

# Whitehaven Town Centre Heritage and Design Series

This document is part of the Whitehaven Town Centre Heritage and Design Series. This series has prepared on behalf of Copeland Borough Council to ensure that all development proposals in, or adjacent to, Whitehaven town centre's conservation areas are well-considered, of high quality and have regard to their historical context.

This series is addressed to:

- Residents and businesses;
- The local community;
- Ward members;
- Council departments, including planning, land and property and highways;
- Potential public and private sector developers;
- Statutory service providers, and;
- Relevant professionals, including builders, architects and planners.

Documents in this series are:

- **Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas Character Appraisal**

*This character appraisal identifies and explains the special historical and architectural character of Whitehaven town centre's conservation areas.*

- **Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas Management Plan**

*This management plan programmes short, medium and long-term actions to preserve and enhance the conservation areas.*

- **Whitehaven Town Centre Development Guide**

*This development guide outlines the urban design principles and criteria to be applied in the town centre.*

- **Whitehaven Town Centre Site Development Guides:**

- Site 1: Former YMCA Building Irish Street
- Site 2: Albion Street South
- Site 3: Albion Street North
- Site 4: Quay Street Car Park
- Site 5: Bardywell Lane
- Site 6: Gough's Car Park, Strand Street/ Malborough Street
- Site 7: Mark House, the former Victorian public baths and the Paul Jones Pub, Strand Street
- Site 8: Former Bus Depot, Bransty Row
- Site 9: Former Bus Station and Works, Bransty Row

*These site development guides are to be read in conjunction with the Whitehaven Town Centre Development Guide and indicate the degree and type of development that will be acceptable on each development site.*

- **Whitehaven Town Centre Public Realm Appraisal**

*This public realm appraisal provides guidance on the degree and type of surface materials and street structures that will be acceptable in the town centre.*

## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the people of Whitehaven who provided invaluable local knowledge and encouragement during the preparation of this report, in particular Cllr John Kane, Cllr Jeanette Williams, Cllr Henry Wormstrup, John Crewdson of the Whitehaven and District Civic Society, Michael Moon of the Whitehaven Heritage Action Group and Celia McKenzie of the Whitehaven Harbour Commission.

Thanks are also due to the staff at the Whitehaven Record Office and Local Studies Library who provided helpful assistance and to the Lowther Estate who kindly permitted the reproduction of several of the plans within this document.

# Site Development Guide

## Bardywell Lane

### Purpose of the Guide

The information provided here is intended to be read in conjunction with the Whitehaven Town Centre Development Guide, 2008. The purpose of this Site Development Guide is to encourage appropriate high quality development on the site and the enhancement of the special historic character of this part of the town. The information provided should assist developers in appreciating the urban design issues relating specifically to the site and the town as a whole.



Aerial photograph

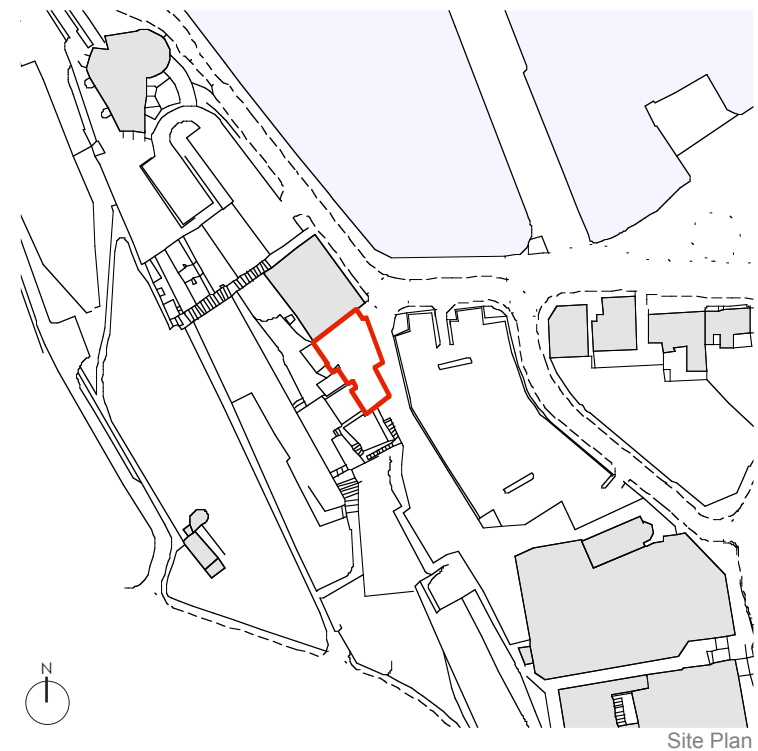
### Background

The site is to the west of the harbour front next to the former Pumping Station. The site backs onto the hillside leading up to Mount Pleasant. It is currently vacant and contains a number of derelict buildings.

### Historical Background

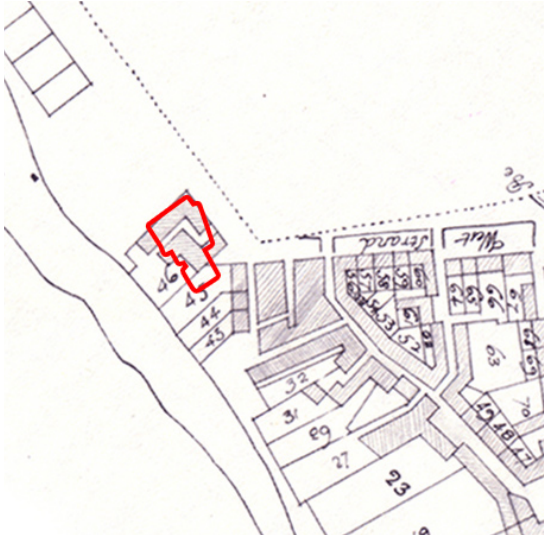
The site is located in one of the oldest parts of the town. The town's early beginnings as a fishing village were established around the harbour and the Market nearby. Quay Street is one of the oldest streets in the town centre. A map of 1710 indicates the site developed with buildings fronting onto Bardywell Lane and with rear gardens built into the hillside. Towards the end of the 18th Century, worker's cottages were built to the west of the site towards Mount Pleasant and the Wellington Coal Pit. These dwellings were reached by a series of steep stepped lanes rising up the hillside.

The area appears to have benefited little from the gentrification elsewhere in the town and became a slum area with poor sanitation and living conditions



Site Plan



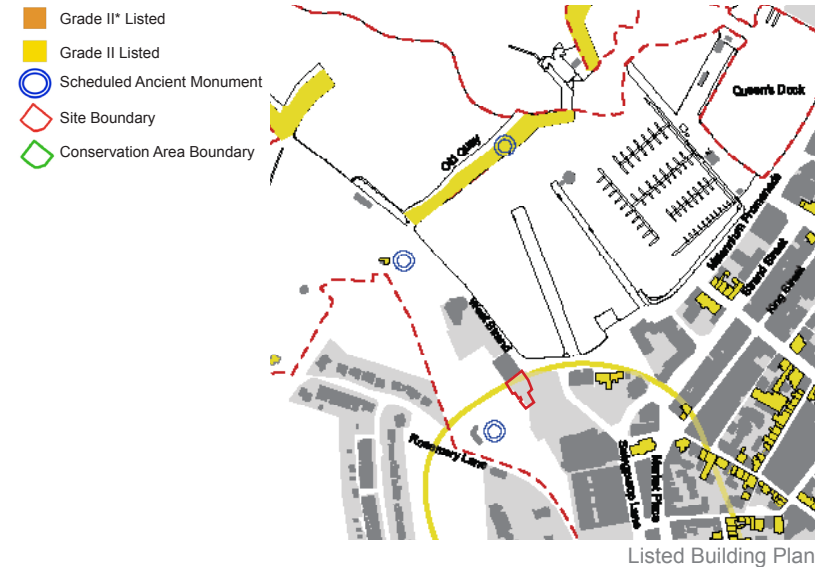


## Historical Background (Cont)

A report commissioned in 1849 to review the living conditions described the area as “a congregation of most wretched dwellings...”

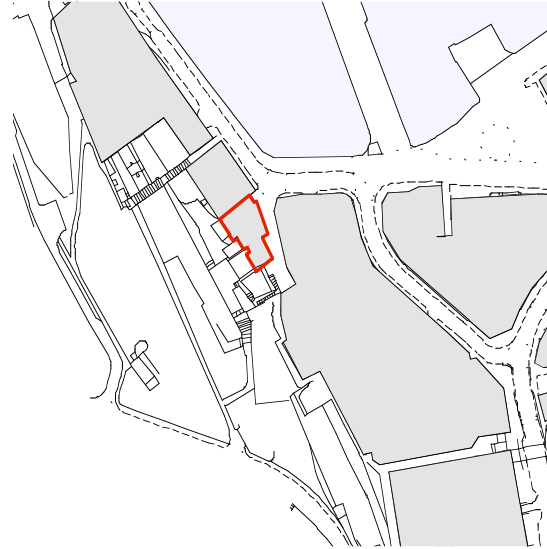
However, it was not until the 1930s that clearance of the slums on Mount Pleasant was achieved. The eastern half of the site fronting Bardywell Lane was demolished in the 1950s leaving the rear properties serving the Pumping Station yard and its rail connection to the quayside.

The site is within the Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings on or immediately adjacent to the site. To the west of the site is the Wellington Pit structure which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and to the north is the former Pumping Station which is an attractive brick structure.



## Urban Blocks

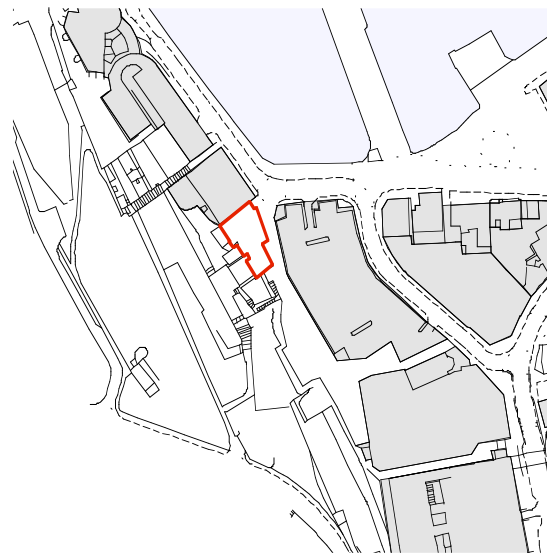
The area originally followed a medieval pattern of tight knitted irregular shaped blocks subdivided by narrow lanes. This is in contrast to the grid iron pattern for the main part of the town planned by the Lowther family. The block backs into the hillside and effectively is only accessed from the east off Bardywell Lane. Access from the west is via a series of narrow pathways and steps.



Plan of Blocks

## Building Plots

The original subdivision of the site in the early 17th Century resulted in a series of narrow plots along Bardywell Lane extending back to the hillside to the west. The buildings would have been built by different owners and the street facades would have varied to reflect the different building plot widths. This subdivision appears to have remained until the site became redundant in the 1970s.



Building Plots Plan



Stepped access up to Mount Pleasant



## Density and Mix

The site has been densely developed with continuous lines of abutting buildings built up to the street edge. Rear plots were infilled over time.

The area's proximity to the Pumping Station would suggest that the site accommodated support facilities such as offices, stores and possibly living quarters.

As the harbour activity moved elsewhere, this quarter of the town appears to have been severely neglected and lacked any investment. Its current state of disuse is inappropriate for this prominent site and has a negative impact upon the amenity of the area. Adjacent sites have suffered the same fate and this has combined to impact upon the area's lack of any sense of place. Bardywell Lane exists in name only and is in reality a walled off

no-man's land.

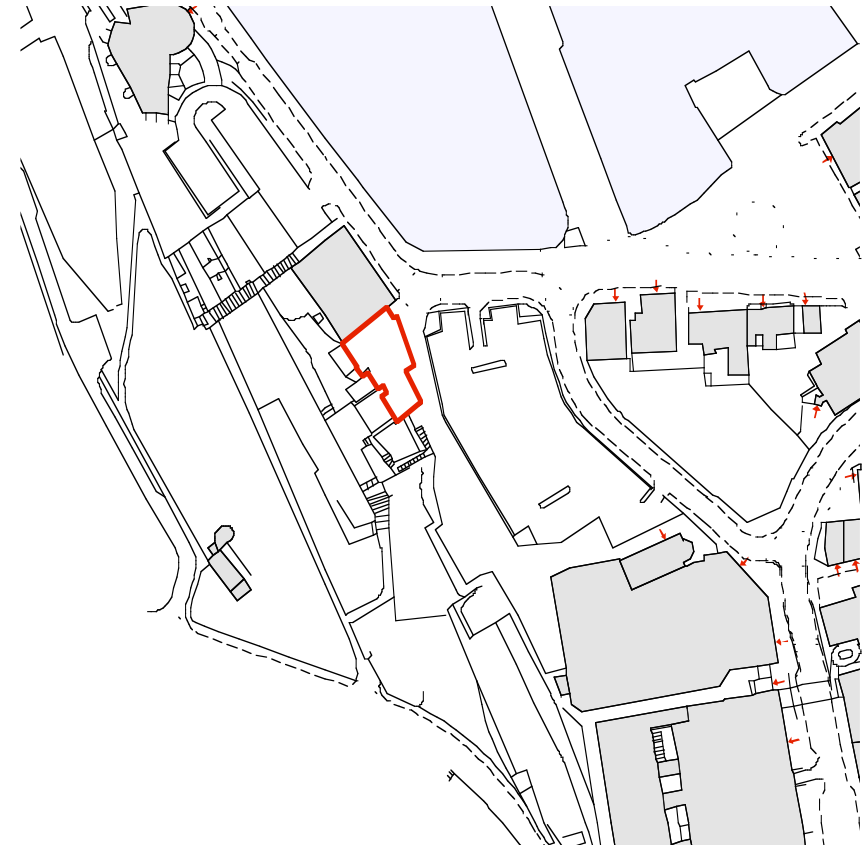
This is a high profile site with an important harbour frontage. It also has potential for links between the harbour and Mount Pleasant. At street level, new frontages on Bardywell Lane should encourage activity and animate the street scene.



Western quayside from the south



Building Usage Plan



Street Activity Plan

- Residential
- Office
- Retail
- Cafe/Restaurant/Bar
- Places of Assembly
- Leisure
- Vacant
- Light Industrial
- Public Services
- Multistorey car park
- Surface car park
- Hotel
- Education
- Transport

### Height and Massing

The town centre buildings are predominantly 3 storeys in height with vertical proportions and relatively modest massing. The area has lost most of its original buildings. Nearby structures are only two storeys in height and the overall impression is of a low, undeveloped area that has no association with the historic town centre - a paradox given that this is one of the oldest parts of the town. The hillside and the former pit structures predominate the setting and provide a robust backdrop to the

### Views and Vistas

The site is visible from the entire harbour and is at the termination of the distant views along West Strand. It is also set against the backdrop of the hillside.

The site is also overlooked from Mount Pleasant. Consequently the roofscape of any new development will need to be fully considered from this vantage point.



Aerial view from Mount Pleasant



The Harbour View



Termination of view along West Strand

### Building Type

The site was originally fully developed with individual properties that had relatively small floor plates and low storey heights reflecting their modest value. Access to the properties was directly off the street and the buildings were built up to the street line. A courtyard was formed to link the site with the adjacent Pumping Station. Larger floorplates are evident in the adjacent Pumping Station.

### Façade and Interface

The loss of the buildings on the site has removed any definition to the street. The character of the town is of continuous rows of buildings fronting the street. The reinstatement of a strong building line along Bardywell Lane would connect the site back to the harbour and reinforce this historic harbour enclave.

### Details and Materials

The town has a consistent blend of traditional materials in its buildings. This includes painted harled walls with stone dressings to openings and double pitched roofs with dark slate.

The buildings that remain on the site are of brick and may have been influenced by the Pumping Station construction.

It is perhaps inevitable that any future building on the site will utilise modern building methods and materials. This should be encouraged providing the design is of a high quality and any contemporary materials enhance the historical townscape.



### SITE RESPONSES

- Encourage high quality development on the site.
- Reflect historic building plot widths at street level to encourage a varied street scene.
- Encourage development that extends to the perimeter of the site.
- Encourage a range of uses that will provide an active street frontage.
- New buildings to be minimum 3 storeys in height.
- Heights greater than 3 storeys to be justified in urban design terms.
- Limit the overall massing of any new development. A collection of forms is preferable to a single mass.
- Façades at ground level to extend to back of footpath.
- Encourage high quality contemporary building and materials that enhance the historic town centre.
- Reinforce the greenery of the steep hillside as a clear definition between the hilltop and the lower profile of the town centre.