open segmental pediment on brackets. Side elevations have pedimented gables with oculi in bracketed architraves above mullioned and transomed windows. Former open-fronted arcade below 1st-floor balcony now walled but with original columns. Interior: theatre: two stairs, one with original handrail, the other with wall-panelling and ceiling cornice; late-C20 suspended floor inserted in former auditorium at circle balcony height, but decorative balcony front survives, with plaster cherubs, swags and cartouches. Decorative plaster work to auditorium walls, vaulted ceiling, dome and proscenium arch. Original 1st-floor pair of glazed double-doors in architraves. Projection box. Former picture-house/concert hall retains vault ceiling with some star-shaped light fittings, disc decoration to supporting column, curtain pelmet, a projection box.

Source: Eds I Mackintosh & M Sell, *Curtains!!! or a new life for Old Theatres*, 1982, p94. P Wells & S Endacott, *Glimpses of Bognor Regis Pier*, 1982 (Pier Heritage). P Wells and S Endacott, *Bognor Regis Pier*, 1997 (Heritage Open Day). G Young, *History of Bognor Regis*, 1983, p187.

WATERLOO SQUARE (West Side) Nos. 7 and 9

Grade II

Date first listed 7.11.1975

GV II Built circa 1815-20 by W K and Daniel Wonham. 2 houses, not quite a pair and much altered. 3 storeys. 3 and 2 windows respectively. Stuccoed. Modillioned eaves cornice. Glazing bars missing except for the original French windows and one sash window both on the 1st floor of No 7. No 7 has an iron balcony on the 1st floor supported on 7 slender columns below and with hood supported by trellised columns, but the hood has been replaced by corrugated iron (painted). No 9 retains its hood but only has a wooden balcony supported on 3 iron columns of a later date than the house. No 7 has a doorway in fluted frame, No 9 a doorway with curved hood over. Nos 7 to 17 (odd) form a group.

WATERLOO SQUARE (West Side) Nos. 11-15

Grade II

Date first listed 7.11.1975

WATERLOO SQUARE 1. 5401 (West side) Nos. 11 to 15 (odd) SZ 9398 NW 7/5A II GV 2. Built Circa 1815-20 by W K and Daniel Wonham. Early C19. 3 storeys. 7 windows in all. Stuccoed. Modillion eaves cornice. Slate roofs. Glazing bars missing. Nos 11 and 15 have balconies, altered, on the 1st floor. Nos 7 to 17 (odd) form a group.

