

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



Priddy's Hard Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

February 2024

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This Appraisal and Management Plan for Priddy's Hard Conservation Area supports the duty of Gosport Borough Council to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in the exercise of their planning functions. Conservation areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. In planning policy, conservation areas are 'designated heritage assets' meaning that applications for changes or developments within the area must consider the effect that the development might have on the significance of the conservation area.

For details of the methodology employed in assessing the conservation area and preparing the appraisal, see Part 5, Section 29 of this document (p.103).

Document Structure

This Conservation Area Appraisal is divided into four sections:

- **Part 1 Overview of the conservation area (p.6).** The Overview contains a summary of the conservation area's special interest, its condition, issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities for enhancement, and management recommendations for the long-term preservation and enhancement of the its character and appearance.
- **Part 2: Context and Methodology (p.13).** This section provides information about the context and purpose of this Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan.
- **Part 3: Character Appraisal (p.24).** This section provides an assessment of the special architectural and historic interest of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area, and the contribution made by individual elements.
- **Part 4: Management Plan (p.78).** This section provides principles and recommendations to manage change across the conservation area whilst preserving its character and appearance.
- **Part 5: Supporting Information (p.97).** The last section contains: a gazetteer of heritage assets in the conservation area; a list of useful sources; the methodology used to carry out this Appraisal; and a glossary of architectural and historic terms used throughout the Appraisal.

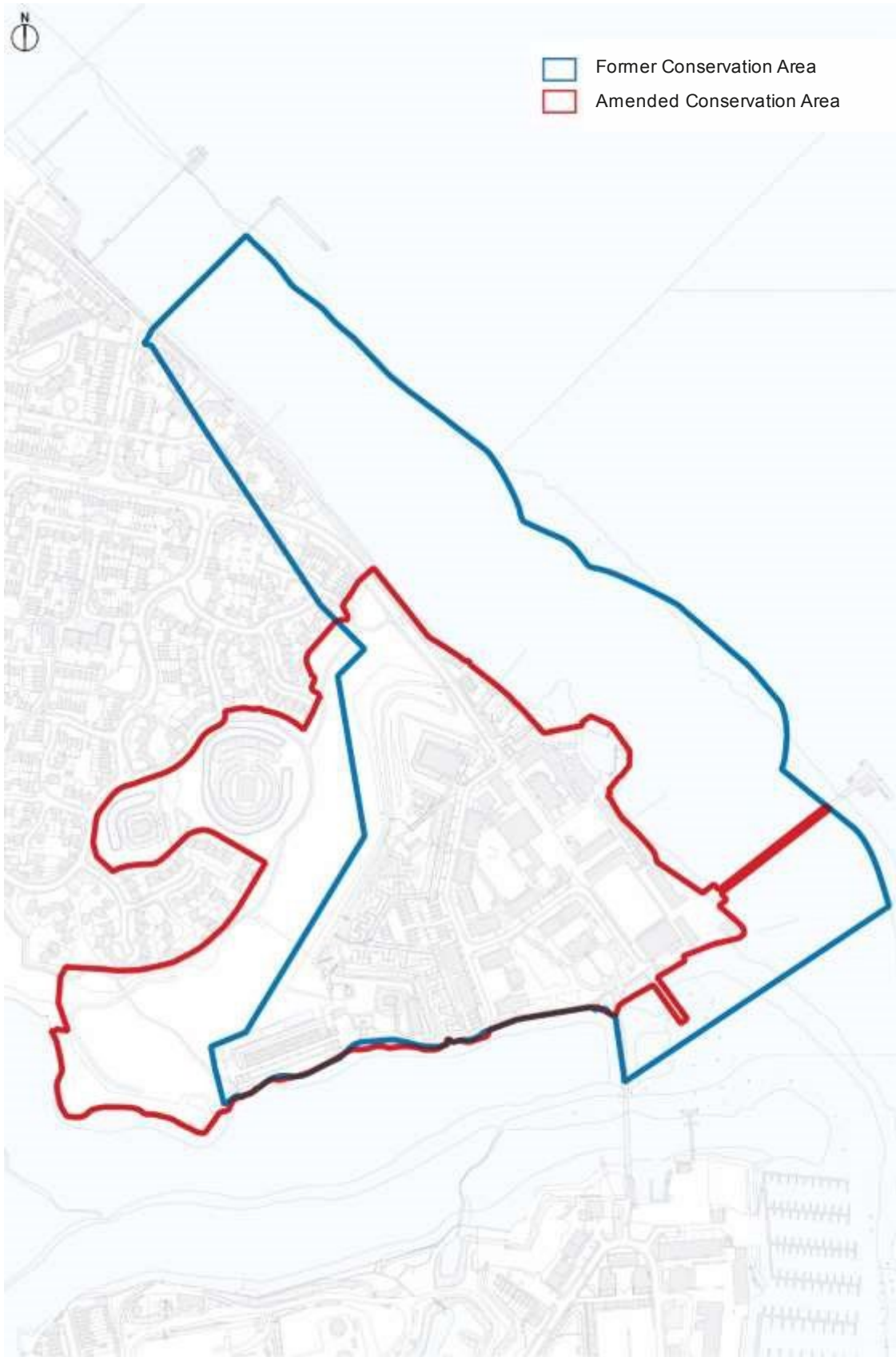


Figure 1 Amended (red) and former (blue) boundaries of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area

Part 1

Overview of the conservation area

1.0

Summary of Special Interest

Priddy's Hard is a highly unusual conservation area, with a unique sense of place. It is of local, regional, national and international significance as an integral element of the naval history and historic infrastructure of Portsmouth Harbour.

That special interest derives from its history as a naval munitions factory and the character of the fortifications erected to defend it. Though elements of a number of similar facilities – known as Ordnance Depots – survive, it is at Priddy's Hard that their history and evolution is best preserved and, through the museum Explosion! and the work of the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, most accessible to the public.

Since the closure of the depot in 1989, areas of open space within and around the conservation area have been recognised as internationally, nationally and locally important wildlife habitats. The ecological, landscape and amenity value of these open spaces is now an important element of the conservation area's character and appearance.

Within the core historic area – which was the extent of the facility in the eighteenth century – the special character and appearance takes the form of a collection of largely brick-built and pitched roof industrial structures of predominantly one or two storey height, erected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their arrangement and orientation were dictated by the requirements of highly specific industrial functions, and further complicated by changes to technology and manufacturing. The complex grew incrementally, and many alterations and additions were utilitarian or insubstantial. All surviving details that illustrate its historic hybrid industrial-military character contribute to the conservation area's special character, including, for example, lighting, signage, railings and remnants of surfacing and the once extensive tramway system.

The planning of Priddy's Hard was orientated towards Portsmouth Harbour, from where materials were delivered and out into which completed munitions were distributed to warships. The camber (little harbour), seawalls, piers and other infrastructure are therefore central to the special interest of the conservation area. The superb panoramic views across the Harbour help to understand its historical setting, the relationship with Portsmouth Dockyard and the historical continuity of its naval operation, including the loading of warship munitions off Priddy's Hard.

Outside this core area, there are several other distinct character zones, reflecting the history, functioning and setting of the central complex:

Modern housing: since the site was disposed by the Ministry of Defence in 1989, housing has been erected within the fortifications and along the Forton Lake shoreline. This caused an almost complete loss of historic fabric and character in these areas. By their design and layout, the housing and urban realm do not contribute to the historic character and appearance of the conservation area or the setting of the scheduled fortifications.

The fortifications: the eighteenth-century fortifications are well-preserved and also contain most of the few remaining elements of the once extensive late nineteenth century expansion of the munitions facility. Many of these elements are now vulnerable to decay or loss. The ecological value of the fortifications has grown since the closure of the Depot and must now be balanced with the preservation of the scheduled monument.

The Field of Fire: beyond the fortifications is an open space, the remnant of its once integral 'field of fire'. This zone includes the substantial remains of the cordite stores – which are a historical and archaeological record of a significant phase in the development of ammunition and Priddy's Hard – and biodiverse habitats of ecological value.

2.0

Condition of the conservation area

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area has a mixed character and appearance. This is described in more detail in Part 3: Character Appraisal p.24). Some significant elements positively contribute to its character and appearance and are in good condition:

- Many of the former depot buildings have now been sensitively refurbished and put to appropriate new uses, initially under the ownership of Gosport Borough Council and then the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, the current landowner.
- The programme of works to improve the condition of buildings and boundary treatments is ongoing and continues to improve the overall condition of the conservation area.
- Levels of public activity in the conservation area are gradually increasing due to the pull of attractions like the Explosion! Museum and the Powder Monkey brewery and taproom, as well as the increasing numbers of residents within the conservation area. This is making the conservation area a more vibrant and amenable place. Regular public access to the fortifications is due to commence soon.
- The public realm is in generally well-maintained both within the central historic core and within the outlying areas of modern housing and public open space beyond the fortifications, though not always reflecting the site's unique character.

Other elements of the conservation area are in poor or deteriorating condition:

- Some former depot buildings, including some listed buildings, remain vacant and in a semi-derelict state. The Property Trust is developing proposals to address this, but the longer these buildings are vacant the more susceptible they are to further degradation of fabric and loss of significance.
- The condition of the fortifications (a scheduled monument) has not been assessed in detail. However, the nineteenth-century structures within the moated area have severely deteriorated after a long period of disuse. The condition of the earth ramparts has been improved by selective shrub and tree clearance, but remains susceptible to deterioration without sustained vegetation management.
- The condition of the cordite stores has not been assessed in detail. The extensive growth of trees across the earth embankments may have caused some deterioration.

3.0

Issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities

The principal issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities within the conservation area are:

- The former boundaries of the conservation area, created thirty years ago, no longer accurately reflected its special character, because of intervening housing development and other changes. Therefore the boundary has been amended to better reflect the special interest of the historic site, including expanding the boundary to preserve and enhance heritage assets and landscape features formerly outside of the conservation area.
- The development of certain areas to incorporate residential accommodation has led to the erosion of historic character in some parts of the conservation area, particularly where this has required the loss of historic buildings.
- Long-term management of the fortifications places a financial and administrative burden on the landowner and management company. Ecological and heritage considerations have to be balanced, and may compete.
- The conservation area attracts much interest and engagement from local heritage enthusiasts. There are many opportunities to increase volunteer input into the management of the site and access to the monument and listed buildings.
- Contamination and unexploded ordnance are issues affecting the conservation area due to its former use. This affects the ways in which public access to the site can be achieved, and how future development opportunities can proceed.
- There are opportunities to improve access to the harbourfront and the fortifications to allow the public to better understand and experience the site's special interest. The Property Trust is planning to address this.
- Priddy's Hard is likely to be susceptible to the damaging impacts of climate change because of its low-lying, coastal location. In particular, the increasing likelihood of more frequent flooding events.
- Vandalism and antisocial behaviour continue to harm the conservation area. The loss of the Grade II listed Shell Store to arson in 2004 is a particularly stark example.
- Both on- and off-site interpretation requires improvement to better inform the public about the national significance of Priddy's Hard and its importance in the wider context of Portsmouth Harbour's maritime history.

4.0

Management recommendations

Recommendation 001

Stakeholders should continue joint efforts to reverse the poor condition of the parts of the conservation area in order to remove it from the Heritage at Risk Register.

Recommendation 002

The loss of listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets shall be resisted and should be wholly exceptional, where held to be strictly necessary and strongly justifiable.

Recommendation 003

The Borough Council will support efforts to conserve and enhance the central historic core and all other heritage assets within the conservation area, whether designated or non-designated, to halt further loss of significance through fabric degradation and secure their longer-term survival, including adaptation for sustainable new uses.

Recommendation 004

Balanced conservation and management of the Scheduled Monument should be guided by a Scheduled Monument Management Plan.

Recommendation 005

The landowner and developers should work closely with Gosport Borough Council and other stakeholders to ensure that any new development preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area and integrates surviving historic fabric.

Recommendation 006

The Borough Council should consider options for securing the conservation, reuse and interpretation of surviving historic buildings and infrastructure through redevelopment proposals, to include the use of Section 106 agreements.

Recommendation 007

The Borough Council will support and encourage greater public access to the harbour front.

Recommendation 008

The Borough Council will support and encourage regular public access to the scheduled fortifications.

Recommendation 009

Options should be explored for the redesign, reduction and where possible removal of security fencing from around the central historic core and the fortifications, in order to improve the setting of heritage assets and the appearance of the conservation area.

Recommendation 010

The Borough Council should work with the landowner and stakeholders to secure the protection and enhancement of the internationally, nationally and locally important habitats and protected open space within and adjacent to the conservation area.

Recommendation 011

The Borough Council, the Property Trust, the housing management company and stakeholders should identify and coordinate short-, medium- and long-term means to enhance the public realm throughout the conservation area.

Recommendation 012

All new development within Priddy's Hard Conservation Area should achieve the highest standards of energy efficiency, and that the sustainable retrofit of existing buildings is to an exemplary standard, whilst ensuring that such measures are without detriment to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Recommendation 013

The Borough Council, Property Trust, HCC and management company should develop a coordinated approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures within the conservation area, particularly relating to flood defences.

Recommendation 014

The Borough Council should engage with the Property Trust, management company and other key stakeholders including Historic England and Hampshire County Council improve public understanding of Priddy's Hard through on-site and off-site interpretation measures.

Recommendation 015

In addition to adopting this CAAMP as part of the Local Development Framework, the Borough Council has adopted the revisions to the original boundary of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area, to better reflect the current extent of special interest.

Part 2

Context and methodology

5.0

Background to this document

5.1 What is the purpose of this document?

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) has been produced to support Gosport Borough Council's statutory duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Priddy's Hard Conservation Area in the exercise of their planning functions. It sets out the special character of Priddy's Hard and management recommendations for the conservation area.

The CAAMP has the following purposes:

- To provide homeowners, developers, Council officers and other interested parties with a framework against which future development proposals in the conservation area can be assessed and determined.
- To outline the history of the area and explain what makes it special. The CAAMP identifies the elements that make up the special character and interest of the area, and those that detract from it.
- To provide recommendations for the area's management. These include changes to its boundaries.
- In doing so, the appraisal supports the Borough Council's legal duty (under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to consult the public about those proposals.

5.2 How does this document relate to planning policy and other Council documents?

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is part of a suite of planning guidance documents prepared by Gosport Borough Council to support the implementation of the Local Plan 2011-2029 (and the Local Plan 2040 once adopted). The advice outlined in this CAAMP will be a material consideration when determining planning applications affecting the conservation area or its setting.

Specifically, the CAAMP provides guidance on the implementation of local planning policy outlined in the Local Plan and associated policies maps and adoption statements. The Gosport Borough Council Local Plan conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the national government's planning policies for England and how these contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

It has also been written to support the implementation of other Council and landowner strategies including:

- Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2014)

This document should be revised once the emerging Local Plan 2040 is adopted to reflect any updated policies.

5.3 How was this document prepared and who has been consulted?

Gosport Borough Council in conjunction with the landowner (Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust) and a variety of other stakeholders have been working collaboratively on the regeneration of Priddy's Hard for three decades. These efforts have been supported more recently by Historic England (HE) through the Gosport Heritage Action Zone (HAZ),

which has provided financial assistance and input from HE’s advisors on a range of projects affecting the conservation area.

This CAAMP was prepared as part of the HAZ project. As with all HAZ projects, this aims to breathe new life into historically-rich places and use them as a catalyst for regeneration. The document was prepared by Alan Baxter Ltd in consultation with Gosport Borough Council; Hampshire County Council; Historic England; the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust; the National Museum of the Royal Navy and the Gosport Society.

The draft CAAMP was subject to public consultation before adoption by the Borough Council.

The preparation and content of this CAAMP follows best practice guidance set out in *Planning Practice Guidance* (published November 2016, last updated June 2021) prepared by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1* (Second Edition, 2019). This document conforms with Historic England’s Advice Note 1 in terms of recommended content although its structure has been tailored to the unique character and management requirements of Priddy’s Hard Conservation Area.

For a detailed description of the methodology used to prepare this CAAMP, see Part 5: Supporting Information (p.98).

5.4 Abbreviations and terminology

This table provides an explanation of common abbreviations and terms used within this document.

The Council	Gosport Borough Council
CAAMP	Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
GBC	Gosport Borough Council
HAZ	Heritage Action Zone
HCC	Hampshire County Council
HE	Historic England
LPA	Local Planning Authority (in this case, Gosport Borough Council)
PNBPT	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

5.5 Acknowledgements

The authors of this report are indebted to the many people who have provided advice on the preparation of this CAAMP, in particular members of Gosport Borough Council and Historic England.

All photographs and diagrams are copyright of Alan Baxter Ltd unless otherwise stated.

6.0 Geographic and designation context of the conservation area

6.1 Location and geographical context

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area is located in the Borough of Gosport around 1km north of Gosport town centre, in the county of Hampshire. The conservation area lies within an estuarine environment, forming one of the many peninsulas and islets that define Portsmouth Harbour. The harbour forms the boundary of the conservation area to the east. A bridge across Forton Lake, constructed in 2001 replacing an earlier structure, links the conservation area with another formal naval site, the Royal Clarence Victualling Yard, to the south.

6.2 Boundary of the conservation area

The boundary of the conservation area as originally designated has been formally amended based on the findings of this document to better reflect the extent of surviving special interest. The former and amended boundary are shown on Figure 1 on p.5.

As amended, the boundary of the conservation area encompasses the surviving areas of the former Priddy's Hard Ordnance Depot and forms a roughly triangular shape. The north-eastern boundary comprises the high-water mark of Portsmouth Harbour. The Shell Pier (c.1900) is also within the conservation area apart from the easternmost section because this is beyond the Borough boundary and lies within the jurisdiction of Portsmouth City Council.

The southern boundary of the conservation area is defined by the shoreline of Forton Lake running west beyond the traverses of the former shelling filling rooms (1886-7) and is now amended to encompass the Priddy's Hard Nature Reserve. The amended north-western boundary is more irregular but is generally defined by the boundary between the historic field of fire (which were cleared and landscaped in the late 1990s) and the neighbourhood of Elson, with the two cordite stores (1898-9) forming a salient of the conservation area into the neighbourhood.

Following this review, the former northern section of the conservation area has been removed from the conservation area because housing development since designation has removed the historic character and appearance of this zone.

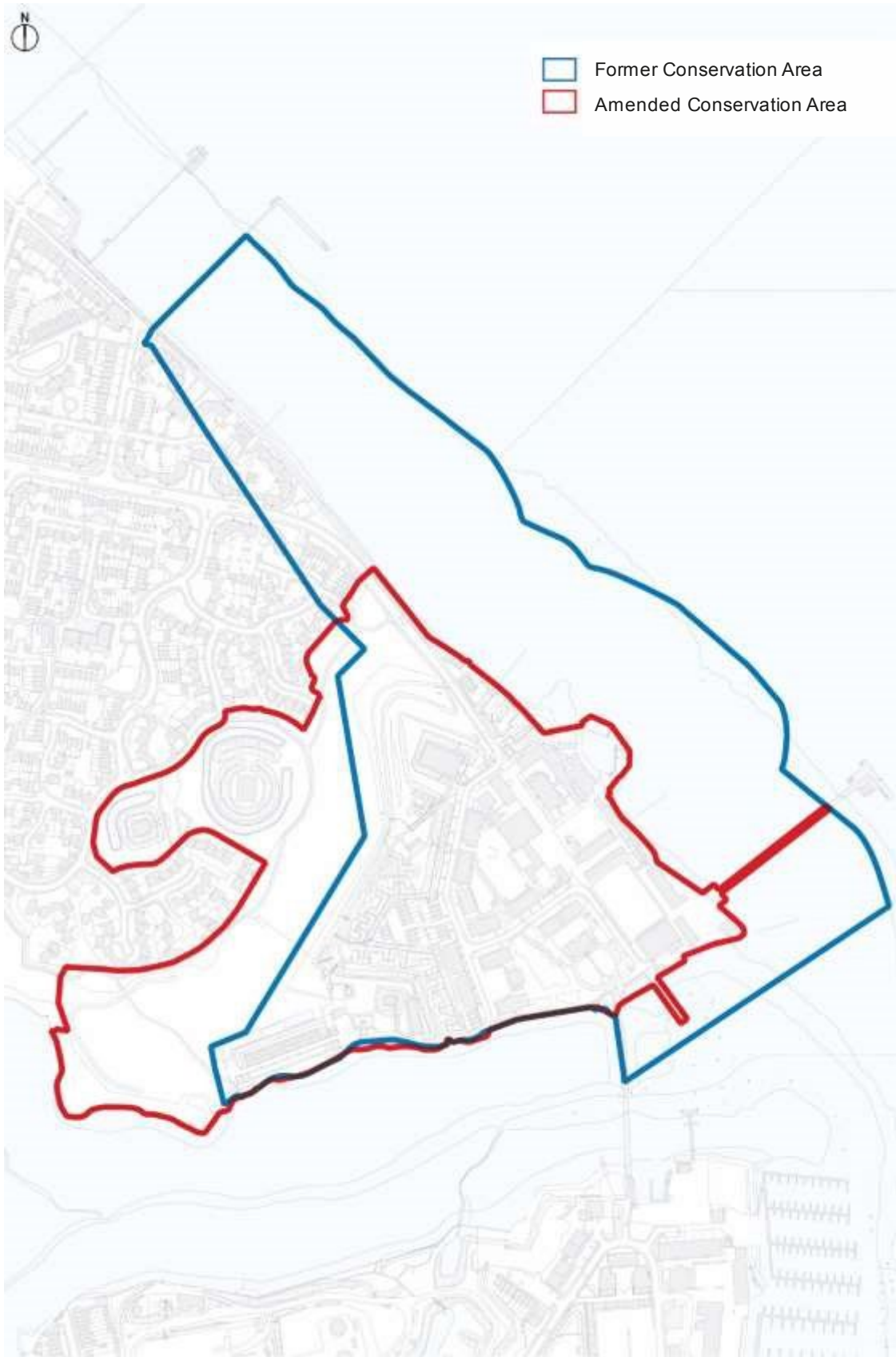


Figure 2 Amended (red) and former (blue) boundaries of the conservation area

6.3 Designations

6.3.1 Conservation Area at Risk

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area was designated by Gosport Borough Council in 1990. Its boundary has remained unchanged since its initial designation.

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area is currently on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. The 2022 Register gave its condition as 'Very bad', its vulnerability as 'High' and the trend as 'Deteriorating significantly'.

The purpose of the Heritage at Risk Register is to identify designated heritage assets that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. The addition of a site to the register can be the catalyst for positive change, and special guidance and funding opportunities are available for buildings and places on the register.

Together with other aspects of the Gosport HAZ project, the objective of this Appraisal is to help stakeholders improve management of the conservation area to a point where ultimately it will be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.

6.3.2 Other heritage assets within Priddy's Hard

Many buildings and spaces within the conservation area are designated in their own right. These designations are shown on fig 2 on p.18 and listed in the Gazetteer in Part 5: Supporting Information.

The conservation contains 25 listed buildings of which:

- 2 are Grade I listed
- 3 are Grade II* listed
- 20 are Grade II listed

The conservation area also contains a Scheduled Monument, covering the eighteenth century fortifications around the historic core of the conservation area. The official name of the monument is Earthwork Defences at Priddy's Hard.

There are a number of other surviving former depot buildings and structures which are identified in this CAAMP as non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to the area's special character and appearance. These non-designated heritage assets are also listed in the Gazetteer in Part 5 (p.97).



Figure 3 Map of heritage designations and character within the conservation area

6.3.3 Landscape and ecological designations

There are a number of landscape and ecological designations applying to the conservation area and its immediate setting:

- The fields of fire; cordite stores; Priddy's Hard Nature Reserve; and areas of green space within the central historic core are 'Existing Open Space', meaning that their loss will be resisted by the Council in line with Policy LP35 of the Local Plan.
- Priddy's Hard Nature Reserve and the cordite stores are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). SINC are sites within Hampshire that are of local importance for nature conservation which contain habitats or features which are irreplaceable. More information is available via this link:
www.gosport.gov.uk/article/1393/Local-Sites
- Abutting the boundary of the conservation area, Forton Lake and Portsmouth Harbour are heavily protected due to their landscape and ecological importance. The following designations apply to both waterbodies and their foreshores up to the high water mark:
 - Ramsar site – designated as wetlands of international importance under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.
 - Special Protection Area – designated under the European Union Birds Directives and Member States are required to take special measures to protect migratory, rare and vulnerable species of birds. SPAs are particularly important for birds which depend on specialised or restricted habitats for breeding, feeding, wintering or migration.
 - Portsmouth Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest – SSSIs are sites of national importance designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to protect flora, fauna, geological or physiological features of special interest. The Portsmouth Harbour SSSI contains a number of important habitats including inter-tidal mudflats and marshes which support international important wetland bird species.
- More information is available via this link:
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1003174&SiteName=Portsmouth%20Harbour&countyCode=19&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&FCAArea>

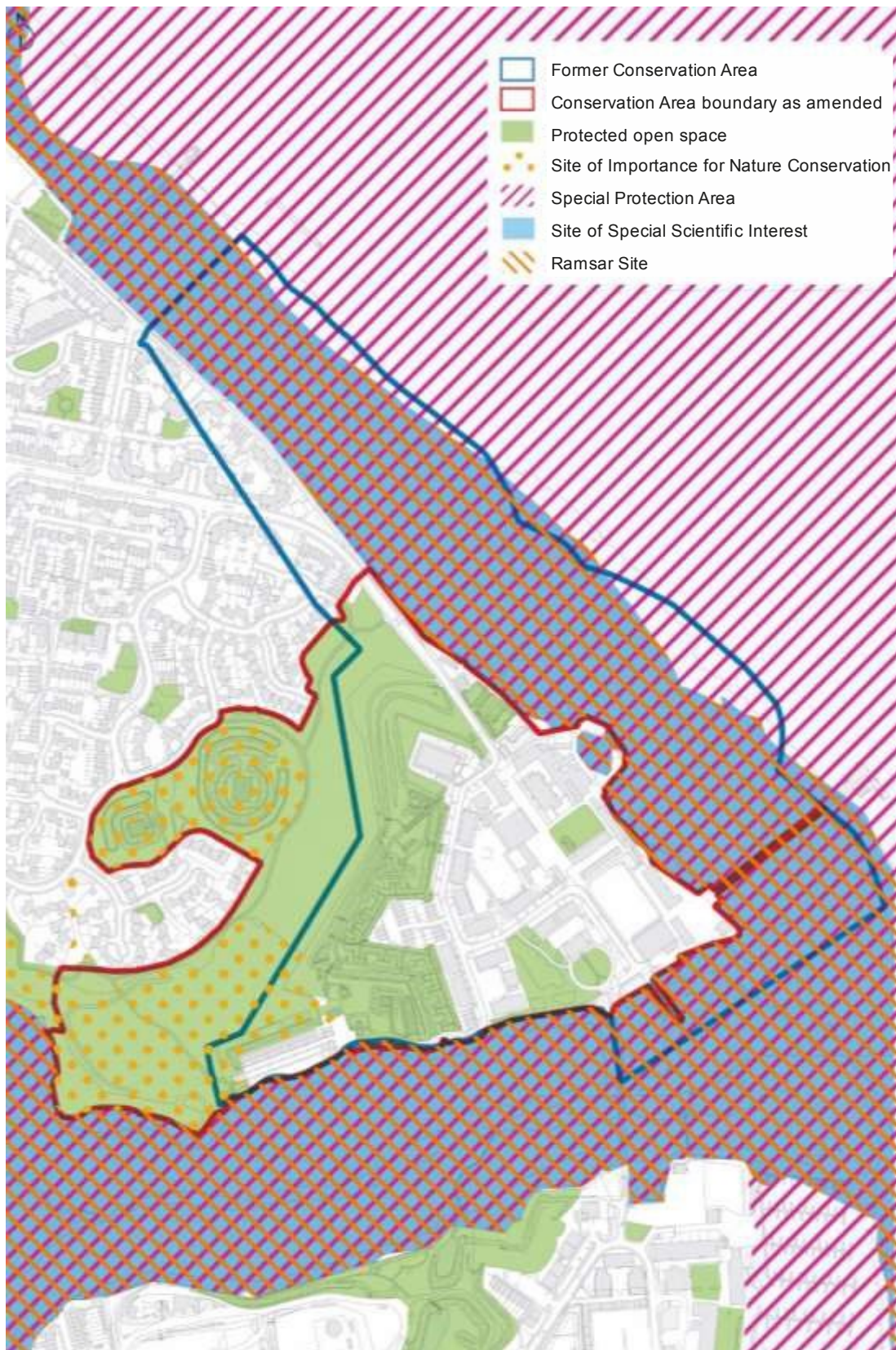


Figure 4 Map of landscape and ecology designations within the conservation area

7.0 Useful resources

A range of useful resources are now available describing the history of Priddy's Hard and ongoing efforts to conserve its heritage. A full list can be found in Part 5 of this CAAMP (see p.97), but the following sources are of particular importance in understanding the conservation area today. Web links are provided for sources which are available online:

David Evans. 2006. *Arming the Fleet: The Development of the Royal Ordnance Yards, 1770-1945* (Explosion! Museum and English Heritage: Gosport)

[Gosport Local Plan 2011-2029 and policies map \(adopted October 2015\)](#)

[The Gosport Society](#)

[Gosport Heritage Action Zone – Priddy's Hard](#)

[Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust – Priddy's Hard](#)



Figure 5 Aerial view of Priddy's Hard looking eastward

Part 3

Character Appraisal

8.0

Appraising the character and appearance of Priddy's Hard

This Character Appraisal, Part 3 of the Priddy's Hard CAAMP, outlines the character and appearance of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area. It is presented in seven sections:

- 9.0 The historical development of Priddy's Hard
- 10.0 Geology and topography
- 11.0 Spatial character
- 12.0 Architectural interest and built form
- 13.0 Open space and ecology
- 14.0 Views
- 15.0 Heritage assets and areas of weakened character
- 16.0 Character Zones
- 17.0 Condition of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area

9.0

The historical development of Priddy's Hard

9.1 Introduction

The development of Priddy's Hard between 1757 and the Second World War was highly complex and is not easily expressed in summary. The process involved gradual development with occasional periods of heightened activity, as the ordnance depot responded to new technologies and expanding functions moved there from elsewhere.

Earlier buildings were often cleared away to make room for new ones, and those that remained were often altered and adapted to new uses. The task of interpreting the history of the standing buildings and structures today is made more difficult by the significant amount of redevelopment that has occurred since the depot's closure in 1989.

Fortunately, we are greatly aided in our understanding of the site's development through the extensive surveys carried out by English Heritage (now Historic England) in association with the Borough Council and Explosion! Museum during the 1990s, in the wake of widespread closures of military sites after the Cold War. The findings of this survey were reproduced in the book *Arming the Fleet: The Development of the Royal Ordnance Yards 1770-1945* (Explosion! Museum and English Heritage: 2006), which is an invaluable resource for anyone seeking a detailed history of the complex site.

Arming the Fleet provides a detailed and richly illustrated account of the origins and development of Priddy's Hard. The following sections provide a summary of the site's highly complex development and use – largely derived from *Arming the Fleet* – to help the general reader understand the history and context of the conservation area's character and appearance.

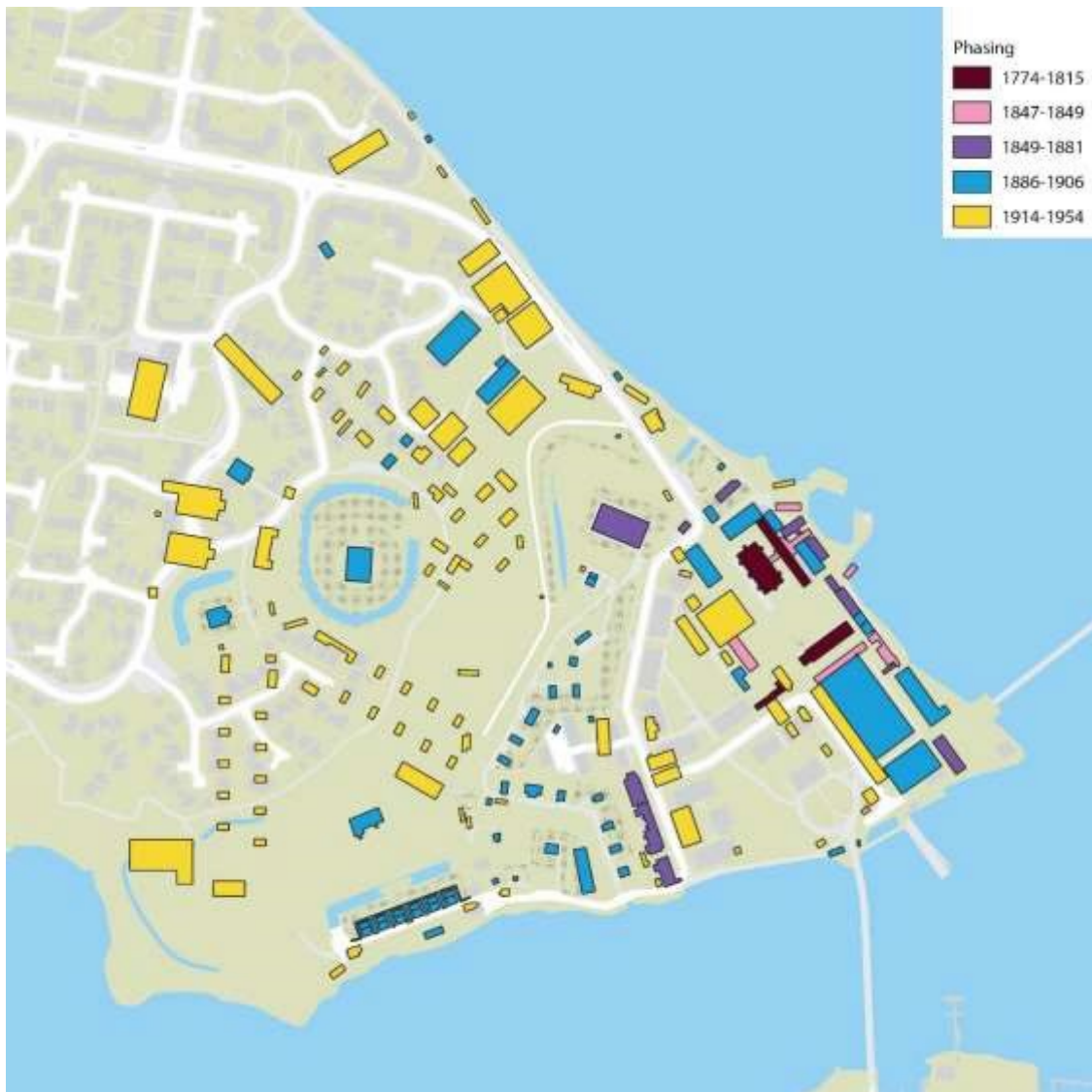


Figure 6 Phasing diagram of Priddy's Hard, showing extant depot buildings in 1988, the year of closure. Each building is coloured according to the phase of development in which it was constructed.



Figure 7 Phasing diagram of Priddy's Hard, showing extant depot buildings in 2022. Each building is coloured according to the phase of development in which it was constructed. Note the dramatic contraction of the site to a central historic core along the harbourfront, compared to the 1988 phasing diagram.

9.2 1750s – Origins of Priddy’s Hard

The origins of the conservation area lie in the expansion during the 1750s of the defensive fortifications constructed around Gosport to defend against landward attack. In 1757, the defences, known as the Gosport Lines, were extended in the form of earthwork ramparts around a 40-acre area of agricultural land and a boatyard on the north bank of Forton Lake, to deny the vacant ground to an enemy seeking to bombard the dockyard or Gosport from there. These original fortifications were simple earthworks but appear to have been built on something close to their current alignment (as created when the ramparts were improved in the 1770s, see Section 1.3).

The enclosed area was known as Priddy’s Hard Fort, the name derived from the former landowner – Jane Priddy – and the local name for a boatyard – a ‘hard’. The fort was lightly garrisoned by Army personnel. The land to the west of the fortifications was kept clear of vegetation and trees to provide a clear line of fire to defenders. This area was known as the ‘field of fire’.

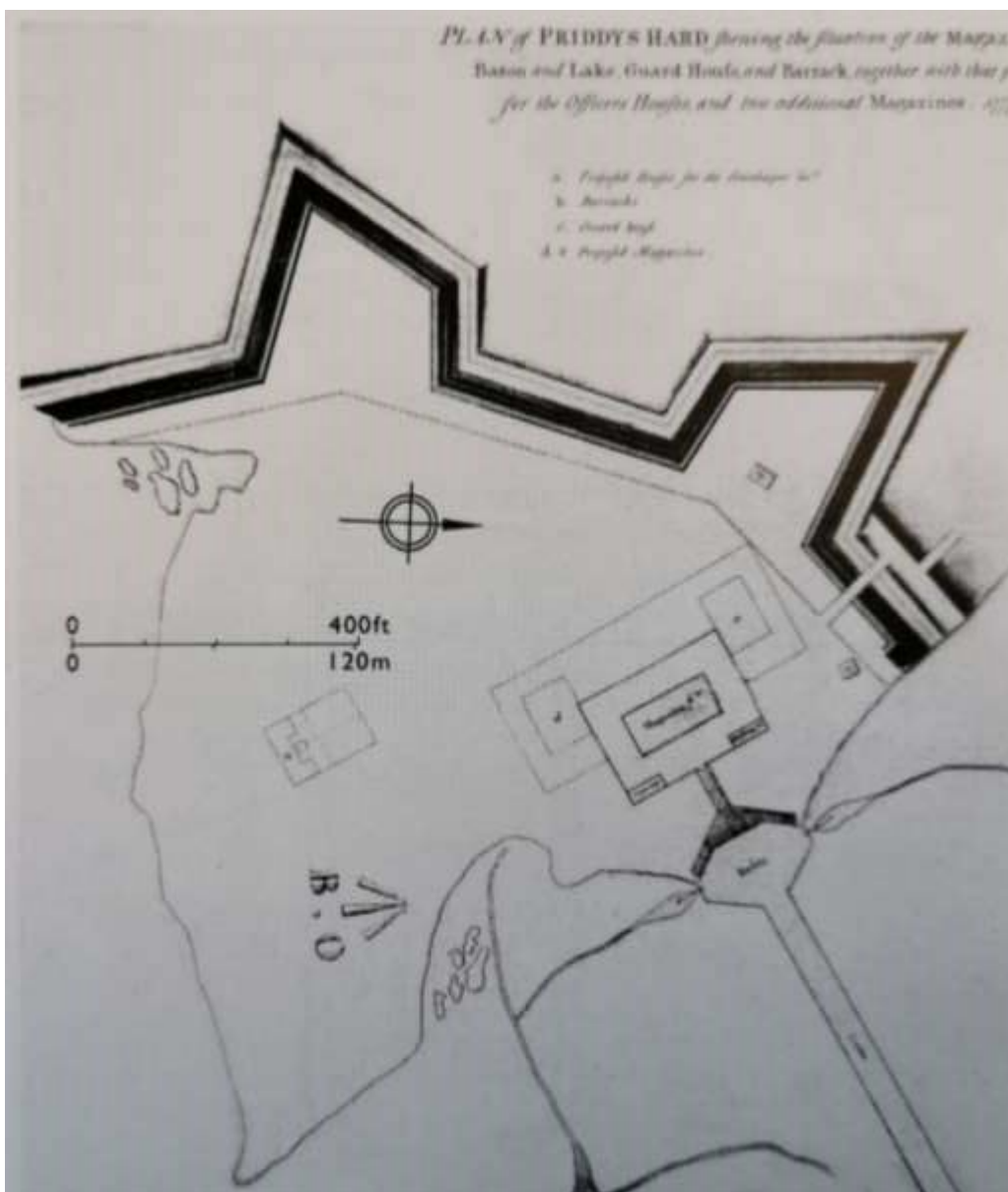


Figure 8 Plan of Priddy’s Hard as completed in 1777, A Magazine survives as the heart of Explosion!

9.3 1777 – Establishment of the Ordnance Depot

As the quantity and power of munitions increased, the Admiralty came under intensifying pressure from local communities living in the vicinity of naval bases, particularly where large, densely-populated areas laid in close proximity. Residents of Old Portsmouth fiercely petitioned the authorities for the removal of gunpowder from Portsmouth and so in 1769 work began on a powder magazine and supporting infrastructure within Priddy's Hard – considered to be at a sufficiently safe distance from built up areas to protect against a catastrophic accident.

The first phase of the new Ordnance Depot was completed in September 1777. It comprised a basin for powder vessels, a powder magazine, a cooperage for the repair of powder barrels, a rolling way (for moving powder in barrows or trollies), labourers' cottages, officers' houses and a shifting house (for the examination of powder). Some of these earliest buildings survive today, including A Magazine, the cooperage and shifting room (all Grade I listed). They are very rare survivals and among the best-preserved of their type in the country.

The rolling way was an unusual structure and no plans of it are believed to survive. It appears to have been a tramway covered by a timber enclosure, along which barrels of gunpowder were transported manually in barrels or trollies from the camber into the various magazines and later to the laboratory (see below). The structure was later rebuilt in brick and survives today (see Section 1.5).

Two additional magazines were projected in 1776. Though they were never built, their proposed location and footprint determined the form of the demi-bastions and ramparts which were constructed in 1779 when the Lines, previously a temporary system of earthworks and palisades, were improved and strengthened.

The fortifications were altered in later years to accommodate depot buildings within the moat, but largely retain their original form and extent today. Their survival makes a major positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area because they represent the first major phase of military presence in the area, and are one of the best-preserved sections of the historic fortifications that once formed a defensive ring around Portsmouth Harbour.

In 1811-12 a range of offices were added to the south of the 1770s buildings. These survive today and are Grade II listed. The building's list description describes it as '*a fine Late Georgian building that both visually and through its historical role is related to the original Magazine group on this uniquely important site.*'



Explosion! Museum

Figure 9 Early nineteenth-century painting of the Officers' Residence at Priddy's Hard, built in 1786 and demolished in the 1950s

9.4 1815-1860 Improvement of the fortifications and establishment of the Royal Laboratory

Priddy's Hard changed little in the decades immediately after the Napoleonic Wars concluded in 1815.

The first significant new works took place in 1844, with the restoration and improvement of the defences after a long period of neglect. The dry ditch was made wet, and a drawbridge and defensible wall were added to protect the main entrance. The camber (Grade II) was also improved during this period. Originally constructed of timber, the structure was remodelled in stone over several phases, with its estuarine position necessitating continual dredging to allow its continued use. The survival of this characterful structure illustrates the manner in which gunpowder and munitions were originally conveyed to and from the depot.

In 1847-48, a laboratory was established to test the quality of powder, taking the form of a quadrangle of buildings immediately south of the A Magazine complex and served by its own jetty to the south onto Forton Lake. Its construction coincided with a turning point in the function of the military laboratories, with attention increasingly paid to the development of artillery and filled shells above that of small arms ammunition. Although only the north and part of the east range survive today (and are Grade II listed), the laboratory complex at Priddy's Hard sits alongside the Royal Laboratory at Woolwich as the most complete of the former military laboratories and is therefore of significant national historical interest.

The establishment of the laboratory marked the beginning of a major shift in the principal function of Priddy's Hard, from storage of ordnance (primarily gunpowder) to production.

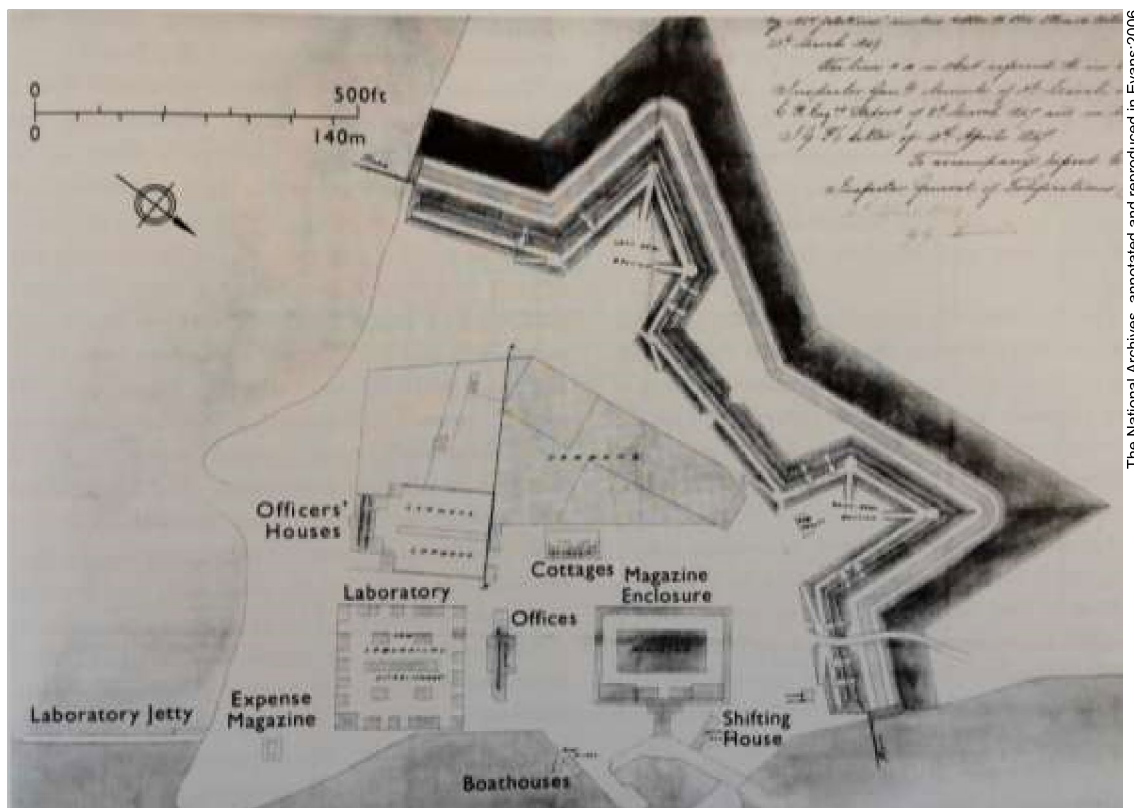


Figure 10 Priddy's Hard in 1849 after completion of the laboratory and improvement of the fortifications

9.5 1860-1900 The emergence of filled shells

The later-nineteenth century witnessed an acceleration in the development of new ordnance technologies and consequently, the expansion of functions and facilities at Priddy's Hard. The principal driver of change from the 1840s was the replacement of solid shot (canon balls) by filled shells. This innovation transformed naval and land warfare and forced the development of new technologies and processes for their production, processing, storage and conveyance. Priddy's Hard was at the forefront of these innovations and many of the buildings added to the site between 1860 and 1900 are now unique or very rare surviving examples of their type.

A complex process emerged at Priddy's Hard where empty shells and explosives were imported, transported to stores, then to filling rooms, then painting rooms where specific markings were added to denote the type of shell, then to storehouses, awaiting delivery to ships anchored in the harbour. Shells and explosives were transported on network of tramways and safety precautions were paramount throughout.

Most of the buildings constructed during this period had a role in the shell-filling process, including the C Magazine (1860, Grade II), originally built to receive ammunition from ships but later repurposed as a key part of the shell-filling process, forming the terminus to the shell tramway, and E Magazine (1879, Grade II*), built to replace A Magazine. A further shell store was added in the south-east corner of the site in 1879 (Grade II). The covered rolling way and the buildings around the camber (formerly timber) were all rebuilt in brick during the 1860s.

Accompanying buildings directly involved in the shell-filling process was a wide range of buildings providing ancillary services, including: carpenters' shops; cottages for laboratory workers (1847, altered 1877, Grade II); a fire engine shed (c.1860-74, non-designated heritage asset); and storehouses for the countless wooden crates required to transport empty and filled shells to and from vessels (1879, Grade II).

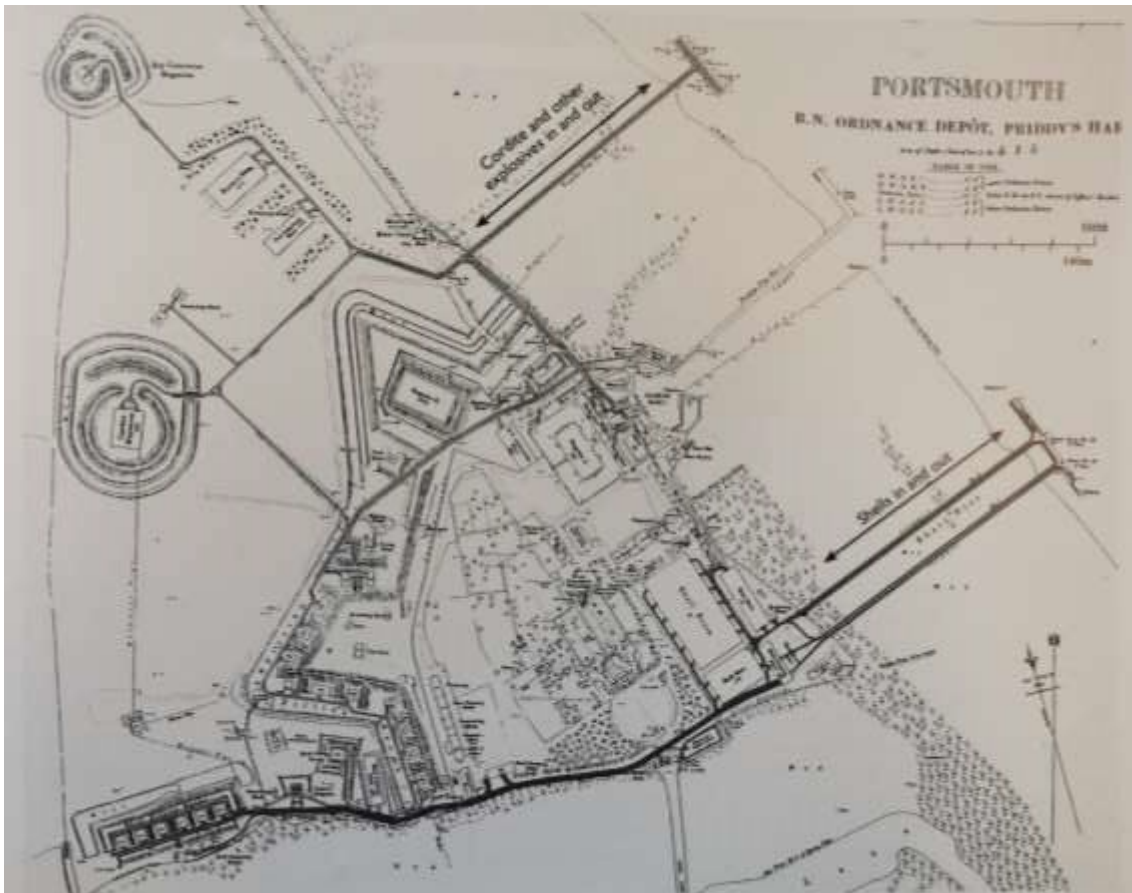
In the late 1890s, Priddy's Hard underwent another major expansion. The shell-filling process was expanded into the moat of the fortifications – the threat of a French invasion having receded and the eighteenth-century fortifications now outdated. Traverses (recesses) were cut into the western bank of the inner rampart and timber-framed shellfilling rooms constructed between them, with a new tramway system laid down on a concrete causeway through the moat.

The invention of the explosives cordite and guncotton required the addition of other buildings and structures, including new cordite magazines surrounded by large earth blast embankments, and several gun cotton stores constructed in 1898-99 within the field of fire; this was the first significant expansion of the depot beyond its historic enclosure. Of this phase, the major survival is the two cordite stores and their earthworks (non-designated heritage assets), the rest having been cleared during the 1990s redevelopment of the site.



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Figure 12 The timber-framed shell filling rooms (1897, now demolished) built between traverses cut into the fortifications, connected by a tramway system. The concrete causeway, traverses and bridge seen in the rearground survive today



Source: Historic England Archive.

Figure 13 Plan of Priddy's Hard in c.1902, showing the shell tramway (dark grey) and the powder line (lighter grey). This is best preserved on the site of the former shell stores (bottom right)

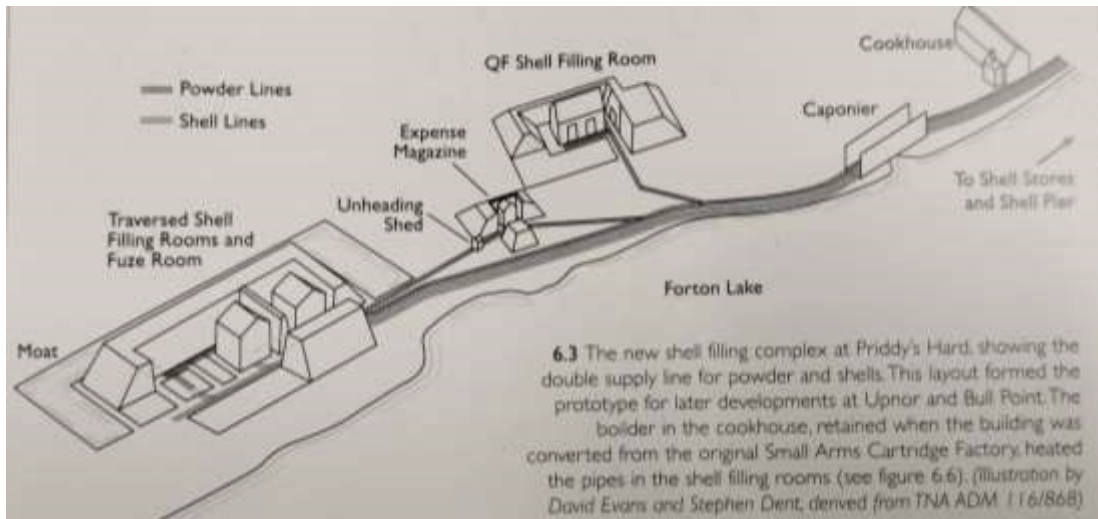
9.6 1900-1939 Further expansion and roles

The first decade of the twentieth century saw further expansion at Priddy's Hard but also the removal of one key historic function. In 1904 an explosion in the New Shell Store raised concern about the potential impacts of a catastrophic accident at the site, given its proximity to Gosport and the Royal Dockyard across the Harbour. Activities at Priddy's Hard were thereafter focussed on the filling of munitions rather than bulk storage, which was transferred to a new facility at Bedenham to the north, further away from population centres. Bedenham was one of three sub-depots developed between the 1900s and 1920s to provide complementary facilities to Priddy's Hard, the others being at Elson (developed as a magazine depot from the 1920s) and at Frater (established in 1918 for the repairing and testing of naval mines). In 1918, Priddy's Hard and its sub-depots were renamed as the Royal Naval Armament Depot (RNAD) Priddy's Hard, under the authority of the Armament Supply Department (ASD) (Bedenham remains an operational Naval munitions store).

The First World War marked another major phase of growth at Priddy's Hard, with a dramatic increase in demand for all manner of munitions. New explosives such as trotyl (TNT) required new specialised storage and processing facilities. Additional filling rooms were constructed in rows around the cordite magazines, and there were new storage buildings for mines, bombs and depth charges both within and beyond the old fortifications. The depot was connected into the wider network of military sites around the harbour in 1914 when a mainline rail connection was made, augmented in 1917 by a 'transfer shed' to enable the direct loading of filled shells onto railway trucks.

Most of the buildings added to the depot during the First World War were located within the field of fire and have subsequently been cleared away. The most substantial survival is the tinsmiths' and painters' shops of 1916, constructed immediately south-west of A Magazine. This building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area as one of the few surviving buildings from this significant phase of growth at the depot; its form and appearance reflects common design elements of the historic buildings within the conservation area.

Priddy's Hard expanded further when the facilities and personnel of H.M. Gunwharf, Portsmouth were transferred there following Gunwharf's closure in 1923. Priddy's Hard was, at that time, the senior local depot with overall responsibility for the supply, servicing and repair of all types of naval ordnance. New structures were erected to accommodate the guns, with a new factory, foundry and other buildings added north of the conservation area. The site was named 'New Gunwharf'. Very little survives today, apart from the rebuilt harbour pier.



David Evans and Stephen Dent, derived from drawings at The National Archives, reproduced in Evans (2006)

Figure 14 Diagram of the shell filling complex of 1886-87 overlooking Forton Lake to the west of the fortifications. Only the expense magazine, caponier and traverses survive today, with striking modern houses constructed on the former site of the shell filling rooms.



Priddy's Hard Archive, reproduced in Evans:2006

Figure 15 The Shell Section workers, c.1918

9.7 1939-1989 Contraction and closure

Priddy's Hard reached its greatest physical extent during the Second World War, with a range of new buildings constructed within and beyond the ramparts and some of the earlier buildings adapted for alternative uses. Some buildings were adapted to protect against the increased threat of aerial attack, with pitched roofs on earlier brick buildings replaced by concrete flat roofs. Women formed more than half the total work force (of 3000) at Priddy's Hard by 1944.

The depot came through the war relatively unscathed in comparison to other nearby facilities and the town centre of Gosport. Although the buildings constructed during the war were plain, utilitarian structures and not necessarily of the same aesthetic quality as earlier buildings, almost all have now been demolished, making those that survive of even greater value in illustrating the vital role of the depot during the conflict.

Priddy's Hard played a significant part in the preparations for D-Day, acting among other duties as the principal supplier of armaments to the vast armada that crossed the Channel. Some 6500 tonnes of ammunition were issued to the bombarding force vessels prior to DDay.

The end of the Second World War initiated an era of contraction throughout the British armed forces, with military sites rationalised and consolidated across the country. Very little was built at Priddy's Hard after 1945, with its functions gradually moved to other sites:

- The eighteenth-century Officers' Quarters were demolished during the 1950s.
- The new laboratory closed in the late 1960s, followed by the shell filling rooms in the 1970s.
- The Royal Naval Armaments Depot Priddy's Hard was renamed to RNAD Gosport in 1977.
- A brief resurgence during the Falklands War (1982) did little to stem the tide and in 1988 the last remaining stores and staff were relocated to Bedenham, Elson and Frater.
- Priddy's Hard finally closed in 1989 after over 200 years of service.



Source: Historic England Archive. RAF Photography.

Figure 16 Aerial photograph of Priddy's Hard in 1946 at its greatest physical extent

9.8 1990-Present – Post-closure regeneration

Priddy's Hard was acquired by Gosport Borough Council in 1990 and designated as a conservation area. A thematic study of the Depot was conducted by English Heritage, leading to the statutory listing of the most significant surviving buildings within the central core of the site.

The future use of Priddy's Hard was immediately under consideration, with a mix of civilian functions (commercial, recreational and residential) all explored. Prior to any major redevelopment, however, a range of enabling works were carried out to turn the partially derelict, isolated and highly contaminated site into one suitable for civilian use.

The Council collaborated with English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund on a range of repair and restoration works including the reconstruction of the collapsed northern arm of the camber and extensive works to the A Magazine complex. It was essential to overcome the (deliberate) isolation of the site, so critical infrastructure was delivered through various funding streams including the Millennium Project, with the addition of the Forton Lake Bridge in 2001 and a new bypass from the A32 to provide direct access to the site and proposed new housing.

The first housing scheme within the former depot was the eastward extension of the neighbourhood of Elson, covering much of the western section of the depot up to and around the 1898 cordite stores. In conjunction with this redevelopment, the ordnance facilities constructed across the historic fields of fire during the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries were mostly demolished, decontaminated and re-landscaped as a public open space, with the southern section along Forton Lake set aside as a local nature reserve.

Within the fortifications, the first significant new tenant was the Explosion! Museum of Naval Firepower, which moved into the core of original buildings around A Magazine in 2001 (now part of the National Museum of the Royal Navy).

In 2009, Priddy's Hard was transferred from Gosport Borough Council to Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust. This was the prelude to further housing development, this time within the ramparts, and arranged on an entirely new street layout across the central and western area. The development included an imitation of the late-eighteenth-century Officers' Quarters (demolished in the 1950s) in their original location overlooking Forton Lake.

Striking modern houses were then constructed in 2018-19 nestled between the traverses of the 1880s shell filling rooms overlooking Forton Lake. In 2020-2022 a new series of terraces were constructed within the (southern) Left Demi-bastion. At the time of writing (2022), more new homes are currently under construction within the traverses along the western flank of the Left Demi-bastion.

This extensive redevelopment of the western and central sections of the historic core of Priddy's Hard required the removal of most of the former depot buildings. One additional, unplanned, loss was that of the 1890s shell store, which was destroyed in an arson attack in 2004.

Conservation efforts have progressed with renewed impetus in recent years, and is creating new commercial activities, including a taproom in the c.1881 case store (Grade II listed) and a microbrewery within the 1870s E Magazine (Grade II* listed), as well as an ongoing programme of restoration of the remaining historic buildings by the Property Trust.

Some of this is being funded via the Gosport Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), announced in 2019, with Historic England providing funding and advice. At the time of writing (2022) a Masterplan is being prepared to coordinate the next phase of heritage-led regeneration within the conservation area, with a focus on the remaining south east corner.

10.0

Geology and topography

The geology of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area is typical of an estuarine environment – namely, sands and gravels above a sedimentary bedrock associated with the London Clay and Wittering Formations. The topography of the conservation area is similarly defined by its location bordering Portsmouth Harbour, being very flat, with no area more than 5m above sea level. The historic fortifications and protective earthworks around the powder magazines represent man-made changes which are of greater prominence due to the flat prevailing topography.



Figure 17 Geology map of the conservation area

11.0

Spatial character

11.1 A unique military-industrial complex

‘Spatial character’ refers to the interplay of developed and undeveloped space within an area that produces an urban form with characteristics which are distinct from adjoining areas of the built environment. It can be derived from a range of factors including: the layout and hierarchy of streets; the form of urban blocks and individual building plots; the form and function of open space; the ‘permeability’ across the area; prevailing building uses and activities; and the area’s interconnectedness with adjoining areas.

Because of its combination of industrial complex and military fortification, the spatial character of Priddy’s Hard is highly unusual, with layers of historic and modern built form sitting alongside large interconnected areas of historic open space. The redevelopment of land within the conservation area after the Depot’s closure in 1989 has fundamentally changed the spatial character of large areas. However, significant elements of historic spatial character which contribute to special interest persist across the conservation area.

This section outlines the way in which the spatial character of Priddy’s Hard defines the conservation area’s character and appearance.

Spatial character summary •

Within the historic core:

- Strong military-industrial character defined by robust, functional, industrial buildings sitting alongside structures of a more recognisably military character.
- Pragmatic, irregular layout of former depot buildings dictated by the complex and dangerous processes of its historic function. Areas of dense development contrasted by more spaciouly arranged areas.
- No strong sense of a street hierarchy or pattern, but instead, a mix of yards, passages, paths and broader thoroughfares that were defined by the industrial processes.
- Former uses now replaced by range of light industrial, storage and cultural uses.
- The west of the conservation area is largely undeveloped:
 - Man-made landscape consisting of military fortifications overlaid with later industrial uses: earthen ramparts, the field of fire and cordite stores. These create juxtaposing forms which contrast with the spatial character of the built-up areas.
 - Forton Lake and Portsmouth Harbour are clearly defined boundaries to the built environment, landscape and movement, to which the conservation area is visually and functionally connected.
- Sandwiched between the historic core and open areas, the neighbourhood of modern housing does not contribute to special interest.



Figure 18 Industrial character of the central core



Figure 19 Nature has encroached into the fortifications, creating an unusual and characterful landscape

11.2 A military-industrial landscape

The eastern and western areas of the conservation area differ greatly in spatial character, between a built-up environment to the east and a largely open, more natural environment to the west. This contrast preserves the fundamental historic spatial character of Priddy's Hard, of a military-industrial site enclosed within a ring of defences beyond which open land extended to the north and west, and the harbour to the east and south.

11.2.1 The industrial core

Fundamental to the special and unusual spatial character of the conservation area is the industrial nature of the historic core of buildings

- The function of Priddy's Hard was industrial – albeit for military purposes – and the layout of buildings and spaces within the surviving historic core owes more to the character of industrial complexes than to ordered, formally-arranged military sites. The seemingly irregular arrangement of buildings and spaces belies the industrial logic and intricacy with which the site was developed over nearly two centuries, pragmatically incorporating new structures in response to new technologies and processes.
- Space was deliberately left between and around certain buildings (because of the risk of explosion), while others were arranged close together or interconnected depending on their function and the risk associated with it. This creates a series of yards and passages between buildings which are of fundamental importance to the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Most buildings have a modest external appearance, generally comprising one- or twostorey brick boxes with pitched or hipped roofs. Each had a highly specialised function during the depot's operation. In some cases, these buildings represent the last surviving example of their type, which adds considerable historical interest to the conservation area.

11.2.2 The fortified outer ring

The western section of the conservation area has a very different and contrasting spatial character to the eastern section. It is largely composed of open space, though the character of the open space varies substantially:

- The defining spatial character is landscape forms created and shaped for the purpose of military defence and protection: large earth ramparts, traverses and a wet moat. Overlaid onto this man-made landscape is the surviving infrastructure dating to the expansion of the depot into the moat in the 1890s, but also the post-closure proliferation of trees and vegetation, creating a highly unusual and characterful space where man-made and natural forms are deeply interwoven, combining multiple positive elements of the conservation area's character and appearance.
- West of the fortifications is the field of fire, which is a large, open field now used for recreation. Its current form, dating from the 1990s, to a degree re-creates its historic character as cleared land around the fortifications and as such has considerable historic interest as well as its landscape and amenity value.
- The western section of the field of fire, later redeveloped with depot buildings, has a spatial character distinct from that of the rest of the conservation area, having been set aside as a local nature reserve and characterised by clumps of trees and bushes stretching down to the shoreline. This ecology and amenity value makes a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

11.2.3 Waterfront

Proximity to the harbour is another important element of spatial character. The harbour and Forton Lake create clear boundaries to the north-east and south, with buildings, structures and paths along these borders designed historically to make functional use of the water and

today to take advantage of its amenity value. The openness of the harbour relieves the hard, enclosed character of the built-up part of the conservation area.

11.3 Modern housing

The neighbourhood of two- to -four storey blocks of terraced houses and flats, regularly arranged along clearly-defined asphalted roads with pavements front lawns, has a modern urban and residential character. It is read as an overtly modern addition to and intervention in the conservation area, and has little in common with the highly distinctive historic spatial character of the munitions depot or fortifications. In layout, height, urban realm and detail, this neighbourhood does not in itself contribute to the special historic or architectural interest of the conservation area. Different phases of development present different architectural forms of varying quality (see Section 12 below).



Figure 20 The historic field of fire looking towards the fortifications, obscured now by vegetation



Figure 21 The central north-south route through the historic core of the conservation area



Figure 22 Aerial view of the conservation area looking south

12.0

Architectural interest and built form

12.1 The architecture of armaments

The distinctive historic building forms, styles and details of the munitions depot are a core element of the conservation area's sense of place, character and appearance of the conservation area. They illustrate the evolution of Priddy's Hard over 200 years to incorporate new functions and processes whilst maintaining a consistent, functional, military-industrial aesthetic. This section of the Appraisal outlines the how the buildings and structures within the conservation area contribute to its special interest.

Architectural interest and built form summary

- Historic depot buildings of special interest are typically:
 - One to two storeys under pitched (occasionally hipped) roofs
 - Executed in red brick (with some burnt headers) with natural slate roofs
 - Of a functional, unadorned design sometimes exhibiting modest details in brick or stone
 - Possess a range of window typologies typical of the C19 and early C20, particularly six-over-six sash windows and multi-paned, metal-framed casements.
 - Incorporate distinctive details, typically executed in brick, include buttresses, eaves corbelling and flat or segmental jack arches
 - Include a range of highly specialised elements associated with their historical function
- Most modern housing does not contribute to the special interest of the conservation area, though some phases more effectively take account of the historic context than others.

12.2 Height and massing

The height and massing of surviving depot buildings is one of the defining characteristics of the conservation area. Buildings are almost uniformly of one to two storeys (often a single tall storey) under simple roof forms (pitched or hipped). Building massing is typically simple and box-like, either as a long uniform range or as a larger, rectangular form. Variety is created in more densely developed parts of the site through the construction of several of these 'boxes' alongside each other. Some building forms are representative of the specialised processes therein, such as tradesmens' sheds with tall doors and magazines with battered buttresses and small windows.

Although the massing of modern housing in the conservation area generally conforms with that of the former depot buildings, their height of three or more storeys has altered the character of the conservation area and does not contribute to the historic character identified above in terms of scale.

12.3 Styles and details

The external appearance of most surviving historic buildings in the conservation area illustrates how their design was driven primarily by function, with aesthetics being a secondary consideration. They are typically plain buildings with a regular ordering of bays and windows, sometimes adorned with simple details such as eaves corbelling and gauged-brickwork jack arches to doors and windows. Common window typologies are multi-paned sashes or casements constructed of timber or metal, although some buildings (e.g. the magazines) have no windows at all, or unglazed slit windows. Many of the former industrial buildings have battered or square buttresses, which illustrate their robust design.

The exception to this general rule is the Grade II listed Office Block (1811, extended 1920s) which more fully exhibits the ordered symmetry and detailing of Classical design typically found around Portsmouth Harbour and the UK more widely in military sites of a similar age.



Figure 23 Office Block (1811, extended 1920s)



Figure 24 Brick corbelling, buttresses and multi-paned timber-framed windows

12.4 Materials

The prevailing building material is red brick – a common local building material – sometimes combined with burnt headers and typically laid in English or Flemish bond. The bricklaying of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century structures is uniformly of excellent quality, illustrative of the craftsmanship of the time. Natural stone and concrete are used sparingly, mostly as lintels and corbels.

Buildings are roofed almost exclusively in natural slate, the typical roofing material of choice during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Timber is also used as an external treatment, typically in a functional manner such as for window frames, barge boards, dagger boards etc. Many buildings within the depot were constructed of lightweight timber-framed construction, but none of these survive today.

12.5 Uses

As a result of the depot's closure, none of the remaining historic buildings within the conservation area remain in their original or historic uses. However, many retain evidence of their former use both in their general robust, functional form but also through the survival of historic fixtures, fittings and features. Historic uses were often highly specialised and can be very difficult to ascertain without a detailed understanding of the site's history, even where a greater proportion of original fabric survives. The former uses of these buildings greatly contributes to the special interest of the conservation area as many are now very rare or unique surviving examples of their typology.

The museum occupancy of the A Magazine complex, the light industrial (brewing) use of E Magazine, and the current storage function of other historic buildings on the site are appropriate uses for these significant buildings in that they have a generally low impact on surviving historic fabric and because they retain industrial functions, or evidence and interpretation of it.

Historically, there was very little accommodation on site. This was confined to the officers' quarters (demolished 1950s) and some cottages for the laboratory workers (Grade II): the increasing proportion of residential buildings in the conservation area do not contribute to its historic character and appearance.

12.6 Boundaries and streetscape features

Historically there were very few internal boundaries within Priddy's Hard as it was under single ownership and security relied heavily on its outer perimeter of defences. Therefore few historic boundary treatments and streetscape features survive following the postclosure redevelopment of the site. This makes the few surviving elements of even greater significance as vestigial evidence of the site's former streetscape character.

Of particular interest are the highly ornate cast iron lamp posts of c.1903-1911 along the central drive of the historic core (immediately west of A Magazine), which contrast the strictly functional design of the buildings around them and exhibit high-quality Edwardian craftsmanship. Several others are held in store by the Property Trust.

Other elements include signage and, in a few areas and especially in and around the site of the former shell store (destroyed 2004), the remains of the once extensive internal tramway system that was the principal means of moving explosives and ordnance around the yard. Adjacent to the camber is a characterful electricity box with the raised letters 'Priddys Hard Electricity Supply'. This is another significant streetscape feature.

Elsewhere, some depot buildings are linked or enclosed by high brick walls constructed from the same brick as the buildings, such as immediately south of A Magazine, which are

illustrative of the need for security and managing movement at the depot even within the protective line of fortifications.



Figure 25 Red brick with burnt headers and natural slate are the prevailing historic building materials



Figure 26 Ornate cast iron lamp post adjacent to the imposing, robust form of A Magazine

The boundary treatments and streetscape features within the areas of modern housing, such as grass lawns, historic-style lamp posts and extensive parking bays, do not contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Modern fencing is a prominent feature of much of the site. There are two types in particular: tall security palisades around the fortifications, the museum zone and elsewhere, erected to combat the persistent problems of antisocial behaviour; and, steel railings erected around what are understood to be areas of high ground contamination.

All this modern fencing detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting and appreciation of highly significant historic structures, such as the fortifications

12.7 Harbour structures

Structures associated with the harbour are important to mention here given their integral role to the historic operation of the ordnance depot:

- The camber (c.1777, rebuilt early 1800s, Grade II listed)
- The sea walls (nineteenth and twentieth century, non-designated heritage asset)
- The shell pier (c.1902, non-designated heritage asset)
- The Forton Lake jetty (c.1910s, non-designated heritage asset)

These structures played vital roles in the functioning of the depot throughout its operation and illustrate an evolution in the way in which explosives and munitions were moved into and out of the depot, initially entirely through the camber and later via the shell pier and its accompanying powder pier (demolished). They are significant structures which provide evidence of the site's former use and make a major positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

12.8 Modern housing

A range of approaches were taken in the design of the housing constructed within the conservation area since the early 2000s. This has included:

- The historicist, Neo-Georgian apartment block roughly located on the site of the Officers' Quarters (demolished 1950s);
- The sleek, contemporary detached houses constructed within the traverses overlooking Forton Lake;
- The low-rise blocks constructed in the mid-2000s to early 2010s which draw on the forms and massing of the larger former depot buildings;
- The properties recently built within and around the left demi-bastion, which are a modern stylistic interpretation of the traditional terraced house.

This range of designs and typologies demonstrates the diverse ways in which the design of new buildings within conservation areas can be approached. While some of these new buildings are of a high-quality design, they do not in themselves contribute to the special interest of the conservation area as they are recent additions of no historical or architectural interest in heritage terms. This may change with time as the prevailing character of Priddy's Hard continues to evolve.



Figure 27 The Camber (Grade II listed)



Figure 28 Modern housing within the left demi-bastion

13.0

Open space and ecology

13.1 Summary

The conservation area contains diverse areas of open space, from steep-sided earthen ramparts to densely-wooded areas of nature conservation. The entire network of open space is man-made, although nature has been allowed or actively encouraged to take hold in some areas. Open space contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area both for its historic interest but also for its archaeological, landscape, ecological and amenity value:

- Eighteenth-century fortifications are of high historical and archaeological interest as part of the Gosport Lines – some of the best-preserved eighteenth-century fortifications in the country.
- The field of fire has been 'recreated' through re-landscaping as an open public space.
 - Priddy's Hard Local Nature Reserve positively contributes to the conservation area due to its ecological value although is unlikely to reflect the historic form of the area (probably cleared ground).
- Some green open space within the central historic core retains its historic form and illustrates how space was left between and around some buildings for aesthetic or safety reasons.
- The fortifications remain a hard barrier to movement throughout the conservation area – in a sense maintaining their historic function. Restricted public access to them impedes their ability to reveal the conservation area's special interest to visitors.
- Forton Lake and Portsmouth Harbour (partially within the conservation area) are heavily protected for their internationally important ecological value

13.2 Character of open space

The open green space within the conservation area falls into five categories:

- The fortifications
- The field of fire
- The Priddy's Hard Nature Reserve and wooded banks of the cordite stores
- Public open space within the central historic core
- Public and private open space within the areas of modern housing

All of these areas are designated in Gosport's Local Plan as Protected Open Space, which places strict limits on planning applications in these areas.

13.2.1 The fortifications

The fortifications comprise a network of earth ramparts arranged around two demi-bastions which project westward in an arrowhead shape. The wet moat retains a concrete causeway installed in the late 1800s and traverses cut into the western slopes of the inner ramparts to house shell-filling rooms. Elements of standing archaeology from all phases of use survive throughout the moated area and in places on top of the ramparts.

After the closure of the depot, vegetation grew up over the ramparts and within the moat. In some places, this growth has developed into larger mature trees. In recent years, the slopes of the ramparts have been cleared of scrubby vegetation, better revealing their underlying form.

The principal contribution made by the fortifications to the character and appearance of the conservation area is through the archaeological and historical interest as part of the Gosport Lines, some of the best-preserved eighteenth-century fortifications in the country.

The archaeological value of the fortifications is recognised through their designation as a Scheduled Monument. The surviving structures associated with the depot's expansion into the moat are also of historical and archaeological interest as arguably the best-preserved contiguous area of the former depot dating from the major late-nineteenth-century expansion.

The existence of trees and vegetation within the ramparts breaks from their historic character (they would have been kept clear to ensure clear lines of fire) but is now part of their established character. Furthermore, they give the area ecological value as a habitat for protected species including Great Crested Newts, a consideration which is no less important in the conservation area's preservation and enhancement than its broader historical and architectural interest.



Figure 29 The moat within the fortifications is now an important wildlife habitat

13.2.2 The field of fire

This part of the conservation area has evolved from originally an area of cleared ground providing clear lines of sight from the fortifications, to an integral part of the ordnance depot complex following its expansion out of the fortifications in the later-nineteenth century, to its current character as a public open space, cleared of buildings and re-landscaped as a playing field.

This latest stage in the area's history allows an appreciation of its historic form and relationship with the fortifications. The field of fire possesses archaeological potential due to its continuous use and development since the eighteenth century. It also has landscape and amenity value as a well-used public space with attractive views out across Portsmouth Harbour and the local nature reserve.

13.2.3 Priddy's Hard Local Nature Reserve and the cordite stores

After closure of the depot and the site's designation as a conservation area, these parts of the conservation area were given over to wildlife and are now designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Both are now densely wooded and provide locally important wildlife habitats. The earth banks around the cordite stores – built up to contain blast damage in the event of an accidental explosion – possess historical interest along with their ecological value, as surviving evidence of the ordnance depot's expansion beyond the fortifications and rare surviving examples of this building typology.



Figure 30 The field of fire

13.2.4 Public open space within the central historic core

Since the opening of the Explosion! Museum, the grass lawns around A Magazine and in front of the 1811 Office Block have been in use as public open spaces by visitors to Priddy's Hard for picnicking and recreation. These spaces preserve their historic forms and are a significant surviving element of the ordnance depot's layout. Both provide relief to an area characterised by hard surfaces and austere structures, and form an important part of the setting of the buildings surrounding them, in particular allowing clear views of the Office Block and A Magazine.

13.2.5 Public open space within the areas of modern housing

Public realm in the housing areas around Heritage Way and Searle Drive preserves no legible traces of the area's former operation as an ordnance depot and is primarily designed for visual amenity and to serve the needs of the area's residents. The landscaping of the lawns, paths and drives in front of the recreated Officers' Block overlooking Forton Lake is based on historic map evidence of their layout and are a positive element of character. This area also has archaeological potential due to its location within the former core of the ordnance depot.

The housing development has also preserved many mature trees which, based on historic aerial photography, had grown up within the depot as early as the 1940s. These street trees contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area through their intrinsic aesthetic value and providing relief to streetscapes characterised by hard surfaces, but also for their ecological value.



Figure 31 The public realm within the modern housing neighbourhood has an entirely modern, urban residential character which does not contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area

13.3 Access and movement

Access and movement through the site when the depot was operational was heavily regulated and carefully managed for safety and security reasons. Movement was primarily by way of manual (and later mechanically-driven) tramways used to move munitions and explosives around the site in a stable, controlled manner. Land access to the depot was only possible through two guarded entrances – a main gate to the north of the fortifications and across Forton Lake Bridge (rebuilt in 2001). Remnants of these historic movement patterns and access arrangements survive today, both tangibly, such as surviving sections of tramway and the concrete causeway within the moat, and in a more abstract sense through the sustained relative isolation of Priddy's Hard from the surrounding area.

Today, access to open space within the conservation area allows the public to appreciate the heritage interest of these spaces and the historic structures and buildings surrounding them. It also enhances the amenity of the area and promotes it as a place where the public are welcome to explore the unique and highly significant environment of the conservation area, both for its heritage and ecological value.

However, access to some significant areas is currently restricted. In the case of the cordite stores, this is because they are privately owned. With the fortifications, health and safety risks and antisocial behaviour have required the erection of high security fencing. This limits the ability of the public to understand and appreciate the form, and significance of these areas. Nevertheless, it is hoped that limited access to the ramparts will be possible in the future (see section 14.0, p.59).

The fortifications create a barrier across the landscape. This is historically significant: the fortifications were designed to prevent access to Priddy's Hard. However, this limits movement between the inner core of the conservation area and the land north and west of the fortifications.

13.4 Ecology

Large areas of the conservation area and its immediate surroundings possess significant ecological value:

- Priddy's Hard Nature Reserve and the densely-wooded banks of the cordite stores are designated by the Borough Council as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.
- The ramparts are home to protected species including bats.
- Portsmouth Harbour and Forton Lake are heavily protected as estuarine habitats of national and international importance (particularly for seabirds). They are designated as a Ramsar site, Special Protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Throughout the conservation area, there are many native species of trees which make a positive contribution to character and appearance but which are also of considerable landscape and ecological value. Trees are an important element of the conservation area's appearance and have been a feature of its landscape for many decades.

This ecological value makes a strongly positive contribution to its character and appearance. The designations ensure that these natural habitats are also maintained and strictly regulated through the planning process.

Sometimes it is necessary to balance ecological and heritage considerations. A recent example is the scheduled monument, which has been subject to a programme of controlled clearance to better reveal its significance and prevent deterioration of the monument whilst maintaining a biodiverse mixed grassland and woodland habitat. The cordite stores is another area that would benefit from a planned approach to management of ecology and archaeology.

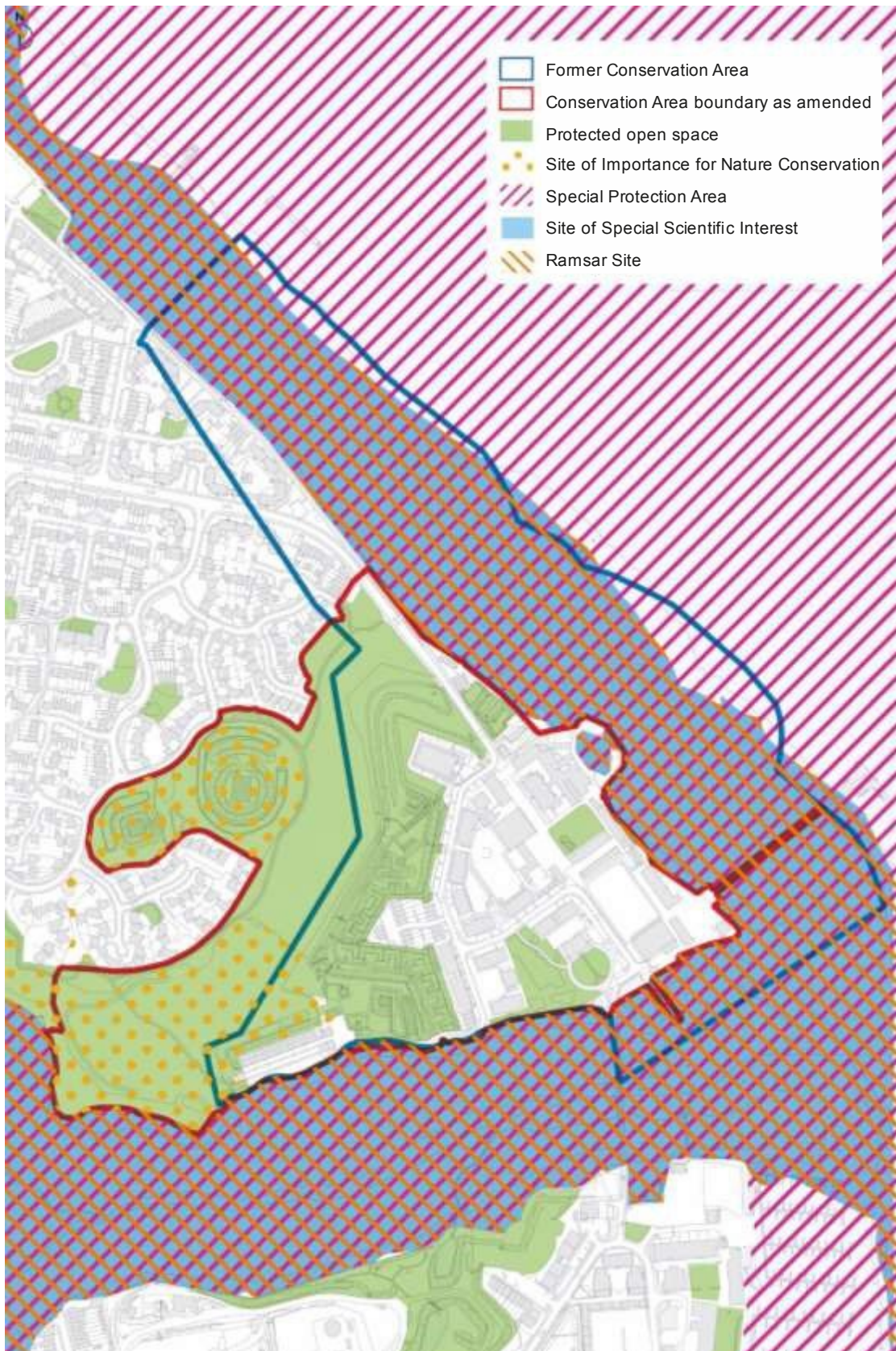


Figure 32 Map illustrating the landscape and ecology designations applying to the conservation area

14.0 Views

14.1 Views diagram

The diagram below illustrates a sample of the significant views which capture key elements of the conservation area's character and appearance, or its relationship to its wider setting. These are representative; it is not possible to capture every significant view within a conservation area of the complexity and unique spatial character of Priddy's Hard, and other views of comparable significance will exist and may be identified by the Borough Council.



Figure 33 Views diagram

14.2 The importance of views

Views make an important contribution to our ability to understand and appreciate the character and appearance of the conservation area. They convey the special and unique character of Priddy's Hard, capturing contrasting elements of character which define its special interest, such as natural and historic built environments. They also help to understand its historical, functional and landscape context.

By the nature of the unique spatial characteristics of Priddy's Hard, significant and enjoyable views are widespread within the conservation area. Most fall into one of four principal categories:

14.3 Key views

Seascape panoramas across Portsmouth Harbour and Forton Lake. These panoramic views capture both the intrinsic aesthetic and topographical qualities of the harbour but also naval activities which continue to take place there, illustrating the strategic and functional location of Priddy's Hard within the UK's principal base of naval operations. Clear views are gained from the camber of the Upper Harbour Ammunitioning Facility, where the process of loading munitions onto naval vessels continues to this day just a short distance from the conservation area, illustrating a significant historical continuity.



Figure 34 Seascape view featuring HMS Queen Elizabeth, the Royal Navy Fleet Flagship

Historic streetscape vistas. These views can be appreciated dynamically, moving through the complex assortment of historic buildings and structures in the central core, or from fixed positions, such as standing on the lawn in front of the Office Block. They capture the intricate layout of the site, and the sequences of buildings arranged to follow industrial processes rather than conventions of urban planning. They also capture the harmony of design between structures built decades apart and for different specialised uses.



Figure 35 Historic streetscape view

Views from the fortifications. These views are best experienced dynamically, moving along the ridge of the ramparts or along the concrete causeway within the moat. These views are highly evocative of the commanding defensive position the fortifications afforded looking across the field of fire, but also reveal the cross-sectional form of the ramparts which cannot be appreciated from beyond their perimeter. The growth of trees and wetland plants within the moat adds a sense of enclosure and tranquillity to views from within the moat. Here, the abandoned remains of munitions depot structures, tramways and other infrastructure are highly evocative, with a fragile character unlike anywhere else in the conservation area

The public have only very limited access to these views at present.



Figure 36 View within the moat – a contrast of natural and man-made forms

Views from the field of fire. These views can be experienced dynamically or from fixed positions. The primary value of such views is the intrinsic aesthetic quality of the landscape – some formally managed and some more wild – that has developed after the closure of the ordnance depot. These views are expansive and have a ‘big sky’ character because of the scale of the space. Dense vegetation and mature trees around the perimeter create a pleasant sense of enclosure. Because of the vegetation, in these views it is difficult to appreciate or understand the fortifications, and there is no sense of the historic infrastructure within them.



Figure 37 View from the field of fire

14.4 Focal points

Focal points are prominent buildings or structures (or sometimes spaces) which make a significant positive contribution to views in the conservation area.

The flat topography of the conservation area and the relatively modest scale of historic buildings within it limit focal points to the following buildings and structures which, by virtue of scale, design and placement relative to their surroundings, are prominent in views:

- A Magazine (1777)
- Office Block (1811, extended 1920s)
- Shell pier and pontoon (c.1900). NOTE: the eastern end of this structure lies beyond the boundary of Gosport Borough.



Figure 38 'A' Magazine

15.0 Heritage assets and areas of weakened character

15.1 Designated heritage assets

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area is considered a 'designated heritage asset' in the planning system, meaning that it has legal protection under legislation. Conservation areas are designated in order to preserve and enhance their special historic and architectural interest.

Within the conservation area there are two additional types of designated heritage asset: listed buildings and a scheduled monument.

Listed buildings are buildings or structures that have been designated by national government as having special historic or architectural interest at a national level; they are subject to listed building consent controls. Priddy's Hard contains 24 listed buildings, which are listed in the Gazetteer of Heritage Assets in Part 5 (p. 97) and shown on the map on p.20.

Scheduled monuments are nationally important archaeological sites which are protected from uncontrolled development or change under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. At Priddy's Hard, the eighteenth-century fortifications are a scheduled monument.

For further details of listed buildings and scheduled monuments, see <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/> and to find individual list descriptions, search the National Heritage List for England at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>.

In the case of listed buildings, this document does not identify the extent of the listed building or associated 'curtilage' buildings and structures to which listed building consent might apply. Please consult Gosport Borough Council for advice on the extent and curtilage of individual listed buildings.

15.2 Non-designated heritage assets

According to the government's Planning Practice Guidance, non-designated heritage assets are locally-identified 'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets'.

15.2.1 Locally listed buildings and parks and gardens

Non-designated heritage assets are commonly identified by Local Planning Authorities through the production and maintenance of a local list of heritage assets.

Gosport Borough Council maintains a list of locally important heritage assets, including locally listed buildings, and parks and gardens of local heritage interest. The preservation of the significance of these heritage assets is a material consideration in planning applications, under policy LP13 of the Local Plan 2011-2029. These assets are considered non-designated heritage assets, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Local List of Heritage Assets and associated designation criteria can be found at this link: <https://www.gosport.gov.uk/article/1205/Conservation-and-Design>

There are no locally listed buildings or locally listed parks and gardens within Priddy's Hard Conservation Area.

15.2.2 Other non-designated heritage assets

Alongside locally listed buildings and parks and gardens, there are other unlisted buildings, structures, landscapes, sites, places and archaeology that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area but which have not previously been identified by the Borough Council and do not necessarily merit inclusion on the Local List. These are identified in this appraisal as 'non-designated heritage assets', as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. Some may have suffered from superficially unsympathetic alteration or deterioration through long-term vacancy, but nevertheless make a positive contribution because of the underlying integrity and interest of the historic building or place.

Non-designated heritage assets are also considered to contribute to the significance of the conservation area (which is a designated heritage asset) and their loss would be considered harmful to the area's character and/or appearance. Part 4, Section 2 provides more details of the methodology used to identify non-designated heritage assets.

The criteria for identifying non-designated heritage assets is the same as that for identifying and designating locally listed buildings and parks and gardens, which can be found via the link above and in section 29.4.

The contribution made by a building or structure to the character and appearance of the conservation area is not limited to its front elevations but can also derive from its integrity as an historic structure and the effect it has in three dimensions. Rear and side elevations can be important, as well as views from alleys and yards. Contribution to the conservation areas may derive as much from what the building or structure reveals about the history of the place as from any aesthetic value.

16 buildings and structures have been identified as non-designated heritage assets in this CAAMP. These are listed in the Heritage Assets Gazetteer in Part 5 (p. 97) and shown on the map on p.20.

15.3 Areas of weakened character

In some instances, parts of a conservation area may have been so extensively redeveloped or changed since designation that they may now make only a minimal or no contribution to the special architectural or historic interest for which the conservation area was designated. These can be considered as 'areas of weakened character', where special efforts should be made to avoid further loss of special interest and all opportunities to enhance the character of the conservation area should be taken.

At Priddy's Hard, residential redevelopment helped to breathe new life into a highly specialised site that was left without function, and at risk of abandonment or substantial loss. Its construction, however, caused the removal of most of the former depot buildings and the historic road network from all but the most significant eastern section of the depot. As a result, standing in the new residential neighbourhood today, it is today to appreciate the historic character for which the area was designated. As such, this part of the conservation area is considered an 'area of weakened character'.



Figure 39 Grade II* listed E Magazine



Figure 40 Map of heritage designations and character

16.0 Character zones

16.1 Identifying character zones

In some conservation areas, it is possible to identify subsidiary zones that are discernibly different from one another, based on their spatial character, architectural qualities, historical development and the contribution they make to the conservation area. At Priddy's Hard, there are four zones of discernibly different character. The features and individual characteristics of each zone which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area are summarised below.

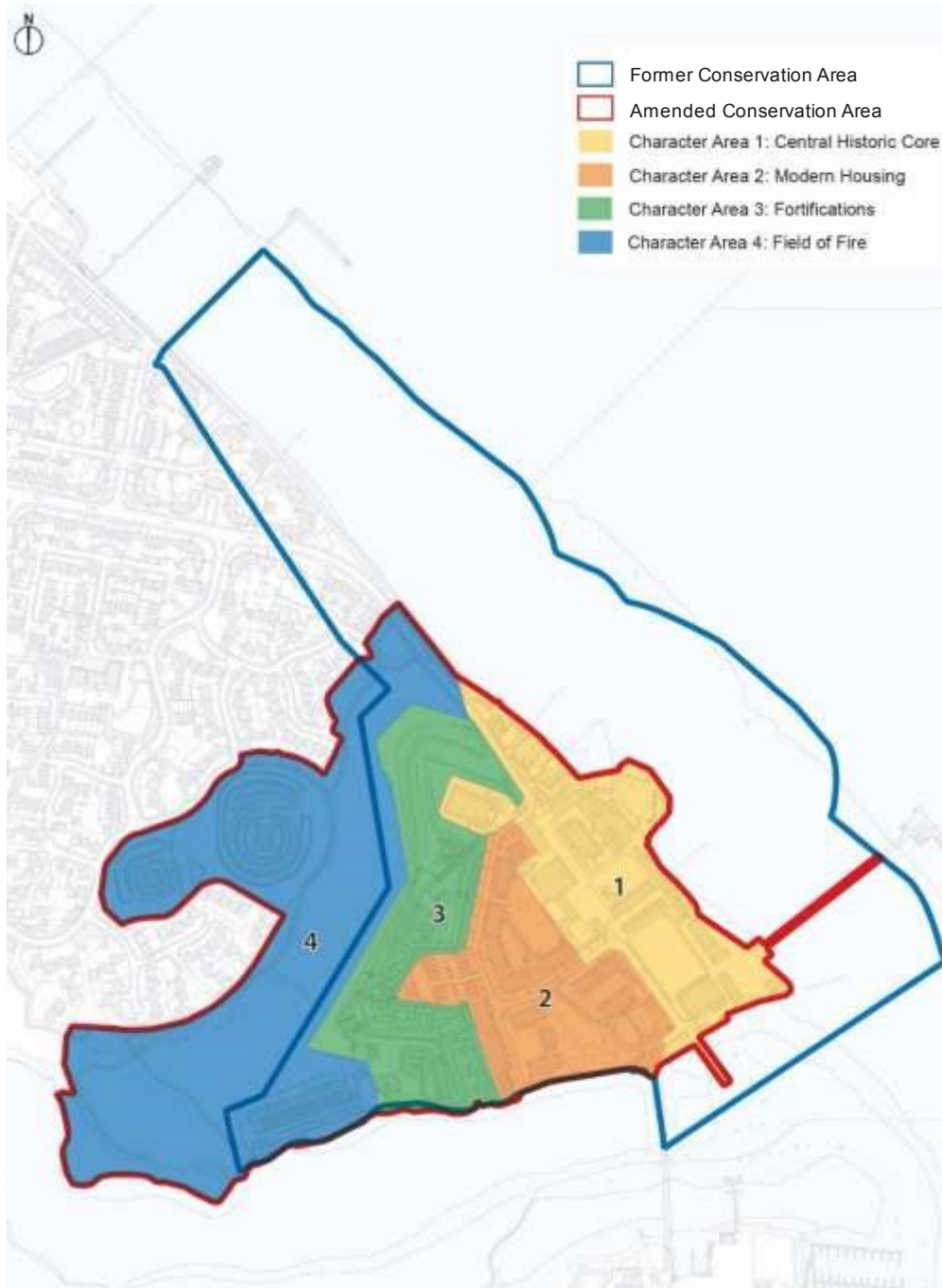


Figure 41 Map of the character zones within Priddy's Hard Conservation Area

16.2 Character Zone 1: Central Historic Core

16.2.1 Extent

- Buildings and spaces to the east of the principal north-west route through Priddy's Hard, plus some outlying buildings immediately to the west.

16.2.2 Distinctive positive characteristics

- Nationally important survival of highly specialised historic buildings, some unique survivals, which together form the most complete contiguous surviving area of the former ordnance depot, and individually comprise the most significant individual buildings within the conservation area.
- Orthogonal arrangement of buildings along a central axis, the planning driven by the historic industrial processes and their evolution. with
- Buildings are uniformly constructed of red brick with pitched or hipped slate roofs; of one to two storeys, with a regular arrangement of punched windows containing a range of historic window types, and reinforced with buttresses (battered or flat).
- Survival of tramway rails, historic railings, lampposts and other public realm elements.
- Harbourfront buildings generally turn their backs to the harbour, illustrating inwardfacing character of the depot.

16.2.3 Issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities

- Site of the former shell store is empty and awaiting development.
- Some historic buildings remain in a semi-derelict and long-vacant state. The longer buildings remain vacant the greater the chances of avoidable loss of significant fabric through building degradation.
- Future regeneration and redevelopment of these areas and buildings should conserve and where possible enhance the special character of the conservation area, including listed buildings and other historic buildings, structures, surfaces etc that positively contribute to special interest.
- Lack of interpretation (away from the museum buildings) impede public understanding of the highly complex site.
- Shortage of public access to the harbourside, which could be improved.
- Unattractive and unwelcoming security fencing.



Alan Baxter

Figure 42 Central historic core character zone

16.3 Character Zone 2: Modern Housing

16.3.1 Extent

Neighbourhood of low-rise apartment blocks and short terraces constructed between c.2005 and 2022 in the central and western areas of land within the fortifications, extending into the southern demi-bastion.

16.3.2 Distinctive characteristics

- Modern residential form and layout.
- Some design cues from historic buildings in the conservation area, such as construction in brick, pitched slate roofs, punched windows and square buttresses
- Mass and height of many block greater than the historic character of the site.

16.3.3 Issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities

- Considered an 'area of weakened character' due to general loss of special interest and lack of interpretation of the area's former character.
- Scale and arrangement of buildings and the nature of the public realm does not reflect the site-specific character of Priddy's Hard.
- Public realm appears to lack climate resilience with large areas of hardstanding and few street trees to provide cooling.
- Prevalence of steel fencing, some believed to fence off areas of high ground contamination.



Alan Baxter

Figure 43 Modern housing character zone

16.4 Character Zone 3: The fortifications

16.4.1 Extent

Star-shaped earthworks extending in an arc through the middle of the conservation area from Forton Lake in the south to Portsmouth Harbour in the north-east. The character area largely mirrors the footprint of the scheduled monument.

16.4.2 Distinctive characteristics

- Legible network of well-preserved eighteenth-century earthworks, which have been better revealed in recent years through selective clearance of scrubby vegetation.
- Evocative surviving industrial archaeology relating to expansion of the ordnance depot into the moat in the late nineteenth century, including concrete causeways, brick huts, steel gantries and bridges.
- The waterlogged moat and mature trees within the fortifications are of landscape and ecological value in providing habitats for protected species and for their intrinsic aesthetic qualities.
- Historically significant and aesthetically pleasing views can be gained from the ramparts across the field of fire, and along the moat from the causeway.

16.4.3 Issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities

- The management of the scheduled monument represents a financial and administrative burden for the landowner.
- Agreeing and maintaining a balance between the conservation of the scheduled monument's heritage and its ecological value. For example, where vegetation hosting protected species could damage the monument through uncontrolled growth
- Anti-social behaviour and vandalism requiring security fencing to protect historic structures but which harms the setting and appreciation of the scheduled monument.
- Presence of ground contamination and unexploded ordnance.
- Historically, no public access to the fortifications, limiting understanding and appreciation of the scheduled monument
- New strategy for volunteer-led management of the scheduled monument being agreed between Historic England, the Borough Council and the Property Trust, including regular guided tours.



Alan Baxter

Figure 44 Fortifications character zone

16.5 Character Zone 4: The field of fire

16.5.1 Extent

Extensive, largely undeveloped area to the west of the fortifications, extending from Forton Lake in the south-west to Portsmouth Harbour in the north-east. The westernmost section of the character zone is a local nature reserve. There are several surviving depot buildings in the southern and western sections of the character zone.

16.5.2 Distinctive characteristics

- The cordite stores have a distinctive mound-like form, largely concealed by trees, which is of historic interest in illustrating the expansion of the ordnance depot into the former field of fire to support new technologies in the late-nineteenth century.
- The clearance of depot buildings from the rest of the character zone in the 1990s and its re-landscaping as a playing field has had the effect of restoring the original openness of the area as the field of fire in front of the fortifications.
- Open spaces and densely-wooded banks of the cordite stores have significant ecological, landscape and amenity value.
- Historically significant and aesthetically pleasing views are gained of the fortifications and across Forton Lake and Portsmouth Harbour, unimpeded by built form.

16.5.3 Issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities

- Lack of interpretation limits the public's ability to appreciate and understand its historic context.
- Inability to understand from here the ramparts as fortifications because of the extent of vegetation
- Conservation of the cordite store buildings is complicated by ownership, contamination and the biodiverse woodland habitat now established here.
- Increased risk of flooding and wildfires due to climate change may harm historic buildings within the character zone, as well as potential archaeological assets.
- Extent of archaeological potential is unclear.



Alan Baxter

Figure 45 Field of fire character zone

17.0

Condition of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area

The condition of the conservation area varies greatly across the site. There are significant elements which are in good condition as the result of years of investment by the Property Trust, the National Museum of the Royal Navy, the Borough Council, Historic England and other partners:

- Many of the former depot buildings have now been sensitively refurbished and put to appropriate new uses, initially under the ownership of Gosport Borough Council and then of the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, the current landowner.
- The programme of works to improve the condition of buildings and boundary treatments is ongoing and continues to improve the overall condition of the conservation area.
- Levels of public activity in the conservation area are increasing due to the pull of attractions like the Explosion! Museum and the Powder Monkey brewery and taproom, as well as the increasing numbers of residents within the conservation area. This is making the conservation area a more vibrant and amenable place.
- The public realm is in generally good condition and well-maintained both within the central historic core and within the outlying areas of modern housing and public open space beyond the fortifications.

There are other elements of the conservation area which remain in a poor or deteriorating condition:

- Some former depot building and areas, including some listed buildings, remain vacant and in a semi-derelict state. The longer these buildings are vacant the more susceptible they are to further degradation of fabric and loss of significance.
- The condition of the fortifications (a scheduled monument) has not been assessed in detail. The surviving built structures within the moated area are mostly severely deteriorated after a long period of disuse. The condition of the earth ramparts is difficult to assess because of the extent of vegetation coverage, but uncontrolled tree growth may be having a detrimental effect on the earthworks.

The following listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets are currently vacant and a future use is not secured:

- Mines and countermines store (Grade II)
- East range of laboratory complex and attached rolling way (Grade II)
- North range of laboratory complex and attached building to the north-east (Grade II)
- C Magazine (Grade II*)
- Shifting room to south-west of C Magazine (Grade II)
- Expense magazine with traverse walls for shell filling rooms (Grade II)
- c.1860-74 fire engine shed (Non-designated heritage asset)



Alan Baxter

Figure 46 Grade II listed shell painting room currently lying vacant



Alan Baxter

Figure 47 Grade II listed building sensitively refurbished and repurposed to a sustainable new use



Figure 48 Phasing diagram of Priddy's Hard, showing extant depot buildings in 1988, the year of closure. Each building is coloured according to the phase of development in which it was constructed.



Figure 49 Phasing diagram of Priddy's Hard, showing extant depot buildings in 2022. Each building is coloured according to the phase of development in which it was constructed. Note the dramatic contraction of the site to a central historic core along the harbourfront, compared to the 1988 phasing diagram.

Part 4 Management Plan

18.0

Managing change in the historic environment

This Management Plan contains analysis, overarching principles and specific recommendations which have emerged from the assessment of the Priddy's Hard Conservation Area and consultation on it, to help GBC and its partners manage change across the area. It is presented in seven sections:

- 19.0 Management recommendations summary
- 20.0 Summary of vulnerabilities and opportunities
- 21.0 Conservation of Heritage Assets
- 22.0 Future regeneration
- 23.0 Access, security and movement
- 24.0 Managing public realm and open space
- 25.0 Improving interpretation
- 26.0 Boundary review

19.0

Management recommendations summary

The table below lists recommendations for ongoing management of the conservation areas to preserve and enhance their special interest. A more detailed description of recommendations and implementation guidance is provided in the proceeding sections.

Number	Responsibility	Recommendation	Timeframe
Conservation of heritage assets			
1	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, with support from GBC, HE, NMRN and other partners	Stakeholders should continue joint efforts to reverse the poor condition of the parts of the conservation area in order to remove it from the Heritage at Risk Register.	Short term
2	GBC	The loss of listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets shall be resisted and should be wholly exceptional, where held to be strictly necessary and strongly justifiable.	Ongoing
3	GBC	The Borough Council will support efforts to conserve and enhance the central historic core and all other heritage assets within the conservation area, whether designated or non-designated, to halt further loss of significance through fabric degradation and secure their longer-term survival, including adaptation for sustainable new uses.	Short to medium term
4	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, in partnership with HE, HCC and GBC	Balanced conservation and management of the Schedule Monument should be guided by a Scheduled Monument Management Plan.	Short term
Future regeneration			
5	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC	The landowner and developers should work closely with Gosport Borough Council and other stakeholders to ensure that any new development preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area and integrates surviving historic fabric.	Medium term
6	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC	The Borough Council should consider options for securing the conservation, reuse and interpretation of surviving historic buildings and infrastructure through redevelopment proposals, to include the use of Section 106 agreements.	Medium term

Access, security and movement			
7	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC	The Borough Council will support and encourage greater public access to the harbour front.	Short to medium term
8	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust	The Borough Council will support and encourage regular public access to the scheduled fortifications.	Short term
9	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, with GBC, HE and NMRN.	Options should be explored for the redesign, reduction and where possible removal of security fencing from around the central historic core and the fortifications, in order to improve the setting of heritage assets and the appearance of the conservation area.	Medium to longer term
Managing public realm and open space			
10	GBC, HCC, Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust	The Borough Council should work with the landowner and stakeholders to secure the protection and enhancement of the internationally, nationally and locally important habitats and protected open space within and adjacent to the conservation area.	Ongoing
11	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, housing management company, GBC	The Borough Council, the Property Trust, the housing management company and stakeholders should identify and coordinate short-, medium- and long-term means to enhance the public realm throughout the conservation area.	Ongoing
Climate change adaptation and mitigation			
12	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, developers and building owners	All new development within Priddy's Hard Conservation Area should achieve the highest standards of energy efficiency, and that the sustainable retrofit of existing buildings is to an exemplary standard, ensuring that such measures are without detriment to the character and appearance of the conservation area.	Short to medium term

13	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC, HCC, HE	The Borough Council, Property Trust, HCC and management company should develop a coordinated approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures within the conservation area, particularly relating to flood defences.	Medium term
Improving interpretation			
14	Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust with input from GBC	The Borough Council should engage with the Property Trust, management company and other key stakeholders including Historic England and Hampshire County Council improve public understanding of Priddy's Hard through on-site and off-site interpretation measures.	Short to medium term
Boundary review			
15	Gosport Borough Council	In addition to adopting this CAAMP as part of the Local Development Framework, the Borough Council has adopted the revisions to the boundary of Priddy's Hard Conservation Area, to better reflect the current extent of special interest.	Immediate

20.0

Summary of vulnerabilities and opportunities

The principal vulnerabilities and opportunities within the conservation area are:

- **Demolition of historic buildings and structures.** Loss of character since designation of the conservation area, caused by the demolition of historic buildings formerly associated with the Royal Ordnance Depot, many to facilitate residential redevelopment. This has erased evidence of the site's history and historic appearance from large areas of the conservation area.
- **Regeneration of at risk buildings and sites.** As a result of decades of investment, only a few areas of the site remain to be regenerated. A conservation led approach to this task, that retains and exploits historic character and buildings, will enhance the special interest of the conservation area and help to sustain its use and vitality.
- **Monument management.** Long-term management of the fortifications places a financial and administrative burden on the landowner. Ecology, conservation of the historic environment, public safety and anti-social behaviour have to be balanced.
- **Public access to the harbourfront and fortifications.** Public access to the harbourfront and the fortifications is currently limited. Improving access is an opportunity to better reveal and explain the site's special interest and history, and draw more visitors to the site.
- **Climate change.** Priddy's Hard is likely to be susceptible to the damaging impacts of climate change because of its low-lying, coastal location. A primary concern is the increasing likelihood of more frequent flooding events, which will need to be designed into future developments.
- **Vandalism.** Vandalism and antisocial behaviour continue to affect the conservation area, with the loss of the Grade II listed Shell Store to arson in 2004 as a particularly stark example. Notwithstanding this, efforts to reduce or redesign security fencing would enhance the appearance of the conservation area and create a more welcoming environment for visitors.
- **Interpretation.** Both on- and off-site interpretation requires improvement to better inform the public about the great significance of Priddy's Hard and its importance in the wider context of Portsmouth Harbour's maritime history.

The following sections outline management recommendations and guidance to address these considerations, and maintain and celebrate the very special interest of this conservation area.

21.0

Conservation of heritage assets

21.1 Heritage at Risk

Recommendation 001 – Stakeholders should continue joint efforts to reverse the poor condition of the parts of the conservation area in order to remove it from the Heritage at Risk Register.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, with support from GBC, HE, NMRN and other partners

Explanation

Priddy's Hard Conservation Area is currently on HE's Heritage at Risk Register. Here, its condition is described as 'Very bad', its vulnerability as 'High' and the trend as 'Deteriorating significantly'. The entry can be read at this link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/2925>

The Character Appraisal identifies two principal causes: extensive residential redevelopment that has eroded special interest, and the vacancy, underuse and poor fabric condition of some historic structures and areas, including listed buildings such as the shell painting room (Grade II).

Over the last 15 years, the landowner, the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, has made great strides to restore and bring into sustainable new uses a range of buildings. Recently, this has included E Magazine (now a highly successful brewery). Advice, support and funding from several bodies including Gosport Borough Council, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Regional Growth Fund and Historic England.

The Trust is in the process of preparing a masterplan for the remaining areas, which will seek to regenerate former shell store area, the north and east ranges of the laboratory and the office and store block, creating a sustainable and creative mixture of uses and occupiers that will bring in more and more varied visitors.

The Borough Council will continue to support the Property Trust in these efforts. This would help to achieve Policies LP11, LP12 and LP13 of the Local Plan.

So too will Historic England, which for many years has provided financial support to projects. Recently this has been through its Repair Grants for Heritage at Risk and Heritage Action Zone schemes. More information can be found at this link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/grants/our-grant-schemes/repair-grants/>

21.2 Conserving listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets

Recommendation 002 – The loss of listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets shall be resisted and should be wholly exceptional, where held to be strictly necessary and strongly justifiable.

Responsibility GBC.

Explanation

Since designation, a significant proportion of land within the conservation area boundary has been redeveloped with housing. This has provided new uses for the site, but at the cost of many buildings and structures constructed during the area's military use. Some of these were simple post-war buildings of little historic significance, but many were constructed before 1945 and of considerable heritage significance.

Alongside these losses, there has been widespread loss of historic character, in such distinctive and highly site-specific matters as the layout of buildings, circulation patterns, tramways, paths and details such as signage and lighting. Priddy's Hard was not uniform, but an amalgam and accumulation of different phases and changes, many of which were utilitarian and industrial in their nature.

The net result of these changes is that within the fortifications, the special character and unique sense of place has shrunk back to the core alongside the harbour. In much of the housing area, there is little to indicate or reflect the site's history and form.

For these reasons, any further loss of buildings and character should be resisted in order to conserve the site's distinctive spirit of place as a military-industrial complex, not just a collection of listed historic buildings. In line with Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan, applications for the demolition of listed buildings or buildings which positively contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. In such instances, the demolition would have to be balanced by other public benefits, including heritage benefits, which outweigh the harm caused to the conservation area and the total loss of the individual building itself.

Any consent for demolition of non-designated heritage assets or listed buildings would be accompanied by a requirement by condition for a detailed (Level 3 or 4) recording of the structure prior to demolition.

Proposals should also incorporate elements of streetscape such as paving, lighting, tramways, railings or signage that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area, in compliance with Local Plan policy LP13.

21.3 Reusing historic buildings

Recommendation 003 – The Borough Council will support efforts to conserve and enhance the central historic core and all other heritage assets within the conservation area, whether designated or non-designated, to halt further loss of significance through fabric degradation and secure their longer-term survival, including adaptation for sustainable new uses.

Responsibility GBC.

Explanation

Several listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets are in urgent need of repair, refurbishment and new use, including the former laboratory buildings and the painted shell store. New uses will generate greater activity that will support existing businesses and attractions and increase passive surveillance. In all of these ways, appropriate new uses could be overwhelmingly positive for the conservation area, and go much of the way to removing the conservation area from the Heritage at Risk register, in pursuance of Policy LP11 of the Local Plan.

There are several recent successes at the site that demonstrate what can be achieved. For example, the repurposing of E Magazine as a brewery is a positive and successful example of sensitive adaptation to new use, a low-impact, light industrial activity for which the lack of windows and consistent internal temperature of the magazine was a virtue not a hindrance.

The Property Trust is encouraged to engage through pre-application discussions with GBC and HE in order to develop proposals that are viable and in compliance with GBC and national planning policy. Harm to heritage significance should be avoided; if harm is caused, it must be balanced by benefits. This balance will vary from building to building depending on planning considerations, designation status, viability, condition, degree of internal survival and building form and layout.

21.4 Scheduled monument

Recommendation 004 – Balanced conservation and management of the Schedule Monument should be guided by a Scheduled Monument Management Plan.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, in partnership with HE, HCC and GBC.

Explanation

The eighteenth-century fortifications are of national historic and archaeological significance. They are a complex scheduled monument to manage, with not only historic environment interest but also ecological and biodiversity value as a habitat for protected species such as bats.

In recent years, management of the scheduled monument has advanced considerably. A balance between conservation of the monument and its ecology has been agreed between stakeholders and implemented with funding from HE, involving a controlled programme of selected clearance of shrubs and some trees in order to open up more grassland. The Property Trust is responsible for the management of the monument, and hopes to but structured volunteer involvement may help to alleviate the burden, as well as fostering community engagement and interest in the future of the fortifications.

To build on this progress, future management of the scheduled monument should be planned and resourced to prevent avoidable loss of significance. In addition to earthworks and ecology, management should address:

- Conservation and repair of surviving infrastructure associated with the expansion of the munitions depot into the fortifications e.g. concrete causeways, bridges, lighting buildings, foundations, signage etc. The ramparts are the last area of Priddy's Hard where – despite much demolition - evidence of the distinctive character of late Victorian and early twentieth century expansion is widespread and highly evocative.
- Regular public access, taking into consideration health and safety, contamination and ecology factors.
- Security, and opportunities for reducing the harmful visual impact of the measures necessary to minimise anti-social behaviour and further arson and other irrevocable damage to significance (see also Recommendation 009 on p.89)

A Monument Management Plan signed off by all partners is recommended as a vehicle to codify and implement an agreed management approach.

22.0

Future regeneration

Recommendation 005 – The landowner and developers should work closely with Gosport Borough Council and other stakeholders to ensure that any new development preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area and integrates surviving historic fabric.

Recommendation 006 – The Borough Council should consider options for securing the conservation, reuse and interpretation of surviving historic buildings and infrastructure through redevelopment proposals, to include the use of Section 106 agreements.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC.

Explanation

Considerable progress has been made over the last two decades to regenerate the redundant site, with the area around the laboratory complex and shell stores as the principle zone still to be revived and repurposed.

This is a pivotal location between the cycle and pedestrian route to the town centre and the boat links to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, and the historic core around the Explosion! Museum. Successful regeneration here will enhance the conservation area's special character, and support and sustain its future as a mixed use, conservation-led quarter by expanding footfall, activity and diversity of uses.

In line with Local Plan policies LP10 and LP12, proposals should be conservation led and respond positively to the exceptionally rich historic context, and reflect and sustain its unique character. To achieve this, the Property Trust should:

- Analyse the lessons from previous projects in Priddy's Hard and elsewhere.
- Prepare a masterplan, to develop a holistic conservation led approach to the future of the site that takes account of its special character, its setting and the interests of stakeholders and the resident community.
- Retain and reuse listed buildings and buildings that are non-designated heritage assets to the conservation area
- Develop designs for any new buildings that respond positively to the historic character of the host area of the site in their disposition, massing, scale, height, materials and details.
- Preserve or restore the historic layout of buildings and street pattern.
- Preserve or enhance the setting and function of existing buildings.
- Design climate resilient public realm that reflects the specific character and materials of the area and incorporates surviving historic infrastructure and fabric such tramways.
- Create public access to the harbour front (see recommendation 007, on p.88).
- Conserve key views within the conservation area and out across the harbour and Forton Lake, and exploit opportunities to create new ones that better reveal the character of the site and its relationship to its setting.

Deviation from these principles will be strongly resisted unless there is a clear and convincing justification that demonstrates benefits for the conservation area which outweigh harm to its character and appearance and to individual heritage assets.

Borough Council may use planning mechanisms to secure the conservation and reuse of listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets, such as through Section 106 agreements.

23.0

Access, security and movement

23.1 Access to the harbour front

Recommendation 007 – The Borough Council will support and encourage greater public access to the harbour front.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC

Explanation

Access to the harbour front is currently limited. Creating public access to the quays of the camber and to the harbour wall in the South East corner of the site (from where there are superb views across the harbour and of modern naval activity) would allow better understanding of the conservation area's historic functional relationship to the harbour, and of its topographical and naval context.

Increased access to the harbour will therefore be strongly supported, in line with Policy LP37 of the Local Plan (Access to the coast and countryside). This is subject to the development of sensitive and proportionate solution to access and safety issues.

23.2 Access to the fortifications

Recommendation 008 – The Borough Council will support and encourage regular public access to the scheduled fortifications.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust

Explanation

This is the longest surviving length of Portsmouth Harbour's eighteenth-century fortifications to which public access is practical in the short to medium term. It is unlikely that full, unmanaged public access is possible or desirable due to levels of contamination and other health and safety risks. In light of this, stakeholders have developed proposals for regular guided tours led by volunteers.

The Borough Council is supportive of the landowner's efforts, in consultation with other stakeholders, to consider ways in which managed public access can be achieved, perhaps through guided tours on open days at manageable intervals throughout the year.

Increased access to the fortifications will therefore be strongly supported, subject to the development of sensitive and proportionate solution to access and safety issues.

23.3 Security considerations

Recommendation 009 – Options should be explored for the redesign, reduction and where possible removal of security fencing from around the central historic core and the fortifications, in order to improve the setting of heritage assets and the appearance of the conservation area.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, with GBC, HE and NMRN.

Explanation

Antisocial behaviour is a significant problem at Priddy's Hard. It is a direct threat to the conservation of historic buildings and structures, as acts of arson and vandalism have sadly demonstrated.

Access to the central historic core of the conservation area, which contains the Explosion! Museum and other businesses, is managed by means of steel palisade fencing at either end of the principal north-south route through the site, with additional stretches of this fencing in other places to control access into the central core from surrounding areas. The fortifications are similarly ringed by steel railings, preventing uncontrolled public access.

The desirability of managing access to these parts of the conservation is fully recognised, given the high significance of the heritage assets and security concerns of the businesses in this area. However, the existing steel palisade fencing is visually obtrusive and considered inappropriate in the setting of listed buildings. It creates a negative impression to visitors arriving at the site.

The landowner, with support from the Borough Council, the Property Trust and partners should undertake a comprehensive review of security measures and fencing and where possible remove, reduce or redesign fencing and railings. These improvements could be implemented over a number of years, to spread the annual financial burden.

One additional consideration to managing access through the conservation area could be the creation of a route along the harbour front, thus enhancing movement through the area whilst maintaining security to the central historic core.

24.0

Managing public realm and open space

24.1 Ecological and landscape conservation

Recommendation 010 – The Borough Council should work with the landowner and stakeholders to secure the protection and enhancement of the internationally, nationally and locally important habitats and protected open space within and adjacent to the conservation area.

Responsibility

GBC, HCC, Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust

Explanation

The established character of Priddy's Hard is now almost as closely linked to the landscape, ecological and amenity value of its open spaces as it is to the historic built environment. Portsmouth Harbour and Forton Lake are heavily protected through ecological designations, while Priddy's Hard Nature Reserve is locally protected for its ecological value. In addition, the greater part of the open space within the conservation area is protected open space in GBC's Local Plan. By virtue of the way in which the Harbour, Forton Lake and the Field of Fire strongly define the character and key views within the conservation area, these open spaces contribute significantly to the special interest of the conservation area from a heritage perspective, in parallel to their nature designations.

The importance of preserving these natural environments is outlined in the Local Plan Policies LP35, LP42, LP43 and LP44, which strictly limit the circumstances in which planning permission will be granted in areas covered by ecological or landscape designations.

For these reasons, development proposals affecting the conservation area or its setting should consider any potential impacts upon the ecological and landscape value of the area from the outset and avoid any harmful impacts. Climate change adaptation measures also subject to this, including improvements to flood risk defences.

24.2 Public realm enhancements

Recommendation 011 – The Borough Council, the Property Trust, the housing management company and stakeholders should identify and coordinate short-, medium- and long-term means to enhance the public realm throughout the conservation area.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, housing management company, GBC

Explanation

The urban realm in and around the housing erected over the last few years fails in three ways to conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area:

- The materials, layout and design do not reflect the specific character of the place.
- There are numerous railings and similar barriers
- There is a shortage of trees and biodiverse planting

Moving forward, it is important to ensure that a different approach is taken, where the character of the historic urban realm better shapes future development proposals and opportunities are exploited to remedy some of the factors outlined above. This will become

ever more important as Gosport adapts to a changing climate, for example with the planting of additional street trees to increase rainwater interception across the mostly hard landscaped area of modern housing.

This may be achieved through the development of an urban realm design code, produced in collaboration or coordination between the Borough Council, the landowner, Natural England and HE, to ensure new development delivers public realm of the highest quality.

25.0

Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Recommendation 012 – All new development within Priddy’s Hard Conservation Area should achieve the highest standards of energy efficiency, and that the sustainable retrofit of existing buildings is to an exemplary standard, whilst ensuring that such measures are without detriment to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, developers and building owners

Explanation

Gosport Borough Council passed a resolution in 2020 to acknowledge climate change and the need for action (more information at this [link](#)). The Borough Council is working to achieve net-zero emissions across the Borough by 2050, in line with its legal duty under the Climate Change Act 2008, amended 2019. The urgent need for action is embedded in the Draft Gosport Borough Local Plan 2040 which places addressing climate change as an overarching priority.

The Borough Council recognises that Gosport is susceptible to a six ‘high priority risks’ identified in the Government’s latest Climate Change Risk Assessment, namely:

- Flooding and coastal change
- Heat waves
- Water shortages
- Damage to ecosystems, soils and biodiversity
- Impacts on domestic and international food production
- New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species.

If these risks are not managed, they will cause health problems, increase costs to the Council and to individuals and business, and degrade Gosport’s local environment. The greater the rise in average global temperatures, the harder it will be to manage these risks.

The Borough Council’s Climate Change Strategy (adopted 2022, available at this [link](#)) makes it clear that the built environment has a major role to play in mitigating these high priority risks and achieving the Council’s net-zero ambitions. It sets out a range of ambitions for reducing domestic emissions across the Council’s own operations and across the Borough as a whole. This includes but is not limited to:

- Behaviour change to reduce energy demand;
- Achieving high energy efficiency standards for new buildings;
- Retrofitting high standard energy efficiency measures in existing buildings;
- Prohibiting the installation of fossil fuel based heating systems in new buildings;
- And retrofitting at least 7500 homes with non-fossil fuel based heating systems by 2030.

Priddy’s Hard Conservation Area has an important role to play in helping to achieve these ambitions, and has a major stake in doing so due to its particular susceptibility to the damaging effects of climate change due to its low-lying coastal location and as an internationally-important wildlife habitat.

To achieve the Borough Council's targets, any new development within the conservation area must achieve the highest levels of energy efficiency and rely on renewable energy sources for all heating and electricity demand.

The retrofitting of existing buildings is more complex due to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the need to preserve and enhance the significance of individual listed buildings. Poorly-planned retrofit measures could have detrimental effects on the special interest conservation area and individual listed buildings through visual impacts and/or fabric impacts. On the other hand, well-planned measures could achieve meaningful reductions in carbon emissions, improve the comfort of building users and reduce energy costs, while preserving the special interest of the listed building and conservation area, and securing the long-term viability of heritage assets by building in climate resilience.

To achieve well-planned retrofit measures, building owners should take a 'whole building approach', which seeks the best balance between energy saving, maintaining a healthy indoor environment and sustaining heritage significance, all by understanding the building in its context. Because opportunities and constraints vary widely depending on context, the optimum solution in one case might be quite different in another. The 'whole building approach' ensures improvements are suitable, proportionate, timely, well-integrated, properly coordinated, effective and sustainable.

A range of tried and tested sensitive retrofit measures may be suitable in some buildings with the conservation area, including improvements to historic windows, external or internal wall insulation, roof, loft and floor insulation, shading devices, on-site renewable energy sources such as air and ground-source heat pumps. Building owners should work closely with the Borough Council to understand the suitability of particular measures for individual buildings, particularly given the highly-graded status of many buildings in the conservation area.

A range of best-practice guides are now available regarding the sustainable retrofit of traditional buildings. Links to some of these are provided below:

[Historic England Advice Note 14. 2020. Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes.](#)

[Historic England. 2018. Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: How to Improve Energy Efficiency.](#)

[Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance \(STBA\) Guidance Wheel.](#)

[Historic Environment Scotland. 2021. Guide to Energy Retrofit of Traditional Buildings.](#)

Recommendation 013 – The Borough Council, Property Trust, HCC and management company should develop a coordinated approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures within the conservation area, particularly relating to flood defences.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, GBC, HCC, HE

Explanation

Priddy's Hard is likely to be susceptible to the damaging impacts of climate change because of its low-lying, coastal location. A primary concern is the increasing likelihood of more frequent flooding events. The Property Trust has been advised that all further development will require flood prevention measures.

The design and positioning of any new flood defence systems should take full account of the special interest of the conservation area. Key considerations will be the impact upon the setting of heritage assets and the conservation area as a whole, including the views and visual connection between the conservation area and the harbour. Flood defences should seek to avoid if possible blocking views of the water from the conservation area.

Other measures to improve the climate resilience of the conservation area, such as increased greening of the public realm, should be supported where the impacts upon the special interest of the conservation area are positive or of an acceptable level of harm.

26.0

Improving interpretation

Recommendation 014 – The Borough Council should engage with the Property Trust, management company and other key stakeholders including Historic England and Hampshire County Council improve public understanding of Priddy’s Hard through on-site and off-site interpretation measures.

Responsibility

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust with input from GBC.

Explanation

It is important to reflect on the significant work of Explosion! Museum in improving public awareness of Priddy’s Hard and the Royal Ordnance Depots, and the preservation of artefacts and knowledge relating to the site, which is of ever greater value following the redevelopment of the conservation area after the site’s closure. Visitors to the museum are well-informed of the significance of Priddy’s Hard and its wider historic context as an integral part of the network of facilities ringing Portsmouth Harbour to support the Royal Navy.

However, the casual visitor to the conservation area does not benefit from the same opportunities to understand the history and significance of the conservation area. On-site interpretation is limited to several interpretation boards, some in obscure locations, and presented in an uncoordinated manner having been added at different times and by different bodies.

Off-site interpretation is similarly uncoordinated, although some high-quality online resources have been produced in recent years through the Heritage Action Zone project and by the PNB Property Trust.

Improving interpretation is an important way of enhancing public awareness and appreciation of the special interest of the conservation area, with beneficial knock-on effects such as drawing more visitors to the facilities housed in the listed buildings and improving passive surveillance.

A wide variety of opportunities exist for improving both on- and off-site interpretation. Onsite interpretation could include improved signage and information boards, walking trails, guided tours, and if feasible, reopening a small section of the fortifications to the public. Consideration should be given to creating a bridge or viewing platform from which the fortifications could be viewed, from which access could also be created between the field of fire and Priddy’s Hard. Off-site interpretation could include a dedicated website detailing the history of the site and ongoing efforts by the Trust and Borough Council to conserve and enhance the conservation area. New interpretation facilities should be designed and introduced in a coordinated manner.

Importantly, new interpretation facilities should emphasise the role of Priddy’s Hard within the wider network of facilities within and around Portsmouth Harbour. All opportunities should be taken to tie into wider campaigns and projects to improve interpretation around Portsmouth Harbour, offering opportunities to strengthen or foster new partnerships with organisations and stakeholders in the City of Portsmouth.

Enhanced on-site interpretation could be secured as part of the wider public benefits of any future development proposals affecting the conservation area, such as by way of a Section 106 agreement or Listed Building Consent condition.

27.0

Boundary review

Recommendation 015 – In addition to adopting this CAAMP as part of the Local Development Framework, the Borough Council has adopted the revisions to the boundary of Priddy’s Hard Conservation Area, to better reflect the current extent of special interest.

Responsibility

GBC

Summary of boundary changes

Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to review the boundaries of conservation areas from time to time. This process is typically and most effectively undertaken as part of a wider study of the character and appearance of the conservation area and the development of a management plan to preserve and enhance the conservation area’s special interest. Priddy’s Hard was designated as a conservation area in 1990 immediately after the closure of the ordnance depot, signalling Gosport Borough Council’s recognition of the site as of unique heritage interest and the desire among heritage stakeholders, including the Borough, to ensure that the regeneration of the site progressed in a manner befitting the site’s significance.

Since designation, the redevelopment of Priddy’s Hard commenced at pace and has introduced new characteristics to the conservation area. In addition, further detailed study of the site’s history and significance has been carried out, most notably the work undertaken by English Heritage in the 1990s and early 2000s and published in *Arming the Fleet* (2006). These two factors – extensive redevelopment within the conservation area and additional research into the site’s history – have driven a review of the boundaries of the conservation area during the preparation of this CAMP. The following recommendations were made and subsequently adopted:

- **Extension of boundary westward to include field of fire, cordite stores and Priddy’s Hard Nature Reserve.** The field of fire, now an open field and a local nature reserve, was an integral part of the fortifications built around Priddy’s Hard in the 1750s. It has archaeological potential and plays an important role in defining significant views in the conservation area. The open field and local nature reserve also have amenity, landscape and ecological value recognised in the Local Plan. The cordite stores are important survivals from a major phase of expansion of the ordnance depot in the 1890s. The earth banks that surround them are interesting landscape features and contribute to views of and from the conservation area.
- **Removal of the foreshore up to the high-water mark from the conservation area.** This move is principally designed to improve the consistency between Priddy’s Hard Conservation Area and other coastal conservation areas within the Borough. The foreshore remains heavily protected in development management terms, due to its extensive ecological designations but also as part of the immediate setting of the conservation area. Although some activities of the depot projected out onto the foreshore, the foreshore itself was never an integral part of the ordnance depot site and is not considered to possess sufficient historic and architectural special interest to warrant conservation area designation.
- **Removal of inshore land north of the field of fire.** This area of land was originally included in the conservation area boundary as it corresponded with the boundary of the ordnance depot site where it extended northwards to a main gate into the complex. Since designation, this land has been comprehensively redeveloped with modern housing on a new street layout, such that today there is no perceptible trace of the

depot's former occupation of this land. Therefore, this area is no longer considered of sufficient interest to merit conservation area designation.

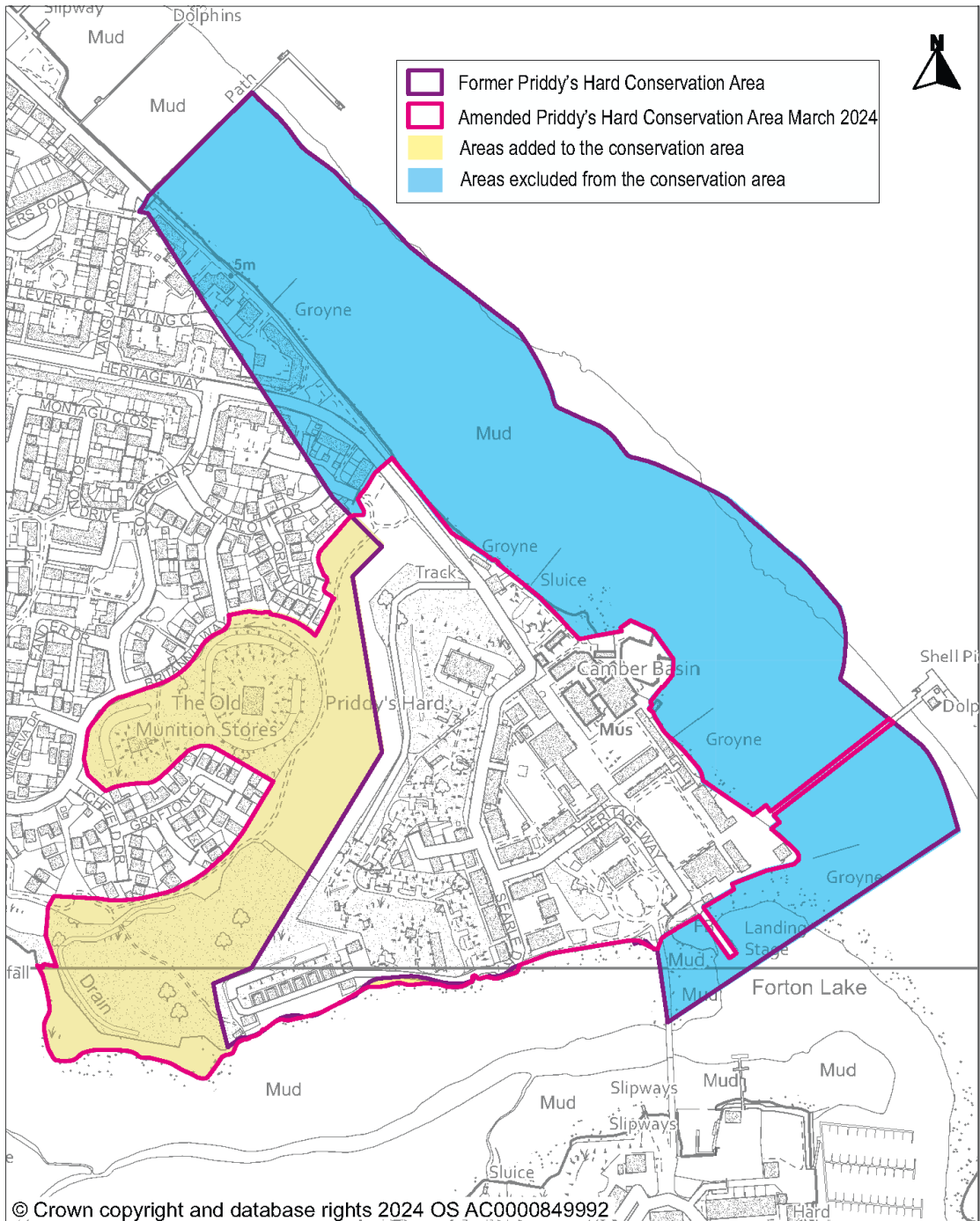


Figure 50 Map of changes to the former and amended conservation area boundary

Part 5

Supporting Information

28.0 Gazetteer of Designated Heritage Assets

The table below lists the designated heritage assets (listed buildings and scheduled monuments) within Priddy's Hard Conservation Area.

Asset	Designation	List Entry Number (Listed buildings and scheduled monument) Building number (as per Evans: 2006, pp.238-239) (non-designated heritage assets)
EARTHWORK DEFENCES AT PRIDDY'S HARD	Scheduled Monument	1010741
'A' MAGAZINE, MUSEUM BUILDINGS	Grade I	1276026
'B' MAGAZINE (NORTH AND SOUTH STORES) AND ATTACHED PASSAGE AND BOUNDARY WALL, AND MAIN ROLLING WAY AND ATTACHED FOREMAN'S OFFICE, SHIFTING ROOM AND SHOE HOUSES, MUSEUM BUILDINGS	Grade I	1393247
C MAGAZINE	Grade II*	1234618
'E' MAGAZINE (BUILDING 436) AND ENCLOSING WALLS	Grade II*	1234622
QUICK FIRE SHELL STORE (BUILDING 433) APPROX. 12M N OF 'A' MAGAZINE, MUSEUM BUILDINGS	Grade II*	1393251
MAIN OFFICE BUILDING (BUILDING 209)	Grade II	1234619
SHIFTING HOUSE (BUILDING 431), TO NORTHWEST OF CAMBER	Grade II	1234703

THE CAMBER BASIN, RETAINING WALLS AND TWO CRANES AND RAILINGS	Grade II	1234725
CASE STORE TO W SIDE OF CAMBER, MUSEUM BUILDINGS	Grade II	1234799
EXPENSE MAGAZINE WITH ASSOCIATED TRAVERSE WALLS FOR SHELL FILLING ROOMS	Grade II	1276025
LABORATORY NORTH RANGE AND LABORATORY BUILDING TO NE OF LABORATORY COMPLEX	Grade II	1393252
LABORATORY BUILDING, E RANGE AND ATTACHED ROLLING WAY	Grade II	1393270
LABORATORY COTTAGES	Grade II	1393271
SHELL PAINTING ROOM	Grade II	1393272
CASE STORE EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE ROOMS AND ROLLING WAY TO S OF 'B' MAGAZINE	Grade II	1393273
QUICK FIRE SHELL STORE, APPROXIMATELY 19M W OF 'A' MAGAZINE	Grade II	1393274
SHELL STORE APPROXIMATELY 5M SE OF SHELL STORES AND TRANSFER SHED (BUILDING 303)	Grade II	1393275
MINES AND COUNTERMINES STORE (BUILDING 409)	Grade II	1393276

SHELL FILLING ROOMS, FUZING ROOMS AND ASSOCIATED TRAVERSE WALLS, APPROX. 60M SW OF SOUTHERN DEMIBASTION TO PRIDDY'S	Grade II	1393278 NOTE: Shell filling rooms demolished but traverses survive.
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HARD RAMPARTS		
SHED FOR EMPTY POWDER CASES AND BARRELS (BUILDING 418), MUSEUM BUILDINGS, TO SW OF CAMBER	Grade II	1393279
Empty Powder Case Store (Building 312), Museum Buildings, to SW of Camber	Grade II	1393280
SHIFTING ROOM (BUILDING 223), TO SW OF 'C' MAGAZINE	Grade II	1393281
EMPTY PACKAGE STORE (BUILDING 428), MUSEUM BUILDINGS	Grade II	1393282
LABORATORY BOAT HOUSE (BUILDING 314)	Grade II	1393283
Cordite Magazines (189899)	Non-designated heritage asset	59
Latrines (1899)	Non-designated heritage asset	30
Shifting Room (1897)	Non-designated heritage asset	36
Proof House (1896-7) and ancillary building (c.1940)	Non-designated heritage asset	40 and 99
Shell Store (1896-97)	Non-designated heritage asset	42
Coach House and Engine House (1780s with later extensions)	Non-designated heritage asset	2
Pay Office and Fire Engine House (c.1915-20)	Non-designated heritage asset	70

Carpenters' Shop (1903 with later extensions)	Non-designated heritage asset	54
Tinsmiths' and Painters' Shops (1916)	Non-designated heritage asset	73
New Wash House (1938)	Non-designated heritage asset	119

Fire Engine Shed (c.1860/74)	Non-designated heritage asset	12
Central Sub-Station (1918)	Non-designated heritage asset	94
Examining Rooms (c.1919)	Non-designated heritage asset	126
The sea walls (Nineteenth and twentieth century)	Non-designated heritage asset	-
The shell pier	Non-designated heritage asset	-
Forton Lake jetty (c.1910s)	Non-designated heritage asset	-

29.0

Methodology

29.1 Designation and management of conservation areas

What are conservation areas?

Conservation areas are areas of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' – in other words, they exist to protect the features and the characteristics that make a historic place unique and distinctive.

- They were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. They need to have a definite architectural quality or historic interest to merit designation.
- They are normally designated by the local planning authority, in this case Selby District Council.

Effects of conservation area designation

- The Council has a duty, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
- Designation introduces some extra planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect the historical and architectural elements which make the areas special places.
- To find out how conservation areas are managed and how living in or owning a business in a conservation area might affect you, see Historic England's guidance pages on [Conservation Areas](#) and [Works in a Conservation Area](#).

29.2 Best practice

Two Historic England publications provided relevant and widely-recognised advice that informed the methodology employed to prepare the appraisal:

- [Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 \(Second edition\), English Heritage \(2019\)](#)
- [The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 \(Second Edition\) 2017](#)

Other documents and sources that were consulted are listed in [section 7.4](#) below.

29.3 Process

The appraisal of the conservation area involved the following steps:

- A re-survey of the area and its boundaries;
- A review of the condition of the area since the last appraisal was undertaken to identify changes and trends;
- Identification of views which contribute to appreciation of the character of the conservation area;
- A description of the character of the area and the key elements that contribute to it;
- Where appropriate, the identification of character areas where differences in spatial patterns and townscape are notable that have derived from the way the area developed, its architecture, social make-up, historical associations and past and present uses;
- An assessment of the contribution made by open space within and around the conservation area
- Identification of heritage assets and detracting elements; and,
- Recommendations for future management of the conservation area.

29.4 Heritage assets

The appraisal identifies buildings, structures, sites, places and archaeology which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and those that do not. These include:

- **Statutory listed buildings** are buildings and structures that have, individually or as groups, been recognised as being of national importance for their special architectural and historic interest. The high number of nationally listed building plays an important part in the heritage significance of many of district's conservation areas. Listed buildings are referred to as designated heritage assets. The location and grade of listed buildings in this conservation area are taken from GIS files from the National Heritage List for England, which is maintained by Historic England (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>).
- **Scheduled monuments** are nationally important archaeological sites (and sometimes historic buildings and structures) that are given legal protection against unauthorised change. Scheduled monuments are designated heritage assets. The location and details of any scheduled monuments in this conservation area have been taken from GIS files from the National Heritage List for England, which is maintained by Historic England (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>).
- There are many **unlisted buildings, structures, sites, places and archaeology** that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. These have been identified using GBC's standard methodology for the identification and designation of locally listed buildings, parks and gardens. This is summarised below, with one key difference being that the assets identified in this CAAMP are located within a conservation area, rather than outside of one:
 - The locally listed buildings are considered to be of historic architectural or townscape value located outside Conservation Areas which contribute to the character of the Borough.
 - One primary criterion and a number of subsidiary criteria are used to determine inclusion on the List.
 - The primary criterion is the age and condition of the building:
 - Post 1950: Completed and unaltered and of significant landmark value
 - 1914-1950: Substantially complete and unaltered
 - 1840-1914: Only affected by reversible minor alterations
 - 1700-1840: All buildings where the style and form is clearly identifiable and there is the potential to restore the building and for it to make a positive contribution to its setting.
 - Pre-1700: All buildings retaining more than 25% evidence of structural remains.
 - Pre-1600: All surviving structures
 - In addition to the primary criterion at least one of the following criteria would also need to be met to ensure inclusion on the List. Two criteria would need to be met for buildings post dating 1914.
 - Historical association
 - Part of the Historic Socio-Economic Development of an Area
 - Architectural Importance
 - Townscape significance
 - Buildings in the noted publications on historic buildings in Hampshire.
 - The Local List of Heritage Assets and detailed designation criteria can be found here: [Conservation and Design - Gosport Borough Council](#)

29.5 Areas of weakened character

Not every aspect of the conservation area will contribute to the characteristics that make it special. In this appraisal these are identified on the character area maps as 'opportunities for enhancement'. These might be buildings, structures, landscapes, sites or places. They may not contribute to the defined character and appearance of the conservation area by virtue of:

- inappropriate scale or massing
- poor quality materials or detailing
- extent and nature of alterations
- negative impact on the character and appearance of streetscape or landscape
- poor relationship to neighbouring buildings and spaces
- not reflecting historic plot boundaries and street patterns
- impact of poor-quality elements such as street clutter and furniture and hard landscaping

29.6 Views

The methodology applies best practice from Historic England's advice document [*The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 \(Second Edition\) 2017*](#). Central to this is an analysis of the 'significance' of each view in terms of its historical, architectural, townscape, aesthetic and community interest, and of the key landmarks or heritage assets visible within it.

29.7 Statement of community engagement

Following initial stakeholder engagement, the public consultation for the amended Conservation Area boundary for Priddy's Hard and draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans for Priddy's Hard ran for 4 weeks and was widely accessible, using a variety of inclusive communication methods to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders in keeping with the Council's Statement of Commitment to Equality & Diversity and Statement of Community Involvement.

Consultation methods included contacting land and property owners in the area; local interest groups; using social media, and following the Council's normal methods of communication with residents to gather as many comments as possible in addition to an online exhibition of information. The comments and suggestions received were fed into the final report, as appropriate.

30.0 Definitions

The following tables set out the definitions of important terms used within the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. It is important both to agree both the term and the accompanying definition at the start of the project and across all the documents to help consistency.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	
Term	Definition
At risk:	an historic building, structure, landscape, site, place or archaeology, which is threatened with damage or destruction by vacancy, decay, neglect or inappropriate development
Designated heritage asset	buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, landscapes or archaeology that are protected by legislation: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield and Conservation Area
Non-designated heritage asset –	a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which does not have the degree of special interest that would merit designation at the national level, e.g. listing. Any buildings, structures, landscapes, sites, places and archaeology which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of conservation areas are considered non-designated heritage assets.
Setting:	the aspects of the surroundings of an historic building, structure, landscape, site, place, archaeology or conservation area that contribute to its significance
Significance:	the special historical, architectural, cultural, archaeological or social interest of a building, structure, landscape, site, place or archaeology – forming the reasons why it is valued

STREETSCAPE/LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS AND WAYS OF DESCRIBING THEM	
Term	Definition
Active frontage:	ground floor level frontages that are not blank, in order to encourage human interaction. For example, windows, active doors, shops, restaurants and cafes.

Amenity:	elements that contribute to people’s experience of overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the interrelationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity
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STREETSCAPE/LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS AND WAYS OF DESCRIBING THEM

Term	Definition
Building line:	the position of buildings relative to the edge of a pavement or road. It might be hard against it, set back, regular or irregular, broken by gaps between buildings, or jump back and forth
Enclosure:	the sense in which a street feels contained by buildings, or trees
Historic plot:	for the purposes of this document, this means the land and building plot divisions shown on nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey maps
Landmark:	a prominent building or structure (or sometimes space). Its prominence is normally physical (such as a church spire) but may be social (a village pub) or historical (village stocks)
Legibility:	the ability to navigate through, or ‘read’, the urban environment. Can be improved by means such as good connections between places, landmarks and signage
Massing:	the arrangement and shape of individual or combined built form
Movement:	how people and goods move around – on foot, by bike, car, bus, train or lorry
Public realm:	the publicly-accessible space between buildings – streets, squares, quaysides, paths, parks and gardens – and its components, such as pavement, signage, seating and planting
Roofscape:	the ‘landscape’ of roofs, chimneys, towers, spires etc.
Streetscape:	the ‘landscape’ of the streets – the interaction of buildings, spaces and topography (an element of the wider townscape, see below)
Townscape	the ‘landscape’ of towns and villages – the interaction of buildings, streets, spaces and topography

Urban grain:	the arrangement or pattern of the buildings and streets. It may be fine or coarse, formal or informal, linear, blocky, planned, structured or unstructured
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ARCHITECTURAL PERIODS/STYLES	
Term	Definition
Georgian	dating to between 1714 and 1830, i.e. during the reign of one of the four Georges: King George I to King George IV.
Victorian	Dating to between 1837 and 1901, i.e. during the reign of Queen Victoria.
Edwardian	correctly refers to the period from 1901 to 1910, the reign of King Edward VII, but often used in a more general way to refer to the whole period from 1900 to 1914.

BUILDING MATERIALS	
Term	Definition
English bond brickwork:	an arrangement of bricks with courses showing the short side (headers) separating courses showing the long side (stretchers)
Flemish bond brickwork:	an arrangement of bricks in which the short side (headers) and long side (stretchers) alternate in each course
Hipped roof:	a pitched roof with four slopes of equal pitch
Pitched roof:	a roof with sloping sides meeting at a ridge. Include m-shaped roofs, hipped roofs and semi-hipped

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