

Heritage Statement

Refurbishment works to Royal Terrace Pier, Royal Pier Road, Gravesend

November 2022

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This statement is prepared to identify the heritage value and significance of the building to be altered and to assess the impact of the proposed works.

1.2 This document has been prepared following an investigation of the relevant records including Historic England records, together with other local sources of information and following an inspection of the property.

2.0 Assessment of Significance.

2.1 The Royal Terrace Pier, including the pavilions flanking and entrance is a Grade II listed structure described as follows:

Now the headquarters of the Pilotage Service. Built in 1844 by the Gravesend Freehold Investment Company at the cost of £9,200. Designed by John Baldry Redman C E. T-shaped construction of cast iron. It is built on 3 rows of 3 columns at the shore end and 3 rows of 5 columns under the T-portion, with triglyph frieze above. The shore end is flanked by small pavilions of coursed stone with quoins, cornice and base of dressed ashlar. Above each is a little turret of which the west one has been enlarged. The remainder of the pier has been roofed over at a later date. In the angle of the T is a light turret. Beyond the T-platform is a floating pontoon for embarkation approached by steps. Princess (later Queen) Alexandra landed here on the 7th March 1865 on her arrival to marry the Prince of Wales.

Listing NGR: TQ6511974475

2.2 The Royal Terrace Pier is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

2.3 The Map attached to this Statement within Appendix A, shows the location of the Pier and has been sourced from Historic England for the purpose of this application.

2.4 Grade II listed buildings are considered to be of special interest. The Pier itself was Listed Grade II in May 1971.

2.5 The construction of Royal Terrace Pier dates back to April 1844 and was opened to the public in 1846. The proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers included a paper in April 1845 describing the construction of the pier and details of the costs (a copy is included within Appendix B of this statement).

2.6 Alexandra Towage commissioned the refurbishment of the Pier in 1977 with the assistance of Engineer R.J. Crocket and Architect David A. Croydon (who also designed Alexandra House in 1973). This work included the removal of the cast iron cladding panels and the replacement of the structure supporting the roof. The Pier was re-clad with glass fibre panels with steel framed windows.

2.7 Following the 1989 Marchioness disaster a lifeboat station was established at Gravesend and a mooring provided on Royal Terrace Pier in 2002.

2.8 The Port of London Authority (PLA) purchased Royal Terrace Pier in July 2004 as part of a joint reorganisation of PLA and Adsteam Towage operations, with the tugs moving to their current base at Denton Wharf.

2.9 The old pontoons at Royal Terrace Pier were removed and a new pontoon (Barge 559) installed on new tubular piles in October 2004. Access took the form of a refurbished brow (originally fabricated in 1928) that had previously serviced the old Tower Pier prior to its replacement in 2000.

2.10 The downriver accommodation was refurbished in 2004 for use by PLA crews.

2.11 The internal surfaces of the pier approach were repainted, and the lanterns replaced in 2005.

2.12 The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) moved from their portacabin type accommodation in Alex House car park into the refurbished upriver accommodation on Royal Terrace Pier in June 2007.

2.13 The entrance and lodge roofs were refurbished in 2008.

2.14 The internal surfaces of the pier approach were redecorated again in 2010.

2.15 The substructure of the pier comprising cast iron and steel beams on cast iron cylinders was repainted in 2011.

2.16 It is considered that the Pier and associated structures remain important in respect of its grading (this is evident from the listing description) and makes an invaluable contribution to the street scene on this part of Royal Pier Road and the wider Conservation Area.

3.0 Impact of the Proposal on the Significance of this Heritage Asset

3.1 The proposals subject of this Listed Building Application are set out in detail in the separate Planning Statement and Design & Access Statement. It is apparent that the proposed works will not result in negatively affecting the sites listed status designation or any of the original features of the building.

3.2 The aim of these proposals is to refurbish and enhance the structure to ensure that its listed status is protected and able to be well maintained for the long term. The proposals will ensure the structure continues to add to the high quality character and heritage of this area and continue to make a positive contribution to the local historic environment, ensuring that the local character of this stretch of the River Thames is of the highest quality and a strong positive feature of the Gravesend Riverside Conservation Area and the borough as a whole.

3.3 To confirm there are no internal works proposed as part of this application.

4.0 Summary

4.1 The proposed works contained in this application of Listed Building Consent comprises the following:

- A) Repairs and redecoration to existing cast iron lighthouse turret;
- B) Installation of below-deck protection; and
- C) Installation of fall arrest system.

4.2 These external changes are considered minor and principally involve maintaining and improving existing parts of the external structure, to ensure these continue to have a positive effect on the sites listed status and to allow for ongoing maintenance to take place safely for the external structure.

4.3 It is therefore concluded that the integrity of the historic significance of the Pier structures, will be protected and enhanced as a result of these works, and this application for Listed Building Consent will not affect the historic significance of this important heritage asset.