

# Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area Appraisal



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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area lies between the A20 and the outer harbour of the Dover Western Docks. It consists of five terraces of mid to late Nineteenth Century buildings, all of which are grade II listed, and a grade II listed war memorial. The conservation area was designated on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 1970. This appraisal was carried out during August 2016.

The Dover seafront has seen significant physical change, both natural and manmade. The Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area is located on land created by the formation of a shingle spit at the mouth of the River Dour. This land was utilised as the town's ropewalk and as a source of stone cobbles, which were used to pave the streets of Dover. The later incarnation of the land during the Nineteenth Century as the 'visitor quarter' of Dover saw the construction of sweeping terraces of town houses and hotels, with public gardens and recreational buildings designed to cater for the many visitors to the "Gateway to Europe". In the Twentieth Century Dover seafront saw extensive damage by shelling and bombing during the Second World War, with later losses caused by building clearance and the final significant change courtesy of the construction of the A20.

An appraisal is intended to provide an understanding of the special interest of a conservation area and to set out options and recommendations to help ensure that any changes are informed by an understanding of the local character and distinctiveness of the conservation area. When this appraisal is adopted by Dover District Council (DDC) it will become a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission within and adjacent to the conservation area.

This appraisal looks at the following issues:

- The origins and evolution of the conservation area.
- The current boundary of the area and any review that should be made.
- The positive and negative factors that contribute to or detract from the current condition of the conservation area.
- Any recommendations that will protect and enhance the conservation area. Any changes proposed must sustain and enhance the historic environment and its heritage.

### 1.2 Planning Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the statutory definition of a Conservation Area, which is "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" (s.69(1)). Dover District currently has 57 designated Conservation Areas.

There is a requirement under the legislation to review Conservation Areas “from time to time” to ensure that the boundary captures all the area that is of special interest and to assist in developing plans for the management of change within the conservation area. This is further endorsed by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) which urges the need to ensure that an area justifies the designation because of its special architectural or historic character or appearance.

The Dover District Heritage Strategy (2013) presents the districts Heritage Assets as Themes; Theme 13 dealing with conservation areas. The districts conservation areas are considered to be heritage assets of **outstanding significance**, and in addition to being attractive places to live and work, contribute to the economic wealth of the district by being a magnet for visitors.

A methodology was developed for the Heritage Strategy enabling a rapid desk-based assessment of the general condition of the districts conservation areas and applied to 19 of the conservation areas. The results of this overview, using a traffic-light system to classify their condition, indicate that of the 57 conservation areas in the district 12 of these conservation areas were identified as ‘performing well’ and achieved a green light, six achieved an amber light, requiring some enhancement, and one area required considerable enhancement or potential “de-designation” as a conservation area, due to the substantial loss of its character of special interest. Waterloo Crescent is one of the 19 conservation areas on which the rapid assessment was carried out, and the results have informed this more detailed appraisal.

Theme 13 describes methods and techniques by which an area’s condition may be measured, assessed and managed; Article 4(2) Direction is one such method. An Article 4(2) Direction removes permitted development rights from residential properties to ensure that certain changes, such as the replacement of windows, is managed to ensure that the change is appropriate to the special character of the conservation area.

The Heritage Strategy also suggested the formulation of a system for the assessment of a conservation areas condition such as that developed and adopted by the Oxford City Council, endorsed by Historic England and used by the Oxford Preservation Trust. That system has been used to inform this character appraisal, in addition to best practice guidance contained within the Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Feb 2016).

### 1.3 Community Involvement

The draft Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area Appraisal has been prepared by the Regeneration Delivery Section of Dover District Council following a site visit on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

The Council has commenced the preparation of a Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document for the Dover Waterfront area allocated under Policy CP8 in the core strategy, which includes this conservation area. A sound understanding of the

character and historic interest of the conservation area is needed as part of the evidence base for the Masterplan and this has therefore led to its prioritisation for the preparation of a conservation area appraisal.

The appraisal will follow a process of public consultation and views will be sought from bodies including Dover Harbour Board, Dover Town Council and the Dover Society. All responses received will be taken into consideration prior to drafting the formal document for approval by Cabinet.

### 1.4 Summary of Significance

- The historical development of the area during the Nineteenth Century as the 'visitor quarter' of Dover has had the most significant impact in terms of evidential value above ground. The five terraces are what remains of a series of elegant properties which were built to take advantage of the coastal location, providing in some cases unrivalled views of the sea.
- The area has aesthetic and historic value as a part of Dover that was much represented in historic paintings, photographs and postcards.
- The historic value of the Conservation Area is enhanced by the relationship to Charles Dickens. Dickens stayed at 10 Camden Crescent during the summer of 1852 whilst working on Bleak House. A plaque has been erected on the building to commemorate the association.
- There is potential for further archaeological evidence of the early use of the land. The world famous Bronze Age boat was found just to the north of Cambridge Terrace where the modern-day underpass links the seafront to the town.
- The conservation area has a high degree of homogeneity due to the form and style of the buildings. Designed in the same architectural style and of similar proportions the buildings have a high aesthetic value lending cohesion to the conservation area as a whole unit. The muted colour palette contributes to the uniformity. Decorative stucco and other architectural detailing individualises the buildings.
- The conservation area is composed of two parts; a core centred on the war memorial and a range of buildings dominantly addressing the seafront. This gives the area two distinct characters: one of enclosure with constrained views into and out of the conservation area which can best be appreciated at an intimate level, and a second character area with an aspect that is more open with a wider landscape context, providing panoramic views of the sea and harbour.

## 2 The Character Appraisal

### 2.1 Overview

The Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area is situated to the southwest of Dover town centre, nestled between the A20 and the outer harbour of the Dover Western Docks, and encircled by Dover Castle and the Western Heights. Built upon what is effectively reclaimed land, composed of silt, shingle and sand deposited by the River Dour and longshore drift, the topography of the conservation area is completely flat.



The view from Dover Western Heights



Looking towards Dover town centre with Cambridge Terrace to the left and New Bridge House to the right

While the underpass follows the original street pattern and provides a degree of connection between the town and Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area, the A20 forms a physical, noisy and visual barrier creating a disconnect between the town and the seafront.

This has the impact of isolating the conservation area and views both into and out of the area are important to help set it in context within the town. Panoramic views of the conservation area can be gained from Dover Castle,

the Western Heights and Jubilee Way Viaduct. More immediate and intimate views are gained when accessing from the east via Marine Parade with the wide open

space of Marine Parade Gardens and the smaller but distinct Granville Gardens in the foreground, and from the south via The Esplanade, although a view into the core of the conservation area from the latter is restricted by Waterloo Mansions. A fleeting view into the core of the conservation area is garnered from the A20. Panoramic views are gained from the sea as vessels approach Dover and from the harbour piers, with the curve of Waterloo Crescent creating a particularly attractive composition that is reproduced in numerous historic postcards and photographs.



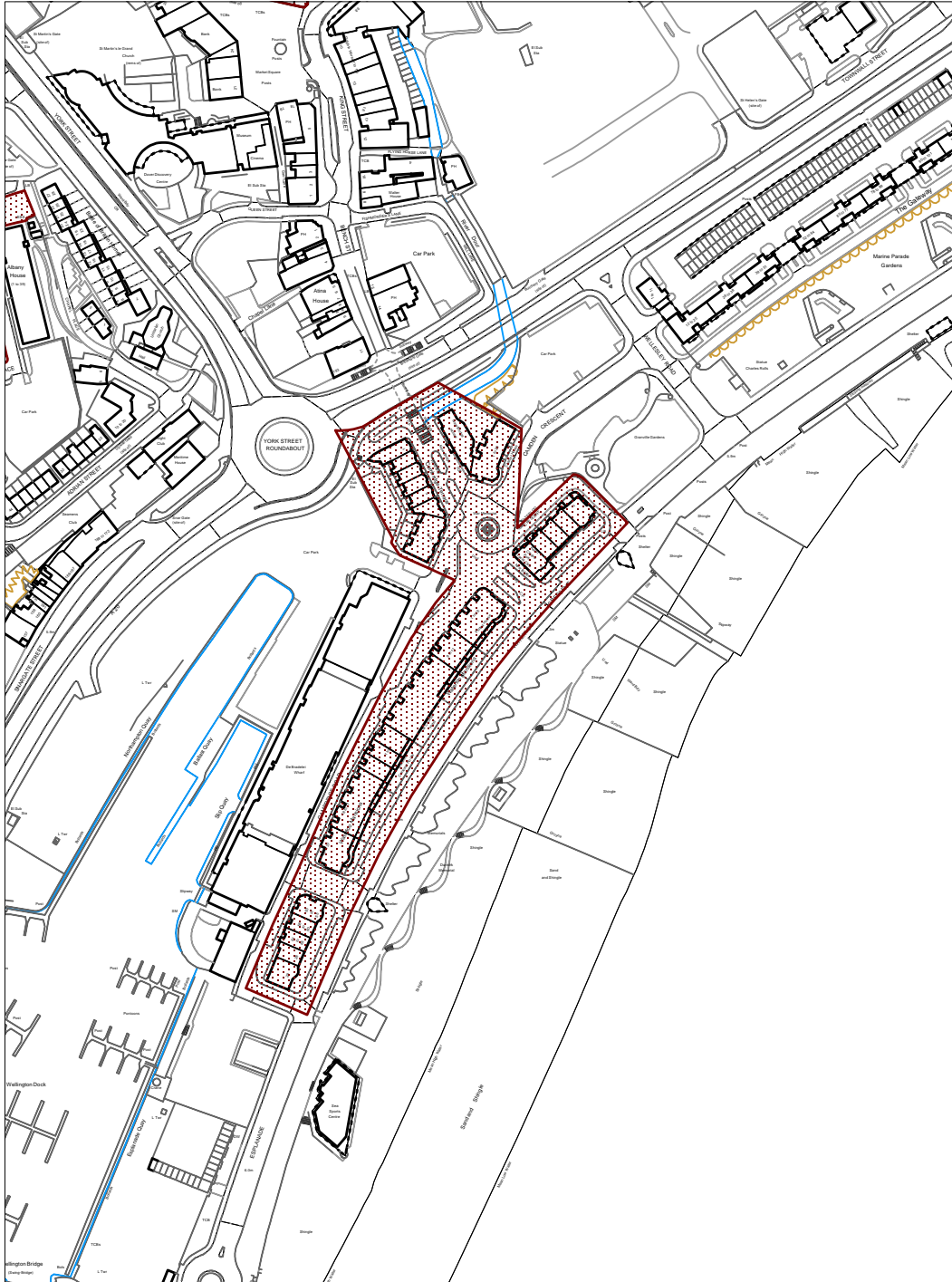
The underpass and New Bridge House

A restricted but directed view is afforded the pedestrian accessing the conservation area from the North via Bench Street and through the underpass, which construction saw the discovery of the Bronze Age Boat now housed at Dover Museum. This route crosses the course of the River Dour and along New Bridge towards the seafront. The sense of constriction caused by the underpass is somewhat released on exiting onto New Bridge and once beyond the extensive run of guardrails is replaced by a feeling of intimacy.

The open spaces of the gardens to the front of the Gateway, Granville Gardens, the Esplanade and the beach (although all currently outside the boundary of the conservation area) enhance this characteristic and consequently make a positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area.

The development of the area is illustrative of the Nineteenth Century fashion where those of high social standing visited the coast for both pleasure and for the perceived health benefits. Waterloo Crescent's seaward frontage enables visitors to appreciate the sea views as well as clearly being a show of high status accommodation. Consequently, the terraces polite architectural style, form and placement along with the areas wide promenades and formal gardens creates an easily identifiable character, that of a Nineteenth Century south coast resort similar to that of Brighton or Folkestone.





**Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area**

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Scale 1:2500



Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area as existing

## 2.2 The Built Heritage

Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area is remarkable for having all historic buildings and structures within its boundary being included on the National Heritage List for England (the list). The eight entries, all of which are listed at grade II, are:

- Waterloo Mansions, Waterloo Crescent (which is split into three individual entries on the list)
- 1-9 Cambridge Terrace, including railings
- 1-4 Camden Crescent
- New Bridge House, New Bridge Street
- K6 telephone box, New Bridge Street
- 60<sup>th</sup> Rifles War Memorial.

The buildings range in construction date from 1834 to 1865 and all relate to the period of development of the area to recreational and residential use. Whilst they share an architectural style and choice of materials leading to a high degree of homogeneity to the conservation area each building has features which individualises it from its neighbours. The buildings and war memorial are a tangible reminder of the Nineteenth Century development of the seafront, and their value as a group is recognised in the designation as a conservation area.

A brief description of the key features of the conservation area follows, highlighting significance and condition.

### a. **Waterloo Mansions, Waterloo Crescent**

Waterloo Mansions were built between 1834-8 in the Regency style by Philip Hardwick. These buildings were the first to be constructed in the new 'visitor quarter' and at five storeys high, with basements, Waterloo Mansions sweep along the Dover seafront and provides unrivalled views of the Western Docks. From New Bridge the gap between two of the ranges provides a framed view through to the seafront.

The buildings are white painted stucco to the seafront elevation with the ground floor level being finished to resemble stonework (rusticated), which continues to the rear elevation. The buildings demonstrate the typical hierarchy of the architectural style of buildings of this period with, to the front elevation, large round-headed sash windows to the ground floor and French doors leading onto an iron balcony identifying the principle rooms, and graduating to modest sized windows to the third floor informal rooms up to small windows serving the attics in the slated mansard roof.



Waterloo Mansions - front elevation



Waterloo Mansions - rear elevation

The hierarchy is continued with Corinthian columns from first to second floor to the end and centre houses in the middle range supporting an entablature and plain pilasters at third floor level. The curved fronts of the end houses of each section form bookends to the ranges. The outer blocks of Waterloo Mansions are of four and five storey in height, with basements, and help to emphasise the strong horizontal rhythm of the Crescent. The rear is simpler in architectural detailing but retains the hierarchy of fenestration.



Corner house to Waterloo Mansions



Entrance door to Waterloo Mansions

Above the stuccoed ground floor elevation the buildings are constructed of yellow brick. Protruding bays form the principle entrances to the individual properties, with doors surrounded by a plain pilaster, margin lights and the building name and number

in stained glass over the door. The buildings have a strong horizontal emphasis created by the balcony to the seaward elevation and a pleasing rhythm to both front and rear.

The buildings of Waterloo Mansions are generally in good condition, with all original doors to the rear intact and little damage to the stuccoed features. Unfortunately many windows have been altered by the loss of their glazing bars and there have been inappropriate replacement with UPVC windows. The rear of the buildings have been the focus for location of services such as mechanical extract vents, soil pipes and escape staircases which have led to a cluttered appearance, and a large lift shaft punctuates the roof of the western terrace forming an unattractive and imposing feature.

Additions such as security cameras, lights and burglar alarms have not always been placed sympathetically. A key aspect of the importance of these buildings is that unlike Cambridge Terrace and 1-4 Camden Crescent, Waterloo Mansions have not suffered from war damage or demolition.

**b. Cambridge Terrace, Cambridge Road**



Cambridge Terrace - front elevation

With white render to the front elevation with yellow brickwork to the rear, Cambridge Terrace has a stronger vertical emphasis than Waterloo Mansions. Details are less ornate, excluding the exuberant iron balcony to the front elevation, with flat pilasters, quoin detail and a plain panelled plaster frieze below third floor level. The hierarchy of each floor level is retained with windows following the typical pattern, and the entrance doors with their overlights are surrounded by a robust Tuscan porch. The

alternate porches and bay windows beneath the swirling pattern of the iron balcony create a rhythmic and attractive frontage. The iron railings, which are included in the list description, are original and intact.

Although overall in general good condition, at the time of the survey the building was largely empty and boarded up. The rear, which is accessible via a secluded footpath, has suffered from some vandalism with window glass being broken and is generally in a rundown condition.



Entrance doorway to Cambridge Terrace

**c. New Bridge House Complex: New Bridge House and 1-4 Camden Crescent.**

New Bridge House was built as a bank in 1865 on land that was formally the gardens to no.1 Camden Crescent at what was by then a busy intersection. The building was originally single storey with a parapet but is now one and a half storeys high with a mansard roof. Adorned with Classical ornamentation, although smaller in stature than its neighbours it is nonetheless a dominant building in the streetscene. The iron railings have been removed, possibly as part of the war effort (as with the railings to the 60<sup>th</sup> Rifles Memorial), with just a single section remaining between the K6 telephone box and Camden Crescent.



New Bridge House



Remnant of railings to New Bridge House



Camden Crescent

1-4 Camden Crescent is the remains of a much larger terrace built in 1840 and extending from New Bridge eastwards towards Wellesley Road. The building is constructed of yellow brick with the ground floor stuccoed, replicating the rear of Waterloo Mansions opposite, and architectural details such as parapet and string course in render. An iron balcony to the first floor and original iron railings to the boundary remain and the building has retained most of its original windows.

Despite the significant loss of a large portion of the building, Camden Crescent is a well maintained and attractive building.

The telephone kiosk, individually listed at grade II, is a type K6 designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.

**d. 60th Rifles Memorial**

The memorial commemorates the fallen of the First Battalion of the Royal Rifles during the Indian campaigns of 1857, 1858 and 1859. It is constructed of granite in a classical style and is notable for being one of only four known free standing monuments in England relating to the Indian Mutiny. Apart from a minor chip to the top of the granite obelisk (caused by a seaplane raid in 1916) and the complete loss of the iron boundary railings (presumably for the war effort in 1941) the memorial is intact. It was listed at grade II in 2014.



The 60th Rifles Memorial

The memorial occupies a prominent position, and is a significant focal point within the heart of the conservation area. Despite surrounding buildings being three or three and a half storeys high the memorial is not overwhelmed or dominated, although due to its location it acts as a roundabout which can impede access to and appreciation of the memorial.

#### e. The public realm



A variety of bollards

The open spaces within and around the Conservation Area contribute to its character by emphasising the scale of the buildings and providing an attractive place to be for visitors and residents.

The historic street plan was designed to facilitate ease of movement for recreational walking with the sea as the main focus, with pleasant wide pavements, a long seafront promenade and formal gardens.

The public realm is extremely cluttered with a variety of bollards and lamp post of differing styles and materials, signage and guardrails which leads to a confusing and unattractive public space. Some are in a poor condition whilst others appear to be obsolete or unnecessary. Certain areas, for example the open space between the buildings on New Bridge and two of the Waterloo Mansion terraces, have been well designed and help to create both a pleasing environment and a visual link between two pedestrianised parts of the conservation area. However, this success is marred by the lack of a coherent scheme for the conservation area.



Well designed and detailed public realm works



The entrance to the underpass on New Bridge

The underpass has had a significant physical and visual impact on the character of the New Bridge part of the conservation area. It extends beyond the line of the buildings into the heart of this area, and the requisite guardrails add extensive visual and physical clutter, particularly standing out due to being painted a different colour to the prevailing colour found on the historic iron railings and balconies.

#### f. **The setting of the conservation area**

The loss of buildings from war damage and demolition and changes to road layout has led to the conservation area feeling isolated and physically dislocated from the town centre.

But it is not completely isolated visually from the town. No.11 Bench Street, a building which originally turned the corner onto Snargate Street, is of similar stature to the historic buildings in the conservation area and forms a visual link across the A20 with Cambridge Terrace. On entering New Bridge from Bench Street there is a sense of intimacy after the rather oppressive underpass, and the street opens out around the war memorial to provide views to the seafront, Dover Castle and the Western Heights. The Gateway is a significantly large building adjacent to the conservation area and imposes but does not dominate views out of the conservation area towards Dover Castle or on long distance views into the conservation area from the Castle or Western Heights. It has been set back behind a generous green space to the seafront elevation, Marine Parade Gardens, which prevents the building from being oppressive or interrupting views from Marine Parade across the conservation area and towards Western Heights.





View towards Camden Crescent from Marine Parade Gardens

Due to their layout, height and architectural form the historic buildings in the conservation area are imposing and visually dominating, even when viewed from some distance. Despite this, the buildings are not overwhelming or foreboding when within or adjacent to the conservation area and this is due in part to the wide roads and generous spaces both between and around the buildings within the conservation area and adjacent to the existing boundary. The open spaces of Marine Parade Gardens, Granville Gardens, the Esplanade and the beach, and the single storey, functional form of De Bradlei Wharf (although all currently outside the boundary of the conservation area) enhance the stature of the buildings and consequently make a positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area.



Marine Parade Gardens

### 3 Management Plan

#### 3.1 Vulnerabilities and Negative Features

##### a. Loss of historic detailing

Although all of the buildings are listed over time certain architectural details have been lost either through decay or inappropriate replacement. Loss of original windows, including replacement with UPVC, has led to an erosion of the uniformity of the architectural design of the buildings. Some decorative stucco detailing is missing and there is potential for more loss through lack of maintenance of rainwater goods.

##### b. Street furniture and the public realm

While some of the works have been successful in creating an attractive public realm, others have led to clutter that distracts from the homogeneity of the area. The existing extensive signage and traffic calming features would benefit from a cohesive strategy to reduce clutter, improve the setting of the listed buildings and structures and to generate a friendlier atmosphere.



Traditional cast iron single sign post



Historic lamp standard cluttered with signage

### c. Setting of the conservation area

There are various features that have had a detrimental effect on the setting of the conservation area; the two car parks, one adjacent to Camden Crescent and one to the west of Waterloo Crescent, and modern development adjacent to the conservation area. The Gateway imposes on views out of the conservation area towards Dover Castle and looms dominantly in long distance views into the conservation area from both the Castle and Western Heights. However the open spaces adjacent to the conservation area enhance the stature of the buildings.



Looking towards the 60th Rifle Memorial and the rear of Waterloo Mansions

Any development that is proposed for sites within or adjacent to the conservation area would need to ensure that a key characteristic of the conservation area, the dominant and imposing nature of the historic buildings, is maintained or enhanced particularly when viewed from long distance vantage points.



A view to Dover Western Heights from Granville Gardens

#### d. Conservation of key views

The pivotal location within the conservation area is the war memorial. From this vantage point views are afforded of key features; Dover Castle, Dover Western Heights and the seafront. Any development proposals for sites within or adjacent to the conservation area should ensure that these views are protected or enhanced.



View from the Conservation Area to Dover Castle

### 3.2 Recommendations

#### a. Enhancement of the public realm

A strategy for the replacement of existing bollards and lampposts to reduce the number of items and variety of styles, in addition to creating a more pedestrian led public realm, would improve the appearance of the conservation area. A comprehensive audit should be carried out to determine what from a highways perspective is required, what is necessary and what is obsolete and can be removed. The potential to enhance the pedestrian experience of the conservation area could be explored by the introduction of a greater pedestrian-led space.

**b. Design guidance on replacement windows**

Although all buildings are listed and Listed Building Consent is required to replace windows, a design guide to assist owners in making successful applications would be beneficial (planning permission is required where buildings are not single dwellings, as is likely to be the case with all buildings in the Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area). The guide would help to ensure that the detailing of replacement windows would improve the appearance of individual listed buildings and enhances the homogeneity of the conservation area.

**c. Enhancement of the setting of the war memorial**

The setting of the listed memorial would benefit from enhancement to emphasise it as a focal point within the conservation area, and to highlight its historic and communal importance. Works could include the reinstatement of railings.

## Appendix 1 Historical Development

The Waterloo Crescent Conservation Area is on land which was created by accident during the first half of the Sixteenth Century. The formation of a new harbour at Archcliffe to the west of Dover caused an unbalance in natural coastal processes and created a spit of sand and shingle which blocked the route up the River Dour to the ancient Roman harbour. Called the 'New Spit', by 1566 this shingle bar extended as far as the foot of the cliffs on which Dover Castle sits, and now mark the present day shoreline. During the reign of Elizabeth I the shingle spit was consolidated and a tidal lagoon called the Great Pent developed between the original foreshore and the spit. Fed by the River Dour, the lagoon was developed to become Wellington and Granville Docks.



The Platt of Dover Castel Towne and Harbour by William Eldred, 1641 copyright Dover Harbour Board



A map showing the Waterloo Crescent area in the 19th Century

Poor accessibility from the town prevented the development and exploitation of the land throughout the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. The town map dating to 1737 indicates the shingle spit was utilised as a rope walk and during the late Eighteenth Century two gun batteries were erected (Lord North's and Amherst's Batteries) as part of the extensive coastal defence system which includes the first development of the Dover Western Heights.

Historic maps from the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries show a bridge (variously labelled Buggins, Brungars or Bengers Bridge) over the River Dour in the approximate location of New Bridge. In the early Nineteenth Century the brick built New Bridge was erected over the River Dour, which gave direct access from the town via Bench Street. Development of the area was now possible but it was not until 1835 when Cambridge Road was laid out to connect with the New Bridge that major building works started with the construction of Waterloo Mansions and Crescent as the beginnings of the new 'visitor quarter' of Dover.



An engraving showing Camden Crescent to the left and side of Waterloo Crescent to the right; late Nineteenth Century

During the Nineteenth Century Camden Crescent became the location of choice for the wealthy elite. Charles Dickens stayed at 10 Camden Crescent in the summer of 1852 whilst working on Bleak House.

Prior to the formation of the shingle bar the area would have been located at the mouth of the Dour estuary, which has probably acted as an important haven or harbour from the later prehistoric period onwards. Important and deeply buried sedimentary sequences are known to underlie the conservation area that relate to a very early course of the River Dour. Extensive peat and other waterlogged deposits containing rich environmental remains are known. It is from these deposits that the internationally famous Dover Bronze Age boat was recovered in 1992 a short distance to the north of the conservation area.

## Appendix 2 References

Bavington Jones, J (1907) Dover: A Perambulation of the Town, Port, and Fortress.

Parfitt, K (2009) Dover Cable Car Project Historic Environment Implications Report, Canterbury Archaeol. Trust (unpublished report)



## Appendix 3 Glossary

**Conservation Area** is an area designated so that the planning authority can control changes within it. They can be defined as “Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Details can be found in the conservation pages of the DDC website.

**Dover District Council (DDC)** is the planning authority with responsibility for this conservation area - [www.dover.gov.uk](http://www.dover.gov.uk).

**English Heritage** in this appraisal refers to the body officially known as the “Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England”, which is the public body that looks after England's historic environment. It is now known as **Historic England** - [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk).

**Heritage Strategy** is a DDC strategy which aims to enable them to achieve their objectives for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. The strategy documents can be found in the conservation pages of the DDC website.

**Kent County Council (KCC)** is the authority with responsibility for, amongst other things, the highways in this conservation area. That responsibility includes road and pavement surfaces, signage and street lighting - [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk).

**Listed Building** is one designated as listed in the National Heritage List for England (NHLE). It marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system so that some thought will be taken about its future. There are three categories of listed building: Grade I, Grade II\* and Grade II. Details are on the Historic England website.

**National Planning Policy Framework** is a key part of Government reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth. Details can be found at the government's planning portal [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).

**Non-designated Building** refers to one which is not listed.

**uPVC** in this appraisal refers to windows and doors, generally of aluminium construction, coated with plastic (usually white).