

Wharf Wall at Blackpool Mill Canaston Bridge Pembrokeshire

Addendum to Heritage Impact Statement



Richard Hayman

for

Bluestone Resorts Ltd

January 2025

Wharf Wall at
Blackpool Mill
Canaston Bridge
Pembrokeshire

Addendum to Heritage Impact Statement

Richard Hayman

© Richard Hayman, 2025

Contents

1 Introduction.....	1
2 Historical Background.....	2
3 Significance of the Wharf Wall.....	3
4 Proposed Works.....	4
5 Impact Assessment	5
6 References	7
Appendix I: Listed Building Description	8

List of figures

Figure 1. Site plan.....	1
Figure 2. Mill, wharf wall (on the right) and store building, photographed in 2021.	2
Figure 3. Surviving section of wharf wall, showing its rubble-stone construction.....	3
Figure 4. The wharf, photographed in 2023 after the collapse.	3
Figure 5. Example of a cobblestone block taken from Red-Rock brochure.....	4
Figure 6. Plan of proposed works.	5
Figure 7. Elevation of proposed works.	5
Figure 8. Cross-section of proposed works.....	6

I Introduction

This report has been prepared on behalf of Bluestone Resorts Ltd as an addendum to an earlier Heritage Impact Assessment that supported proposed conversion of Blackpool Mill and its outbuildings (Lichfields 2020). In 2023 the wharf wall beside the mill collapsed and its replacement will require a new wall abutting the plinth of the mill and underpinning of a store building beside the mill (Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority planning reference NP24/0649/FUL). Blackpool Mill is listed grade II* (Cadw ref 6090) and the store building is curtilage listed. This addendum therefore assesses the potential impact of the proposal on the setting and significance of the mill and the store building.

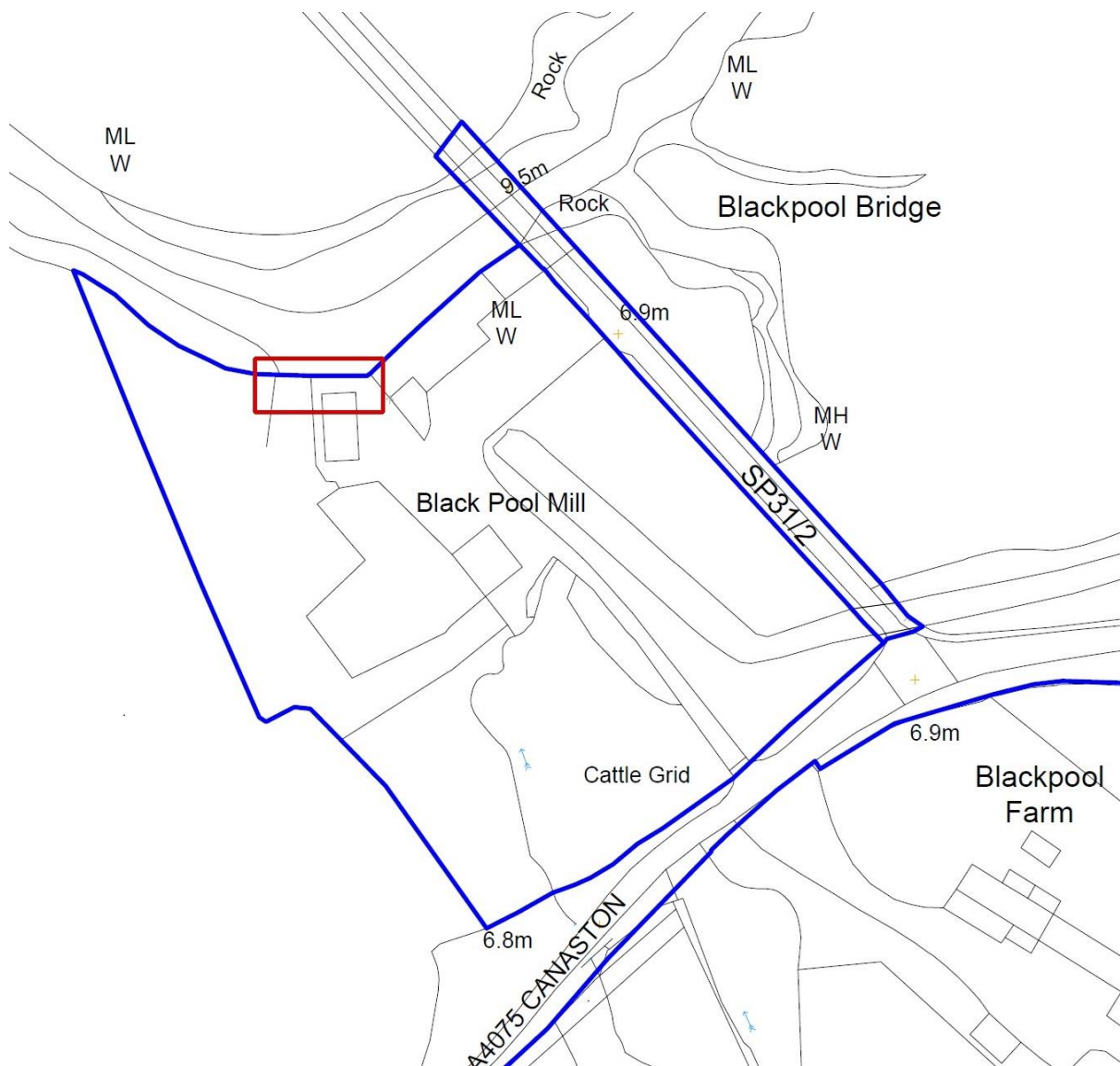


Figure 1. Site plan.

The addendum is a desk-based report that concentrates only on the repair of the wall and does not replicate material in the original report. The site has not been visited in person, but relies on photographs provided by Graham Frecknall Architecture and Design and engineer's drawings supplied by JBA Consulting.

The wharf adjoins the north-west angle of the mill, on the left (south) bank of the Eastern Cleddau, at SN 0597 1448 (fig 1). The wharf is recorded in the National Monuments Record (nprn 420658) and was briefly covered in a historic building record of Blackpool Mill (Hayman 2021).

2 Historical Background

Blackpool Mill was built in 1813 on the Eastern Cleddau and continued working until 1954. The store building had been built by 1846, when it is shown on the Slebech, Minwere & Newton Tithe map. The mill's waterside location was deliberately chosen as it stands close to the navigable limit of the Eastern Cleddau. There was already a wharf at Blackpool by the end of the eighteenth century (Dashwood 1968), if not earlier, from where slate from Glogue Quarry was shipped until the arrival of the railway in 1853. The quarries at Glogue, east of Crymych and about 14 miles from Blackpool, had begun working in the late-seventeenth century (Hayman 2021, 13). A new quay was constructed by the tenant in the early twentieth century and was used in the conveyance of goods central to a rural economy: grain, flour, foodstuffs, manure, stone and coal (Pike 1968, 14).



Figure 2. Mill, wharf wall (on the right) and store building, photographed in 2021.

Before its collapse the wharf was a slightly curving rubble-stone retaining wall with return wall at the west end and a coping course, on to which the uprights of a guard rail had been bolted (figs 2, 3). The wall abutted the plinth of the mill. The infill behind the collapsed wall included some modern material, which ties in with the rebuilding of the wall in the early twentieth century (fig 4).



Figure 3. Surviving section of wharf wall, showing its rubble-stone construction.



Figure 4. The wharf, photographed in 2023 after the collapse.

3 Significance of the Wharf Wall

The significance of heritage assets is measured against agreed heritage values, as set out in Conservation Principles published by Cadw (2011):

- **Evidential value:** This derives from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including its physical remains or historic fabric.

- **Historical value:** An historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement.
- **Aesthetic value:** This derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset. This might include the form of an historic asset, its external appearance and how it lies within its setting.
- **Communal value:** This derives from the meanings that an historic asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It is closely linked to historical and aesthetic values but tends to have additional or specific aspects.

The wharf has high historical value because it demonstrates the importance of river transport in the pre-railway and motor transport period. It also contributes directly to the history of Blackpool Mill itself as an important means of conveying goods to and from the mill.

The wharf is clearly visible in views of Blackpool Mill from Blackpool Bridge and in that sense contributes to the aesthetic value of Blackpool Mill. Blackpool Bridge is a grade-II listed building and is within Slebech Park, included at II* in Cadw's Register of Historic Parks & Gardens in Wales. The wharf, as a visual component of Blackpool Mill, therefore contributes to the setting of both the listed bridge and the park. Evidential value is less important because the structure that collapsed was a rebuilding of the early twentieth century, except that it was a traditional rubble stone construction using local materials.

4 Proposed Works

The proposal is to rebuild the wharf wall and, at the same time, underpin the gable end of the store building, the long-term stability of which has been affected by the collapse of the wharf wall. Loose rubble and debris at the base of the wall will be removed. The wall will be underpinned by a reinforced concrete foundation on bedrock and will be faced with a pre-cast concrete retaining wall of Redi-Rock Blocks with 'cobblestone surface finish' (fig 5). This is considered to be the most sympathetic solution, as it replicates the appearance of masonry (figs 6, 7, 8). At the abutment with the mill plinth there will be a separation layer to prevent permanent adhesion to the existing building. A pedestrian guard rail will be bolted on to the coping course.



Figure 5. Example of a cobblestone block taken from Red-Rock brochure.

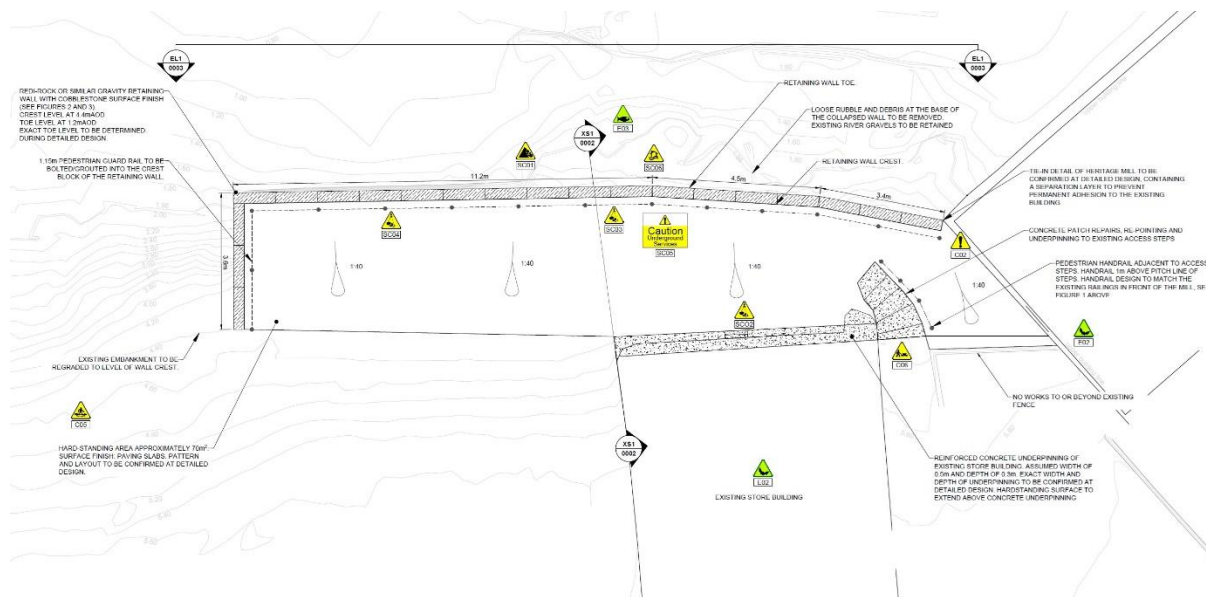


Figure 6. Plan of proposed works.

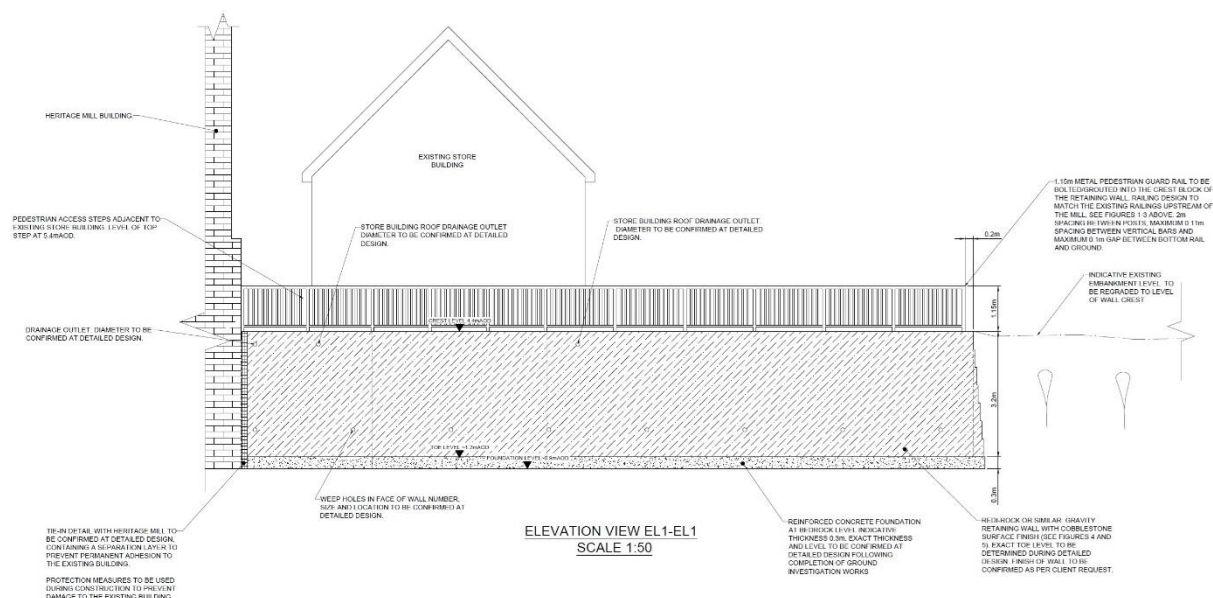


Figure 7. Elevation of proposed works.

The gable end of the store building is to be underpinned by reinforced concrete of approximately 0.5 metres width and 0.3 metres depth, although the precise specification will be determined at the detailed design stage.

5 Impact Assessment

The use of a concrete foundation for the wall should not have a visual impact as it is below the normal water line. The Redi-Rock blocks will create the impression of a masonry wall of regular courses, which is different from the previous wall. When first built this wall might look a little out of character and would contrast strongly with the masonry of the mill plinth.

6 References

Cadw, 2011, *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*.

Cadw, 2017a, *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*.

Cadw, 2017b, *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales*.

Dashwood, Sir Francis, c1968, *The Story of Blackpool Mill*.

Hayman, Richard, 2021, *Blackpool Mill: Level 4 Historic Building Record*.

Lichfields, 2020, *Blackpool Mill Section 19 Application: Heritage Impact Statement*.

Pike, W.G., 1968, *As far as the tide flows*. Unpublished ms.

Welsh Government, 2017, *Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment*.

Welsh Government, 2024, *Planning Policy Wales*, edition 12.

Appendix I: Listed Building Description

Full Report for Listed Buildings



Summary Description of a Listed Buildings

Reference Number	Building Number	Grade	Status	Date of Designation	Date of Amendment
6090		II*	Designated	21/06/1971	11/11/1997

Name of Property	Address
Blackpool Mill	

Location

Unitary Authority	Community	Town	Locality	Easting	Northing
Pembrokeshire	Martletwy		Blackpool	205999	214489

Street Side	Location
	On the left bank of the Eastern Cleddau 1 km SW of Canaston Bridge.

Description

Broad Class	Period
Industrial	

History

Built in 1813 by Nathaniel Phillips, owner of the Slebech Estate, on the site of the former Blackpool ironworks. Water for the wheel was brought from a distance of 0.5 km. The last section of the leat was contrived to approach the S face of the mill nearly on its central axis, for architectural effect. The mill itself is also designed for symmetry, with a central main entrance

and with its main block flanked by equal low wings at each end. The original water-wheel was beneath the main block of the mill: a wheel of 4.5 m diameter and 3.5 m in width, on a wrought-iron shaft.

In 1842 John Butler became tenant of Blackpool Farm and Mill. He had problems with the water wheel; marks from the original wheel scraping against the stonework are visible in the basement. He also had trouble from Rebecca rioters, who destroyed the floodgates in 1843.

At the turn of the century it was decided to renew the milling machinery and to remove the water-wheel in favour of a turbine. The new machinery was installed by Armfield of Ringwood, and continued in use until after the second World War. In 1958 the mill was converted to electricity.

In 1968 a programme of restoration of the mill was commenced by Lady Victoria Dashwood to convert the mill to a tourist attraction. The left wing was converted to be the public entrance and shop, the right wing to be the tea-room. The mill machinery including the turbine was guarded, displayed and interpreted. One window of the left wing was converted to be a doorway and the main front door canopy was removed.

Exterior

The main elevation facing SE is of four storeys plus an attic, with a range of five windows. The attic is lit only by windows in the gable ends plus a recent central roof-light at the front in the place of an earlier small dormer. At each end of the building is a two-storey wing, two windows, set back from the front elevation but in a continuous elevation at the rear. Rendered on all faces; slate roofs with coped gables. All the windows are of sash type with 16 panes, with recessed exposed frames. Some of the sashes have been replaced, many are of the type without horns and probably original. Slate sills. Central original double-doors, framed and boarded with a large fanlight within a dressed limestone surround. Three steps up to the door, which are unlikely to be original. There are the marks of a former canopy above.

As the rear elevation is all in one plane the fenestration of the main block and the wings is continuously spaced as a range of nine windows. In the ground storey the third and seventh openings are doors, probably altered from windows as the head height is the same.

The mill stands on a thin plinth over a basement podium. The basement is about 0.5 m high at the front but about 5 m high overlooking the river at the rear. The basement below plinth level overlooking the river is in regularly coursed hammer-dressed stonework with a large central archway for the tail water from the wheel and a smaller blocked archway to the left.

Interior

The main roof is of four king-post trusses with two purlins each side, in pine. The struts to the principals are kept high to preserve headroom. Sack-hoist pulley centrally in the roof apex. The roofs of the two side extensions are of two bays on queen-post trusses.

The attic floor is carried on four timber cross-girders supported by timber posts in the storey beneath. Plain pine single floorboarding in variable widths without cross-tongues. The first, second and third floors are all similar but each is carried on

110 mm diameter cast-iron columns in the storey beneath. The ground floor is also carried on timber girders, with two longitudinal ones supported on stone piers and six trimmed cross-girders at positions where machinery loads are carried.

The staircases have turned storey-posts in oak. Shaped pine handrails on square balusters; closed strings.

The machinery consists of a vertical-axis turbine by Armfields of Vale of Avon Ironworks, Ringwood, in the basement, driving a lay-shaft at ground floor to the four stones. The four sets of stones are at first floor level. The cast-iron hurst frames at ground floor level have handwheels for the adjustment of runner pressure.

Reason for designation

Listed as an exceptionally fine industrial building in the functional tradition, imposingly situated. It survives virtually intact and includes a full working set of machinery.
