

## Asset Details

<b>Asset name</b>	709 Christchurch Road
<b>Asset address</b>	709 Christchurch Road (Formerly Motabit) Bournemouth BH7 6AF
<b>Additional location information</b>	what3words firmly.boats.smooth
<b>Asset type</b>	Building

## Heritage Significance

Value	Description	Level
<b>Archaeological value</b>	This value does not apply in this instance.	None
<b>Architectural value</b>	The building has high architectural value due to its architectural integrity and reflection of period detailing. Built around 1934, the building is a north facing detached structure, on a mixed commercial use road. It is built in the 'streamline moderne' phase of the Art Deco movement, which developed in the early 1930s. The building is three storeys in height and asymmetrical in form, set to the back of pavement with its principal elevation facing the road. To the ground floor is a retail area with large, glazed display windows that projects forward of the rest of the building under a large, flat-roofed canopy. Set back from this at first and second floor levels are residential flats, with long linear windows of horizontal emphasis and curved returns; these were originally a showroom and offices. To the right is a fine glazed external staircase tower with a cantilevered feature at the top, and to the left is a stepped back section with narrow vertical windows. As was the style of 'streamline moderne', the building uses cement stucco, glass and moulded metal frames to create its smooth, white, lightweight appearance.	High
<b>Historic illustrative value</b>	The building has historical illustrative value through the use of new materials and technologies such as reinforced steel and concrete. Of particular importance were developments in the production of glazing, which saw it become cheaper and available in larger sheets. This made office buildings such as this better lit by natural light, creating healthier and more aesthetically pleasing places to work at a time when the workforce was spending increasing amounts of time inside.  As well as the aesthetic value of the clean lines and minimal decoration, the architectural treatment of the building creates a sense of efficiency and progress. This illustrates the drive at this time for progressive and innovative thinking in manufacturing, commercial and service sectors – a clean break from the antiquated styles and attitudes of pre-war Britain. As the showroom and public face of a significant regional service provider, this clear display of modernity is demonstrative of the shift in cultural and social thinking at the time.	Moderate
<b>Historic associative value</b>	The building was constructed to house the showrooms and offices of the Southern Gas Board. The showroom on Christchurch Road was built on the site of the old showroom after it was demolished along with the neighbouring music emporium to expand the footprint of the new construction. This showroom is perhaps the most impressive of those built in the area, and its value is enhanced by the association with a prosperous period in the company's history following the rapid expansion of the gas network, which also necessitated the building of a self-contained gas works at Pitwines in Poole Harbour.	Moderate
<b>Aesthetic or artistic value</b>	In the post-depression era of the 1930s, a pared-down version of Art Deco architecture began to spread from the USA throughout the world. This style removed the excess ornamentation seen in earlier Art Deco art and architecture	Moderate

	in exchange for more aerodynamic forms and strong horizontal lines suggesting a post-depression sense of movement and clean living. Many of the main characteristics of 'streamline moderne' architecture are illustrated in the building, such as the smooth curve of the main façade, the asymmetric layout and flat roof.	
<b>Communal value</b>	The building occupies a prominent position on Christchurch Road amongst commercial businesses and leisure facilities. The first and second floors function as residential properties; however, as of November 2021, the ground floor retail space is vacant. There is little to suggest that the building contributes to the area's sense of collective identity. That said, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence: such distinctive landmarks often have value for communities as a source of distinctiveness, sometimes only becoming apparent when a site is threatened.	Little



cc-by-sa/2.0 - Boscombe: an art deco shop by Chris Downer - [geograph.org.uk/p/882024](http://geograph.org.uk/p/882024)