



Heritage statement

**Royal Hotel, The Esplanade, Bognor Regis, West Sussex,
PO21 1SZ – Extensions and alterations to form apartments
and restaurant**

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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 draft statement is in accordance with this guidance.

1.0 Site and surroundings

1.1 Comprises a large seafront hotel that is vacant and in a very poor condition. It is located on The Esplanade between the junctions with The Steyne and Waterloo Square and just to the west of the Bognor Pier.

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 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 The Royal Hotel, built in 1888, was situated on the esplanade between The Steyne and Waterloo Square. Originally called The Pier Hotel, its name was changed following objections from locals. The hotel was designed by Arthur Smith, a local architect, and developed from parts of a smaller manor house dating back to the late 1820s. The land on which the manor had been built was originally part of Aldwick Manor. In the deed of sale dated 23 May 1810 it was described as a *field or close of meadow land*. The two bays of the old manor were incorporated into the façade of the hotel then two more storeys, canopied balconies and a hipped roof were added.



Figure 1. The (white) manor house was built sometime around 1830 and formed the basis of the Pier Hotel which was built in 1888.

2.5 Sometime in the early years of the 20th century the hotel was extended with the addition of a wing to the east. Advertising claimed this as a “*first-class modern hotel for families and gentlemen, affording every domestic comfort, situated opposite the pier, with the latest sanitary improvements*”. As well as the sea air, visitors came to the hotel for the Goodwood Races. In 1912 the hotel was advertised with the boast that it was “*patronised by the Marchioness of Salisbury and family*”.



Figure 2. The Royal Pier Hotel in about 1900 with canopied balconies, additional storeys and hipped roof. The extension to the east had yet to be built.

2.6 In 1891 the proprietor was a William J. Jordan who lived there with his wife, Alice E Jordan. On the night of the census six visitors were staying in the hotel. In 1901 the proprietor was William Wallace, aged 28, who lived there with his wife, Ethel, and one year old son, Douglas. Eight servants were also recorded on the 1891 census but no guests were listed as staying at the hotel.

2.7 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.

2.8 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.

2.9 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.

3.0 Architectural evolution

3.1 The original hotel was formed from the Manor House in about 1888. It would seem that two additional floors were added and an extension to the east. In the early years of the twentieth century a further eastward extension was built of three floors. The last phase appears to have been the amalgamation of the late nineteenth century two-storey building on the corner of the Esplanade and The Steyne (possibly post-war). Architecturally this corner building is quite different from the remainder of the hotel. It lacks the architectural ornament that is a strong element of the design of the original and extended hotel.

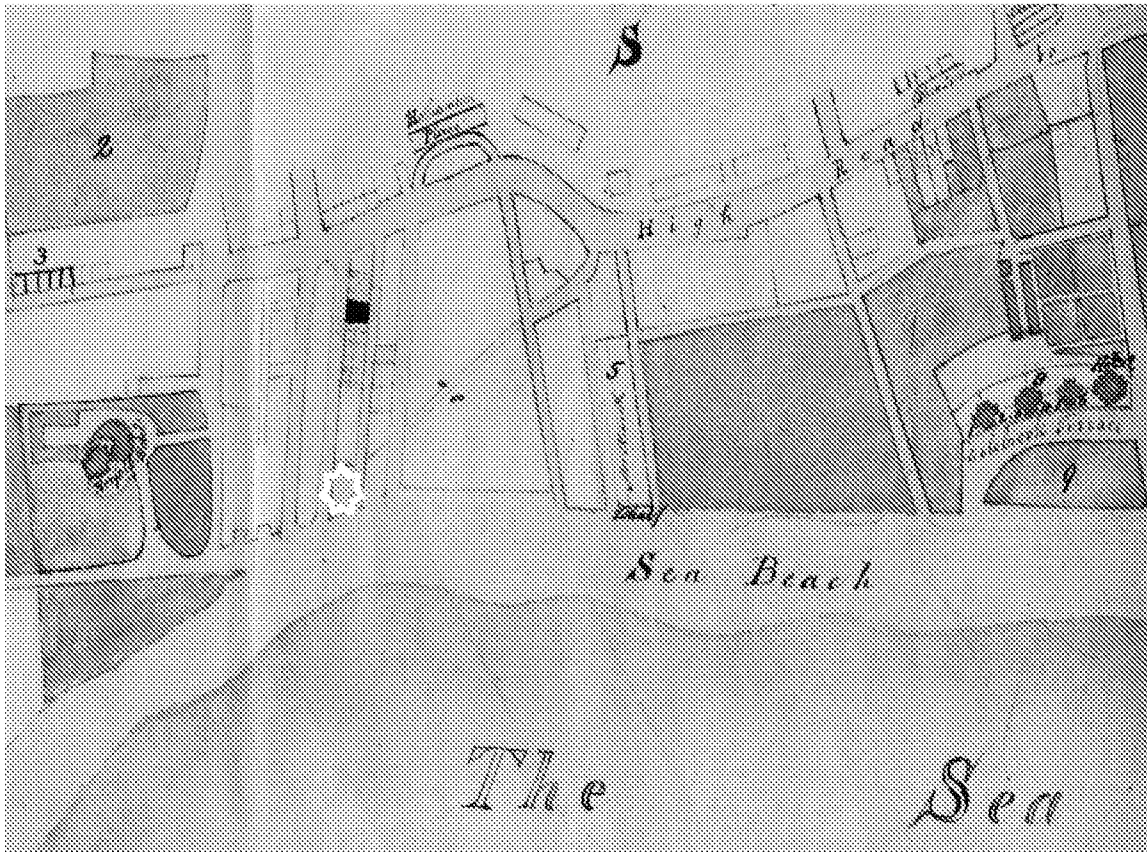


Figure 3. Map extract about 1820s. Application site is undeveloped.

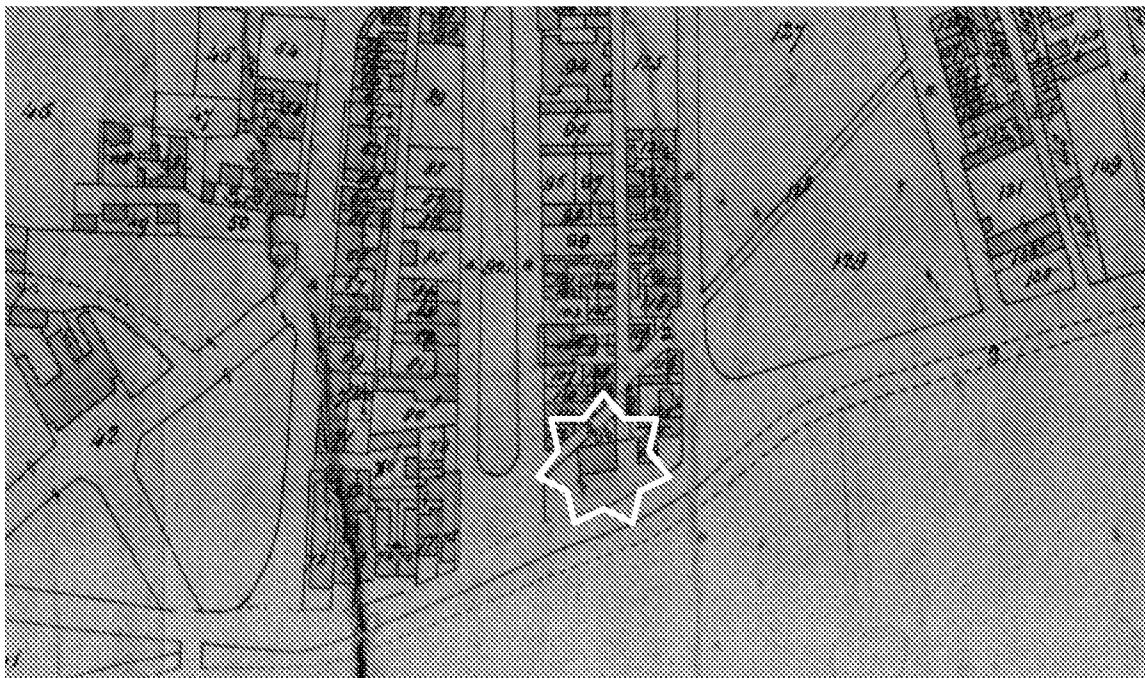


Figure 4. Extract from Tithe Map of 1842 showing the Manor House on part of site.

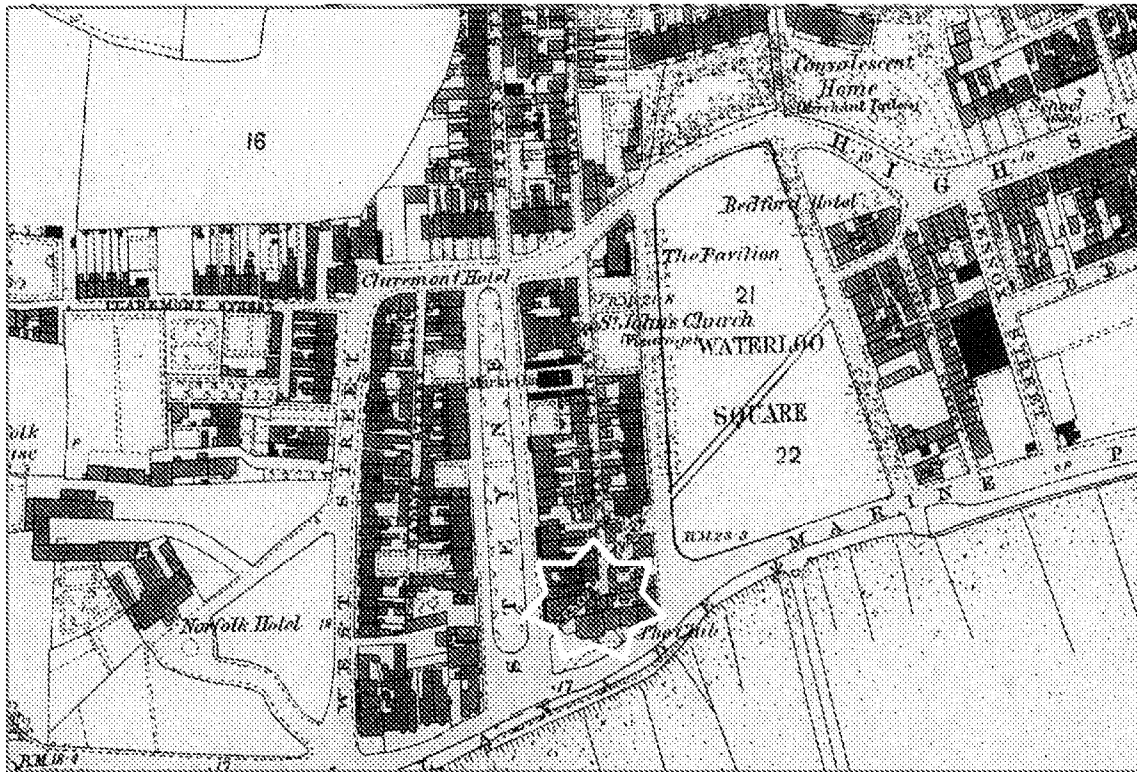


Figure 5. Extract from map of 1875 showing the Manor House.

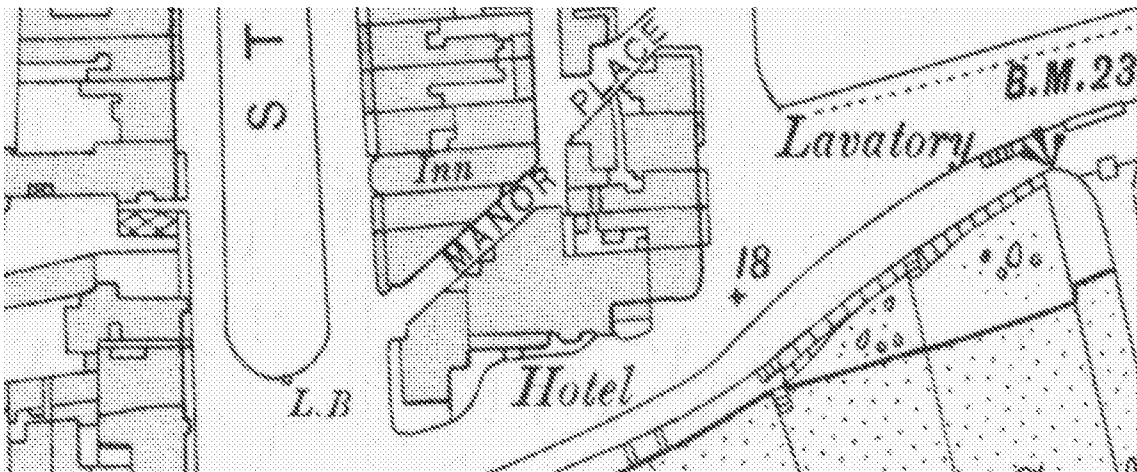


Figure 6. Extract from map of 1912.

4.0 Pre-application

4.1 Discussions, including a meeting on site with the Council's Conservation Officer, have taken place. As a result the application proposals have been modified. In particular the extension to the western part of the building has been reduced in mass and the design altered.

5.0 The proposals

5.1 To extend the property and convert into apartments and a restaurant. Please refer to the design and access statement for a more detailed description of the proposals and

the relevant drawing numbers and other supporting CGIs.

6.0 Relevant legislation

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

7.0 Heritage assets

7.1 The application property is not a statutory listed building but has been selected by the local authority as a locally listed building/structure of character. This is a non-designated heritage asset as defined in the NPPF. 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.

8.0 Significance of heritage assets

8.1 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.

8.2 The application property, being a locally listed building, has primarily some aesthetic value derived from its surviving external form and design. It has a medium level of significance and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. This contribution is devalued because of the present poor condition of the building, vacancy and to some extent through unsympathetic alterations.

The conservation area has values covering all of these areas.

8.3 The conservation area was 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.*

9.0 Impact on heritage assets

9.1 The intention is to carry out a thorough refurbishment of the property as an integral part of the conversion project. In particular the roof would be repaired and a much more consistent and sympathetic arrangement of windows and external doors installed. The colonnaded ground floor entrance would be restored to its former appearance and the decorative balustrades enclosing the balconies would also be repaired. New matching railings would be installed at ground floor level to match those above, following the removal of the ugly basement infill extension. All of this work of sympathetic repair and re-use of the property for primarily residential purposes would benefit the locality and certainly enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Both the designated heritage asset (conservation area) and non-designated heritage asset (locally listed building) would be impacted in a positive way and certainly no harm would be caused to their significance.

9.2 In respect of the extension proposed to the eastern wing this would be in the form of a mansard style roof addition. This would ensure that the gabled bay feature would remain dominant and the inclusion of two small dormer windows either side of the gable

would be a sympathetic way of providing natural lighting to the internal space.

9.3 Similar dormer windows would be utilised, together with conservation style rooflights, to effect the use of the roofspace forming part of the original hotel building for residential accommodation. The style and limited size of these windows would ensure that a sympathetic outcome would be achieved.

9.4 The two-storey extension to the western part of the site allows for a slightly more contrasting design solution. To reduce the mass and in order to retain a subordinate appearance in relation to the original hotel building a mansard style third storey is proposed. Smooth rendered walls for the lower storeys would ensure a comprehensive and integrated appearance. The opportunity has been taken to provide more extensive glazing and balconies to take advantage of the sea views. The simpler architectural style of this part of this part of the building would allow for a restrained contemporary design solution to contrast and reveal the much more decorative architectural styling of the original hotel building.

10.0 Heritage and planning policy

10.1 *The Arun District Local Plan* has just been adopted. There are a number of policies 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 DM2 - Locally Listed Buildings and Structures of Character

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 the requirements are to retain locally listed buildings and ensure

that extensions and external alterations are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host property. The setting of listed buildings should be respected and development within a conservation area should preserve or enhance the character and appearance.

10.2 In August 2015 *The Bognor Regis 2015-2030 Neighbourhood Development Plan* was adopted. Amongst other things the plan identifies key priority sites and provides specific guidance for them. The application site is not specifically identified in the plan.

10.3 The 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.

10.4 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.*

10.5 *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.

10.6 Overall it is considered that the proposed development would enhance the heritage asset that is the conservation area, compared to the existing appearance of the site, by respectful alterations and extensions and significant refurbishment that would bring the external appearance back to a condition not seen for many years. The increased height at the western end of the site is considered entirely appropriate as it would act as a focal point when approaching along The Esplanade from a westerly direction. The mansard style roof design would ensure a subordinate height to the original hotel building and allow for the eaves detailing, including the brackets to be revealed. Furthermore, the embellishment of this corner would also, it is considered, sit sympathetically when viewed from The Steyne. The variety of building heights on the east side of The Steyne contribute towards the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

10.7 The setting of listed buildings in The Steyne and Bognor Regis Pier, also listed, would not it is considered be impacted in a harmful way as a result of the

extensions and alterations proposed. The extensions would not exceed the height of the existing hotel building and many of the listed buildings in The Steyne are three or four storeys in height.

10.8 *The Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* was not cancelled following the issue of the *National Planning Practice Guide*. This guide provides some advice on alterations and additions. It is considered that the proposed development would be in line with wording in Paragraphs 178,179,180 and 182 as it would respect the architectural interest of the building, the new work would not dominate, the plan form would be largely unaltered and the design would follow the character and appearance of the original building. Moreover, important historic fabric would remain intact.

11.0 Assessment

11.1 The application proposals have been carefully conceived to ensure that a sympathetic and harmonious appearance would result and as such the character and appearance of the conservation area would be enhanced. Furthermore, the impact on the locally listed building that is the application property would be beneficial and secure its long-term future as a notable building on Bognor's seafront. The setting of statutory listed buildings in The Steyne and the pier would be respected and there would be no harm caused to their significance.

Appendix A

SI 9398 BOGNOR REGIS THE ESPLANADE

7/131 Bognor Regis Pier

27.4.89 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.

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West Sussex Record Office (1875) *1st Ed. OS map of South Berstead*. LXXIV/6

