

37 Ocean Village – Commercial

Context

This character area forms one part of an area known as Ocean Village. To the west is the operational dockside area: Eastern Docks (CA36) and to the east is Ocean Village marina enclosed by residential development (CA38). The rear elevations of buildings to Canute Road border the area to the north although some of the traditional buildings have been designed to present a formal front to both sides.

This area lies within the part of the dock built by 1842 but the character of the area has been significantly altered by the infilling of the Inner or Close Dock which was constructed in 1851.

Grain

The buildings have a medium to coarse grain and are set in groups which semi-enclose spaces comprising car parks and soft landscaped grounds. The building lines define these semi-enclosed but the built form is insufficiently robust to effectively enclose these relatively large spaces.

Scale

Buildings are three to five storeys with low pitched roofs. There are some views to South Western House, the scale of which still dominates most of the area. Glimpses out to the marina with masts and halyards making up much of the view is a reminder of the water-side context. The view north out of the open courtyards of modern low rise office blocks is partial, terminated by the converted warehouse adjacent to the cinemas.

Uses

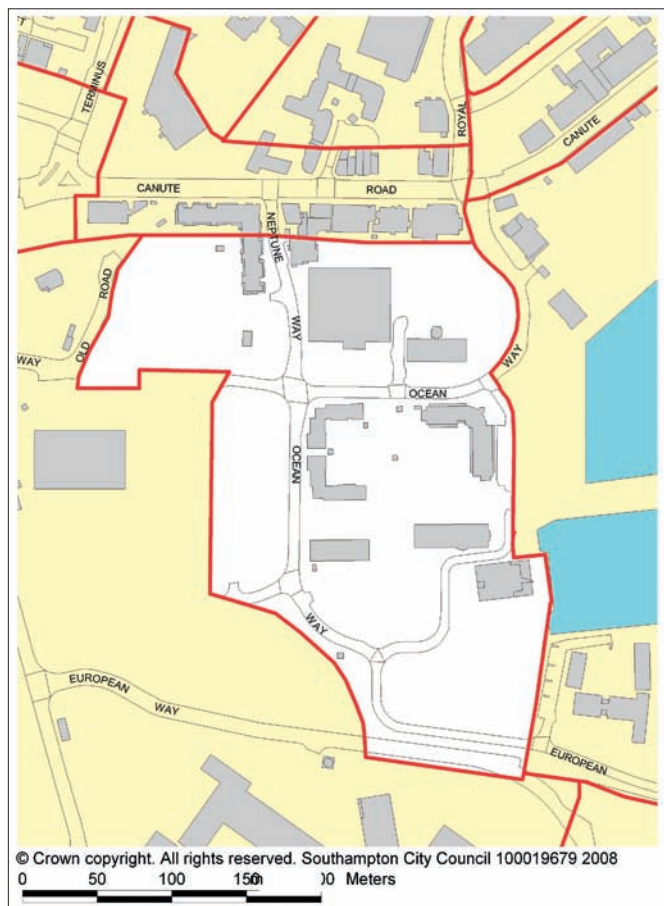
This is the commercial and leisure core of Ocean Village, with offices and a cinema complex as well as a separate independent art house cinema, Harbour Lights. The modern low rise office blocks are very impersonal buildings and despite glazed facades (tinted and/or highly reflective) have very little interaction with the highly over-landscaped spaces within which they sit.

Public Realm

The landscaped areas within the commercial core are of a high quality but feel dated and tired. There is an unsuccessful attempt to mix car parking with raised ponds/lakes and seating areas. Many of the views to buildings are dominated by the parking forecourts finished in tarmac.

Connectivity

This area is permeable and publicly accessible from the residential sections of Ocean Village though there is little reason to walk through the area unless working there.



Views

The National Oceanography Centre to the south makes a significant impact on the skyline when viewed from this character area. There are local views to the waterfront and marina and a good view of South Western Hotel can be had from the corner of Ocean Way and Enterprise Way. A number of internal views are terminated successfully by built form (though the quality of design is sometimes indifferent).

Building types

Purpose-built low rise office buildings, converted warehouse (to offices) and a purpose-built cinema complex and separate purpose-built cinema.

Architectural qualities

The purpose-built offices are flamboyant in their disregard for any fixed architectural point of reference other than to be considered as overtly and intentionally post-modern. The converted building is a fine early nineteenth century warehouse and has retained much of its simplicity and architectural integrity despite conversion.

Heritage Assets

The area is considered to possess a moderate to high degree of evidential value due to fact that the area was reclaimed in the mid-nineteenth century and therefore there is the potential for submerged pre-historic landscapes, including peat deposits and maritime archaeological features such as the remains of vessels. This area is outside the Local Area of Archaeological Importance.

There is also the potential for the survival of above ground features that have associative value and interest as evidence of the industrial history of Southampton. Assessment of this potential should be undertaken prior to any development proposals being made.

The historic character of the area has been considerably altered. There is a warehouse building dating from the late nineteenth century (now converted but retaining its form) which due to its illustrative value as one of the few surviving warehouse buildings is considered to be of historic and architectural merit. The dock has been infilled.

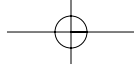
The Harbour Lights cinema is a striking contemporary addition to the waterfront and addresses the waterside well.

Materials

Salmon beige coloured handmade brick (converted warehouse). The modern offices – various colours of stock brick combined in bands of colour. Roofs are natural slate, or profiled metal. There is some vertical timber cladding to the Harbour Lights cinema.



- 01 Low rise high quality office accommodation is arranged in blocks around landscaped courtyards
- 02 Water features form part of the courtyard landscaping
- 03 The recently completed multi-storey car park forms the western boundary with the operational docks



Condition

Good throughout.

Ownership

Multiple ownership – large companies.

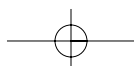
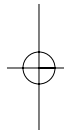
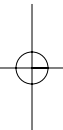
Intervention

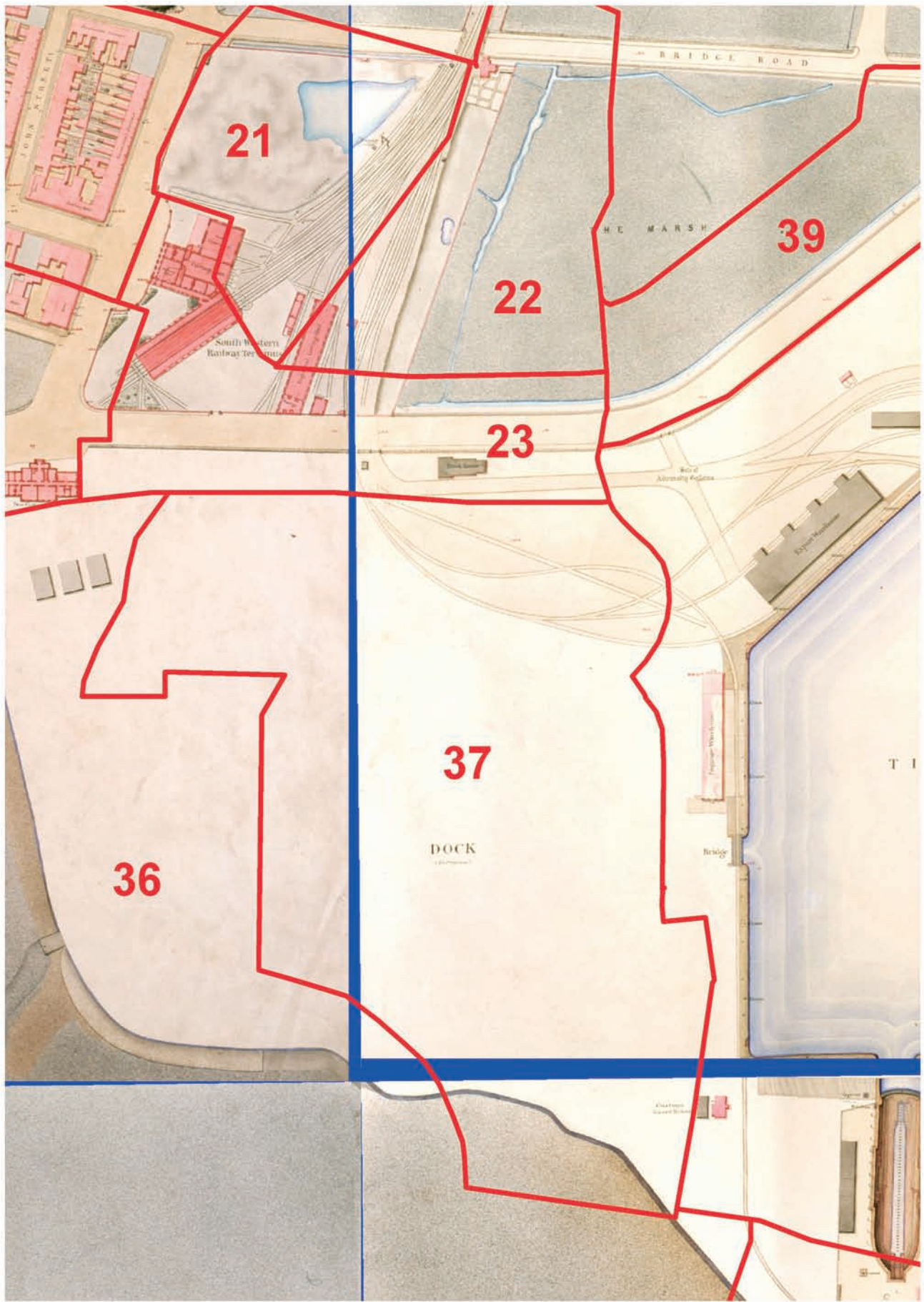
- Redesign internal courtyards to provide positive spaces to enable the built form to integrate with these amenity spaces.

- Remove parking from the central courtyards.

Key design principles

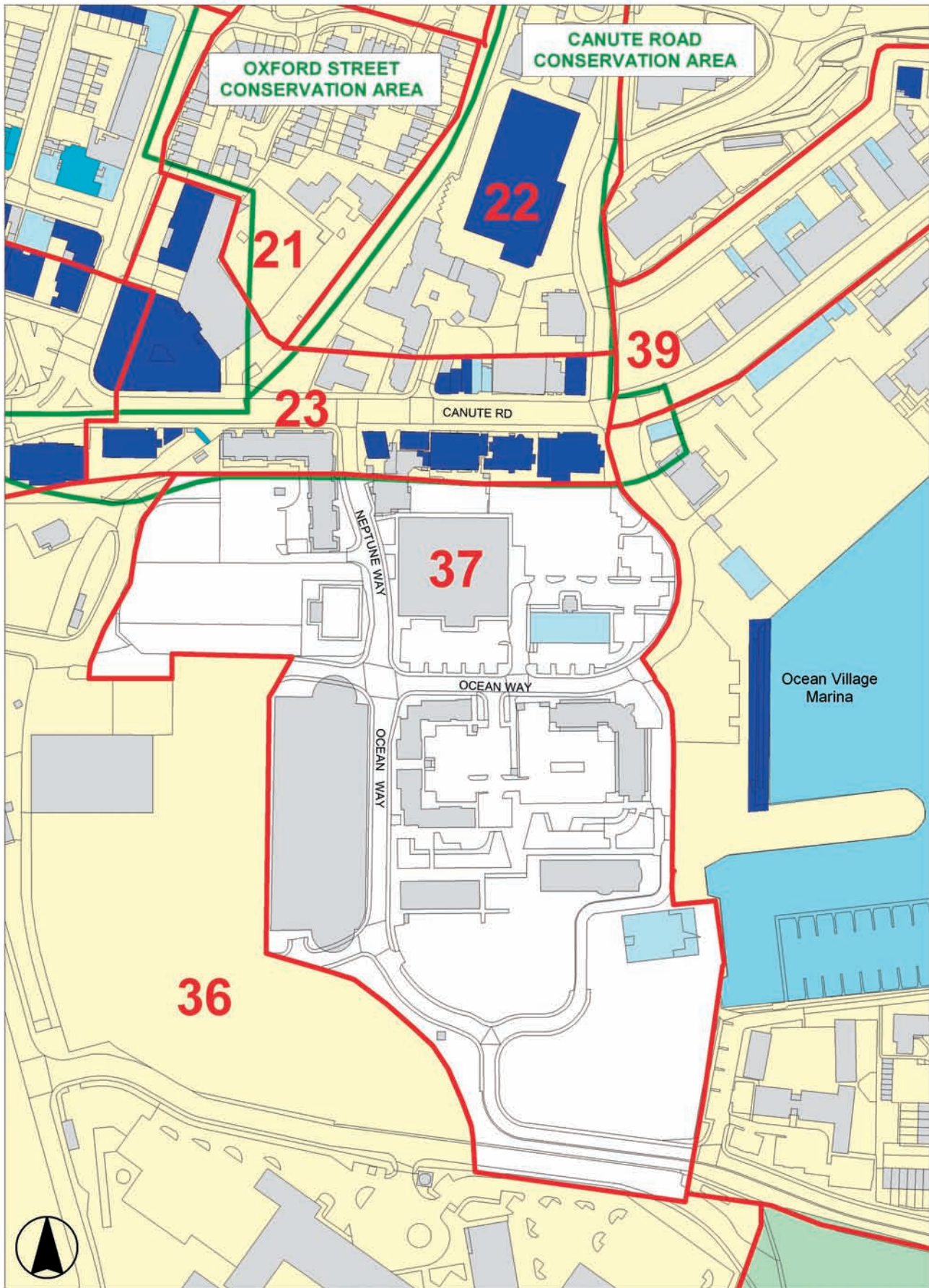
- Keep the hard and soft landscaping to large courtyard spaces simple and retain an ability to relate buildings to each other and the central space.
- Install non-reflect non-obscured glazing to the offices to improve their relationship with the courtyard spaces.





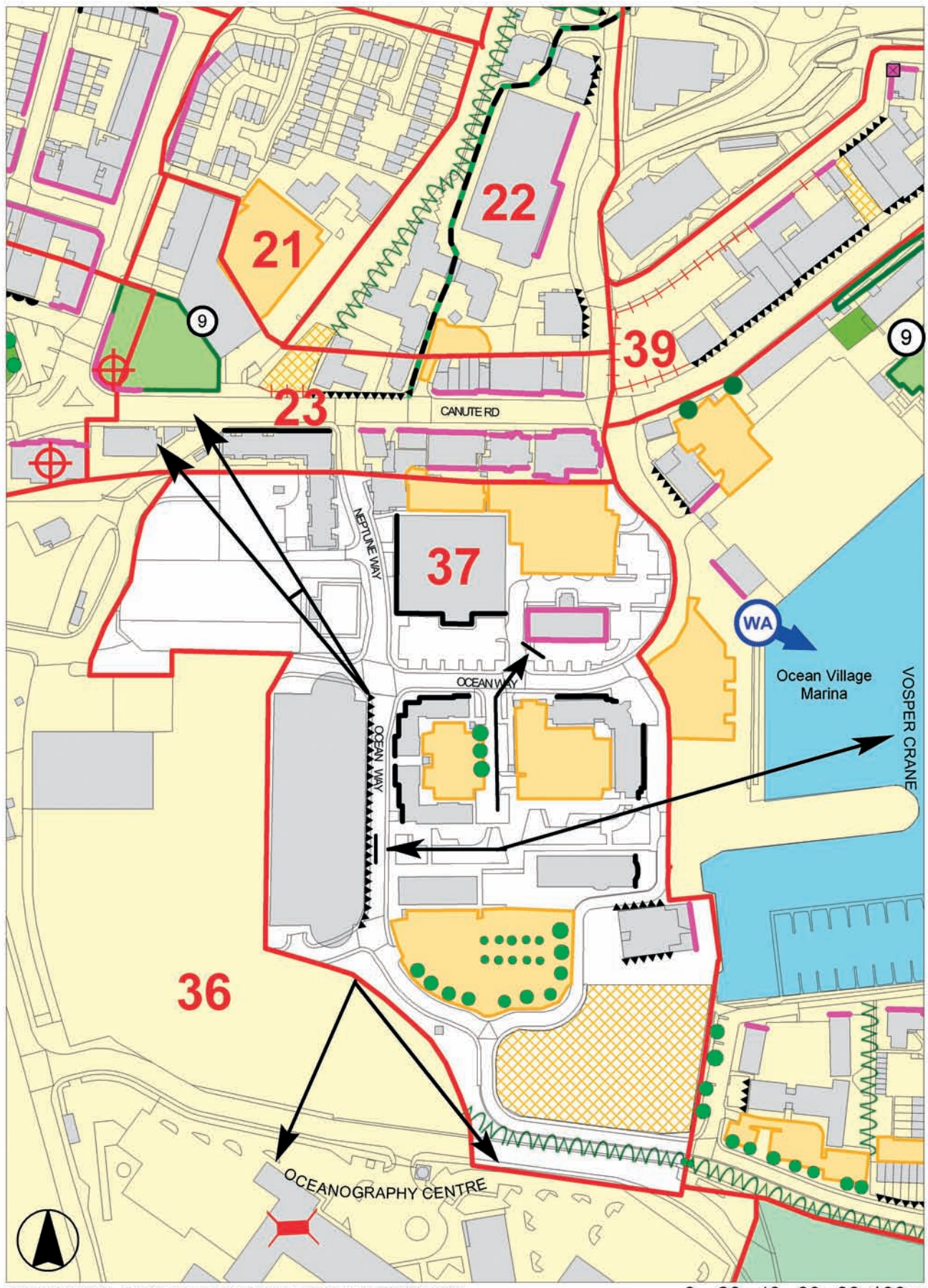
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Townscape