

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1991

THE REGISTERED BUILDINGS (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 1991

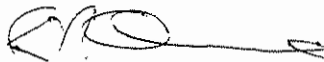
To:
Heron & Brearley Ltd,
Admin Block,
Old Castletown Road,
Kewaigne,
Douglas,
Isle of Man.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at a meeting held on the 5th June, 1998, the PLANNING COMMITTEE of the Department of Local Government and the Environment, in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations REGISTERED The Central Hotel, Broadway, Douglas, as defined in red on the enclosed plan, in the PROTECTED BUILDINGS REGISTER by reason of architectural and historic interest.

THE EFFECT OF THIS REGISTRATION IS IMMEDIATE and prohibits the alteration or demolition of the structure or appearance of any part of the building except in compliance with an obligation imposed by or under any statutory provision or with the prior written consent of the Planning Committee.

Dated this 25 day of June, 1998

By Order of the Committee



R M Quine
Secretary, Planning Committee.

3rd Floor, Murray House,
Mount Havelock,
Douglas,
Isle of Man.

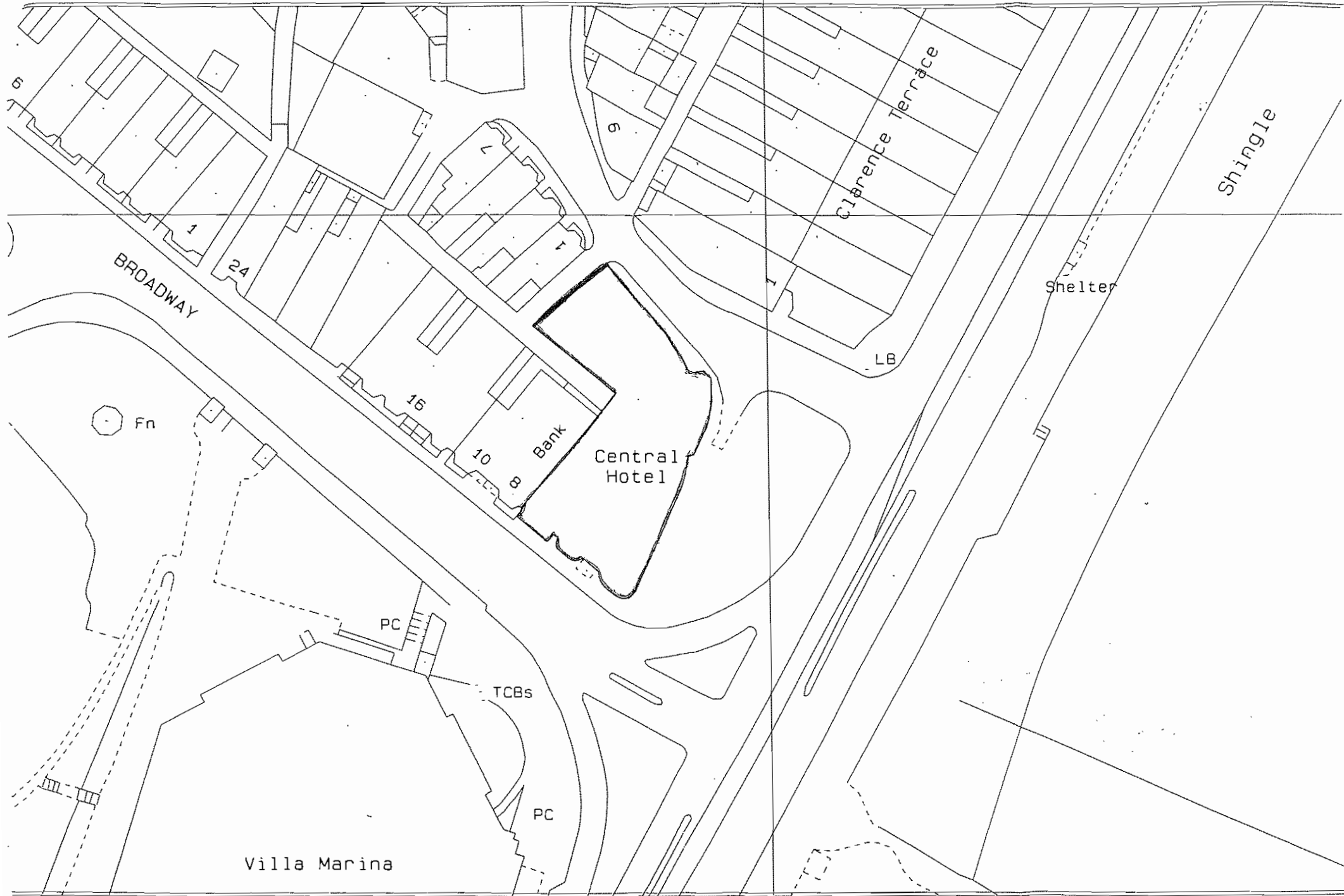
NOTE: Rights to request de-registration of the building are provided under the Regulations and in summary are that:

Application in writing for de-registration may be made by the owner or occupier of, and any other person having an interest in the buildings within a period of 28 days of service of this notice. Such application should be sent to the Secretary, Planning Committee, 3rd Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas.

In the event that de-registration is not requested by any party within the 28 day period described above, then de-registration may not be requested within a period of 3 years.

- cc -
- 1) Douglas Corporation, Town Hall, Ridgeway Street, Douglas
 - 2) Manx National Heritage, Kingswood Grove, Douglas
 - 3) Advisory Council, Glebe Cottage, Maughold
 - 4) J G Kelly Builders, Falcon Cliff, Palace Road, Douglas
 - 5) P S Newton, 2 Glen View, South Cape, Laxey
 - 6) R.B. File 173
 - 7) File 2920
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Scale 1:1000



CENTRAL HOTEL,

Broadway,

Douglas.

Background

The Central Hotel, Broadway was one of the buildings which appeared on a list produced and submitted as part of the information supplied to the Public Enquiry into the Revision of the Douglas Local Plan, in June, 1997. Part of the grounds for its inclusion at this time lay in the fact that many significant Victorian buildings which had added so much to the character of, not only the promenades, but Douglas as a whole, had been demolished in recent years. With the loss of buildings such as The Villiers, the Masonic Hall and its adjoining properties, the Palace Ballroom (the Lido) and other lengthy sections of the promenades, the merits of those buildings which remain become enhanced and take on a more important status, by virtue of their survival, than they might otherwise have done. It is accordingly of increasing importance that the surviving buildings which are considered to be of architectural or historic interest should be protected by Registration.

Historical notes

The Central Hotel is located in a very prominent position in the most significant natural break in the brows which frame Douglas Bay. From time immemorial, Broadway was the route by which the farmers of Ballaquayle hauled sea wrack from the Douglas shore to spread on their fields. When the Duke of Athol acquired the Ballaquayle Estate and decided to build for himself, the Castle Mona, he caused a fine driveway to be

constructed leading from Broadway, running parallel with the beach for approximately six hundred yards to access his new residence. Flanking the entrance to the Drive he constructed a pair of gate lodges, one of which became the "Castle Tap" public house and which eventually provided part of the site for the present Central Hotel.

On the 1st September, 1887 Douglas Corporation granted approval for the layout of plots for Boarding Houses on land off Broadway: the layout of plots was undertaken by W. J. Rennison, Architect of Villiers Chambers. The design for the Central was the subject of a design competition which was advertised in The Builder on 26th November, 1887 on behalf of Mr. Louis Kelly, Builder of Douglas.

The prize for the winning entry was awarded to one Mr. A Pennington of Southport and Ramsey and I have found no evidence to tell us whether or not the design executed had changed significantly from the winning entry.

The principal elevation of the building addresses the Broadway frontage; the side elevation which now faces onto the promenade did, of course, originally front on to Castle Mona Avenue prior to the demolition, in the 1960/70's, of the building shown as a café on earlier photographs.

Even prior to the demolition of so many other buildings on the promenade, the Central Hotel has been, and still remains, one of the most striking buildings along the whole of the Douglas sea front. Several factors contribute to its architectural quality and distinguish it from others:-

- the use of red Ruabon brickwork combines with decorative terracotta and lime stucco of a high quality to form a most striking composition;

- features such as curved bow windows and splayed bays add interest and bring about sense of scale and order to the Broadway elevation;
- this sense of order is enhanced by the external demarcation of floor levels being expressed in horizontal string courses;
- the pattern of fenestration on the promenade elevation also achieves a pleasing sense of order with windows at ground floor level grouped symmetrically around a central doorway and at upper levels groups of windows are arranged in pairs and adopt a variety of window head treatments all of which add a distinct and almost playful appearance to this building so typical of Victorian Seaside Architecture.
- the building occupies a dominant position and uses its corner site appropriately well advertising its presence to all who approach, even from a distance.

Another important feature in the building's appearance and history is the removal (probably in the early 1920's as the present entrance is shown "as existing" in drawings submitted in 1925) of a third curved bow window feature from the extreme left hand side as viewed from Broadway, and its replacement with the existing Portico in the Art Deco Style. This gives a clue to the re-modelling which has taken place in part of the interior: the main staircase to the first floor is a later re-arrangement with a 1920's style lift to convey visitors to the upper levels of the hotel. The main lounge at first floor level has been also remodelled in the spirit of Art Deco, with sheet marble panels and a replacement fireplace fitted. Although the style of this room may not appeal to all tastes, it marks a part of the changing history of the building and should be recognised and respected as such.

Architect Mr. W. J. Rennison may have had a hand in the final design, but I have found no conclusive proof to that effect, save for the fact that his name appears upon the application form for Bye-Law approval: however the plans which accompanied the

application were not to be found at the time of my enquiry. Rennison did practice with Pennington for some time and if, in fact, the building is a Rennison work, this would add to the grounds for Registration when set against the fact that we have lost several Rennison works in recent years.

From the mid 1890's the use of Ruabon Brick became very popular in the Isle of Man. This is a hard-baked, resilient, smooth-faced brick imported from Ruabon in Wales and although there are other examples of the use of this material within Douglas, none is used with quite the same style or distinction as we see in this building combined with highly decorative terracotta and lime stucco work as seen for example in the corner panel clearly visible in its second floor corner position; clever use of curved bow windows and splayed bay windows are all features which add to the internal qualities of the building and take advantage of the fine views across Douglas Bay.

The building has over the years lost some of its attractive features with the removal of the three roof towers and the substitution of a mansard type of roof form in place of the original, steeply pitched roof with its oval shaped dormers. However, it may be said that none of these alterations or removals is irreversible and any proposed re-use of the building would encourage the restoration of the original roof form.

An application to the Town Surveyor's Department for the addition of a new Smoke room and Billiard Room was lodged by Mr. Edward Forrest, Architect and Surveyor of Athol Street, Douglas and approved on 31st March, 1897. From an internal inspection and from the drawings lodged of the building, it is clear that this extension provided superior accommodation for the playing of billiards in a large first floor room with seating around the perimeter walls and large roof lights to provide natural daylight from above. The roof structure is attractive and was designed to be seen, featuring substantial King Post trusses, which are well wrought and are at present just visible through a hatch in the later, lower ceiling construction.

Finally, the addition of the "Balcony Bar" in the 1960's was the last major addition to the hotel, but any future proposals for the building would be encouraged to remove, alter or modify this aspect, which although again provides a record of the historical development of the building, it does not respond sympathetically to the initial design concept, nor complement or enhance the building.

The Central Hotel now represents one of the few examples of Victorian architecture's fully developed response to the requirements of the rapidly expanding tourist industry in the Isle of Man at the approach to the last turn of the century. The building shows a confident use of a wide architectural vocabulary and materials resulting (despite unfortunate losses and alterations) in a building of considerable architectural merit and aesthetic quality which is now a well known land mark on the streetscape of the Town of Douglas.

The Central Hotel, Broadway, Douglas is entered into the Protected Buildings Register on the following grounds:-

- **the building in its prominent position makes a major contribution to the streetscape of the Island's Capital by virtue of its aesthetic quality and particularly the high standard of decorative terracotta and lime stucco work to be seen on the Promenade and Broadway elevations;**
- **the building is one of the few remaining examples of High Victorian Architecture in an Hotel built to accommodate the rapidly expanding tourist industry in the Isle of Man at the end of the last century: as such the building represents an important element in the historical and sociological development of Douglas.**







ENTRAL

Cola



PAVE TOILET
1110
1110
1110

CENTRAL
MILL



CENTRAL











THE CENTRAL

CENTRAL LOUNGE

