



HERITAGE ASSET STATEMENT

February 2026

25027 Cumberland Building Society Whitehaven

PASSIONATELY CREATING ENVIRONMENTALLY AND SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE SPACES

Our shared vision across Architects Plus is to produce beautiful, purposeful and timeless buildings that are sustainable and inclusive.

We are a proud forward-looking Cumbrian company who have become one of the region's most progressive and successful practices, with an established reputation for practical, sustainable and beautifully crafted buildings.

We continue to evolve our practice and use our decades of experience and knowledge in new build, retrofit and refurbishment projects across a wide variety of sectors to meet the changing needs of our clients and address the climate challenges ahead.

We have a dedicated team of established qualified professionals who can assist in everything from heritage, conservation and accessibility to sustainable design, carbon analysis and energy efficiency.

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	PAGE 4
2.0	ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.....	PAGE 8
3.0	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.....	PAGE 13
4.0	MITIGATION STRATEGY.....	PAGE 15



1 | INTRODUCTION

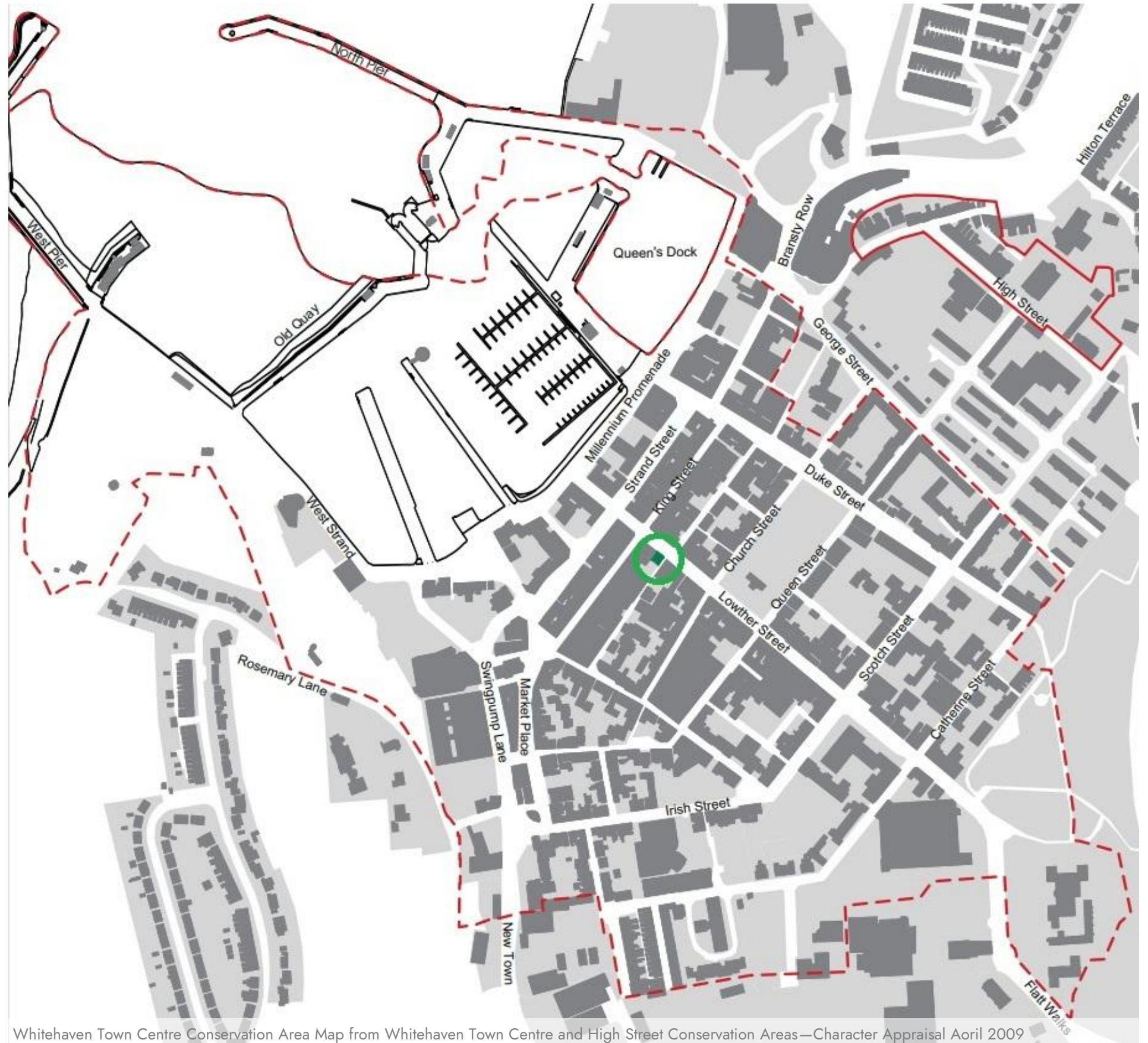
1.1 THE SITE

INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Asset Statement has been prepared to accompany a full Planning application for the development of the Cumberland Building Society, Whitehaven.

The statement is being prepared as there are works to the façade and the building is within a Conservation Area.

The property is located within the Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area.



Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area Map from Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas—Character Appraisal April 2009

1.2 DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

6

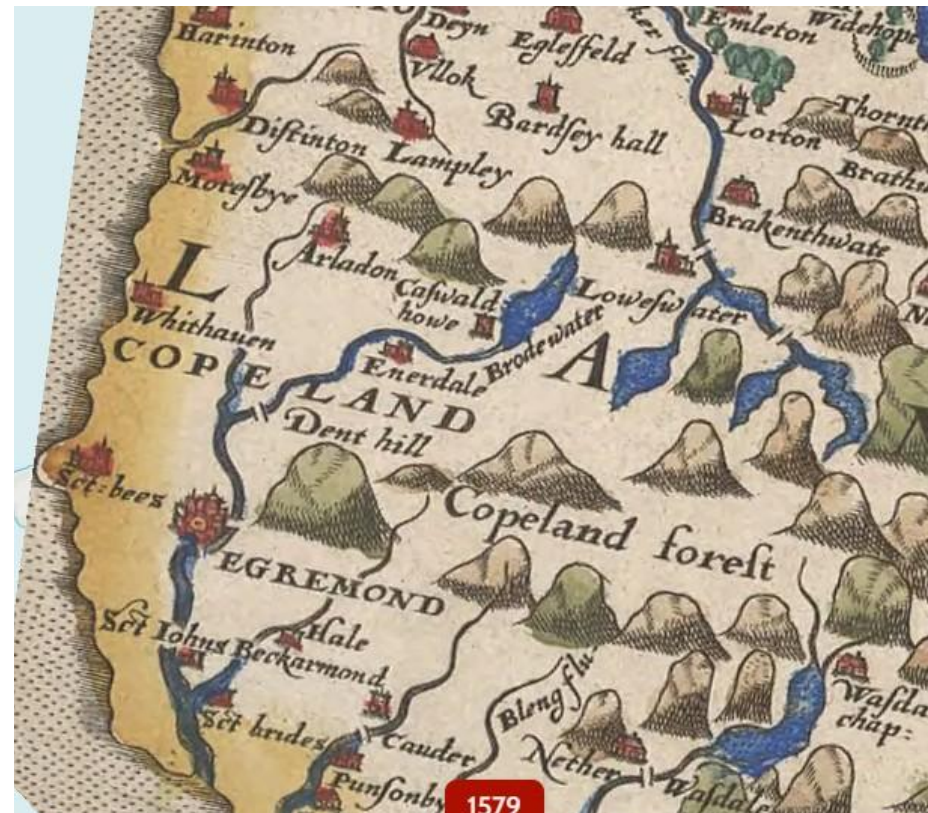
The property is a semi-detached three storey building, with room in the roof and a basement. Located on Lowther Street in Whitehaven.

Whitehaven was originally settled in the 10th Century and until the middle of the 17th Century it was a small fishing village. In 1630, Sir Christopher Lowther established a major coal-exporting port. Starting in the 1660s, but more notably in the 1680s Sir John Lowther, designed Whitehaven on a grid system, making it one of the earliest (and now most complete) planned post-medieval new towns in England. It was designed to manage the rapid growth driven by the coal and shipping trade.

The maps on this page clearly show the grid design formed on the 1787 map and later.

Architectural style

Lowther Street is known for its Georgian buildings and was built as part of the Grid design in the 17th Century.



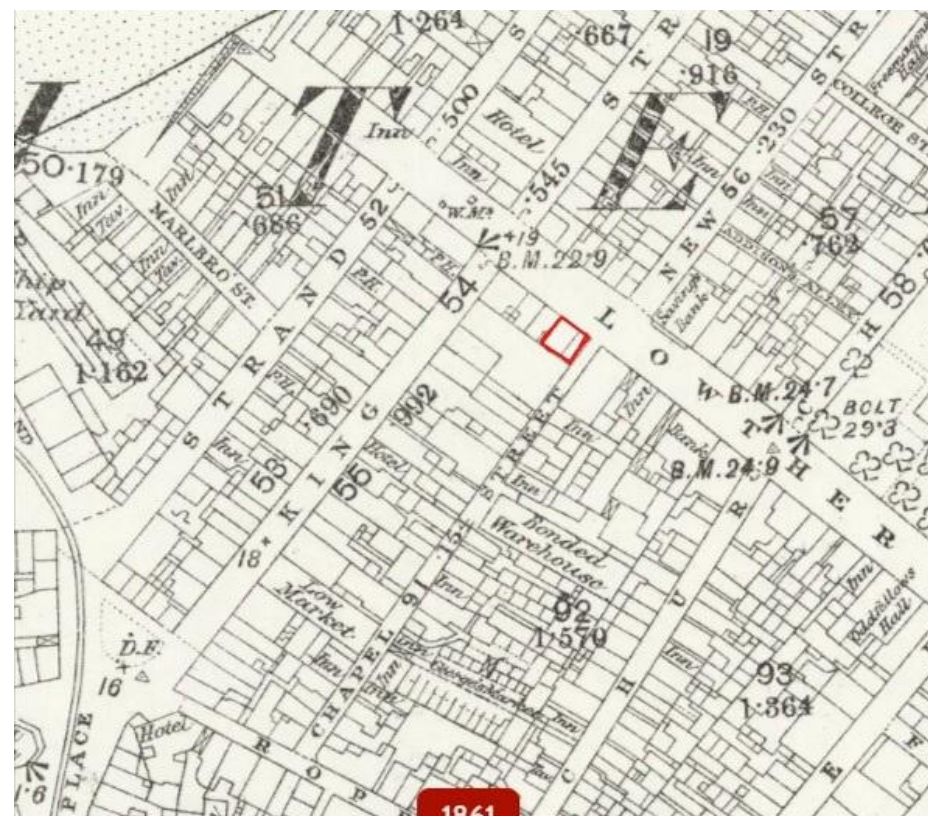
Historic Map of Site from 1579 - Taken from Old Maps Online



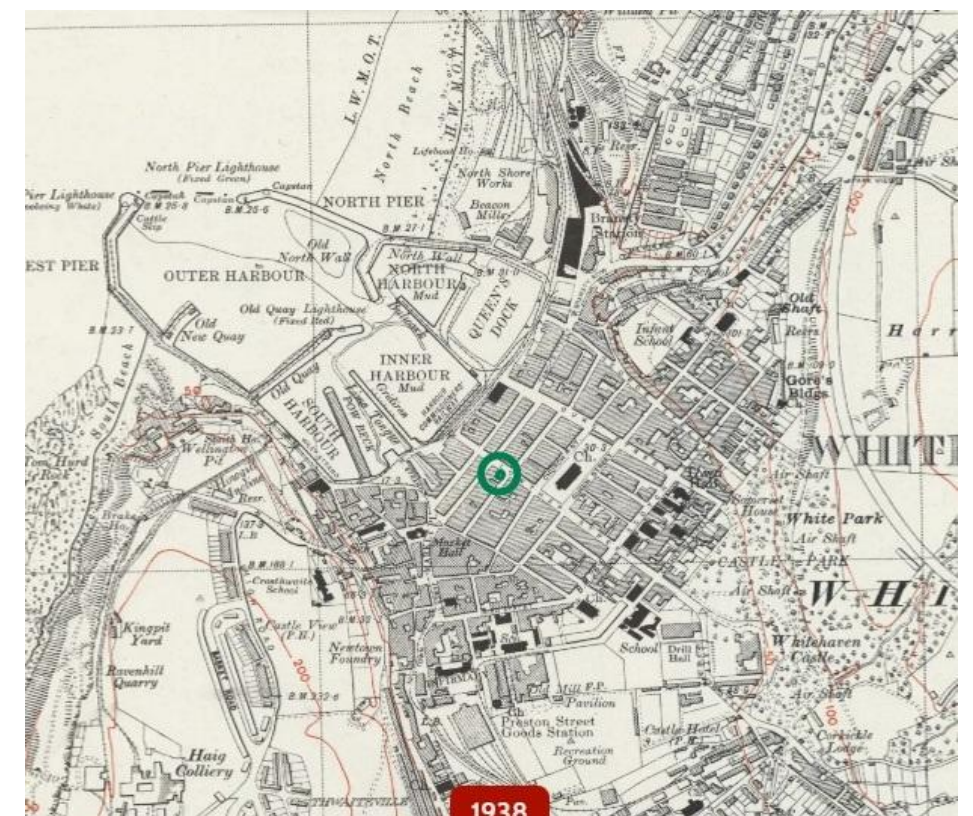
Historic Map of Site from 1787 - Taken from Old Maps Online



Historic Map from 1800 - Taken from Old Maps Online



Historic Map of Site from 1861 - Taken from Old Maps Online



Historic Map from 1938 - Taken from Old Maps Online

1.2 DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Date of construction

The building was constructed in the latter part of the 17th Century, during the expansion of the town and grid design by Sir John Lowther.

Materials and notable characteristics

The Cumberland Building Society has an interesting façade. The Ground floor has modern, stone covering and large glass windows, as many of the shops along the road do. The first floor has a red sandstone face and a large bay window. The windows to the left and right have decorative sandstone carvings above. The Second floor has decorative brick work, with red brick design below the windows that mimics the sandstone carving of the windows below. At the Eaves is a carved sandstone freeze along the top. Decoration and finishes from the façade on Lowther Street return around the corner onto Chapel Street for a short distance before stopping abruptly and becoming a rendered finish.



Birds Eye View of Whitehaven, by Matthias Read

Commissioned by Sir John Lowther in 1736

Image from 'contours.co.uk' courtesy of the The Beacon Museum



Corner onto Chapel Street showing end of decorative facade



First Floor Bay Window



Existing Façade onto Lowther Street

2 | HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

2 HERITAGE VALUE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

2.1 EVIDENTIAL HERITAGE VALUE

The potential of the building to provide new historical information is limited. The building has been significantly developed in the past.

2.2 HISTORIC HERITAGE VALUE

The building itself is not Listed, but it plays a role in architectural history as part of Sir John Lowther’s development of the town, promoting a grid system. Lowther Street is part of the larger Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area due to this. As noted in the Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas Management Plan:

‘Today Whitehaven is know for its attractive and colourfully painted Georgian buildings, its grid-iron streets... and for its connections with the formative years of the United States of America’



View down Lowther Street



Image of Lowther Street, Looking East, from Google Maps



Image of Lowther Street, Looking West, from Google Maps



Picture of Building Above Neighbouring Property

2 HERITAGE VALUE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

2.3 AESTHETIC HERITAGE VALUE

The buildings along Lowther Street, despite being developed as part of an overall masterplan in the 17th Century, are all distinct in character.

Design value

The building is not Listed but it has a number of Georgian features, including the symmetry of the façade, use of brick and stone materials and being a three storey town house.

Artistic value

While the building is fairly typical, the carved stonework on the first and second floor is distinctive along the street.

Fortuitous value

The building façade has been over-clad at ground floor level, with larger shop windows installed, as have a number of the buildings along the street. While the first and second floor have had little intervention, although the windows have been replaced at some point in the past. So there have been a number of interventions historically that have not been in keeping with the historic nature of the building.



Image of Existing Façade at Ground Floor (left hand side)



Image of Existing Façade at Ground Floor (right hand side)

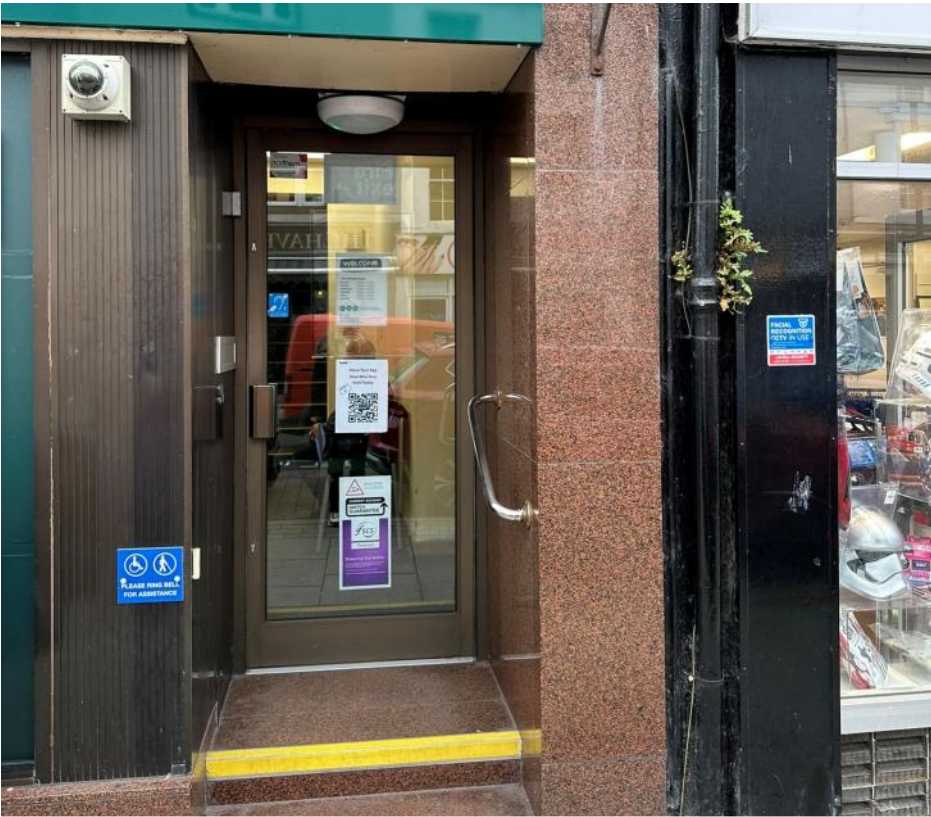


Image of Entrance Door and Steps



Image of Existing Façade with Neighbouring Building

2 HERITAGE VALUE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

2.4 COMMUNAL HERITAGE VALUE

Commemorative value

Whitehaven is particularly commemorative of Sir John Lowther’s grid design and vision for an organised expansion of the port town.

Social value

As noted in the Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas Management Plan:

The historical and architectural interest of Whitehaven is recognised by the volume of statutory listed buildings... and the existence of two conservation areas, Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area and High Street Conservation Area.'

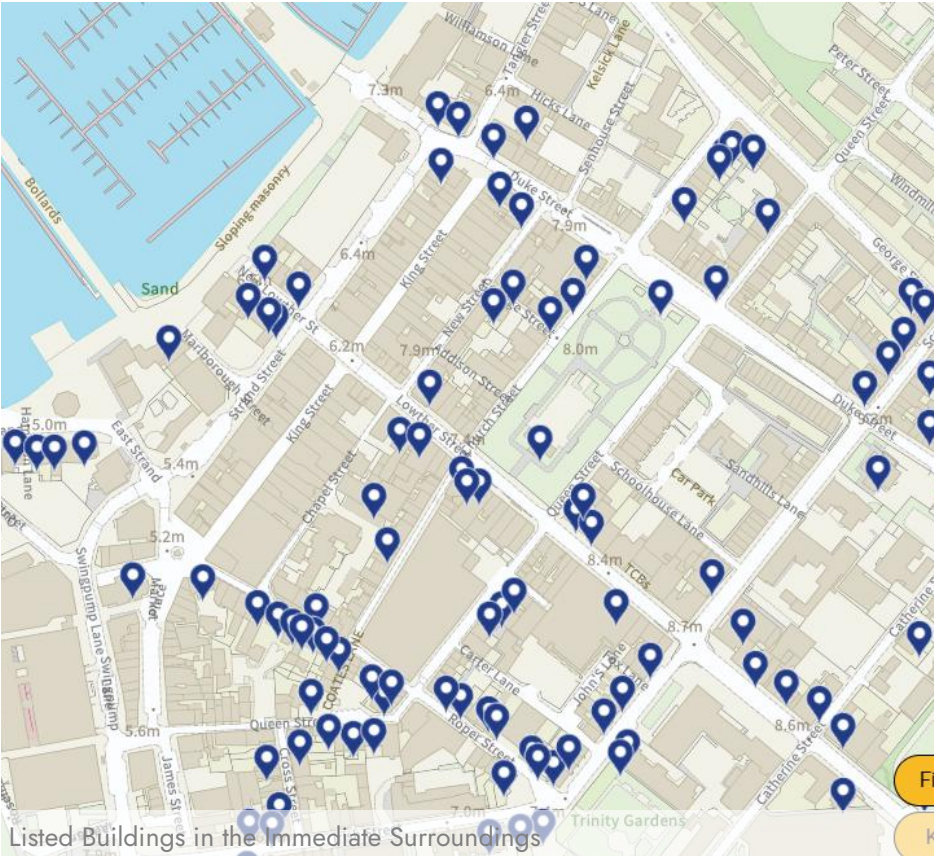


Image of Tower Chapel from Google Maps



Image of New Lowther St (37-42 Lowther St) from Google Maps



View of The Pack Horse and Barclays Bank Listed Buildings (26-28 Lowther St)

2 HERITAGE VALUE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

2.5 HISTORIC SETTING

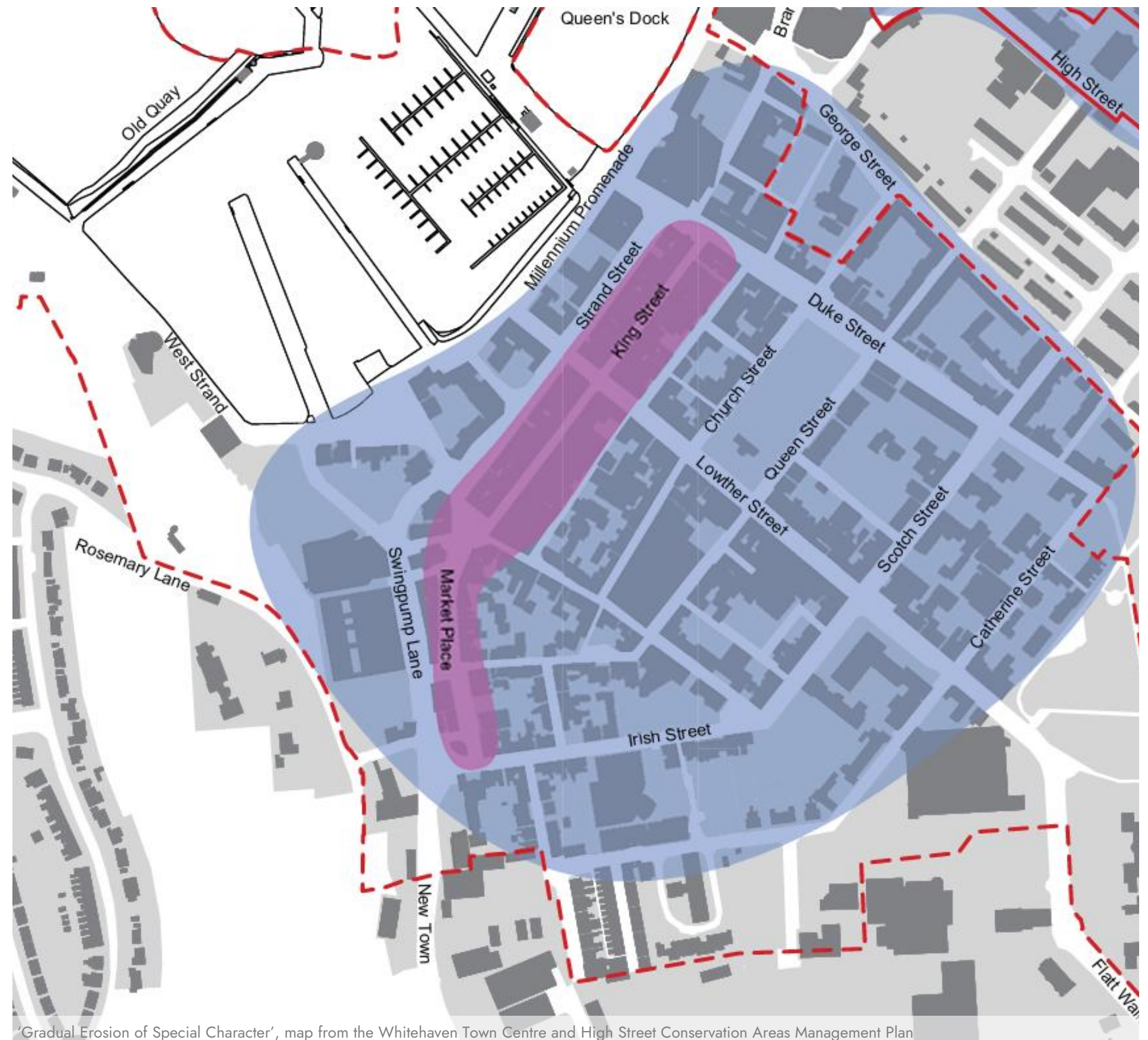
The historic setting has been noted in detail earlier in the document.

Characteristics of Surroundings

The street is Georgian and has undergone extensive development over the years. In the Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas Management Plan it is specifically noted that *'one of the biggest threats to the town centre's character is the loss of traditional features and the introduction of inappropriate modern features onto historical and architecturally interesting buildings.'* The areas that are shown as being of particular concern include areas of Lowther Street and particularly the buildings either side of King Street as illustrated in the map adjacent.

Wider Context

Whitehaven has a high concentration of historic and listed buildings. The Grade II Listed St Nicholas Centre and Tower, constructed in 1883 (with remnants of the 1693 church), are located approximately 80m east along Lowther Street. Other Grade II listed buildings, including the Pack Horse Public House, Barclays Bank, Savings Bank, 22–26 Lowther Street, 37–42 Lowther Street and Strand House are all within 80m along Lowther and New Lowther Street.



'Gradual Erosion of Special Character', map from the Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas Management Plan

3 | IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

3 PROPOSALS

IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed works consist of replacing the existing sign with new tiling and signage.

Need

The Cumberland Building Society wishes to update their façade and provide a sign that is more aesthetically appealing and also in keeping with the historic context. Additionally, they wish to provide an accessible entrance point to the building. Currently the only entrance is by steps and a temporary ramp is placed over these when someone requires it. However, by moving the entrance point to the left of the façade (further east), the change in height between the external and internal levels is reduced and a permanent, accessible entrance can be formed.

Risk

The risk to the asset is minimal as it is replacement of an existing modern sign on the ground floor façade and alteration of the modern windows and doors which have had previous alterations.

Benefits

Benefits of the new work include a more aesthetically pleasing and historically sensitive façade, as well as greater accessibility.

Justification

There will be minimal intervention to achieve the proposed alterations. The existing openings on the façade are being used for the revised window alterations. There will be some minor lowering of the sill in the location of the new door. Additionally, the new sign uses tiles (on a backer board to minimise fixing to the façade) that is more in keeping than an aluminium sign currently in place.



Opening to left showing proposed ATM location



Image showing proposed Entrance Door



Existing Entrance Door to Become Window



Existing Sign to be Replaced

4 | MITIGATION STRATEGY

4.1 ACTION TO REDUCE IMPACT

MITIGATION STRATEGY

There will be minimal impact on the existing building fabric and any interventions impact the modern façade. There are no alterations to the first and second floor facades that retain more originally features.

The proposed signage is a tiled band that will be mounted on backer board so that the tiling is not adhered to the façade itself. Additionally the 'The Cumberland' Signage will be in individual letters, that create a more aesthetically pleasing sign than the existing flat, aluminium sign. The proposed projecting 'house' sign will replace the existing, in a slightly different location.

Creation of the new entrance will be within an existing opening. The sill for the door will need to be lowered. This is within the clad façade that has had significant alterations in the past.



(Caption)

4.2 MATERIALS

MITIGATION STRATEGY

Materials have been selected that match the existing, with improved thermal efficiency for the windows and doors.

The tiles for the façade are more in keeping with a historic building than the aluminium signage.



Recently Completed Project with Similar Signage



01228 515144

ap@architectsplus.co.uk

architectsplus.co.uk