

Canute Road Conservation Area – Draft Appraisal

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1. Introduction

The Canute Road Conservation Area is bounded by Platform Road, the railway line, Royal Crescent and Canute Road. It was designated in January 1986 in recognition of its importance to the development of the city as a major shipping and passenger port. It has links to Town Quay, Ocean Village and the Oxford Street Conservation Area, all of which reflect the major growth of the town from around 1840 onwards.

The majority of buildings in the conservation area are listed for their architectural and historical significance. A Conservation Area Appraisal was published in 1996; since then, two buildings have been added to the statutory list and new development has taken place in the form of new student housing and flats.

This document has been produced in line with English Heritage guidance, to replace the existing appraisal and supplement the adopted planning policy. It includes a detailed character appraisal of the Conservation Area and a Management Plan which includes advice and guidance together with proposals for enhancement. Its purpose is to provide an up-to-date record of the existing buildings and features; analyse the special architectural and historic interest; identify positive and negative elements; make suggestions for beneficial change; and recommend development and conservation management proposals.

While this document provides guidelines for owners and developers the City Council must always be consulted when development proposals are being formulated. This appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive and omission of any particular feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.



Figure 1. Aerial view of Canute Road Conservation Area

2. Planning Policy Framework

The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the legal basis for controlling works within conservation areas and on listed buildings. Conservation areas are designated by local authorities to identify areas of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'

Listed buildings are buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are protected under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5, Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) is the key government guidance regarding development affecting conservation areas, historic buildings and sites of archaeological interest. Local planning authorities have to take into consideration these national policies when determining applications for development within conservation areas and on listed buildings. At the time of writing it is proposed that all existing Planning Policy Statements will be replaced by a new Planning Policy Framework, the final form of which has yet to be determined.

In addition to national policies, Southampton has several local policies relevant to the Canute Road Conservation Area.

Southampton's Core Strategy was adopted in January 2010. Policies relevant to Canute Road are:

- CS 12 Accessible and attractive waterfront
- CS 13 Fundamentals of design
- Policy CS 14 Historic environment
- Policy CS 18 Transport: Reduce – Manage - Invest

Key policies from the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (2006) were 'saved' as part of the Core Strategy.

Policy SDP1 Quality of Development states that 'Planning permission will only be granted for development which (ii) Respects and improves the quality of Southampton's built and natural environment.'

Policies relating more closely to conservation areas are HE1 and HE2. Policy HE1- New Development in Conservation Areas states 'Where development is proposed in a conservation area, adjacent to it, and affecting its setting or views into and out of the area, such development: (i) Must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, having regard to the Conservation Area Character Appraisal where available.' Policy HE2- Demolition in Conservation Areas states 'Consent will be refused for the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area unless: (i) The building does not make a positive contribution to the area's character or appearance as assessed against the area character appraisal where available.'

Policy HE3 Listed Buildings protects listed buildings from proposals that ‘adversely affect the character or setting of a listed building’ and from demolition.

Other policies of the plan will be applied as necessary, including SDP6-12 which relate to urban development, CLT1 and 7 which relate to public open spaces, and REI 4 and 8 which relate to retail shops and shop fronts.

A number of Supplementary Planning Documents provide guidance and principles for development. These include the Streetscape Manual, the City Centre Urban Design Guide, and the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011. In addition, the City Centre Characterisation Appraisal identifies key character areas within the city and is part of the base for the Local Development Framework. The City Centre Action Plan, set to be adopted Autumn 2013, will guide development to 2026.

3. Historic Development and Archaeology

The historical development of the area depended primarily on its geography. The Late Saxon settlement of *Suthamtune* was established on the higher ground in and about today’s Old Town. It succeeded the Middle-Saxon town of *Hamwic* that was located on and around the western bank of the river Itchen, and was a response to the need to provide a defence against Viking raids.

After the Norman Invasion of England the town appears to have been consolidated and expanded, with a substantial castle in the north-east (now largely demolished), and from the 14th-century onwards, protected by the Town Walls (that still largely survive). The land immediately to the east was divided into meadows, orchards and fields, the boundaries of which are largely preserved in the current road system.

Outside the town boundary to the east, protected from flooding by earthwork bulwarks along the shoreline, was the salt marsh, a stretch of common land that played an important part of the town life. Among other things, it was a place where animals grazed, clay was dug and rubbish was dumped. This led to unevenness in the ground level of the area (See Figure 2).



Figure 2. View of common and bulwarks, 1723

The natural shoreline of Southampton was a shingle bank ending in a shingle spit in the River Itchen. The shingle bank, and the later bulwarks built to protect the land from flooding, were used as a road to the Cross House ferry from the town. This is evident today as Platform, Canute, and Cross House Roads. On the seaward side of these bulwarks few structures were built prior to the development of the salt marsh in the 19th century. In 1225 a windmill was located on the shingle spit, possibly near the current location of the bank building near the entrance to Ocean Village. A windmill was in this area in the early 17th century, either on the same location or nearby. It was demolished by 1771. Note the row of trees along the bulwarks in 1771 in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Southampton in 1611 (left) and 1771 (right)

Near to the location of the windmill, between the high and low tide marks, was the location of the Admiralty gallows in the 16th- 17th centuries (see Figure 69, below). This may also be the location of Canute's Point, the spot where King Canute is supposed to have rebuked his courtiers by saying he could order back the waves. It is memorialised on a plaque on the Canute Castle Hotel and by the name Canute Road. Canute's Point was lost by the construction of the docks in the 1830s.

To the south of the bulwarks was the Platform, the location of the current Vokes Park. It was originally built in the 13th century as a quay for God's House. In the 17th century, several cannon were placed here to help protect Southampton from the threat of invasion. After the 18th century, the cannon became a saluting battery of seven guns, which were used on special occasions such as royal visits. In the 18th century, the route to Cross House was upgraded and a double line of trees was planted, making the walk along the water a very popular and pleasant one (See Figure 4). The Platform battery was replaced several times in the 19th century and remained in place even after the extension of the docks divorced the Platform from the water, but by the end of the 19th century the guns were removed.



Figure 4. The Platform 1850- shows the row of trees, gun battery and water

From 1740-1840, Southampton was a fashionable spa town, with numerous spas and bathing houses along the waterfront, although most were along the River Test. In 1827 the Royal Gloucester Subscription Baths were built by Mr D Brooks on the route of the promenade between the town and Cross House (See Figure 5). In 1839 they were converted to the Dock's Office but the building was later demolished to make way for the new Customs House, built in 1846 by Alfred Giles, (now the Union Castle House see Figure 6). This site most clearly encompasses the later history of Southampton, with uses ranging bath house to dock's office, shipping company to accommodation, it has adapted to the required use of its time.



Figure 5. Royal Gloucester Subscription Baths 1827-46 Figure 6. Customs House, later Union Castle House, built 1846

The economic prosperity of the town was driven by the development of the railway and the construction of the Eastern Docks, and these led to the increased development of the area to the east of the walls, including Canute Road. The railway from London came to Southampton in 1839, terminating firstly at Northam, and then extended (as originally planned) to Terminus Station in 1840. Terminus Terrace, the South Western House, and Terminus Station in the nearby Oxford Street Conservation Area are all intimately related to the development of the railway (See Figure 7). Several tracks ran across Canute Road to the eastern docks to serve the cargo ships and passenger liners. Of these, only one now remains in use.



Figure 7. 1846 map. Note railway, Customs House, Platform and Marsh

Canute Road was the main route to the new docks and railway station, and its importance to the commercial life of the town is reflected in the buildings (including hotels, public houses, shipping agents, banks, a Board of Trade office, post office and a Customs House) that were developed here. (See Figure 8).

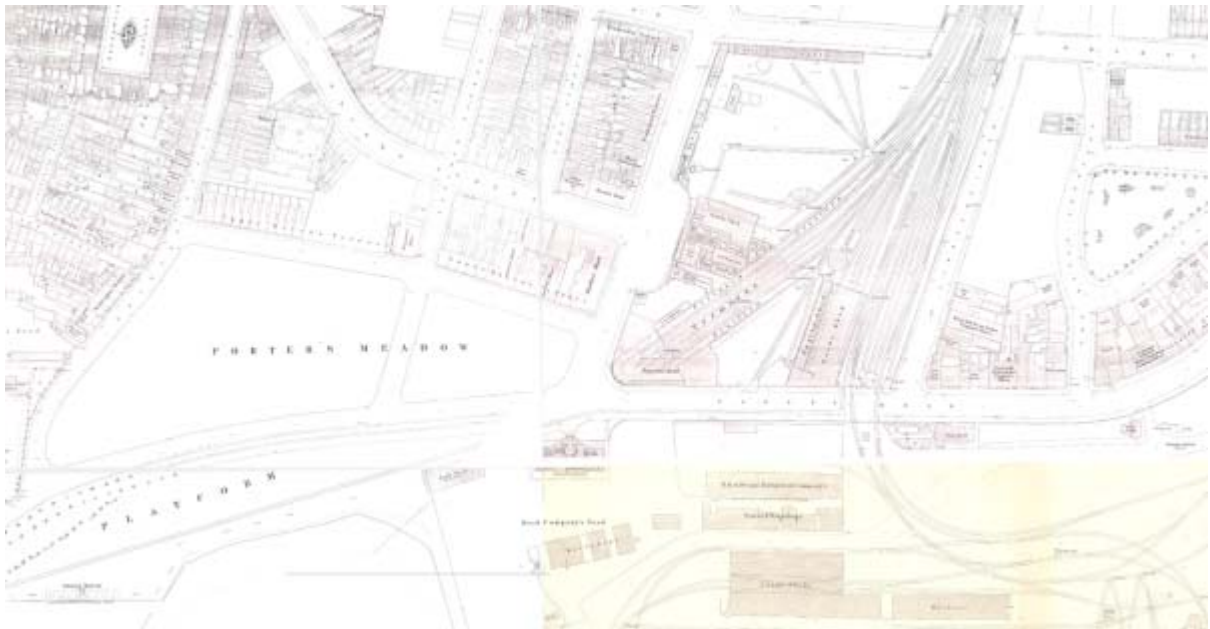


Figure 8. 1870 map. Note development on north side of Canute Road.

In the late 19th century and early 20th century, other forms of transportation such as flying boats and aeroplanes gradually replaced ocean liners for transatlantic travel and shipping. Consequently, the docks and railway became less used and eventually Terminus Station was closed in 1966. It had already been replaced in importance by the current Southampton Central Station.

Increasing containerisation of goods led to larger ships and fewer dock workers and the major shipping companies began moving out of the area. There are still a few shipping companies on the eastern arm of Canute Road, out of the Conservation Area, and Red Funnel still operates to the Isle of Wight out of Town Quay, but the other companies have long since left. Several of the buildings have been converted into flats in the past 30 years and some new developments have been built. For example, 6-9 Canute Road was

demolished and rebuilt as purpose-built flats. The former engine and carriage sheds associated with the listed goods shed have recently been built on as student housing for Southampton Solent University. In addition, the land west of Provincial House has also been developed for flats (See Figure 9). Increasingly, land is being developed for leisure and accommodation. The former Inner Dock has been filled in and developed, and the Outer Dock (now Princess Alexandra Dock) has been developed for housing, with a marina for pleasure craft, a cinema, and restaurants.

It is clear that the area is facing increasing pressure to change, and sensitive management policies are needed in order to conserve the character and make appropriate development choices. Any future development, including roadworks, should include an appropriate level of archaeological investigation.



Figure 9. Canute Road, 2005 The site of the former engine and carriage sheds are to the left, while to the right are the recent flats.

4. Visual Character

Canute Road Conservation Area is of similar size to nearby Oxford Street Conservation Area, but due to the larger size commercial properties and flats, there are fewer buildings (27). Of these, 14 are Grade II listed. The following section assesses each building's architectural and historical character in the context of the conservation area and suggests opportunities for enhancement.

4.1 Platform Road

Figure 10 shows the view into the conservation area from the west, with Vokes Park to the right, Queens Park on the left, and the Post Office and South Western House in the distance. Platform Road (centre) is the main east-west route to the docks and forms a major obstacle to pedestrians.



Figure 10. Platform Road from Orchard Place

Vokes Park (named after Alderman FM Vokes in the 1930s) lies on the location of the former artillery Platform (see above). Along the southern edge is the steel Customs Fence, through which views of the car park and the Cunard liners can be seen (See Figure 11). The fence and the car park are visually obtrusive. However, the views of the ships beyond remind the viewer of the proximity of the water and the maritime history of the area. In some areas the Customs fence is screened by shrubs. It would be beneficial to continue the plantings along the length of the fence to soften the area.



Figure 11. View to docks from Vokes Park



Figure 12. Vokes Park sign and shed

Vokes Park is a green space laid to grass with little more than a few low plantings. The kerb between the pavement and the park is rather high and in poor condition.

There is an uninviting concrete pump house in the centre of the park, clearly visible from all directions and which blocks the view along Platform Road (See Figure 9). There is also a shed along the car park fence but that is wood clad and partially hidden behind bushes. The sign for Vokes Park near the Dock Gate 5 is small, inappropriate to the conservation area and covered in lichen (See Figure 12). A clearer, more appropriate sign would be more fitting for a memorial garden. In addition, as a park, it is somewhat inaccessible by virtue of its height from the pavement and lack of benches. The only users are dog walkers as most pedestrians would use the pavement along Platform Road. However, due to its location next to a busy road and its proximity to the larger Queens Park, its use can probably be no more than a green space as a way to soften the city landscape. Perhaps an informational plaque showing the history of the Platform and the Beach would encourage visitors to the city to enjoy this small bit of land as visitors in the past have done.

Further along Platform Road is the former Post Office. It is in a prominent location, and there are no other immediately adjacent buildings. It was built in 1902 as the post office for the docks. It was closed in 1967 and was converted into a telephone exchange. In 1998/99 it was converted into flats. It still retains its “Wrenaissance” style appearance with red brick, stone dressings and prominent pediments and columns on three projections. The windows remain as timber sliding sash, and several of them have rounded tops. The ground floor and car park are obscured by the hedge-lined Customs fence. As a prominent building, it is important for it to maintain its architectural features and setting. Although it would be ideal to see the ground floor more clearly, the bushes make a better setting than a steel security fence and cars.



Figure 13. Post Office Building, 2011



Figure 14. Post Office and Customs House, 1905

Next to the Post Office is Dock Gate 4, which leads to the National Oceanography Centre, the Cunard cruise passenger terminal, and the car and grain terminals. The dock gate consists of a security gatehouse and the Customs fences that mark the boundary of the docks (See Figure 15). Along Platform Road there is a small triangular island with steel directional signs on it. The only official welcome to the city is a small sign that states 'Welcome to Southampton, Drive on the Left' in several languages. In order to make cruise passengers feel more welcome, a more appropriate sign should be in place (Figure 16), although it will need to be sensitively located.



Figure 15. Dock Gate 4, view to south traffic



Figure 16. Dock Gate 4, welcome sign and traffic

Portcullis House is a large, concrete, four-storey office block built in the 1970s, replacing the former Customs House (see Figure 14). It is currently vacant and has a large 'To Let' notice on the front elevation. Its location, proximity to the Customs Fence, and issues with access and parking probably preclude refurbishment for residential use, and redevelopment as offices would appear to be a distant option. In front of Portcullis House are a few flowering bushes and a brick structure (See Figure 17).



Figure 17. Portcullis House

4.2 Canute Road (south side)

Union Castle House was built in 1846 as the new Customs House for the docks. It was built by Alfred Giles, the Engineer to the Docks. It replaced the previous Dock's Offices which were adapted in 1839 from the Royal Gloucester Subscription Baths, which were built in 1827 (See Figure 5). It was the Customs House until 1902, when a new Customs House was built on the site of Portcullis House. The Union Castle Steamship Line moved its offices into the building at this time. The original yellow brick building dates from 1846, with brick quoins and simple decorative features (See Figures 18 and 19). A Portland stone ground floor extension to the north was built between 1910 and 1933. It is more ornate, with an arched doorway, columns and decorative urns above the windows. The cupola on the roof also dates from this time. In 2000, the building was converted into residential flats. The building is prominent, facing directly on to Terminus Terrace, and requires sensitive management in order to maintain its landmark status.



Figure 18. Union Castle House, 2011



Figure 19. Union Castle House, 1953

To the east of Union Castle House is Pilgrim House, now a Chinese restaurant. Built between 1883 and 1896 as the Mercantile Marine Office, it later became the Offices of the Department of Trade and Industry (See Figure 20). They occupied the building until 1974, after which it was let to private commercial tenants. Many original features survived although the interior has changed much and many changes were made in the 20th century. It is similar architecturally to the Union Castle House with yellow brick quoins on the corners and around the doors, timber sliding sash windows and lack of ornament. An iron railing is in front of the building, although parts are missing and the pavement underneath is in need of repair. Externally the building has not changed much since first constructed, and unsympathetic alterations will be resisted.



Figure 20. Pilgrim House

Between Pilgrim House and the remaining dock railway line is the Wilts and Dorset Bank building, built in 1907. They were taken over by Lloyds Bank in 1915. In 1957, it became the Western Union Office. From the front it is a highly ornamental building with Ionic columns, a parapet on the roof and 'Wilts & Dorset Bank Est 1835' on the frieze (See Figure 21). This date refers to the establishment of the bank, and not the construction of the building, and led to an incorrect date on the Statutory List. The classical front obscures the irregular footprint, which is governed by the railway tracks to the east.



Figure 21. Wilts and Dorset Bank

The railway crossing is marked by two brick and stone piers and a blue and white gate on the south side of Canute Road (See Figure 22). The north side has a rusty iron gate and piers that match the fence around the South Western House (See Figure 23). The iron gate would be more in keeping with the character of the conservation area and it would be beneficial to have matching gates kept in good condition.



Figure 22. Railway gates and piers to south



Figure 23. Railway and gates to north

On the other side of the railway line is a seven to nine- storey block of flats known as Charter House (See Figure 24). The corner of Neptune Way and Canute Road has a round eight- storey tower with a balcony on the ninth floor. Its height and the use of modern materials means that it stands out in an area where the average building height is four-five storeys. The two-toned brick reflect the red and yellow brick buildings surrounding it, and there is a yellow brick and blue railed boundary fence at ground floor level. The building is tall in relation to the buildings to the west, but it is smaller than South Western House and other new developments built in the past 15 years. From the east, the building line gradually rises from the two-storey Ferry House to the 4.5 storey Provincial House.



Figure 24. Charter House

Provincial House was built in 1927-9 for the National Provincial Bank by F.C.R. Palmer. It was also known as the National Westminster Bank Chambers. It is red brick with Portland stone dressings, round windows and large arched windows and doorways on the ground floor (See Figure 25). It has a high chimney and a tiled hipped roof with a dormer window in it. The gate piers to the west are contemporary with those next to the Wilts and Dorset Bank building and mark a separate railway crossing (See Figure 26). The track is no longer there, but the piers remain and are listed along with Provincial House.



Figure 25. Provincial House and gate piers, 2011



Figure 26. Canute Road 1899-1927. Railway piers in foreground

Set back behind Provincial and Wight House is Neptune House. It is dominated by a round-topped tower in the Canute Road frontage (See Figure 27). The building is six-storeys high, and it is close to the height of Provincial House although it is higher than Wight House and forms a backdrop to the smaller building. Along Neptune Way, it is unremarkable with a stone clad ground floor and yellow brick upper storeys with five balconies set at an angle. As the building lies only partially within the conservation area, it does reflect the character in terms of material and size, but otherwise it does not have any architectural merit.



Figure 27. Neptune House



Figure 28. Wight House

Wight House, to the east of Neptune House, is an interesting building that retains evidence of its multiple of uses in its facade (See Figure 28). The words 'Towing Office' and 'Capital and Counties Bank' can still be made out above the ground floor windows. It was built in 1896 for the Capital and Counties Bank, but it also had R&JH Rea Ltd and Red Funnel, (both shipping companies) as tenants. In 1920, Capital and Counties was taken over by Lloyds. After WWII, Red Funnel moved out and R&JH Rea left in 1968. Matthews Brothers was a tenant from 1971 until 1979 when the Solent Port Services moved in, and it is currently converted into accommodation. It is in fairly good condition, however the signs

above the windows are stained from water dripping from the windows above, so much that the 'Capital and Counties Bank' is very difficult to read and is damaged in some places. The building has retained its timber sliding sash arched windows which contributes to the architectural character of the conservation area. It was added to the statutory list in 1999, along with Provincial House.

The Dart House, or Maritime Chambers as it is sometimes known, is a wide three storey yellow brick building with a pediment over the centre that has the initials LSWR (London and South Western Railway) (See Figure 29). It was built in 1899 and until WWI the North German Lloyd Line Norddeutscher was a tenant. They were forced to leave at the outbreak of the war. It was used as an embarkation office during WWI and afterwards was used for the shipping companies Cunard (later Cunard White Star) and Dart Container Line. The building still has its timber doors and sliding sash windows. The railing in the front is not original but it is a simple style that does not detract from the character of the building.



Figure 29. Dart House

Adjacent to Dart House is Canute Chambers, which differs greatly architecturally. It was built in 1893 out of red brick for the American Line. The large Dutch gable and bay window on the front are unique to the conservation area and make Canute Chambers stand out from its neighbours (See Figure 30). Similar to Dart House, it was used by a number of shipping companies, most famously the White Star Line (from 1907 to 1931). This was the line that owned the Titanic. When she sank in 1912, the families of the crew gathered outside to hear the fate of their relatives. Outside Canute Chambers there is a plaque identifying the building as the offices of the White Star Shipping Company (See Figure 31). It is still an office building with several different tenants.



Figure 30. Canute Chambers



Figure 31. Titanic plaque, Canute Chambers

The final building on this side of Canute Road is Ferry House, now The Admiral Sir Lucius Curtis, a Wetherspoons pub (See Figure 32). It is yellow brick with simple brick quoins and windows much like Dart House, Pilgrim House and the original building of Union Castle House. These examples of Victorian functional design give a sense of uniformity to and help define the historic character of the area. Ferry House was built in 1872 as Dock House, the headquarters of the Southampton Dock Company. It was later used as the Southern Railway Docks Office and in 1962 Thoreson Ferries moved in, giving it the name Ferry House. It became the Cork and Bottle Public House in 1989.



Figure 32. Ferry House, 2011



Figure 33. Entrance to Ocean Village, 2011

The main entrance to Ocean Village lies to the east of Ferry House. The intersection is regulated by a traffic light making pedestrian crossing relatively easy (See Figure 33). From the mid-19th century until the 1980s there was a police lodge in the location, which was removed when the road was widened.

The Bank Building, built in 1896 as the Grant & Maddisons Union Bank was adjacent to the Police Lodge, and now forms the corner building to the entrance to Ocean Village. It is red brick with Portland Stone dressings and an interesting arched pediment above the entrance (See Figure 34). A large 'Ocean Village' sign on the east elevation marks the entrance to visitors. The doorway has Ionic columns supporting a triangular pediment which makes a very grand entrance for the bank, similar to Provincial House and the Wilts and Dorset Bank buildings. Canute Road's architecture is mainly dictated by the purpose for which it was built.

The shipping and docks offices are generally in simple yellow brick buildings with little ornamentation while the banks use different materials and architectural elements to make them special.



Figure 34. Bank Building

4.3 Canute Road (north side)

The northern side of Canute Road consists mainly of a terrace of shops and hotels and recently built student housing. 1-13 Canute Road predates the southern side of Canute Road by about 30 years. The Police Lodge and Dock House (both now demolished) were the only buildings on the south side apart from the Customs House until the 1870s. The engraving below shows what Canute Road would have looked like for passengers emerging from the docks in the mid 19th century (See Figure 35).



Figure 35. Canute Road and Docks, 1865

The most prominent building on the northern side is the Canute Castle Hotel, (13 Canute Road), on the corner of Canute Road and Royal Crescent (See Figures 36 and 37). It was

built around 1850 as the Canute Hotel. It originally had an octagonal viewing chamber on the corner. Of white stucco with a rusticated ground floor, it has pilasters supporting a frieze with the name 'Canute Castle Hotel' on both the south and east elevations. In addition, between the first and second storeys on the Canute Road side there is a plaque stating 'Near this spot AD 1028 Canute reproved his courtiers'. It is currently a mix of commercial and residential uses although it still has the architectural features that make it look like a grand Victorian hotel.



Figure 36. Canute Castle Hotel, 2011

Figure 37. Nos1-13 Canute Road, 1920

Next to the Canute Castle Hotel, and probably built at the same time, are Nos10-12 Canute Road (See Figure 38). Originally built as offices, each had a wide variety of tenants over the three floors, including a moneychanger, tobacconist, tailors, hairdressers, cafe, and news agents. Currently No10 is a takeaway, No12 is an off license and the upper storeys are used as a Portuguese restaurant. Both have had shop fronts inserted. The first floor has two sets of three arched sash windows, and the second storey has three casement windows with an arched window above the centre window.



Figure 38. Nos 10-12 Canute Road

Originally built in 1851 as of the Officer's Home of the Royal Mail Team, No6 was also Miller's Clothier's and outfitters and No9 was the shop of JR Stebbing, an optician who also sold mathematical instruments and had built an observatory in the rear. They were

redeveloped in 2005 / 06 by Orchard Homes. The current building is four storeys with a basement, rising to five storeys at the rear of the site (See Figure 39). They respect the building line of the rest of the street but do not add any particular architectural character to the area (See Figure 40).



Figure 39. Nos 6-9 Canute Road, 2011 **Figure 40. Nos 6-9 Canute Road, 1851**

No5 Canute Road was built in 1852 as the Ship Hotel (See Figure 41). It still retains its pub advertisements on the front elevation stating ‘London & Dublin’ and ‘Stout House’. In 1933 it was known as the ‘Refreshment Rooms’ and later as ‘Canute Cafe’. It is currently an Oriental buffet restaurant. It is remarkable that this building has retained its eatery use for over 150 years while the rest of the street has changed tenants and uses many times over the same period.



Figure 41. No5 Canute Road **Figure 42. No4 Canute Road**

No4 Canute Road was built at the same time as No5. They share the same dentil moulding at the top of the building and have identical windows, although No4 has been painted and has a parapet and different shop front than No5 (See Figure 42). Currently it is a Chinese restaurant and shares a shop front with No3. These shop fronts were added onto the buildings much later.

Nos2 and 3 were built together and share upper floors although their ground floors differ (See Figure 43). It originally housed a chemist, although by 1912 Nos2, 3, 4 and 6 all were the shop of Miller & Sons clothiers. The building is four storeys with a cornice between the second and third floors. It may have been built concurrently with No1 Canute Road, but it was probably later, as the first business directory entry is for 1852 whereas No1 is in 1850. The two buildings do line up at the roofline and at other points.



Figure 43. Nos 2-3 Canute Road



Figure 44. No 1 Canute Road

No1 differs greatly from Nos2 and 3. It is a corner property, and it addresses the corner to St Lawrence Road. The ground floor is rusticated with arched doorways and windows (See Figure 44). The first floor has a window on the corner with a pediment and pilasters separating three windows. The three upper storeys are brick with cement ornamentation including prominent pilasters. Similar to Nos2 and 3, a cornice separates the second and third floors. No1 was built as the New York Hotel which it remained until 1874 when it became the London and Southwest Steam Packet Offices. In 1897 it changed to the Southwest Chambers. It currently is offices for a variety of businesses.

Many of the buildings on the north side of Canute Road had different tenants for each floor, and the upper floors tended to be offices for shipping agents for various companies. For example, 10-12 Canute Road had Dunlop and Shoales, agents for Vanderbilt's European Steam Packet Company in its upper floors until 1920. Nos2 and 3 were the offices of JR Croskey & Co, who was the agent to several shipping companies and was involved in Southampton politics in the 19th century. Nos 3 and 4 were the home of the US Line from 1923 to 1931 when they moved to Canute Chambers across the street. The street is now dominated by restaurants and estate agents.

Stretching from Canute Road to Bridge Street and from the train tracks to Royal Crescent are a number of student housing blocks for the Southampton Solent University. They range from four to eight storeys with three different colour bricks forming interesting patterns on some elevations. They are contemporary in style but use the brick to good effect to reflect the materials of the historic buildings in the conservation area (See Figure 45).



Figure 45. Student Housing from east

4.4 Royal Crescent Road

The new buildings almost completely surround the listed railway goods shed on Royal Crescent Road. It is currently a car park for the student housing and is separated from the public by a brick wall with railing above. It was built in the late 19th Century in a Gothic style, possibly by Sir William Tite (See Figures 46 and 47) when the expansion of the railway resulted in the demolition of the original goods shed.



Figure 46. Student Housing and Railway Goods Shed Figure 47. Former Railway Goods Shed

The only other building in the conservation area is a two storey angled building housing 'Olly's Play and Party Shack'. It is not an architecturally interesting building and unfortunately due to the prevalence of security shutters on the ground floor windows and door, it does not seem very playful (See Figure 48). The entrance to the car park is along the same wall as for the goods shed and is a high imposing brick wall. Although this building is not as old as the surrounding buildings, its location within a conservation area should bring some restrictions pertaining to appropriate security shutters. When they are shut, it forms a very formidable and imposing frontage to all visitors using Royal Crescent to go from the Itchen Bridge to Ocean Village. There is an important development opportunity for this site as a welcoming entrance to the conservation area and the entertainment area beyond.



Figure 48. Olly's Play and Party Shack

4.5 Conclusion

Most of the buildings in Canute Road Conservation Area contribute positively to its character and appearance. The housing blocks built since the designation of the conservation area respect the location of the conservation area and are more sensitive than those from the 1970s. Most of the buildings have a connection with the docks or railway. There are few development opportunities. Any future development should reflect the character, scale and height of the historic buildings.

5. Streetscape

Southampton has recently undergone an analysis of the streetscapes around the city and have highlighted five key themes that need addressing. These are urban design, highway design, street lighting, enforcement, and cleaning. The council aim to provide residents and visitors with 'clean, safe, accessible, well designed and attractive streets and public places, to the high quality expected of a successful city of international standing.'

5.1 Paving and street furniture

Canute Road is not considered a primary public space, but it does sit between the QE2 Mile and Ocean Village and along Queens Park, all of which are considered primary public spaces. Canute Road has had new paving laid between Union Castle House to Ferry House (See Figure 49). Platform Road, Royal Crescent and Ocean Way have inconsistent paving that should be replaced as opportunities arise.



Figure 49. New paving, Canute Road Platform Road



Figure 50. Poor asphalt paving and kerb,

In addition, Platform Road has poor quality retaining walls along Vokes Park (See Figure 50).

Street furniture consists of light columns, bus shelters, litter bins and parking ticket machines. There are three new black bus shelters within the conservation area (See Figure 51). There are only two litter bins (adjacent to the bus shelters), which could exacerbate the problem of street littering. Along some of the buildings on the south side of Canute Road, there are boundary railings with historic paving behind. These have become litter traps and diminish the character of the area (See Figure 52).



Figure 51. Bus stop and litter bin, Canute Road **Figure 52. Historic tiles and litter**

There are parking ticket machines for on-street parking located outside of 3 Canute Road and along Vokes Park on Platform Road. These are also black and consistent with the street design.

The light columns are consistent, black and modern. Street lights are located on the south side of Canute Road, and these are out of scale with the buildings (See Figure 53). Wall mounted lights would be more appropriate.



Figure 53. Light pole, Canute Road

Figure 54. Light pole, Town Quay

The City Centre Urban Design Guide suggests that ‘a palette of pavings and furnishings should be adopted for the entire waterfront area that evoke a maritime character...’ This would unify the link between Town Quay, Canute Road and Ocean Village.

5.2 Accessibility

In terms of accessibility, Platform Road and Canute Road are not very pedestrian friendly, and there are several key areas that should be addressed. The intersection between Terminus Terrace, Canute Road and Platform Road is particularly difficult. It is very busy at

all times of the day, and more so when cruise passengers are embarking or disembarking through Dock Gate 4.

Subject to contract, the City Council has recently secured Regional Growth Fund monies to deliver road improvements to Platform Road. This will provide a widened two way route along Platform Road into Canute Road and Terminus Terrace. The gyratory around Queen's Park will be removed and Queen's Terrace will become a local access route. This will allow much better pedestrian connections into Queen's park from the Oxford Street area to the north. The scheme will also incorporate improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at key junctions and will use materials consistent with the Streetscape manual. The scheme will encroach into Vokes Park, which will need to be reconfigured. Other improvements to Queen's Park will lead to a qualitative improvement to public open space.



Figure 55. Intersection of Terminus Terrace and Canute Road

A pedestrian crossing is provided at Dock Gate 4, which allows people to cross to the centre of Queens Park, but there are no crossings at the east and west ends of the park. The bollards at Dock Gate 4 should be painted black (See Figure 56). The Platform Road Improvement Scheme works will improve pedestrian accessibility into the east and west ends of Queen's Park.



Figure 56. Dock Gate 4 bollards and crossing



Figure 57. Pavement at railway crossing, Canute Road

The Council should work with Network Rail to see if improvements can be made to the railway crossing, especially in relation to insertion of tactile paving at the junction with the rail lines (See Figure 57).



Figure 58. Vokes Park to west

6. Key Views and Vistas

The conservation area's relatively straight wide roads allows for several views in and out of the area. The low plantings of Vokes Park allow for views across the docks to the ships docked there. The views and important entry points to the conservation area are identified on the text and map below.

Views into the area include:

- East along Platform Road from Gods House Tower and Town Quay to South Western House

- South along Terminus Terrace to Union Castle House
- South from Central Bridge down railway line and down Royal Crescent Road
- Southwest from Itchen Bridge down Saltmarsh Road to former Goods shed
- From Dock Gate 4 to east down Canute Road and to west towards Vokes Park
- North from Canute Road along railway line and Central Bridge
- East and west along Canute Road from entry points (See Figures 60 and 61)

Views out of the area include:

- From Dock Gate 4 to west towards Gods House Tower
- Vokes Park and Platform Road to docks
- Platform Road Dock Gate 4 north through Queen's Park and south to docks
- Canute Road east to Itchen Bridge
- Canute Road south to Ocean Village

Important transport entry points include:

- Platform Road and Orchard Place
- Dock Gate 4, Platform Road
- Platform Road, Canute Road, Terminus Terrace
- Canute Road, Ocean Way, Royal Crescent Road
- Royal Crescent Road and Saltmarsh Road

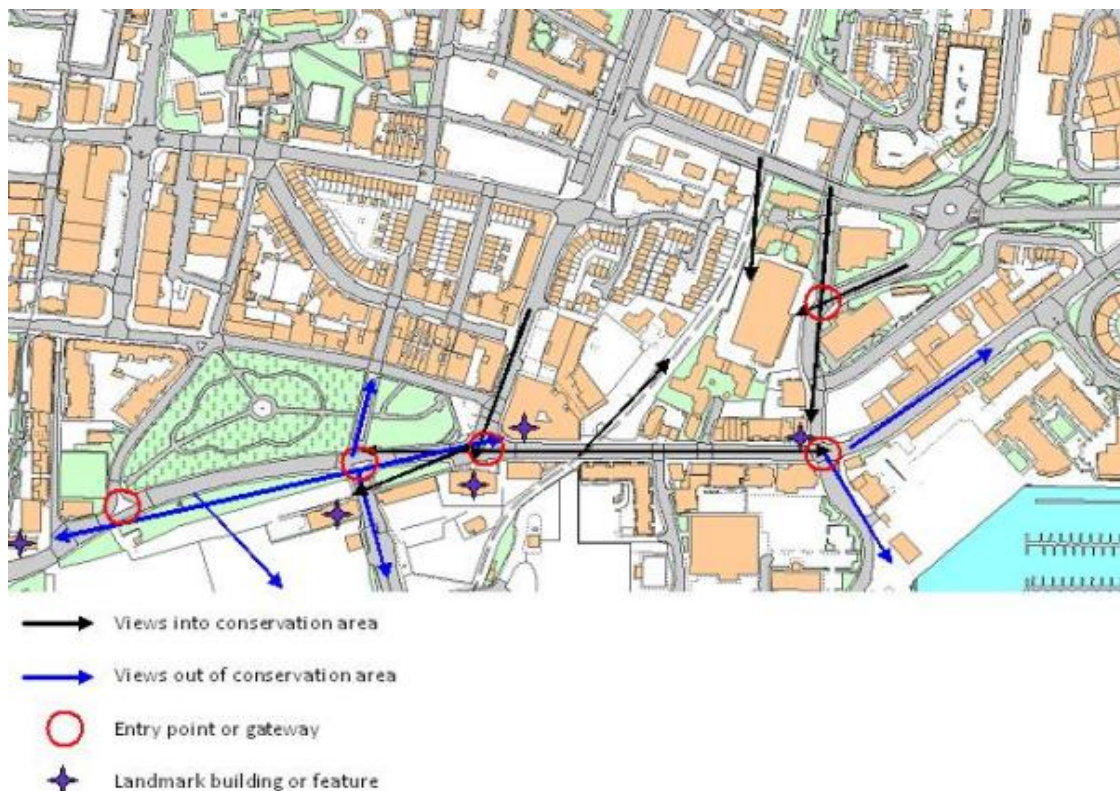


Figure 59. Important Views © Crown copyright and database right 2011. Ordnance Survey 100019679



Figure 60. View from Terminus Terrace to east



Figure 61. View from Ocean Way to west

7. Issues within the Conservation Area and Capacity for Change

7.1 Issues

There are a number of threats to the character of the Canute Road Conservation Area. These include:

Traffic- the volume of traffic is high, particularly when a cruise liner is docked. The speed of traffic around Queen's Park is also of concern.

Vacant sites- Portcullis House is an unsightly and large site

Paving- along Platform Road and Royal Crescent, the paving is either mismatched blocks or patchy asphalt, creating an uncared- for appearance

Poor quality shop fronts and adverts- restaurants along Canute Road, security shutters on Royal Crescent Road (See Figure 62) and bill-boards next to the railway line are inappropriate to the conservation area (See Figure 63)



Figure 62. Security shutters, Royal Crescent Road Canute Road



Figure 63. Advertisements,

7.2 Capacity for Change

An overview of the area's capacity for change was included within the City Characterisation Project (2009) (See Figure 64).

Elements within and around Canute Road which are considered to be highly sensitive to change and therefore require careful management include:

Architectural qualities, heritage assets, grain, scale, and connectivity

The Local Authority should take these elements into account when deciding on planning applications for development and when making streetscape improvements.

Character Area	Grain	Scale	Uses	Public Realm	Connectivity	Views	Building types	Architectural qualities	Heritage Assets	Materials	Condition
18 Queen's Park	▲	▲	▼	▲	▲	▼	▼	▲	◆	▲	F
22 Royal Crescent Rd. Environs	▼	▼	▲	●	▼	▼	◆	◆	◆	▼	G
23 Canute Road	▲	▲	▼	▼	▲	▼	▲	▲	▲	◆	G

Figure 64. Sensitivity to change, extract from City Characterisation Project (2009)

8. Conservation Management

This section sets out reasons why individual elements are considered important and presents guidelines in respect of each of them.

8.1 Buildings

8.1.1 Wall finishes

In most cases buildings have not been painted and this does not require consent on unlisted buildings unless the building is under an Article 4 Direction, which is inappropriate in this Conservation Area.

Guidelines

The City Council will encourage the retention and conservation of existing and original external wall finishes as appropriate and it will actively discourage the introduction of materials such as imitation stone cladding and textured rendered finishes which are inappropriate to the character of the area. The City Council will discourage the painting of surfaces such as brickwork, where this was not originally intended.

Overpainting of existing historic signs should be avoided

Render should be maintained and painted (where appropriate)

8.1.2 Doors

All of the listed buildings on the south side of Canute Road and the Post Office Building on Platform Road retain their historic doors and doorcases. These will be retained, or replaced like-for-like if beyond repair. The doors on the north side of Canute Road for the most part are timber and glass appropriate for their use as shops. Retention of these doors will be encouraged.

Guidelines

The City Council will encourage the retention/ reinstatement of original or sympathetic external front doors and will refuse applications where proposals include doors of inappropriate size, design or material.

The City Council will refuse applications that include the use of uPVC, aluminium, or other inappropriate materials or finishes.



8.1.3 Windows

Window styles differ with the age and style of the building, but generally the Victorian office buildings such as Dart House and Ferry House have simple two-paned timber sash windows. The more elegant examples of the banks and shipping offices have a variety of windows ranging from single pane timber sash windows to 8 over 8 timber sash windows.

With one single exception, all of the historic buildings have retained their original windows. That one exception is the Wilts and Dorset bank which has uPVC casement windows.

Guidelines

The City Council will encourage the retention of existing traditional window types, details and materials.

The City Council will encourage the repair of existing windows wherever possible, and where this is not possible their replacement by matching windows

The City Council will refuse applications where the use of uPVC, aluminium and other inappropriate materials or finishes is proposed.



8.1.4 Roofs

Many of the buildings have flat roofs with parapets, but where the roofs are pitched, they are either slate or tile. Roof details such as ridge tiles, cupolas or finials are also important and should be retained wherever possible or salvaged and reused where the roof has to be replaced.

Guidelines

The City Council will encourage the retention and use of traditional roofing materials (such as slate) and discourage the use of unsympathetic modern roofing materials such as interlocking concrete tiles.

Roof details such as ridge tiles and slates should be retained whenever possible.

The City Council will encourage the retention of chimney stacks and pots.

8.1.5 Detail and ornament

It is the architectural details present in many of these buildings that made them special enough for listing and inclusion within the conservation area. It is imperative that any changes made to these buildings take their special architectural character into account and not to alter them unsympathetically. Each building has special features that make it unique to its neighbours and contribute to the character of the conservation area. Several have interesting pediments with more structural purposes. Ferry House has historic lanterns outside its main entrance. Provincial House has stone mouldings integrated into the stonework. Wight house and Union Castle House have cupolas on their roofs. All of these features should be retained and kept in good condition.

Guidelines

The City Council will encourage the retention and reinstatement of original detail.

The removal of any original feature or interesting original details will be discouraged.



8.1.6 Building names

Several buildings are identified by carved, painted or applied letters and these should be retained and repaired where necessary to maintain the architectural integrity of the building and the character of the area.



Signs in need of cleaning and repair: Wight House and Wilts and Dorset Bank



8.2 Boundary railings and paving

Although none of the buildings in the conservation area have front gardens, some have railings that separate the public realm from the private. Within the private property, some buildings have historic pavement that is in varying condition. Retention and repair of historic railings will be encouraged to maintain the character of the area and to separate the public and private realms. Where paving is damaged, it should be repaired with similar materials.

Guidelines

The City Council will discourage the removal/ demolition/ or unsympathetic alteration of existing railings which are of architectural or townscape value

The City Council will encourage the retention of existing railings and their restoration where appropriate.

The City Council will encourage the retention of existing forecourts and the retention of original or other suitable materials



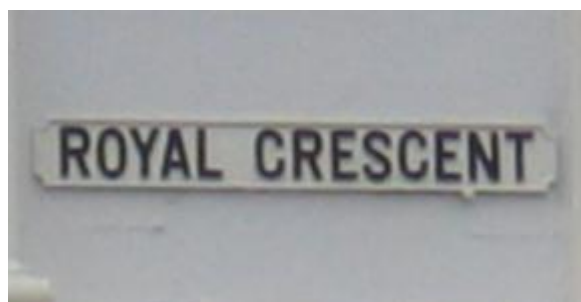
8.3 Street Furniture

Street furniture can add or detract from the visual character of the area. Some signs appear on buildings that identify historic events and places. Canute Castle Hotel has two street signs, a plaque commemorating King Canute and the name of the hotel. The Wilts and Dorset Bank (see 8.1.6) states the name of the company and when it was founded (although not the date it was built). Canute Chambers has a date stone on its Dutch gable for when it was built. These details are important to the history of the area and help in identifying the building. The removal of historic street signs will be resisted.

Guidelines

The City Council will encourage the retention of historic street furniture where this survives.

The City Council will encourage the removal of unsightly and unnecessary street furniture where possible.



8.4 Green Space

Very few buildings have trees or bushes around them; these are limited to Platform Road and the student housing. The major area of green space in the conservation area is Vokes Park and the views of Queen's Park nearby. The retention of Vokes Park will soften the harshness of the docks and retain the appeal of the historic Platform and beach.

Guidelines

The City Council will discourage the loss of existing areas of green space.

The City Council will encourage new and replacement planting of appropriate species to help maintain and enhance the character of the area.

9. Boundary Changes

To the west and northwest of Canute Road Conservation Area are the conservation areas of Old Town and Oxford Street respectively. To the south are the docks, much of it in private ownership and with very few historic buildings. Ocean Village consists mainly of new development around the old eastern docks and these buildings are not historically or architecturally significant enough to warrant inclusion in the conservation area. Expansion in these directions is not viable.

To the east of Canute Road Conservation Area is an area bounded by the Itchen Bridge to the north and Canute Road to the south. There are several shipping agents and warehouses located here. Two listed former public houses are located at the end of Albert Road South and these are interesting architecturally, although both have been converted to flats (See Figures 65 and 66). There are also several housing developments from the mid to late 20th century. There are many opportunities for development in this area, and inclusion in the Canute Road Conservation Area might help to guide the development so it is more appropriate.



Figure 65. Marsh Hotel and E Canute Road shipping agents



Figure 66. Royal Albert PH and shipping agents

The shipping companies could be included for their connection with the shipping agents from the more historic Canute Road, although their buildings are modern and do not contribute to the character of the area. The aviation museum is modern and although there are historic connections to the aviation industry in Southampton, it does not contribute to the character of the area (See Figure 68).



Figure 67. Flats Albert Road South



Figure 68. Aviation Museum

Reducing the extent of the conservation area to remove the new student housing around the former goods shed has been considered. However, the importance of the railway and its connection to the docks gives good reason for its retention. The student housing, although modern and with some design flaws, is not wholly inappropriate and does contribute to the area through the maintenance of the buildings and inclusion of green space.

10. Heritage Assets

Canute Road Conservation Area consists of around 27 buildings, half of which are important listed buildings from the mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries. It also is next to Oxford Street Conservation Area and Old Town Conservation Area, and several of the listed buildings from those areas can be seen from Canute Road Conservation Area. In addition, the gate piers to the railway on the south side of Canute Road are locally listed.

Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area	Listed Grade	Date
1 Canute Road	II	1850
2 & 3 Canute Road	II	1852
13 Canute Road	II	ca. 1850
Goods shed to former Terminus Station	II	ca. 1890
Ferry House	II	1872

Canute Chambers	II	1893
Dart House/ Maritime Chambers	II	1899
Wight House	II	1896
Provincial House and gatepiers to NE	II	1927-9
Wilts and Dorset Bank	II	1907
Pilgrim House	II	1883
Union Castle House	II	1846
Post Office Building (Admiralty House)	II	1902

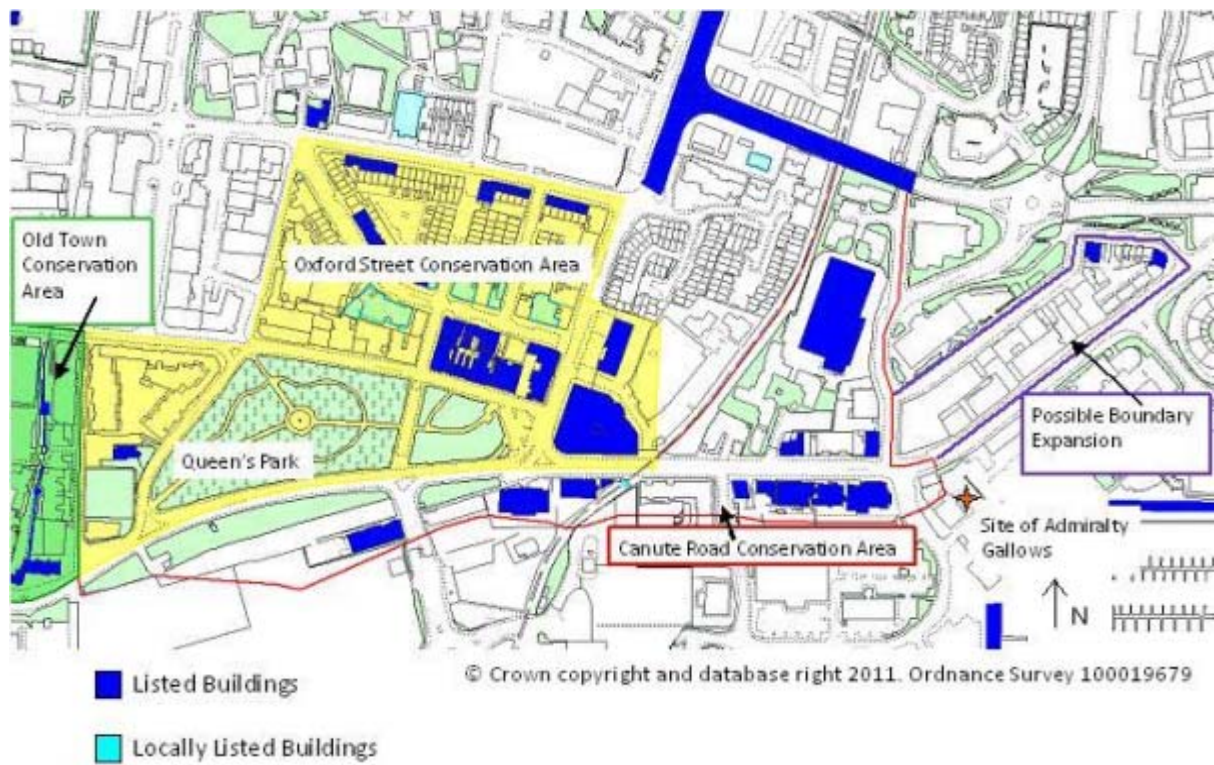


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11. Sources of Information

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For more information please contact:

Kevin White
Historic Environment Team Leader
02380833192
kevin.white@southampton.gov.uk

Date of Issue: 5 Sept 2011

Status: Draft

Author: Kate Clifford, Historic Building Consultant

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