

**Stanpit and Fisherman's
Bank
Conservation Area
Interim Report**

September 2007

**FORUM
Heritage
Services**

Contents

1.0 Executive Summary

Part 1: Introduction

2.0 Purpose and Scope of Study

3.0 Consultation

4.0 Planning Policy Context

Part 2: Appraisal

5.0 Location and Setting

6.0 Historic Development and Archaeology

Settlement Plan

Archaeological Potential

7.0 Spatial Analysis

Character Areas – Brief Overview

Stanpit North

Stanpit Central

Stanpit South and Argyle Road

Former Coastguard Station

Fisherman's Bank

8.0 Architectural and Historic Qualities of Buildings

9.0 Activity: Prevailing and Former Uses

10.0 Contribution made by Key Unlisted Buildings

11.0 Prevalent Local and Traditional Materials

12.0 Contribution made by Green Spaces, Trees, Hedges and Natural Boundaries

13.0 Key Views, Vistas and Panoramas

14.0 Degree of Loss of Architectural and/or Historic Elements

15.0 Negative Elements

16.0 Conclusion

Part 3: Management Plan

17.0 Vulnerable Buildings and Buildings at Risk

18.0 Article 4(2) Directions

19.0 Boundary Revisions

20.0 Recommendations for Enhancement

21.0 Policies/Recommendations for New Buildings

21.0 Traffic/ Street Improvements

Bibliography and References

Glossary

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank is one of 12 designated conservation areas in the Borough of Christchurch. Designated as a conservation area on 20th February 1991, it was amended in September 2005 and revised following production of this appraisal, which was approved following public consultation on ...[to be completed following consultation]....2007/2008.
- 1.2 The conservation area appraisal and management plan will form part of the evidence base for Local Development Framework on the subject of conservation area issues within the Borough.
- 1.3 The character of a conservation area stems from: the landscape setting of the area; the grouping of traditional buildings and the resultant spaces and sense of enclosure; the scale, design, type and materials of the buildings; boundaries and the public realm; landmarks, views and vistas; the interaction with natural features; and the present and former pattern of activities and land uses.
- 1.4 It is the particular mix of these elements which gives Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank its character, namely:
 - The close relationship much of it shares with the harbour edge
 - Its modest 'village' scale and grain
 - Survival of cottages from early nineteenth century and good quality Victorian housing from the late nineteenth century
 - Trees and hedges which define parts of the townscape and form landmarks within the street scene
 - A positive sense of enclosure from traditional housing built to the back of pavement
 - The survival of unpainted brick and natural Welsh slate roofs
 - The survival of early brick and stone boundary walls which defined early plot divisions and now clearly demark public/private spaces
 - Exceptional views across the harbour to Hengistbury Head, back towards Christchurch and to the beach hut lined spit
- 1.5 Advisory note 2: *Conservation Areas (2000)* published by Christchurch Borough Council provides general advice and a list of conservation areas in the District and can be obtained from Christchurch Borough Council offices.
- 1.6 **Summary of recommendations**
 - There were no buildings identified as being vulnerable or at risk
 - There are small groups and some individual houses recommended which would benefit from the removal of their permitted development rights (through the use of Article 4(2) Directions
 - There are four boundary revisions recommended – three exclusions and one inclusion

- A comprehensive traffic calming scheme linked to the Mundeford Quay Conservation Area is proposed
- A Harbour Management Plan should be produced
- Generic policies for new buildings in the conservation area are recommended
- Traffic and street improvements could include, in addition to traffic calming measures, the reconsidering of directional signage so as to redistribute traffic across the network.
- There is the potential for improvements to both the cycle and pedestrian networks and opportunities to celebrate these through walking and cycling trails.

Part 1: Introduction

2.0 Purpose and Scope of study

2.1 The Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan are seen as the first steps in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area and to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future management.

2.2 The appraisal and management plan aim to:

- Identify those elements of Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank which contribute to its character
- Identify elements which detract from the character
- Propose measures to maintain or improve the positive character, local distinctiveness and sense of place of Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank

2.3 The framework for the study follows the English Heritage guidance 'consultative documents'; *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* and its companion *Guidance on the management of conservation areas*, both published August 2005.

2.4 The importance of conservation area appraisals and linking these documents to management plans is now expressed in Central Government Best Value Performance Indicator 219b:

BV219b Preserving the Special Character of Conservation Areas:
Conservation Area Appraisals:

Indicator: The percentage of conservation areas in the local authorities area that have an up-to-date character appraisal.

Reason: *'Clear and concise appraisals of the character of conservation areas provide a sound basis for their designation and management, and will inform local development documents (LDD's).*

2.5 The indicator emphasises the use of the English Heritage Guidance and the importance of involving the local community at the earliest stages.

2.6 The fieldwork, research and analysis for appraisal and management plan were undertaken in June-August 2007. Whilst every attempt has been made to consider all aspects of the character of the conservation area there may be elements that have been omitted. This may be due to an inability to access private land or restricted areas within the conservation area or the need to keep the report concise. Planning applications which affect the conservation area should be considered on their own merits and in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan (and the emerging Local Development Framework). The

appraisal and management plan should be used to guide and inform this process.

3.0 Consultation (see appendix ??)

3.1 *This section will be completed by Christchurch Borough Council on adoption of the appraisal and management plan*

4.0 Planning Policy Context:

4.1 Section 69 1(a) and 2 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') defines Conservation Areas as:

'Areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'

4.2 In addition, the Act puts particular emphasis on specific duties:

'It shall be the duty of the local authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas...'

4.3 This is reinforced by the guidance set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994) and *Planning and Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning* (1990). In particular, the local authority should regularly review and, from time to time, formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas (i.e. the Management Plan).

4.4 In order to undertake works of enhancement, the character of the conservation area needs to be clearly defined and understood (i.e. the Character Appraisal). This is in line with government guidance on the management of the historic environment through *Informed Conservation* (English Heritage 2001). It also seeks to utilise some of the principles used in characterisation techniques promoted by English Heritage.

4.5 Christchurch Borough Council has encapsulated the broad principles of this Government Guidance in its Local Plan policies presently contained within the *Adopted Borough of Christchurch Local Plan*, Christchurch Borough Council, March 2001.

Policies BE2 to BE5 directly relate to conservation areas and are contained in pages 29-42 of the *Borough of Christchurch Local Plan*.

Part 2: Appraisal

Suggested Figures: Location map
 Geology map
 Contours map
 Boundary Revisions Map: Conservation Area boundary-
 existing and proposed

5.0 Location and setting

5.1 Stanpit, originally a small settlement 1km east of the centre of Christchurch on the north east edge of Christchurch harbour, now forms part of the large conurbation extending along the coast from Christchurch in the west to Barton-on-Sea in the east. Much of the harbour to the south-west of Stanpit is marshland; only properties at the southern end of the conservation area back on to a water channel known as Mother Siller's Channel. The B3059 passes through the settlement.

5.2 The underlying geology is a Barton sand/clay deposit, which would have provided good agricultural land sloping gently towards the sea.

6.0 Historic Development and Archaeology

Suggested Figures: Map: Archaeological Significance
 Series of historic maps (Tithe map OS 1st, 2nd and 3rd eds)

6.1 The main focus of early settlement in the area is the imposing landmark of Hengistbury Head from which archaeological evidence of occupation from the Upper Palaeolithic period has been recovered. The sea level would have been considerably lower during that period leaving the surrounding area well inland. Finds of flint tools, especially from the area of Mother Siller's Channel, provide evidence for continued occupation of the area through the Mesolithic period. By the Neolithic period, rising sea levels had produced a coastline similar to that of today and archaeological finds from the wider area show that the area continued to be settled. Hengistbury Head is believed to have been a major trading centre from the Bronze Age onwards with the harbour providing a safe anchorage for ships trading with Gaul and later the expanding Roman empire. During the Iron Age, Hengistbury was the site of an advanced metal industry which included copper working and mining for iron ore. Coins were probably minted within the trading settlement.

6.2 The Domesday Book contains two entries for *Stanpeta* (the name meaning 'stone pit') both in the lordship of Hugh of Port. The first small estate was held by Wihtlac and contained a hall; the second, slightly larger estate was held by Godric the Priest and had a recorded population of 4 people. However, as records only record the head of the house, this actually suggests a population of 16-20 people). Although this estate was held by a priest, there was no church or chapel at Stanpit as it lay within the large parish of Christchurch.

6.3 Although farming and seafaring were the principal occupations of many of the inhabitants of Stanpit, its later history is primarily concerned with smuggling, a subject around which there is both fact and folklore. The centre for smuggling operations in Stanpit appears to have been The Ship In Distress Inn and a possible former landlady; Hannah Seller or *Siller*, the *Angel of the Marsh* or *Mother Seller* as she was also known (although she is also claimed to have been the landlady of another local smuggling establishment, The Haven House Inn in Mudeford). Smuggling in the area was rife, involving people at all levels of society and sometimes leading to clashes between the smugglers and Customs officials, as at the Battle of Mudeford in 1784. In the mid-nineteenth century a Coastguard Station was built at Stanpit in an effort to control the illegal activities of the locals.

6.4 Buildings that formerly stood opposite the Ship in Distress became a centre of technology for a short period in the early to mid-nineteenth century when local children were used for the manufacture of *Fusee Chains*; an essential component of the chronometer and the pocket watch. Linked with this industry is Tutton's Well. In addition to providing fresh water, its waters were claimed to have healing properties; especially for children with failing eyesight, a common problem locally due to the fine work required in the Fusee Chain Factory.

6.5 **Settlement plan**

6.5.1 Historically, Stanpit was a small settlement ranged alongside the road that ran along the northern edge of the Christchurch Harbour. Gradually, during the nineteenth century infill developments occurred, mainly of small houses and terraces. Larger scale developments around the conservation area in the later twentieth century have amounted to Stanpit becoming part of the wider Christchurch conurbation.

6.5.2 Although Christchurch Harbour has clearly been a major element in its history, it is interesting to note that hardly any properties face the waterfront. It was only in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century with the construction of houses set within long narrow plots at the southern end of the conservation area that houses were built to face the harbour.

6.6 **Archaeological Potential**

6.6.1 Archaeological evidence from the wider area indicates the importance of the area for prehistoric settlement and activity, including within the submerged landscape of Christchurch Harbour. Little is known archaeologically about the medieval settlement at Stanpit, and given the probable low density and irregularity of settlement it is difficult to identify a specific area of archaeological potential. There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Stanpit Conservation Area.

6.6.2 Stanpit was settled by the eleventh century at least, so it is possible that evidence for the origins and development of the settlement could be encountered within parts of the conservation area that have not been subjected to modern development. Any future development proposals on sites that have not been

compromised by development within the limits of the conservation area may be subject to archaeological conditions in accordance with PPG 16. Such conditions would relate to the potential for the discovery of remains of prehistoric settlement, use of the area and development of the settlement. The area with possibly the highest archaeological potential is the adjacent harbour where submerged landscapes and structures associated with quays, jetties or industrial activity (such as salt-making) may survive beneath the mud and silt of the harbour.

6.7 **Key Historic Influences**

6.7.1 The key historic characteristics of Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank are:

- Early settlement probable given the proximity to Hengistbury Head and water supply.
- Early settlers likely to be farmers and fishermen but on a small scale.
- Houses built up along the harbour side along the route to Mudeford.
- The Ship In Distress Inn was pivotal in the smuggling activities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- Houses faced away from the harbour side until the late nineteenth/early twentieth century.
- The Coastguard Station or 'Preventative Station' was built in 1860-1 to patrol the shoreline and curb any illegal activity.
- Late development has created an almost continuous line of development to the harbours edge.

7.0 Spatial Analysis

Suggested Figures:

Map	Designations (Scheduled Monuments/statutory/local listings and buildings which make a positive contribution and trees and boundary treatments-walls, railings)
Map	Character Areas
Map	Townscape

7.1 Character Areas

7.1.1 Conservation Areas are designated for their special character, but within the area there will be zones which are varied but contribute to the whole. It is important to define these 'sub areas' and provide a clear understanding of the defining elements making up the character of a particular part of the conservation area. This leads to a more useful and comprehensive document in development control terms.

7.1.2 It should be noted that whilst five sub areas have been identified, it is also important to appreciate the cohesion to the whole conservation area, which should always be considered when addressing the character of the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area.

7.1.3 Each character area makes reference to the following in bullet points

- Form (cohesiveness – what makes it a character area)
- Scale and building line
- Significant groups
- Materials
- Views
- Local features

7.2 Brief overview

7.2.1 The most striking characteristic of the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area is its village scale, which is in contrast to Christchurch town and very much defined by the harbour. The relatively high density of development along Stanpit (compared with that of adjacent twentieth century development) gives an urban feel to the area. The mix of vernacular and polite styles of modest built form, rather than town houses and large villas, distinguish it from its immediate neighbours; Purewell and Mundeford. The narrow road which winds along from Purewell to Mundeford accentuates this village feeling, in contrast to the more regimented urban streets found adjacent to the conservation area, and elsewhere in the Borough.

7.2.2 The majority of buildings are residential and generally set on the back of the pavement. There are few large driveways or large front gardens. Terraced rows of former fisherman's cottages give way to occasional views across the harbour

from the southwest end of Stanpit. These views signal the close intimate relationship the built form has with the harbour and the functional role that the water played in the shaping of the settlement and its buildings.

7.2.3 The harbour side is accessible to the public via a footpath for part of the edge of the water. This area is called Fisherman's Bank. The banks of the harbour and the rear gardens of properties along the south side of Stanpit form the outer edge of the conservation area. The very open aspect of Fisherman's Bank with its exceptional views across the harbour and back towards Christchurch is in contrast to the tight enclosure created by the narrow road and consistent building line of Stanpit. The character of a community intimately and inextricably linked to the water is very much evident here. The increasingly long narrow plots now comprising rear gardens (as one moves south) reach down almost to the water's edge, and there is a positive attachment between the houses, the boats and the harbour.

7.3 *Character Areas:*

7.3.1 (1) *Stanpit (North)*

- This character area comprises the northern section of Stanpit down to the Recreation Ground. On travelling south into the conservation area there is a sense of entering an older part of the Borough and the 'gateway' to the conservation area is strongly defined by a mature Holm Oak, the boundary wall and a tightening of the townscape.
- Buildings are predominantly two storey with some of a very modest scale, such as Nos 51 and 53 (figure 1). Almost all buildings are set back from the roadside forming a positive strong eaves line throughout. Recent development has continued the consistent building line to the south side with houses set almost to the back of pavement. As the road curves round, gable ends and chimneys become prominent in the street scene. There is a very distinct kink in the building line to the north, which sets this small group of cottages apart (nos 49 to 53), suggesting some realignment of the road (pre 1870).
- All of the buildings in the sub-area form an informal group, and most are seen very much in a positive relationship with the other. A distinct group comprises the modest cottages which turn away from the road and then dictate the new building line for the buildings adjacent.
- The main walling material is traditionally red brick. However, almost all of the traditional samples have been painted. Colours vary but are not detrimental to the overall street scene. There are also some rendered external envelopes. Most houses have natural slate roofs.
- The tight townscape and the curve in the road means that local views are funnelled through, and partially enclosed, in a positive way by built form (figure 2). The view out of the conservation area along Bub Lane is closed by the group of cottages lining the south side of the lane.
- Low red brick boundary walls are particular local features to this part of the conservation area. They enclose small front gardens and help to strongly define the townscape. Their human scale in proportion with the

modest nature of the cottages to this part of the conservation area is a positive characteristic of the character area.

7.3.2 (2) Stanpit (Central)

- This part of the conservation area is similar in scale and townscape to the Stanpit (North) area, but the houses have much deeper gardens which back on to the salt marshes (Local Nature Reserve, SSSI) of the harbour. The recreation ground provides a visual break in the road defining the start of the character area. Historically, due to the relationship with the harbour, the north side of Stanpit was undeveloped until the mid twentieth century.
- There is a consistent two storey scale to this section of Stanpit, with only the one exception of Nos. 120 and 122 a pair of houses at two and a half storey (with dormers set in the eaves). The building line is almost consistent throughout, with the houses to the south side strongly defining the road edge. To the north, the bungalows sit behind boundary walls. These walls form an important part of the character of the road, and hedges behind provide a softened but well defined edge to this side of the road. The houses are also in scale with the historic sections of Stanpit and this is also important to the overall character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.
- The most cohesive group within the character area is the terrace of former fisherman's cottages which form the narrow section of Fisherman's Bank to their rear. Their modest scale and simple form denote their humble origins. Elsewhere small groups of cottages and houses are noticeable for their variation in material detail and roofline (figure 3). This subtle mix forms part of the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.
- There is a diverse palette of materials within this part of the conservation area, making it the most diverse section. There is a mix of red brick, painted brick and render (some coloured), and traditional roof materials vary from natural slate to clay tile; with much modern replacement, and this too is varied. There are very few original timber windows in this part of the conservation area.
- There are important glimpsed views from the road through gaps to the harbour (figure 4), and there are also some spectacular vistas as one moves from the road to publicly accessible viewpoints such as Tuttons Well (figure 5) and the entrance to Fisherman's Bank (figure 6). Travelling from Stanpit through this part of the conservation area, a sense of the importance of the harbour and its relationship with the built form of Stanpit can be gained.
- Tuttons Well is an important local feature with considerable historic significance. The well provided fresh water to the local inhabitants and is reputed to have possessed special healing properties. Its survival and importance are celebrated with a stone seat and information tablet (see figure 5)

7.3.3 (3). *Stanpit (South) and Argyle Road*

- This section of the conservation area was developed out in the very late Victorian/Edwardian period and is on a slightly grander scale to its neighbours to the north. The houses on Argyle Road are very similar in scale to those in Stanpit, but appear to have been built out either as individual plots or in pairs. This has provided a high degree of variation which is not seen to such an extent in Stanpit.
- The historic scale is classically proportioned (Victorian/Edwardian) two storey throughout, except for one modern flat block of three storey adjacent to the village hall. This consistency is an important part of the cohesion of this section of the conservation area. The building line to Stanpit closely follows the curve of the road and houses are defined by low, mainly red brick boundary walls enclosing small front gardens (figure 7). Argyle Road has a very strongly defined townscape with houses following a regimented building line throughout, filling their plots with single or double fronted buildings (the latter are usually symmetrical pairs) (figure 8). This gives the wider impression of a terrace of houses, but the variation between designs is accentuated by an attractive rhythm of gables and pitch roofs fronting the highway.
- In Argyle Road, all the houses (despite some modern examples) make a strong cohesive group of some quality. Their setting adds to this group. Stanpit is more divided, but stylistic features such as gabled projecting bays (see figure 7) provide some cohesion to the Stanpit houses.
- Unpainted red brick is much more prevalent in this part of the conservation area, and is well defined in groups in both Stanpit and Argyle Road. Other buildings are a combination of painted brick or painted render, but it is likely that most of these were originally unpainted brick. The traditional roofing material is almost consistently natural Welsh slate. This material finish also helps knit roads together, particularly Argyle Road where the roofs and chimneys are clearly seen and form an attractive part of the townscape (figure 9).
- There is a glimpsed view of the harbour looking south along Argyle Road and this is enhanced by the strongly defined building line (figure 10) and the trees to 15 Argyle Road on the corner of Fisherman's Bank and Argyle Road. This view develops and emerges as a grand vista of the harbour and Hengistbury Head, and is one of the best views of the harbour (figure 11)
- There are some important survivals of architectural detailing in this part of the conservation area. No. 1 Argyle Road retains its original cast iron railings (figure 12) and some roofs have decorative ridge tiles and terracotta finials. It is also good to see original cast street signs mounted on the sides of houses (figure 13). These details make a valuable contribution to the whole.

7.3.4 (4). *Former Coastguard Station*

- The original coastguard station or 'Preventative Station' was built c1860-1 and comprised; boathouse, terrace of ten coastguard cottages and one officer's house or quarters. A boundary wall (still surviving in parts)

demarked this site and enclosed the buildings on three sides with the fourth open to the harbour. The Watch House is a locally listed building, and was used for the stabling of horses and the housing of the boats, as well as acting as a look-out post across the harbour. The group that survives today is sadly much altered and a terrace of houses has been built in the grounds in the 1970s.

- The cottages are two storey as is the former watch house and the building now known as Charthouse (No.7 Stanpit). The terrace of cottages shares a common building line parallel with Argyle Road and each cottage sits in a long narrow plot with garaging to the access lane. The Charthouse sits back from Stanpit in its own grounds, reflecting the higher status of this building which historically was the officer's quarters for the coastguard station. The high hedge boundary above a low brick wall strongly defines the corner of this plot in townscape terms (figure 14).
- The former buildings which comprise the coastguard station can still be read as a group, despite some unfortunate alterations to some of the buildings. Materials such as brick and buff bricks for dressings (figure 15) link the houses, as does the use of a stepped gable, seen on both the cottages and the Watch House (figure 16). The remains of the boundary wall are also valuable survivals and can be seen to line the rear of the properties to Argyle Road (figure 17).
- There is a mix of red brick and buff bricks for dressings and sadly coloured render which has covered most of the cottages in the terrace. The Watch House is painted but this may have always been the case. Almost all of the original natural Welsh slate roofs survive and this also adds to the cohesion of the group. Boundary walls are red brick.
- The coastguard station is an important local group of buildings and played an important role in trying to eradicate the smuggling activities which were rife along this part of the south coast. As such, survival of any elements of this group have considerable local interest and make a positive contribution towards the special historic character of the conservation area.

7.3.5 (5) *Fisherman's Bank*

- Fisherman's Bank runs along the south-eastern edge of the harbour, north and south of Argyle Road. It has a public right of way, which is no more than a footpath, which passes along the ends of the long plots of houses that front Stanpit and back on to the harbour. Many of the houses have private slips to the water's edge, and keep boats and dinghies on the shore line (figure 18).
- The rear private gardens of the houses are demarked by boundary walls almost the entire length of Fisherman's Bank. This forms a strongly defined edge between public (footpath) and private space. To the southern end of Fisherman's Bank, houses have been built to the back edge of the access lane formed from the foreshore but are still set behind small boundary walls (figure 19). Houses are two storey, broken by the uncompromising horizontal planes of both the rear of Stanpit Village Hall and the three storey flat block adjacent. These buildings break the grain

of the northern group of houses by developing right up to the water's edge (figure 20).

- There are two key groups in this character area. The houses to the north of the village hall are defined by their relatively short gardens and very distinctive and attractive boundary walls and outbuildings. The southern group comprises long, deep gardens with buildings built towards the harbour's edge taking the form of summerhouses (of various sizes and design – figure 21), moving to large houses built to the harbour and fully exposed to view from the footpath/access road (figure 22). Despite first impressions, all these grander buildings are relatively recent additions to the conservation area; in the last 50 years.
- The predominant material for houses is render, usually painted white. Traditional roofs show a good survival of natural Welsh slates. There is a very distinctive use of dressed Purbeck stone, as well as red brick for the boundary walls and outbuildings to the fisherman's cottages to the north end of Fisherman's Bank (figure 23). These well cut, dressed stones are thought to have been salvaged from the docks and quays which once lined the harbour.
- Some of the best views into and out of the conservation area can be gained from Fisherman's Bank. There are very attractive views to be had along the bank (figure 24) and out to the harbour (figure 25) towards Hengistbury Head. It is from here that a true sense of the scale of the harbour can be gained and the modest character of the historic buildings which define this important and highly sensitive edge.
- The stone and brick boundary walls to the fisherman's cottages are highly distinctive and valuable parts of the special character of this part of the conservation area. Boundary walls generally are varied in construction but perform important functions defining semi-public and private spaces. All boundary walls in this part of the conservation area make a very positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area (figure 26).

8.0 ***Architectural and Historic Qualities of Buildings***

8.1.1 The conservation area has only one listed building; No.69 Stanpit, Grade II listed. Formerly known as 'Stanpit House', this eighteenth century house (with possibly earlier origins) is distinctive for the way in which it sits side-on to the street, and with its prominent brick boundary wall encloses a generous garden to the south. As a result, the house is unassuming from the roadside and is only revealed when inside the garden, or in winter when from a distance part of the classical façade can be seen.

8.1.2 In terms of the dating of buildings within the conservation area, the houses fall into two groups. Those built in the early part of the nineteenth century and comprising modest fisherman's cottages, often terraced or in groups and unfortunately much altered in terms of windows, doors and in some cases roofs as well. The key characteristics of these early groups is their modest scale. This is an important part of the character of these houses and the survival of the early scale of settlement in Stanpit.

8.1.3 The second significant building period comes at the end of the nineteenth century into the Edwardian period when laid out speculative plots were taken up by buildings, either individually or in pairs, and developed out with pattern book Victorian building types (see figure 7). These are seen to the southern end of Stanpit and along Argyle Road. There is a notable exception to this in Nos. 3-4 Argyle Road; a fine pair of late Victorian houses with good quality brickwork and all original features including very well considered fluted chimneys with brick banding (figure 27).

8.1.4 The group of late Victorian/Edwardian houses also have some or all of the following distinctive features:

- Red brick facades.
- Gabled canted bays.
- Faux timber framing to gables .
- Single glazed timber vertical sliding sash windows.
- Plastered and painted window and door heads.
- Bands of different colour brick for string courses.
- Decorative barge boards.
- Natural Welsh slate roofs.
- Decorative ridge tiles.
- Terracotta finials.
- Brick and/or rendered chimneys.
- Timber porches with glazed roofs.

8.1.5 All of these features greatly contribute to the character and appearance of this group of houses and make a very positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area.

8.1.6 In summary, the architectural characteristics of the buildings in the conservation area are defined by a modest traditional scale, with attention to detail and a good survival of original architectural features. There is a good example of a modern intervention which has retained the scale and character of the original buildings in Coastguard Way (figure 28).

9.0 ***Activity: Prevailing and former uses***

9.1 The area is almost entirely given over to residential properties, though these are interspersed with other uses which reinforce the sense of a village character. In particular a number of shops on corners survive (figure 29), with the fish and chip shop to the southern section of Stanpit being highly frequented by residents and

visitors alike. However, the materials and detailed design of the shopfront could be improved?.

9.2 The village hall is an important community asset and is very well used but is sadly a modern building which does not relate well to the traditional scale of Fishermans Bank.

9.3 The boatyard to the southern end of Fisherman's Bank is an important survival of the type of former uses which would have lined the harbour side. This is an entirely appropriate use to see in this context and the jumble of boats, jetties and wharfs adds to the special character and interest of this part of the conservation area. Adding to this interest is the public right of way, which means that the public can get close to the waterfront and the activity.

10.0 ***Contribution made by Key Unlisted Buildings***

10.1 There are a number of unlisted buildings which make important positive contributions to the character of the conservation area, both individually and in groups. Key groups are:

- Houses to the lower part of Stanpit (Character Area- Stanpit (South))
- Most houses on Argyle Road
- Coastguard Station

10.2 In addition, a number of boundary walls and outbuildings make significant contributions to the character of the conservation area. Boundary walls and outbuildings and individual properties of local interest making a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area can be found on the Designation Map and Townscape Map (there is also a list of the latter in Appendix A).

11.0 ***Prevalent Local and Traditional Materials***

11.1 Across the conservation area there is a wide variety of materials used within the character areas identified. However there is some degree of consistency, for example the predominant use of red brick and natural slate in Arglye Road and its environs (see figures 7 and 27). In this part of the conservation area unpainted red brick, usually in stretcher bond for houses and Flemish garden wall or English garden wall for boundary walls is an important part of the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

11.2 It is almost certainly the case that for most of the conservation area the houses were originally unpainted brick, and that over the years they have either been painted (usually white or cream colours but with some other colours beginning to emerge), or rendered then painted. This is probably due in part to the weather conditions which these buildings have to endure, particularly those backing/facing on to the harbour. In some ways one could view this as an evolving tradition.

- 11.3 The mix of painted and unpainted brickwork, and render to elevations, forms a positive part of the character and appearance of the conservation area. But there should be a presumption against the painting of unpainted brickwork on traditional buildings, given its historic interest and in order to maintain this variation.
- 11.4 The predominant roof material is natural Welsh slate, seen in most cases with grey hip and ridge tiles. Traditionally hips would have been finished with a lead roll or mitred flashings but this is not seen in the conservation area today. A notable addition to these roofs, particularly on the grander Victorian houses to the southern section, is the use of decorative terracotta ridge tiles and finials. These are attractive features and provide interest on the skyline (figure 30).
- 11.5 Decorative wooden bargeboards are also seen on the Victorian houses in the conservation area; some appear to be original and others are reproductions. These features distinguish the projecting gable (figure 31) and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the host building and the wider conservation area.
- 11.6 The red brick boundary wall is prevalent throughout the conservation area and historic unpainted survivals (for example to the rear of Argyle Road, fronting Coastguard Way) make a very positive contribution to the conservation area. They are of special interest when finished with cast iron railings (as per the fine example in Argyle Road) and where remnants of original boundary treatments survive, such as stone cappings and gate piers with stone or plastered cappings (see figures 10 and 12)
- 12.0 ***Contribution made by Green spaces, Trees, Hedges and Natural Boundaries (see Townscape Map)***
- 12.1 The principal public green space; the recreation ground adjacent to Stanpit Marsh is only partially within the conservation area. However its tree lined edge to Stanpit strongly defines this side of the road and provides some soft landscaping to the otherwise urban environment. Glimpses out to the recreation ground can be had from Stanpit (figure 32) and once beyond the tree belt views open out to the marshes and across to Christchurch Priory (in the winter). This area is a very valuable amenity to the local community and also provides a walking route to Christchurch town centre.
- 12.2 At the southern end of the conservation area there is another public green space; Mudeford recreation ground. This area is not presently within the conservation area but it is felt that its spatial qualities, its relationship with the main road (figure 33), its value as a local amenity space and the quality of the enclosing trees all make an important contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area. This area is particularly sensitive to change being open in both visual terms and accessibility terms. The future management of this tranquil open space will be an important factor in maintaining the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- 12.3 There are relatively few large private gardens. However, where these are found they are characterised by mature trees which make a very positive contribution towards the setting of the host building and views looking into these gardens from the public realm. This is particularly the case when viewing the rear gardens of houses along the central section of Stanpit (backing onto Stanpit Marsh) and the gardens running down to Fisherman's Bank.
- 12.4 Other than the trees lining the sides of both recreation grounds, there are some fine trees elsewhere in the Conservation Area which define parts of important townscape transitions. The tree to the front garden of No 137 Stanpit is particularly important in townscape terms and marks a key change in direction along the road (figure 34). From this point looking north trees and hedges define the boundaries to the east side of Stanpit and the road takes on a more suburban character. In this respect the mature green boundaries to the east side of the road make a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area rather than the houses beyond (figure 35). The fine windswept Douglas Fir to the southern end of Fisherman's Bank is another good example of trees terminating views and providing focal points in townscape (figure 36).
- 13.0 ***Key Views, Vistas and Panoramas (see Townscape Map)***
- 13.1 The most important views of the conservation area are those from and towards the harbours edge. The types of view of the harbour range from the glimpsed view - Argyle Road, where the openness of the view looking south is accentuated by the enclosure of the road (figure 37) - through to panoramas which can take in the high landscape quality and tranquillity of Christchurch Harbour (figure 38). It is important to note that these views change with the rise and fall of the tide adding to the interest and quality of this exceptional landscape.
- 13.2 It should be noted that important views into the conservation area can be had from Stanpit Marsh and the adjacent recreation ground and distant views from Hengistbury head. These views into the conservation area are very sensitive to change and strong rooflines or the loss of trees could have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of these sections of the conservation area.
- 13.3 The views of built form in long distance views are defined by much variation in the quality of townscape and detailed design of houses, flats and house extensions, however, the scale of development in these views is consistently modest and with a few exceptions in proportion with and subservient to the host building. The fact that these houses can be seen almost in their entirety means they are more sensitive to change and proposals for alterations/extensions should be very carefully considered against established good design best practice (see section 21 of this report).
- 14.0 ***Degree of Loss of Architectural and/or Historic Elements***
- 14.1 There has been a dramatic loss of traditional windows and doors throughout the conservation area with some character areas struggling to find one or two original examples. This has had a very detrimental impact on the special character and appearance of the conservation area. This is particularly true of the group of

Fisherman's Cottages (nos. 142 to 156 west side of Stanpit) and the four (now five) cottages to the east formerly known as Wellington Place. Many of these houses have also lost their original roofs. The combination of these two factors has significantly eroded much of the special character of some parts of the conservation area.

14.2 The consultation process identified a potential threat to private land from users of the public right of way along Fisherman's Bank. The perception of this area is that of a public area but land to the south west of the footpath is in private ownership. Abuse of this right of way has led to some owners enclosing or partially enclosing their private property. Unfortunately this has been to the detriment of the open character of this part of the conservation area. This is a very sensitive issue which needs some careful consideration of both the users of the public path and the owners of private land.

14.3 The loss of the salt marsh was also a perceived erosion of an historic element of the wider setting of the conservation area. This is thought to be a symptom of the general management of the harbour which needs a more integrated and proactive approach.

15.0 ***Negative Elements***

15.1 The following is an indication of some of the negative issues of the conservation area highlighted in consultation with residents, amenity groups and local councillors:

15.2 The areas of concern fall into two very distinct principal groups and then a number of specific issues which are listed. The first negative issue within the conservation area was the impact of traffic on the character and appearance of the conservation area. This could be broken down into the following bullet points:

- The speed and volume of traffic was excessive for the scale of Stanpit
- Pavement parking was a significant problem and was not enforced against
- The routing of traffic through Stanpit as a result of directional signage at Purewell and Highcliffe Road junctions.
- Drivers using Stanpit and connecting suburban roads as 'rat-runs'

15.3 It was generally felt that some form of traffic calming combined with the changing of directional signage would improve the present situation.

15.4 The second significant negative issue related more to the wider setting of the conservation area; the condition of the harbour and its management. The following points were made:

- Boats/jetski's travel too fast through the harbour
- Threat to birdlife and visual amenity
- The issue of flooding was not taken seriously given the real potential for a breach of Double Dykes

- There has been constant erosion of the harbour banks although this may be a natural progression
- Management boards established to manage and coordinate the stakeholders of the harbour do not appear to be very effective
- There is no management plan for the harbour (it is understood that one is in the process of production)
- During the weekends unauthorised moorings are established. There is no enforcement of these
- Policing of the harbour is perceived to be inadequate and infrequent. It should be co-ordinated with the tidal movements

15.5 In summary, it was felt that the harbour was under significant pressure from outside influences, such as the infrequent users of the harbour (weekend visitors/sailors for example) and that the management of the harbour needs to be more co-ordinated and better resourced to undertake enforcement and monitoring duties. It was felt that the net effect of these problems was a real threat to the wildlife and amenity of the harbour

15.6 In addition to these two principal areas of concern there were a number of general and very specific negative elements which are summarised in bullet form below:

- Housing – too expensive for local people with many homes being used as second homes and so infrequently occupied.
- Planning - The local authority is failing to uphold refusals and the resources and determination of developers is leading to a public loss of confidence
- Repair – Brickwork used in the repair of boundary walls is often a poor match to the original brickwork leading to a patchwork effect.
- Conflict between public and private spaces - notices along Fisherman's Bank were felt by some to be intimidating and unnecessary.

16.0 Conclusion

16.1 The historic scale and grain of the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area is distinctive from the much later twentieth century urban development immediately adjacent and abutting the conservation area for much of its eastern boundary. The survival of cottages and houses from the eighteenth and nineteenth century - the latter particularly in evidence in Argyle Road, the immediate environs which have such an inextricable link to the harbour and the remnants of the Coastguard Station (particularly the terrace of cottages) are elements which hold this conservation area together.

16.2 Views into and out of the conservation area in the wider context of Christchurch harbour are a sensitive asset and one which should be carefully controlled through the use of the conservation area legislation.

- 16.3 The condition and survival of the built form is very poor. Original brickwork has been painted, original windows have been replaced with inappropriate modern examples, as have doors almost throughout the conservation area. This is largely due to the lack of any Article 4 Directions and so there has been very limited control over the loss of these elements. There is the same issue with roofs but to a lesser extent. Many of the natural Welsh slate roofs have been replaced with concrete tiles.
- 16.4 The development pressure to accommodate ever larger extensions onto what are modest cottages and houses has caused some damage to the scale and fine grain of the conservation area and this remains a significant issue for the local planning authority. There have been a number of regrettable schemes which have marred what are otherwise modest houses with simple traditional openings and roofscape. Some of these large extensions and new buildings are very prominent in extended views much to the detriment of the character of the conservation area.
- 16.5 The transport infrastructure defined by the historic built form was not designed to take the level or intensity of traffic seen today and the users of the road and pedestrians often find the journey through Stanpit at best difficult and at worse potentially dangerous. There is a need to address the issues of the speed and volume of traffic using the roads within the conservation area.
- 16.6 There is a real concern that the harbour, an important element of the setting of the conservation area, is being irrevocably damaged. This appears to stem from a perception that the harbour is not managed as well as it could be. This could have very serious consequences for the long term future of the features and elements which make this part of the harbour special.
- 16.7 In light of these observations there needs to be a comprehensive look at how best to address some of the negative aspects highlighted by the appraisal, in particular the loss of historic fabric, the management of the road and the management of the harbour.

Part 3: Management Plan

Suggested Figures: Management Issues Map:

Vulnerable buildings and Buildings at Risk
Suggested location and extent of Article 4(2) Directions
Areas for development briefs/ redevelopment opportunities (if any)
Recommendations for enhancement

17.0 Vulnerable Buildings and Buildings at Risk

17.1 There are no buildings at risk within the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation area.

18.0 Article 4 (2) Directions

18.1 Article 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) enable local planning authorities to make directions withdrawing the permitted development rights given under the order. These rights should only be withdrawn where there is firm evidence to suggest that permitted development is likely to take place which could damage the character or appearance of a conservation area, and which therefore should be brought within full planning control in the public interest.

18.2 Within the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area there a number of small groups of important unlisted buildings and some individual houses which would benefit from the protection afforded by additional planning controls in order to retain elements of particular historic or architectural interest.

18.3 The Management Issues Map identifies these areas for potential designations.

19.0 Boundary Revisions

19.1 As a result of analysis undertaken, the following are suggested boundary revisions to reflect ownership changes, recent development and local and national policy designations and changes.

19.2 **Remove:** Properties south-east of the Coastguard Station.

19.2.1 *Description and reason for proposal:* All of the properties in this section of the conservation area are modern or have been heavily modernised so as to greatly diminish their value. The original plots have been subdivided and built upon so that the grain of the original settlement has been lost. All of the significant trees within this part of the conservation area have Tree Preservation Orders. There does not appear to be any special character to the area and normal planning controls and additional policies of the local authority relating to the harbour side should be able to control development if and when it came forward.

19.3 **Remove:** Small section of new development to Haven Close

19.3.1 *Description and reason for proposal:* The site of the new Haven Close development was occupied by a pair of semi detached 1950s houses that made no positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area. The scheme as built conformed to a development brief prepared by the local authority in which the importance of a continuous frontage to Stanpit was expressed. This has been provided by the new development and it is proposed that only this section of the new development be retained within the conservation area. The alternative is to include all of the new development within the conservation area, however the detailed design of the remaining sections of the development are not considered 'special' or of sufficient quality or have a close relationship to the established historic character of this part of the conservation area.

19.4 **Remove:** Nos. 151a to 155 Stanpit, a group of terrace cottages formerly known as Wellington Place

19.4.1 *Description and reason for proposal:* Sadly this short terrace of cottages has had all its windows replaced and enlarged with uPVC units, modern doors inserted, and a concrete tile roof. The brickwork has been painted. It has lost virtually all of its historic fabric and has been extended with a new cottage which matches the modern appearance of the remaining four properties. These buildings can no longer be considered 'special' as defined by the advice in Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment.

19.5 **Include:** Mudeford Recreation Ground to the north-east of Stanpit and Argyle Road

19.5.1 *Description and reason for proposal:* The Recreation Ground is strongly defined to Stanpit and is a large open green amenity space of some considerable value to the local community. It appears to have been laid out at the same time as Argyle Road and the development of the lower part of Stanpit and so is linked historically to this important period of growth in Stanpit. Presently the trees are unprotected and bringing this area within the conservation area would afford these important trees some protection. The Recreation Ground also provides an attractive setting to important buildings already within the conservation area (figure 39)

20.0 Recommendations for Enhancement

20.1 Please note that these recommendations are subject to funding and resource availability.

20.2 **Improve pedestrian linkage**

Comment [r1]: RC seeking highways comments

20.2.1 There was support for improvements to the present public access to the harbour side with requests for a link between Fisherman's Bank and Christchurch.

Though desirable, this would be extremely difficult to achieve in practise without significantly impacting upon the wildlife of the Stanpit Marsh and private property rights and would impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, changing what is a softened edge to the harbour to potentially something more urban.

20.2.2 There is the potential to improve pedestrian routes and cycle movements through the area with a comprehensive traffic management scheme along the road, combined with the re-direction of traffic away from Stanpit. This could be combined with the encouragement of people to explore this part of the borough by providing walking and/or cycling trails.

20.3 *Harbour management plan*

20.3.1 Whilst the implication of a Harbour Management Plan is much wider than the area defined by the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area, there are many issues which were raised by local residents and stakeholders (and summarised in section 15.4 of the conservation area appraisal) which have a direct impact on the character of the harbour side particularly the tranquil and picturesque qualities of this part of the harbour. There are also very important wider issues such as the potential for flooding which could very seriously undermine the very essence of the character of the edge of the harbour.

20.3.2 As this report was being produced, Christchurch Council were already producing a Management Plan for the Harbour. Outcomes of this report will therefore be incorporated into the Management Plan where appropriate, reflecting the sensitivity of this part of the Conservation Area.

21.0 ***Policies/Recommendations for New Buildings (generally smaller infill sites)***

21.1 This guidance provides generic advice for smaller developments up to approximately 5 - 8 housing units. Sites of a larger number will require considerable pre-application negotiation and may be the subject of design briefs. Some small developments may be in such sensitive locations that they require a concise brief from the Local Authority. In all cases a Design Statement will be required to accompany the application drawings. Where a Character Appraisal exists for a Conservation Area, this must be consulted by the applicant's agent, the developer and the planning officer, as it will assist in setting the context of the development.

21.2 It is strongly advised that all parties visit the site and its setting. The setting will vary in virtually every case, but as a guide it should be taken both as the area from which the site can be seen, and the surroundings seen from the site. The setting can also be defined as the general pattern of uses in the vicinity. These may vary on each side of the site.

21.3 It is important to consider specifically: surrounding skylines, rooflines and landmarks (e.g. church towers etc), or if the development will have an impact on cherished views of the landscape or "signature" skylines.

21.4 The surrounding built form should be appraised:

- What are the typical sizes and shapes of building plots? Are these uniform or varied? If varied, consider largest and smallest types.
- How do buildings relate to the back edge of the footpath or carriageway? This factor alone can help to assimilate new buildings into the street scene.
- Are the buildings in the street freestanding, or are they in small informal groups or more regular terraces?
- Are buildings linked in a particular way, for example with boundary walls?
- Do the buildings generally have their main ridgeline parallel to the street or at right angles?
- Are the buildings generally "grand" or modestly proportioned and styled?
- The character of the front boundary walls or fences is an integral part of the character of the area.
- Identify the predominant materials and colour of material in the area and if any are unique.

21.5 The character of the site should be considered.

- The boundaries should be noted, especially if they comprise hedgerows, mature trees, vernacular walls, fences or railings.
- The access point to the site will have to be agreed. Care should be taken to minimise any damage to front boundaries through the uncritical imposition of sight lines which may have the effect of removing most of a boundary.
- Consider potential assets on-site, such as the lie of the land, areas of shelter and sunny aspect, existing structures such as buildings or walls, trees or hedgerows which might be incorporated into the scheme.
- Develop a Design Concept. This should include: What is the role of this development within the setting?
 - Is this a gateway or other edge development on the approach or periphery of the site?
 - Is it a focal point development terminating a view or providing a skyline?
 - Is the site at a pivotal point in the townscape, turning a corner from one type of development to another?
- The frontage part of the development should in virtually every case face outward to the streetscape, unless there are compelling reasons not to do so.
- The character of the development should be determined by layout and providing an appropriate sense of identity and enclosure. A sequence of spaces and places should be considered – from major to minor space, from formal/symmetrical or informal?
- The design should avoid any inappropriate suburbanising of the proposals through deep or irregular house plan, fussy elevations, spacious set backs from

the building line, dwarf wall boundaries and inappropriate spacing between buildings.

- Design considerations such as window proportions, subservience of elements such as garages, roof type (gable end or hipped), roof pitch, projection or recession and choice of materials, which should derive from the character of surrounding buildings forming the setting.
- Contemporary solutions may be appropriate if it can be demonstrated that they derive from a comprehensive appraisal of the setting and site

22.0 Traffic Management/ Street Improvements

22.1 *Traffic calming measures*

22.1.1 On consulting local residents and stakeholders, there was a general consensus that some form of traffic calming was needed for the sections of road within the conservation area, primarily on Stanpit. The suggestion was for a 20 mph speed limit to be imposed on this section of road, but in practise it would extend out of the conservation area north towards Purewell and south along Mudeford.

22.1.2 This could take many forms. However it was clear that residents did not favour a priority type scheme or just crude speed bumps.

22.1.3 There was also a desire to see a pedestrian crossing near or outside the shops. This could also have the effect of slowing traffic, especially if it was combined with a change in materials.

22.1.4 A priority scheme could also be fairly subtle and work on slowing the traffic, rather than halting it altogether. An example of how this might work is shown in figure 40. In addition, as discussed in the recommendations for enhancement, raised tables for junctions finished in a simple change in material and demarked with granite setts would also slow traffic and enhance the road by breaking up the long stretches of tarmac.

22.1.5 The scheme should start with the premise of reducing signage. There is increasing evidence to suggest that traffic moves slower when there is less signage rather than more. The evidence is showing that motorists are more wary when not directed by signage and their overall speed lower. This is especially true when the road and pavement are blurred, such as at junctions, where it appears that the pedestrian has equal priority.

22.1.6 The council should prepare a scheme in partnership with the local community for the calming of traffic along this stretch of Stanpit but also bringing in the adjacent conservation area; Mudeford Quay.

22.2 *Relocation and new signage*

22.2.1 Amongst local residents there were a number of people in favour of a rerouting of traffic through the use of and changes in directional signage. It is felt that a car park availability sign at a strategic junction could save a high number of wasted

trips and reduce congestion with people looking for spaces in full car parks. In addition, this strategic sign could provide alternative sites.

22.2.2 It was considered that a sign (on Purewell roundabout) indicating the distance to the sea Mundeford Quay and Avon Beach, would help visitors considerably when trying to reach their destinations.

22.2.3 Signage could also redirect some traffic along a more suitable route from Highcliffe Road rather than through Stanpit.

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Maps

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