

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

Please feel free to forward this document to other interested parties. It will also be available to view at the Ramsgate Society website.

www.ramsgate-society.org.uk

For FEEDBACK details see final page.

The

"Complementary"

ART EXPERIENCE

ART
ARCHITECTURE



THE RAMSGATE SOCIETY

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

The revised Core Strategy document, to be issued by Thanet District Council later this year, will contain (we hope) revised proposals for the future of Ramsgate.

The Strategic Planning Dept of TDC has kindly encouraged a continued dialogue on proposals, which could be considered for inclusion. The Ramsgate Society has prepared a number of **ideas**, which it is hoped will provoke discussion on a suitable way forward for the benefit of the town.

Although the Core Strategy is not "site specific" it is sometimes necessary to fit the pieces of a jigsaw together to get an impression of the overall plan, this approach has been adopted by looking at individual sites then combining them into an overall idea.

This is a book of Ideas

Some you may like, some you may hate,

*Some may come to fruition; others will be
consigned to the bin*

The overriding idea is to provide a coherent strategy for the future of Ramsgate, without which the town is doomed to a future of endless applications for unwanted and unneeded blocks of flats on every available piece of land and within every redundant building.

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT.

WHY ?

A “complementary” ART EXPERIENCE.

“Ramsgate’s contribution to The Turner Contemporary”

Thanet District Council has staked the future of tourism in Thanet on ART and the Turner Contemporary Gallery. Grant funding is being drawn into Thanet for art projects.

Ramsgate is highly unlikely to be provided with a publicly funded attraction for visitors as there is no support for this from a Margate focused council, coupled with an economic recession and no clear indication of what is desired or required in Ramsgate.

“Shaping the Future” the TDC Core Strategy to 2026 has a vision of Margate as a centre of art. This is reasonable aim to attract new visitors to the area, unfortunately the “vision” is centred only on Margate and not Thanet as a whole.

Thanet cannot compete with the West Country, Wales and the Lake District for dramatic scenery and long “staycations”, but it has advantages of its proximity to London and a new “swish” high speed train. If an art culture can be established in and promoted widely from Thanet, the traditional “day-tripper” may return for ART.

Where does Ramsgate fit into this? Ramsgate does not need a new building dedicated to art. It has the essence of “Art and Architecture” at every street corner, either in its 900 listed buildings or diverse art forms throughout the town.

Ramsgate is already an unrivalled open-air art gallery and should be enhanced and promoted as such. This will bring tourists into Ramsgate who may go on to the Turner Contemporary, or Turner Contemporary visitors may extend their visit to Ramsgate. Both scenarios are GOOD FOR THANET. The Thanet towns are not competing for tourists, the WHOLE of Thanet is competing with other parts of the UK. Money spent in Ramsgate will benefit Margate through greater prosperity of TDC.

The aim of ART & ARCHITECTURE is to illustrate the possibilities for enhancement of Ramsgate’s existing attributes and explore opportunities for extending the open-air gallery concept to harmonise and contrast with the Turner Contemporary.

A “complementary” ART EXPERIENCE therefore:

- a) Complements the Turner Contemporary
- b) Complements Thanet’s aspiration as a centre of art
- c) Complements Ramsgate’s architectural heritage
- d) Complements the Ramsgate Historical Town Trail
- e) Complements the Ramsgate Society Costumed Walks

NOTE Items numbered (1) to (6) are buildings needing the protection of a Trust.

EXISTING FEATURES WHICH CAN BE ENHANCED

Items in blue are ideas for the future

Sea Garden (re-planted)

The Granville Theatre (performing arts)

Pugin Bust and Fountain

The Bandstand (musical art)

Albion House (1) (exhibition ?)

Destiny

Madeira Walk Waterfall & Pulhamite

Eastcliff Lift

Maritime Museum (2)

Smeaton’s Crosswall Cervia, Ramsgate Time line, Camera Obscura.
(linear museum for marine industrial archaeology)

George IV Oberlisk

Ramsgate Society Costumed Walks (performing arts event)

Beach Pillar (restored)

The Royal Harbour and Channel Dash Memorial

Military Arches & Pulhamite

Albert Court Sofas

Promenade Shelters (restored)

Lighthouse & Powder store

Pugins building group

“Molecule” Westcliff Prom

The Chine (3) (re-planted) & Pulhamite

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW FEATURES

“Food Art” promotion of the restaurant and café culture.

Ramsgate Historical Town Trail (in progress)

Cleaver Lane Centre (Staffordshire St Car Park)

Royal Victoria Pavilion (4) (restored)

Pier Yard (events space)

The “Albatross” Crossing (Harbour Street – Harbour Parade enhancement)

Tram Shelter (“THE LOOP” an opportunity for focal art exhibit)

Le Poisson. (Upgrading the York Street planters)

The Lobster Pot (Upgrading the York Street planters)

Westcliff Pavilion (5) (Refurbished and linked to the marina)

After MONDRIAN (Livening up Leopold Street)

Westcliff lift (6) (Café and lift enhancement – “Pugins Arches”)

Western Marina Arches (A scheme to revitalise the Marina/Harbour)

EXISTING FEATURES WHICH CAN BE ENHANCED

Sea Garden (re-planted)

Time, money and effort have been expended on this garden and it needs to be maintained to protect the feature. It is particularly effective when viewed from the cliff top promenade.



Granville Theatre (Performing Arts Venue)

Pugin Bust and Fountain

A 1950's modernist fountain together with a bust of Edward Pugin, son of Augustus commemorated on a plinth in the promenade gardens.



The Bandstand (Musical Art Venue)

Albion House (1) (exhibition ?)

A refurbished Albion House with exhibition space on the ground floor will enhance the art experience



Destiny

The newly uncovered statue of destiny is now prominent at the head of the waterfall.



Madeira Walk Waterfall & Pulhamite

A brilliant example of Pulhamite "stonework". The waterfall is very convincing and gives a real atmosphere on the winding Madeira Walk.



Eastcliff Lift

A lovely example of a cliff/ beach lift tastefully restored to full working order.



Maritime Museum (2)

The maritime Museum housed in the Clock House makes an ideal introduction to a museum park celebrating Ramsgate's industrial and maritime heritage. A solution must be found for its continued survival.



Smeaton's Crosswall

Smeaton's Crosswall is a Grade II* listed structure and could be developed into a linear museum for industrial archaeology including Cervia, Ramsgate Time line, Camera Obscura.
(Further information is given in the proposals.)



George IV Obelisk

A tribute to the voyage of King George IV taken between 25 September and 5 November 1821, resulting in the Ramsgate Royal Harbour.



Ramsgate Society Costumed Walks (performing arts event)

Beach Pillar (restored)

An elaborate example of cast iron formed into a pillar, the only surviving one of a pair originally erected as the beach entrance.



Channel Dash Memorial

A recently erected memorial commemorating “Operation Fuller”



The Royal Harbour

A Grade II listed structure and the only Royal Harbour in the UK. It needs some TLC and promotion in a manner appropriate to its unique status.



Military Arches & Pulhamite

The whole construction of Royal Parade and Military Road Arches is a Grade II listed structure and includes Pulhamite Stonework matching the Madeira Walk Waterfall and Westcliff Chine.



Albert Court Sofas

A wonderful example of modern art and craft, even a skilled bricklayer would be puzzled by how such soft and fluid shapes have been achieved in brick



Promenade Shelters (restored)

In need of renovation but beautiful examples of Edwardian seaside architecture, which have a Heritage Lottery Grant agreed for renovation



Lighthouse & Powder Store.

A beautiful lighthouse situated at the end of the western harbour arm, providing endless photographic opportunities. The powder store is at the landward end of the same arm.



Pugin's building group

A group of grade I listed building by a famous British architect, provides a backdrop to government acre open space.



"Molecule" Westcliff Prom.

An interesting sculpture placed on top of the Westcliff adjacent to the promenade and overlooking Pegwell Bay.



The Chine (3) (re-planted) & Pulhamite

A Grade II listed structure adjacent to a conservation area with five levels of protection . SSSI, NNR, SAC, SPA, RAMSAR site



The above extensive list, added to the numerous architectural gems spread throughout Ramsgate, make the town an unforgettable ART experience, that will continue to be a magnet for tourism as long as the quality of appearance is maintained for the future.

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW FEATURES

The following items are new proposals for the enhancement of existing features in the town.

“Food Art” a promotion of the restaurant and café culture.

Ramsgate’s restaurants and cafes are gaining a wide reputation for good eating, fine dining and a sociable atmosphere in very pleasant surroundings. The combined promotion of these individual businesses could provide a basis for attracting many visitors to the town.

Ramsgate Historical Town Trail (in progress)

This initiative is already under way and will highlight the many famous people who have helped shape the town in the past. By encouraging an appreciation of the historical importance of the town a new civic pride can be engendered.

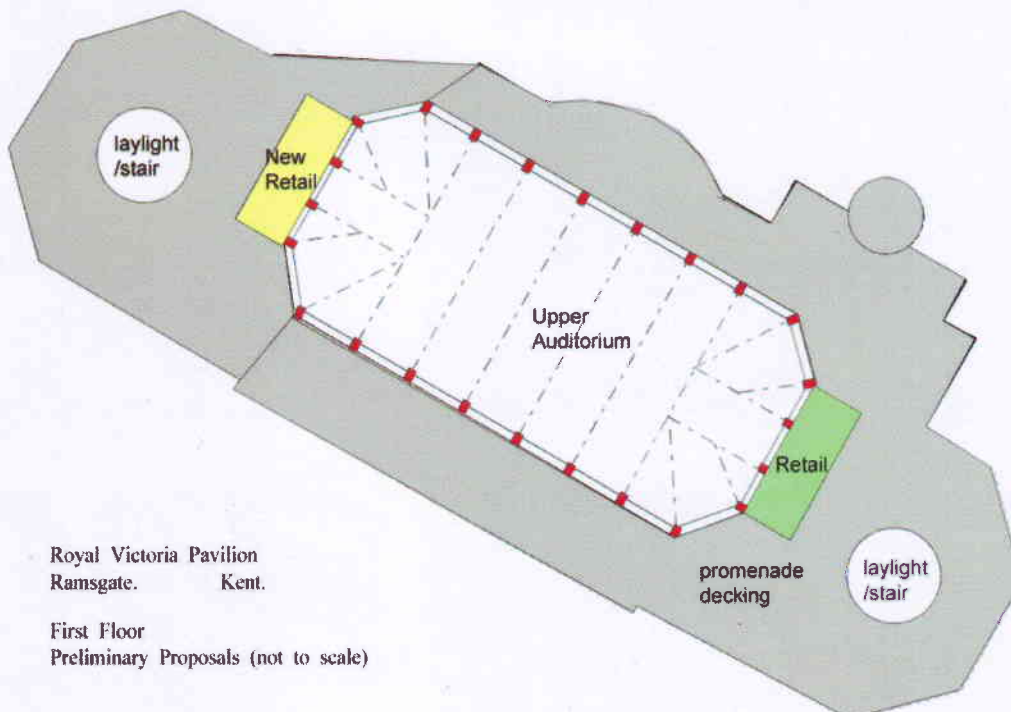
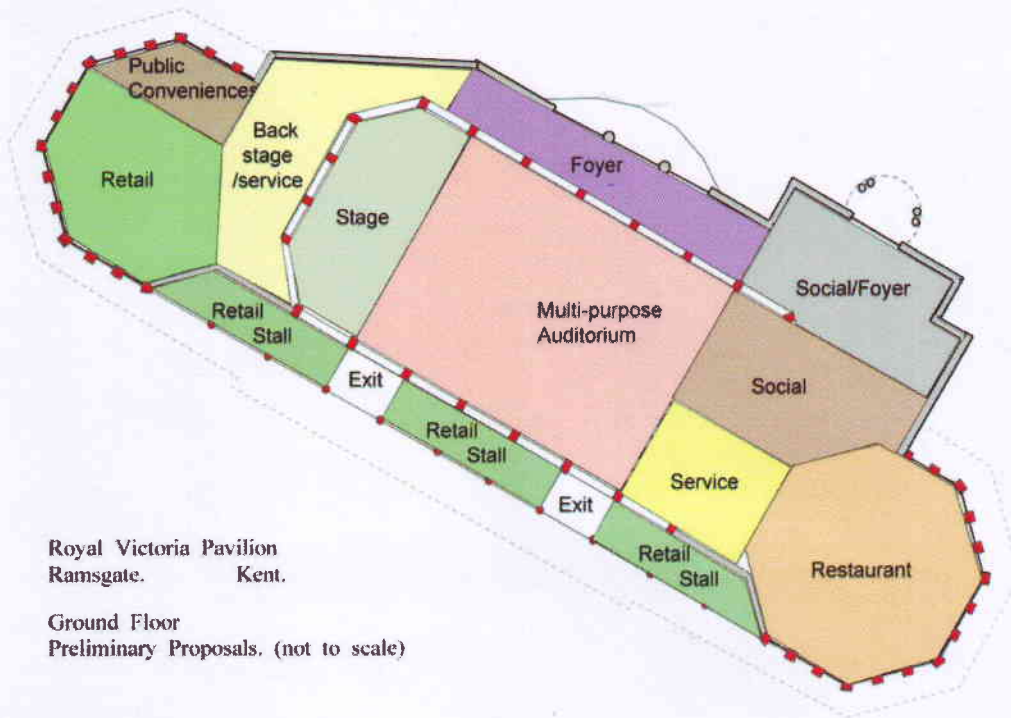
Cleaver Lane Centre. (Staffordshire Street Car Park)

Staffordshire Street Car Park is earmarked for development and it is important that clear planning guidance is given to its future use. Cleaver Lane is a fabulous original cobbled street and should be incorporated as the focal point of such a development. Existing surface parking can be placed in a three-storey car park on one third of the site and in scale with surrounding buildings.



Royal Victoria Pavilion (4) (restored)

The Royal Victoria Pavilion is in need of complete renovation and is being considered for inclusion in a Building Preservation Trust programme. The structure is sound but the internal finishes have been destroyed. This building can be restored to provide a valuable contribution to the life of the town. The Ramsgate Society supports its use as a multi-purpose auditorium where social events such as “Ramsgate Rocks” and the events during “Ramsgate Week” can be organised. An additional consideration could be the incorporation of a demountable ice rink for winter “off-season” use, giving the building a year-round function.

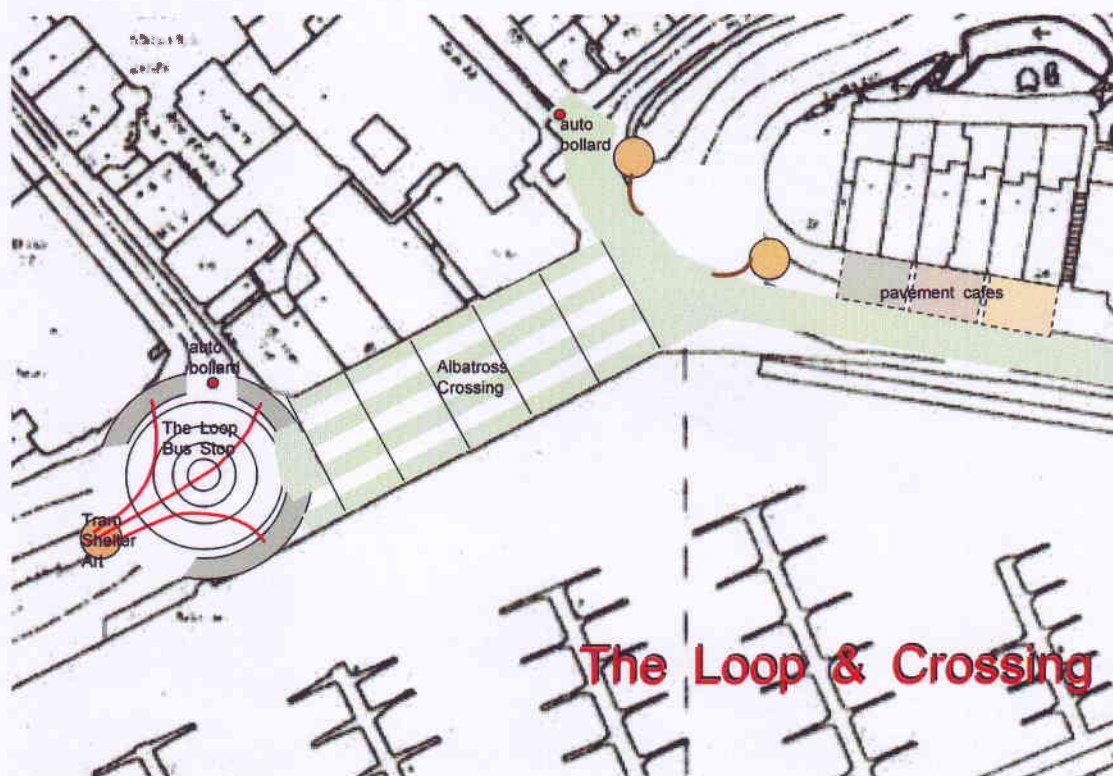


The Albatross Crossing (Harbour Street – Harbour Parade enhancement)

Easier pedestrian link between Harbour Street and Harbour Parade would provide continuity between the Town Centre and the Royal Harbour. By making the section of Military Road, west of York Street roundabout into a pedestrian /vehicular common space together with incorporating the bus stops into the roundabout. A plaza space can be created which leads into a pedestrian friendly Harbour Parade.

Old Tram Shelter (The Loop - opportunity for focal art exhibit)

The tram shelter at the bottom of Royal Parade has never been rebuilt and there is an opportunity to create a focal art feature, which can also be a functional item incorporating bus pick up points to suit the 21st century. “Open gating” to the lower end of Madeira Walk reinforces the change of space.

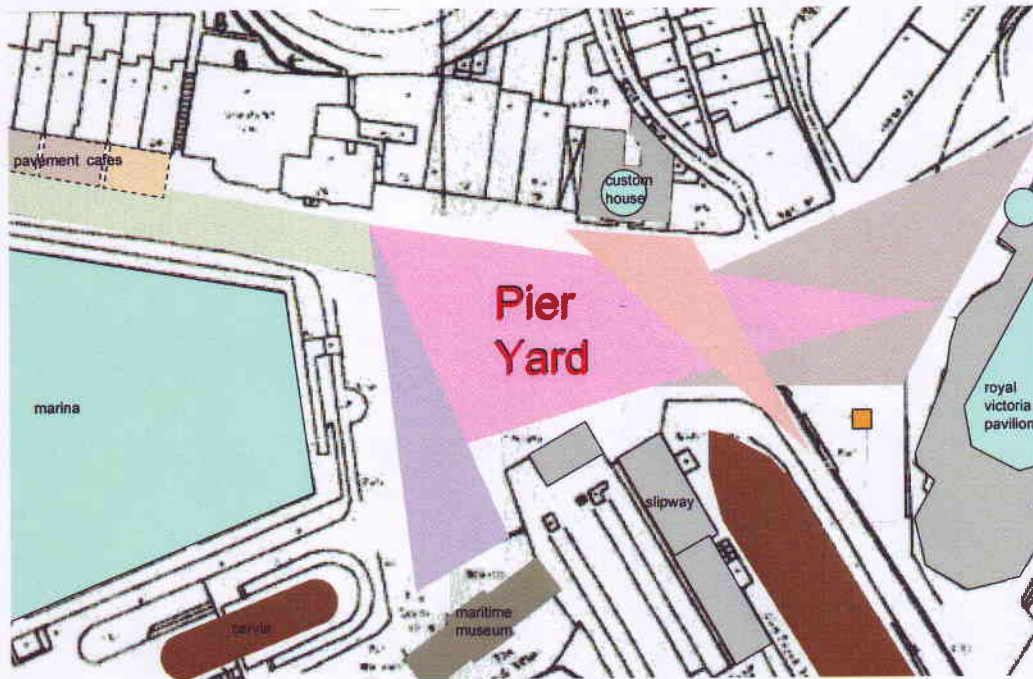


Car Parking Rationalisation.

By reorganising and restricting car parking in Harbour Parade and Pier Yard, different demands will be put on other car parks. Leopold Street Car Park should be enhanced with greater security to become more user friendly. Eastern undercliff car park should be retained and enhanced for beach use and promenading. Car access to the marina should be encouraged via the port tunnel and parking west of the lift bridge. (Just some preliminary comments and suggestions for improvement.)

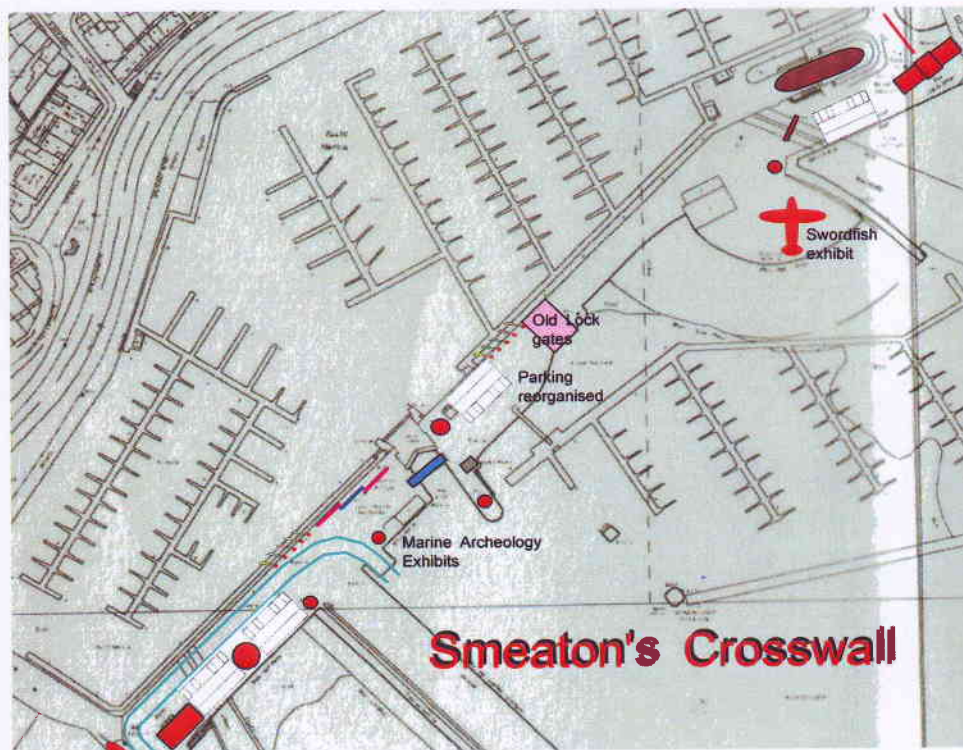
Pier Yard (Outdoor exhibition area)

With a revitalised Royal Victoria Pavilion providing an entertainments venue, a reorganised Pier Yard could extend the festive space to an indoor/outdoor exhibition area. The following diagram shows some of the great structures surrounding Pier Yard and an enhancement of views of these wonderful buildings and monuments could be one approach to the re-modelling of the space. Car parking dispersion from this important area should be a priority.



Smeaton's Crosswall.

Enhancement of the Harbour Crosswall originally designed by John Smeaton could provide new marine archaeology exhibits and improve the existing features.



Le Poisson. (Upgrading the York Street planters)

Art can be used to improve townscape, recent planting in York Street has suffered from skateboarders and pigeon feeding. By using artists to produce open sculptures, climbing planting can be protected and the area enhanced.



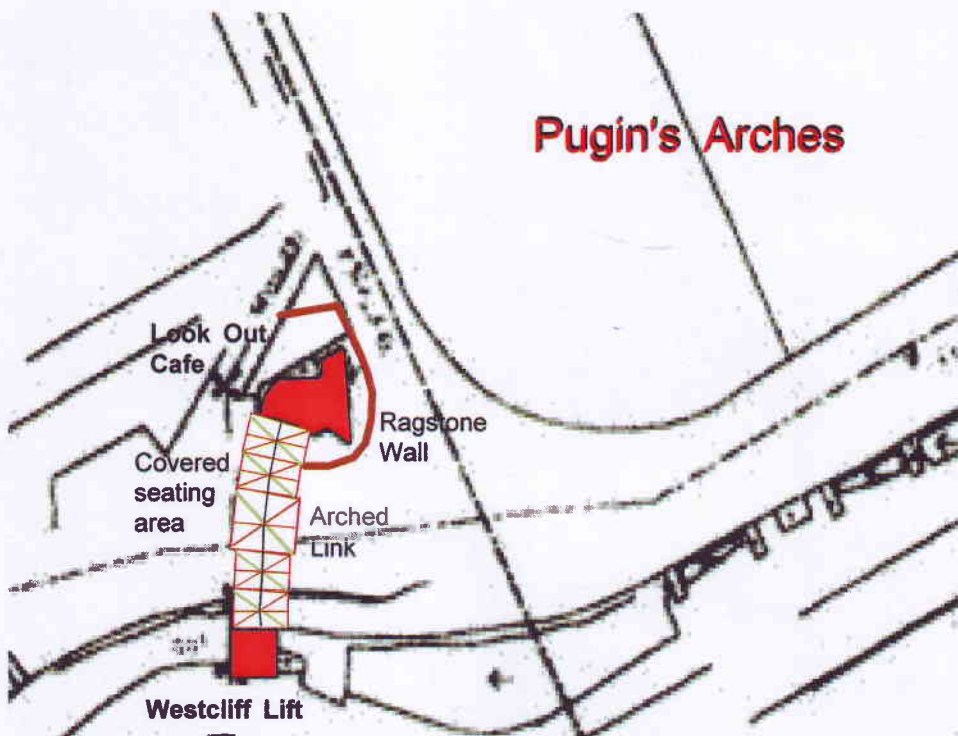
The Lobster Pot (Upgrading the York Street planters)

These are only illustrations of the approach, which could be developed by talented artists into sculpture, which commemorates Ramsgate's strong fishing history.

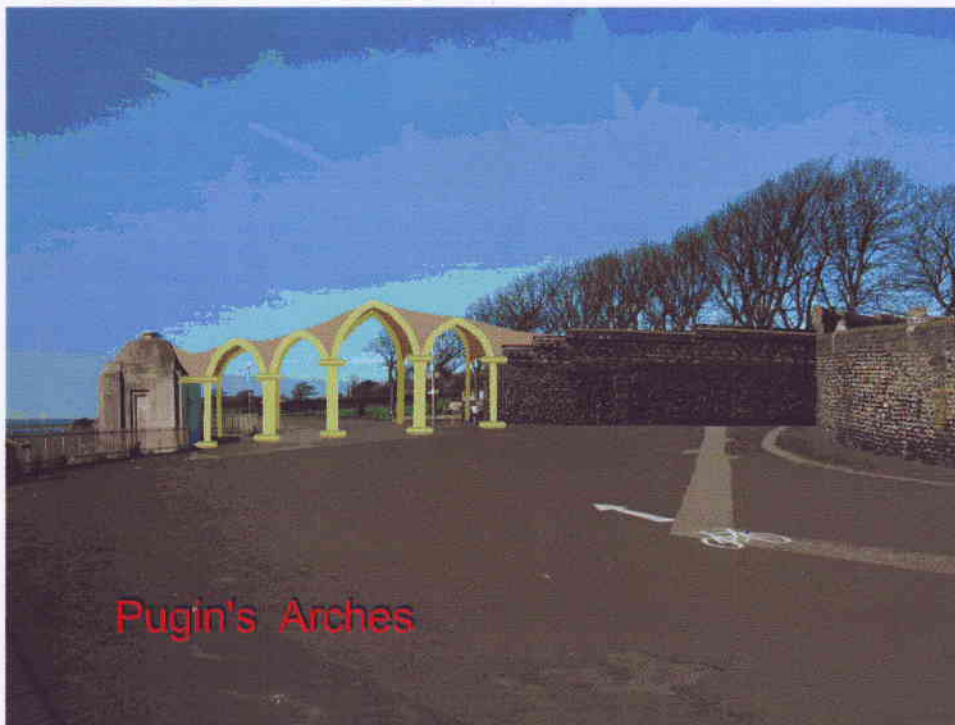


Westcliff lift (6) and Look Out Café (enhancement)

Westcliff Lift is a Grade II listed building in poor condition. At the top of the cliff is the Look Out Café, an unsightly modern café. Both of these buildings stand at the end of the garden to Pugin's Grange, a Grade I listed building.

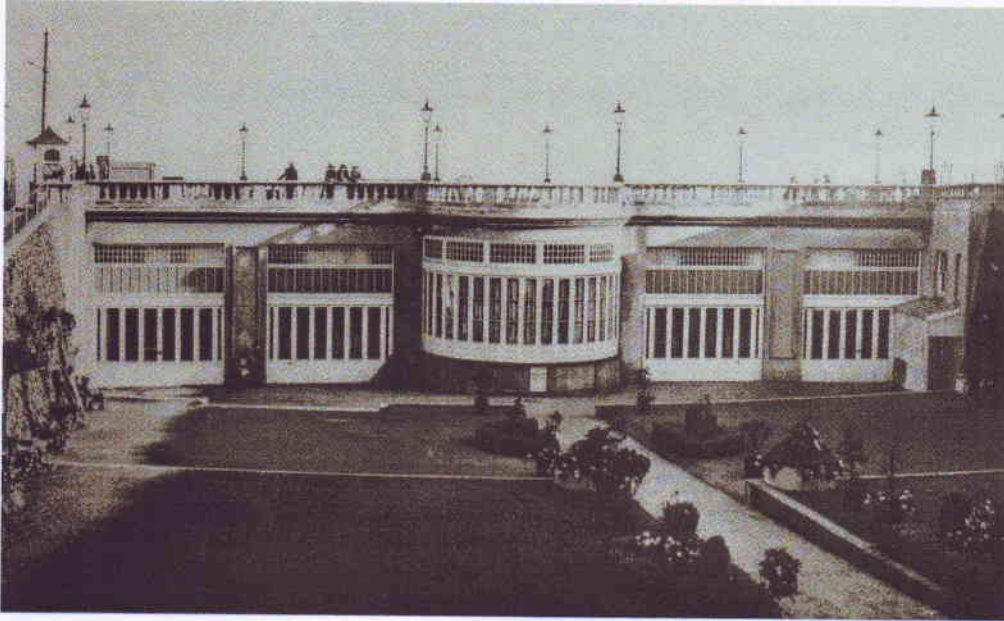


The lift could be improved by associating it with the café. The café could be improved by screening and providing a covered external seating area. The proximity of Puginism, lends itself to a gothic styling in the form of a folly or ruined abbey.



Westcliff pavilion (5) (Refurbished and linked to the marina)

Efforts are being made to restore this building to its former glory, the picture below shows the Westcliff Pavilion as it appeared when constructed. A well thought scheme for re-use would certainly enhance this part of the town.



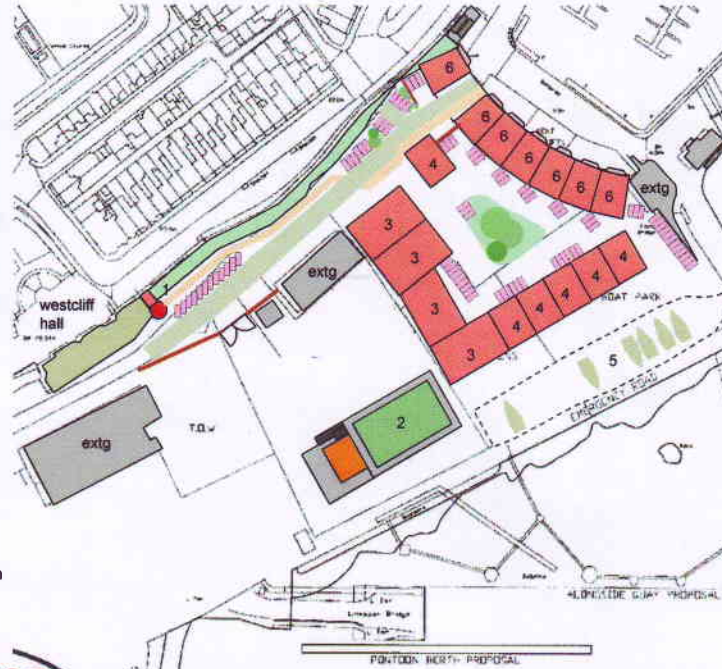
After MONDRIAN (Livening up Leopold Street)

This is a somewhat more whacky idea, which could brighten up the dismal modern architecture of Leopold Street. It may be considered OTT but could stimulate thought for a suitable scheme.



Western Marina Arches (A scheme to revitalise the Marina/Harbour)

London Array have published their intention to build a depot in the commercial harbour, this could initiate a revitalisation of the western marina site. A marine based industrial estate could include parking and lift access to the cliff top for the Westcliff Pavilion. A prestigious group of barrel roofed craft units could front the marina, capturing the essence of the Military Road arches.



Western Marina

Reflective glazing to the craft units mirrors the marina and provides a suitable backdrop to complete the historic Royal Harbour. The diminishing roof heights maintain the cliff-top views. Road access is revised for improved traffic flow.



This is not

THE END

It is only

THE BEGINNING

of **RAMSGATE**

for the 21st CENTURY

FEEDBACK

Criticism is better than apathy but positive and constructive suggestions are preferred. Please send e-mails to:

renovateramsgate@gmail.com