

Archaeology Wales

Holyhead Waterfront Regeneration Scheme

Heritage Impact Assessment



Report No. 1955

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Summary

In January 2021 Archaeology Wales was commissioned to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment in relation to the proposed development which will be located along the existing Holyhead seafront and on reclaimed land in Holyhead New Harbour. The proposed development will include new residential developments, public realm, commercial, leisure and retail use (plus associated infrastructure) and a new marina with protective breakwater.

A preliminary search highlighted that there were three Conservation Areas, nine Scheduled Monuments and 67 Listed Buildings within the study area, with one Conservation Area and four of the Listed Buildings inside the proposed development site. During the assessment, and subsequent site visit, it was determined that the proposed development had the potential to impact two Conservation Areas, one Scheduled Monument and 16 Listed Buildings (19 designated assets). The remaining assets were discounted from this assessment due to distance, topography and the built landscape between them and the proposed site.

This assessment considers the impacts upon: Holyhead Beach Conservation Area, Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House (LB 14761), Soldier's Point House (LB 14760) and Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-Felin) House (LB 14759), all which will be directly affected by the proposed development.

The proposed development would see the renovation of Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House (LB 14761), Soldier's Point House (LB 14760), and Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-Felin) House (LB 14759) and their immediate surrounding areas. The proposed development is also wholly located within Holyhead Beach Conservation Area. Therefore, these assets will be directly impacted by the development, which will result in a Major Change, but the overall impact upon the Conservation Area will be Minor Beneficial and the overall impact upon the buildings is likely to be Major Beneficial. This assessment has highlighted the poor state of disrepair these buildings are in, and it is imperative they are saved before being lost forever.

Crynodeb Annechnegol

Ym mis Ionawr 2021 comisiynwyd Archaeoleg Cymru i gynnal Asesiad Effaith Treftadaeth mewn perthynas â'r datblygiad arfaethedig a fydd wedi'i leoli ar hyd glan y môr presennol Caergybi ac ar dir wedi'i adfer yn Harbwr Newydd Caergybi. Bydd y datblygiad arfaethedig yn cynnwys datblygiadau preswyl newydd, tir cyhoeddus, defnydd masnachol, hamdden a manwerthu (ynghyd â seilwaith cysylltiedig) a marina newydd gyda morglawdd amddiffynnol.

Amlygodd chwiliad rhagarweiniol fod tair Ardal Gadwraeth, naw Heneb Rhestredig a 67 Adeilad Rhestredig yn ardal yr astudiaeth, gydag un Ardal Gadwraeth a phedwar o'r Adeiladau Rhestredig y tu mewn i'r safle datblygu arfaethedig. Yn ystod yr asesiad, a'r ymweliad safle dilynol, penderfynwyd bod gan y datblygiad arfaethedig y potensial i effeithio ar ddwy Ardal Gadwraeth, un Heneb Gofrestredig ac 16 Adeilad Rhestredig (19 ased dynodedig). Gostyngwyd gweddill yr asedau o'r asesiad hwn oherwydd pellter, topograffi a'r dirwedd adeiledig rhyngddynt a'r safle arfaethedig.

Mae'r asesiad hwn yn ystyried yr effeithiau ar: Ardal Cadwraeth Traeth Caergybi, Wal Sgrin i Soldier's Point House (LB 14761), Soldier's Point House (LB 14760), Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-Felin) House (LB 14759).

Byddai'r datblygiad arfaethedig yn gweld adnewyddu Screen Wall i Soldier's Point House (LB 14761), Soldier's Point House (LB 14760), a Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-Felin) House (LB 14759) a'r ardaloedd cyfagos. Mae'r datblygiad arfaethedig hefyd wedi'i leoli'n gyfan gwbl yn Ardal Gadwraeth Traeth Caergybi. Felly, bydd y datblygiad yn effeithio'n uniongyrchol ar yr asedau hyn, a fydd yn arwain at Newid Mawr, ond bydd yr effaith gyffredinol ar yr Ardal Gadwraeth yn Fân Fuddiol ac mae'r effaith gyffredinol ar yr adeiladau yn debygol o fod yn Fuddiol o Fawr. Mae'r asesiad hwn wedi tynnu sylw at gyflwr gwael yr adeiladau y mae'r adeiladau hyn ynddynt, ac mae'n hanfodol eu bod yn cael eu hachub cyn cael eu colli am byth.

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. In January 2021 Archaeology Wales (henceforth – AW) was commissioned to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). This assessment was carried out in relation to the proposed development which will be located along the existing Holyhead seafront and on reclaimed land in Holyhead New Harbour. The proposed development will include new residential developments, public realm, commercial, leisure and retail use (plus associated infrastructure) and a new marina with protective breakwater.
- 1.1.2. There are four Listed Buildings located within the proposed development site, and it is also located wholly within Holyhead Beach Conservation Area. There are a further three Listed Buildings located immediately adjacent to the proposed development site.
- 1.1.3. This assessment has been prepared in accordance with the guidance laid out within Managing Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, produced by Cadw in May 2017.

1.2. Site Description

- 1.2.1. The site currently comprises of a number of industrial buildings, hard standings, some redundant buildings of significant heritage interest, a wooded area, inter-tidal foreshore, seafront promenade and a harbour. The site topography ranges from the seabed, of which a small part is to be reclaimed, to the inland areas at the southern edge of the development boundary which vary from 9m – 15m AOD.
- 1.2.2. The dominant feature of this area is the existing operational Holyhead Harbour, which is defined on its seaward (north-western) side by the Great Breakwater. To the west is Salt Island, which operates as a ferry port for both Irish Ferries and Stena Line. To the south-east of the site are the residential areas of Holyhead, and to the south-west is open grassland with wooded areas and rocky outcrops. To the west and south-west of the site comprises pasture, the Breakwater Country Park, Holyhead Mountain, and further areas of coastline.
- 1.2.3. The geology beneath the site is comprised of mica schist and psammite belonging to the New Harbour Group. This metamorphic bedrock formed approximately 541 to 635 million years ago in the Ediacaran Period. The superficial deposits beneath the site consist of sand, silt and clay belonging to the Coastal Zone Deposits that formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2021).

2. Methodology

- 2.1.1. The primary objective of this assessment is to assess the impact of the development proposals on the historic environment, specifically Holyhead Beach Conservation Area and the Listed Buildings likely to be impacted by any proposed development. It will gather enough information to understand the significance of any heritage assets

affected and assess the impact of the proposals on those assets. This will help inform future decision making, design solutions and potential mitigation strategies.

2.1.2. This report provides information of sufficient detail to allow informed planning decisions to be made which can safeguard the archaeological resource.

2.1.3. The assessment considers the following:

- a) The significance of the existing site and its setting and its relationship to adjacent and non-designated heritage assets, through assessment of various readily available primary sources:
 - Assessment of all available reports and archives including unpublished and unprocessed material affecting the site and its setting.
 - Assessment of all relevant extant photographic evidence, including available historic photos.
 - Map regression analysis using all relevant cartographic sources e.g. all editions of the Ordnance Survey County Series, tithe and early estate maps (as available).
 - Place name evidence.
 - Historic documents (e.g. Charters, registers, estate papers).
- b) The significance of the assets in their local, regional and national context and in light of the findings of the assessment.
- c) The potential impact of any proposed development on existing historical assets and their setting.

2.1.4. This work follows the guidance laid out in Managing Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales (Cadw, 2017).

3. Understanding the Significance of the Assets

3.1. Listed Buildings

3.1.1. There are three Listed Buildings within the proposed development area that which will be directly impacted by the development (Table 1, Figure 2).

Reference	Name	Period	Grade	NGR
LB 14761	Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House	Post medieval	II	SH2365383637
LB 14760	Soldier's Point House	Post medieval	II	SH2363083563
LB 14759	Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-Felin) House	Post medieval	II	SH2376083358

Table 1: The Listed Buildings within the development area.

Soldier's Point House (Plates 1-9)

- 3.1.2. Soldier's Point House is a two-storey castellated house built as the residence of Mr. Rigby in c.1849. Rigby was one of the main contractors of the Holyhead Breakwater project. The large house was modelled on Hampton Court, and the house is an early example of Victorian castellation with stucco rendered walls and barred windows, surrounded by a stone curtain wall with towers (LB 14761) shielding it from the Breakwater.
- 3.1.3. The south-east elevation, which is the main entrance to the house, has six bays, crowned with castellations and castellated turrets all carried on stepped corbelling, with octagonal towers at the corners and two entrance porches, between which is a modern glazed veranda. The structure was expanded in the early 20th century with a substantial two-storey addition to the west of the house added after 1970. This extension obscures the south-western elevation of the house, although corner towers and the central pair of turrets remain visible. The north-east elevation has three windows with corner towers and central pair of turrets. A garden wall extends north-west from this elevation, which is comprised of exposed stone with towers and turrets, in a similar style to the main Screen Wall, with broad arches providing access to the yard.
- 3.1.4. The house had a service block and outbuildings and was entered through a gateway between pair of towers. The house was set in extensive grounds which included garden walls and ornaments in a similar style to the grand screen wall north of the house. The first edition Ordnance Survey map sheet of 1889 shows that the gardens also included two ornamental fountains as well as its own landing.
- 3.1.5. The listing description states that the house was designated as a relatively unspoilt example of the style and due to its connection with the construction of the Great Breakwater. It has group value with the Screen Wall and so its value and significance will be discussed with the Screen Wall below.

Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House (Plates 10-11)

- 3.1.6. The Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House (LB 14761) is located within the north-western extent of the proposed site boundary and is an elaborate castellated screen wall. The screen wall runs along the western and northern sides of the grounds surrounding Soldier's Point House (LB 14760), screening the house from activity related to the construction of the Great Breakwater.
- 3.1.7. Within the screen wall is a high, castellated, octagonal tower. The faces of the tower have cruciform loops outlined in white quartz. To the east of the tower the wall steps down to the east to a low square tower with shallow arched doorway and then continues to turret beyond which is another similar square tower. From here the wall turns slightly south-east, stepping down between round turrets, terminating in low

square tower with shallow-arched doorways.

- 3.1.8. To the west of the tower is a blocked gateway flanked by towers, just beyond this the wall turns to the south and becomes much simpler in style, with rustic crenelations between stone piers.
- 3.1.9. The listing description states that it was designated due to its impressive style and for its group value with Soldier's Point House.

Evidential Value

- 3.1.10. Soldier's Point House is an early example of Victorian castellation and was modelled on Hampton Court Palace. Neither the house nor its Screen Wall have undergone any major alterations, with the original physical fabric still surviving. In the early 20th century, a small extension was added to the northern side of the building, with a further two-storey extension added on the western side of the house in the mid 20th century. These do not appear to have radically altered the original fabric, with the towers and crenelations still extant behind the two-storey extension.

Historical Value

- 3.1.11. Holyhead began to expand during the mid 19th century, when it became the largest port on the Anglesey. The expansion of the town and its port was due to the need for a more reliable water link to Ireland, both for ferry passengers and for use by the Royal Mail (Scott Jones, 2010). This prompted further engineering projects across the island, to improve road and rail links with the mainland, which included the construction of the Menai Suspension Bridge and in 1848 the Chester to Holyhead Railway was opened (Scott Jones, 2010).
- 3.1.12. In the 1820s steam ships had begun to operate between Holyhead and Ireland, however, the port was too small to accommodate the increase in ship traffic, with the existing pier becoming overused. The Admiralty decided that Holyhead port required improvements which resulted in plans being drawn up for the construction of a new harbour and port, as (Evans and McGuinness, 2017). These improvements included the construction of the Great Breakwater, which is itself a Grade II* listed building and the longest pier in the British Isles (LB 5743). Work on the Great Breakwater began in 1848 and it was not completed until 1876.
- 3.1.13. The contracts for the construction of the breakwater and the preliminary works, which included the construction of tramways to connecting the quarry to Soldier's Point, were awarded to Messrs Rigby. After work had started on the harbour improvements, Soldier's Point House and its Screen Wall were constructed as the residence of Mr Rigby. As such the historical value of the house and screen wall are linked to the expansion of Holyhead and its harbour and the construction of the Great Breakwater.
- 3.1.14. The Screen Wall has further historical value as the octagonal tower in the Screen Wall was converted into a pillbox during the Second World War. It was one of thirteen pillboxes placed around Holyhead to defend the harbour against any potential attack

(Scott Jones, 2010).

Aesthetic Value

- 3.1.15. The aesthetic value of the house and its Screen Wall are linked to their elaborate style, with both being fine examples of Victorian castellation. The stucco render and white paint make the house visually striking, and it can be seen from Newry Beach, which forms Zone 1 of the proposed development.
- 3.1.16. The house was originally modelled on Hampton Court and as such, the building, along with its castellated bare stone towers and screen wall, set in this maritime setting, may be considered to be extremely unusual, imposing and individual, especially when viewed from the Great Breakwater (Scott Jones, 2010).

Communal Value

- 3.1.17. The current communal value of Soldier's Point House and Screen Wall is largely linked to their aesthetic value. They are situated in a prominent position and are visible to all who use the Breakwater Country Park, with the footpath leading directly past these buildings towards the Holyhead Breakwater. Therefore, the buildings should be seen as local landmarks for people.
- 3.1.18. Soldier's Point House was burnt down in 2011 and is currently not accessible by the public due to the danger posed by the remains of the building, it is currently fenced off. As such there is little other communal value in the building or the Screen Wall beyond their use as landmarks.

Porth-y-Felin House (Plates 12-16)

- 3.1.19. To the south of Soldier's Point House is another residential property, the Grade II listed Porth-y-Felin House, also called Porth-y-Felin House (LB 14759). The house was built around 1849 by Mr. Rigby for Mr. G. F. Dobson, the resident engineer of Holyhead Breakwater. After the completion of the breakwater in 1873 the building was used as the Harbourmaster's House. On the First Edition OS map of 1889 – 1890 it is labelled as Government House. It first appears as Porth-y-Felin House on mapping in 1924.
- 3.1.20. During the Second World War the building was used to quarter RAF air-sea rescue personnel. It was later used to house the RAF's Marine Craft Unit until this branch of the RAF was disbanded in 1986 and the house went out of use. It has since fallen into decay and been subject to vandalism.
- 3.1.21. The building is two-storey and has a U-shaped plan, with the front elevation facing east across the harbour. The building is externally stuccoed, with band courses below the eaves and to the first floor. It has shallow-pitch, hipped slate roofs with low rectangular stucco chimney stacks. It was originally glazed with small-pane hornless sash windows, but these have now been entirely blocked up to the ground floor and

boarded behind on the first floor.

- 3.1.22. The front elevation has 11 bays. It has a central projecting pedimented section of three bays, with three windows to both storeys. Those to the ground floor have been blocked up, while to the first floor the six- over six-light sash window frames partially remain, boarded behind. The bays to either side of the central section both have arched doorways to the ground floor. The door surround has Doric columns and a round arch with projecting keystone. Doric pilasters framing the doorway rise to the height of the central moulded band course. To the first floor both bays have six- over six-light sash window frames, boarded behind. To either side of the front elevation are semi-hexagonal projecting bays with 3 small-pane sash windows to each floor.
- 3.1.23. The south wing (to the left of the front elevation) is four bay, with a blocked doorway to the ground floor of the southernmost bay and tall windows with stucco surrounds to the other three. There is a blind opening window in stucco to the first-floor southernmost bay, and smaller sash windows in stucco surrounds to rest. The north wing has seven bays, including a projecting, cross-hipped bay. There is a doorway to the ground floor at the western end. The rear of the building has a single storey service block enclosed by the wings.

Evidential Value

- 3.1.24. Despite being in a poor state of repair the building retains much of its original character. It has undergone no major alterations since its construction, and as such has good potential to inform on the fabric and construction methods used. The building was listed as a good example of its period and style. Unfortunately, some of the original exterior elements have been destroyed by the blocking up of the ground floor openings to prevent intruders. This includes the doors and sash windows. Some of the sash window frames survive in varying degrees of preservation to the first floor. The interior condition of the building is not known.

Historical Value

- 3.1.25. Porth-y-Felin House, previously Government House, is an important building in the history of Holyhead, as it was built to house the resident engineer of the Great Breakwater project, G. F. Dobson, by Mr. Rigby of the work's contractors J. and C. Rigby. At a similar time, c. 1849, Rigby also built himself a mansion, the neighbouring Soldier's Point House. These associations to important figures in a period of significant development for Holyhead means the building has high historical value.

Aesthetic Value

- 3.1.26. Porth-y-Felin House is, like neighbouring Soldier's Point House, an imposing building which reflects the ambition of the Great Breakwater project. Architecturally Porth-y-Felin is in a very different style to Soldier's Point House, with strong Neo-Classical elements particularly to the front elevation, overlooking the harbour. Sited on a raised promontory it has views overlooking the breakwater and harbour and can be seen from various locations including Newry Beach promenade. Despite its

prominent setting, the aesthetic value of the building is diminished by its current poor state of repair.

Communal Value

- 3.1.27. As in the cases of Soldiers Point House and Screen Wall, the communal value of Porth-y-Felin House is largely linked to its prominent position and visibility from the harbour, which make it a local landmark. The house is situated on a trackway which forms part of the Wales Coast Path, although a high boundary wall limits views from the path.
- 3.1.28. Unfortunately, the building has fallen into disrepair since it went out of use and is currently inaccessible due to the danger posed by the structural remains. Its poor condition, including blocked up windows and discoloured stucco walls, detract from the building's value as a local historical landmark.

3.2. Conservation Area

- 3.2.1. The proposed development site is located wholly within the Holyhead Beach Conservation Area, which was designated in 1971, (Figure 3). This conservation area lies to the north of Holyhead. From Salt Island Bridge the southern boundary of the conservation area runs westwards along the south side of Prince of Wales Road and the boundary wall to the edge of the greens along Beach Road to then follow the Breakwater Quarry Road until it reaches Soldier's Point. The boundary then follows the natural coastline eastwards up to Trinity Yard from where it then runs along the promenade wall up to Mackenzie Landing. The final length sees it again follow the natural coastline eastwards back to Salt Island Bridge.
- 3.2.2. The reasons for this designation are as follows:

"Most of Newry Beach evolved from agricultural land to an enclosed working area established during the construction of the Great Breakwater. Later after completion of the Breakwater the central area was transformed by the construction of a two-tier promenade and landscaping to create a vast green public open space that even today is used for functions. The unique character and history of the imposing buildings and rugged landscape to the west, the vast public open space to the centre, and the more urban 19th Century development to the east are all considered worthy of protection and enhancement" (Holyhead Beach Conservation Area Character Appraisal, p.10 2005).

Evidential Value

- 3.2.3. The conservation area is largely comprised of green open areas, with very little development having taken place within it since the completion of the Great Breakwater in the later 19th century. As such the conservation area represents a largely fossilised 19th century landscape, with buildings that are contemporary with the Holyhead Breakwater. As such its evidential value is high.

Historical Value

- 3.2.4. The historical value of the conservation area is linked to the expansion of the port of Holyhead and the construction of the Great Breakwater in the mid to late 19th century. As already discussed above the development of the port included the construction of Soldier's Point House, its Screen Wall, Porth-y-Felin House and the Lifeboat House (LBs 14760, 14761, 14759 and 14729).
- 3.2.5. Due to the low levels of development within the conservation area it retains much of its 18th and 19th century maritime setting and character, and so its historical value is considered to be high.

Aesthetic Value

- 3.2.6. Part of the aesthetic value to the conservation area is linked to the fact that little development has taken place, meaning the area retains its historic fabric. The presence of the imposing and unique buildings of Soldier's Point House, its Screen Wall as well as the impressive Porth-y-Felin House (LBs 14760, 14761 and 14759) enhance its aesthetic value.
- 3.2.7. The aesthetic value of the conservation area is also derived from the fact it is largely open and has good views from within as well as from without. For example, Soldier's Point House can be seen from Newry Beach in the central area of the development, whilst large parts of the conservation area can be viewed from both Soldiers Point House and Porth-y-Felin House. From Newry Beach views across the Great Breakwater and across to other areas of the north-western coast of Anglesey are also afforded. The aesthetic value can therefore be considered to be high.

Communal Value

- 3.2.8. The conservation area is largely made up of green open spaces, such as the park and green spaces and the promenade within the Newry Beach area. These often frequented by both residents and visitors. Part of the communal value is also derived from the fact that this area of Holyhead is comprised of the largely preserved 19th century landscape. As such the communal value of the Conservation Area can be considered to be high.

4. Summary of the Development Proposals

- 4.1.1. The proposed development will be a mixed-use regeneration scheme. It will include new residential developments, public realm, commercial, leisure and retail use (plus associated infrastructure) and a new marina with a protective breakwater. Planning Application and Listed Building Consent is for a mixed-use development proposed along the existing waterfront, and on reclaimed land within Holyhead New Harbour, in the shelter of the Great Breakwater.
- 4.1.2. The proposed development site is located c. 1km to the north-west of Holyhead town

centre, and it is located along the existing Holyhead seafront and on reclaimed land in Holyhead New Harbour, centred on approximately on NGR SH 24135 83334 (henceforth – the site). The site covers an area of 34.083 hectares and comprises of four development zones (Figure 1):

- Zone 1 - Newry Beach
- Zone 2 - Porth-y-Felin
- Zone 3 - Soldiers Point
- Zone 4 - The Greens

- 4.1.3. The Zone 1 Newry Beach area of development is located within the eastern section of the development boundary and seeks to construct a new L-shaped breakwater to provide robust protection for the new 250-berth marina, along with a Marina Control building and all associated marina infrastructure. The existing Holyhead Sailing Club is to be retained, refurbished and extended while a pair of new commercial buildings adjacent to the existing slipways would provide B2 marine commercial space. Additional commercial premises along the waterfront would provide four flexible A1/A3 units, leading eastwards to a new public amphitheatre and covered arcade adjacent to the existing Sunken Gardens for community uses such as outdoor performances, craft fayres and farmers' / Christmas markets.
- 4.1.4. A public promenade punctuated with discrete kiosks is proposed along the complete length of the rebuilt shoreline, extending right out onto the breakwater and featuring a dominant public art-piece; at the base of the widened breakwater a new 'perched beach' inlet is proposed, surrounded by six two-to-four storey apartment blocks accommodating 108 apartments with basement car parking and elements of discrete surface parking. Finally, at the eastern end, the development would retain an area of accessible beach adjacent to Mackenzie Landing with enhanced public realm, landscaping, pedestrian / cycle links and parking provision around the existing Maritime Museum and restaurant.
- 4.1.5. The Zone 2 Porth-y-Felin development further west is focussed around the restoration and conversion of the currently derelict Listed 'Porth-y-Felin House' into five residential apartments within an enhanced natural landscaped setting. This acts as the visual fulcrum for new housing to be constructed mostly on land reclaimed from the sea, with a new shoreline and creation of a new private yacht basin at the heart of the residential development.
- 4.1.6. Surrounding the new yacht basin, the residential accommodation would include 123 townhouses and apartments on the newly reclaimed waterfront, along with 13 detached villas on higher ground to the rear. In addition to housing, the development would provide new public spaces and park, with interconnecting and improved pedestrian and cycle access to Soldier's Point and the Breakwater Country Park. The single-track road meandering to the rear of Porth-y-Felin House would be dedicated as a cycle/footpath as part of the established Wales Coast Path.

- 4.1.7. The Soldiers Point development in Zone 3 is focused on the imposing Soldiers Point House, which is currently lying derelict, by restoring and converting the main Listed Building into four residential apartments in order to safeguard the future of this building, along with restoration and conversion of the adjacent stable yard out-buildings into two further dwellings. To generate income and promote tourism, the development also includes four visually recessive holiday lodges located within the landscaped grounds outside the Screen Wall and taking advantage of stunning views out over The Great Breakwater towards the north-west coastline of Anglesey beyond.
- 4.1.8. The Zone 4 development broadly entitled 'The Greens' is intended to form a buffer/link between Newry Beach and Porth-y-Felin and includes a new bridge link across Porth-y-Felin Creek, which would preserve both this sheltered inlet and the setting of Porth-y-Felin House, and winter lay-up storage and parking overflow adjacent to The Boathouse Hotel. Significantly the amenity grassland referred to locally as 'The Greens', and forming a southern boundary to the Proposed Development, is to be retained and protected as the 'vast green open space' described in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA). The maintained feeling of spaciousness would preserve the overall character and feel of this predominantly exposed part of the Conservation Area.

4.2. Detailed Development Proposals and Pre-Application Consultations

- 4.2.1. The proposed development in Zones 2 and 3 includes the repair, alteration, and conversion of the Grade II listed Porth-y-Felin House (LB 14759), Soldier's Point House (LB 14760) and Screen Wall (LB 14761).
- 4.2.2. The design team's pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) during 2019, in the early stages of development of the proposals, established constraints limiting the completeness of assessments of both the buildings' heritage significance and the potential impacts of evolving proposals thereon. This was due to the condition of the structures. Porth-y-Felin House is heavily decayed and vandalised, and Soldier's Point House is badly fire damaged, making both unsafe to enter, greatly limiting the ability to carry out internal inspections, measured surveys or archaeological recording.
- 4.2.3. Making the buildings safe to enter prior to consent being granted had been deemed unviable by the Applicant, due to the financial and logistical challenges of not only doing so in the first instance, but also, from there, keeping the buildings themselves safe until consent was eventually granted. It was argued that making the building safe for survey would also, logically, increase the already high risk of trespass and with it the risk of further criminal damage which would put any surviving elements of the building's interior at threat of total loss.
- 4.2.4. The loss of any surviving internal elements would, it was argued, not only weaken the ability to record and analyse the building's historic development but could also cause instability in surrounding structures, leading to collapse of the historically

significant external fabric the development sought to retain and restore.

- 4.2.5. An LPA consultation panel assembled in October 2019 and acknowledged the regretful circumstances and supported the principle of progressing the development of proposals for the listed building from an assessment baseline weaker than would typically be expected, in part on the basis of the Design Team's expressed commitment to a sympathetic scheme prioritising the restoration and protection of external envelope to help secure public benefit.
- 4.2.6. At this point it was determined that the baseline for the assessment of development proposals would be established from a combination of the visual assessment of safely accessible sections of the buildings' interiors, external surveys of accessible areas (including drone footage) and archive records including architectural drawings submitted with past planning or building regulations applications.

Pre-App Mitigation Strategy

- 4.2.7. The limitations of the assessment baseline prompted a pre-application discussion with the LPA over potential mitigation strategies. The Design Team proposed to an LPA consultation panel assembled in October 2019, and subsequently to the LPA Conservation Officer in December 2019, that a reasonable and proportionate mitigation strategy might involve a Watching Brief condition covering the Site Clearance phase which would follow receipt of a consent. The findings of this archaeological work could inform, or be accompanied by, an analytical historic building record also secured by condition. Together these measures would, it was argued, help address the shortcomings of the initial assessment baseline.
- 4.2.8. The proposals for each of the Listed Buildings are detailed below.

Soldier's Point House

- 4.2.9. The development proposes the restoration of the envelope of the iconic Soldiers Point House and reconstruction of the interior layout to provide four residential apartments within an enclosed courtyard, looking out upon private gardens to the front.
- 4.2.10. The architecture of Soldier's Point House lends itself well to a residential subdivision because of its residential origins and apparent original division into two units. The presence of well-proportioned rooms, and the generous and convenient allocation of existing entrances and windows across the elevations supports a well-proportioned practical layout with good views and daylight levels.
- 4.2.11. To the rear of the courtyard, the existing ancillary outbuildings – including former stables and a cottage - would also be reconstructed to provide two additional residential apartments.
- 4.2.12. The distinctive Screen Wall would be retained and safeguarded, with public access facilitated around the periphery of the grounds and interconnecting the Waterfront development with the Great Breakwater and the Country Park.

- 4.2.13. Discreet parking is to be provided within courtyard enclosures to minimise modern ‘clutter’ around the external facades of the complex.

Proposal Design Detail & Philosophy – Main House

- Proposals were developed with reference to comprehensive documentary research, external surveys and drone footage of fire-damaged interiors.
- The proposal focusses on the repair and restoration of the external envelope of the original house, to deliver maximum public benefit.
- A C20 porch between the house’s two original front entrance porches is to be removed.
- To the west elevation an unsympathetic modern two storey side extension is to be removed to allow the original elevation to be restored.
- In line with pre-application discussions held with the LPA, the internal fit out has been developed on the basis of ‘total replacement’ in anticipation of no standing fabric being in a condition suitable for incorporation into the new residential accommodation.
- The proposed layout has been designed around the external envelope’s historic window and door apertures and the central ‘party wall’ which appears to have once divided the house into two units.
- The proposals provide generously proportioned apartment units to help ensure proportionality with the architectural quality of the building.
- Communal stairs will be located at the rear of the plan to make best use of the space and host architecture of each unit, and to provide convenient access to parking concealed behind the courtyard’s screen walls.
- The North elevation accommodates a simple intervention to provide the additional internal space needed to make best use of the architectural qualities of the original house. The external presentation of this intervention is deliberately contemporary and contrasting to protect historic integrity. While contrasting, the dominant material of brick is actually a direct reference to the shell construction of the original house, which is local brick below a stucco plaster.

Proposal Design Detail & Philosophy – Cottages (Stable Yard)

- The proposal seeks to deliver two residential units from existing ancillary buildings at the rear of the main house which have undergone numerous alterations and adaptations over time to suit the needs and tastes of the owners of the site.
- Proposals were developed with reference to comprehensive documentary research, external survey data, limited internal inspection and reference to early 20th century archived architectural drawings, prepared for a former owner of

Soldier's Point House, Arthur Pearson, as he adapted stables and cottages to accommodate a motorcar.

- Where possible and feasible, existing stone facades are to be stabilised and retained so the re-built structures would generally sit within the footprint of the existing.
- Where rebuilding is necessary, masonry is to be salvaged from the existing structure to be incorporated into the external envelope of the proposal.
- Once complete, the character of the buildings would protect the site's historic architectural hierarchy, with a low-status vernacular character contrasting sharply with the grander architecture of the main house they once served.
- The proposals retain storey and-a-half units of stone construction with dormers and windows reflective of original positions and patterns.
- Features introduced to enhance the quality of accommodation in this largely enclosed setting are delivered honestly, with contemporary materials selected to contrast with the historic palette.
- In line with pre-app discussions held with the LPA, the internal fit out has been developed on the basis of 'total replacement' in anticipation of no standing fabric being in a condition suitable for incorporation into the new residential accommodation.
- It is anticipated that addressing the ill effects of the criminal damage and abandonment these buildings have suffered, along with the requirement to meet modern building standards, will necessitate substantial areas of rebuilding. The extent of this rebuilding work will be informed by detailed surveys once safe access is possible.

Porth-y-Felin House

- 4.2.14. The development proposes the restoration of the envelope of Porth-Y-Felin House and reconstruction of the interior layout to provide five residential apartments, within a formal landscape looking south-east towards the new Marina development.
- 4.2.15. The architecture of Porth-Y-Felin House lends itself well to a residential subdivision because of its residential origins and original division into two units. The presence of well-proportioned rooms, and the generous and convenient allocation of existing entrances and windows across the elevations supports a well-proportioned practical layout with good views and daylight levels.
- 4.2.16. The proposals allow for the reinstatement and enhancement of the long-abandoned formal gardens around the house discovered during the research phase of the project.
- 4.2.17. A link bridge is proposed across the inlet to the southeast of the house in lieu of a

previously proposed perimeter road across the shoreline to better reveal the landscape character in the Porth-Y-Felin area at the time of the house's construction. This solution helps to ensure access to areas of wholly new development will not visually overwhelm the historic setting of Porth-y-Felin House.

Proposal Design Detail & Philosophy

- Proposals were developed with reference to comprehensive documentary research, archive floor plan drawings and external surveys and limited visual inspection of accessible sections of the abandoned, vandalised and dangerously dilapidated interiors.
- The proposal focusses on the repair and restoration of the external envelope of the original house, to deliver maximum public benefit.
- Crudely blocked up former window openings are to be reinstated, and the insertion of wholly new windows restricted in number and limited to the rear elevation.
- The heavily modified and now derelict single storey service block between the two rear wings is to be rebuilt to make the most functional use of the original built footprint. The simple flat-roofed form of this rebuild ensures subservience to the architecture of its host. A parapet detail referencing the classical influences of the main house can be utilised to conceal the single otherwise-exposed roof edge of the proposal to ensure the flat roof form does not catch the eye for those venturing to the rear of the house, who will view it from close quarters at street level.
- In line with pre-application discussions held with the LPA, the internal fit out has been developed on the basis of 'total replacement' although it is hoped that some architectural features may survive in currently inaccessible areas which could be incorporated into the final proposals.
- The proposed layout has been designed to suit the external envelope's historic window and door apertures including the separate front entrances which appear to have supported the division of the building into two units.
- Where possible, original room arrangements and partition positions (visible from limited inspection or as assumed from past floor plan drawings) are retained in the proposed layout, to help preserve the architectural character of the interior and how it was intended to relate to the building's external envelope.
- Communal stair cores are proposed in the likely original positions of stairwells off of the building's two front entrances, delivering functional benefit from the original layout.
- The proposals provide generously proportioned apartment units to help ensure proportionality with the architectural quality of the building.

5. Potential Impacts

5.1. The Proposed Changes

Soldier's Point House and the Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House

- 5.1.1. The proposals outline the intention to restore the iconic facade to Soldiers Point House and reconstruct the interior layout to accommodate four residential apartments within an enclosed courtyard, looking out upon private gardens to the front.
- 5.1.2. To the rear of the courtyard, the outbuildings would also be reconstructed to provide two additional residential apartments with discrete parking within the courtyard enclosure.
- 5.1.3. The distinctive Screen Wall would be retained and safeguarded, with public access facilitated around the periphery of the grounds and interconnecting the Waterfront development with the Great Breakwater and the Country Park.
- 5.1.4. The existing ancillary buildings within the feature Screen Wall at Soldier's Point are proposed to be reconstructed to create two new residential units. The form and appearance of the building would reflect the existing buildings, being a storey-and-a-half units of stone construction and proposing reinstatement of the dormer windows with openings largely in their original positions. Where possible and feasible, the existing stone facades are to be stabilised and retained so the re-built structures would generally sit within the footprint of the existing.
- 5.1.5. While re-use and conversion of the existing fabric would be preferable, due to the damage and deterioration that these buildings have suffered in recent years - along with the requirement to meet modern building standards - it may be that partial reconstruction is a more practical solution and this will be informed by a detailed structural survey once safe access is possible. The existing feature 'battlement' wall, against which the current building is constructed, would be supported and protected in-situ while this work took place. Overall, the character and setting of Soldier's Point House and the Listed screen wall would be retained.
- 5.1.6. The development includes a proposal to provide additional use for the landscaped area immediately outside Soldiers Point in the form of a small number of holiday units . This forms part of the commercial viability strategy for the Soldiers Point area, ensuring that a use is maintained that would help safeguard the maintenance of the surrounding landscape.
- 5.1.7. At the same time, a holiday function as a commercial use would economically help support the maintenance and upkeep of heritage assets. It is recognised that providing a diverse range of uses across the proposal site would help to ensure the sustainability of the site as a whole.
- 5.1.8. In terms of form, the desire is to keep the appearance of the proposed holiday units low in profile. These would be single storey units, partially embedded in the existing

landscape with grass roofs and a frontage of local stone. Consideration has been given to their position against the surrounding topography to ensure that they would not have a significant impact on distant views and the appearance of heritage assets.

Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-Felin) House

- 5.1.9. As with Soldiers Point above, the proposals intend to restore the façade and convert the existing interior into five residential apartments within a formal landscape looking south-east towards the new Marina development.
- 5.1.10. A link bridge is proposed across the inlet for access to the proposed Porth-y-Felin residential development and this would draw the vehicular route away from Porth-y-Felin House and thus preserve the setting of Porth-y-Felin House within the landscape.

Holyhead Beach Conservation area

- 5.1.11. The proposed development is situated wholly within this area, and therefore the area will be altered by the entire development. With the exception of the Holyhead Marina residential apartments, there has been little development within the Conservation Area and the vast open space in the centre remains intact. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA) makes the point that there is however scope for development in the Conservation Area in services sectors such as tourism and leisure, and this is likely to be maritime focussed.
- 5.1.12. What built-form there is in the Conservation Area differs greatly in style and function and as a whole there are few unifying architectural features; any new development should continue to be sympathetic to the historic character and appearance of the Area.
- 5.1.13. On the western side, the once-grand Porth-y-Felin House greatly affects the appearance of the Conservation Area. In the central area, the vast green public space should be preserved, along with key views outwards from the promenades.

5.2. Impacts of the Proposals

- 5.2.1. Presently, Soldier's Point House and Porth-y-Felin House are boarded up and derelict and in desperate need of repair and maintenance. It has been proposed to refurbish the buildings and develop them into residential apartments. It is predicted that these proposals could directly impact upon the existing fabric and character of these buildings. The magnitude of the impact is likely to be major. However, the proposals could be viewed as being beneficial to the buildings, in that they would breathe new life into the buildings and their surrounding landscapes, as long as appropriate mitigation measures are undertaken prior to any potential alterations to either the internal or external features and fabric and that any proposed restoration is sympathetic to the building's original architectural character and form.

Soldier's Point House, the Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House Porth-y-Felin (Porth-y-

Felin) House

5.2.2. The benefits of the redevelopment of the Listed Buildings are evident and are deemed necessary to ensure the survival of the assets. The key benefits to the proposals are:

- Secures long term future of the redundant heritage asset and recycles historic fabric
- Delivers residential use compatible with the original building function
- Restores all principal public elevations
- Development restricted to internal footprint of existing structures.
- Courtyards and surrounding gardens enhanced
- Visual connections between Listed Buildings improved versus outline approval
- Sightline within residential development incorporated to frame Listed Buildings
- Visual prominence of both Listed Buildings in landscape is safeguarded
- Opportunity to add to the Historic Building Record during works
- Reinstatement/ refurbishment of paths through the historic gardens of Porth-y-Felin House and Soldiers' Point
- Careful thinning/ clearance/ re-planting of scrub and woodland around the properties to restore views of the buildings and out to sea
- Sympathetic restoration of heritage features such as steps, walls, fountains, etc.

Holyhead Beach Conservation area

5.2.3. The proposed development will both directly and indirectly impact the Holyhead Beach Conservation Area. The proposed development is situated wholly within this area, and therefore the area will encounter a number of changes. The parts of the Conservation Area that will not see any development will still be indirectly impacted by the development that has occurred elsewhere. The proposed development is likely to result in a significant alteration, but the overall impact upon the area could be seen as beneficial to the conservation area as a whole. The designated status of this area has retained and preserved its character, but it has also led to stagnation and decline. A sympathetic new development may bring a boost to the area.

5.2.4. The CACA states that 'to retain the special character of the Conservation Area it is also vital that the scale and proportion of any new development respects the inherent setting, scale and (maritime) style of this historic environment.' The proposals have evolved throughout the design process to achieve this and overall the development should enhance the Conservation Area and the features within.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1.1. The condition of the fire damaged main Soldiers House building and its derelict adjacent Stable Block (or “The Cottages”) as well as Porth y Felin House made them unsafe to enter, greatly limiting the ability to carry out internal inspections, measured surveys or archaeological recording.
- 6.1.2. Making the buildings safe to enter prior to consent being granted had been deemed unviable by the Applicant, due to the financial and logistical challenges of not only doing so in the first instance, but also, from there, keeping the buildings themselves safe until consent was eventually granted. It was argued that making the building safe for survey would also, logically, increase the already high risk of trespass and with it the risk of further criminal damage which would put any surviving elements of the building’s interior at threat of total loss.
- 6.1.3. Given that Soldier’s Point House, the Screen Wall and Porth y Felin House and gardens are in desperate need of attention, in order to preserve and conserve their character and heritage, the proposals would indeed have a beneficial effect upon the building and its setting. However, it is important that the proposals are sympathetic to the historic character of the house and its setting. The CACA noted that ‘the once grand Porth y Felin House has over time fallen into a derelict state. The scale and prominent position of the neglected house and grounds greatly affects the appearance of sub-area 1 (the western third of the Conservation Area). The works will halt the decline of the Listed Buildings and will therefore have a direct beneficial impact on the Conservation Area while maintaining its character.
- 6.1.4. The limitations of the assessment baseline prompted a pre-application discussion with the LPA over potential mitigation strategies. The Design Team proposed to an LPA consultation panel assembled in October 2019, and subsequently to the LPA Conservation Officer in December 2019, that a reasonable and proportionate mitigation strategy might involve a Watching Brief condition covering the Site Clearance phase which would follow receipt of a consent. The findings of this archaeological work could inform, or be accompanied by, an analytical historic building record also secured by condition. Together these measures would, it was argued, help address the shortcomings of the initial assessment baseline.

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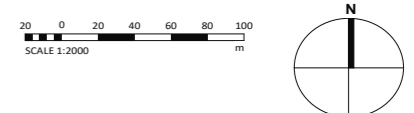


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F	Buildings and landscaping design updated.	04.12.2020	SJF
E	Development details updated. Annota. on updated.	24.09.2020	SJF
D	Annotations added.	15.09.2020	TL
C	RNLI berth	20.09.2020	TL
B	Development boundary redefined.	04.09.2020	SJF
A	Zone 4 updated.	30.07.2020	SJF
REV	25/02/2020	04/12	NS

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Holyhead Waterfront Regeneration Scheme
 Isle of Anglesey, Wales

SJF
 11/2019
 1 : 2000 @ A1

Planning 2571-3-00-201

Figure 1. Proposed Development

Plan provided by the client



Figure 2. Listed Buildings within the development area

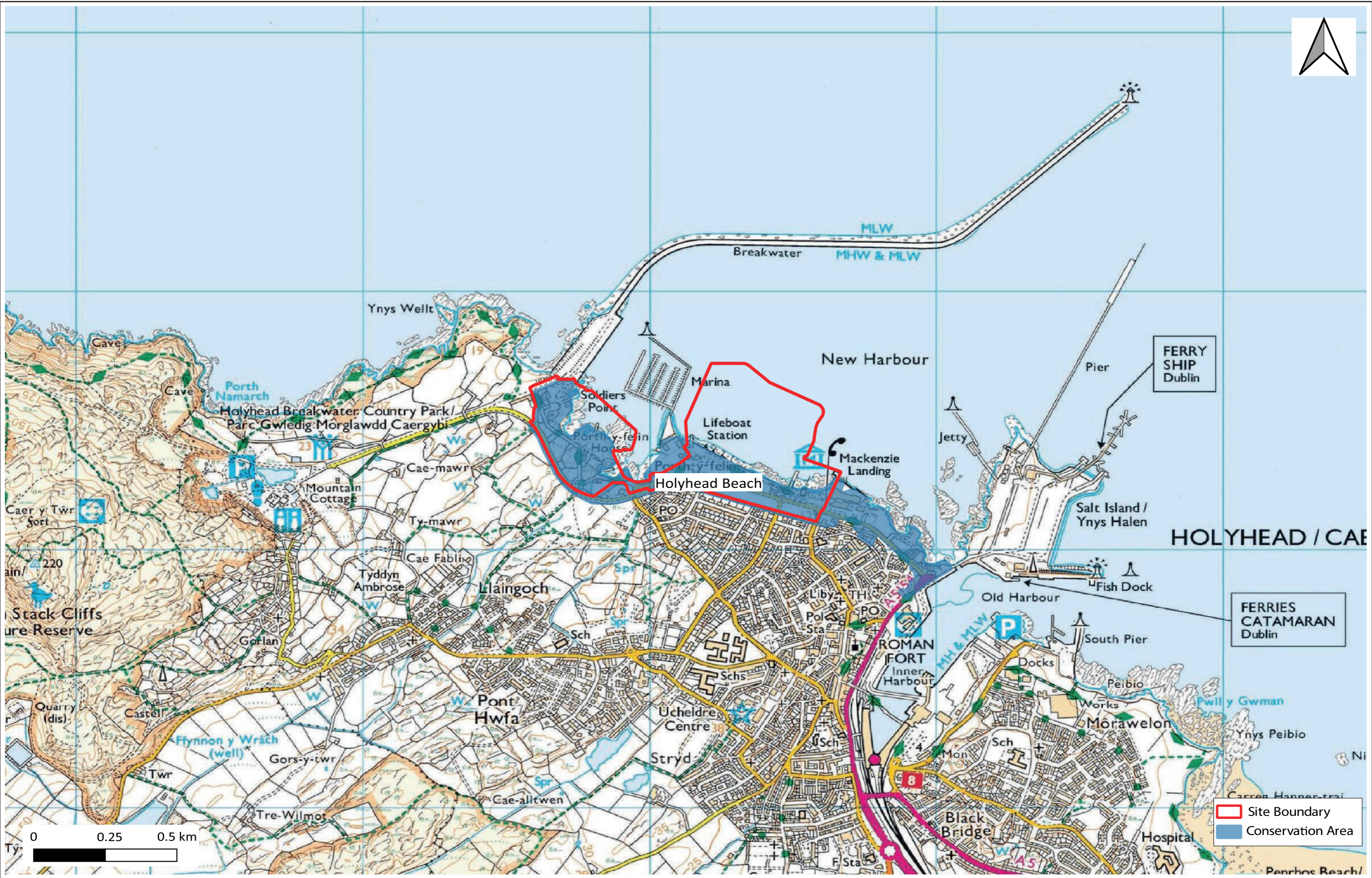


Figure 3. Conservation Area within the development



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TITLE Holyhead Waterfront Regeneration Scheme Isle of Anglesey, Wales	AUTHOR DW	DATE Jun 21
CLIENT Conygar Holyhead Ltd	SCALE @A1	CHECKED TM
DETAIL Visualisations Soldiers Point House	STATUS Planning	DRAWING NO. 2571-3-31-911



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<p>RIBA  Chartered Practice</p>		<p>TITLE Holyhead Waterfront Regeneration Scheme Holyhead, Isle of Anglesey</p> <p>CLIENT Conygar Holyhead Ltd</p> <p>DETAIL Visualisations Soldiers Point Holiday Lodges</p>
<p>STATUS Planning</p>		<p>AUTHOR TL</p> <p>DATE 05/19/21</p> <p>SCALE @A1</p> <p>CHECKED TM</p>
<p>DRAWING NUMBER 2571 3-33-911</p>		<p>REVISIONS</p>

Figure 5. Soldier's Point Holiday Accommodation Visualisation



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AUTHOR DW
 DATE Jun 21

CLIENT Conygar Holyhead Ltd

SCALE @A1

DETAIL Proposed Visualisations
 Poth-y-Felin House

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Planning	2571-3-21-911	

Figure 6. Porth-y-Felin Visualisation

Plates



Plate 1. Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north



Plate 2. Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north



Plate 3. Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north-east towards New Harbour and proposed site



Plate 4. Stone archway opposite Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north-west



Plate 5. Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking south-east



Plate 6. Soldiers Point House (LB 14760) and buildings to rear, looking north-east



Plate 7. Buildings to rear of Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north



Plate 8. Buildings to rear of Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north



Plate 9. Footpath leading past Soldiers Point House (LB 14760), looking north-west



Plate 10. Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House (LB 14761), looking east



Plate 11. Screen Wall to Soldier's Point House (LB 14761), looking south-east



Plate 12. Western edge of The Greens, looking north-west towards Porth-y-Felin House



Plate 13. Zone 2 – Porth-y-Felin: Porth-y-Felin House (LB 14759), looking north



Plate 14. Porth-y-Felin House (LB 14759), looking north-east



Plate 15. Porth-y-Felin House (LB 14759), looking east



Plate 16. Porth-y-Felin House (LB 14759), looking east