



## CABINET

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Friday, 31 January 2025</b>
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>
<b>VENUE:</b>	<b>Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1SE</b>

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Councillor M Stephenson	- Leader of the Council; Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder
Councillor I Henderson	- Deputy Leader; Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder
Councillor A Baker	- Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder
Councillor M Barry	- Leisure & Public Realm Portfolio Holder
Councillor P Kotz	- Assets & Community Safety Portfolio Holder
Councillor G Placey	- Partnerships Portfolio Holder
Councillor G Scott	- Arts, Culture & Heritage Portfolio Holder
Councillor A Smith	- Environment & ICT Portfolio Holder

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**DATE OF PUBLICATION: THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY 2025**

## AGENDA

### 1 **Apologies for Absence**

The Cabinet is asked to note any apologies for absence received from Members.

### 2 **Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 7 - 28)**

To confirm and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet held on Friday 20 December 2024.

### 3 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors are invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests of Non-Registerable Interests, and the nature of it, in relation to any item on the agenda.

### 4 **Announcements by the Leader of the Council**

The Cabinet is asked to note any announcements made by the Leader of the Council.

### 5 **Announcements by Cabinet Members**

The Cabinet is asked to note any announcements made by Members of the Cabinet.

### 6 **Matters Referred to the Cabinet by the Council**

There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council on this occasion.

### 7 **Matters Referred to the Cabinet by a Committee - Reference from the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee - A.1 - Scrutiny of the Initial Budget Proposals for 2025/26 (Pages 29 - 30)**

To enable the Cabinet to consider the recommendations submitted to it by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee following that Committee's scrutiny of the Cabinet's initial budget proposals at its meeting held on 13 January 2025.

### 8 **Matters Referred to the Cabinet by a Committee - Reference from the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee - A.2 - Grant Funding by the Council and Others and its Appropriateness Given the Needs of the District (Pages 31 - 34)**

To enable Cabinet to consider recommendations made by the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee following its scrutiny of grant funding by the Council and others at its meeting held on 14 January 2025.

### 9 **Leader of the Council's Items**

There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council on this occasion.

### 10 **Cabinet Members' Items - Report of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder - A.3 - Updated General Fund Financial Forecast / Budget 2025/26 (Pages 35 - 58)**

To seek Cabinet's approval of:

- (i) the latest financial forecast / budget proposals and council tax amount for 2025/26 for recommending to Full Council;
- (ii) a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance to agree the detailed budget proposals and formal draft resolutions / 'technical' appendices required for Full Council on 11 February 2025; and
- (iii) a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, to agree / adopt a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure mandatory business rate relief scheme for 2025/26 along with any other changes to reliefs that may be announced by the Government.

**11 Cabinet Members' Items - Report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder - A.4 - Adoption of Six Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans (Pages 59 - 442)**

To inform Cabinet on the progress of updating the District's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans.

To seek agreement from Cabinet that the final versions of six Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans be adopted by the Council. The six Conservation Area Appraisals for adoption are:-

Clacton Seafront;  
Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church;  
Great Clacton;  
Lawford;  
Kirby-le-Soken; and  
Great Oakley.

**12 Cabinet Members' Items - Report of the Partnerships Portfolio Holder - A.5 - Procurement of information and support service (Pages 443 - 486)**

To seek approval from Cabinet to provide an information and advice service to local residents with revised requirements via an associated specification and procurement process, with the new arrangements commencing on 1 October 2025.

To approve the allocation of **£0.072m** to Citizen's Advice Tending to continue to contribute to the existing information and advice guidance service through direct funding for the interim period up to 30 September 2025 in accordance with a subsidy scheme.

**13 Cabinet Members' Items - Joint Report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder - A.6 - Updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2025/26 (Pages 487 - 508)**

To seek Cabinet's approval of the updated HRA Business Plan for 2023/24 along with final HRA budget proposals 2025/26 (including fees and charges, capital programme and movement in HRA Balances) for recommendation to Council on 11 February 2025.

**14 Management Team Items**

There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council's Management Team on this occasion.

### **Date of the Next Scheduled Meeting**

*The next scheduled meeting of the Cabinet is to be held in the Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1SE at 10.30 am on Friday, 21 February 2025.*

## **Information for Visitors**

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET,  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 20TH DECEMBER, 2024 AT 10.31 AM  
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, AT THE TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-  
ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

**PRESENT:**

**PORTFOLIO:**

Councillor M E Stephenson	Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance (Chairman)
Councillor I J Henderson	Deputy Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism
Councillor A P H Baker	Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning
Councillor M Barry	Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Public Realm
Councillor P Kotz	Portfolio Holder for Assets
Councillor G R Placey	Portfolio Holder for Partnerships (except item 99)
Councillor G G I Scott	Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture & Heritage
Councillor A Smith	Portfolio Holder for the Environment

**Group Leaders Present by Standing Invitation:** Councillors J D Bray (Leader of the Reform UK Group) (except items 101 – 105), J B Chapman BEM (Leader of the Independent Group) and P B Honeywood (Leader of the Conservative Group)

**In Attendance:** Chief Executive (Ian Davidson), Corporate Director (Economy & Place) & Deputy Chief Executive (Lee Heley), Corporate Director (Operations & Delivery) (Damian Williams), Director (Governance) & Monitoring Officer (Lisa Hastings), Director (Finance & IT) & Section 151 Officer (Richard Barrett), Director (Planning & Communities) (Gary Guiver), Committee Services Manager (Ian Ford), Communications Manager (Will Lodge), Committee Services Officer (Bethany Jones) and Communications Officer (James Dwan)

**88. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence submitted on this occasion.

**89. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor I J Henderson and:-

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on Friday 15 November 2024, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

**90. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Placey declared an Other Registerable Interest in relation to Agenda Item 12 (report A.7) insofar as she was a Trustee of Tendring Community Transport.

Councillor Bray declared an Interest in Agenda Items 14 (report A.8), 15 (report A.9) and 17 (report A.11) insofar as he was a Housing Tenant of the Council.

**91. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

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Devolution and Local Government Re-organisation Government White Paper

At the invitation of the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive (Ian Davidson) outlined to Cabinet the aims and objectives of the Government's recently published White Paper on Devolution and Local Government Re-organisation and their potential implications for this Council.

Christmas Pantomime

The Leader of the Council reminded Cabinet that local school children were attending the Christmas Pantomime in the Princes Theatre that morning and that consequently there would be a considerable amount of 'noises off'.

**92. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CABINET MEMBERS**Spendells Project

The Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder made the following announcement:-

*"I am delighted to announce that the Spendells project has been completed, with a Certificate of completion being issued on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December and by Friday of the same week, 8 families had moved in.*

*As of today over 12 families are now in residence, which is a testament to the dedication of our Housing staff in dealing quickly with those families' needs.*

*While this project has been delayed, and had other issues, which I am not prepared to comment further on today, it still remains a very worthwhile one. It will provide temporary accommodation for up to 30 families with children, a better place for them to be accommodated, than a hotel room, thereby reducing the impact on both the children's education and the family's overall health.*

*At this site, there are two members of staff available, during the week, to assist those residing there in moving on from this Council owned Temporary Accommodation, either into the private rented sector, or where available, our own Housing stock.*

*Having visited the site, on more than one occasion, I have seen the project progress, from a building site, into a modern usable site. The design has been one with future residents in mind, and the flat adapted for those unfortunately physically disabled, has features that I had not seen before, including a moveable sink and cooker area, to make access that much easier.*

*Also, I should mention how grateful I am to Officers, for arranging a site visit, on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November, for local residents, and the Ward Councillor, Councillor Oxley, to show them the rooms and facilities available, and to 'put to bed' the rumours as to who would be occupying the site."*

Tenancy Checks and Reviews

The Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder made the following announcement:-



*“This Council will be undertaking a tenancy audit of its Housing Stock. These checks, performed regularly by a dedicated fraud team, aim to identify properties that have been abandoned, sub-let, or falsely claimed.*

*The checks are also carried out to ensure that tenants are in receipt of the correct discount or benefit, for example Single Person Discount, Local Government Support Grant or Housing Benefit, where applicable.*

*In recent years, more than 60 properties were reclaimed from individuals who falsely claimed entitlement and these homes were then reassigned to families on the waiting list who genuinely need them.*

*For instance, one case involved a tenant who had not lived in his property for over two years, he was found to be living elsewhere and using the Council property for storage and to access benefits fraudulently. As a result of this investigation, legal action was taken and the property was taken back by the council and provided to a family in need.*

*Tenancy reviews are important for protecting taxpayers and legitimate council tenants.*

*We are proud of our area and the services we provide to our thousands of council tenants, most of whom are model residents legitimately housed by us. Unfortunately, a small minority try to exploit the system, depriving families in need of a home and costing TDC – and taxpayers – having to provide temporary accommodation. If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear, but we do not tolerate fraud. If someone is acting illegally, we will find out and take action.*

*We also want to ensure homes have not been abandoned, something which could be depriving local people of a much-needed home.”*

#### Family Fun Day

The Leisure & Public Realm Portfolio Holder informed Cabinet that he had been delighted to attend the recent free Family Fun Day which had been held to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dovercourt Lifestyles centre.

#### **93. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE COUNCIL**

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council on this occasion.

#### **94. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY A COMMITTEE - REFERENCE FROM THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - A.1 - SCRUTINY OF THE SPORT AND ACTIVITY STRATEGY FOR TENDRING**

Cabinet was aware that the Community Leadership Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 15 October 2024, had scrutinised the Sport and Activity Strategy for Tendring.

Invited to that meeting had been Councillor Mick Barry (Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Public Realm), Lee Heley (Corporate Director for Place and Economy), Kieran Charles (Sport & Leisure Operations Manager), Sylvia Gentleman (Delivery Oversight in Essex for the Active Wellbeing Society), Hayley Chapman (North Essex Relationship Manager for Active Essex), Jason Fergus (Board Member for Sport England, Senior Leader in

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public health at Essex County Council and Director for Active Essex) and Sharon Alexander (Chief Executive Officer for CVS Tendring).

The Committee had resolved to RECOMMEND to Cabinet that –

- (a) that the following actions that had been included within the Sport England submission be pursued:-
- (i) to support an expanding population in the west of Tendring (Garden Community Project) the scope should be broadened from identifying new sports facilities to identifying new opportunities for creating active environments;
  - (ii) to ensure that appropriate contributions towards sport are consistently secured. Furthermore, the scope of contributions should be extended to cover capital projects that would support the delivery of physical activity priorities;
  - (iii) encourage the application of Active Design principles into new developments to help ensure that opportunities for encouraging physical activity are maximised in practice; and
  - (iv) that new/refurbished buildings that the Council funds have fully considered environmental sustainability.
- (b) that the following actions should also be undertaken:-
- (i) showcase activities fairs being held at centres across the District in 2025 to allow clubs and organisations to offer to the public opportunities to be involved in sport/be active;
  - (ii) an Activities Council/Committee to be created and meet to help encourage further dialogue between sports activities providers;
  - (iii) creation of sports/activities promotion videos that the public can access to encourage involvement in those activities/access information on activities locally; and
  - (iv) develop proposals for more play zones including on sites in the west of the District to then be implemented as and when funding becomes available.

Cabinet had before it the following written response of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Public Realm:-

*“Thank you to the committee for your consideration of the Sport and Activity Strategy and the comprehensive list of recommendations. The action plan included with the strategy was developed following evaluation of the evidence base and a comprehensive consultation process. Together with Officers, I am now in the process of prioritising those actions to deliver the best outcomes for local people, within the resources we have at our disposal. The strategy has a strong consideration of population expansion in the west of the district and how the Council can work with developers to improve activity levels across the district together with quality of life for local people. The Council will continue to work with partners to drive forward improvements and we will reflect on the positive contribution and comments from Sport England.*”

*The Council is already working with local leaders in the district, to consider future Playzone projects in additional locations, if and when external funding becomes available. In addition to this, through the agreed action plan, the development of an evidence based pipeline of capital projects will be compiled for future consideration. It*

*should be noted however that projects will need to be demand led and importantly, align with Council priorities. Once the pipeline is adopted, suitable projects can subsequently be considered for external funding opportunities, as and when they become available and obviously subject to our own internal resources. I am also pleased that the delivery plan aligns with the Committee's recommendation to consider environmental sustainability within our facilities.*

*Following the wide ranging consultation process which took place prior to the strategy adoption, it is clear that a platform which can be used by local people to identify the range of sport and activity services on offer around the district was a key priority. This is likely to be a key focus for delivering the strategy and the committee's various recommendations for wider marketing and promotional activities align closely with the adopted action plan and the points suggested, will be considered together with a range of further measures, through the development of an annually reviewed marketing plan.*

*Following recruitment of the Community Sport and Activity Manager, the action plan will form the basis of their project task list and together with Officers and partners I will constantly review the effectiveness of our delivery plan and the outcomes achieved. The recommendations from the committee are consistent with the adopted plan and will be considered for effectiveness and availability of resources, following the recruitment of the Community Sport and Activity Manager."*

At the meeting the Leisure & Public Realm Portfolio Holder made the additional oral response:-

*"I welcome this report and the opportunity that I was given to discuss the Sport and Activity Strategy at the scrutiny committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.*

*The strategy has effectively been 'live' for three months and I would like to give some updates on its impact, some related developments and future aspirations for our residents across the District.*

*The specification for the post of Community Sport and Activity Manager has been agreed and this post will be a priority for recruitment in the New Year.*

*I have always said that the Strategy was an organic working document that would be part of an overall approach to engaging with residents around sport, activity, health and wellbeing. It is a statement of intent to outside bodies and national organisations that has already been used to successfully influence bids for funding.*

News from Active Essex management only this week:-

*'I am delighted to share exciting news that Sport England have approved our 'deepening' funding submission to extend our successful LDP work (retitled Place Partnerships) for another three years. The total amount of funding approved is £4,998,842.*

*The grant allocates approximately £1million to each place: Basildon, Colchester and Tendring, as well as £2million to fund Active Essex to support the work and undertake further system change across the County. The funding will commence in April 2025 and be completed in March 2028.'*

*This will fund work with Active Essex to deliver elements of the Strategy's action plan across the District.*

*We have also submitted a bid for £1.3million to replace old oil boilers at Clacton Leisure Centre and take further action in line with our Climate Action Plan.*

*The proposal for a free to use cycle zone and a number of play zones across the District are well advanced with results expected by the end of March 2025. Officers have had discussions with English Athletics and British Cycling and Sport England have been very complimentary about the Strategy, and its influence with national organisations.*

*There is no doubt that the Strategy played a key role in convincing funders that we have ambition and capacity to deliver our action plan.*

*There will be a District Sports and Activity Conference in May 2025 which will bring together all bodies, groups and organisations in one place to share good practice and take forward the Strategy through an events programme over the summer months.*

*On a wider scale the feasibility work with consultants and partners regarding an Active Wellbeing Centre for the District is also progressing positively and only yesterday we conducted a fact-finding visit to a newly opened Sports Centre and HUB at Mildenhall.*

*Overall, we have shown that our Strategy has laid really solid foundations for improving opportunity for residents of all ages to engage in healthier lifestyles and improve their quality of life.*

*I welcome the endorsement of the scrutiny committee and thank them for their positive comments."*

Having duly considered the recommendations made by the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee together with the response of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Public Realm thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor Barry, seconded by Councillor Scott and:-

**RESOLVED** that the recommendations made by the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and that the responses, both written and oral, of the Portfolio Holder responsible for Leisure & Public Realm thereto be endorsed.

**95. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY A COMMITTEE - REFERENCE FROM THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE - A.2 - PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 9 OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION**

Cabinet was informed that the Standards Committee ("the Committee"), at its meeting held on 24 October 2024 (Minute 27 referred), had considered the appointment of this Council's members to serve on the Town & Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee for the remainder of the 2024/2025 Municipal Year.

The Committee had been reminded at that meeting that Article 9 (Standards Committee and Town & Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee) of the Council's Constitution stated that the Council would have, in place, a Town & Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee with the following terms of reference:-

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*“To advise and assist Town and Parish Councils and Councillors to maintain high standards of conduct and to make recommendations to Parish and Town Councils on improving standards or actions following a finding of a failure by a Parish Councillor to comply with its Code of Conduct.” [Article 9.05]*

Article 9.05 also required that Sub-Committee to consist of three members of the Standards Committee and three non-voting co-opted Town & Parish Council members nominated by Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC). In addition, the nominated Town & Parish Council members would be of an independent standing and they would not have served as a District Councillor or as a County Councillor for a period of four years prior to their nomination.

The Committee had been informed that Frank Belgrove, Alresford Parish Councillor and the Chairman of TDALC, had emailed the Committee Services Manager on 23 September 2024 and had confirmed that TDALC’s three appointments to the Town & Parish Councils’ Standards Sub-Committee remained as listed below:-

1. Cllr Frank Belgrove (Chairman TDALC) Alresford PC;
2. Cllr Danny Botterell (Vice Chairman TDALC) Little Clacton PC; and
3. Cllr Linda Belgrove (Member TDALC) - Alresford PC.

During the consideration of this matter members of the Standards Committee had expressed their concern that two of the three non-voting co-opted Town & Parish Council members nominated by TDALC represented the same parish council.

Following the discussion of this matter, the Committee had:-

*“RESOLVED that –*

- (a) Councillors Oxley, Talbot and Wiggins plus Councillor Newton as the designated substitute Member be appointed to serve on the Town & Parish Councils’ Standards Sub-Committee for the remainder of the 2024/2025 Municipal Year;*
- (b) notes that the Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC) has previously appointed Parish Councillors Frank Belgrove, Linda Belgrove and Danny Botterell as their three non-voting, co-opted members of that Sub-Committee; and*
- (c) the Committee recommends to full Council that Article 9.05(2) of the Council’s Constitution be amended to state that Tendring District Council would prefer that TDALC’s three nominated members on the Town & Parish Councils’ Standards Sub-Committee represent different parish/town councils.”*

Since that meeting the Council’s Monitoring Officer had considered the matter, and particularly the resolution (c) of the Standards Committee and had suggested the following amendment to Article 9.05(2) for Cabinet’s consideration. The text of the amendment was shown in bold.

*“(2) Composition:*

- Three Members of the Standards Committee and three non-voting co-opted Town and Parish Council members to be nominated by the Tendring District Association of Local Councils;*

- *The nominated Town and Parish Council members will be of independent standing and will not have served as District or County Councillors for a period of four years prior to their nomination; **and***
- ***Tendring District Council would also prefer that the nominated Town and Parish Council members represented different parish/town councils; and***
- *A member (or non-voting co-opted member) of the Town and Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee will not be permitted to sit in that capacity for a hearing if that Member is the subject of the complaint or the complainant. A substitute will be permitted, if they have undertaken specific Standards Committee training."*

Having duly considered the recommendation made by the Standards Committee together with the suggestion put forward by the Monitoring Officer:-

It was moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Baker and:-

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet recommends to Full Council that Article 9.05(2) of the Council's Constitution be amended to read as follows:-

"(2) Composition:

- Three Members of the Standards Committee and three non-voting co-opted Town and Parish Council members to be nominated by the Tendring District Association of Local Councils;
- The nominated Town and Parish Council members will be of independent standing and will not have served as District or County Councillors for a period of four years prior to their nomination;
- Tendring District Council would also prefer that the nominated Town and Parish Council members represented different parish/town councils; and
- A member (or non-voting co-opted member) of the Town and Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee will not be permitted to sit in that capacity for a hearing if that Member is the subject of the complaint or the complainant. A substitute will be permitted, if they have undertaken specific Standards Committee training."

**96. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS - A.3 - DELIVERING AGAINST THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2024-28 - INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR HIGHLIGHT PRIORITIES FOR 2025/26**

Cabinet considered a detailed report of the Leader of the Council (A.3) which reminded it that the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-28 ('Our Vision') set out the Council's strategic direction. That strategic direction itself sought to reflect the issues that mattered most to local people, the national requirements from Government and the challenges that faced the District over the time period of the Plan. The national requirements from Government were themselves changing following the UK Parliamentary General Election held earlier in the year.

The themes of the 2024-28 Corporate Plan ('Our Vision') were:

- Pride in our Area and Services to Residents
- Raising Aspirations and Creating Opportunities
- Championing our Local Environment
- Working with Partners to Improve Quality of Life
- Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer
- Financial Sustainability and Openness

The infographic for the Corporate Plan ('Our Vision') itself was set out at Appendix A to the Leader's report (A.3). It identified that across all its Corporate Plan Themes the Council would look to listen to the residents and businesses in the District and undertake Community Leadership to deliver and enable improvements for those residents and businesses.

Cabinet was aware that it established each year its highlight priority actions to deliver against the Corporate Plan and thereby ensure that the ambition of that Plan was central to its work. The highlight priority actions did not cover every separate element of the ambition of the four-year Corporate Plan; nor were they intended to indicate that other projects, schemes or activities were not being pursued. They were though intended to reflect imperatives across the Council and for the District and actions that it was right to focus on in 2025/26.

At Appendix B to the Leader's report (A.3) were the initial thoughts for the highlight priorities for 2025/26 and through this report it was hoped that they could be adopted to support an engagement with residents, businesses and partners on those priorities. The outcome of that consultation would be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet when finalised proposals would be considered having regard for the outcome of the consultation.

In developing highlight proposals, reviewing the outcome of consultation and finally approving the highlight priorities for 2025/26, there would need to be a robust challenge to all proposals to ensure that the capacity to deliver the priority was in place or would be in place and that the highlight priorities did not undermine the key commitment of the Council to deliver sustainable budgets.

In order to set out openly for all concerned the initial proposals for highlight priorities for 2025/26 and in order to support the openness agenda of the Council and provide an opportunity for engagement with the public, businesses and partners on those initial proposals:-

It was moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor I J Henderson and:-

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) the initial highlight priorities for 2025/26, as set out at Appendix B to the report (A.3), be approved for consultation;
- (b) all Councillors, other partners and the public be invited to consider the initial priorities referred to in (a) above; and

- (c) the outcome of the consultation referred to in (b) above be reported to Cabinet on 21 February 2025 in order that Cabinet can formally adopt its finalised highlight priority actions for 2025/26 with relevant milestones during that year.

**97. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS - A.4 - ADOPTION OF AN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BEST PRACTICE APPROACH AT TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Cabinet considered a report of the Leader of the Council (A.4) which sought its endorsement and formal adoption of an ethical approach for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) at Tendring District Council (TDC).

Cabinet was aware that Artificial Intelligence (AI) was a rapidly growing field with significant potential to enhance the efficiency and quality of work at TDC. However, its use carried risks, particularly around data governance and ethical considerations. The Leader's report (A.4) therefore proposed the adoption of an AI Best Practice Approach to ensure safe and effective use of AI within the Council. The document consolidated existing policies and provided guidance on the benefits, ethical use, and best practices for AI.

It was felt that the proposed approach would help mitigate risks associated with AI use; ensure compliance with data governance and ethical standards; and promote the benefits of AI within the Council and:-

It was therefore moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Smith and:-

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) the proposed Artificial Intelligence Best Practice Approach, as set out at Appendix A to item A.4 of the Report of the Leader of the Council, be approved and adopted for use at Tendring District Council; and
- (b) the Portfolio Holders responsible for Communications and IT be authorised to make any future changes required to the guidance in order to ensure it is updated and continues to reflect best practice as this area develops in the future.

**98. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.5 - UPDATED GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL FORECAST / BUDGET 2025/26**

Cabinet considered a detailed report of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder (A.5) which enabled it to consider the updated financial forecast and budget proposals for 2025/26 for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members were informed that, as part of maintaining a 'live' forecast, this report 'built' on the last position that had been presented to Cabinet on 15 November 2024.

It was reported that, despite the on-going challenging financial and economic environment, confidence in the long-term approach to the forecast continued, which was supported by the forecast risk fund.



The Council had maintained a prudent and sustainable approach to its long-term plan, which provided the 'platform' against which it could consider its financial position in response to the challenging economic outlook it continued to face.

Cabinet was advised that a limited number of changes to the forecast had been made since 15 November 2024, with a revised position set out in Appendix A to the Portfolio Holder's report. Those changes required broadly reflected updates to cost pressures and savings but also now reflected the most up to date position in respect of the council tax 'base' for 2025/26.

In terms of the cost pressures included in the forecast, they broadly reflected unavoidable items, many of which related to issues already identified during the year, with one-off adjustments made in 2024/25 pending the development of the forecast. Many of the cost pressures proposed to be included therefore reflected the on-going impact from those known issues in 2025/26 and beyond.

Work remained on-going in consultation with Services and it was likely that additional cost pressures would need to be included in later iterations of the forecast before final budget proposals were recommended for presenting to Council in February 2025.

Members were told that in terms of the savings identified to date, two new items had been included since the 15 November 2024 report mentioned above and that they had also now been split into those expected to be included in the 2025/26 budget and those that remained subject to further review over the coming year in readiness for confirming as part of agreeing the budget for 2026/27. The necessary work to reflect the identified items within the 2025/26 budget remained on-going and the position would be finalised for consideration by Cabinet in January 2025.

Taking the above into account and in comparison, with the position reported to Cabinet on 15 November 2024, the net overall position reflected a forecasted annual deficit of £1.508m (a decrease from £2.476m). This was broadly due to the expected deliverability of savings earlier in the forecast period i.e. from 2025/26. In line with the long-term plan, it was currently proposed to meet this from the Forecast Risk Fund, which, based on the current forecast, would leave a balance within the fund of £5.157m at the end of 2025/26.

An annual review of reserves had also been undertaken, which had highlighted the need to continue to maintain a number of reserves to support key actions / activities as part of the Council's overall prudent and sustainable approach to managing its finances.

It was reported that the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26 had been announced on 18 December 2024. The forecast would therefore be updated accordingly for consideration by Cabinet at its January 2025 meeting when it considered its final budget proposals for recommending to Full Council in February.

Cabinet recognised that the forecast now included a Council Tax increase of 2.99%. This was the maximum permitted amount without having to hold a referendum as confirmed by the Government in its recent Local Government Finance Settlement Policy Statement. This remained an important element of the forecast, that in turn supported the long-term financial sustainability of the Council.

Once the final position for 2025/26 was determined, the remaining years of the forecast would also be revised, which would be reported to Members later in the budget setting process.

In order to set out the latest financial forecast as part of the process of developing the budget proposals for 2025/26 and in order to comply with the process for Developing the Budget as set out within the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules of the Constitution, which included the consultation process of the draft Financial Strategy / Forecast setting out the basis on which the budget proposals are intended to be formulated, with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees:-

It was therefore moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Kotz and:-

**RESOLVED** that –

- a) the updated Financial Forecast and proposed budget position for 2025/26, as set out in item A.5 of the Report of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder and its appendices, be approved; and
- b) the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments be requested on this latest financial forecast and proposed position for 2025/26.

**99. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGENERATION AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.6 - COMMUNITY REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP (FORMERLY LEVELLING UP PARTNERSHIP) - PROGRAMME DELIVERY**

Earlier on in the meeting, as detailed under Minute 90 above, Councillor Placey had declared an Other Registerable Interest in relation to this item. Councillor Placey therefore withdrew from the meeting and left the room whilst this item was deliberated and decided upon.

Cabinet considered a detailed report of the Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (A.6), which informed it about progress with the Community Regeneration Partnership (formerly the Levelling Up Partnership) initiative and recommended that Cabinet approved the proposed projects aimed at place-based regeneration in Clacton and Jaywick, including progressing a first wave of projects under the delegations set out within that report and establishing appropriate funding agreements with delivery partners for a further wave of projects.

The report detailed the progress since the July 2024 meeting of the Cabinet on the following matters:-

- 1) The Council as Accountable Body and the Policy Framework;
- 2) Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG;
- 3) The Projects;
- 4) Capacity; and
- 5) Programme delivery – The Four 'Waves'.

In order to capitalise on the Government's funding opportunity to address key socio-economic challenges in Clacton-on-Sea and Jaywick Sands, improve local

infrastructure, enhance community services, and contribute to the long-term regeneration of the area and recognising that this was a once in a decade opportunity for Tendring to deploy investment on this scale, in addition to other Government funding, to be benefit of Clacton-on-Sea and Jaywick Sands:-

It was moved by Councillor I J Henderson, seconded by Councillor Kotz and:-

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet formally -

- a) accepts the £19.79M CDEL and £100k RDEL funding offered by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government for the Community Regeneration Partnership (formerly the Levelling Up Partnership) programme;
- b) allocates capital expenditure of £19.79M to the Capital Programme against the projects, as set out in Table 1 of item A.6 of the report of the Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder, and allocates £100,000 revenue to the delivery of a cultural masterplan for Clacton, to deliver the Partnership; and in respect of the projects identified:-
  - c) approves the scope and details of the 'first wave' projects set out in Table 2 of this report and delegates authority as follows:
    - i. approves an allocation of £0.5m from the above capital expenditure to the Seafront Micro Venue project (Ten\_10) and authorises the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Tourism, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture and Heritage to: Agree the final design brief, approve submission of the subsequent planning application and procure a main contractor for the detail design and delivery of the project on the basis of a planning consent;
    - ii. requests the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Tourism to bring a future report to Cabinet in order to enter a main building contract for the Seafront Micro Venue project subject to the outcome of a formal procurement process;
    - iii. approves an allocation of £0.5m from the above capital expenditure to the Shopfront Improvements project (Ten\_08) and authorises the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism to: Sign off an evaluation criteria and deliver an open call grant process administered in line with the adopted External Grant Funding Checklist;
    - iv. approves an allocation of £0.21m from the above capital expenditure to the Community Transport Buses project (Ten\_02) and authorises the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism to: Sign off an evaluation criteria and deliver an open call grant process administered in line with the adopted External Grant Funding Checklist;
    - v. approves an allocation of £0.2m from the above capital expenditure to the Extending the Healthy Homes Initiative project (Ten\_06) and authorises the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Tourism, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Assets, to: Appraise the sites and execute powers as delegated under the Property Dealing Procedure;

- d) in respect of the 'second' and 'third' wave of projects, approves these projects in principle and request Officers to progress outlining the scope and details of these projects, and further requests the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism to bring a future report to Cabinet to seek its approval to progress these projects to implementation; and
- e) in respect of the 'fourth wave' of projects, as set out in Table 3 of the Portfolio Holder's report (A.5), authorises the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism, in consultation with the Corporate Director (Place and Economy), the Director (Finance and IT) & Section 151 Officer and the Director (Governance) & Monitoring Officer, to approve the funding agreements and associated governance arrangements with Essex County Council and the NHS.

**100. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGENERATION AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.7 - LEVELLING UP FUND AND CAPITAL REGENERATION PROJECTS - PROGRESSING THE PROJECTS TO PRODUCTION OF TENDER INFORMATION**

Cabinet considered a detailed report of the Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (A.7), which enabled it:-

- (i) to consider the next steps for the Civic Quarter in Clacton-on-Sea (Levelling Up Fund, LUF) and Homes for Dovercourt scheme (Capital Regeneration Project, CRP) and to approve that funding remaining from the £2,148,421 allocated by Cabinet to those two projects, could be used to progress them to the pre-tender stage. The total sum was made up of £250,000 allocated by Cabinet in May 2023 and £1,898,421 in October 2023;
- (ii) to consider signing up to the Essex County Council managed service solution for temporary worker services; and
- (iii) to note and endorse continued support for the Essex County Council led LUF and CRP projects: the Clacton Hub (LUF); the Kingsway Improvement Corridor (CRP); and Learning and Library schemes in Dovercourt (CRP), as Tendring District Council continued to operate as the Accountable Body and overall programme manager for those projects funded by MHCLG.

The Portfolio Holder's report covered the following matters:-

- (a) The programme and projects;
- (b) Progress to date;
- (c) Projects Delivered by ECC;
- (d) Next steps; and
- (e) Programme management.

In order to ensure the momentum was maintained with the professional team to deliver the LUF and CRP projects to the next technical design development stages, to be able to go out to tender for construction and furthermore, to ensure the Council was able to adequately oversee the projects and manage the subsequent risk effectively, by having the Capital Delivery capacity in place for capital projects within the Council:-

It was moved by Councillor I J Henderson, seconded by Councillor M E Stephenson and:-

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet formally -

1. acknowledges and supports the progress made to date against the original project scope, and the positive outcome of consultation undertaken so far enabling the submission of planning applications for the schemes;
2. approves extending the scope of the £2,148,421 allocated by Cabinet to develop the Carnarvon Terrace (LUF) and Homes for Dovercourt (CRP) projects from planning lodgement through to completion of the main build contract tender process, with expenditure from this allocation to include professional services and capital delivery capacity within the Council;
3. authorises the Corporate Director (Place and Economy), in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer, to continue to determine the mix of funding (from the Council's own approved contribution and the money made available by the Government) to support both the LUF Scheme in Clacton and the CRP Scheme in Dovercourt, within financial parameters previously agreed and until the next significant project milestones are reported to Cabinet;
4. approves, subject to due diligence being undertaken on the terms and conditions, the Council entering into an agreement with Essex County Council for use of the Managed Service Solution framework for the appointment of temporary and permanent workers;
5. authorises the Chief Executive to undertake the aforementioned due diligence, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer and to sign the agreement;
6. authorises the Corporate Director (Place and Economy) to procure and enter into a Pre-Contract Services Agreement with a suitable main contractor, to increase buildability, reduce risk and deliver value for money on the schemes;
7. authorises the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Tourism to agree the final procurement route for the main build contracts and to agree the documentation required to commence procurement for the main build contracts for both Carnarvon Terrace (LUF) and Homes for Dovercourt (CRP); and
8. notes progress on the Essex County Council led LUF and CRP projects: the Clacton Hub (LUF); The Kingsway Improvement Corridor (CRP) and the Learning and Library schemes in Dovercourt (CRP) and reiterates the Council's continued support for the programme management of these schemes, as set out in previous Cabinet reports and in the Agreements with Essex County Council.

**101. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE HOUSING & PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.8 - CONSIDERATION OF REVISIONS TO THE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY AND AGREEMENT TO UNDERTAKE CONSULTATION IN CONNECTION WITH THESE REVISIONS**

Earlier on in the meeting, as detailed under Minute 90 above, Councillor Bray had declared an Interest in this and several other items later on in the Agenda. Councillor Bray thereupon left the meeting at this juncture and did not return.

Cabinet considered a report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder (A.8), which presented to it proposed revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy for approval prior to consultation being carried out as required by the statutory 'Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England 2012' (as updated in June 2024).

Members were aware that Tendring was an area of acute housing shortage in the affordable rented sector and that the demand for housing far outstripped the supply of accommodation becoming available for letting. In each given year, it was normally only possible to assist approximately 10% of all applicants on the Housing Register with accommodation.

It was reported that the Allocations Policy was intended to reflect the Council's vision to put the needs of established Tendring residents first and to provide local housing for local people. The Council was also determined to ensure the creation of mixed and sustainable communities in the affordable rented housing sector and to provide realistic advice on housing options for those seeking accommodation.

Cabinet was informed that the current Housing Allocations Policy had been adopted in June 2013 to take into account amendments brought in by the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act gave housing providers greater freedom to set their own rules on who could join the Housing Register and what priority could be awarded for housing, including a residency qualification. The Policy had been subsequently revised in December 2019 to take into account the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as well as its associated statutory guidance and regulations.

Cabinet was advised that this revision of the Allocation Policy complied with the Regulator of Social Housing's revised Consumer Standards that came into effect from 1 April 2024 and took into account revisions to statutory guidance as well as recent case law.

The objectives of the Allocations Policy were to:-

- meet the legal requirements for the allocation of social housing as set out in Part VI Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act (2002) and the Localism Act 2011;
- provide a single system of allocating housing across the whole District;
- increase the sustainability of local communities;
- provide housing for local people;
- assist in minimising homelessness and assist applicants in the highest assessed need;
- ensure that the scheme allows the Council to make best use of homes and in particular adapted properties;
- provide accommodation for homeless households;
- work with other providers and other agencies to make best use of affordable housing from all sources to meet housing need.

In order to ensure that the Allocations Policy was appropriately adopted, in accordance with the Council's Constitution and scheme of delegation and to evidence compliance with regulatory standards:-

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It was moved by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Placey and:-

**RESOLVED** that -

- (a) the proposed revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy, as set out in Appendix A to item A.8 of the Report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder, be approved for consultation with current and prospective tenants, residents and other key stakeholders;
- (b) the approval of the format and design of the consultation be delegated to the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing;
- (c) subject to there being no significant changes required to be made to the draft Policy because of the consultation, the approval of the revised Housing Allocations Policy be delegated to the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Housing for its adoption and implementation; and
- (d) the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing, to make future updates or amendments to this Policy.

**102. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE HOUSING & PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.9 - CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF HOUSING POLICES ON GAS SAFETY, ELECTRICAL SAFETY, FENCING & PAVING AND EMPTY COUNCIL HOMES MANAGEMENT**

Cabinet considered a report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder (A.9), which enabled it to consider the following draft policies prepared in relation to the maintenance and operation of the Council's retained housing stock:

- Gas Safety Policy;
- Electrical Safety Policy;
- Fencing and Paving Policy; and
- Empty Council Homes Management Policy.

It was reported that, in response to the Regulator for Social Housing having its powers enhanced under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, new Consumer Standards and Tenant Satisfaction Measures had been introduced and which took effect on 1 April 2024.

Although the adoption of those policies was not of itself mandatory, there were legal and regulatory standards for performance which those policies aspired to formalise compliance with.

Members were informed that the Gas Safety Policy set out Tendring District Council's (TDC) aim to ensure that all gas systems within the housing stock were properly managed and operated safely. All new installations, maintenance and safety checks were carried out in accordance with TDC's duties as a landlord as required by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

It was recognised that the Electrical Safety Policy set out Tendring District Council's approach to its responsibilities to comply with relevant legislative and associated guidance on the installation, inspection, repairs, testing and certification of electrical systems in dwellings and associated communal areas which it owned and managed.

Cabinet was made aware that the Fencing and Paving Policy outlined Tendring District Council's aim to ensure that its properties benefited from an appropriate standard of security and appearance through the provision and effective maintenance and replacement of fencing and paving.

It was noted that the Empty Council Homes Management Policy would not only ensure that procedures were in place that reduced the length of time that a property was empty but also ensured that a forward looking and strategic approach was in place.

In order to set in place clear policies to inform future maintenance and management activities and also a policy framework to evidence compliance with regulatory standards:-

It was moved by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Placey and:-

**RESOLVED** that -

- a) the Gas Safety Policy, Electrical Safety Policy, Fencing & Paving Policy and Empty Council Homes Management Policy be adopted;
- b) their direct and immediate implementation be authorised, subject to the call in procedures under the Council's Constitution; and
- c) authorises the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing, to make future updates or amendments to the Policies.

**103. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIPS PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.10 - COMMUNITY PROJECTS UPDATE**

Cabinet considered a report of the Partnerships Portfolio Holder (A.10), with a supporting e-brochure, which provided it with an update and which also sought its endorsement for an extensive range of community projects which supported the Council's key priorities.

Members were aware that the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028 placed a strong emphasis on working positively with partners to improve quality of life, as well as raising aspirations and creating opportunities for adults, children and young people across the District.

To deliver this aspiration, a variety of community projects were currently, or had been undertaken under the following themes:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Education
- Community Safety
- Economic Growth, Culture & Leisure



In many of those projects, Officers had been instrumental in sourcing external funding, and the delivery of projects, whilst others had collaborated with a range of partners.

The Portfolio Holder's report (A.10) provided an overview of the projects which had been identified in accordance with the role of the Council, as a Community Leader.

The Council was not the statutory provider for Education, Health and Wellbeing. However, through influence, bringing stakeholders and partners together to share and improve practices, there were a number of areas where the Council could offer support to Education and Health providers, and ultimately children, learners, patients and residents across the District.

Having considered the overview of the range of projects being undertaken across the Council to support the Council's Community Leadership role in the period 2024/25:-

It was moved by Councillor Placey, seconded by Councillor Baker and:-

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet -

- a) notes and commends the 'Community Projects e-brochure' and the work within it, delivered by the Council or working in partnership, demonstrating community leadership across the District; and
- b) endorses the 'further aspirations' work within the 'Community Projects e-brochure', noting that any financial commitment to progress these projects and programmes will be subject to future decisions.

**104. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE HOUSING & PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.11 - UPDATED HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2025/26**

Cabinet considered a detailed joint report of the Housing and Planning Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.11), which set out and sought its approval of an updated HRA Business Plan, which included proposed changes in 2024/25 along with budget proposals for 2025/26.

Members were reminded that, similarly, to the General Fund's long-term forecast, a 'live' HRA Business Plan was maintained on an on-going basis, with the most up to date position in December each year being 'translated' into the detailed budget for the following year for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was reported that a few changes had been made to the business plan for 2025/26 onwards that largely reflected increased costs / inflationary pressures. Some of those pressures were also being experienced in 2024/25, with corresponding adjustments set out accordingly.

Cabinet was informed that, based on associated guidance from the Regulator for Social Housing, it was proposed to increase rents by CPI+1% in 2025/26. Based on the relevant reference CPI rate of 1.7%, the proposed increase in 2025/26 was 2.7%.

As was the case in previous years, it was acknowledged that, although Councils could set lower increases, this would be a very difficult approach to adopt in terms of the future sustainability of the HRA business plan, given the 'telescopic' impact this would have and greater imbalance it would create, as expenditure would be increasing significantly more than the level of rental income increases. Such an impact had been experienced when the Government had required Councils to reduce rents by 1% over the 4-year period from 2016/17 to 2019/20 and that continued to have an impact over the long-term life of the business plan.

Members were advised that, based on the above, the average weekly rent proposed for 2025/26 was £103.49 (£100.89 in 2024/25).

After taking into account the various adjustments set out in Appendix A to the Portfolio Holders' joint report, there continued to be an estimated budget surplus of £0.418m in 2024/25, albeit this was slightly behind the original estimated position of £0.493m. In terms of 2025/26, there was currently an estimated deficit of £1.170m.

It was reported that the estimated deficit in 2025/26 was broadly due to the increase in costs associated with the repair and maintenance of the Council's stock of social housing.

It was proposed to fund the estimated deficit for 2025/26 by calling on money from HRA balances as an alternative to reducing expenditure. This was partly offset by the transfer of the estimated surplus in 2024/25 to the same reserve.

Cabinet was reminded that, as has been the case in previous years, the use of reserves formed part of a wider managed approach that struck the necessary balance of 'protecting' the investment in tenants' homes whilst recognising the need to use reserves to respond to the on-going financial challenges that the Council continued to face. It was however recognised that this was not a sustainable long-term solution, but it enabled the Council to meet its key priorities in the immediate term, which could be revisited as part of the HRA Business Plan in future years. It would be important that the Council explored opportunities to balance the various competing issues during 2025/26, to inform the business plan and budget from 2026/27.

Members were advised that the HRA General Balances were currently estimated to total £2.556m at the end of 2025/26 (after taking account of the use of balances highlighted above) that remained available to support the 30-year Business Plan and associated risks to the forecast.

It was recognised that the proposed HRA Capital Programme for 2025/26 reflected the commitment to maintain the necessary investment in the existing homes of tenants.

It was noted that HRA debt continued to reduce year on year as principal was repaid with a total debt position at the end of 2025/26 forecast to be £31.120m, which also took into account the refinancing of an historic loan via an internal borrowing approach.

Cabinet was cognisant that there would undoubtedly be further changes required to the forecast before the detailed estimates were finalised for reporting to Cabinet in January 2025, which would provide the opportunity to revisit the above proposals accordingly.

In addition to requesting comments from the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was also proposed to consult with the Tenants' Panel during January, with the outcome reported to Cabinet later that month, when the final HRA budget proposals would be considered for recommending onto Full Council in February 2025.

In order to enable Cabinet to agree the most up to date HRA Business Plan which set out a revised position for 2024/25 along with the proposed HRA budget for 2025/26 for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee:-

It was moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Baker and:-

**RESOLVED** that -

- (a) the updated HRA 30-year Business Plan, which includes the proposed revised position for 2024/25 along with budget proposals for 2025/26, be approved; and
- (b) the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments be requested on this latest HRA financial forecast.

**105. MANAGEMENT TEAM ITEMS**

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council's Management Team on this occasion.

The Meeting was declared closed at 12.13 pm

**Chairman**

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## CABINET

31 JANUARY 2025

### REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### **A.1 SCRUTINY OF THE INITIAL BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2025/26**

(Report prepared by Ian Ford)

#### **BACKGROUND**

In accordance with the requirements of the Budget & Policy Framework Procedure Rules the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (“the Committee”) has undertaken its scrutiny of the budget for the Council. Prior to its meeting on 13 January 2025, the Members of the Committee, met informally on 6 January 2025 with the Section 151 Officer and the Head of Democratic Services & Elections in attendance. The informal meeting aided the Members of the Committee in developing key lines of inquiry for its formal scrutiny meeting that was held on 13 January 2025.

At the Committee’s formal meeting on 13 January, it was aware that the initial General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget proposals for 2025/26 had been considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2024.

The Committee had been provided, as part of the material for them to consider, the following:

- 1) Updated General Fund Financial Forecast / Budget 2025/26 – the report considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2024.
- 2) Updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2025/26 – the report considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2024.

Following the informal meeting of the Committee held on 6 January 2025 a series of written questions had been circulated to Portfolio Holders and their responses had been circulated to the Committee prior to its formal meeting on 13 January 2025. The Minutes of that formal meeting record those questions and responses in an Appendix.

At the 13 January meeting further, supplementary questions had been asked of Cabinet Members and responses provided. Those further responses were also recorded in the Appendix to the Minutes.

#### **RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE’S RECOMMENDATION(S) TO CABINET**

(a) *That the Committee has recorded that it felt that it was not in a position to comment on the robustness of the budget plans for 2025/26 and beyond and, in this regard, it noted that:*

- (i) *in respect of the General Fund, the Forecast Risk Fund (used to smooth deficits in particular years) would be exhausted within 2028/29 and (as at the day of the meeting) there were no specific plans to address the full savings/income generation necessary up to that point to support a balanced budget from that point;*

- (ii) in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, there were not the written plans to move it to a sustainable position;*
- (iii) through the papers submitted and statements made to the Committee, it was understood that plans to address (i) and (ii) were being worked upon; and*

*(b) That Cabinet be informed of the above and requested to address the issues raised.*

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENT(S) AND RECOMMENDATION(S) TO CABINET**

**PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' COMMENTS**

The comments of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder and other relevant Portfolio Holders (as appropriate) will be submitted to Cabinet at the meeting, to be considered as part of items 10 and 13 of the agenda, which are the General Fund and HRA final budget proposals for 2025/26.

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:**

That the recommendations made by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee be welcomed and noted and that it be further noted that the responses of Portfolio Holders thereto will be considered as part of items 10 and 13 of the agenda.

## CABINET

31 JANUARY 2025

### REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### **A.2 GRANT FUNDING BY THE COUNCIL AND OTHERS AND ITS APPROPRIATENESS GIVEN THE NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT**

(Report prepared by Keith Simmons and Hattie Dawson-Dragisic)

#### **BACKGROUND**

As a part of the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme, the Committee considered the topic of grant funding by the Council and others and its appropriateness given the needs of the District. Prior to its meeting on 14 January 2025, the Members of the Committee, met informally on 9 January 2025. The informal scrutiny meeting aided the Members of the Committee in developing key lines of inquiry for its formal scrutiny meeting that was held on 14 January 2025.

At the Committee's formal meeting on 14 January, it considered the report presented by the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and asked the Portfolio Holder a number of questions in relation to this report that had been formulated as a part of the informal scrutiny meeting referenced earlier. At the formal meeting several supplementary questions were also asked to the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships. The Committee heard from a number of external persons that provided their comments/experience on the Grant Funding process, the representatives of the organisations that spoke at the Committee were from Clacton Arts Centre, Jaywick Sands Community Forum and Ketchup Clothes.

The Committee had been provided, as part of the material for them to consider, the following:

- Report of the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships – A.7 External Funding Review – Submitted to Cabinet on 20 September 2024
- Commentary submitted by Headway Essex on their experience/thoughts on the Grant funding process
- Commentary submitted by Inclusion Ventures on their experience/thoughts on the Grant funding process

The submission from the range of external organisations into this enquiry greatly assisted the Committee to assess the extent to which there was corporate oversight of the diverse range of grant schemes provided by through the Council, the issues for many small organisations locally to access information on grant schemes and then accessing those schemes and the extent to which very important gaps in supporting organisations to pursue the Council's Corporate Plan themes and improve health and wellbeing across the District.

#### **COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION(S) TO CABINET**

- 1) *Welcomes the report on Grant Funding from/through the Council and the statements and responses from the Portfolio Holder and Officers to the Committee and further welcomes the flowchart and checklist adopted internally to identify when matters can follow an 'open call' grant arrangement and when a 'procurement';*

- 2) *Records its thanks to all those who contributed to the enquiry into Grant Funding by/through the Council including written submissions from Headway Essex and Inclusion Ventures and the attendance by representatives from Jaywick Sands Community Forum, Ketchup Clothes and from Clacton Art Centre and their insight into the processes and value of grant opportunities for community activities;*
- 3) *urges Cabinet to seriously consider the following actions:*
  - a) *the establishment of an Oversight Group of Members for grant schemes across the Council;*
  - b) *some form of gap analysis – even is full analysis is too large a project to be achieved and the opportunities to ‘flex’ grant giving to maximise the range of organisations receiving financial support in the District across the years.*
  - c) *Further standardised processes for different grant giving arrangements to help deliver best practice across those separate grant giving arrangements (eg around the length of time between opening invitations for applications and the closing date, common and plain language to explain the processes (and be available on the website), details of other grants received, the time between closure of application and determination/notification of outcomes, and the post grant-giving monitoring arrangements)*
  - d) *Adopt a consistent ‘you said, we did’ opportunity for organisations applying for grant funding to feed back on their experiences;*
  - e) *Look at organisation an open day for community/voluntary groups in conjunction with other grant funding organisations (and CVST) to disseminate information on those grant scheme and help to break down barriers to access grant funding for these community/volunteers groups;*
- 4) *Request that the Chairman of the Committee and the Portfolio Holder to consider the recommendations above and to encourage a positive response to them from Cabinet; and*
- 5) *Note that there are proposals for LGR in Great Essex and that we are awaiting confirmation from Government to whether these will proceed and over what timetable. On the basis that Government does approve the principle of LGR in Greater Essex the Committee record that it would wish to undertake an enquiry into the implications of LGR on areas within its responsibility (including grant funding) in the work programme for 2025/26 and that this enquiry would look at possible areas where the transition to a new unitary structure could be supported.*

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENT(S) AND RECOMMENDATION(S) TO CABINET**

**PORTFOLIO HOLDERS’ COMMENTS**

*“I thank the Committee for their recommendations, and these will be considered as the forthcoming Grant Policy is developed. I note the comments in respect of a voluntary sector funding day and consideration will be given to supporting or running such an event to assist the voluntary sector.”*

**RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:**



**That the recommendations made by the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted and be given consideration for inclusion in the forthcoming Grant Policy which is currently being developed.**

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## CABINET

30 JANUARY 2025

### REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

#### A.3 UPDATED GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL FORECAST / BUDGET 2025/26

##### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

###### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek Cabinet's approval of:

- The latest financial forecast / budget proposals and council tax amount for 2025/26 for recommending to Full Council;
- a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance to agree the detailed budget proposals and formal draft resolutions / 'technical' appendices required for Full Council on 11 February 2025; and
- a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, to agree / adopt a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure mandatory business rate relief scheme for 2025/26 along with any other changes to reliefs that may be announced by the Government.

###### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At its meeting on the 20 December 2024, Cabinet considered the updated financial forecast / budget 2025/26.
- The updated financial forecast was subject to consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which met on the 13 January 2025, and their comments are considered elsewhere on the agenda.
- Since the Cabinet's meeting on 20 December 2024, additional changes have been required, primarily as a result of new or revised information becoming available, which includes the impact of the Government's Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement announcements.
- The changes required result in a reduced deficit for 2025/26 of **£0.056m** (0.3% of the Council's current net budget), a change of **£1.452m** compared to the **£1.508m** deficit presented to Cabinet in December. **Appendix A**, along with comments set out later on in this report, provide further details across the various lines of the forecast, with the most significant change being the favourable and potentially one-off income from Business Rates via the estimated Collection Fund position at the end of this financial year.
- The most up to date savings schedule and cost pressure summary are set out in **Appendices B and C** respectively.
- To enable the detailed estimates along with the various resolutions / 'technical' appendices required for Full Council in February to be finalised, a delegation to the

Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance is included below. A further delegation is also included to enable a business rate relief policy, associated with the continuation of a mandatory Government relief scheme in 2025/26, to be finalised in advance of bills being printed and sent out before the start of the financial year, along with reflecting any further changes that could be announced by the Government.

- The budget position set out in this report will change as further adjustments are required as part of finalising the budget for presenting to Full Council on 11 February 2025, with a further delegation included in the recommendations to reflect this.
- Based on the final proposed budget for 2025/26, the Council's own council tax requirement is **£10.674m**, which is based on a 2.99% (**£5.79**) increase for this Council's services, with an annual Band D council tax of **£199.52**. These figures are expected to remain unchanged and therefore will be reflected in the various budget resolutions / 'technical' appendices proposed to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance.
- The Council's annual budget and the District and Parish elements of the council tax will be considered by Full Council on 11 February 2025 with approval of the 'full' council tax levy for the year being considered by the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee later in February 2025.
- As set out in earlier reports, despite the challenging financial and economic environment, confidence in the long-term approach to the forecast remains, which is supported by the Forecast Risk Fund. The Council continues to maintain a prudent and sustainable approach to its long-term plan, which provides the 'platform' against which it can consider its on-going financial position in response to the challenging economic outlook it faces.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**It is recommended that Cabinet:**

- a) Approves the updated financial forecast set out in Appendix A, along with the savings and cost pressures set out in Appendix B and C respectively that form the firm proposals for the 2025/26 budget and *recommends to Full Council:***

  - (i) A Band D Council Tax for district services of £199.52 for 2025/26 (a 2.99% increase), along with the associated council tax requirement of £10.674m.**

- b) approves a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, to agree the 'technical' appendices and resolutions for the budget proposals for recommending to Full Council on 11 February 2025;**
- c) approves, subject to b) above and in consultation with the Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder, the Chief Executive reports directly to Council in respect of the formal resolutions necessary to implement the Executive's budget proposals including any further amendments emerging from additional information becoming available and/or notifications received from the Government; and**
- d) approves a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, to agree / adopt a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure mandatory business rate relief scheme for**

**2025/26 along with any other changes to reliefs that may be announced by the Government.**

#### **REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

To set out the latest financial forecast as part of the process of developing the budget proposals for 2025/26 for recommending to Full Council in February 2025.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

This is broadly covered in the main body of this report.

### **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

A revised Corporate Plan and Vision was approved by Full Council at its meeting on 28 November 2023. One of the 6 included themes is Financial Sustainability and Openness, with a commitment to continue to deliver effective services and get things done whilst looking after the public purse; that means carefully planning what we do, managing capacity, and prioritising what we focus our time, money and assets on. Tough decisions will not be shied away from, but will be taken transparently, be well-informed, and based upon engagement with our residents.

At its meeting on 20 December 2024, Cabinet agreed a number of initial highlight priorities for consultation, which included:

- **Deliver Savings Plan for 2025/26** - To take the necessary steps to implement outstanding items included within the adopted Savings Plan for 2025/26. To review the Saving Plan set against the long term financial forecast and the impact of the Local Government Finance settlement (as it relates to the District), including the Government's longer term funding review, to develop a 'pipeline' of options for consideration.
- **Develop Savings Plan for 2026/27** - Complete the implementation of the items in the 2025/26 Savings Plan and develop the requirement for Savings in 2026/27 and beyond.
- **Develop a High-Level Transformation Strategy and a Targeted Plan for 2025** - Develop a Transformation Strategy/Plan to include the active management of the Council's costs and liabilities and addressing both supply side and demand side challenges faced by the Council.

The above form important elements of supporting the Council deliver financial sustainability over the life of the forecast. The forecasting and budget setting process will have direct implications for the Council's ability to deliver on its objectives and priorities. The current 10-year approach to the forecast seeks to establish a sound and sustainable budget year on year through maximising income, managing liabilities and cost pressures whilst limiting reductions in services provided to residents, business and visitors where possible. The approach set out in this report continues to be set against this wider context.

#### **OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Internal consultation is carried out via the Council's approach to developing the budget as set out within the Constitution. External consultation also forms part of developing the budget, and is carried out early in the year as part of finalising the position for reporting to Full Council in February.

The Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny were consulted on the budget proposals with their response, that was agreed at their meeting on 13 January 2025, set out elsewhere on the agenda.

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)**

<b>Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Significant effect on two or more wards</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Involves £100,000 expenditure/income</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Is otherwise significant for the service budget</b>
		<b>And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)</b>	This item has been included within the Forward Plan for a period in excess of 28 days.

The arrangements for setting and agreeing a budget and for the setting and collection of council tax are defined in the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The previous legislation defining the arrangements for charging, collecting and pooling of Business Rates was contained within the Local Government Finance Act 1988. These have both been amended as appropriate to reflect the introduction of the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

A local authority must budget so as to give a reasonable degree of certainty as to the maintenance of its services. In particular local authorities are required by section 31A(2)(b) and (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to calculate as part of their overall budget what amounts are appropriate for contingencies and reserves.

Essentially the budget decision meeting of Full Council for the approval of the budget and its council tax requirement, is setting the council tax, following a recommendation from Cabinet. Individual amounts are set for expenditure, these are added up and that's how much money the Council requires. Then the Council works out how much money it is likely to get from other sources (charges, grants, investment, the gap after the calculation = council tax).

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 provided the legislative framework for the introduction of the Rates Retention Scheme and the Localisation of Council Tax Support.

The Calculation of Council Tax Base Regulations 2012 set out arrangements for calculation of the council tax base following implementation of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

The Localism Act 2012 introduced legislation providing the right of veto for residents on excessive council tax increases.

Subject to Government guidance, Business Rate Reliefs may be provided using powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, which require a local scheme to be developed and approved. Where reimbursed by the Government, this is done via Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) must report to Council, as part of the budget process, on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves. The proposed approach can deliver this requirement if actively managed and will be an issue that remains 'live' over the course of the forecast period and will be revisited in future reports to members as the budget develops.

In addition to the above, further amending legislation has been introduced since the Local Government Finance Act 1992 that relates to the setting of council tax premiums and discounts, with the latest being the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 set out the requirements of a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement which must be approved by Council each year. In calculating a prudent MRP provision, local authorities are required to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The latest guidance, issued under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003, is applicable from 1 April 2025 which the proposed MRP policy reflects.

In respect of special expenses that form part of the budget setting process, expenditure is classed as a Special Expense if it satisfies the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, Section 35. The only category relevant to this Council is contained within Section 35(2)(d) relating to concurrent functions with Parish and Town Councils. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council must identify as its Special Expense, proposed expenditure on those functions which the Council performs in part of the District but which Parish or Town Councils perform elsewhere in the District. If, in the Council's view, a special expense should properly be charged over the whole of the District's area, the Council may pass an express resolution to this effect (known as a **contrary resolution**).

In order for expenditure to be a Special Expense, there are two conditions that must be fulfilled:

1. Expenditure is estimated to be incurred by the District Council in the whole or part of its area on the provision of a function;
2. Expenditure on the provision of the same function is to be incurred by at least one parish/town council elsewhere in the District.

The Council is also under a broader Best Value Duty that relates to the statutory requirement for local authorities and other public bodies defined as best value authorities in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 ("the 1999 Act") to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". In practice, this covers issues such as how authorities exercise their functions to deliver a balanced budget (Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992), provide statutory services and secure value for money in all spending decisions.

Best value authorities must demonstrate good governance, including a positive organisational culture, across all their functions and effective risk management. They are also required,

pursuant to section 3 of the 1999 Act, to consult on the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the Best Value Duty.

In 2024, the former Government published revised Statutory Guidance on the Best Value Duty of Local Authorities in England under section 26 of the 1999 Act, which best value authorities are required to have regard to. To provide greater clarity to the sector on how to fulfil the Best Value Duty, the statutory guidance sets out seven overlapping themes of good practice for running an authority that meets and delivers best value. These seven best value themes build on the lessons learned from past interventions and reflect what most local authorities already do or are striving to achieve. A detailed description of these themes, including characteristics of a well-functioning local authority and indicators used to identify challenges that could indicate failure, is set out within the revised guidance and financial management and sustainability is a reoccurring expectation throughout the themes and indicators. This report, along with how the Council responds to new or developing issues remains an important element of demonstrating these key requirements.

The Council is legally required to calculate its council tax requirement each financial year. Within this framework is the requirement to monitor and report accordingly on the financial position of the authority against this requirement.

The position set out in this report and the actions proposed are within the Council's powers and reflect the statutory requirements and responsibilities of the Council, including the preparation of its medium term financial plans and associated budget and setting of the council tax.

The proposals set out in this report are therefore in accordance with the Council's budget and policy framework.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:</b>
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The process for Developing the Budget is set out within the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, Part 5.14 to 5.16 of the Constitution, which includes the consultation process of the draft Financial Strategy / Forecast setting out the basis on which the budget proposals are intended to be formulated, with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet will have regard to the response received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Attention is drawn to the on-going reference to the Council's Best Value Statutory Duty and recently published guidance, as set out within the legal requirements section above, along with highlighting that additional decision making will need to be considered as necessary in respect of delivering actions supported by the Council's agreed budget each year.

Within the Best Value Guidance, characteristics of a well-functioning authority are set out under each theme, as part of 'Leadership', an expected standard is that "*The authority's financial strategy and delivery arrangements are aligned with priorities in the corporate plan, and respond appropriately to local need, including the plans of partners and stakeholders.*" This linkage is demonstrated through the reference to the Council's Corporate Plan and draft Highlight Priorities, as set out in the Delivering Priorities section of this report.

The Council's budget makes provision on the basis of Council services which are under consideration will be delivered. The budget does not itself authorise any changes to services and does not assume that changes will be made. Any changes to services will need to be the subject of appropriate consideration by the Cabinet Member or the Cabinet following, where



appropriate, consultation and a full report setting out options for change, the impact of the proposed changes on service users, including in particular the impact on different equality groups. Where a decision is made not to implement any changes then budgetary adjustments may need to be made, however no savings to Council services are currently identified.

The obligation to make a lawful budget each year is shared equally by each individual Member, at Full Council following recommendations from the Cabinet. In discharging that obligation, Members owe a fiduciary duty to the Council Taxpayer. The budget must not include expenditure on items which would fall outside the Council's powers. Expenditure on lawful items must be prudent, and any forecasts or assumptions such as rates of interest or inflation must themselves be rational. Power to spend money must be exercised bona fide for the purpose for which they were conferred and any ulterior motives risk a finding of illegality. In determining the Council's overall budget requirement, Members are bound to have regard to the level of Council Tax necessary to sustain it. Essentially the interests of the Council Taxpayer must be balanced against those of the various service recipients.

### **FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report.

Although the availability of financial resources is a key component in the delivery of services there will also need to be appropriate input of other resources such as staffing, assets and IT.

The long term approach to the forecast set out in this report has been discussed with the Council's new External Auditor, albeit informally. There were no major concerns raised but they will undertake their own independent and detailed review as part of their commentary on the Council's use of resources, which is expected to be reported to the Council early in 2025.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:</b>
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The Section 151 Officer is the author of this report.

### **USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

<p>A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;</p>	<p>This is addressed in the body of the report.</p> <p>In terms of an independent view, the Council's previous External Auditor recently submitted their Annual Report that includes their commentary on the Council's use of resources. The report was considered by the Council's Audit Committee on 9 December with the Auditor's headline statement as follows:</p> <p><i>"Our VFM work for 2020/21 to 2022/23 has not identified any significant weaknesses in the Authority's arrangements".</i></p>
<p>B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and</p>	
<p>C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.</p>	

## MILESTONES AND DELIVERY

This report forms part of the Council's wider budget setting processes, with budget proposals being set out in this report for recommending to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

## ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

There are significant risks associated with forecasting such as cost pressures, inflation and changes to other assumptions that form part of the financial planning process. The Council's response has been set out in earlier reports and reflected within this report as necessary and will continue to be addressed as part of the future financial update reports.

It is likely that further cost pressures may have to be included as part of further iterations of the forecast. As set out in earlier reports, money has been set aside in an associated reserve to help mitigate cost pressures associated with the repair and maintenance of Council assets. When they arise, they are usually significant and the approach taken aims to 'protect' the underlying revenue budget from such items as far as possible.

In previous reports, it was highlighted that there were likely to be emerging risks associated with the establishment of the Office for Local Government (OFLOG). The Government have confirmed that they are no longer implementing this office / body and therefore subject to any further announcements, this risk has now been removed.

As set out in **Appendix A**, the Forecast Risk Fund remains a key element of the long-term plan approach. However, it is important to note that the Council still prudently maintains reserves to respond to significant / specific risks in the forecast such as **£1.758m** (NDR Resilience Reserve) and **£1.000m** (Benefits Reserve), which can be taken into account during the period of the forecast if necessary. The Council also holds **£4.000m** in uncommitted reserves, which reflects a best practice / risk-based approach to support its core financial position.

As highlighted within a table further on in this report, the Forecast Risk Fund is estimated to be depleted during 2029/30, which adds further financial risks and challenges and will require further savings to be identified to deliver a sustainable financial position, which has been acknowledged within the highlight priorities mentioned earlier. It is also worth highlighting that opportunities may arise where additional money could be added to the Forecast Risk Fund over the forecast period, which may provide further flexibility and context to the requirement to identify savings going forward.

The forecast will remain 'live' and be responsive to changing circumstances and it will be revised on an on-going basis. If unfavourable issues arise, that cannot be mitigated via other changes within the forecast then the forecast will be adjusted and mitigating actions taken, which could include increasing the current savings 'targets' within the forecast. Actions to respond will therefore need to be considered but can be taken over a period of more than one year. In respect of this latter point, it is important to also highlight that like many other Councils, this Council has had to rely on the use of reserves to balance its budget, albeit in a planned way via the Forecast Risk Fund. It is essential that the Council continues to work towards delivering in-year balanced budgets as soon as possible rather than continue to rely on reserves, which is not sustainable in the longer term.

The outcome from risk management reviews are planned to be reported as part of the quarterly financial performance reports throughout the year (the latest one being reported to Cabinet on 20 December 2024). It is important to highlight that there are no new / significant adverse issues that have arisen in terms of the annual Forecast Risk Fund surpluses since the last position

was reported. The associated risk management appendix has therefore not been repeated as part of this report. However, it will continue to form part of the regular reporting of the financial forecast going forward as necessary.

**EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct implications that significantly impact on the financial forecast at this stage. However, the ability of the Council to appropriately address such issues will be strongly linked to its ability to fund relevant schemes and projects and determination of the breadth and standard of service delivery to enable a balanced budget to be agreed.

An impact assessment will be undertaken as part of any separate budget decisions such as those that will be required to deliver savings.

Special expenses are based on the principle of ensuring there is equality across the district in levying council tax to residents based on services and facilities provided by Town and Parish Councils in specific areas that are also provided by the District Council.

**SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS**

There are no direct implications that significantly impact on the financial forecast at this stage.

However, such issue will be considered as part of separate elements of developing the budget as necessary.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2050**

There are no direct implications that significantly impact on the financial forecast at this stage.

However, such issue will be considered as part of separate elements of developing the budget as necessary.

**OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS**

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Please see comments above
<b>Health Inequalities</b>	
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	

**PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**BACKGROUND**

On 20 December 2024 Cabinet considered the Updated Financial Forecast / Budget 2025/26 for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report set out an estimated deficit of **£1.508m** in 2025/26, which was being met from the Forecast Risk Fund.

The development of the forecast / budget has continued since the above Cabinet meeting with changes required to reflect the latest information, such as the outcome of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. The most up to date position is set out in **Appendix A**, which highlights a reduced deficit position for 2025/26 of **£0.056m**, which will continue to be met from the Forecast Risk Fund.

The most up to date forecast, savings schedule and cost pressure summary are set out in this report. However, at the time of finalising this report, a number of budget adjustments had yet to be finalised. A further delegation is therefore included in the recommendations above to enable these budget adjustments to be included in the final budget proposals that will be presented to Full Council in February and for completeness includes:

- Recharges between the GF and HRA
- Income from Business Rates
- Any changes emerging from the Final Local Government Finance Settlement and / or other grants / funding, which will include the final position in respect of the proposed reimbursement of the increased national insurance costs that is set out within **Appendix B**.
- Any impact from proposed fees and charges

Any net changes emerging from the above will be adjusted against the Forecast Risk Fund.

Once the final budget adjustments are reflected in the forecast, the detailed / technical information that is required to be reported to Full Council in February will be finalised and an associated delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance is included in the recommendations to reflect this. For completeness these 'technical' appendices include the following:

- *Detailed General Fund revenue estimates, capital programme and reserves 2025/26*
- *Special Expenses 2025/26*
- *Requisite Budget Calculations 2025/26*
- *District Council Taxes for All Areas 2025/26*
- *Precepts on the Collection Fund – District Amounts 2025/26*
- *District Council Tax Amounts 2025/26 (excluding County, Fire and Police services)*
- *Calculation of Estimated Surplus on the Collection Funds for 2025/26*
- *Prudential Indicators 2025/26*

The formal approval of the 'full' council tax levy for the year including the District amount approved by Full Council in February along with the Essex County Council and Police / Fire precepts will be considered by the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee later in February 2025.

#### **LATEST FINANCIAL FORECAST AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2025/26**

As highlighted earlier in this report, the forecast considered by Cabinet at its 20 December 2024 meeting set out a deficit of **£1.508m**. This deficit has subsequently been revised downwards to **£0.056m**, a change of **£1.452m** highlighted in **Appendix A**, which as set out below, is largely due to the favourable and potentially one-off income from Business Rates via the estimated

Collection Fund position at the end of this financial year.

The following table provides a commentary on the changes to the initial forecast set out in **Appendix A** (excludes items where there has been no significant change to the relevant line of the forecast considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2024):

Item in the Forecast	Change since forecast was considered on 20 December 2024	Comments
<b>Underlying Funding Growth in the Budget</b>		
<b>Line 7 –</b> Collection Fund Surpluses b/fwd - BR	Forecast Income Increased by <b>£1.135m</b>	This reflects the estimated position at the end of 2024/25 that is carried forward to support the budget position in 2025/26. This broadly reflects a number of positive elements that impact on the recovery of income post the COVID 19 period.  Collection Fund surpluses are broadly seen as one-off in nature so this level of income cannot be relied upon on an on-going basis, which will be reflected in the longer term forecast as necessary.
<b>Net Cost of Services and Other Adjustments</b>		
<b>Line 20 –</b> Inflation – Other	Estimated increased costs of <b>£0.098m.</b>	Inflationary assumptions remain relatively volatile, with current forecasts anticipating a slower trajectory of downward adjustments in the months ahead. The forecast has been updated to reflect this revised position.
<b>Line 24 –</b> On-going Savings Required	Estimated increase in savings of <b>£0.415m.</b>	<b>Appendix B</b> sets out a revised position compared with the December report to Cabinet, with one item amended (Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement) along with one new item added (Council Tax Sharing Agreement with the Major Preceptors).

*The above position excludes changes to indirect costs such as internal recharges within the General Fund and technical accounting adjustments that do not have an overall net impact on the budget. However, the full detailed budget, reflecting the above changes, will be presented to Full Council at its February 2025 meeting in-line with the proposed recommendations highlighted earlier in this report.*

There have been no changes to the cost pressure line of the forecast, with **Appendix C** currently remaining unchanged compared to the position reported to Cabinet in December. Although there have been no changes since December, it is worth highlighting the potential indirect impact of the Government’s recent employer’s national insurance increases as they will undoubtedly feed through the supply chain, with the potential to increase the Council’s costs

further. Although it will be difficult to identify / isolate the impact of any potential increases, the matter will be kept under review during the year.

As highlighted at Cabinet's meeting on 20 December 2024, the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 18 December 2024, which has now been reflected in the forecast (additional income has been included within Line 24 of the forecast as mentioned within the table above). The provisional position announced by the Government set out a number of issues and proposals such as:

- The introduction of a 'recovery grant' with the aim of increasing the efficiency of Government funding by targeting money towards areas with greater need and demand for services (using deprivation indices), and less ability to raise income locally. (This grant totals £0.591m for TDC in 2025/26).
- Maintaining a 'funding floor grant' to provide the protections required for all authorities, including district councils, to sustain their services between years and guaranteeing that no local authority will see a reduction in their core spending power in 2025/26 (This grant totals £0.200m for TDC in 2025/26 but with no increase in spending power as per the Government's methodology).
- Confirming each Local Authority's Revenue Support Grant (This grant totals £0.815m for TDC in 2025/26)
- Highlighting the arrangements relating to the Extended Producer Responsibilities (EPR) grant, which is deemed to be 'outside' of the Provisional Settlement amounts. This grant reflects a significant new income stream from fees paid by packaging producers. In theory the income aims to cover the existing costs local authorities incur for managing household packaging waste, provide additional funding for new legal duties, and support much needed investment in the waste and recycling industry. Figures have been shared directly with Councils by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Government have confirmed that more details on this scheme will follow in due course and they will assess the impact of additional EPR income on the relative needs and resources of individual local authorities, and how it is factored into their measurement of local authority spending power, ahead of the 2026/27 Settlement. (This grant totalled £0.892m for TDC in 2025/26).
- Confirming the Government's commitment to reimburse Local Authorities for the direct cost of the recent increases in NI contributions. Based on indicative figures, it is possible that the money payable to Local Authorities will only partially offset the increased costs, but the position for each individual local authority will not be known until the final settlement figures are announced.

Based on the above, the overall level of grant funding receivable within the overall settlement is **£1.606m** (excluding NHB). This is **£0.632m** less than the amount receivable in 2024/25. Although this has been more than offset by the EPR grant of **£0.892m** highlighted above, it does raise the risk that without this latter grant, which is only guaranteed for 2025/26, it could indicate that the Council may 'lose' out under any future changes to the Government's funding arrangements from 2026/27 as highlighted below.

In addition to the issues above, associated announcements relating to potential future changes were also highlighted and included the following:

- The Government's intention to 'reset' the business rates retention system, as was originally intended when the previous government established the system. The Government stated that this is long overdue given that there has been no reset of the system since its introduction in 2013/14 and a reset will further allow them to match funding to where it is needed most. The reset will apply nationally, but business rates growth generated within designated areas such as Freeports, Enterprise Zones and Investment Zones will be exempt in line with current policy. A period of consultation will be undertaken to inform the above work.
- From 2026/27, the Government want to fundamentally improve the way they fund Councils and direct funding to where it is most needed, based on an up-to-date assessment of need and local resources. These reforms will build on the proposals set out in the previous Government's review of Relative Needs and Resources (also referred to as the 'Fair Funding Review'), using the best available evidence to inform local authority funding allocations. The Government have stated their intention to move gradually towards an updated system and will invite views on possible transitional arrangements to determine how local authorities reach their new funding allocations. It is expected that a period of consultation will be undertaken to inform the above work.
- The Government stated that 2025/26 will be the last year of the New Homes Bonus in its current form. They plan on consulting on proposals for reforming the NHB beyond 2025/26 in due course.

The above introduces a number of challenges, not least the uncertainty in the short term that makes forecasting beyond 2025/26 difficult. It is also worth highlighting the potential impact of Local Government devolution / LGR which could make financial planning even more challenging over the forecast period. Such issues will need to be remain highlighted within the forecast risk table that accompanies the wider forecast (the most recent update was presented to Cabinet at its 20 December 2024 meeting) and further updates will be provided during 2025/26 as necessary.

Notwithstanding the reference to the New Homes Bonus Grant above, within the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government confirmed the provisional New Homes Bonus Grant due to the Council in 2025/26 - a total of **£0.925m** will be receivable in 2025/26, which is **£0.425m** more than the 'base' amount of **£0.500m** that currently supports the Council's underlying budget. Similarly to the approach taken in 2024/25, it is not proposed to increase this 'base' amount of **£0.500m** but instead set aside the additional funding of **£0.425m** within a one-off budget for further consideration later in the year.

As highlighted earlier, work still remains on-going across a range of budget items such as business rates, recharges between the GF and HRA. These will be finalised and included in the final budget proposals to be considered by Full Council on 11 February 2025.

### **Sensitivity Testing**

Work remains in progress to update associated sensitivity testing of the forecast, with the outcome planned to be presented as part of the on-going development of the budget for consideration by Full Council in February 2025.

### **Reserves**

As part of the budget setting process, a timely review of the appropriateness of the level of reserves was undertaken, with the outcome reported to Cabinet at its December meeting.

As highlighted in the December report to Cabinet, there remains the need to continue to maintain a number of reserves to support key actions / activities as part of the Council's overall prudent and sustainable approach to managing its finances.

No changes over and above those set out elsewhere in this report are currently proposed. Although a more detailed statement will be made by the S151 Officer that will be included in the report to Full Council in February, the current level of reserves remains adequate and will remain under review as part of updating the 'live' forecast and in light of any emerging risks or changes to the risk environment.

### **Potential Further Cost Pressures**

The cost pressures included within the budget to date broadly reflect unavoidable items and it is therefore recognised that potential additional financial demands may emerge going forwards. This has been mitigated to date with timely interventions during the year to address a range of emerging risks with any on-going impact included in the **Appendix C** where necessary. The Council needs to remain alert to additional items that may emerge, including opportunities for investment to support the development of the forecast and Council priorities, which will remain subject to on-going review as part of the various financial reports presented to Cabinet during the year along with the potential and associated use of the Corporate Investment Fund which currently totals **£3.614m**.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Council Tax Levy 2025/26**

Based on a proposed 2.99% increase, the council tax for a band D property will be **£199.52** in 2025/26. The updated property base is **53,496.8**, an increase of just over **3%** over the 2024/25 figure of **51,866**.

In terms of the proposed increase above, the Government have confirmed their commitment to allow District Councils to increase their share of the council tax by 2.99%, although future potential increases still remain subject to further Government announcements.

As set out in previous reports, the Council will continue to opt-in to the Council Tax Sharing Agreement with ECC if it remains financially advantageous to do so. This scheme has continued to provide a financial benefit to the Council over recent years and will continue to do so heading into 2025/26 (which is the second year of the current two year agreement), with the associated figures included in the proposed budget as highlighted earlier.

### **Locally Retained Business Rates**

A change to the forecast has been included as highlighted within the earlier table above, which relates to the estimated Collection Fund surplus for the year.

No further changes over and above this amount have been reflected in the updated forecast at this stage.

The Council continues to remain a member of the Essex Business Rates Pool, with its continuing membership proposed for 2025/26. Unless a Local Authority withdraws from the



Essex business rates pool, the pool will continue in 2025/26. As introduced within the 2024/25 budget, the benefit from remaining a member of the Essex Business Rates Pool continues to be recognised within the forecast and base budget, with income of **£0.400m** therefore included in 2025/26.

As part of providing financial support to businesses, the Government have announced the continuation of the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rate Relief Scheme that was introduced last year, retaining the existing eligibility criteria but reducing the level of relief to 40% compared to the previous 75%. Although also limited by a 'cash cap' of £110,000, the scheme continues to provide support to those businesses who operate within the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. As has been the case for the last two years, the Council is required to agree / adopt a local scheme to enable relief to be granted to qualifying businesses. As the scheme is in affect a mandatory scheme prescribed by the Government with no local discretions proposed, the adoption of a scheme is therefore primarily a governance issue. With this in mind, a delegation is included within the recommendations above to enable an associated scheme to be agreed / adopted before the bills for 2025/26 are sent to businesses during February / March along with any further changes that may be announced by the Government.

The Government will fully reimburse the cost of providing the reliefs mentioned above via associated grant funding.

In terms of the rating multipliers, the Government have confirmed that for 2024/25, the small business multiplier in England will be frozen for a fifth consecutive year at 49.9p, while the standard multiplier will be uprated by September 2024 CPI to 55.5p. The Government will reimburse the Council for the loss of income that results from this announcement.

Work remains on-going to finalise the various budgets relating to business rate income, which will be completed via a separate decision of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance for inclusion in the final budget proposals that will be presented to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

### **Capital Programme**

No changes to the forecast have been required at this stage. The full multi-year Capital Programme, including any cost pressures proposed, will be included within the final budget proposals that will be presented to Full Council in February.

### **Fees and Charges**

Fees and charges are subject to separate Officer decisions made in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) and are reviewed within the framework of the financial forecast and therefore they will be considered against the relevant 'charging power' and where relevant the following key principles:

- general inflationary increases where possible or lower where appropriate / justified
- amounts rounded for ease of application, which may result in a slightly above inflation increase.
- on a cost recovery basis as necessary
- reflect statutory requirements.
- increases where market conditions allow
- to meet specific priorities or service delivery aims / objectives

As set out in this report, the Council continues to face a number of significant financial challenges in 2025/26 and beyond. It is therefore important that fees and charges are considered against this context and to maximise income opportunities where possible, albeit whilst balancing the various issues highlighted above.

Any changes to income are considered alongside the financial forecast process. No changes to the budget are proposed at the present time, but any changes required to reflect the separate decisions made will be included within the final budget proposals presented to Full Council in February.

Although agreed separately, it is planned to provide a full schedule of fees and charges to Members ahead of the Full Council budget meeting in February 2025.

### **Special Expenses**

No changes are currently proposed over and above those described in the report to Cabinet on 20 December 2024, with the underlying principles remaining the same as 2024/25. If changes are required as the budget develops, these will be reflected within the report to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

### **Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement**

As set out in the report to Cabinet on 20 December 2024, where relevant, figures included in the 2025/26 budget are based on the following policy statement that was agreed by Full Council on 26 November 2024.

**In accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2003 and having due regard to guidance issued under Section 21 (1A) of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council's policy for the calculation of MRP for 2025/26 shall be the Capital Financing Requirement Method for supported borrowing and the Asset Life (equal instalment) Method for prudential borrowing.**

### **UPDATES TO THE FORECAST FOR THE PERIOD 2025/26 AND BEYOND**

Taking the most up to date position set out in this report in terms of the position for 2025/26, initial adjustments to later years of the forecast have been made along with their impact on the Forecast Risk Fund. For the first 4 years of the longer term forecast, a summarised position is as follows, which remains subject to further iterations as necessary:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Net Budget Position (including adjusting for prior year use of reserves etc. to balance the budget)</b>	<b>Forecast Risk Fund - Estimated Balance at the end of the year</b>
2026/27	£2.085m deficit	£4.773m (surplus)
2027/28	£1.812m deficit	£3.212m (surplus)
2028/29	£2.527m deficit	£0.935m (surplus)
2029/30	£3.254m deficit	£2.070m (deficit)

As set out in earlier reports, in terms of supporting the underlying context to the development of the budget for 2025/26, it is worth highlighting the following comment: *In terms of the later*

*years of the forecast, it is important to highlight the significant challenges arising from inflationary increases, which are expected to exceed our ability to raise income from council tax and business rates. Therefore, at some reasonable point in the future, the Council must be able to put itself in the position of balancing its annual budget, otherwise the position is not sustainable. Based on the current forecast position, the expected annual imbalance between expenditure and income [from 2027/28 onwards] is approximately £0.700m. This would therefore require corresponding annual on-going savings to be realised over the full forecast period to enable a balanced budget to be set each year.*

Notwithstanding the above, the Council's long term plan and Forecast Risk Fund provide flexibility and support against which the development of the Council's forecast can be considered and it continues to provide the time and opportunity to respond to the structural annual budget deficits that are still estimated to remain in the short term.

It is also worth repeating the point highlighted earlier in this report relating to the Council's initial highlight priorities, where the on-going delivery of a savings plan has been reflected as a key activity during 2025/26.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Although this report has focused on the updated financial forecast and proposed budget for 2025/26, any potential impact over and above what is currently reflected in the in-year budget will be considered as necessary and kept under review and formally reported to Cabinet as part of the Q3 Financial Performance Report 2024/25 in February / March 2025.

#### **PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

Executive's Proposals – General Fund Budget and Council Tax 2024/25 – Item A.1 Full Council 13 February 2024.

Financial Performance Report 2024/25 – General Update at the end of July 2024 - Item A.2 Cabinet 21 October 2024.

Financial Performance Report 2024/25 – General Update at the end of September 2024 - Item A.8 Cabinet 15 November 2024.

Updated General Fund Financial Forecast / Budget 2025/26 – Item A.5 Cabinet 20 December 2024.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

None

#### **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A** Updated Financial Forecast 2025/26
- Appendix B** Savings Plan – Forecast 2025/26 and Beyond
- Appendix C** Cost Pressure Summary

<b>REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Richard Barrett</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Director (Finance and IT)</b>
<b>Email/Telephone</b>	<a href="mailto:rbarrett@tendringdc.gov.uk">rbarrett@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> <b>686521</b>

## UPDATED FINANCIAL FORECAST 2025/26

Line		Prior Year Budget	Last Updated Forecast (15 November 2024)	Updated Forecast (20 December 2024)	Updated Forecast (31 January 2025)	Change between December and January Positions
		2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Underlying Funding Growth in the Budget</b>						
1	Council Tax Increase 1.99%	(0.191)	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)	0.000
2	Ctax increase by £5 (amounts set out are over and above 1.99% above)	(0.064)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.059)	0.000
2a	Council Tax Increase 2.99%	(0.032)	0.000	(0.041)	(0.041)	0.000
3	Growth in Business rates - Inflation	0.000	(0.158)	(0.158)	(0.158)	0.000
4	Growth in Council Tax - general property / tax base growth	(0.158)	(0.190)	(0.325)	(0.325)	0.000
5	Growth in Business Rates - general property / tax base growth	(0.636)	0.540	0.540	0.540	0.000
6	Collection Fund Surpluses b/fwd - Ctax	(0.159)	(0.100)	(0.213)	(0.213)	0.000
7	Collection Fund Surpluses b/fwd - BR	(0.792)	0.000	0.000	(1.135)	(1.135)
		<b>(2.032)</b>	<b>(0.167)</b>	<b>(0.456)</b>	<b>(1.591)</b>	<b>(1.135)</b>
<b>Net Cost of Services and Other Adjustments</b>						
8	Change in RSG (including other financial settlement funding)	(0.571)	0.619	0.619	0.619	0.000
9	Remove one-off items from prior year	(0.375)	(0.396)	(0.396)	(0.396)	0.000
10	Remove one-off items from prior year - Collection Fund Surplus	0.784	0.951	0.951	0.951	0.000
11	LCTS Grant To Parish Council's	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
12	Revenue Contrib. to Capital Programme	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
13	Specific change in Use of Reserves	(0.216)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.056)	0.000
14	Changes to Savings Identified in Prior Years	0.000	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.000
15	On-going Savings Identified / Achieved	(1.242)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
16	Other Adjustments	(0.072)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
17	Use of New Homes Bonus	(0.500)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
18	Gain from Essex Business Rates Pool Membership	(0.400)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		<b>(2.586)</b>	<b>1.513</b>	<b>1.513</b>	<b>1.513</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Cost Increases</b>						
19	Inflation - Employee / Members Allowance Costs (including annual review adjustments)	1.537	1.540	1.540	1.540	0.000
20	Inflation - Other	0.390	0.148	0.148	0.246	0.098
21	Unavoidable Cost Pressures	1.716	0.500	1.157	1.157	0.000
		<b>3.643</b>	<b>2.188</b>	<b>2.845</b>	<b>2.943</b>	<b>0.098</b>
22	Add back Use of Forecast Risk Fund / Reserves in Prior Year	1.236	0.261	0.261	0.261	0.000
23	<b>ANNUAL Structural Budget Deficit / (Surplus) BEFORE Required 'Savings'</b>	<b>0.261</b>	<b>3.795</b>	<b>4.163</b>	<b>3.126</b>	<b>(1.037)</b>
24	On-going Savings Required	0.000	(1.319)	(2.655)	(3.070)	(0.415)
25	<b>ANNUAL Structural Budget Deficit / (Surplus) AFTER Required 'Savings'</b>	<b>0.261</b>	<b>2.476</b>	<b>1.508</b>	<b>0.056</b>	<b>(1.452)</b>
26	Use of Forecast Risk Fund / Other Reserves to support the Net Budget Position	(0.261)	(2.476)	(1.508)	(0.056)	1.452

**Use of Forecast Risk Fund**

<b>Outturn b/fwd from prior years</b>	<b>(6.426)</b>	<b>(6.415)</b>	<b>(6.415)</b>	<b>(6.415)</b>	
Applied in year as set out in the forecast above	0.261	2.476	1.508	0.056	(1.452)
Additional contributions generated / required in year	(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.250)	0.000
<b>Balance to Carry Forward</b>	<b>(6.415)</b>	<b>(4.189)</b>	<b>(5.157)</b>	<b>(6.609)</b>	<b>(1.452)</b>

## Savings Plan - Forecast 2025/26 and Beyond

Description	Totals	On-going / One-off	Planned Delivery / Impact 2025/26	Planned Delivery / Impact 2026/27	Comments
<b>Income Budgets</b>					
Business Rate Income	700,000	On-going	700,000	0	Additional anticipated income from business rates - this is the estimated impact from a mix of regeneration / economic growth, transitional arrangements following revaluation and less pessimistic forecasting
<b>AMENDED</b> - Revenue Support Grant / Financial Settlement	1,039,000	On-going	878,000	420,000	The revised position reflects the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 18 December 2024.
Rent Reviews	30,000	On-going	30,000	0	Additional income will be generated from the usual rent reviews undertaken as part of the underlying existing lease agreements
VAT on Leisure Fees	265,000	On-going	265,000	0	Following further review, the originally anticipated favourable VAT status has been confirmed.
Treasury Investment Income	215,000	On-going	215,000	0	Although a reduction in income was included within original forecasts, based on the current trajectory of future interest rate reductions, it is likely that additional income will be generated in the short to medium term years of the forecast.
Government's Commitment to Fund Cost of National Insurance Increases	474,300	Potentially On-going (subject to future LG funding settlements)	474,300	0	In addition to the item above relating to the Revenue Support Grant, the Government have committed to reimburse Local Councils for the additional cost of the recently announced changes to employers national insurance rates. The Government announced as part of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement that Local Authorities will receive notification of the actual figure as part of final settlement figures that will be published at the end of January / beginning of February.
Inter Authority Agreement with ECC relating to Food Waste	21,480	On-going	21,480	0	Additional income is due to the Council as part of the underlying agreement with ECC.
<b>NEW</b> - Income from the Council Tax Sharing Agreement with the Major Preceptors	155,860	On-going (subject to future agreements)	155,860	0	Following the on-going income recovery performance post COVID19, additional income is estimated to be receivable under the terms of the current agreement.
<b>Expenditure Budgets</b>					
Asset review	220,000	On-going	120,000	100,000	This represents estimated savings from reviewing the Council's operational assets and further possible rationalisation opportunities.
IT Savings	200,000	On-going	50,000	150,000	A number of activities are underway to support the delivery of savings and/or the mitigation of increased costs.
Energy Costs - Leisure Centres	50,000	On-going	50,000	0	As previously reported, following the implementation of a number of energy saving initiatives, energy budgets are likely to be reduced - this is subject to the wider / underlying price volatility relating to utility costs.
Wireless Access Point Licences	10,000	On-going	10,000	0	As previously reported, there will be savings from the annual licence fee for the Council's Wireless Access Points across its estate.
Initial PFH Savings 'Allowance'	250,000	On-going	0	250,000	This represents the potential aggregate of savings from reviews undertaken by Portfolio Holders in consultation with Services.
Beach Hut Leases Review	100,000	On-going	100,000	0	Although the necessary re-investment will be undertaken in terms of seafront assets and amenities, there is now greater flexibility in the use of income generated from beach huts across the Council's wider budget.
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,730,640</b>		<b>3,069,640</b>	<b>920,000</b>	

**COST PRESSURE SUMMARY**

					Proposed Budget Adjustments										
	Adjustments made to the budget to date in 2024/25	On-Going Base Budget Adjustment Included in 2024/25 £	2024/25 One-Off Additional Amount Agreed Earlier in the Year £	Total Adjustments 2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £	2031/32 £	2032/33 £	2033/34 £	Comments	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	
<b>On-going Items</b>															
Insurance Premiums Costs	Base Budget 24/25 - £26k  Q1 Financial Performance Report 2024/25 - Further £25k	26,000	25,230	51,230	31,730	31,730	31,730	31,730	31,730	31,730	31,730	31,730	31,730	This item reflects the most up to date position following the recent renewal process. Costs may increase further during 2025/26 but this will not be known until the next renewal process is undertaken during the summer / autumn of 2025. This will therefore be kept under on-going review as part of the Financial Performance reports during next year.	
Commercial Investment Property Potential Rental Income Reduction	Base Budget 24/25	0	0	0	0	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	The current lease agreement for the investment property in Clacton comes to an end in 2025/26. The adjustment proposed allows for a potential reduction in the rent payable (from approx. £225k per annum to £100k per annum) from 2026/27. This will be subject to further review / revision over the life of the remaining years of the existing lease agreement, with the adjustment proposed reflecting a pragmatic / prudent view for the purposes of the forecast.	
Homelessness Costs	Base Budget 24/25 - £500k  Outturn Report 2023/24 - Further £500k  Q2 Financial Performance Report 2024/25 - Further £1.2m	500,000	1,700,000	2,200,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	This area of the budget remains a significant financial challenge, although the Government have committed to providing extra funding to support Local Authorities. Although Spendells House will have a significant positive impact, it is likely that additional costs will be incurred over and above the £500k included in the base budget from 2024/25 onwards. With this in mind, a further sum of £500k has been included from 2025/26, which will be reviewed in light of any additional financial support emerging from the Local Government Finance Settlement.	
Vehicle Hire Costs	Base Budget 24/25	34,100	0	34,100	8,500	62,400	62,400	62,400	62,400	62,400	62,400	62,400	62,400	This reflects the cost associated with the rolling replacement of various existing fleet vehicles used within Services.	
Career Track Net Revenue Position	Q3 Financial Performance Report 2023/24 - £25k  Outturn Report 2023/24 - Further £50k	0	75,000	75,000	50,000	40,000	30,000	20,000	10,000	0	0	0	0	As previously reported the Service continues to work towards reducing the overall subsidy where possible. This amount reflects a revised approach where a phased reduction in the required subsidy is proposed from 2025/26 onwards.	
Reduction in recreation grounds income - general hire and bookings	Q1 Financial Performance Report 2024/25	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	This adjustment recognises the on-going reduced income being experienced across the Council's various recreation grounds.	

	Adjustments made to the budget to date in 2024/25	On-Going Base Budget Adjustment Included in 2024/25 £	2024/25 One-Off Additional Amount Agreed Earlier in the Year £	Total Adjustments 2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £	2031/32 £	2032/33 £	2033/34 £	Comments
Software Licences	Q1 Financial Performance Report 2024/25	0	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	This reflects the on-going impact from a decision in 2024/25. As part of previous discussions, it was highlighted that the Council is working with other LA partners with the aim of developing viable alternatives to the associated property case management system (IDOX) which is becoming increasingly important due to the increased costs associated with our existing software provider.
Merchant Acquirer Fees	Q1 Financial Performance Report 2024/25	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	With an increase in people paying by credit / debit card, the associated cost to the Council of accepting cards also increases. This however remains a cost effective mechanism to accept payments.
Tendring E-Newsletter	Q2 Financial Performance Report 2024/25	0	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	This cost pressures relates to the purchase of software to support the publication of a regular e-newsletter. This is a priority action as part of the Council's Communication Strategy / Highlight Priority actions.
Card Payments - Additional merchant acquirer costs to facilitate payment by credit / debit cards	Q2 Financial Performance Report 2024/25	0	19,000	19,000	19,000	On-going cost to be funded from Parking Income from 2025/26 onwards								
External Audit Fees	New / Additional Sum	112,000	0	112,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000	This cost pressure reflects the continuing increase in costs associated with the work of the External Auditor, from both a statutory perspective and where they are commissioned to undertake the certification of grant claims work required by the Government.
Members Code of Conduct - Responsibilities under Localism Act 2011 e.g. Review of Complaints / Investigations	New	0	0	0	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	This reflects the increased costs expected to continue on an on-going basis from 2025/26.
Independent Remuneration Panel Allowances	New	0	0	0	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	This reflects the decision made by Full Council on 26 November 2024, where allowances for members of the panel were highlighted / agreed.
Electoral Registration	New	0	0	0	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	This reflects increased postage costs being incurred. The Service are exploring opportunities to reduce this cost where possible.
Clacton Leisure Centre - 'Regular' Repairs & Maintenance Costs	New	0	0	0	17,000	On-going cost to be funded from Leisure Income from 2025/26 onwards								



	Adjustments made to the budget to date in 2024/25	On-Going Base Budget Adjustment Included in 2024/25 £	2024/25 One-Off Additional Amount Agreed Earlier in the Year £	Total Adjustments 2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £	2031/32 £	2032/33 £	2033/34 £	Comments
Clacton Leisure Centre - 3G Pitch - Future Replacement Fund to ensure money is available when necessary in line with the associated external funding agreement.	New	0	0	0	7,000	On-going cost to be funded from Pitch / Leisure Income from 2025/26 onwards								
<b>Total of On-Going Items</b>		672,100	1,881,230	2,553,330	827,830	953,730	943,730	933,730	923,730	913,730	913,730	913,730	913,730	
<b>One-Off Items</b>														
Weeley Council Offices Costs	Q3 2023/24	0	65,000	65,000	65,000									This reflects the continuing cost of ownership, which includes items such as business rates and utility standing charges. Once ownership is transferred in accordance with the associated agreement then these costs will no longer be payable. Work remains in progress to limit the time that the Council retains this liability, with therefore only a potential additional cost in 2025/26 with no further costs expected in future years.
Implement Beach Patrol Recommendations	Q3 2023/24 - £60k Q1 2024/25 - Further £38k	0	98,000	98,000	98,000									This reflects the costs associated with implementing recommendations from a recent review in partnership with the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS). £98k was included in the budget to meet the associated costs for the 2024 season. It is proposed to include the same sum in the 2025/26 budget for the 2025 season with a review to be undertaken as to the longer term position / impact.
Contribution of contribution for the Harwich PCSO	Q3 Financial Performance Report 2023/24	0	24,650	24,650	25,000									It is proposed to set aside the required funding for this post for a further year subject to a separate report during 2025/26.
Fixed Term Family Support Officer	Q3 Financial Performance Report 2023/24	0	48,750	48,750	49,000									It is proposed to set aside the required funding for this post for a further year subject to a separate report during 2025/26.
Fixed Term Housing Early Intervention Officer	Q3 Financial Performance Report 2023/24	0	43,610	43,610	44,000									It is proposed to set aside the required funding for this post for a further year subject to a separate report during 2025/26.
Community Governance Review - Clacton-on-sea, Holland-on-sea and Jaywick Sands	New	0	0	0	48,400									As agreed by Full Council on 26 November 2024
<b>Total of One-Off Items</b>		0	280,010	280,010	329,400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Total of Unavoidable Items Included in the Forecast</b>		672,100	2,161,240	2,833,340	1,157,230	953,730	943,730	933,730	923,730	913,730	913,730	913,730	913,730	
<b>Change across years for Inclusion within the forecast</b>			-	-	-	(203,500)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	0	0	0	

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## CABINET

31 JANUARY 2025

### REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING & PLANNING

#### A.4. ADOPTION OF SIX CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

##### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

###### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- To inform Cabinet on the progress of updating the District's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans
- To seek agreement from Cabinet to adopt the final versions of six Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans

###### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the aims of the Council's adopted Heritage Strategy is for the Council to reassess each of the District's twenty Conservation Area Appraisals.

Fifteen of these have now been the subject of public consultations, with the last five being consulted upon in early 2025.

Seven Appraisals were adopted by Cabinet in the summer of 2024. A further six Appraisals are now ready for adoption, which will enable them to be referred to as a material consideration in planning matters.

The six Conservation Area Appraisals for adoption are:

- Clacton Seafront;
- Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church;
- Great Clacton;
- Lawford;
- Kirby le Soken and,
- Great Oakley

###### RECOMMENDATION(S)

**That Cabinet:**

**(a) considers the outcome of the consultation as summarised within the Report; and**

**(b) subject to (a) agrees to the formal adoption, of the final Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for the following areas (found at Appendices A - F):**

- **Clacton Seafront;**
- **Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church;**
- **Great Clacton;**
- **Lawford;**
- **Kirby le Soken; and,**
- **Great Oakley.**

#### **REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

To progress projects specifically identified in the Council's Heritage Strategy.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

To not formally adopt the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plans. To take this approach would mean that the Council could not give weight to the Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans as a material consideration in planning decisions. The Council's ability to conserve and enhance the district's historic environment would be reduced.

### **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

Having up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals will help in the preparation of the new Local Plan. The review of the Local Plan is identified as a priority within the Corporate Plan (Our Vision) 2024-2028. On 20 December 2023, the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee agreed a set of overarching principles that will guide the review of the Local Plan with the aim of submitting an updated Local Plan to the Secretary of State before the end of 2025.

**OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT** (including with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other stakeholders where the item concerns proposals relating to the Budget and Policy Framework)

The Conservation Area Appraisals have been the subject of public consultation. This included making all documentation available at the Council’s website and at the Council Offices and the hosting of drop-in events at village halls within (or close to) the Conservation Area being assessed.

See further details in Part 3 – Supporting Information, below.

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)**

<p><b>Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)</b></p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Significant effect on two or more wards</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Involves £100,000 expenditure/income</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Is otherwise significant for the service budget</b></p>
		<p><b>And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)</b></p>	<p><b>20/12/2024</b></p>

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), paragraphs 196 and 197 state:

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- d) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- e) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.
- f) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- g) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

**YES** | **The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

Advice was given to the format of the recommendations, which has been taken into account and therefore, no further comments are necessary.

**FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

TDC Officers are leading on this project with the input of Essex County Council Place Services under a Service Level Agreement (SLA). The work has been funded through agreed budgets.

Adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisals will assist in attracting external funding for heritage related activity in the District. Potential sources of funding include:

- National Lottery Heritage Fund,
- Section 106 Agreements, and
- Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas with Historic England.

**YES** | **The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

The Section 151 Officer has not had sufficient time to consider fully the report and will submit any comments et cetera that he may have at the meeting.

**USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;

The production of the Conservation Area Appraisals has been funded through pre-approved budgets. By adopting these appraisals, the Council will also be in a stronger position to work with partners to attract external funding for heritage-related activities within the District.

<p>B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and</p>	<p>Decisions regarding the Conservation Area Appraisals have been made in accordance with the Council's constitution at all key stages. The review of the Tendring Conservation Area Appraisals was a key action from the Tendring Heritage Strategy 2020, adopted by the Council on 24 April 2020. Drafts of each Conservation Area Appraisal were reviewed by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee and by Cabinet. Each appraisal was then subjected to public consultation in the affected areas. The final decision to adopt the appraisals, incorporating appropriate amendments from consultation feedback, will be made by Cabinet.</p>
<p>C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.</p>	<p>The updated Conservation Area Appraisals will enhance efficiency and effectiveness in planning decision-making. By providing accurate and up-to-date information, these appraisals ensure that decision-makers have the necessary knowledge when considering planning applications and formulating planning policies.</p>
<p><b>MILESTONES AND DELIVERY</b></p>	
<p>See background below.</p>	
<p><b>ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION</b></p>	
<p>The adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisals supports the Council's duties to maintain and enhance heritage assets and so reduces the risk of the District's heritage assets being diminished or lost.</p>	
<p><b>EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	
<p>The recommendations in this report are aimed at benefitting all who live, shop, work and visit the District.</p>	
<p><b>SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>	

There is a growing wealth of evidence that demonstrates the role heritage plays in improving mental wellbeing and physical health. People who visit heritage sites reported higher life satisfaction and happiness scores, as well as lower anxiety (Department for Culture Media and Sport 2015).

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2050**

N/a.

**OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS**

**Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.**

<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Heritage assets are, unfortunately, vulnerable to crime. Having a strategy for promoting heritage assets in the district should contribute positively to their maintenance.
---------------------------	---

<b>Health Inequalities</b>	There is a growing wealth of evidence that demonstrates the role heritage plays in improving mental wellbeing and physical health. People who visit heritage sites reported higher life satisfaction and happiness scores, as well as lower anxiety (Department for Culture Media and Sport 2015). Across Essex there are a number of schemes and organisations to encourage and support healthy activity, such as Active Essex and Healthy Life Essex. Tendring's heritage provides a positive platform to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors and take positive steps for their personal health and wellbeing. Heritage Trails, for example, are already established in Harwich and Dovercourt, Frinton-on-Sea, Clacton-on-Sea, Jaywick Sands and Walton-on-the-Naze, and encourage walkers to take routes through the historic environment. Promoting these to new groups and partnering with healthy organisations
----------------------------	---



	can open heritage to new audiences and increase wellbeing.
Subsidy Control (the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the related Statutory Guidance)	<b>N/a.</b>
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	All, but with a focus on those specific wards where Conservation Areas are the subject of the Appraisal and Management Plans.

### PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### BACKGROUND

The Tendring Heritage Strategy was formally adopted by the Council on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020. This Strategy contains a number of actions which are envisaged to be carried out by the Council and its partners throughout the lifetime of the Strategy. Two of these actions are for Officers to update Conservation Area Appraisals and prepare a 'Local List' of non-designated heritage assets within the District.

As the District has twenty Conservation Areas, these were taken to the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee in groups of up to five at a time. Each group was then the subject of a six-week public consultation. During the public consultation the Appraisals were available on the Council's website as well as hard copies at the Council offices. Officers from both TDC and Place Services also hosted in person drop-in events at central locations within or close to each of the Conservation Areas assessed.

#### Timeline of Consultations

	<b>PPLP Committee</b>	<b>Public Consultation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clacton Seafront</li> <li>• Lower Dovercourt</li> <li>• Thorpe-le-Soken</li> <li>• Thorpe-Le-Soken Station and Maltings</li> <li>• St Osyth</li> <li>• Local List criteria</li> </ul>	October 2021	July to August 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harwich</li> <li>• Manningtree/Mistley</li> </ul>	May 2022	October to November 2022

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frinton/Walton</li> <li>• Brightlingsea</li> <li>• Gt Bentley</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirby-le-Soken</li> <li>• Gt Oakley</li> </ul>	October 2022	January to February 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints church</li> </ul>	January 2023	January to February 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawford</li> <li>• Gt Clacton</li> </ul>	April 2023	January to February 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradfield</li> <li>• Ramsey</li> </ul>	April 2023	January 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardleigh</li> <li>• Gt Holland</li> <li>• Tendring Village</li> </ul>	July 2023	January 2025

Out of the above-mentioned Conservation Area Appraisals, Members will recall that they were asked to adopt the first seven Conservation Area Appraisals in the summer of 2024.

Members are now being asked to consider and adopt the next six Conservation Area Management Plans:

- Clacton Seafront;
- Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church;
- Great Clacton;
- Lawford;
- Kirby le Soken and,
- Great Oakley

### **RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS**

Each of the Conservation Area Appraisals share a broadly similar structure. Each Appraisal begins with a section detailing the context and general character of the Conservation Area, and then sets out the ways the Area has evolved. They then detail specific subject areas, including alterations to Conservation Area boundaries, designated and non-designated heritage assets, heritage at risk, assessment of Conservation Area significance, and opportunities and management proposals.

## **Summary of comments received at the Public Consultation**

Due to the number of Conservation Area Appraisals being consulted upon, it would not be practical to set out and comment on every representation as part of this report. Therefore, this section of the report details the most substantive comments and those most likely to impact upon the Conservation Area Appraisal.

### **Clacton Seafront**

- Historic England made some brief comments on the first five Conservation Area Appraisals (Clacton Seafront, Dovercourt, Thorpe Le Soken, Thorpe Station and Maltings and St Osyth). Design briefs and the use of Article 4 Directions are both highlighted as being good practice.
- Natural England had no specific comments to make
- Concerns over inappropriate new development in Clacton
- Concerns over the loss of historic buildings
- Questions about which buildings have been included within the Conservation Area boundary

A table showing all comments received during the public consultation and what (if any) changes were made to the Conservation Area Appraisal as a result can be found at Appendix G. The amended Conservation Area Appraisal can be found at Appendix A.

### **Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church**

A limited number of comments were received during this consultation, which reflects the relatively small size of the Conservation Area, compared to others on this list.

- Historic England made some brief comments on the Conservation Area Appraisal. Design briefs and the use of Article 4 Directions are both highlighted as being good practice. Suggestions were also made as to the extent of the proposed boundary.
- Natural England made no substantive comments
- National Highways made no comment
- Brightlingsea Town Council questioned the proposed boundary

A table showing all comments received during the public consultation and what (if any) changes were made to the Conservation Area Appraisal as a result can be found at Appendix H. The amended Conservation Area Appraisal can be found at Appendix B.

### **Great Clacton**

- Historic England made some brief comments on the Conservation Area Appraisal. Design briefs and the use of Article 4 Directions are both highlighted as being good practice.
- Natural England had no specific comments to make
- National Highways made no comment

Several comments were made at the consultation event itself, these include:

- Comments around presentation of Appraisal
- Concerns raised about trees and green spaces
- Questions around the Local List project
- Traffic issues raised
- Questions around specific buildings and structures within and outside of the Conservation Area
- Concerns over inappropriate development

A table showing all comments received during the public consultation and what (if any) changes were made to the Conservation Area Appraisal as a result can be found at Appendix I. The amended Conservation Area Appraisal can be found at Appendix C.

### **Lawford**

- Historic England made some brief comments on the Conservation Area Appraisal. Design briefs and the use of Article 4 Directions are both highlighted as being good practice.
- Natural England had no specific comments to make
- National Highways made no comment
- Additional land proposed for inclusion within the conservation area at land south of Lawford House.
- Concerns are raised around the inclusion of the land south of Wignall Street

Several comments were made at the consultation event itself, these include:

- Concerns over the overall state of the conservation area
- A number of comments over development at the Pink House
- There are too many restrictions on listed buildings
- Concerns over the proposed alterations to the conservation area
- Should the gardens of Lawford House be locally listed?

A table showing all comments received during the public consultation and what (if any) changes were made to the Conservation Area Appraisal as a result can be found at Appendix J. The amended Conservation Area Appraisal can be found at Appendix D.

### **Kirby le Soken**

- Historic England made some brief comments on the Conservation Area Appraisal. Design briefs and the use of Article 4 Directions are both highlighted as being good practice.
- Natural England had no specific comments to make
- National Highways made no comment
- Comments are made in relation to the amount of traffic through the village.

Several comments were made at the consultation event itself, these include:

- Concerns over traffic through the village
- Flooding in the village
- Concerns over the two Kirby villages merging
- Clearer maps needed
- Damage to church wall
- Concerns over exclusion of the Ship Inn
- Request for Brick Barn to be locally listed.

A table showing all comments received during the public consultation and what (if any) changes were made to the Conservation Area Appraisal as a result can be found at Appendix K. The amended Conservation Area Appraisal can be found at Appendix E.

### **Great Oakley**

- Historic England made some brief comments on the Conservation Area Appraisal. Design briefs and the use of Article 4 Directions are both highlighted as being good practice.
- Natural England had no specific comments to make
- National Highways made no comment

Several comments were made at the consultation event itself, these include:

- Updates needed to the basemap and photography
- The Old Forge and Wheel could potentially be locally listed.
- Maybush House has been converted from a restaurant into dwelling.
- The Village Hall was donated to the village after WWII. It could be mentioned in the setting or potentially locally listed.
- Why modern development to the south has been included within the boundary
- Clarify the boundary to the north, south, and around Mill Lane.
- Check that protected lanes have been mentioned.

A table showing all comments received during the public consultation and what (if any) changes were made to the Conservation Area Appraisal as a result can be found at Appendix L. The amended Conservation Area Appraisal can be found at Appendix F.

### **UPDATE ON THE LOCAL LIST PROJECT**

Another of the recommendations within the Council's Heritage Strategy was for Officers to prepare a list of non-designated heritage assets, often called a 'Local List'. The criteria for assessing submissions to this list was also the subject of a six-week public consultation and adopted by Members at the same time as the first seven Conservation Area Appraisals.

Officers have commenced a long term 'Call for Sites' exercise. This takes the form of a public consultation for a six-month period which started in December 2024. This elongated period will allow Parish and Town Councils, along with other interested groups and members of the public to submit buildings, structures and features to the Council for Local Listing.

Once the consultation closes in mid-2025, Officers will review the submissions and prepare a shortlist of assets which will have a further short period of public consultation before adoption by the Council.

#### **PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

##### **Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee:**

- Recommendation to Cabinet to carry out consultation on Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plans:
  - Clacton Seafront: 19 October 2021
  - Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church: 23 January 2023
  - Great Clacton and Lawford: 18 April 2023
  - Kirby le Soken and Great Oakley: 10 October 2022

##### **Cabinet:**

- Agreement to carry out consultation on Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plans:
  - Clacton Seafront: 12 November 2021
  - Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church: 17 February 2023
  - Great Clacton and Lawford: 23 June 2023
  - Kirby le Soken and Great Oakley: 4 November 2022

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

N/A

#### **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Clacton Seafront Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix B – Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix C – Great Clacton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix D - Lawford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix E – Kirby le Soken Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix F – Great Oakley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix G - Clacton Seafront Conservation Area Consultation Comments

Appendix H – Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area Comments

Appendix I – Great Clacton Conservation Area Comments

Appendix J – Lawford Conservation Area Comments

Appendix K – Kirby le Soken Conservation Area Comments

Appendix L – Great Oakley Conservation Area Comments

<b>REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)</b>	
<b>Name</b>	William Fuller
<b>Job Title</b>	Senior Planning Officer
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:wfuller@tendringdc.gov.uk">wfuller@tendringdc.gov.uk</a>

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# Clacton Seafront Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

**Tendring**  
District Council



Client:  
Tendring District Council

Date:  
November 2023

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

This Appraisal and Management Plan will provide an overview of the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area, outlining its designation history, alterations to the boundary, and highlight its special interest. The appraisal will also consider those buildings, spaces, and features which contribute to its character.

Conservation Area designation gives broader protection than the listing of individual buildings, as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the quality of the area into consideration.

The special interest of the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area is predominantly derived from its coastal location and characteristic seaside architecture. Most notably this includes the formally master planned street pattern, reflecting the area's development as a coastal resort from 1871 following the creation of the Pier Gap which provided access to the seafront and new pier,<sup>1</sup> and the Victorian and Edwardian buildings which form the dominant streetscape. The Grade II Registered Park and Garden Clacton Seafront Gardens, open spaces, and important landmark structures such as Martello Tower F, the pier and pavilions also make positive contributions to the special interest of this Conservation Area, enhancing its coastal character and offering quality examples of seafront architecture which are particularly important when considered holistically.

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<sup>1</sup> The Victoria History of the County of Essex: volume XI, Clacton, Walton and Frinton. North-East Essex Seaside Resorts (ERO Ref LIB/942.67 VCH11) 2012

## 1.2 Conserving Clacton's Heritage

Tendring District Council appointed Place Services to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal for Clacton Seafront; this document is provided as baseline Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. This information is also produced for applicants to consider when designing or planning new development in Clacton which may affect the special interest of the conservation area, including its setting.

This appraisal provides an assessment of the historic development and character of the Conservation Area and outlines its special interest. This does not include medieval Great Clacton, which is located to the north of the seafront and is designated as a separate Conservation Area. The appraisal will consider the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to the character of the conservation area. The understanding of significance will be used to assess the vulnerability of the character areas and the potential impact of new development, highlighting key assets of importance.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights good design as one of twelve core principles of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context. This appraisal provides an outline of the elements composing the special interest of the conservation area which, in turn, make up the context of sites and buildings within the area and can be used to inform good design.

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised Historic England Advice Note 1 for *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2019) and Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Advice Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).



### 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

This document outlines the special interest of the Conservation Area, and should be used as a baseline to inform future development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and the unique character of the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in the bibliography of this appraisal.

Applications that demonstrate a genuine understanding of the character of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce good design and positive outcomes for agents and their clients. This Conservation Area Appraisal will enhance understanding of Clacton-on-Sea and its development, informing future management and development.

### 1.4 Planning Policy Context

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990). In particular Section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural and historic interest as Conservation Areas, and section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced. Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas. National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in chapter 16 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2021).

The Clacton Seafront Conservation Area is located within Tendring District. Local planning policy is set out in the Tendring District Council Local Plan (2007). Saved policies which are relevant to heritage assets include:

- QL9 – Design of New Development
- QL11 – Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses
- ER29 – Amusement Centres
- EN1- Landscape Character
- EN17- Conservation Areas
- EN18- Fascia and Shop Signs in Conservation Areas
- EN18 (a) and (b)- Advert Control within Conservation Areas
- EN20- Demolition within Conservation Areas
- EN21- Demolition of Listed Buildings
- EN22- Extension and Alterations to Listed Buildings
- EN23- Development within the Proximity of a Listed Building
- EN25- Satellite Dishes on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas
- CL3- Tourist Related Facilities along Clacton Seafront
- CL5- Amusement Centres
- CL17- The Gardens Area of Special Character



## 2.0 Clacton Seafront Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

Clacton-on-Sea is located within Tendring District, situated south of Great Clacton on the coast stretching approximately 4 miles from Jaywick in the west to Holland-on-Sea at the east.<sup>2</sup> The town is the largest developed area within the Tendring peninsula, and historically evolved as a seaside resort which still attracts high volumes of tourism during the summer months. Facing south east over the channel, the ground slopes up to the north with high points on Pier Avenue at around 70 ft above sea level.

The Conservation Area stretches along the seafront between Martello Tower F and a historic hotel called 'The Towers'. At the centre of the area is Clacton Pier including its adjacent strip of beach. The designation extends to include some of the planned resort between Marine Parade, Church Road and High Street, and the roads immediately north of Marine Parade West. The Conservation Area was identified in the Conservation Areas at Risk Register for 2015 by Historic England, and while it is noted to be 'improving', there is opportunity for further enhancement to the setting of heritage assets within the area, particularly the Grade II listed and Scheduled Monument Martello Tower F, the Pier, and the Grade II listed Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Light and St Osyth.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., VCH

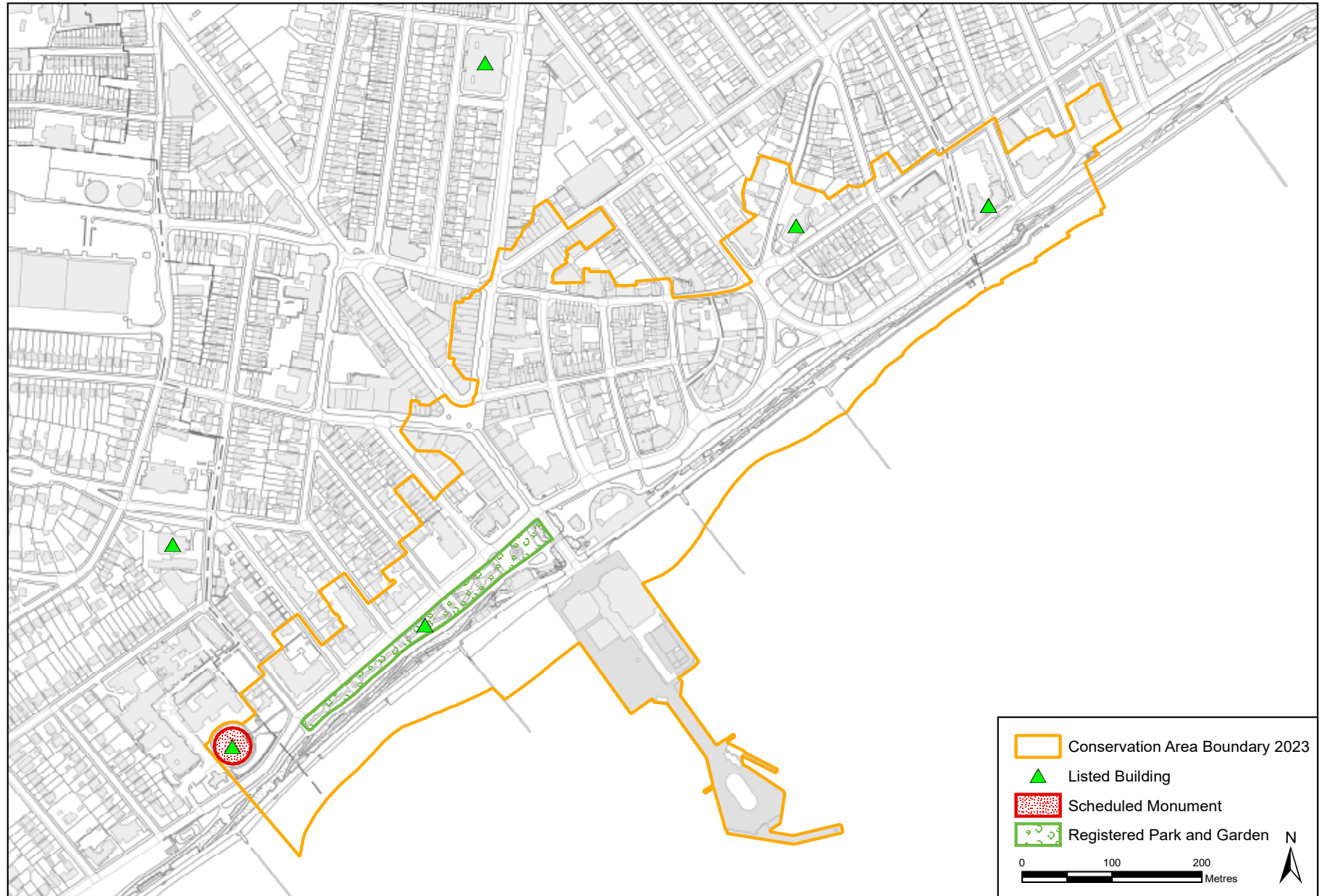


Figure 1 Clacton Seafront Conservation Area within its wider context ©OS Maps



## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview history of Clacton Seafront and its surrounding landscape. The principal settlement in the Clacton area was Great Clacton village, located north of the seafront, with which Clacton-on-Sea shares its name. The name Clacton derives from Early Saxon settlement in this area and its toponymy relates to the Saxon chieftain 'Clacc'. The area of Great Clacton is listed as 'Clachintuna' in the Domesday Book (1086) and was occupied by forty-five tenant farmers and fifty small holders living in cottages. The area of Clacton-on-Sea was largely undeveloped until the nineteenth century, and the agricultural landscape of scattered farmsteads and manors were replaced by Peter Bruff's designed seaside town from the mid-nineteenth century.

### Prehistory

Evidence for settlement and activity in the area has been demonstrated from the earliest of prehistoric periods. The 'Clactonian' flint working industry is named after Palaeolithic artefacts that have been recovered from the area around the foreshore and town. In addition to the worked flints and tools, a rare wooden spear dating to c.400,000 years BC was discovered in a foreshore exposure of Pleistocene sediments. Mammal remains including horse, deer, rhinoceros and bos have been recovered from the Pleistocene sediments which also yielded the Palaeolithic flint tools (HER reference Nos. 2854, 2855, 2865, 2866). Further north east on the beach, located closer to the Pier, both Palaeolithic and Neolithic implements have been found (HER reference Nos.2878, 2879).

Iron Age activity is evidenced by the large quantities of finds from the Bull Hill pottery industry and the 'Clacton hoard' of gold coins found on the beach. Roman remains in the town include two Roman urns (HER reference No. 2880), which were found during construction of the former Grand Hotel, with others reputedly unearthed on the site of the Palace Theatre, Holland Road, Vista Road and near Little Holland Hall.

There is little evidence for settlement or activity from the early to late medieval period. The Chapman & Andre map of 1777 depicts a single road set back from the coast linking dispersed

isolated houses and farmsteads. A Martello Tower was erected between 1809 -12 as part of the defences against Napoleon (HER 5). The area was also of strategic military importance during both World War I and II. A WWI Royal Navy Air Service seaplane station was sited on the West Beach, between two former piers, with the station Head Quarters in the nearby Martello Tower (HER 19348). Much of the seafront was covered in defensive structures during WWII (HER 21179) and many roads leading from the promenade had road barriers erected.

### The early environment of the area

Prior to its development as a seaside resort, the area of Clacton was an agricultural landscape with dispersed farmsteads connected by historic lanes. This arrangement is illustrated on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 which is the earliest cartographic source to depict the area in detail (Figure 2).

The principal route from the settlement of Great Clacton to the seafront followed south from the village through Magdalen Green and The Wick (named Wash Farm on the 1874 First Edition Ordnance Survey and evident in existing street names). Tangential roads connected this with the smaller farmsteads towards the coast; these lanes are still evident in the street pattern today, the most notable on the Chapman and Andre map connecting Little Holland with the farmsteads to the south of Great Clacton, which survive now as Old Road, Rosemary Road and Holland Road.

Due to its proximity to the coast, the area now known as Clacton-on-Sea became a key area for sea defence; elements of its maritime history are evident in the town today, with the Martello Tower F forming a landmark building within the Conservation Area. With the east coast of England under threat of invasion during the Napoleonic Wars, signal stations were established on the Clacton Cliffs and Jaywick, forming a line of communication with the barracks at Colchester to warn of an enemy attack. Three gun batteries were also constructed, and another was added during the renewal of hostilities in 1803. The battery installed in 1803 at Clacton provided the outer defence of for the Martello Tower until it was destroyed in 1883 due to coastal erosion. Clacton's Martello Tower F, constructed within a moat in 1808 with finishing guns installed in 1812, is a significant landmark. The tower forms part of a network of





Figure 2 Chapman and Andre Map 1777

forts constructed to defend the south and east coast of England from Sussex to Suffolk, and when constructed stood in isolation on the coastline at Clacton. In order to provide military access to the beach, gaps were cut into the cliffs. The grounds of the tower later became a popular site for visitors and parties through the nineteenth century, as shown in the depiction of the site in 1880 in Figure 3.

The site stayed in use, unlike others in the defensive line, and remained Crown property until 1904.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Clacton-on-Sea began to gradually expand to accommodate a steady rise in visitors to the area. These early visitors made use of the beach, a useful respite spot for passing ships due to the fresh water stream, and the cliff gaps cut by the military providing access to overnight accommodation that began to be provided by the local farms and two private houses, Osborne House and Verandah Lodge. While Clacton-on-Sea was starting to rise in popularity, there was no large scale development impact on the area at this time, with the built environment limited to dispersed farms and some converted lodges and guesthouses.



Figure 3 Martello Tower F 1880 (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)

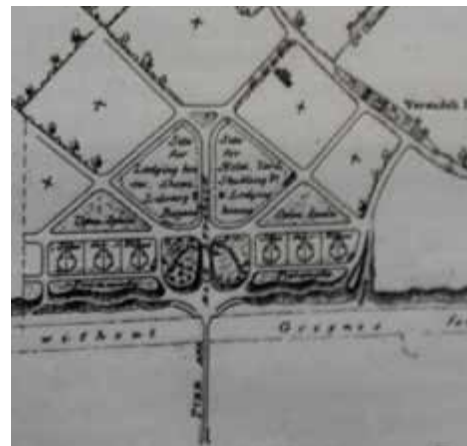


Figure 4 Resort original scheme by Bruff 1871 (VCH, 2012)

**Seaside resort**

The first substantial development of the area began during the 1860s, with the sale of Cliff Lands following the lapse of a trust fund, which had prevented earlier sale. Civil engineer Peter Bruff acquired the land along the seafront after it became available. Nicolas Pevsner notes in his Essex edition of *The Buildings of England* series that 'it is at Clacton that [Bruff] made the greatest impact. He purchased land in 1864, drew up a scheme for laying out the town in 1870, the pier opened in 1871, and the Royal Hotel in 1872. The arrival of the railway in 1882 ensured the resort's continued success'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> J. Bettley and N. Pevsner, *Essex* (Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England), (Yale University Press) 2007, p237

Bruff's vision for the seaside resort was made possible by his immediate action in acquiring support for the construction of a railway to Clacton-on-Sea, and to build a pier. Clacton grew steadily throughout the late nineteenth century, with development overseen by Bruff and two additional development companies, which later merged into the Clacton-on-Sea General Land, Building and Investment Co Ltd. The Company controlled development and bought Bruff's remaining holdings to the west of Pier Avenue; it also stimulated the continued growth of the resort through the promotion of steamboat and railway connections, creating a high-class image for Clacton-on-Sea. The railway and steamer continued to bring high numbers of day-trippers to Clacton, and this growth also resulted in increase to the residential population.<sup>4</sup>

Bruff's original plan (Figure 4) highlights the intended development of the seafront, which would be dominated by large hotel buildings overlooking the greens, cliff and sea with the Pier forming the centrepiece.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Map (Figure 5) depicts development which took place to the east of Pier Avenue. This included a number of villas and hotels on Marine Parade, set within large plots and bounded by streets orientated on the coastal views to the south, and others fronting Rosemary Road. The Pier is prominent, although not yet central to the development, with few seafront buildings to the west of the area.

<sup>4</sup> Allan Brodie, *The Seafront* (Historic England) 2018



Figure 5 Ordnance Survey Map 1874

Late nineteenth century illustrations of Clacton-on-Sea depict the open character of the seafront, the prominent focus being the grand Royal Hotel building and the Pier (Figure 6). The Pier was open in character, and used for promenading with a band playing three times a day for holidaymakers.<sup>5</sup>

Historic images show the creation of formal gardens surrounding the Pier Gap, including the sunken Pavillion and band stand to the east. They also depict the additional facilities to the pier, including the entrance shops constructed in 1885, and further growth of the built town to the north and west.<sup>6</sup>

The resort continued to grow in popularity, with historic sources and imagery at the turn of the twentieth century illustrating the attractive seaside town flooded with visitors and typical seaside amusements (Figures 7 and 8).

<sup>5</sup> VCH, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> VCH, ibid.

Figure 9 illustrates this further, providing an example of the railway advertisement posters which championed the English seaside holiday, of which Clacton-on-Sea was heavily represented. This particular poster illustrates the close link between the sea and beach, and the expansive glass fronted pavilion and bandstand, catering to a crowd of stylish visitors. Entertainment halls and theatres across the town were also well attended by fashionable audiences, and hotels and villas, such as the Osbourne Hotel, advertised assembly rooms which could accommodate up to 600 guests.<sup>7</sup>

The residential population of the town rose at this time by 811% between 1871 and 1911 to 10,000 inhabitants, and by the end of the Edwardian era Clacton's image had also shifted somewhat, with the wider accessibility of cheaper transport and increasing popularity of the town.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> VCH, ibid.

<sup>8</sup> VCH, ibid.



Figure 6 Royal Hotel and Pier 1880 (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)



Figure 7 Pavillion. 1920 (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)



Figure 8 Sunken Band Stand Clacton on Sea c. 1916 ERO D/DU 1464/137



Figure 9 LNER Poster for Clacton-on-Sea 1926 (Science Museum Group Ref: 10173764)

By the outbreak of World War One Clacton's predominant character as a resort shifted, as it became a strategic location for military defence and operations. The coastal settlement had been previously used for Naval and Military manoeuvres as shown in (Figure 10), which increased during World War One. The outbreak of World War Two in 1939 resulted in the construction of pill boxes and further trenches were cut into the cliffs. The settlement received fewer visitors during time of conflict.<sup>9</sup>

The 1939 OS Map (Figure 11) depicts the addition of the Butlin's resort in the West Clacton Estate. This was established in 1936 and opened as a park in 1938. In its heyday it was a great success, attracting large numbers of holidaymakers to the area.<sup>10</sup> However, the outbreak of war resulted in its repurpose, initially as an internment camp and later as a training site for Pioneer Corps. After it reopened in 1946, the holiday camp returned to its former success; however, it was closed in 1983 after changing trends gave way to package holidays, and the Butlin's holiday camp fell out of fashion.

The outbreak of war impacted the town with air raids damaging a number of buildings including the prominent corner plot bank development on Rosemary Road in 1941 and Ernest Johnson's auctioneer offices opposite completely destroyed (Figure 12).

Post war development of Clacton was consistent and steady, with increasing residential development and infill largely linking the towns of Clacton-on-Sea, Great Clacton and Little Holland (now Holland-on-Sea).

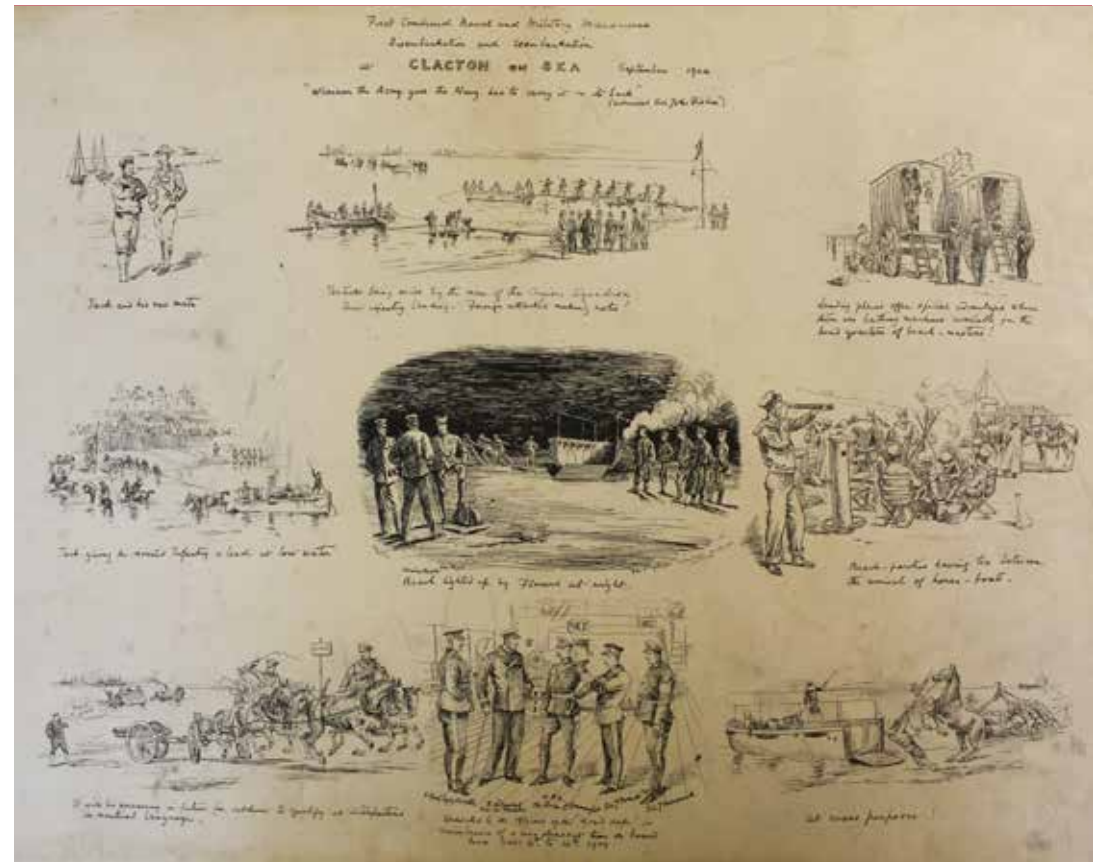


Figure 10 Clacton on Sea Naval and Military Manoeuvres 1904 ERO I/Mp 86/1/5

<sup>9</sup> ERO D/DU 1464/13 7

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.clactonhistory.co.uk/the-butlin-s-story/>



Figure 11 Ordnance Survey Map 1939



Figure 12 Air Raid Damage 1941 (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)



### 2.3 Designation of the Conservation Area

The Clacton Seafront Conservation Area was first designated in 2001. Tendring District Council prepared Conservation Area Character Appraisals for each of its Conservation Areas in 2005 based on earlier, but unadopted, reports from designation in 2001.

Consultation for the original appraisals involved town and parish councils and local amenity bodies. The results of the consultation exercise were reported to the Council's Planning Portfolio Holder when the document was formally considered for adoption as Council planning policy. Based on the results of this consultation, the appraisal was amended and updated to reflect changes which had taken place since 2001. Much of the descriptive material used in the consultants' report of 2001 was retained.

A survey of Conservation Areas carried out by Historic England in 2015 identified Clacton Seafront as a vulnerable but 'improving' Conservation Area. The Conservation Area was included on the Heritage at Risk Register for 2015. Forty Conservation Areas were identified in total, four of which were coastal areas (Dovercourt, Clacton Seafront, Cromer and Felixstowe South). These areas shared common issues, and in 2017 a report was produced to consider the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area further and highlight its key vulnerabilities and strategies for enhancement.

As a result, the Conservation Area has been updated in order to reflect changes in the area since 2005 and the findings of the Clacton Seafront Vulnerable Conservation Area report of 2017.

### 2.4 Revisions to the Boundary

As part of this review, the Conservation Area boundary has been revised to reflect changing methodologies of good practice and provide a clearer strategy which better acknowledges the characteristics of Clacton Seafront's unique built environment.

#### Reductions

The area has been reduced to the east, to exclude modern development on the south side of Church Road which makes a negative or neutral contribution to the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

#### Additions

Parts of the area have been extended to the east, to include a consistent row of well-preserved historic dwellings of architectural interest on the north side of Church Road and north side of Holland Road, and the opposite side of the street on Church Road to reflect the symmetry of the tree lined street.

The eastern boundary on the seafront has been extended to include the pavilion, which terminates the view on St Paul's Road and contributes to the seaside character of the Conservation Area.

The area has been extended to the north to include a greater portion of the town centre; this will incorporate additional parts of the historic planned seaside resort, as well as areas and buildings which contribute to our understanding of the development of Clacton-on-Sea, therefore making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This addition also includes part of Station Road which connects the station with the main town, forming the principal approach to the town centre and terminating with the public square on Pier Avenue. This addition links key historic components of the town.



## 2.5 Designated Heritage Assets

The designated heritage assets within the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area include:

### Listing

Grade II Martello Tower And Brick Lined Moat, List Entry No. 1111520  
Grade II Clacton-on-Sea War Memorial, List Entry No. 1448050  
Grade II Lych Gate at Our Lady of Light and St Osyth, List Entry No. 1420919  
Grade II Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Light and St Osyth, List Entry No. 1271909  
Grade II Colchester Institute Main Building, List Entry No. 1380565  
Grade II Row Of 16 Street Lights South Side Of Esplanade Between Beach Road And West Road, List Entry No. 1111519

### Scheduled Monument

Martello tower F, Marine Parade West, Clacton-on-Sea, List Entry No.1016555

### Registered Parks and Gardens

Grade II Clacton Seafront Gardens, List Entry No. 1001626

## 2.6 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

There is currently no list of buildings of local historical and/or architectural interest in the District. Buildings within the Conservation Area which should be considered for inclusion are identified below. These buildings have been identified as they are either considered to be good examples of their type or architectural style, are prominent local landmarks, demonstrate use of local materials or design features, or are connected to local historical events, activities or people, and are all relatively complete in their survival.

### Local List

- Pair of coastguard cottages, Tower Road
- Edwardian detached dwelling, No. 2 Alton Road
- The Sandrock, Penfold Road
- The Pier
- The Royal Hotel, Marine Parade East
- Lloyds building, Pier Avenue
- Natwest building, Pier Avenue
- Post Office building, High Street
- Old Lifeboat House, Carnarvon Road
- Row of gault brick cottages, Church Road
- Arts and Crafts style dwelling, 15 Church Road



## 2.7 Heritage at Risk

In the 2017 report on Vulnerable Conservation Areas: Clacton-on-Sea, the Conservation Area was described as:

*“The core Clacton Seafront Conservation Area is made up of a comparatively large series of inter-related heritage assets, including a Scheduled Monument, a Registered Park and Garden and several Listed Buildings. However these heritage assets are currently not being exploited to the optimum potential, with significance often obscured or degraded by surrounding development. This is compounded by a series of insensitive and damaging works, on both a large scale- such as unsuitable modern development- and on a more localised scale- such the replacement of traditional features in modern designs and materials. In order to secure a more positive future for the Conservation Area the issues facing key buildings and open spaces need to be addressed. Most significantly these are the Martello Tower at the western end of the Conservation Area, the Pier which is at the centre of the Conservation Area and the associated road Pier Avenue opposite, the Esplanade Hotel on Marine Parade East and the Junction of Anglefield at the eastern end of the Conservation Area.”*

The report highlights that the key areas within the Conservation Area which are currently at risk are the Martello Tower, the pier and Pier Avenue, the historic seafront hotels (including the Esplanade Hotel), and Anglefield Junction.

### **Martello Tower F**

Martello Tower F (Figure 13 and 14) is a significant heritage asset and prominent feature within the Conservation Area. Its significance is derived from its architectural and historic values, and its relationship as part of a wider military defensive network across the east and south east coast of England. It is also significant as the only remaining moated example on the Essex coast, creating its unique setting.<sup>11</sup> In its current condition, foliage detracts from the appreciation of the site, and tall impervious fencing prevents the site from being seen or readily accessed. The twentieth-century coastguard tower, located on the tower, is currently vacant and in a poor condition. This forms a visually dominant feature of the Martello Tower, which detracts from our appreciation of it.

<sup>11</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1016555>



Figure 13 The Martello Tower (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)

The Tower would historically have been the most dominant feature on the Clacton seafront, however its prominence is now reduced. Established planting which currently surrounds the site impacts on the visibility of the Tower itself and obscures the moat which is a key and unique feature of the asset.

### The Pier

The Pier is the central focus for the historic planned seaside resort, utilising the Pier Gap to connect the beach with the settlement. It is a prominent feature within the Conservation Area, clearly visible from the Grade II Clacton Seafront Registered Park and Garden, and it makes a positive contribution to our understanding of the development of Clacton-on-Sea. Currently, the Pier is negatively impacted by modern features and inappropriate additions within its setting which often overpower its historic character. The Pier itself includes a number of modern amusement arcades, stands and rides, and its principal façade is dominated by a large LED screen, signage, and amusements through which the Pier itself is accessed. These modern features reflect its importance as a key source of seaside entertainment, and reflect its continued use by visitors to Clacton-on-Sea; however, these features also impact its aesthetic and architectural values as a promenade public walk, and landing point for vessels (Figures 15, 16 and 17).

Some elements of the Pier detract from its significance as they divert attention away from the significance of the structure. While arcades and modern rides contribute to the seaside character of the Conservation Area, other features of the Pier which are kinetic and create noise pollution, such as

the LED screen, are not in keeping with its historic character and are harmful to the appreciation of the Pier as a heritage asset.

### Hotels and guesthouses

The seafront comprises of a number of key buildings of heritage value, including the Esplanade Hotel, and the continuous line of seafront development positively contributes to the character of the Marine Parade. However, some elements of this frontage are not in keeping with the historic hotel retreats and the grandiose corner plot developments typical of seaside resorts. The Westcliff Hotel, Premier Inn and those buildings on the western side of Anglefield Junction introduce new materials, colours and massing to the Conservation Area and are aesthetically intrusive. There are also examples of inappropriate signage and the introduction of a dark colour palette for prominent seafront buildings, which prevent there from being a continuous and harmonious visual rhythm to the street scape and obscure architectural details (Figure 18).

The Anglefield Junction is a noteworthy area of green space within the Conservation Area, and forms part of the key views of significant buildings such as the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Light and St. Osyth, the United Reform Church and the former Lifeboat Station. It also provides inter-visibility between these buildings and the seafront, enhancing their setting. The junction, however, is negatively impacted by the uncharacteristic development to the west (Figure 19). The twentieth century infill is uncharacteristic in terms of its material and massing and negatively impacts upon the



Figure 14 The Martello Tower

attractive row of terraced housing to the east and the designated Church of Our Lady of Light and St. Osyth to the north east.

As highlighted throughout the Vulnerable Conservation Area Report, the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area has suffered considerable harm from the gradual, and in some



Figure 15 Clacton Pier, ERO I/MP 86



Figure 16 Clacton Pier, ERO I/MP 86

cases irreversible, loss of architectural details which contribute to the town’s unique and distinctive character. The general repair of buildings in the Conservation Area is deteriorating at present, with numerous buildings in a poor state. The Conservation Area as a whole is at risk from further cumulative deterioration through inconsistent boundary treatment, and the inappropriate replacement of doors and windows, which particularly affects the residential development to the west of the area. The majority of dwellings located off Marine Parade have lost their original boundary treatment to make way for paved front garden spaces to provide parking. This has led to the deterioration of these residential streets, and any further loss would be detrimental to the character of the area.

The architectural detailing of buildings (decorative balustrades, prominent turrets and bay windows etc.) is one of the defining characteristics of Clacton Seafront. Few modern developments have embraced this aspect of the built environment and do not incorporate decorative detailing in either a modern or traditional style, lacking the architectural interest and quality of the more historic buildings. This creates disconnect between modern development and the historic buildings of Clacton, and these features have been significantly reduced throughout the area as a result of their gradual loss and lack of maintenance.

Roof extensions are also widespread throughout the residential areas of the Conservation Area, many of which are considered intrusive to its character and appearance. In particular, the variation in their design disrupts the continuity of the planned streetscape and detracts from the architectural quality of some of the buildings.



Figure 17 View of Clacton Pier

## 2.8 Archaeological Potential

Much of the area has been developed and there is likely to be disturbance to archaeological deposits caused by building foundations, cellars etc. However, much of the archaeological potential of the area lies in the geological deposits that underlie the area and are exposed along the foreshore and these are unlikely to have previously been significantly impacted upon.

The Pleistocene sediments, from which both human and mammalian remains have previously been recovered, underlie the area and are recorded at surface level. These deposits represent the former courses of the Rivers Thames and Medway and are recognised as being geological sediments of international importance and are protected in places as a SSSI (Site of Specialist Scientific Interest). Although some areas have been developed, there is high potential for the survival of further Palaeolithic remains including Pleistocene faunal remains within the gravels and interglacial fine grained sediments within the Conservation Area that may be impacted by future development. These remains will also be present in the cliffs, and may be exposed in the foreshore at times, so any work in these areas may impact upon the erosion of the Pleistocene deposits.

Within the Conservation Area the historic street layout is still discernible, including the earliest road noted on the Chapman & Andre map of 1777. As such, there is potential for the survival of below ground remains of former houses/ farmsteads in areas that have not been heavily developed.

The Martello tower is surrounded by a moat or ditch and the area around the Tower has remained undeveloped. There is potential for archaeological remains to be preserved and palaeoenvironmental deposits to survive within the deeper deposits of the ditch or moat.

Little of the WWI defences are likely to survive and all WWII defences have been destroyed. There is some possibility that the bases of these structures may survive below ground in undisturbed areas.



Figure 18 Example of inappropriate signage and paint colour on West Marine Parade



Figure 19 Uncharacteristic development at Anglefield Junction



## 3.0 Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Summary

#### Introduction

The special interest of the Conservation Area principally derives from its design as a seaside resort, built around a formal street pattern which is still discernible today. The Victorian and Edwardian architecture is of varied condition throughout the town, however many of the principal facades have been retained. High quality architectural features highlight the vision of Peter Bruff and subsequent planners for Clacton's development as a fashionable seaside town. The stretch of the seafront, including the Pier and the Martello Tower, makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance Conservation Area; it is this coastal setting which gave rise to Clacton-on-Sea's built environment, reflective of its strategic location and consequential development as part of a defensive network and later seaside resort.

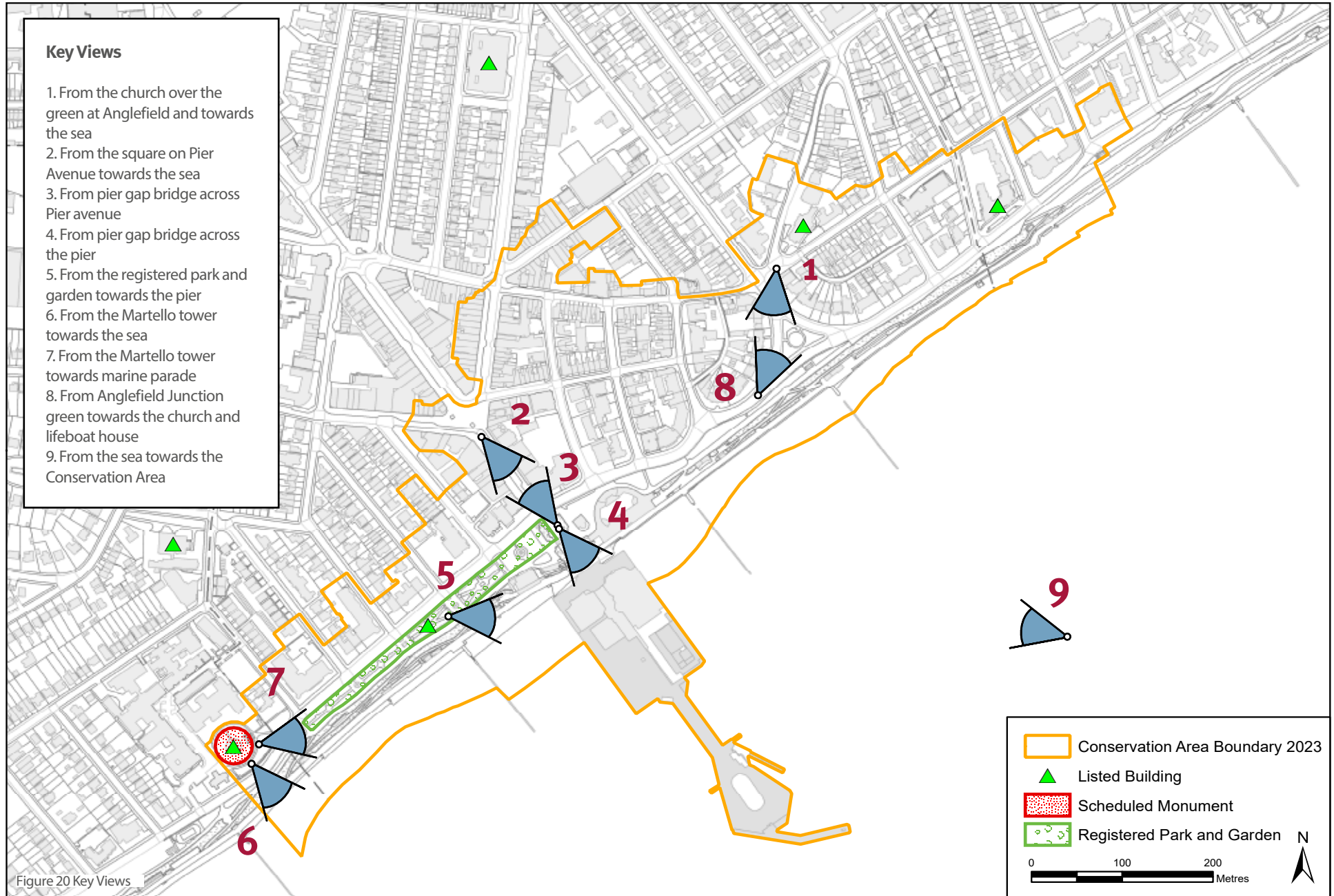
#### Land Usage

The Conservation Area predominantly comprises of commercial, residential and hotel buildings. There are also significant areas of open green space which are recognised in Tendring District Council's Local Plan (2007) along the seafront, including the Grade II Registered Park and Garden and the triangular green at the Anglefield Junction. There are areas of public parking towards the commercial town centre, and surrounding the hotels and guesthouses on the seafront.

The commercial centre of the town within the Conservation Area includes Pier Avenue, Station Road, Rosemary Road and the High Street.

#### Key Views

Key views are identified on Figure 20 . Note the views included are a selection of key views; this list is not exhaustive and there may be other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the conservation area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.





### Landscaping and Open Spaces

There are several key areas of public realm within the Conservation Area, particularly along Pier Avenue where considerable recent refurbishment includes the creation of a pedestrianised plaza at the junction of Pier Avenue and Station Road. This makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, creating a space where buildings at this junction can be appreciated. Planting also enhances the character of the area but, although this is not extensive, in places it has been badly sited and impacts on the view towards the Pier Gap from the square which would have historically been a long view down the avenue towards the seafront. Street furniture here is modern in design and appearance, but well maintained.

The public realm surrounding the Pier Gap is a key contributor to the character of the Conservation Area and enhances our understanding of its historic development and the significance of the seafront. The west of the Pier Gap comprises of a Registered Park and Garden, this includes a series of formal gardens connected by a walkway and unified by high quality street furniture, planting, and pavilions. To the east of the Pier Gap is an area of modern seaside amusements, which have contributed to the continued development and use of Clacton seafront as a seaside resort, but do little to enhance or preserve its historic character. These two sides of the Pier Gap would benefit from a consistent approach particularly regarding quality of street furniture and planting to unify the Registered Park and Garden to the west with the amusements and open space to the east, as well as the area forming a more attractive entrance to the Pier.

The Anglefield Junction comprises an area of a green which has historically provided an area of significant public realm space, characteristic of seaside development. The area once included substantial formal planting, shrubs, trees, and benches, and a cannon providing a connection with the area's maritime history. Currently, this space includes some benches, shrubs, and tree planting, but due to the current sparsity of planting it makes a limited contribution to the area and does not enhance the character of the seafront.

The green surrounding the Martello Tower also contains some shrub and tree planting, with two dominant trees to the north east of the Tower, and some street furniture and information boards.

The Conservation Area is currently lacking in private front garden landscaping, which means that front boundary treatments which contain planting and landscaping make a positive contribution to the area. Good examples exist on Tower Road, Agate Road, Church Road and south side of Orwell Road where the retention of front gardens and green boundary treatments enhance the streetscape.

The tree lined avenues on Station Road and Church Road enhance the character of the Conservation Area; Station Road planting marks the route of the central street which contributes to way finding between the Station and Pier. Church Road planting provides symmetry to the residential street, enhancing vistas to the east and west.

### Traditional/Local Building Materials and Details

Many properties and boundary treatments across the area make a positive contribution to the character of Clacton-on-Sea through their use of traditional building materials; these typically enhance the seaside character of the town, and provide clear indication of its creation as a polite retreat for nineteenth and early twentieth century society.

Buildings are predominantly constructed in red brick with some gault brick in places, typical of Georgian and Victorian development, with some rendered and painted in a light but varying colour palette, archetypal of seaside towns. Larger corner plot developments and commercial arcades, such as the Operetta, include stone and plaster decorative detailing. Some properties include architectural details reflective of their contemporary style, such as clinker brick boundary walls and timber framing on arts and crafts style buildings.

Architectural details including decorative brick, stone, plasterwork and carpentry, turrets, balconies, and bay windows etc., are some of the defining characteristics of Clacton-on-Sea. While few modern developments appear to have embraced these aspects of the built environment and fail to incorporate decorative detailing in either a modern or traditional style, it still exists in properties across the Conservation Area and is worth preserving and enhancing.

Key architectural features evident across the Conservation Area include gables, predominantly found in the residential areas of the Conservation Area. These make a positive contribution with Dutch gables particularly reflective of its coastal character. Balconies, often accompanied by decorative iron balustrades and sometimes recessed with arches, are also reflective of the seafront character of the area, largely orientated to allow for sea views to the south east. Turrets are also a feature found across the area, and are clear indicators of the coastal character of the area. Turrets vary in their architectural style, however all make a distinctive combined contribution.



Example of Dutch gable frontage with balconies overlooking the seafront



### 3.2 Character Analysis

The Conservation Area is divided into three character areas reflecting the predominant land use, location and historic development of the town. The three character areas which comprise the Conservation Area are the Commercial Centre, and Residential Area and Seafront.

#### The Commercial Centre

This area is characterised by its dense urban streetscape with prominent shop frontages. Some roads have been largely pedestrianised and enhanced with planting and street furniture.

The built environment is characterised predominantly by nineteenth and twentieth century development. Development is typically formed of two to three storey terraces constructed in brick. Some buildings are painted, usually in light pastel colours evocative of the seaside setting with some in darker uncharacteristic colours, but the majority are unpainted with visible brick banding detail on the upper floors. The street level is dominated by modern shop fronts and signage, however some historic architectural details are visible in places, particularly along the High Street where pilasters and decorative capitals have been retained and add character to the shop fronts.

Pier Avenue is characterised by its dominant shop frontages particularly those of the gaming arcades which, although garish, are typical of the twentieth century development of seaside resorts. Views of the Pier Gap to the south are terminated by Pier Gap Bridge (Figure 21) and to the north by the central square (Figure 22). Buildings here are three storeys tall, with balconies at first floor on the western side of the avenue. The wide paving of the avenue and the square provides a distinct pedestrian setting to surrounding buildings.

The square itself enhances the character of the commercial centre, providing an aesthetic setting to the surrounding buildings, and creating a sense of place within the commercial core. Buildings here are varied in height with smaller neo-Georgian buildings on West Avenue, including the Lloyds Bank building built in 1920s in a classical style (Figure 24), and taller four storey buildings to the west and east. The Lloyds Bank building has a prominent stone façade in contrast to the brick elevations of the other buildings on West Avenue, although the stone dressings of the building at nos. 4 - 10 provide some coherence in the use of materials, if not stylistically.



Figure 21 Pier Gap Bridge (looking South)



Figure 22 Pier Avenue (looking North)

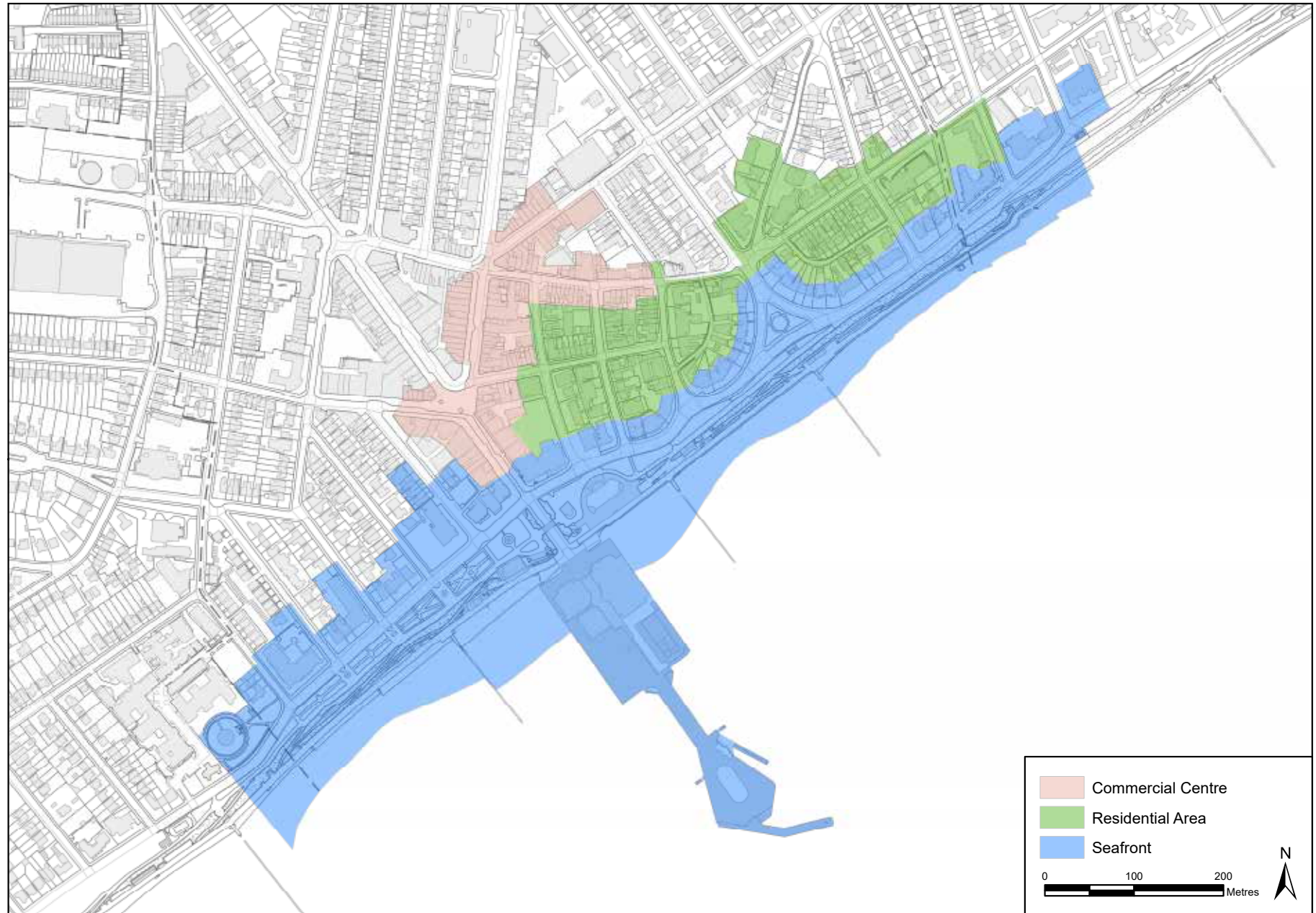


Figure 23 Character Areas Map



Figure 24 Lloyds Bank Building



Figure 25 Natwest Bank Building



Figure 26 High Street



Figure 27 The Operetta

Pallister Road joins the intersection between Pier Avenue and Station Road at its western end, forming the northern side of the central square. The large corner plot development, currently Natwest Bank, was built 1898-9 of red brick with sandstone dressings and overlooks the square (Figure 25). This building makes a positive contribution to the character of the area due to its high quality Victorian architectural detailing and its prominence in the street scene. Some buildings at the north west end of Pallister Road make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area drawn from their simple nineteenth century architectural form and detailing; however, at ground floor level the historic character of the street is negatively impacted by inappropriate, modern signage. In addition, poor quality window replacements and a general lack of maintenance to the building stock means there is opportunity for enhancement here. Further east, on the north side of the street, a row of Victorian terraced housing forms a residential street-scape of a nineteenth century character. These buildings have largely retained their front boundary treatments, porches, and bay windows; however the majority have had inconsistent loft conversions and roof extensions, which impact the historic form of the row.

The High Street retains a historic town centre character, with consistent brick terraced buildings forming a strong and rhythmic vista. Buildings are decorated with simple architectural details, including parapets, gauged brick lintels and decorative stone banding, with some buildings being more elaborately decorated with faience and stone dressings. Some buildings are in a poor condition and have been negatively affected by inappropriate signage and window replacement (Figure 26).

Rosemary Road retains its historic character similar to that of the High Street. It includes smaller buildings to the south, typically of two storeys, and three storeys to the north. A large nineteenth century red brick building, the Operatta, dominates the western end of the north side of the road and occupies the full plot between Rosemary Road and High Street, with a frontage on both. It is an imposing building, decorated with faience dressings and classical-style details, including a central pediment round-headed first floor windows with keystone detailing, and the prominent first floor leaded bow window. Originally constructed as a Theatre and known as Operetta House, the modern shopfronts and signage now detract from its architectural quality and grandeur (Figure 27).

Station Road, a wide arterial route through the commercial centre, is characteristically of a grander scale than the smaller commercial streets to the east. This road forms the approach to the town centre and Pier Avenue from the station. It comprises a tree lined and largely pedestrianised street. To the south of the street many buildings have lost their original balconies, have had poor quality window replacements and are dominated by intrusive signage which detracts from the facades of the buildings. Some shop units have expanded over three buildings which has resulted in some loss of smaller frontages more typical of historic plots.

The intersection of Station Road, Rosemary Road and High Street is now a busy road junction dominated by pedestrian crossings, traffic lights and road signage. However, well designed and attractive nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings purposefully dominate the corner plots between the roads and made a positive contribution to the area. It also forms the northern extent of the Commercial Centre Character Area, and the boundary of the Conservation Area. Either side of Station Road, on the south side of Rosemary Road, are a pair of neo-Georgian three storey red brick buildings with slate roofs behind parapets and sash windows with simple stone surrounds. The ground floors are dominated by modern shop signage and the sash windows to the upper floors are later replacements but the buildings, with their chamfered corners, create a gateway leading the eye south along Station Road and into the core of the Conservation Area. The corner plot between Rosemary Road and High Street is occupied by the former Town Hall; an early twentieth century building of three storeys, also neo-classical in design. The prominent Flemish-bond red brick elevations are complemented by stone cladding below the ground floor cills, a stone band and keystones. The round-headed arched windows to the ground floor add interest to the building, and a large doorway with stone surround on the chamfered corner creates a focal point, particularly combined with the clock tower above. The building located at the corner of High Street and Station Road has a characterful apsed end facing south east with an attractive historic shopfront, curved first floor window with a deep stone band above, terminating in a prominent copper-clad cupola (Figure 28). These buildings form an interesting and characterful group marking the boundary to this part of the Conservation Area.



Figure 28 Corner building of Station Road and High Street



Figure 29 Parking on Orwell Road



Figure 30 Orwell Road

The Commercial Centre Character Area is impacted by the lack of maintenance of some key buildings, particularly along High Street and Rosemary Road. Apertures on first and second floors are generally in a poor condition, detracting from the aesthetic contribution they would otherwise make.

### Residential Area

Many of the streets, particularly those within Bruff's original plans, are orientated to provide terminating views of the sea and open space, often with pavilions located in view. The area is generally characterised by small-scale development with rows of terraced housing towards the west and some larger semi-detached properties at the east, with detached dwellings on corner plots. These streets exist today as they were originally laid out in the original master plan, and therefore relate historically, visually and in function to the seafront.

Rosemary Crescent is perhaps the most uncharacteristic street within this character area as it provides access to the rears of the buildings fronting Anglefield and Beach Road and is dominated by parking areas, garaging and the untidy back elevations of some of the buildings.

The north of Orwell Road comprises Victorian terraced dwellings. These have been much altered by the recladding of roofs, window replacements and loss of front boundary treatments. This, along with the open parking to the north west of the street, has a negative impact on the character of the area (Figure 29). To the south of the street, boundary treatments are mostly well preserved and often planted, with rendered terraced housing painted in pastel colours typical of seaside development. This makes a positive contribution to the character of the residential character area (Figure 30).

Beach Road is also characterised by its terraced Victorian development, many of which are painted in a 'seaside colour palette' and have also retained their front boundary treatments. Inconsistent roof extensions, window replacements and modern infill development have, however, been intrusive to the quality of the streetscape. Modern infill to the south west and east of the street are sympathetic in their generous front boundary treatments, however they are uncharacteristic in their scale and massing, relative to earlier buildings within the street.



Figure 31 Church of Our Lady of Light and Saint Osyth



Figure 32 Rosemary Road



Rosemary Road comprises dense residential development fronting the street pavement. These buildings typically two storeys high and rendered with modern alterations and several roof extensions. Much of the development makes little contribution to the character of this part of the conservation area with unsympathetic alterations to roofs and ad hoc alterations to fenestration resulting in a loss of building form and a disjointed appearance. There are two buildings of note including the building at the south east of the street which was most recently in use as a restaurant and, while currently vacant and in poor condition, retains some architectural features of interest including a prominent Dutch gable. A modern infill development of note at 5 Rosemary Road is broadly Art Deco in style and makes best use of its corner plot with Rosemary Crescent (Figure 32).

The United Reformed Church and the Church of Our Lady of Light and Saint Osyth are located on the junction of Holland Road and Church Road (Figure 31). The Church of Our Lady of Light and Saint Osyth is Neo-Norman with randomly coursed Kentish ragstone elevations and square corner turrets with pyramidal stone caps. The church is set back slightly from the road behind a half height wall with hedge. The churchyard is entered to the west through the 1925 Arts and Crafts style Grade II listed Lych Gate. The United Reformed Church is situated opposite, constructed in the late nineteenth century in red brick with stone dressings. The churches are set within large plots and are prominent features of the large junction, which is open to the south, creating a wide street scene with vista down to the sea which is enhanced by the prominent church buildings. Two well preserved 1901 detached houses opposite the church on Holland Road also make a positive contribution to the area. These have retained characteristic features such as their decorative rendered gable ends, Arts and Crafts style brackets, clay tile roofs with crested ridge tiles, prominent bay windows and brick boundary walls.

Church Road, Harold Road, Thoroughgood Road and Vista Road are characterised by their residential building stock. Church Road comprises a tree lined avenue, terminating with the Church of Our Lady of Light and Saint Osyth at the west. Rows of terraced housing line the street with some larger corner plots. Buildings are typically two storeys in height, rising up to four storeys on the streets closer to the seafront, and constructed in brick with some rendered and painted in a pastel colour palette. Some historic character has been lost, due to window

replacements and loss of front boundary treatments as well as modern infill within the former boundary of the conservation area which now has a negative impact on its character.

However, the overall sense of the tree lined residential development is preserved, with many dwellings of architectural merit and aesthetic views to the west towards the church and south to the seafront.

### Seafront

The Seafront forms the backbone of the coastal resort settlement. It is characterised by its elements of seaside architecture and landscape, including the Pier, Martello Tower, the beach and cliffs, open space along the cliff ridge, and historic hotel streetscape along Marine Parade.

The character area terminates at the Martello Tower F, a scheduled monument and listed building, located on high ground at the west (Figure 33). This building separates the Conservation Area from modern development further along the coast. The area terminates to the east at a guesthouse named Oulton Hall Hotel, a late 1930s hotel by Travco in the Art Deco style. The area includes some buildings to the north of Marine Parade, predominantly comprising guesthouses and hotels, and extends south of Marine Parade to include the cliffs, beaches and Pier.

The topography in this area is varied, with steep slopes down to the sea. This topography affords the buildings on Marine Parade views over the sea, as well as views from the open spaces and Registered Park and Garden on the cliff top towards the sea and Pier below.

Much of this area has been historically designed for hotel and guesthouse use, which gives the built environment of the seafront its grandiose character. Hotels are typically located within larger plots and are orientated to benefit from sea views. They are also characterised by their larger massing than buildings in the residential streets to the north, and are predominantly three storeys in height with some four storey development in the south west. Their facades are broken-up by architectural details including turrets, gable ends, and bay windows. The Grade II Listed Colchester Institute Main Building is a key example of these hotel buildings; constructed in 1892-97, the red brick building is three storeys with a dormer attic, symmetrical



Figure 33 Martello Tower



Figure 34 Colchester Institute (Grade II Listed)



Figure 35 Marine Parade West, Premier Inn



Figure 36 Registered Park and Garden

in its design with prominent single polygonal turrets at the North and South ends, with bays with shaped gables inside these, and 2 central canted window bays in the centre of the building. The architectural features are of a high quality, including decorated string coursing, cast-iron balconies, entrance doorways with pediments raised over shaped aprons, and elaborate Jacobean style timber chimneypieces (Figure 34).

While there is variety in building forms along the seafront, with differences in massing, rooflines, material and boundary treatment, the character of built development is consistent and makes a positive contribution to the coastal street scene. The variety of architecture creates an interesting vista down Marine Parade (Figure 37 and 38). Some buildings, however, are unsympathetic additions to the streetscape and do not reflect the prevailing characteristics. The Premier Inn, for example, introduces a new building material with the use of engineering bricks and an expansive massing which is dense and unbroken by any architectural features which would create some harmony with its surroundings (Figure 35). Rosebank Court and buildings fronting Anglefield Junction are intrusive in terms of their modern features, materials, colour palettes and roofline.

This character area is enhanced by its open green spaces which allow for views towards the Pier and sea. The Seafront Registered Park and Garden is formal in its design and comprises distinct areas which are linked by a public walk. High quality street furniture and planting brings cohesion to the gardens (Figure 36). This enhances the character area and celebrates key views. The open space to the east of the area, and on Anglefield Junction, is simpler in its use of planting and street furniture, with substantial areas of seaside amusements to the immediate east of the Pier Gap, which are characteristic of the settlement's historic development as a seaside resort.

The west of the character area comprises some residential development perpendicular to the seafront. This is characterised by its smaller scale hotel buildings and variety of residential development, orientated towards seaward views to the south which are often terminated with pavilion buildings.





Figure 37 Marine Parade West, Imperial Court



Figure 38 Marine Parade, The Towers

North east of the Martello Tower is a group of well-preserved coastguard cottages; these buildings and their large front gardens make a positive contribution to the character of the seafront, and are reflective of the history of the tower which was used as a coastguard lookout in the late nineteenth century (Figure 39).

On Alton Road residential buildings of interest include: Alton Lodge, a three storey semi-detached property, now converted to flats and set with a fairly large paved plot with three bays, two bay windows and central balcony with decorative railing; and number 2, a well preserved Victorian detached dwelling with a well-kept front garden and rendered dwarf wall.

Penfold Road extends north to include The Sandrock, a detached two and a half storey guesthouse with an Arts and Crafts inspired red clay tile roofline, in red brick with recessed porch under a segmental arch with columns, a recessed first floor balcony with balustrade, and well maintained front garden planting. This building makes a positive contribution to the character of the area; originally constructed as a private residence, the dwelling has been sympathetically converted to hotel use in the late twentieth century and more recently to guesthouse use (Figure 40).

Agate Road has an open character due to the predominant car parks at its southern end, with rows of terraced dwellings beyond. Collectively, the car parks make a negative contribution to the character of the area, breaking the rhythm of the built form within the streetscene and allowing for unintended views to the rear of properties along Pier Avenue. There are, however, some buildings of merit. The terraced houses are of two and a half storeys, constructed in brick with some simple banding detail, and some on the south west side are painted in pastel colours. Those on the south west side have retained some interesting architectural features, such as their first floor recessed balconies with arched heads, however many features have been impacted by cumulative changes, such as loss of front boundary treatments, the unsympathetic replacement of windows and roof cladding, and porch extensions (Figure 41). The terraced dwellings to the north east of Agate Road are notable for their unusual Dutch gables facing the street (Figure 42). These dwellings are reflective of the Victorian development of the seaside resort, and therefore make a positive contribution to the area's character.



Figure 39 Coastguard Cottages



Figure 40 The Sandrock



Figure 41 Agate Road (looking West)



Figure 42 Agate Road (looking East)

### 3.3 Contribution by Key Non-Listed Buildings

Although not recognised by listing designations, there are several key buildings of interest located throughout the Conservation Area, particularly along the seafront and within larger corner plot development. These buildings are significant to the Conservation Area as they are often prominent in street scene vistas, have retained their historic architectural form and details, and are good quality examples of the nineteenth and twentieth century development of Clacton Seafront.

Substantial corner plot developments on Marine Parade are particularly important to the character of the Conservation Area and are typical of seaside development. The most prominent and significant of these are the Royal Hotel and former hotel The Towers. The Royal Hotel (Figure 43) forms a prominent part of Bruff's planned resort and was among the first buildings constructed within the resort in 1872. The building features in historic images of the Pier, prominently located within views from the Pier Gap and the seafront. The ground floor has undergone some alteration which has altered the main façade and detracted from its symmetry, however the first and second floor remain fairly intact and the thick iron veranda and roofline are still discernible and important features of the building. This building makes a positive contribution to the area and our understanding of its development and intended purpose as a resort. The former hotel building named The Towers (Figure 38) marks the boundary of the Conservation Area, and is another significant example of one of the early seafront developments of Clacton with well-preserved Victorian architectural features. Its decorative finials, tower, porches, decorative brickwork and balcony have all survived and contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

The Coastguard Cottages on Tower Road (Figure 39) are unique examples of seaside residences. Constructed in 1888, these cottages once formed a row of detached properties for the coastguard after the relocation of their station. The surviving cottages have retained much of their architectural detailing. Constructed in red brick under a plain tile roof with rendered gable ends and decorative string course brickwork, they are significant as a pair as they reflect the variety of late Victorian residential development in the area and unique functions associated with its coastal location.



Figure 43 The Royal Hotel



Figure 44 The United Reformed Church

The United Reformed Church on Carnarvon Road is located at a prominent position on the junction of Holland Road, Church Road, Rosemary Road and Anglefield. The Church was constructed in 1886 in a neo-Gothic style with brick elevations and stone dressings. Its tower is visible in views north east from the Anglefield Green. Due to its location and architectural merit, the church makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area (Figure 44). The Church also shares a close relationship with Our Lady of Light and St Osyth, a Grade II listed church to its east, which collectively further enhance the Conservation Area as the prominent ecclesiastical buildings.

The row of gault brick terraced cottages on Church Road is unique within the Conservation Area, as this building material is not seen elsewhere in residential buildings. These dwellings are noteworthy for their proximity to and visual harmony with Our Lady of Light and St Osyth, their architectural merit, pronounced front boundary treatments, and the positive contribution that they make to the street scene.

A grouping of buildings of historic merit is located on the square on Pier Avenue. These include: the Natwest building, built in brick with stone dressing in 1898; its neighbour the bank chambers, built shortly after in 1900 with panels of decorative plasterwork; and the Lloyds Bank, constructed in 1922 as a single storey stone building in the classical style. These buildings are significant in their own right, as good quality examples of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture, but they also collectively provide focal points for the square, enhancing the historic character of the Conservation Area.

The building occupying the corner plot between High Street and Station Road makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Its prominent rotunda tower and apsed elevation forms the principal view of the building from the south of Station Road and its red brick elevations with stone detailing harmonise with surrounding buildings. The building has retained much of its historic character, and benefits from sympathetic signage and a historic shopfront at ground floor level.

The former Lifeboat House, located on Carnarvon Road, was constructed in 1878 in red brick with pedimented entrances and a central pedimented projection (Figure 45). The parapet is topped with ball finials and an ogee capped tower with small dormer windows which dominate the composition. The building has since been converted to pub use and flats and has undergone some consequent alteration; however the building still makes a positive contribution to the historic character of the area and strengthens our understanding of the historic development of the seafront and its previous function as Clacton's lifeboat station.

### 3.4 Significance of Buildings

The Conservation Area comprises buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area, with key examples highlighted in section 3.3; there are also a number of buildings which make a positive contribution due to their historic and architectural merit, and their quality. There are also some which are considered to be neutral in their significance, although may have the potential to be positive with some maintenance, and some which are negative. These are highlighted below in Figure 46.



Figure 45 The Old Lifeboat House

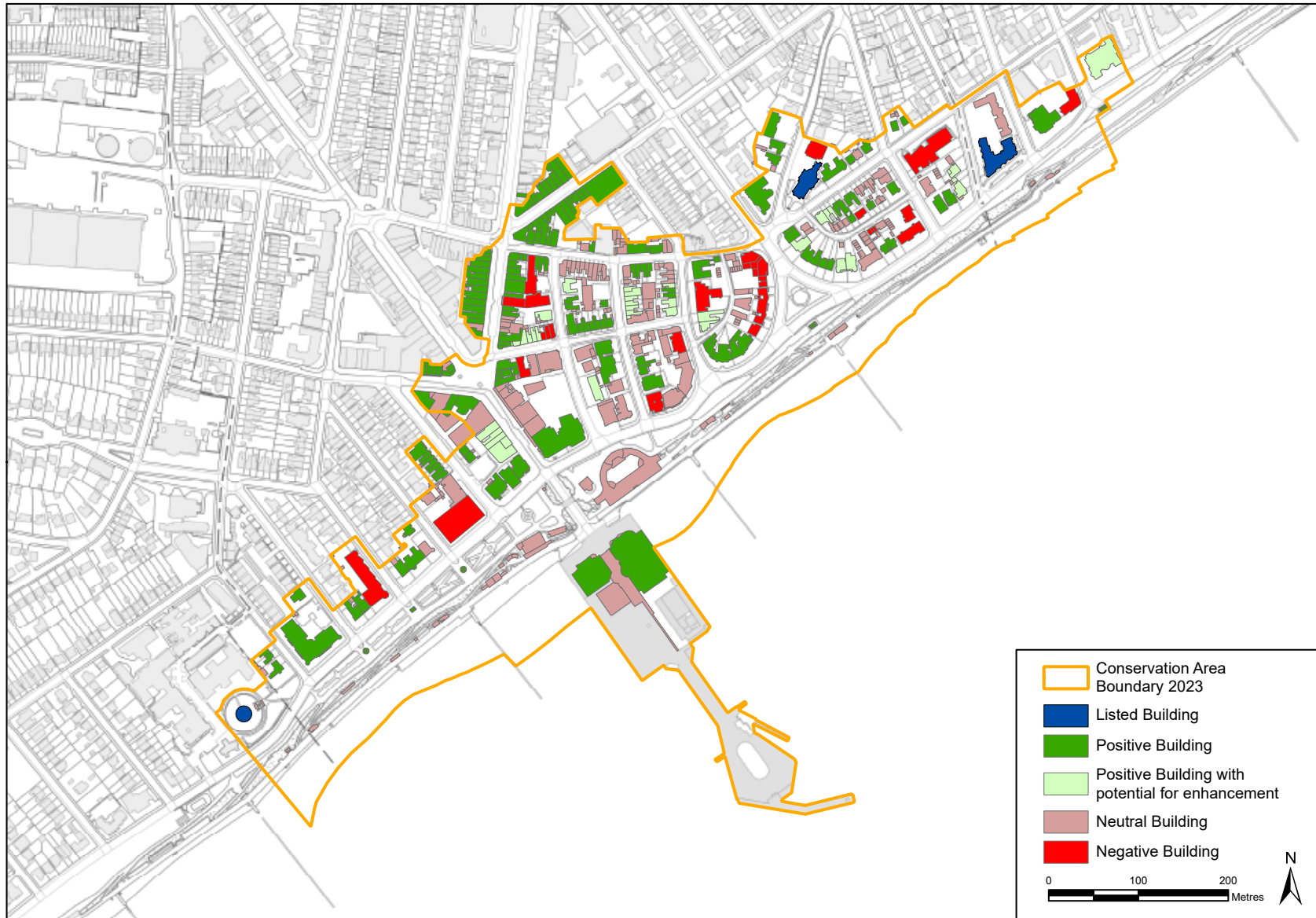


Figure 46 Significance Map

### 3.5 Beyond the Conservation Area Boundary

The Conservation Area also draws its significance from key features outside of its boundary, most notably from the sea itself to the south east. The seafront buildings and residential side streets are deliberately orientated towards the sea, to afford the best views of the coast and to create a pleasant resort. The Pier currently provides a focal point to these views and the open views of the sea undoubtedly enhance the special character of the Conservation Area.

Development at Clacton-on-Sea also draws historic significance from the settlement core, Clacton, located to the north. Whilst Clacton-on-Sea originated in the nineteenth century as a planned seaside resort, the area was previously connected with Clacton town, evident through prehistoric finds and the medieval farmsteads that were located in the Conservation Area which grew surrounding the town. Both settlements have become connected and coalesced over the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with development filling the open land between the two. They are currently connected physically through the built environment, and historically as evidenced in the town's development pattern.



Figure 47 View of the Sea from Clacton Seafront Conservation Area (looking South West)

The seafront extends beyond the Conservation Area and is notable for the contribution that it makes to the significance of the area. Large residential and guesthouse buildings extend along the seafront and are interspersed with areas of greenery. The grade II listed Moot Hall further to the north east and a group of 5 grade II listed street lights dating from c.1912 to the north east of the Conservation Area also contribute to the historic context and setting. These street lights were installed along with the grade II listed street lights along Marine Parade West, and are a rare survival in Essex; they make a positive contribution to the seafront setting, however, the lamps have been removed from the columns, impacting their heritage value. Buildings along the seafront outside of the Conservation Area are largely sympathetic in terms of their height and massing, and also mirror key architectural features in places.

The train station, located to the north of the seafront, forms a key historic connection with the Conservation Area (Figure 48). The arrival of the railway line in the nineteenth century, secured by Bruff after the successful sale of the land, gave rise to the success of the seaside development of Clacton-on-Sea. As such, the railway has a strong relationship with the resort. The station is located on Station Road at the junction with Carnarvon Road, and is fronted by a green space to its south. The route from here to the Conservation Area is a noteworthy one due to the historic relationship between the two and the footfall that exists between them. The road has the potential to make a positive contribution to our understanding of the Character Area, through methods of wayfinding etc. which will be discussed in the next section in greater detail.

The tree lined Station Road and Carnarvon Road highlight the routes towards the sea and commercial centre of Clacton-on-Sea, and the grade II listed Town Hall is located on Station Road outside of the Conservation Area. These all make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area as they create a sense of place as visitors enter the area.

The Martello Tower, located in the western end of the Conservation Area, forms part of a wide reaching network of forts constructed from Sussex to Suffolk to defend the south and east coast of England. The Tower's significance is derived from its architectural form and its relationship between these forts beyond the Conservation Area; their connection provides an appreciation of our maritime history, and their survival enhances the historic character of the stretch of coastland.

Some previous modern interventions within the Conservation Area have not given due regard to its character and appearance, often appearing to be more ad hoc and reactive to prevent the deterioration of buildings, rather than proactive to improve and enhance buildings and their surroundings. The following key issues have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is not exhaustive and neither are the issues identified unique to Clacton Seafront, with many being shared with other similar Conservation Areas.



Figure 48 The Station



## 4.0 Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive, and neither are the opportunities identified unique to Clacton Seafront, with many being shared with other Conservation Areas.

### 4.1 Car Parking

Adequate public car parking is considered necessary to sustain the town's tourist trade; however, creation of parking spaces within the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area is often harmful to the character of the area. Aside from the negative visual impact of the parked vehicles, the sites are often in prominent locations and feature poorly maintained boundary and surface treatments with minimal positive landscaping.

Agate road in particular is at risk from the open car parks towards its southern end (Figure 49 and 50). These open tarmac expanses create uncharacteristic breaks in the street scene to the east and west and create unintended views towards the rears of buildings on Pier Avenue and Penfold Road. Car parks could be enhanced through the use of planting, or other sympathetic screening methods to provide a visual barrier to the rear entrances of buildings and to create a more enclosed character to these areas of the street front.

Similarly, Colne Road is currently characterised by its use as service entrances to commercial buildings on Rosemary Road and Station Road, and as a public car park. The open car park permits views towards the rear access to buildings on Pier Avenue, and creates an uncharacteristic break in development of the building line; this area would also be enhanced by the use of planting or other sympathetic screening methods.

Church parking on Holland Road and private parking along Rosemary Crescent and Orwell Road also present opportunities for enhancement. These areas are currently inconsistent in their boundary treatment, and often in a poor state of repair, creating uncharacteristic and unappealing vistas within the street scene. Consistent boundary treatments and considered planting or other visual enhancements would reduce the adverse impact these areas make on the Conservation Area.



Figure 49 Parking on Agate Road (looking East)



Figure 50 Parking on Agate Road (looking West)



Figure 51 Signage on Station Road

Private parking on a smaller, residential scale also impacts the Conservation Area through the cumulative effect of the prevalence of on-street parking, the loss of front boundary treatments, the loss of front gardens and the creation of areas of hardstanding. There is scope for enhancement in this regard, and the potential for the use of an Article 4 Direction to remove Permitted Development rights for the removal of boundary treatments and the laying of hardstanding. The majority of buildings on the streets set at right angles to Marine Parade have lost their original front boundary treatments, and these have been either completely lost or replaced with a wide variety of materials and designs, often to different scales and in varying states of repair. This creates a discordant streetscene, detracting from the intended harmonious master plan of the settlement. Cumulatively this erodes the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area and these areas would benefit from the reintroduction of sympathetic boundary treatment and planting.

#### 4.2 Shop Frontages

Many shop frontages within the Conservation Area are out of character with the historic town. High volumes of inconsistent and overly large fascia signage in modern materials adorn the shops and arcades along the main retail streets. These are far removed from the refined and smaller signage which would be more traditional and sympathetic to Bruff's original master plan. Some historic shop frontages survive behind later signage but are in various states of repair across the area, with many in poor condition. The loss of historic shopfronts through lack of maintenance or replacement, together with erratic approaches to signage, has impacted the visual cohesion of the street scene and its historic character (Figure 51). There is scope to enhance the character of the commercial centre through the production of a design guide for shopfronts and signage to create a clearer approach to the design of new shop frontages and management of historic ones.

### 4.3 Vacant Premises

A large vacant plot located on the Rosemary Road and Orwell Road junction is a key area for enhancement. The plot was the site of the former Osbourne Hotel c.1871 which was one of the earliest buildings constructed in the new seafront resort and incorporated the first pair of villas to be built in the town. The site is currently empty after its demolition and is fenced off for sale. This site would benefit from a sympathetic development sensitive to the character and appearance of the area and the former villa which was once located here, to continue the pattern of building along the street and obscure open views to the rear of buildings on High Street from Rosemary Road.

The former restaurant on Rosemary Road and Rosemary Crescent is currently vacant, and would be greatly enhanced through reinstating a use (Figure 52). The building faces onto Rosemary Road, its façade features a Dutch gable, plasterwork detailing surrounding windows and decorative banding at first floor level. There is potential for the building to make an enhanced contribution to the street scene and Conservation Area, after reinstating its fenestration and maintaining the facade.

### 4.4 Vacant Upper-Floors

There are no vacant upper floors noted within the area, although some external elevations of upper floors are in poor condition. This impacts on the overall appearance of the historic building stock and our ability to appreciate them as heritage assets, particularly as many of the ground floors of these buildings have undergone modern interventions leaving the upper floors as the only reminder of a building's age and former quality. For example, The Operetta, which forms a substantial building with frontages onto the High Street and Rosemary Road, has a number of damaged and deteriorating windows with broken panes and unpainted frames, with others that are boarded. This detracts from the aesthetic value of the building and the contribution it makes to the Conservation Area which would be enhanced with small scale remedial work to repair damaged windows and other fittings, particularly where prominent on the main façade of the building.



Figure 52 Vacant property on Rosemary Road

#### 4.5 Access and Integration

The stretch of road and development between the Station and the commercial town centre on Pier Avenue, and from Pier Avenue to the Pier itself, would be greatly enhanced through the introduction of a cohesive method of wayfinding. Currently, the station feels detached from the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area, separated by Station Road and the busy crossing of Carnarvon Road. The lack of a clear and defined pedestrian crossing or a continuous sense of direction severs the station from the main town and seafront. A safe and appropriate crossing near the station, clear signage, and other wayfinding methods such as consistent street furniture, public art, and planting would enhance the experience of visitors to the area, and create a strong sense of character throughout the Conservation Area and its setting. There is scope for these enhancements to also generate a greater bond between the Pier and seafront area, the retail core, and the station, bringing harmony between the character areas within the Conservation Area while promoting the key features within it.

#### 4.6 Inappropriate Modern Development

A widespread concern within the Conservation Area is the volume of windows, doors, roofs and other architectural elements which have been replaced with those of inappropriate design and materials. In the majority of cases, these replacements do not pick up on traditional detailing and profiles, glazing pattern, palette of materials or design. This has a particularly negative impact on older Victorian boarding houses where modern plastic windows, in particular, impact the visual appearance and our understanding and experience of the historic buildings. The level of visual intrusion caused by these alterations is more dominant in residential areas as these streets are often characterised by terraced rows and pairs of semi-detached houses where modern interventions appear more apparent. In many instances one of the pair has been unsympathetically altered, whilst the other has retained its original features, highlighting the inconsistency between appropriate traditional materials and inappropriate modern interventions. The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the relatively limited palette of materials used, and this piecemeal loss of fabric can



Figure 53 Development on the west side of Anglefield Junction

cumulatively have a more significant impact on the character and appearance than any of the other concerns. There is scope to enhance these features, and reinstate them wherever possible, while protecting those which are still existing. An Article 4 Direction to remove Permitted Development rights for alterations to the front elevations of buildings could provide a framework in which to better manage the loss of original architectural features and the sympathetic replacement of those already lost.

The introduction of an inappropriate modern colour palette is also considered to be a concern within the Conservation Area. Some buildings located in prominent areas have been painted in darker colours which are inconsistent with the area and uncharacteristic of the seaside resort. The Kassaba restaurant on Marine Parade, McDonalds on Pier Avenue and Romolo's restaurant on Rosemary Road would all be enhanced through the introduction of a lighter colour palette as they currently are uncharacteristic of the wider area and visually domineering in the street scene.



Figure 54 Waverley Hall Hotel prior to demolition and construction of Premier Inn (image kind permission of

Key areas of larger scale inappropriate modern development are apparent on the west side of the Anglefield Junction (Figure 53). There is opportunity for enhancement of the streetscape here through planting of the visible private gardens, or by instating a front boundary treatment which is characteristic of the area, to better integrate the building with its surroundings.

#### 4.7 Neutral Contributors

A significant proportion of buildings are currently considered to make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The historic buildings that fall into this category still contribute to the area's character and appearance, and their contribution should not be underestimated and certainly should not be considered negative. The majority of these historic buildings have the potential to make a positive contribution but due to the loss of original architectural details, front boundaries, and unsympathetic additions, are considered to be neutral contributors which can lead to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character. Through small scale improvement works, such as reinstating boundary treatments, planting, appropriate replacement windows, more traditional signage and use of colour, and preventing further loss of architectural form and features, these buildings would be enhanced and their positive contribution realised. Similar interventions to the more modern neutral buildings could help to better integrate them into the area.

#### 4.8 Public Realm

At present the Conservation Area lacks a consistent style of street furniture with a varied mix of styles, ages and upkeep. The area contains some street furniture of high significance, including those features associated with the Registered Park and Garden and the grade II listed streetlights on Marine Parade West, and there is scope to enhance the area by reflecting this high quality throughout.

Street furniture that would benefit from a consistent approach includes lampposts, benches, signage, bins, bike stands, bollards and railings. The Conservation Area benefits from areas of quality public realm, predominantly the areas of the Registered Park and Garden and the stretch of Pier Avenue. However, the wider Conservation Area would be enhanced if these features were aesthetically unified and consistent.

There is currently a range of signage across the Conservation Area, with those of a more historic character in cast iron towards the seafront and a modern, chrome style within the town centre. This is reflective of the distinct character areas within the Conservation Area, however this is not reflected across the wider Conservation Area. A coherent approach to public realm features, either to introduce consistency across the area or with distinct character areas, may enhance the sense of place within each, improve understanding of the area, and limit long term costs of maintenance.

#### Hard Landscaping

Inconsistent quality of paving, particularly along Marine Parade and surrounding the Registered Park and Garden, detracts from the sense of grandeur intended along the seafront and throughout the planned resort and would benefit from consistent maintenance.

This is also apparent where substantial areas of private front gardens have been paved over in a piecemeal approach, and are inconsistent with their neighbours and adjoining paving.

### Open Spaces

As previously considered, the open and green spaces across the Conservation Area provide great scope to make a positive contribution. The Anglefield Junction is situated in a prominent, seafront location, at a junction of a number of historic routes through the town. It is also overlooked by an appealing row of terraced dwellings, former lifeboat house, and the churches of Our Lady of Light St Osyth and the United Reformed Church on its eastern side. There is scope to enhance the area, and restore it to its historic glory as a more densely planted setting for the surrounding heritage assets. Figure 55 highlights historic planting on Anglefield Green, and shows that the garden once contained typical coastal memorabilia; a canon. The hedge borders and clumps of shrub and floral planting provided a more enclosed garden, which is currently stark and open within its built surroundings. Further consideration of this area would help to create a unified approach to the open spaces in the Conservation Area, such as an appropriate schedule of maintenance for the upkeep of planting and trees. The area is currently planted with scattered trees; however it appears sparse and would benefit from shrub planting and flowerbeds, as well as the maintenance of existing trees, to emanate the historic sense of the resort (Figure 56).

The Martello Tower would similarly benefit from further, smaller scale planting, and the appropriate reduction of its trees, which currently compete with the tower for dominance. Planting within the immediate setting of the Martello Tower needs to be sympathetic to the qualities which give the tower its unique significance, particularly its moat. Overgrown planting currently obscures this and distracts from the tower itself, which would have once stood as the dominant feature along the whole stretch of the seafront. In its current state, it would benefit from a rethought landscaping scheme.

### Additional interventions

Notable features of a Victorian seaside resort are the shelters along the promenade, of which Clacton Seafront Conservation Area benefits from 5. These buildings form an important part of the townscape, often providing residential streets with terminating views, and offering the opportunity to rest and enjoy views over the sea for visitors and residents alike. They are typical of seaside architecture, and make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. However, in some cases their present state indicates a lack of maintenance and investment, and they would be enhanced through small scale repairs.

Features such as blue plaques, community projects, public art, and other place making methods particularly on main routes through the area (particularly from the station to the Pier), would also provide scope for enhancement. Not only would these additions enhance the visual streetscape of the town and our understanding of the unique historic significance of Clacton-on-Sea, but they would allow for community involvement in the conservation and enhancement of the historic town, working to ensure its long term celebration and preservation.



Figure 55 Anglefield Postcard ERO D/DU 1464/13 7



Figure 56 Anglefield green currently



## 5.0 Management Proposals

As outlined in the previous chapter, there are a wide range of issues facing the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This chapter draws from the opportunities identified in Section 4 to recommend management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### 5.1 Positive Management

The first set of proposals relates to positive management and focuses on good practice and improved ways of managing change and development. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short time-frame, typically within one or two years.

#### Local Heritage List

Clacton-on-Sea would benefit from adopting and maintaining a comprehensive Local List in order to preserve its historic environment from further deterioration. A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF.

In recent years, the demolition of the Osbourne Hotel, conversion of buildings such as the Lifeboat House, and the poor maintenance of buildings such as the Operatta, indicates that a Local List may be beneficial to ensure the upkeep of buildings which are significant to Clacton-on-Sea's history and character. The exercise would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding.

There are a number of buildings within the Conservation Area which are of sufficient quality to be considered for local list status, as highlighted in Section 2.6.

#### Shop Frontages

A predominant concern throughout the Conservation Area is the use of inappropriate signage and the loss or alteration of traditional shopfronts. Signs are often dominant in views, concealing architectural details on the buildings they adorn, and therefore negatively impacting our ability to read the historic character of the town. A review of the town's approach to signage and shopfronts, perhaps through a design guide, might allow for some cohesion across the Conservation Area, and reinstate a rhythm to the shop frontages intended in the original master plan.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Replacing all inappropriate street furniture is an optimum solution; however it is acknowledged that this is an expensive project to undertake. There are numerous other short-term solutions to this problem which can be achieved through positive working interdepartmental relationships to improve the public realm and highways.

Through the agreement of a standard good practice within the Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams and other landowners, long term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm, such as avoiding excessive road markings or signage and



agreeing a standard street furniture to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced. This will have a long term positive impact on the Conservation Area.

### Heritage Statements

Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that where proposal development could impact on the significance of heritage assets or their settings, applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, and assess the impact of the proposal on this significance. *The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.* This information is usually contained within a Heritage Statement.

All applications within the Conservation Area and immediate setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement in order to understand the impact of a proposed development on the area. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition to, alteration to or removal of a building, structure, tree or highway within any of the key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the conservation area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.

### Tree Management

In line with Tendring District Council's policy, all trees in Conservation Areas which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, street trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the Conservation Area should be monitored and maintained appropriately. This will ensure the symmetry along tree lined streets and visual rhythm, as well as maintain the green character of the area. Any tree that makes a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous) replaced with an appropriate new tree.

### New Development

There are numerous opportunities within Clacton-on-Sea and its setting for new development which would make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. To date there has been a lack of high quality modern architecture which respects the local character. To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

In accordance with guidance published by CABE and Historic England Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas, 2001, successful new development should:

- Relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- Sit sympathetically in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- Use materials and building methods which as high in quality of those used in existing buildings; and
- Create new views which add to the variety and texture of their setting.





Development should therefore be guided in a positive manner in the following ways:

- Engage with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials;
- Ensure medium-large scale development schemes are referred to Design Review (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be sympathetic with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it is appropriate to a conservation area; and
- Seek opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### Neutral Elements

As discussed in paragraph 4.9, the dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral can lead to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character.

The quality of design within the area must not be 'averaged down' by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment and, wherever possible, neutral buildings should be enhanced through the reinstatement of lost architectural details or alterations which better respect their context. Given the Conservation Area is 'at risk', in part due to inappropriate modern development, the Local Planning Authority must where possible seek schemes which enhance the built environment and not allow previous poor quality schemes to become precedents.

### Public Facing Resources: Improved Understanding and Awareness

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a Conservation Area. In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. A single Good Practice Design Guide on standard alterations such as signage, shopfronts, windows, doors, rainwater goods, boundaries and roof extensions will ensure inappropriate development does not continue to be the accepted norm. Forming partnerships with local societies may also help to increase awareness.

Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and results in a loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of Clacton-on-Sea's built heritage.

At present there is no widespread interpretation (information boards, signage, interactive QR Codes, for example) within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding and awareness. This would be an effective way to improve the awareness and re-establish the identity of Clacton-on-Sea as a unique seaside settlement. Vacant shop units, vacant buildings and hoardings around development sites could be utilised to temporarily display historic images of the town. This would serve to improve their appearance in the short-term as well as improving public understanding and awareness.



## 5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

The second set of proposals are also focussed around positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

### Character Appraisal and Management Plan and Boundary

The Conservation Area and its boundary have been revised within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2021) and Historic England Advice Note 1 *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2019). The boundary now excludes areas of no special interest, and include areas of historic significance, which improve our understanding of the original purpose and growth of the settlement.

The Conservation Area should be reviewed every five years to monitor change and inform management proposals. The boundary should be assessed as part of this review to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

### Interpretation

A considered and more consistent approach to aspects of the public realm would enhance the overall character of the Conservation Area; features such as street furniture, pavilions, signage, information boards, planting and railings are recommended for consideration. The high quality of the features within the Registered Park and Garden currently juxtapose with the rest of the Conservation Area, and a variety of styles of street furniture exist across the area. Due to this variety of approaches, a high-level overview or design guide to ensure a consistent maintenance and design approach would be beneficial. This approach can prove cost effective in the long term maintenance of the spaces, saving dispersed review.

## 5.3 Council-Led Projects

### Opportunity Sites

As discussed above in Section 4, there are a variety of opportunity sites across the Conservation Area. These chiefly include the car parks on Agate Road, which currently create a cumulative negative impact on the character of the street, and the vacant plots on Rosemary Road. These sites would benefit from further consideration for sensitive redevelopment or works to mitigate and enhance the visual impact they make on the Conservation Area.

A number of positive buildings have also been identified that would benefit from enhancement.

### Access and Integration

Clear wayfinding can be considered between the three main areas of significance within the town; the station, the commercial centre, and the Pier and seafront. Fluidity between these areas would improve visitor experience, and strengthen the sense of place in Clacton-on-Sea, encouraging all to move between the three areas and experience the Conservation Area within its wider setting.

### Grant Funding Schemes

#### Shop Frontages

There is substantial scope for improvement to shop frontages to enhance the character and appearance of the historic streetscape. In addition to tightening controls, small grant funding schemes would provide an incentive to encourage private property owners to carry out works to enhance their property and thereby the wider conservation area.



The council should consider utilising existing powers to intervene where any unit has been vacant for over three months so that it does not detract from the areas character and appearance.

#### **Upper Floors**

Small grant funding schemes would provide an incentive to encourage private property owners to carry out works to enhance their property and thereby the wider conservation area.

#### **Design Guides**

##### **Shop frontages**

There is also scope to enhance the character of the commercial centre through the production of a design guide for shopfronts and signage, which will create a clearer approach to the design of new shop frontages and management of historic examples.

Vacant shop units can be enhanced creatively at a low cost and should be considered a 'blank canvas' for improvement. This could include public art or information on the area, as noted in paragraph 5.1.0.

##### **Car Parking**

This should begin with a car parking survey to establish the need for car parking across the area. Once the level of necessary car parking has been established a landscape strategy should be created by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with local stakeholders.

##### **Public Realm**

The first opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area is through investment to improve the wider public realm. This can be achieved through continuing to improve and rationalise existing street furniture.

## **5.4 Funding Opportunities**

There are four main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### **National Lottery Heritage Fund**

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NLHF schemes Tendring District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

#### **Section 106 Agreements**

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon Clacton. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site specific improvements.

#### **Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)**

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would be suitable to preserve and enhance either the shop frontages or the architectural detailing.



## 6.0 Appendices

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#### *Archives*

- Essex Record Office (ERO)

## 6.2 Legislation and Planning Policy

LEGISLATION/POLICY/ GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions. 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2021) DCLG	Section 16; Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans	
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment	
National Guidance	Historic England Advice Note 1 (2019) Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Traditional Windows	
National Guidance	Historic England, High Streets for All (2018) Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places	
National Guidance	Historic England (2016) Stopping the Rot: A guide to enforcement action to save historic buildings	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Repointing Brick and Stone Walls Guide for Best Practice	
Local Policy	Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond (2022)	Section 2



### 6.3 Glossary (National Planning Policy Framework)

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic environment record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

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# Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Tendring  
District Council



Client:  
Tendring District Council

Date:  
November 2024





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All Saints Church

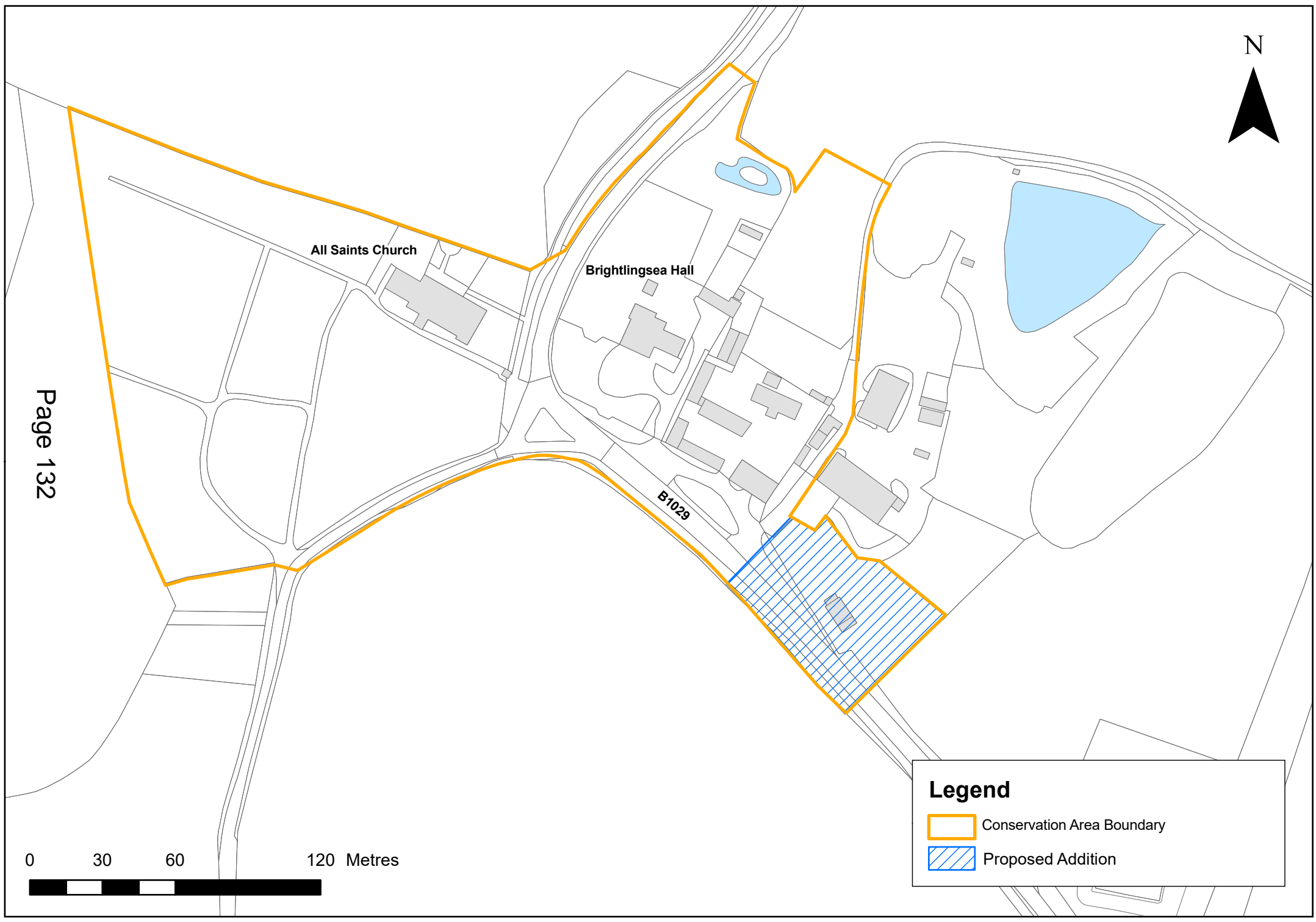
Brightlingsea Hall

B1029

**Legend**

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Proposed Addition

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

This Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area, outlining its designation history, alterations to the boundary, and a description of its special interest. The appraisal will also consider buildings, greens, spaces, and features which contribute to the Conservation Area's character and appearance. The appraisal will also consider the significance of heritage assets within the area and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to its character. The understanding of significance can be used to help manage future change.

Conservation Area designation provides broader protection than the listing of individual buildings as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and appearance. This ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the area into consideration.

The Conservation Area includes the All Saints Church and Brightlingsea Hall, prominent on the main entrance to the Brightlingsea peninsular. The Hall is a nineteenth century building with a range of outbuildings of various dates and styles, mostly in light industrial use. The Conservation Area's key significance is derived from its historic, landmark buildings and location on the main route to Brightlingsea.



Figure 1 View towards All Saints Church, Grade I Listed landmark building within the Conservation Area (List Entry Number: 1337182)



## 1.2 Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development, and design with regard to the sensitivities of the Conservation Area and its unique character and appearance.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area which contribute to its special interest. It will consider how the area came to be developed, in terms of its building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities will be used to assess key characteristics, highlighting potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church area. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the individual character areas, as well as a review of the previous Conservation Area Appraisal for the area (2006).

This appraisal will enhance understanding of Brightlingsea and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character and appearance of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce appropriate and responsive design with positive outcomes for agents and their clients.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in Section 6.2.

## 1.3 Planning Policy and Guidance

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990). In particular section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and Section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced. Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context, the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.

National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in chapter 16 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2021).

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2019) and *Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).

The Conservation Area which is the subject of this report is located within the area covered by Tendring District. Local planning policy is set out in the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Section 2 (2022).

Policies which are relevant to the historic environment include:

- Policy SPL 3 - Sustainable Design
- Policy PP 8 - Tourism
- Policy PPL 3 - The Rural Landscape
- Policy PPL 7 - Archaeology
- Policy PPL 8 - Conservation Areas
- Policy PPL 9 - Listed Buildings
- Policy PPL 10 - Renewable energy generation and energy efficiency

The Conservation Area is located outside the town's Development Boundary, and is within the Coastal Protection Belt.

#### 1.4 Designation of the Conservation Area

Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area was first designated in 1993. An appraisal was first adopted in 2006.

#### 1.5 Proposed Boundary Revision

The boundary currently includes the listed church, its surrounding churchyard, and the Hall with historic barn complex which is now occupied by businesses. An assessment of the boundary has been undertaken as part of this review.

It is proposed that the area is extended to include the pair of early nineteenth century dwellings to the south of the area. They contribute positively to the historic character and appearance of the area. Their location and proximity to the road creates a sense of a gateway for the Conservation Area. They are prominent in



Figure 2 Buildings on Church Road

views towards the Church to the north west. The building is red brick with details such as the flat headed arches at ground floor level, and single polychromatic diamond above the original central entrance. The simple but decorative detail adds to the quality and character of the building and Conservation Area. Although some changes have occurred, such as the loss of original windows and roofing, and timber lean to extensions on both sides, the building still makes a positive contribution. It is considered, therefore, that the Conservation Area and building would both benefit from inclusion within the boundary.



Alresford Creek

B1029

All Saints Church

Brightlingsea Hall

Movers Lane

B1029

Modern Brightlingsea

400 m



## 2. Brightlingsea Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

The Conservation Area includes All Saints Church, Brightlingsea Hall and the outbuildings to the Hall, including a barn complex. These are located on the edge of a ridge of high ground above the Alresford creek. The modern edge of Brightlingsea town is visible across level fields to the south-east of the area. The Conservation Area is bisected by the B1029, the only main road accessing Brightlingsea.

The area is rural in character, surrounded by arable fields and open land stretching to the creek.

### 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of the Conservation Area, and its environs.

#### *Prehistory (500,000 BC – 43 AD)*

The archaeology of the Brightlingsea area is well documented through cropmark evidence and suggests a rich history dating back to the Mesolithic period. Evidence of early human activity is suggested on aerial photography, which shows buried archaeological features as a visible trace in the landscape. These have revealed a widespread multi-period landscape stretching back to the Mesolithic period. Neolithic activity is evidenced from flint tool manufacture as well as large scale ritual monuments. During the Neolithic period, the landscape was cleared of trees by early settlers for monuments and likely for agricultural purposes.

The occupation of the area continued into the Bronze Age with extensive cemeteries located upon the gravel ridge. These cemeteries, with their many barrow monuments, would have been important landmarks in the Bronze Age landscape. Extensive field systems were established during the Bronze Age, marked out by ditches and trackways. Occupation within the area continued through into the Iron Age.



Figure 3 Aerial image of Brightlingsea All Saints Church and Hall (Google Earth 2009). Cropmarks are visible within the field to the south, highlighted in red, possibly showing a double-ditched trackway and field boundaries (HER 2131)



### **Roman (43 – 410)**

The church is located on the site of an earlier Roman building. Roman building material has been recovered within the church grounds and incorporated into the church walls. These remnants of Roman materials which can be seen to the left of the south door are in a round-headed recess incorporating the Roman brickwork.

The environs of the Conservation Area was also occupied, with the remains of villas and farmsteads, linked by trackways along the gravel ridge. New field systems were also laid out across this area in the Roman period.

### **Anglo Saxon (410 – 1066)**

All Saints Church likely has Saxon origins. Brightlingsea was one of a group of Anglo-Saxon royal manors, the central settlement in the area which would likely have been attended by the king. Remains of the settlement have been revealed southwest of the Church and the presence of a church is confirmed in a writ dating to 1096.

It is likely that the land within the Conservation Area was home to an ancient meeting place for the wider, scattered agricultural community of the parish; this made it the natural site for its ecclesiastical centre.

Before the sea receded, Alresford Creek provided a sheltered haven for the town of Brightlingsea, and the meadow below All Saints Church is still called Church Dock.<sup>1</sup>

### **Medieval (1066 – 1540)**

The medieval period saw the expansion of the port of Brightlingsea, as after 1353 the historic port was established as a limb of the Cinque Port of Sandwich, Kent. Cinque Ports were an association of ports and their supporting 'limbs' spread

across Kent, Sussex and Essex. Their purpose was to provide ships and men to the crown. They were first established by Edward I as a defensive group, but later grew in importance and peaked in their production in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> Already a thriving ship-owning port at this time, Brightlingsea was able to contribute to the ship-service quota of Sandwich, acting as its limb. Brightlingsea was, and still is, unique in that it is the only element of the Cinque Ports and their associated limbs which lies in Essex.

All Saints Church's fabric dates mainly from the thirteenth century, although it contains earlier material. It is possible that the Church was connected to the thirteenth century owner and resident of nearby Moverons, Alexander de Brightlingsea, who was a man of importance; this may explain its separation from the main town of Brightlingsea.<sup>3</sup> The church stands on the highest point of the town. The tower, one of the finest in East Anglia displaying diagonal buttressing, stands at 97 feet tall, acting as a wayfinder and landmark within the wider landscape. It may once have served Thorinton and Arlesford Parishes too. The interior of the church is rich with history, and contains seven brasses of the Beriffe family. The Beriffes were notable wool merchants and the owners of Jacobes Hall in Brightlingsea; the family contributed to the rebuilding of the church. Within the baptistry is a Tudor font, carved with roses.

Brightlingsea Hall was formerly the rectory, and was called Brightlingsea Rectory Hall in 1458. The change from the name Brightlingsea Rectory Hall to Brightlingsea Hall would have occurred at a later date. The existing hall was built in 1874, replacing the timber house, and as such is not likely to be the rectory house of 1458 unless very much altered.<sup>4</sup>

The Vicarage house stood to the south of the Church facing the Green. The tithe barn stood behind it. In 1610 it was stated that a stable and garden were attached to it. The house burnt down in 1816.

<sup>1</sup> Michael Swindlehurst Vicar, The Parish Church of All Saints, Brightlingsea (2002 rev.)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Cinque-Ports>  
<sup>3</sup> Edward Dickin, History of Brightlingsea (1913)  
<sup>4</sup> History of Brightlingsea op. cit.



Figure 4 Chapman and Andre map of 1777. The map depicts buildings south of the Church along the road which has a distinct sharp bend. The Hall is named, and the main road appears wide, perhaps showing the presence of a small green here.



**Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)**

In 1814 the roof and clerestory of the church collapsed and as a result the church was refurbished c.1870s. This work was undertaken by Charles Pertwee, the brother of the Vicar. The clerestory was not rebuilt. The tower was used as a guiding light for fishermen; it is recorded that Rev. Canon Arthur Pertwee, vicar 1872-1912, even in old age climbed the tower to give lantern light to the fishing fleet entering the harbour.<sup>5</sup>

Within the church is a notable installation which began in the 1870s. A frieze of ceramic tiles lines the walls, commemorating local residents whose lives were lost at sea.<sup>6</sup> This tradition is well known locally and was begun in 1873 by Rev. Pertwee.

5 Historic England, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1337182?section=official-list-entry>  
 6 Barbara Vesey, *The Hidden Places of East Anglia* Travel Publishing (2003), p77

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Figure 5 Ceramic tiles, begun by Rev. A. Pertwee, to commemorate residents whose lives were lost at sea



Figure 6 Timeline depicting the historic context of All Saints, displayed within the church



Figure 7 Top left: John Bateman, Above: Brightlingsea Hall, shown in 1908, during the time of John Bateman's occupation (source Brightlingsea Museum)

The existing Brightlingsea Hall was built in the latter half of the nineteenth century. One of its most notable residents was a Mr John Bateman, a renowned horticulturalist, who bought the hall and its estate in 1871. On his arrival in Brightlingsea, Bateman introduced new ideas in agriculture, establishing maize, silage, and tobacco. Within the grounds of Brightlingsea Hall he also introduced the *Eucalyptus Gunnii* (or the "Blue Gum"); Bateman introduced the *Eucalyptus* tree from seeds sent from Argentina.<sup>7</sup> He is regarded as one of Brightlingsea's most loved benefactors, known as the "Old Squire". In 1883, he built a folly known as Bateman's Tower located on Promenade Way in the town which is now Grade II Listed. After the revival of the Cinque Port Liberty, Bateman became Brightlingsea's first Deputy and held the office for seven years, from 1887 to 1891, and again in 1899 and 1903. In 1893, he presented Brightlingsea with the Deputy's badge and chain of office, a large opal carved with a seascape on a solid silver chain with alternate links of oysters and crossed sprats, which is still worn by the Deputy today. Bateman died at Brightlingsea Hall on 12 October 1910 and his wife, Mrs Jessie Bateman, died in October 1925 at the age of 89.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Leslie, Andrew, Mencuccini, Maurizio and Perks, Mike P. (2011) *Eucalyptus in the British Isles*. Quarterly Journal of Forestry, 105 (1). pp. 43-53.

<sup>8</sup> Tom Moulton, 'Tom Bateman', The Cinque Port Library (2008) <<http://www.cinqueportliberty.co.uk/johnbateman.htm>>

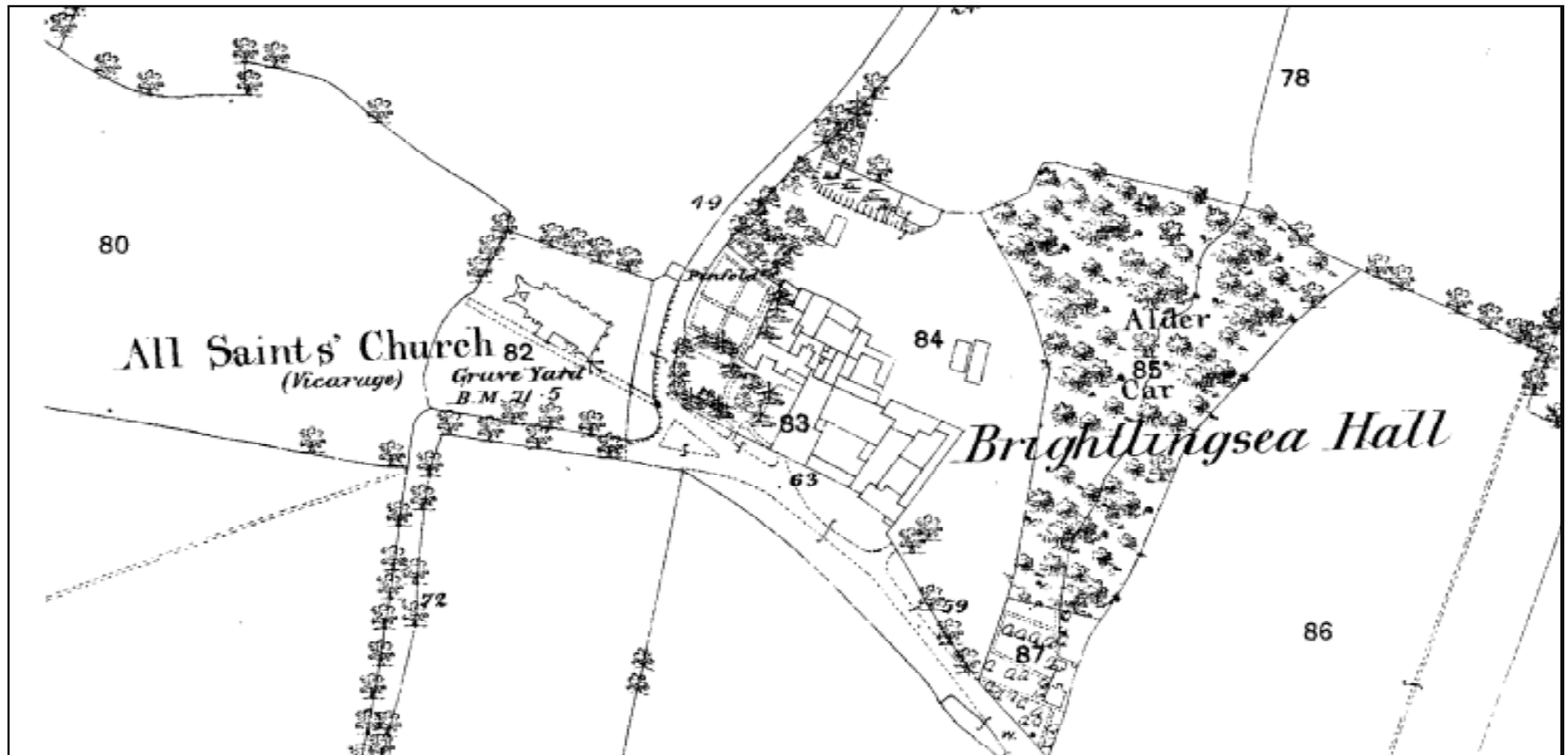


Figure 8 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, c.1881, showing All Saints Church, Brightlingsea Hall and the historic barn complex. The historic buildings to the south of the Church, previously shown on the Chapman and Andre Map, have been removed. 'Alder Car' suggests a watery area of woodland to the east of the Conservation Area at this time.

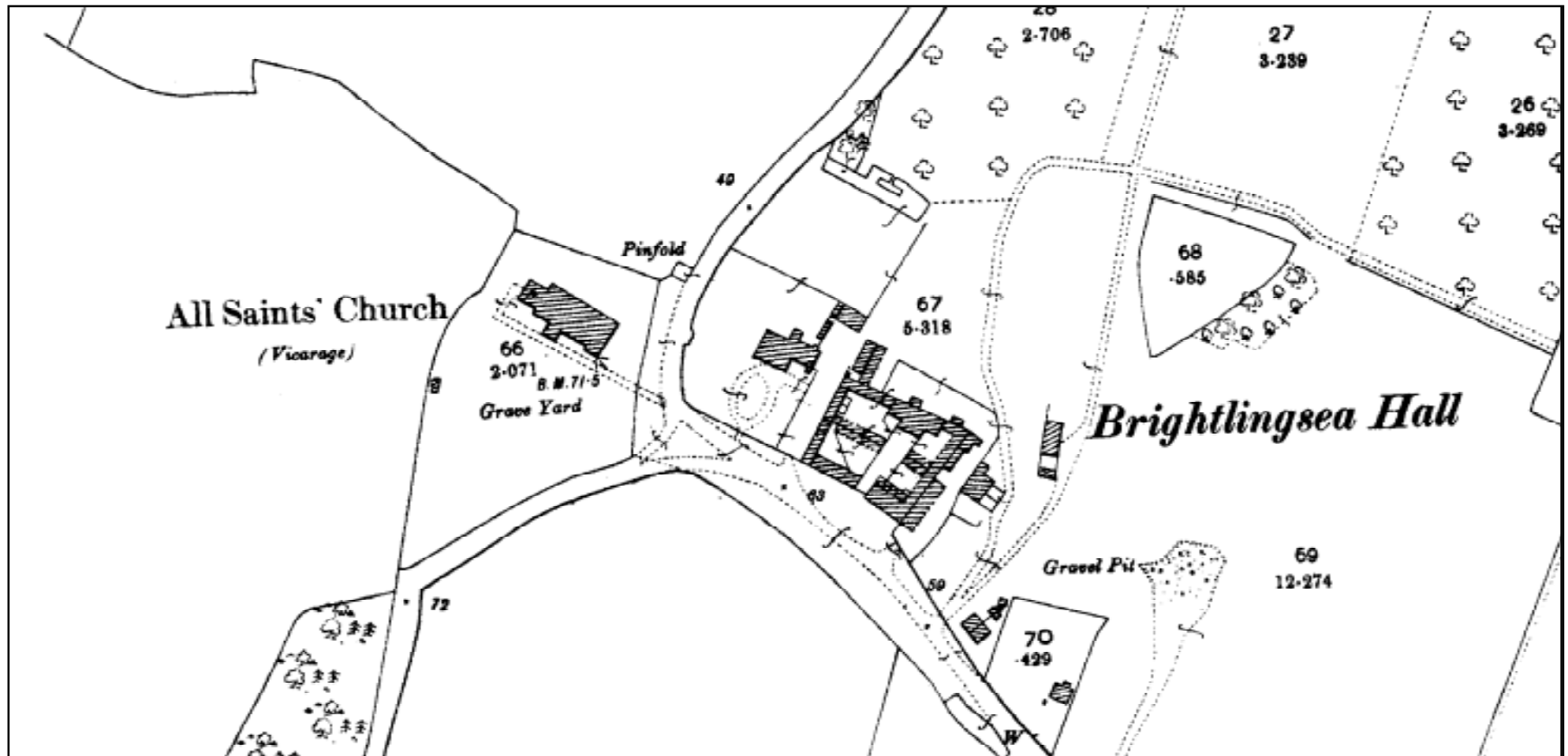


Figure 9 Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, c1897, showing little change to the area, except for the additional cottages to the south, loss of woodland Alder Car, and new gravel pit and pond.

There is a pinfold shown on historic maps (Figure 7 and 8) to the north east of the Church. These were spaces where animals could be tethered and are located at the edges of towns and cities. This demonstrates the fact that this area marks the gateway into Brightlingsea.

### **Modern (1901 – now)**

There have been some small-scale changes to the area throughout the twentieth century.

The lych-gate of the church dates from around the end of the First World War. The lych-gate is a memorial to Canon Arthur Pertwee, Vicar from 1872-1917. The gate was damaged in 2018 by a car collision and was restored in 2019.

Brightlingsea Hall was for a time used as a hotel in the twentieth century. It gained permission for conversion to residential home for retirees and a nursing home in 1992.<sup>9</sup> It was used residentially until it was subdivided into separate properties in 2016.<sup>10</sup>

Within All Saints Church, the chapel has been completely refurbished for worship in recent years. The modern glass in the east window, by Caroline Swash, represents Mary's contribution as the Mother of Jesus. Work to All Saints Church is currently being undertaken, and will span 2022- 2023. This work is part of a £498,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and includes an extension to house a lavatory. The work aims to allow the building to function as a host for music, arts, and other community events, and make more of its maritime history.<sup>11</sup>

The Church is still used as the place where the Freemen of the town meet to elect the Cinque Port Deputy, as part of a historic tradition.

9 Planning application reference 92/00662/FUL  
10 Planning application reference 15/01636/FUL  
11 Planning application reference 20/00169/FUL

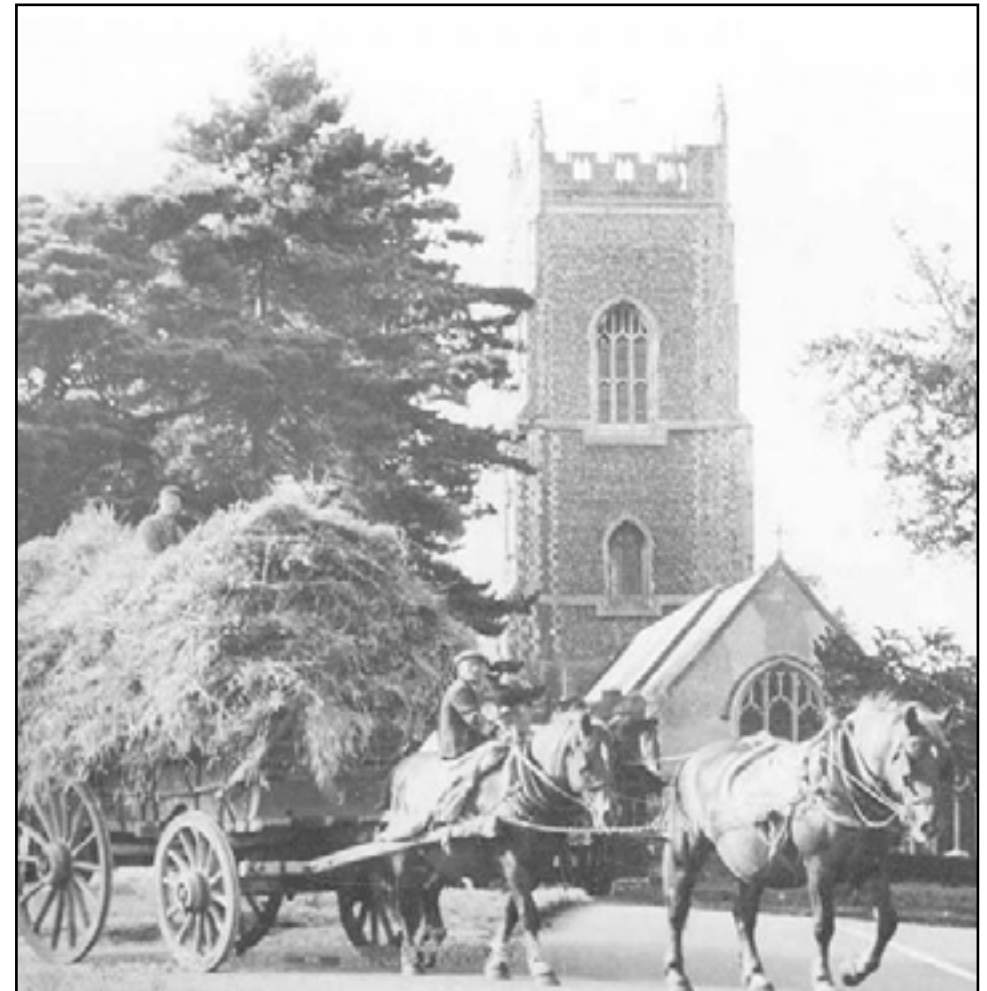


Figure 10 View of All Saints Church, 1940





Figure 11 Historic images of the barn complex at Brightlingsea Hall, all taken in 1985 (Essex County Council)



### 2.3 Designated Heritage Assets

There is one designated heritage asset within the Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area, the Grade I listed Church of All Saints (List UID: 1337182).

This building has been listed due to its special architectural and historic interest under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Further information about the listing process can be found on the Historic England [website](#).

Listed buildings are protected by government legislation and there are policies in place to ensure that any alterations to a listed building will not affect its special interest. It is possible to alter, extend or demolish a listed building but this requires listed building consent and sometimes planning permission.

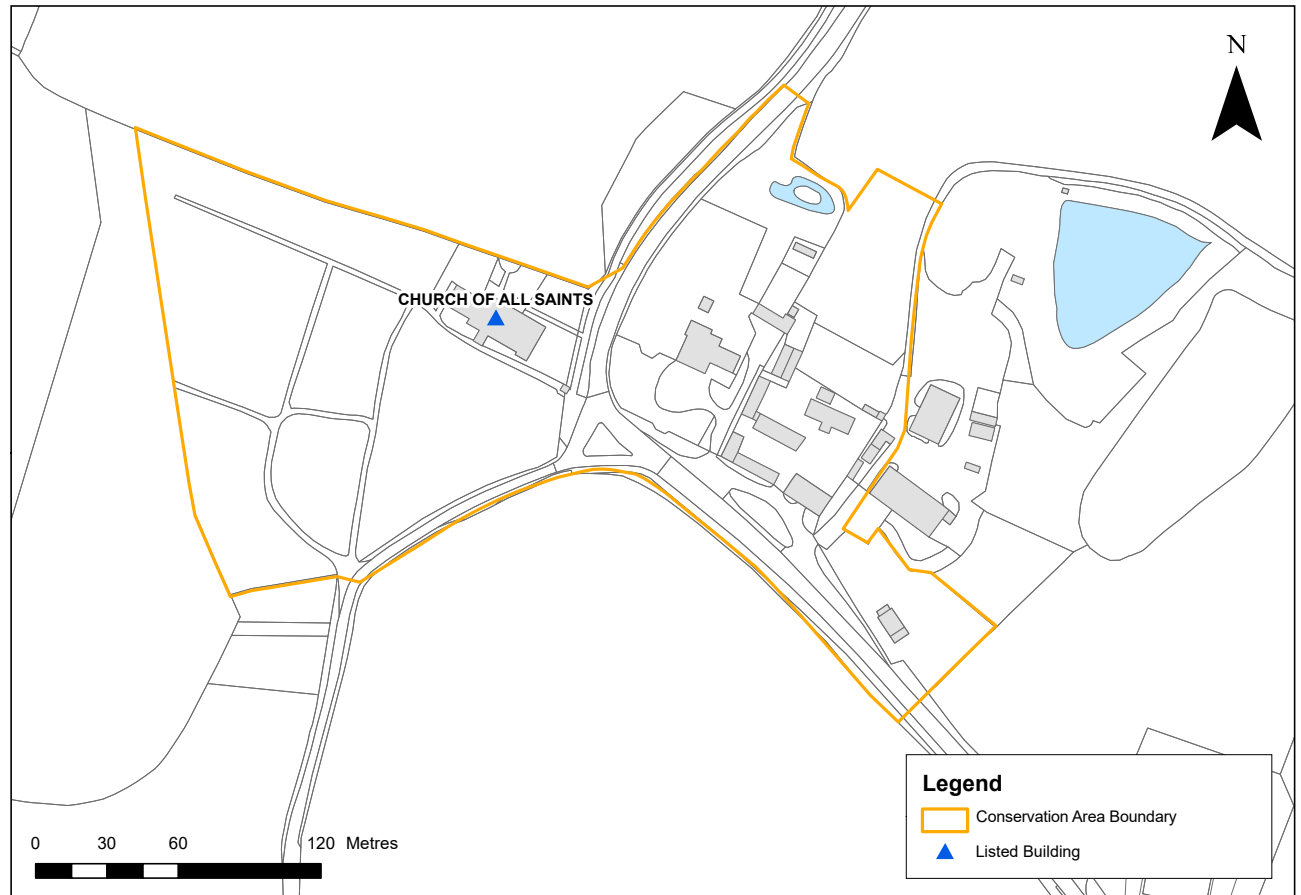


Figure 12 Map showing location of the only designated heritage asset within the Conservation Area

### ***Non-Designated Heritage Assets***

Every building, space, and feature within a conservation area makes a contribution to its character and special interest, be it positive, neutral or negative.

Heritage assets are defined in Planning Policy as 'A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.'

Not all heritage assets are listed, and just because a building is not included on the list does not mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other structures of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs, and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area's historic interest and its general appearance.

Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the locality. This document has identified heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and could be considered for local listing in the future. This list is not exhaustive, and further buildings may be identified as non-designated heritage assets through the planning application process. Buildings and features within the Conservation Area which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets include:

- Brightlingsea Hall
- All Saints Church Lych-gate



Figure 13 The Lych-gate, an important, non-designated building within the Conservation Area

### ***Heritage at Risk***

The Grade I Church of All Saints is included on Historic England's Heritage At-Risk Register, in a 'very bad' condition and at immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric, with no solution agreed. As a key, landmark building of the Conservation Area, it is important that a solution is agreed to work towards taking this building off the register.



### ***Archaeological Potential***

Within the Conservation Area there is the potential for the preservation of significant archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric period to post medieval period. The extensive and ongoing excavations, which have taken place over a number of years to the southeast in advance of quarrying, have revealed multi-period archaeological remains. Recent excavations on the outskirts of the settlement suggest this activity is spread across the Brightlingsea Peninsula.

Previous investigations and cropmark evidence have revealed the Conservation Area is located within a widespread ritual landscape dating from the Neolithic period. This landscape was also settled and farmed through to the Anglo-Saxon period. Further remains relating to funerary, settlement and agricultural activity are likely to survive within the Conservation Area. Of greater significance is the known remains of a Roman building below the chancel in the grounds of the existing church and the potential for an earlier Saxon predecessor church to have existed within the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area primarily comprises the Church and manor. The manor is Saxon in origin and settlement evidence has been revealed to the southwest of the church, it is considered likely that the full extent of the settlement has not yet been revealed and that it may extend northwards towards the church.

The isolated nature of the Church and Hall are a common medieval settlement pattern where they are located at some distance from the main settlement area. The survival of the medieval Church is an important, well preserved resource. The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 depicts buildings south of the Church along the road which has a distinct sharp bend. By the first edition OS map the graveyard

has been extended and the buildings are no longer extant. The road layout south of the church was altered prior to c.1900 and below ground remains of the former buildings along it and the road itself are likely to survive within the area.

The location of the medieval manorial hall is likely to be within the area of the existing hall. A building, identified as Brightlingsea Rectory Hall, is recorded in 1458 before the site became known as Brightlingsea Hall. The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 depict the Hall east of the church set back from the road on the edge of a possible medieval green. The present hall was built in 1874 and so earlier structures are likely to have been located within the same area and below ground remains may exist within the grounds of the current hall. Buildings associated with the hall, as well as agricultural buildings, would have been erected and replaced during the medieval to postmedieval period and evidence for these may also survive.

The recovery of pottery, industrial remains, shell and bone from excavated sites on the periphery of the Conservation Area would suggest good survival of most archaeological remains. Environmental remains, preserved in deeper features, have yielded information on the wider landscape as well as evidence for food and cereal production. Within the areas surrounding the church there is potential for earlier graves associated with a possible Saxon church here.

Much of the Conservation Area surrounding the Church is in use as a graveyard which will have largely truncated any surviving archaeological remains. However survival of archaeological remains is demonstrated closer to the existing church and there is potential in any areas of less disturbance.

## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Summary

The Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area is notable for its location, historic buildings, and rural character. It has small but distinctive spaces, separated in terms of land use and physically by the main arterial road that runs through the area, the B1029. This acts as the main gateway into Brightlingsea town, making it a significant route.

To the north west of the area is All Saints Church, a notable landmark within the Conservation Area, of national significance. The church is a good example, typical of East Anglian style. Surrounding the church is a six-acre churchyard, serving the local community of Brightlingsea, and demonstrating a strong historic connection to the town.

The churchyard is separated from Brightlingsea Hall, and the barn complex to the south east, by the main road into Brightlingsea. Brightlingsea Hall is a significant positive building within the Conservation Area, and is set within a substantial garden, bounded by a historic red brick wall.

Further south east are historic barns, now used as commercial premises. These have been much altered in recent years, which has impacted their significance; however, the site retains a number of historic buildings and is legible as a historic barn complex. The south of the area is terminated by early twentieth century cottages, which make a positive contribution and are prominent in views along the main road.



Figure 14 Planted sign within the Conservation Area, along the main route into Brightlingsea

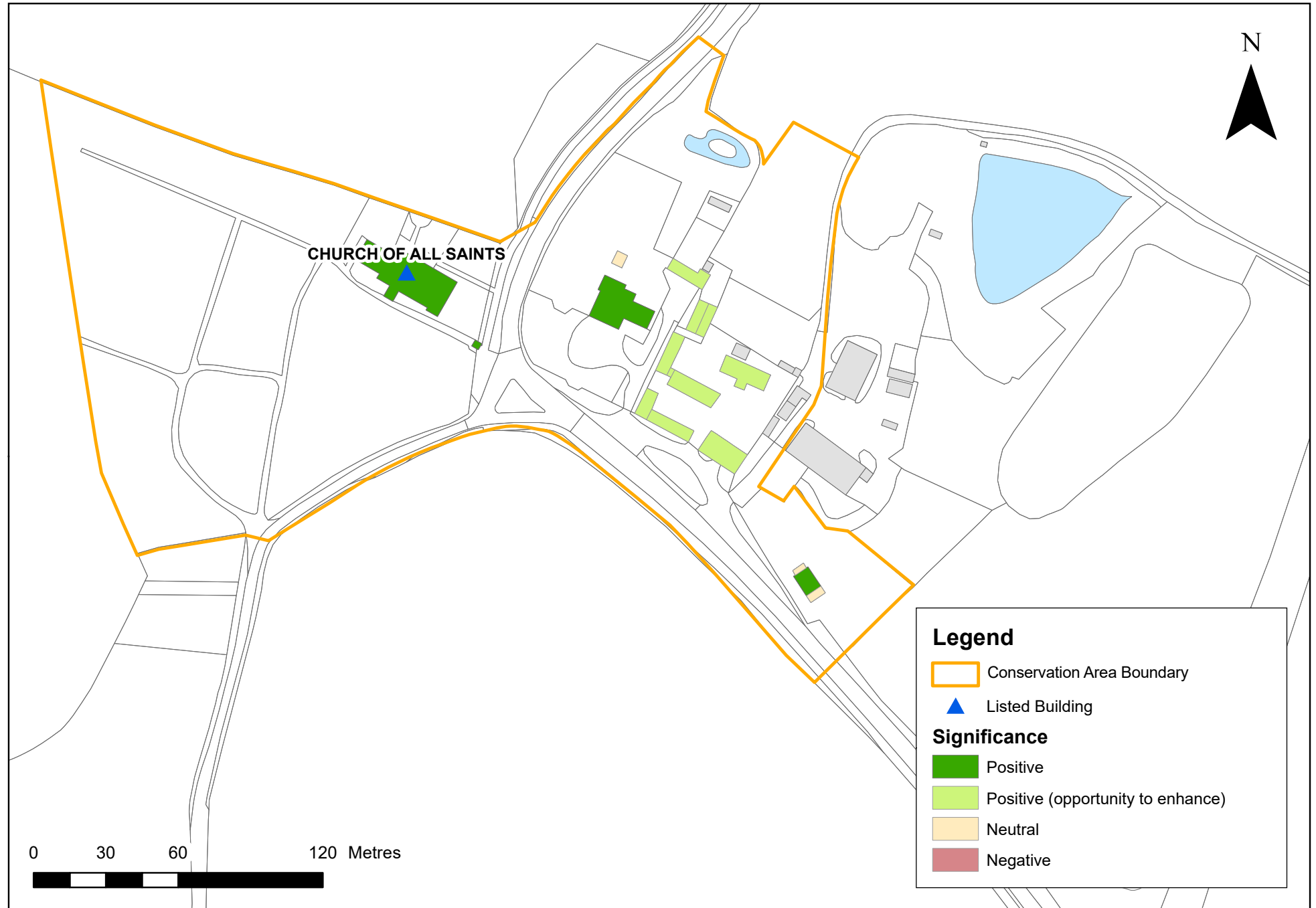


### 3.2 Significance of buildings

Where visible from areas of public realm, the buildings within the Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area have been assessed. The map on page 23 (Figure 15) should be read in conjunction with the key notes opposite. These outline the broad descriptions of positive, neutral and negative attributed to buildings within the Conservation Area. It should be noted that just because a building is positive it does not mean it cannot be enhanced. Some positive buildings may have intrusive aspects (such as inappropriate windows) and are addressed in the management plan. The buildings identified as 'Positive with opportunity for enhancement' tend to have more bespoke or fundamental issues that are not generally observed or widespread across the area.

- **Positive:** these are buildings that have been identified as positive contributors to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst identified as positive there are likely to be enhancements which can be made to better reveal the architectural interest of the building and improve its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These general enhancements are noted in the management plan. One example would be the replacement of windows where the buildings have UPVC. The upgrade of these items would be beneficial as a general rule.
- **Positive with opportunity for enhancement:** these are buildings have been highlighted as they are positive contributors, however, they have been compromised due to intrusive alterations or additions. These buildings can be enhanced through the removal, replacement or redesign of intrusive or unsympathetic alterations. In the case of Brightlingsea Hall, buildings have been highlighted which require changes that go further than the widespread issues such as inappropriate windows and can include buildings with unsympathetic roof replacements, replacement windows, doors, and extensions.
- **Neutral:** These buildings make no beneficial or adverse contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- **Negative:** These buildings make an adverse or intrusive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. None have been identified within the Conservation Area.

Figure 15 Map showing significance of buildings within the Conservation Area



### 3.3 Character Analysis

#### *Summary of character*

The character of the Conservation Area derives from its small size, low density of buildings, and its secluded position on the highest topographic point of Brightlingsea. Although there are very few buildings within the area, those that are here are varied in character. The buildings range from the historic ecclesiastical landmark of All Saints Church, and the historic nineteenth century Brightlingsea Hall and barn complex to the south-east.

#### *Land Usage*

The Church, and its surrounding churchyard, are located to the west of the B1029 and the historic ecclesiastical use of the land here is prominent. The churchyard contains further areas such as the peaceful Remembrance Garden, areas of wild grass, and forest church activity.

To the north east of the B1029 are Brightlingsea Hall and nineteenth century pair of cottages.

Commercial businesses occupy the historic barn complex located between the Hall and cottages. The historic agricultural use of the buildings is still legible in the group of buildings, however, the changes that have occurred have led to some loss of historic features and eroded their character individually.

There are two small areas of public realm space throughout the area, flanking the main arterial route that leads into Brightlingsea town. These are planted.

#### *Landmark Buildings*

The area contains the Grade I Listed All Saints Church (Figure 16). Due to its importance, use, and scale, it is a key landmark within the Conservation Area and wider landscape. Its spire is visible from the sea, acting as a way-finder throughout history.

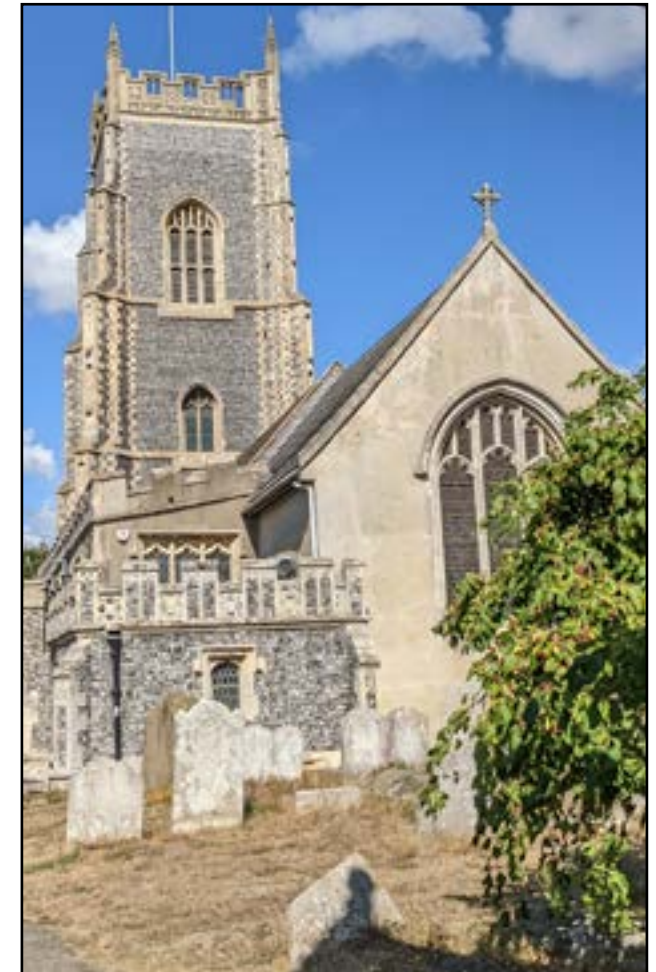


Figure 16 Grade I All Saints Church, a landmark building within the area





### **Local Building Materials and Details**

The Church is built in the perpendicular style. It contains reused materials, notably the roman brickwork in the south aisle wall of the doorway, likely the remaining doorway of the early Norman church. The exterior is in flint rubble walls and flint flushwork to east bay of North Chapel, South Vestry and West Tower. The roofing is predominantly grey slate, with some lead. It has a plastered east wall.

The Churchyard is fronted by a low brick wall, older and with half round coping to the north, more modern and with copings of red engineering brick to the south.

The lych-gate dates from around the end of the First World War and is a traditional open structure in black stained timber.

Brightlingsea Hall is a Victorian building of two storeys, with red brick elevations under a clay tiled roof. It displays detail such as the polychromatic diamond brickwork, and decorative ridge tiles. The sash windows are in arched openings. To the rear is a simply detailed single storey modern property with rendered walls under a concrete tiled roof.

The historic barns within the area are weatherboarded, the one adjacent to the road has a pantile roof. The modern additions are of varying construction and facing materials.

The cottages to the south east of the area are red brick with a simple polychromatic diamond on the front elevation, and flat headed arches to windows. It has a modern concrete roof, and modern windows.

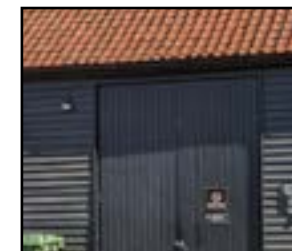
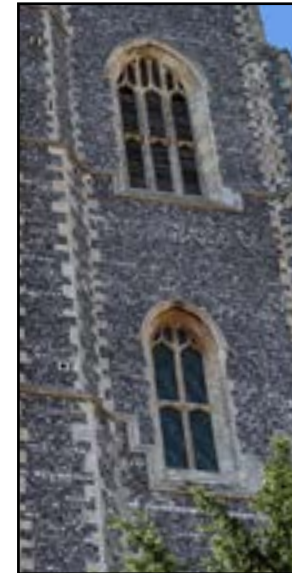


Figure 17 Material palette showcasing buildings and structures within the Conservation Area



**Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm**

Surrounding the plots and road are wide, planted grass verges, that contribute to the green character, and sense of low building density within the Conservation Area.

Outside the churchyard there is a small triangular green, its floral display linking with the Brightlingsea name board on a small grassed area on the other side of the road.

The garden surrounding Brightlingsea Hall is a notable open space within the Conservation Area and is of significance due to its historic association with the horticulturalist John Bateman. Historic maps demonstrate that there was once a fairly substantial garden, with a drive, planting and walled garden. In front of the Hall are traces of Victorian planting, particularly in the remains of the circular bed in the centre of the drive, and in the conifer by the vehicular entrance.

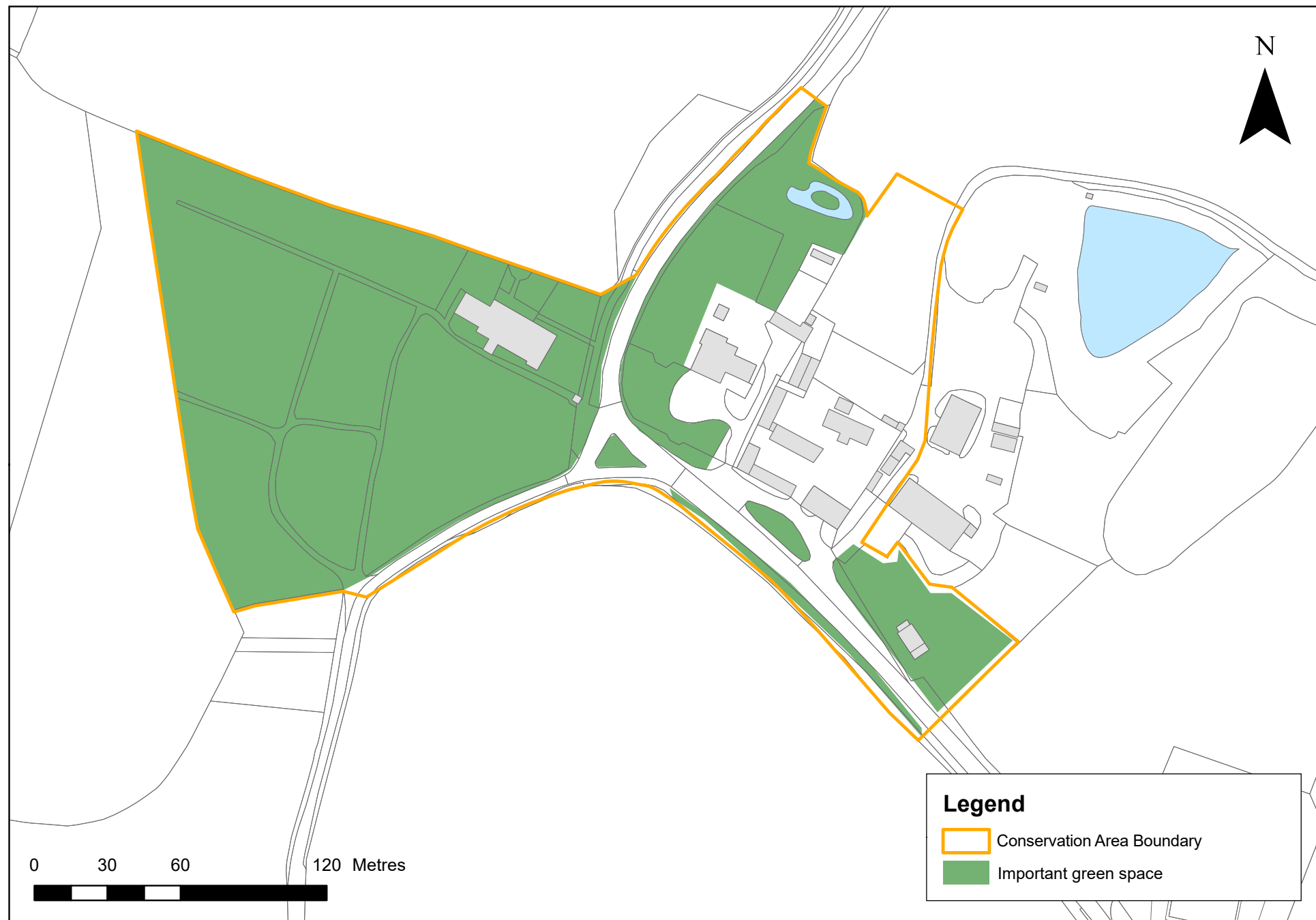


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Figure 18 Examples of landscaping, open space and public realm within the area, including street furniture and sculptures

Figure 19 Map showing important green space within the Conservation Area





### **Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings**

Brightlingsea Hall makes a key contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is a fairly large hall, with simple but well preserved architectural detailing, set within its grounds which are largely visible from public areas. The site, opposite the Church, is prominent within the Conservation Area and along the main route into Brightlingsea. It shares a historic connection with John Bateman, a key figure in the local community.

### **Key Views**

Key views are identified on Figure 20. The views included in this assessment are not exhaustive; for example, there are also glimpsed and kinetic views informal glimpsed views that contribute to the character and appearance, particularly those to the south towards the core of Brightlingsea and towards the church spire. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

#### **Views of All Saints Church**

The principal views of All Saints Church are from Brightlingsea Road and Church Lane. The views take in the Grade I listed landmark within the Conservation Area, and highlight its prominent location on high ground along the main route into Brightlingsea. The church tower in particular is a very prominent feature in views towards the area; the tower acts as a waymark in the landscape, for the local community as well as for those at sea.

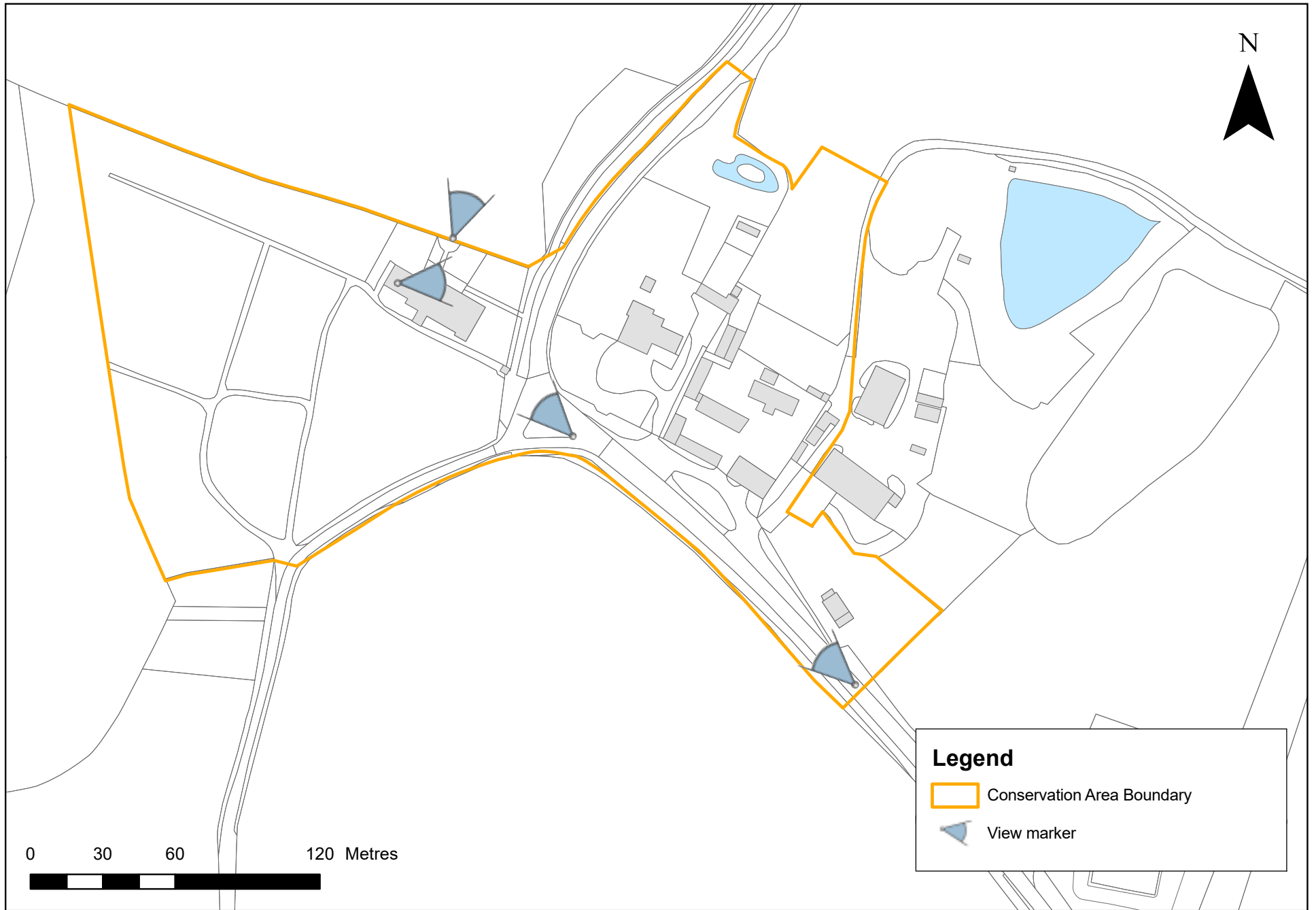
#### **Views from All Saints Church**

The views from the spire towards the sea are particularly significant, as they historically were used to guide fishermen.

#### **Views into the surrounding landscape**

The views into the surrounding rural landscape, towards the town centre and sea make a positive contribution to the conservation area. They give the small rural area context, and highlight its important position within the landscape topographically.

Figure 20 Map showing key views identified within the Conservation Area





### 3.4 Character areas

Given the scale of the Conservation Area, there are no defined character areas identified. However, descriptions derived by historic land use have been included below, to aid understanding of any variance in characteristics across the area as a whole.

#### *The Church*

The church and its large churchyard are distinct in character. The churchyard is well planted with mature trees and hedgerows, which creates a sense of tranquillity. Glimpsed views into the wider landscape also contribute to a sense of isolation here.

The church itself is a fine example of the East Anglian perpendicular church, incorporating earlier materials. It is constructed in flint rubble and flushwork with freestone dressings. The tall tower is crenelated and is prominent in wider views. The churchyard is bounded by a low brick wall and hedgerows. It is accessed by the twentieth century lych-gate, constructed in timber under a tile roof with decorative ridge tiles.

The churchyard comprises a small, formal memorial garden to the north of the church, with burial ground to the west and south. The memorial garden to the north has open views towards the creek, with benches orientated to take in the views. The burial ground area is traversed by wide paths lined with trees, giving the space a formal character. There is a small forest school area to the west of the churchyard, in use by the local community. Memorial benches are located throughout the churchyard, providing space for quiet reflection.

#### *The Hall*

Brightlingsea Hall and its grounds are another distinct area. The garden is bounded by a low buttressed brick wall with more substantial walls fronting the churchyard. The hall is a Victorian building of two storeys, with red brick elevations under a clay tiled roof. The sash windows are in arched openings with straight-sided heads. To the rear is a simply-detailed single storey modern property with rendered walls under a concrete tiled roof.

The square forecourt in front of the Hall shows traces of Victorian planting, particularly in the remains of the circular bed in the centre of the drive, and in the notable conifer by the current vehicular entrance.

#### *Barns*

The outbuildings of the hall are now the premises of independent businesses. The most prominent buildings are a historic weatherboarded barn with a red pantiled roof on the road frontage, and a similarly-scaled though heavily-altered former agricultural building to the rear of the premises, now of two storeys with modern windows.

The remaining buildings are largely modern single storey, of varying construction and facing materials, and of very limited visual value.

To the rear of the building complex, the ground drops relatively sharply into the yards and car park attached to the works.



### 3.5 Setting of the Conservation Area

The NPPF describes the setting of a heritage asset as:

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”

Historic England Good Practice Advice Note on the Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) indicates that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. It goes on to note ‘Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset’.

Historic England’s advice note on setting includes a:

“(non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance’. As the advice note states, ‘only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of a particular relevance to an asset.’”

This checklist has been used to inform this assessment.

The Conservation Area draws its significance from key features outside of its boundary, most notably from the creek, town centre, and sea. Due to the topography of the Conservation Area, the land slopes towards the water and the town of Brightlingsea to the south east; this affords views from high ground into the wider area. The location of the Church and height of its tower means it is visible widely within the landscape; the tower can be seen for seventeen miles out to sea, making it an important landmark that was used to guide fishermen home.

The wider setting is formed of arable farmland and creeks, as well as the town of Brightlingsea. The surrounding fields make a positive contribution to the rural character of the Conservation Area, with the main town separated from the area by arable fields. The fields to the north of the Church are important in views to and from the tower; these fields were also historically farmed by Dorrien Magens and Magens, who also owned the barn complex within the Conservation Area.

The church also shares a strong connection with the town, as it serves the community there. Brightlingsea Hall shares a connection to the town through its association with John Bateman, who became Brightlingsea’s first Deputy and built Bateman’s Tower.

The woodland burial to the south of the Church was established by the turn of the twentieth century, named Gravesend on the second edition OS map. This forms a part of the setting of the Churchyard and burial ground.



Figure 21 View north towards the Alresford Creek, within the setting of the Conservation Area





## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive, and neither are the opportunities identified unique to Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church, with many being shared with other Conservation Areas.

### ***Car Parking***

Car parking is mostly informal, with a small, gravelled area to the south of the church and further cars parking along Movers Lane and the small layby beside the barn complex.

Car parking surrounding the green space on Movers Lane can become crowded at peak times of use, and impact views towards All Saints Church from the south-east. This can be an issue to the south side of the green, where the lane is single track, so parked cars block access (Figure 22).

### ***Inappropriate alterations and development***

Incremental changes have occurred which have impacted the historic character of some of the buildings within the Conservation Area. The changes made to the barn at the back of the complex is perhaps the most notable example of this (Figure 23), as the modern uPVC windows detract from the historic façade in terms of their positioning and material.

### ***Interpretation***

There is opportunity to enhance heritage interpretation of Brightlingsea Hall, through digital resources and physical interpretation on site.

### ***Maintenance***

Some spaces within the Conservation Area are in need of some routine maintenance to enhance their appearance. For example, the boundary walls at Brightlingsea Hall are cracked, and the mortar is failing in places (Figure 24). Routine maintenance and repairs would prevent further deterioration of this historic boundary wall, and feature of Brightlingsea Hall.

### ***Public Realm***

The Conservation Area contains high quality green spaces, which are well maintained and clearly tended for by the local community. There is opportunity to continue to maintain this high standard of planting and maintenance.

There are tracks and routes within the barn complex and courtyard spaces associated with the barns that are surfaced and patched in a variety of materials. There is opportunity to improve the condition and appearance of the tracks.

### ***Green spaces***

It is clear from the findings of this appraisal that the gardens at Brightlingsea Hall were once of interest, due to their connection with the notable horticulturalist John Bateman. Some surviving indications of the Victorian drives and gardens can be seen, and the boundary walls remain. However, little maintenance appears to have been carried out for some considerable time. Should there be sufficient investment, there is opportunity to enhance the gardens and provide the Hall with an appropriate setting which reflects its history and significance. There is also potential for this space to be further researched and understood, perhaps through local interest groups such as the Essex Gardens Trust. This may support in the future management of the site.



Figure 22 Crowded parking to the south of the Church



Figure 23 Loss of historic features within the barn complex can be seen with replacement windows, doors and roofing

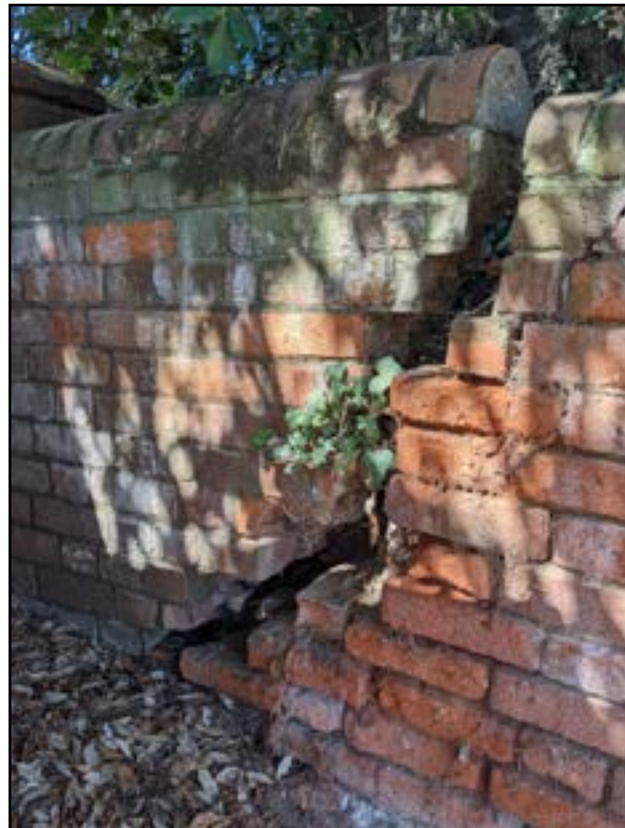


Figure 24 Damage to Brightlingsea Hall boundary wall



Figure 25 Materials along the approach to Brightlingsea Hall



Figure 26 Opportunity to enhance the gardens of Brightlingsea Hall, currently used for parking



## 5. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of opportunities for the Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This section builds on the opportunities identified in Section 4 and seeks to recommend management proposals which address these.

### 5.1 Positive Management: Short term

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the local planning authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### *Enforcement*

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works. The loss of original windows is a particular concern within the Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Conservation Area.

#### *Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments*

In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

All applications and development proposals within the Conservation Area and its setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures or trees on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2019). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.



### ***Local Heritage List***

A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF. Local Lists can be beneficial in ensuring the upkeep and maintenance of historic buildings that contribute to the character of the settlements.

There are some buildings and features within the Conservation Area which make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area, which indicates that a Local List may be beneficial to ensure the upkeep of buildings which are significant to Brightlingsea's history and character.

There are buildings within the Conservation Area which are of sufficient quality to be considered for local list status, as highlighted in Section 2.5. These are Brightlingsea Hall and the Lych-gate (which is curtilage listed).

The exercise of creating a Local List is currently underway by Tendring District Council. It will also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding.

### ***Neutral and Negative Elements***

Tendring Council must not allow for the quality of design to be impacted by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must, where possible, seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate historic features. It is also considered that poor quality or unsympathetic schemes do not preserve the special interest of the Conservation Area and therefore are discouraged, both within the Conservation Area and its setting; this is due to the potential impact to the character and appearance of the area.

### ***New Development***

To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

Successful new development will:

- Relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings; and
- Use materials and building methods which as high in quality of those used in existing buildings.

Tendring District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Ensuring large scale development schemes are referred to a Design Review Panel (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it's appropriate to a conservation area.



- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### **Public resources**

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a conservation area. In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. A single Good Practice Design Guide on standard alterations such as signage, shopfronts, windows, doors, rainwater goods, boundaries and roof extensions will ensure inappropriate development does not continue to be the accepted norm.

- Provide guidance on appropriate design and materials for windows and doors and encouraging the retention or reinstatement of historic glazing patterns and door designs and the use of appropriate materials.
- Provide guidance on the traditional form of boundary treatments and encourage their reinstatement where they have been removed or compromised.
- Provide guidance on traditional roofing materials and encouraging the reinstatement of good quality slate and the removal of unsympathetic modern materials such as interlocking concrete tiles.

- Provide and update guidance relating to signage. This should address appropriate size and design, the extent and amount and associated lighting. All further planning applications and advert consent applications should be required to comply, where possible, with this standard, designed to help to restore the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and results in a loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of the areas built heritage. At present there is some interpretation (information boards, signage, webpages) within the Conservation Area, located within the Church, aimed at improving understanding and awareness. These must continue to be maintained and updated where appropriate to ensure awareness and establish the identity of Brightlingsea as a historic settlement and its close connections with the Church and Hall.

### **Tree Management**

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, all trees in Conservation Areas are afforded the same protection as a Tree Preservation Order. Trees which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council. Six weeks' notice has to be given to the council under S211 of the Act.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the Conservation Area should be monitored and maintained appropriately, particularly those within the grounds of Brightlingsea Hall and the churchyard. This will maintain the green character of the area. Any tree that makes



a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous) replaced with an appropriate new tree.

## **5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term**

The second set of proposals are also focussed around positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

### ***Character Appraisal and Management Plan***

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed every five years to monitor change and inform management proposals.

### ***Conservation Area Boundary***

The Conservation Area boundary has been revised within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2019) and Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2018). The boundary now includes the late nineteenth-century cottages to the south east of the area, due to the positive contribution they make to the area. The boundary should continue to be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

### ***Interpretation: Improved Understanding and Awareness***

There are areas of physical interpretation across the Conservation Area, predominantly found within the Church. There are also resources available digitally which promote understanding and awareness of All Saints Church and Brightlingsea Hall. There is scope for further interpretation within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding, particularly surrounding Brightlingsea Hall.

### ***Opportunity Sites***

There are some opportunity sites across the Conservation Area which, if sensitively addressed, may enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Sites which may provide opportunity for enhancement include the historic barn complex. This is due to the erosion of historic features, such as doors, windows and roofing materials. Should there be an opportunity to reinstate these features in the future, this would benefit the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### ***Public Realm***

Investment to improve the wider public realm can be achieved through continuing to improve and rationalise existing surfacing, and the continued maintenance of existing, high-quality street furniture.



### 5.3 Funding Opportunities

There are three main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### ***National Heritage Lottery Fund***

The National Heritage Lottery Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Tendring Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

#### ***Section 106 Agreements***

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon Brightlingsea. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site specific improvements.

#### ***Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)***

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would be suitable to preserve and enhance architectural detailing.



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Historic Environment Record (ECC)





## 6.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	All sections are relevant, although the following pertain to Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans:  66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.  72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2021) DCLG	Chapter 16;  Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2019) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans	
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	
National Guidance	Historic England Advice Note 1 (2019) Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Traditional Windows	
National Guidance	Historic England, High Streets for All (2018) Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Repointing Brick and Stone Walls Guide for Best Practice	
Local Supplementary Planning Document	Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond (2022)	Section 2



### 6.3 Glossary

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic environment record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Local List	Local listing is a concept that is designed to ensure that the historic and architectural interest of buildings that are of local importance but do not meet the criteria for being nationally listed is taken account of during the planning process. Local lists can be used to identify significant local heritage assets to support the development of Local Plans.
Non-Designated heritage asset	Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. Only a minority of buildings have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

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# Great Clacton Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Tendring  
District Council



Client:  
Tendring District Council

Date:  
December 2024



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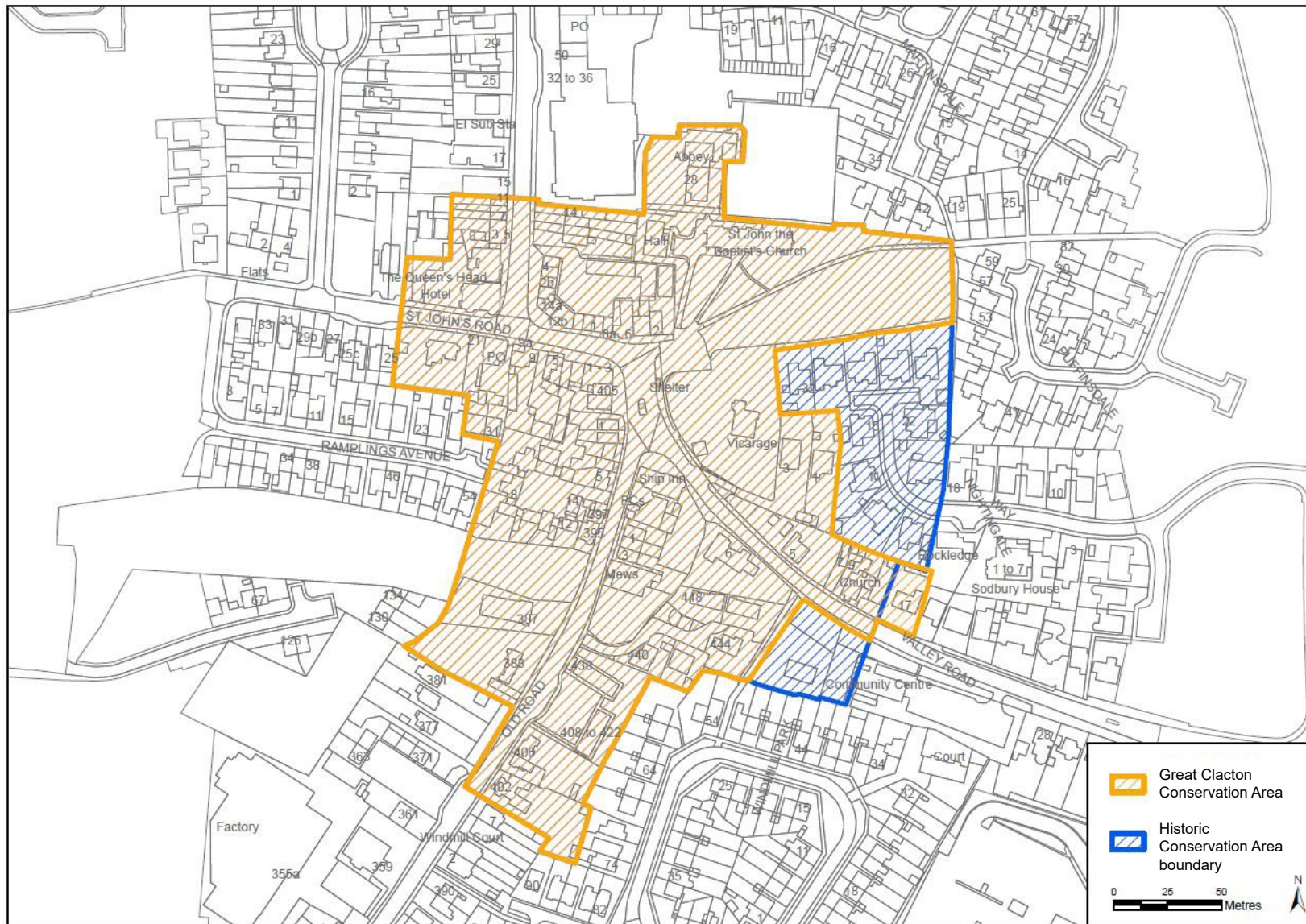


Figure 1 Map showing Great Clacton Conservation Area (with 2024 boundary changes)



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the Great Clacton Conservation Area, outlining its designation history, alterations to the boundary, and a description of its special interest. This appraisal also considers buildings, green spaces and features which contribute to the Conservation Area's character and appearance. It also highlights the significance of heritage assets within the Conservation Area and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to its character. The understanding of significance can be used to help manage future change.

Conservation Area designation provides broader protection than the listing of individual buildings as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and appearance. This ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the area into consideration.

Great Clacton Conservation Area's significance is predominantly derived from its historic and architectural interest. Great Clacton is a settlement with early medieval origins. The twelfth century Grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist in the north of the Conservation Area would once have dominated the medieval village which developed around the bishop's manor. It remains an important landmark today, and its churchyard provides a tranquil and important public green space. The architectural interest of the area also derives from three Grade II listed timber framed and plastered public houses/former inns and other Grade II listed buildings on St John's Road, Old Road and Valley Road.



Figure 2 The Grade II listed Queen's Head former public house and The Plough on North Road



## 1.2 Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the Conservation Area and its unique character and appearance.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area, which contribute to its special interest, along with their setting. It also recognises non-designated heritage assets within the setting of the Conservation Area which contribute to its special interest. It considers how the area developed, in terms of its building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities are used to assess the key characteristics of the area, highlighting the potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Great Clacton. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the area itself, as well as a review of the previous Conservation Area Appraisal published in 2006.

This appraisal enhances understanding of the Conservation Area and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce appropriate designs and positive outcomes for agents and their clients.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in Section 6.2.

## 1.3 Planning Policy and Guidance

The legislative framework for the conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990). In particular, Section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and Section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced. Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context: the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.

National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in Chapter 16 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2024).

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2019) and Good Practice Advice in Planning 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).

The Great Clacton Conservation Area is located within Tendring District. Local planning policy is set out in the *Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Section 2 (2022)*. Policies which are relevant to the historic environment include:

*Policy SPL 3 - Sustainable Design*

*Policy PP 8 - Tourism*

*Policy PPL 3 - The Rural Landscape*

*Policy PPL 7 - Archaeology*

*Policy PPL 8 - Conservation Areas*

*Policy PPL 9 - Listed Buildings*

*Policy PPL 10 - Renewable energy generation and energy efficiency*

The Conservation Area is located within the Clacton-on-Sea Development Boundary.



Figure 3 Buildings on St John's Road (looking west)



Figure 4 Aerial view of the Great Clacton Conservation Area showing it in its wider context



#### **1.4 Designation of the Conservation Area**

Great Clacton Conservation Area was first designated in 1983. A Conservation Character Area Appraisal was adopted by Tendring District Council in March 2006, derived from a document produced for the Council by consultants Smith Stuart Reynolds in 2001. The Conservation Area was reviewed in 2022, with a public consultation period and event undertaken.

#### **1.5 2024 Boundary Revision**

The 2006 Appraisal included suggested changes to the Conservation Area boundary and proposed Article 4 Directions but these were not implemented, and the boundary remained as designated in 1983. The 2006 suggestions for boundary revisions were reviewed as part of this appraisal, and changes to the boundary of the Conservation Area were made in light of these, and as the result of new development which has taken place since 2006.

To the south of the churchyard and east of the twentieth century vicarage, mid-twentieth century housing has been augmented with a new development of further bungalows at the northern end of Nightingale Way, on previously undeveloped land. These are characterful in design and have been carefully detailed but are not of sufficient architectural quality to merit inclusion in the Conservation Area. An area of unkempt scrubland directly fronting Valley Road and a tarmacked area behind this surrounding the Army Cadets' building located off Valley Road was also removed. The map on page 4 of this report shows the amended Conservation Area boundary.

## 2. Great Clacton Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

Great Clacton is situated in the south of Tendring District, and forms part of the larger coastal town of Clacton-on-Sea. The Great Clacton Conservation Area is relatively small, urban in character and represents the historic core of the village settlement which developed around the medieval church and nearby manor house and along the main roads: Old Road (to the south, formerly known as Brook Street)<sup>1</sup>, St John's Road (to the west), Valley Road (which runs east to west, formerly known as Holland Road)<sup>2</sup> and North Road (to the north).

Modern commercial development on North Road just beyond the Conservation Area boundary and on St John's Road has eroded the historic village character of the Conservation Area. There has been more sympathetic new housing introduced on Old Road and to the rear of the street fronting buildings. Road traffic through the area is heavy and constant, which detracts from how the area is experienced and from the setting of all the street fronting listed buildings.

<sup>1</sup> It was still shown as such on the 25 inch Ordnance Survey (OS) map published in 1923.

<sup>2</sup> The name Valley Road first appears on the 1923 OS map.



Figure 5 Approach to the medieval church



## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of the Conservation Area its environs.

### Prehistory (-500000 – 43)

Relatively little is known about the prehistoric archaeology within the Great Clacton Conservation Area however the prehistory of the wider area is well documented. The cliffs and foreshore at Clacton-on-Sea have yielded abundant animal and plant fossil remains, as well as extensive Palaeolithic deposits of struck flints which gave its name to the 'Clactonian' flint industry. The numerous river valleys that cross the Tendring area and the coast would have been especially favoured in providing a predictable source of food (from hunting and fishing) and water, as well as a means of transport and communication in the prehistoric period. The free-draining sand and gravel soils were preferable locations for settlement and agriculture and coincidentally, also provide favourable conditions for the formation of cropmark features, where below ground archaeological features show as a visible trace on the surface and can be recorded through aerial photography. Recorded cropmark features suggest that there are numerous Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments across the Tendring District with notable examples at St Osyth to the west. Some material remains relating to ritual activity have been recovered from the surrounding area from the Neolithic to Iron Age period though none from within the Conservation Area.

### Roman (43 – 410)

The Romano-British occupation of the Great Clacton area is also relatively unknown with only a single Roman coin recovered north of the Conservation Area. Roman brick and limestone are incorporated into the walls of the parish church, however, and further building material recovered in the area surrounding the church could indicate the material came from a nearby source.

### Early Medieval (410 – 1066)

Great and Little Clacton are ancient parishes that originated as a single estate in the Anglo-Saxon period. For taxation purposes they were treated as a single unit until the mid-sixteenth century although they each had their own parish church by the twelfth century. It is thought likely that in the tenth century or earlier, Great and Little Clacton and part of what was to become known as St Osyth made up a large Anglo-Saxon estate owned by St Paul's Cathedral. By around 1000 Clacton was a separate manor owned by the Bishop of London.<sup>3</sup> The name Clacton is thought to be Anglo-Saxon in origin, simply translated as 'the village of Clacc's people' however Great Clacton is not separately documented until the medieval period and the location of the Anglo-Saxon settlement is unknown. Though not accurately located, the remains of a possible high-status burial suggests there was settlement in the Anglo-Saxon period close to or within the Conservation Area.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Christopher C. Thornton, Herbert Eiden, VCH Essex, Volume XI - Clacton, Walton and Frinton: North-East Essex Seaside Resorts (2011), p.226.



It is thought that Clacton Hall was probably established prior to the Norman conquest of 1066. The exact relationship of the medieval manor house to eighteenth century Great Clacton Hall is unclear but there was certainly a house on the present site by 1656.<sup>4</sup> Outside of the Conservation Area, the less important manor houses including Cann Hall in the north-west corner of Great Clacton and a sub-manor of Colbaynes Hall located near the western boundary were medieval in origin but date to after the conquest.<sup>5</sup>

From the early medieval period to the late nineteenth century most of the land in the parishes of Little and Great Clacton was held by the manor of Great and Little Clacton, and so their landownership and economies were linked for much of their history. Both parishes had similar agricultural economies until the seaside resort of Clacton-on-Sea was developed in the 1870s, although Great Clacton developed a small fishing industry in the medieval period.<sup>6</sup> There was a landing place, one ship, a master and four mariners and fishermen living at Great Clacton in 1565.<sup>7</sup>

4 Ibid., p.242.

5 Ibid., p.234. Timber forming part of Cann Hall has been dated to 1512 using dendrochronology. Roger Kennell, *The Place-Names of Great Clacton* (Essex Society for Archaeology & History, 2016 (e-book)).

6 Ed. Christopher C. Thornton, Herbert Eiden, *VCH Essex, Volume XI - Clacton, Walton and Frinton: North-East Essex Seaside Resorts* (2011), p.234.

7 Ibid., p.258.

Although no major highways passed through Great Clacton, the roads to Little Clacton (to the north) St Osyth (to the west) and Little Holland (to the east) are presumed to be ancient and were significant to the development of Great Clacton.<sup>8</sup>

### Medieval (1066 – 1540)

Large areas of local woodland may have survived until the eleventh century but appear to have been cleared by the later medieval period. The manor of Great and Little Clacton had two parks including one in the south-west of Great Clacton known as Alton Park, the latter recorded in 1313 and which descended with Clacton Manor until the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>9</sup> The Conservation Area encompasses the historic village core, clustered around an open area formed where the roads joined and crossed each other. The scale and grandeur of the Norman parish church gives some indication of the relative importance of the settlement in the medieval period. The village conforms to a typical medieval settlement pattern where the church and manorial hall are located in close proximity. The development of a village seems to have been encouraged by the bishops of London in the fifteenth century and by 1444 small parcels of land belonging to the manor (demesne land), probably near the centre of Great Clacton, were being leased to tenants, apparently as building plots.<sup>10</sup>

8 Ibid., p.230.

9 Ibid., pp.228 and 247.

10 Ibid., p.235.



In the mid-fifteenth century there are records of rents from several parcels of land and new houses which included a cottage at the church gate, land in the Hall yard, land on the west side of the churchyard and a parcel of land between a smithy and the lord's garden.<sup>11</sup>

The Church of St John the Baptist is the only medieval monument to survive within the Conservation Area. In the medieval period it was dedicated to St Nicholas rather than St John, the latter dedication first recorded in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>12</sup> A chapel to the north of the church appears to have been built at the time of the church's construction or soon after, possibly for private use by the lord of the manor. The three bay church nave with round arch headed windows is the main survival from the twelfth century. Inside the building a piscina survives from the fourteenth century and the octagonal font dates to the fifteenth century. The nave roof is of a form common between around 1350 and 1450. The west tower was added in the fifteenth century and superseded an earlier timber framed belfry.<sup>13</sup>

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11 Ibid., p.235.

12 Ibid., p.277.

13 Ibid., p.281.



Figure 6 Medieval Church of St John the Baptist



Figure 7 Chapman and Andre map of 1777. The map depicts the Church of St John the Baptist with its parsonage to the south and Great Clacton Hall to the north and the Ship Inn can be seen directly to the south of the main road junction.



In 1507, the vicarage lay to the east of a road near Clacton Hall, thought probably to be the site of the nineteenth century vicarage which was demolished and replaced (on the same site) with the current vicarage in 1974. In 1810 the vicarage was noted to have a brick front with lath and plaster rear and side elevations, and to have a thatched and weatherboarded stable.<sup>14</sup> The Parsonage is clearly marked on Chapman and André's map of Essex (1777), and shown as the vicarage from the 1st edition OS map of 1876 onwards.

Great Clacton had no proper harbour but due to its proximity to the coast it is thought that from the medieval period and later, communication with London and other parts of Essex may have been by sea with a landing place recorded at Conyber in 1565 (the location of which is unknown).<sup>15</sup>

### Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)

In 1545 Clacton manor was exchanged by the church for land owned by the Crown in Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. In 1548 the manor was granted to Princess Mary (later Queen) and in 1553 to Thomas Darcy, 1st Baron of Chiche (which became known as St Osyth) and passed through successive generations of the same family until the mid-nineteenth century when it passed to the Trustees of W F Nassau (died 1857), who were still in possession in the 1930s.<sup>16</sup>

14 *Ibid.*, p.277.

15 *Ibid.*, p.230.

16 *Ibid.*, p.241.

Christopher Saxton's Map of Essex (1576) shows the church at Great Clacton but generally provides little detail for the county other than some of the larger mansions and certain estates which are shown as enclosed (or impaled) indicating private land belonging to someone with significant wealth.

The earliest surviving buildings in the Conservation Area include the timber framed Ship Inn, and the buildings at 403 Old Road (The Maltings) and 1-3 St John's Road which abut one another and are thought to date to the sixteenth century or earlier. The former was converted to a shop in the 1980s. The latter was a single house called Turland in the 1950s.<sup>17</sup> The Ship Inn was probably originally built as a dwelling but was recorded as an inn by the later 1700s.<sup>18</sup> Smuggling was prevalent along the isolated local coast in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is reputed to be a bricked-up entrance to a tunnel in the cellar of The Ship which was part of a network used to hide smuggled contraband before it was moved to Colchester and London. Other tunnels were also said to connect the Queen's Head Hotel to the house called Three Chimneys opposite, and Great Clacton Hall to the church.<sup>19</sup>

17 *Ibid.*, p.238.

18 *Ibid.*, p.238.

19 <https://www.clactonhistory.co.uk/smuggling-tales-great-clacton/>



Figure 8 Grade II listed Forge Cottage on Valley Road which has been dated to the sixteenth century or earlier

Forge Cottage on Valley Road, originally a hall house and which became the local Smithy, has also been dated to the sixteenth century or earlier and has a later outshot to the rear. Of the same date is The Queen's Head on St John's Road and the corner of North Road which was originally built as a dwelling,<sup>20</sup> and extended in the eighteenth century. By 1704, it had a brewhouse and a stable yard.<sup>21</sup> The brewhouse is likely to have been what is now The Plough to the rear of the hotel

20 VCH Essex Volume XI, p.259.

21 Ibid., p.259.



Figure 9 Portrait of John Cobbold of Ipswich who acquired the Ship Inn in 1800, by George Frost (1820) (Ipswich Borough Council collection)

which has been dated to circa 1700.<sup>22</sup> Both The Ship and the Queen's Head were licenced from 1769, and The Ship was acquired by John Cobbold of Ipswich in 1800, passing to his descendants and Cobbold's brewery, who owned it through the nineteenth century and later also acquired the Queen's Head.<sup>23</sup>

Number 383 Old Road (also known as Brook Villa) has been dated to circa 1679 and was built as a farmhouse possibly by its first known owner William Angier (died 1671).<sup>24</sup> It is reported that in 1832, Revenue Officers came to the house searching for smuggled goods.<sup>25</sup>

The Mansion House which was located in the centre of Great Clacton before it was demolished in the 1960s was either built or encased in brick in around 1720.<sup>26</sup>

22 Ibid., p.238. and James Bettley and Nikolaus Pevsner, Essex (Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England), (Yale University Press) 2007, p.401.

23 VCH Essex Volume XI, pp.259-260.

24 Ibid., p.240.

25 <https://www.clactonhistory.co.uk/smuggling-tales-great-clacton/>

26 VCH Essex Volume XI, p.237.

Great Clacton Hall was built or rebuilt in the eighteenth century for the Schutz family who bought the house and demesne lands in 1717.<sup>27</sup> It is a two-storey timber framed and plastered house of three bays with a tiled roof, a central chimney stack and stair. Dormer windows to the roof were removed in the 1980s and the large extension on the north side of the house was added in the late 2000s.<sup>28</sup> A number of historic farm buildings and ranges associated with Great Clacton Hall are depicted on the 1777 map and structural remains of the former post-medieval buildings and yards have been uncovered north of the church. A relatively large complex of buildings is still shown to the north-east of the hall on the 1st Edition OS map published in 1876 and these were still in place by the time of the 1923 OS map.

The 1777 map shows the village clustered around a 'square' to the west of the church at the intersection of the main roads, The Ship directly to the south of the intersection, and with further buildings more sparsely ranged along St John's Road, Valley Road and Old Road.

Great Clacton was connected to Colchester by the operation of a carrier's cart which started to run from soon after 1730, and a carrier service continued into the late nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup> The 1777 map shows settlements at several greens in Great Clacton including Rush Green in the south-west, on the northern edge of Alton Park, and at

27 *Ibid.*, p.266.

28 *Ibid.*, p.242.

29 *Ibid.*, p.231.



Figure 10 Late nineteenth/early twentieth century view south along North Road with The Plough Inn on the right hand side

Magdalen Green which lies to the south of the Conservation Area along Old Road. The area to the west of Great Clacton featured extensive greens until the nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup>

30 *Ibid.*

Three Chimneys lies on the western boundary of the Conservation Area and is a timber framed house with a painted brick principal façade, and plastered to the rear. It has been dated to the seventeenth or eighteenth century and had a new garden laid out in 1847.<sup>31</sup> It takes its name from Three Chimneys Farm shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map published in 1876.

Weatherboarded Saddlers Cottage (No. 5) on St John's Road dates to the eighteenth century and has the fascia of a former shop front on the left-hand side. The shop sign was still present in the 1980s.<sup>32</sup> Number 9 St John's Road which is a former cottage or pair of cottages now in use as a shop, also dates to the eighteenth century as do the three, three-storey former houses of Church House. What today is the barber's shop at the western end of this range was first converted to a double-fronted shop in 1883.<sup>33</sup>

The village was considered vulnerable to invasion during the Napoleonic Wars and a signal station was built at Great Clacton in 1795, with three Martello towers built along the Clacton coast in the first decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup>

31 Ibid., p.238.

32 The sign is shown on an image of Saddlers Cottage taken in 1985 by Essex County Council.

33 Ibid., p.238.

34 Ibid., p.229.



Figure 11 Late nineteenth/early twentieth century image of the Ship Inn showing the windmill demolished circa 1918 (Clacton and District Local History Society)



A windmill was in place at Bull Hill Farm to the east of Old Road by 1756 and seems to have continued in use until 1833. This mill, which appears on the 1777 map, lay further to the east of the road than a mill that succeeded it in the nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup>

The Church of St John the Baptist was restored in the nineteenth century. The spire of the west tower was rebuilt in 1810 and a balustrade replaced the former battlements in 1913. Amongst other changes carried out in the nineteenth century was the introduction of two new galleries in 1837. A later phase of works was carried out from 1865-6 by Edward Charles Hakewill (died 1872), who rebuilt the east wall and introduced three new Norman-style windows, and added a two bay north aisle to the chancel. He also introduced septaria stonework to the external masonry, which was previously rendered.<sup>36</sup>

The first Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was built in 1824 on Valley Road and is marked as such on the 1876 OS map. This building was superseded by the current Methodist church on the same site, in 1863, enlarged to include a schoolroom in 1876, and further extended in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.256.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.281. Septaria is a mix of rock, mineral and organic matter formed within layers of limestone sediment.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p.286.

Beyond the southern boundary of the Conservation Area, two almshouses were built and endowed by James Maskell on Old Road, in 1827 and the vicar James Silvester added a third almshouse in 1908. The nineteenth century almshouses are shown as 'Maskell's Almshouses' on the 1876 OS map. These were sold around 1936 and replaced by houses at 215 and 217 Coppins Road. The almshouses on Old Road were subsequently demolished.<sup>38</sup> The Workhouse was also located on Old Road, at Clacton Green built around 1750 which became disused in 1835 when the Tendring Union workhouse was opened. It was demolished in the 1940s.<sup>39</sup>

Also on Old Road, some way south of the current Conservation Area was the National School, founded by the church and built in 1860, eventually taken over and replaced by Essex County Council in 1930. The old school building was used as a shoe factory after the Second World War.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p.270.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.272.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p.272.



Figure 12 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map published 1876 showing the northern part of the Conservation Area including Great Clacton Hall and the church and showing the former rural character of the surrounding area





Figure 13 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map published 1876 showing the southern part of the Conservation Area including the farm once associated with Three Chimneys, the first Methodist Chapel on Valley Road and the windmill demolished circa 1918



The broad pattern of settlement in Great Clacton remained the same until the development of Clacton-on-Sea in the 1870s, which initially only affected the coastal area.<sup>41</sup> The economy remained mainly agricultural until the development of the seaside resort, led by Peter Bruff, an engineer from Ipswich.<sup>42</sup> The railway (a branch line from Thorpe-le-Soken) to Clacton-on-Sea was opened by the Tendring Hundred Railway in 1866. The nineteenth century also witnessed the emergence of industrial activity in the area surrounding the village, including a brickworks north of Magdalen Green (in operation from 1886 to 1921, possibly longer)<sup>43</sup> and a three storey steam mill. The steam mill on Old Road was built in 1867 by Charles Beckwith and was sold in 1894 to Henry Bromley, miller and baker. Having been updated with new machinery, in 1909 the mill was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt, still trading as Bromley and Co Ltd in 1929.<sup>44</sup> The nineteenth century windmill shown on the 1876 and 1897 OS maps, was demolished circa 1918.<sup>45</sup>

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41 Ibid., p.237.

42 Ibid., p.248. and Bettley and Pevsner, Essex, p.54.

43 VCH Essex Volume XI, p.258.

44 Ibid., p.256.

45 Ibid., p.256.

### Modern (1901 – now)

In 1939, Great Clacton Hall belonged to H S Cousins.<sup>46</sup> During the twentieth century, and particularly following the Second World War, there was much residential development which overtook Great Clacton, and areas such as Magdalen Green were subsumed within Clacton-on-Sea.<sup>47</sup>

Given its coastal location, Clacton needed extensive defensive features during the Second World War and road barriers were emplaced around the junction at St Johns Square, with a Spigot Mortar emplacement positioned at the corner of the graveyard of St Johns Church.

Within the Conservation Area, the modern development of shops with flats above, located on the east side of North Road and the north side of St John's road, was built in the 1960s, and replaced a demolished group of medieval buildings which had been subdivided and used as shops in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.<sup>48</sup> In the current century, new housing has been developed at various sites on Old Road, to the rear of buildings on St John's Road, and a further small development of houses now borders the historic churchyard to the north, in the direct setting of the church and Conservation Area.

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46 Ibid., p.241.

47 Ibid., p.237.

48 Ibid., p.238.

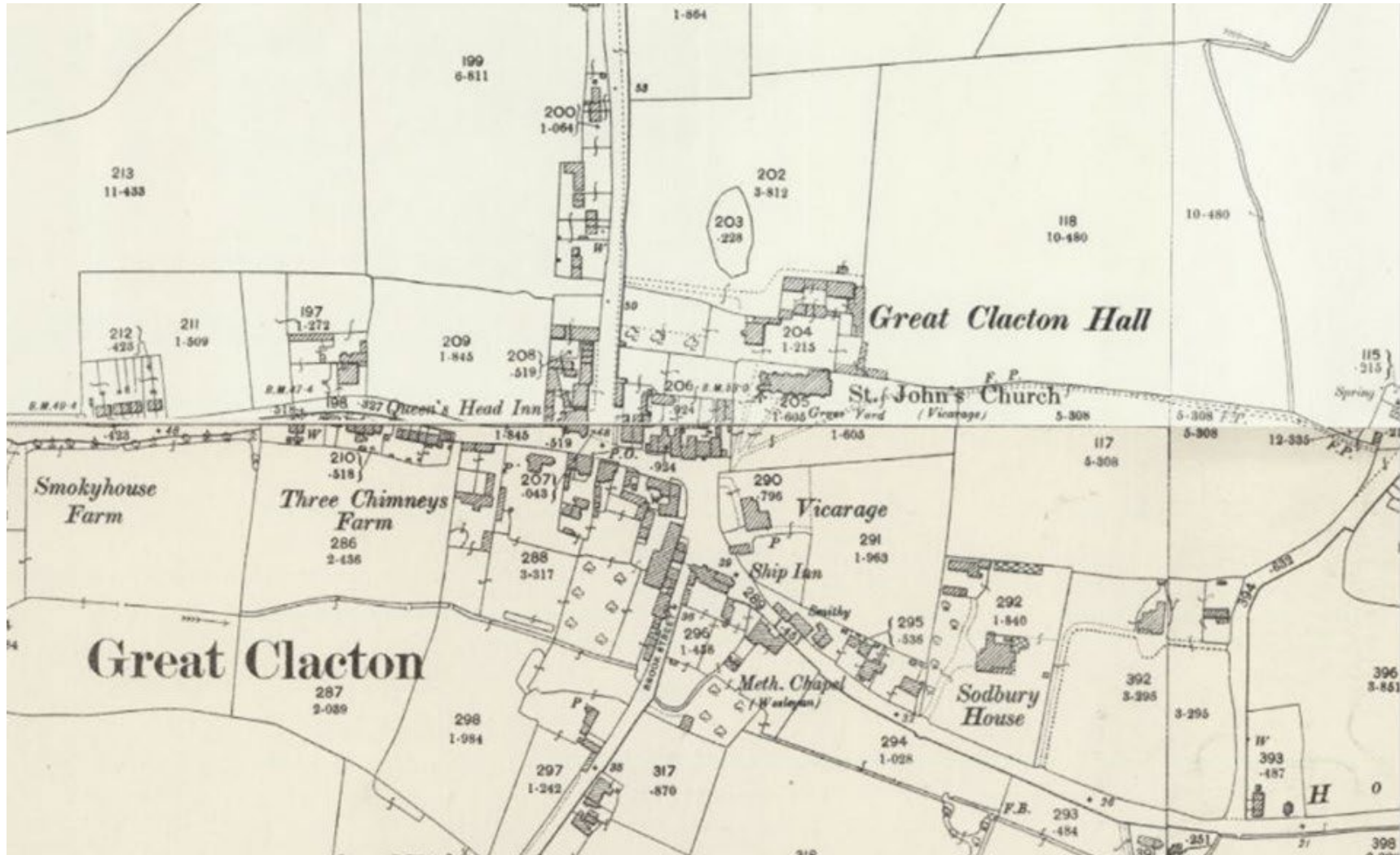


Figure 14 Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map published 1897 showing the Conservation Area little changed from the first edition map

The Church of St John the Baptist underwent repairs in 1959 and 1981, and was closed from 1986 until 2002.<sup>49</sup> Having undergone significant deterioration, the church was restored by Gerald William Barrett from 1997-2000 which included removal of most of the nineteenth century furnishings and the installation of a new stone floor.<sup>50</sup>

49 Ibid., pp.,280-281.

50 Ibid., p.281.



Figure 15 Great Clacton Hall and the tower of St John the Baptist in 1955 (G W Martin, Essex Record Office reference IM\_8\_86\_1\_28)



Figure 16 383 Old Road in 1985 (Essex County Council)



Figure 17 404 and 406 Old Road in 1985 (Essex County Council)



Figure 18 Great Clacton Hall in 1985 prior to addition of a large extension on the north side in 2002 (Essex County Council)



Figure 19 Saddlers Cottage in 1985 showing former shop sign (Essex County Council)

### 2.3 Designated Heritage Assets

There are twelve designated heritage assets within the Great Clacton Conservation Area which contribute to its special architectural and historic interest. These include the Grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist, Grade II listed Great Clacton Hall, the Grade II listed public houses The Plough and The Ship Inn and the former Queen's Head Hotel. Other designated assets include domestic buildings and former dwellings that have been adapted for commercial use, some of which are timber framed buildings re-fronted to reflect changing architectural tastes. The listed buildings in the Conservation Area provide a good representation of medieval and post-medieval English architectural history.

A full list of all the designated assets within the Conservation Area is included in Appendix 6.1.

These buildings have been listed due to their special historic and architectural interest as defined by Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Further information about the listing process can be found on the Historic England [website](#).

Listed buildings are protected by government legislation and there are policies in place to ensure that any alterations to a listed building will not affect its special interest. It is possible to alter, extend or demolish a listed building but this requires listed building consent and sometimes planning permission.

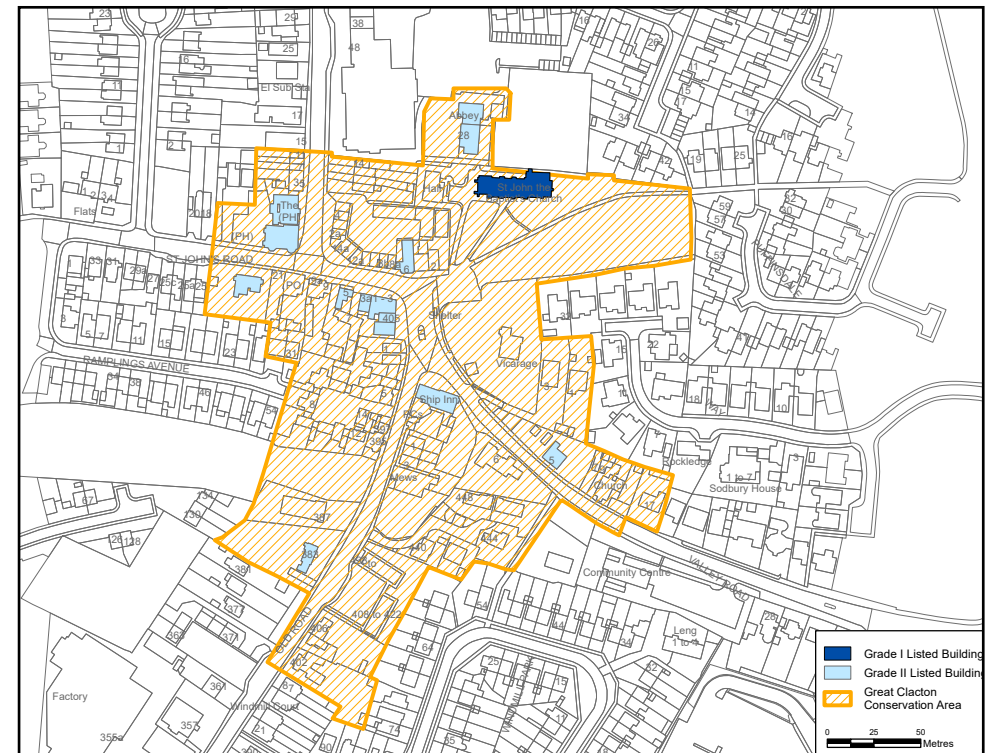


Figure 20 Map showing the location of the designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area



## 2.4 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Every building, space and feature within a Conservation Area makes a contribution to its character and special interest, be it positive, neutral or negative.

Heritage assets are defined in Planning Policy as ‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.’<sup>51</sup>

Not all heritage assets are listed, and just because a building is not included on the list does not mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other structures of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area’s historic interest and its general appearance.

Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the locality. At present there is no approved local list for Tendring District. This document has identified heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and could be considered for local listing in the future. This list is not exhaustive, and further buildings may be identified as non-designated heritage assets through the planning application process.

<sup>51</sup> NPPF, p.67.

Buildings and features within the Conservation Area which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets include:

- 3-11 North Road
- 17 North Road (The Great Clacton Surgery)
- 9 St John’s Road (Foxes Garden and Furniture Shop)
- 397 and 399 Old Road (Vacant shop and Liberal Democrats office)
- 395 Old Road
- Former Public Convenience (Old Road, adjacent to The Ship public house)
- 406 and 404 Old Road
- Old Mill Cottage, 402 Old Road
- Eaglehurst, 6 Valley Road
- Great Clacton Methodist Church and adjacent semi-detached cottages on Valley Road
- 17 Valley Road
- Sodbury House, Nightingale Way (outside of the Conservation Area boundary)



## 2.5 Heritage at Risk

There are no buildings or features in the Great Clacton Conservation Area which are on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. However, Grade II listed 383 Old Road appears to have been unoccupied for several years and is in a neglected state, thus this building could be considered at risk. Grade II listed Great Clacton Hall also appears to be unoccupied following the closure of the Abbey Care Home formerly on these premises, though appears to be in a reasonable state of external repair.

## 2.6 Archaeological Potential

The Conservation Area comprises the medieval Church/Hall complex and the core of the historic village which is medieval in origin. The survival of the Church, post-medieval buildings and historic road layout are an important, well-preserved resource.

The discovery of an Anglo-Saxon burial in a barrow found in association with a glass drinking cup, broken tiles and charred wood provides evidence for a high-status grave and a possible Anglo-Saxon settlement within or close to the Conservation Area.

Excavation adjacent to the Conservation Area shows that the graveyard of St John the Baptist once extended further north and that a chapel, possibly a private chapel associated with the manor, lay north of the church. The area north of the church has potential for further remains relating to the church, chapel and churchyard. Within the church itself, excavations below floor level have demonstrated the survival of structural remains associated with the earlier phases of the church.

The scale and importance of the Norman parish church gives some indication of the relative importance of Great Clacton in the medieval period. Early medieval settlement evidence is limited though some has been revealed to the north of the church. Further evidence for the



medieval settlement can be expected to survive around the church and may also include remains of the medieval manorial site. Structural remains of the later post-medieval manorial complex have been uncovered north of the church.

The eastern extent of the churchyard borders a cropmark feature of a square enclosure of unknown date and origin, and associated features may be preserved within the existing churchyard. Roman building material is commonly found incorporated into medieval church walls, the quantity of Roman building material found in later archaeological features adjacent to the church may be related to the destruction of the medieval chapel, but may also indicate the presence of a nearby available source of material, possibly from a former Roman building or villa.

In recent years there has been a number of small-scale archaeological investigations that have provided information on the nature, scale and quality of surviving archaeological remains within the Conservation Area. The low density of features and the low quantity of material remains from the sites investigated suggest that any settlement evidence is concentrated within the core of the historic village. The

settlement has been occupied since the medieval period and it can be anticipated that further below-ground archaeological remains survive within the Conservation Area. Whilst settlement evidence is more likely to be sited along the street frontage, the backyard areas may contain evidence for ancillary activity, such as wells, cess-pits, yards and middens, as well as industrial activity.

Much of the land surrounding the Church is in use as a graveyard which will have truncated any surviving archaeological remains within those areas. However, survival of archaeological remains is demonstrated closer to the existing church and is likely in any areas of less disturbance.

The soil-type within the Conservation Area is conducive to the survival of bone, shell and ceramics, and there is the potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits to be preserved within waterlogged deposits. The potential for these is high within the areas of undeveloped land bordering the stream which flows up to Old Road. Waterlogged deposits can also be anticipated within deeper features such as wells and cess-pits.



## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Summary

The Great Clacton Conservation Area is notable for its historic village character and appearance which largely derives from the medieval Grade I listed church of St John the Baptist to the north-west with its churchyard providing an important open green space enhanced by historic tombs and memorials; and the cluster of listed buildings at the heart of the Conservation Area, mostly placed around the junctions of North Road, St John's Road, Old Road and Valley Road. These are a mixture of predominantly two storey timber framed and plastered public houses and houses. Grade II listed Great Clacton Hall to the north of the church and Church House to the west date to the eighteenth century and some of the older timber framed houses were re-fronted with brick and/or render in the eighteenth century to reflect changes in architectural taste. Some of the listed buildings which originated as dwellings have been adapted for commercial purposes and the majority of commercial premises within the Conservation Area are located on St John's Road and North Road.

With some notable exceptions, modern development within the Conservation Area and immediately in its setting has somewhat eroded the historic character, coupled with poor quality surface treatments to roads and pavements as well as unsympathetic and poor quality street furniture (for example, street lighting, signage and bollards) adding to this issue.



Figure 21 The churchyard of St John the Baptist which provides a valuable green space in the Conservation Area



### 3.2 Significance of buildings

Where visible from areas of public realm, the buildings within the Great Clacton Conservation Area have been assessed. The map on page 31 (Figure 22) should be read in conjunction with the key notes opposite. These outline the broad descriptions of positive, neutral and negative attributed to buildings within the Conservation Area. It should be noted that just because a building is positive it does not mean it cannot be enhanced. Some positive buildings may have intrusive aspects (such as inappropriate windows) and are addressed in the management plan. The buildings identified as 'Positive with opportunity for enhancement' tend to have more bespoke or fundamental issues that are not generally observed or widespread across the area.

- **Positive:** these are buildings that have been identified as positive contributors to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst identified as positive there are likely to be enhancements which can be made to better reveal the architectural interest of the building and improve its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These general enhancements are noted in the management plan. One example would be the replacement of windows where the buildings have uPVC. The upgrade of these items would be beneficial as a general rule.
- **Positive with opportunity for enhancement:** these are buildings have been highlighted as they are positive contributors, however, they have been compromised due to intrusive alterations or additions. These buildings can be enhanced through the removal, replacement or redesign of intrusive or unsympathetic alterations.
- **Neutral:** These buildings make no beneficial or adverse contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- **Negative:** These buildings make an adverse or intrusive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- **Other:** It was not possible to view these buildings from the public realm to ascertain their contribution to the Conservation Area.

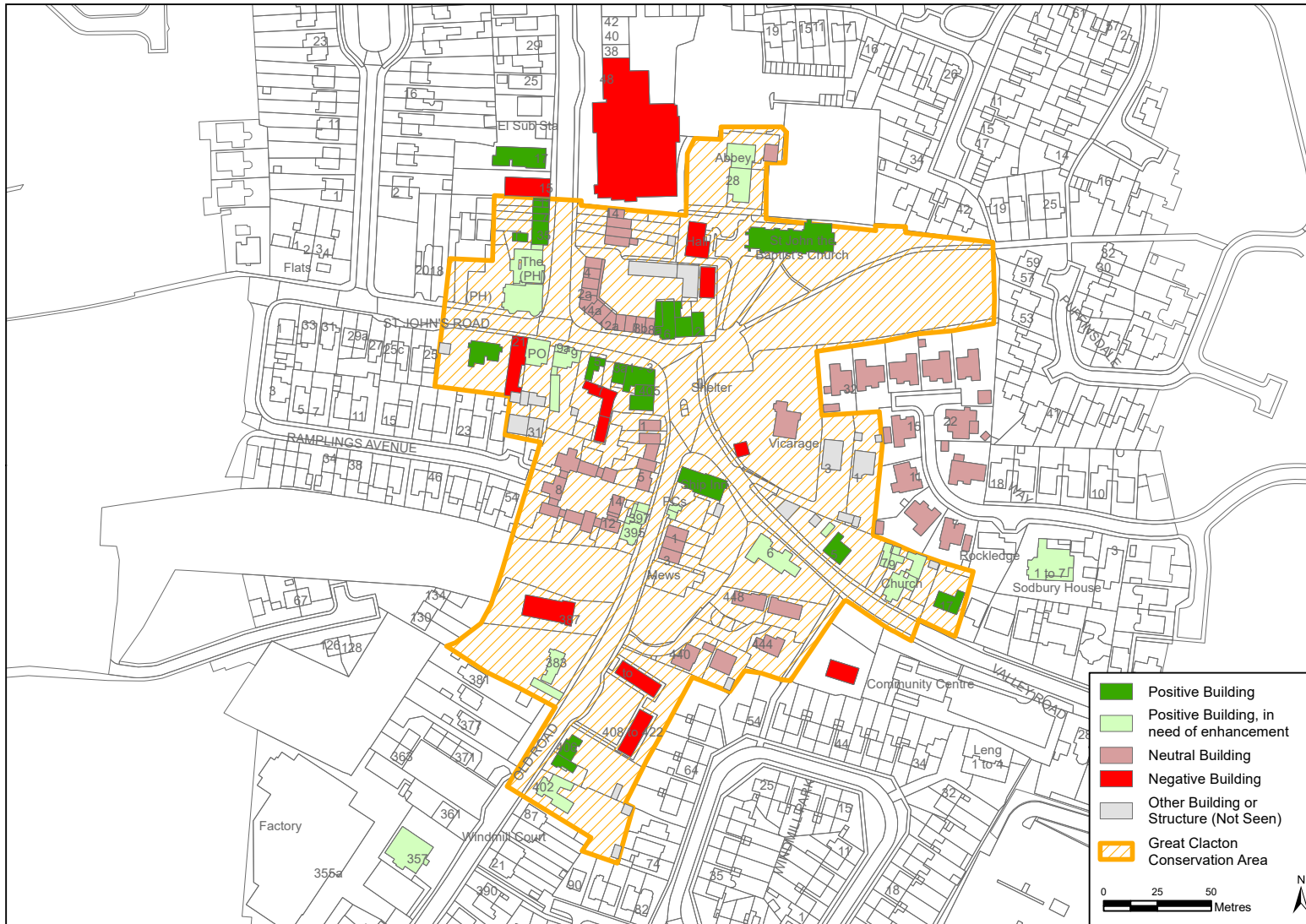


Figure 22 Map showing significance of buildings within and neighbouring the Conservation Area

### 3.3 Character Analysis

#### Summary of character

The character of this small Conservation Area derives from its historic village form with a relatively low density of predominantly two storey buildings, many set to the front of their plots, directly fronting the road. These comprise the linear form of development along the four main roads which converge close to the landmark medieval church to the north-west. A looser grain of development is apparent along Old Road and Valley Road than is experienced at the commercial centre of the Conservation Area. Today the Conservation Area is also characterised by the steady flow of road traffic along its main through routes.

#### Land usage

Land use is largely residential and commercial along the main road routes with the exception of the Grade I listed church of St John the Baptist and its churchyard, the latter of which provides the only notable area of public green space.

#### Landmark buildings

Due to the height of its tower, the church is the only landmark building that has prominence and visibility from a distance from both inside and

outside the Conservation Area, particularly in views from the south where the land slopes away as one heads southwards along Old Road. The church is screened from view when heading east along St John's Road and here the large horse-chestnut tree on the western edge of the churchyard provides more of a focal point. The Ship Inn also has prominence at the centre of the Conservation Area and the Queen's Head (which has been converted to business units and flats) defines the junction of St John's Road and North Road, retaining the former pub's hanging and painted signage.

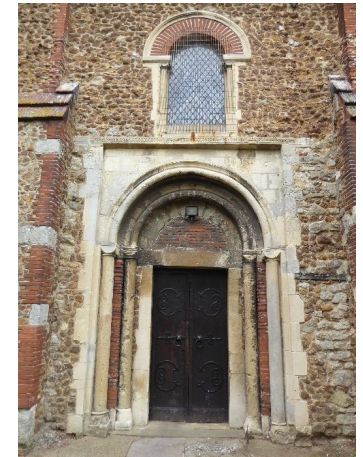


Figure 23 The south doorway of St John the Baptist church showing a variety of materials and detailing

#### Local Building Materials, Details and Boundary Treatments

The medieval church is exceptional within the Conservation Area for the use of mixed rubble stone and septaria in its construction, with dressings and details of limestone, Roman and twentieth century brick. The roof of red clay tile is, however, reflective of many other buildings within the Conservation Area. The twelfth century recessed north and south door surrounds of the church include details such as roll moulded round headed arches and stone columns with moulded bases and



Figure 24 Number 395 Old Road in red brick laid in Rat Trap bond, with numbers 399 and 397 to the north

cushion capitals. The fifteenth century tower features a nineteenth century timber weatherboarded upper stage with a balustrade, and grey fish-scale tiles to the octagonal spire.

Although less common than clay tile, slate roofs can also be found throughout the Conservation Area including the roof of The Plough (Grade II listed) on the western side of North Road.

Timber framed buildings are also a feature of the Conservation Area. The Plough is plastered and features exposed timber framing, which can also be seen on The Ship Inn. Other timber framed buildings in the Conservation Area are largely faced in render which conceals their frames including the Grade II listed building at 1-3 St John's Road housing the Thai Vintage Restaurant and adjacent dwelling. Weatherboard is also used as a facing material, painted white on eighteenth century Grade II listed Saddlers Cottage. Render is also used as a finish on brick buildings including eighteenth century Great Clacton Hall and where timber framed buildings have seen the introduction of brick infill such as at the seventeenth and eighteenth century house called Three Chimneys on St John's Road.

Red brick also features throughout the Conservation Area exemplified by a pair of late nineteenth or early twentieth century two storey red brick former houses (numbers 19 and 19A), to the east of Three Chimneys on the south side of St John's Road and on the two storey 1960s commercial development of shops with flats above on North Road and St John's Road, the latter with a concrete tiled parapet roof and some timber weatherboard detailing to first floor. A pair of single storey painted brick shops with twentieth century shop fronts and slate roofs at numbers 399 and 397 Old Road adjoin an attractive early nineteenth century two storey house at number 395 (extended in the twentieth century) in red brick laid in rat-trap bond (where the bricks are laid on edge).

Directly to the south of The Maltings on the west side of Old Road is a small modern development of five houses in a traditional style emulating eighteenth century architecture, with chimneys, sliding sash windows and predominantly finished in red brick (one with render) with clay tile roofs.

Many windows in the Conservation Area are of a traditional timber framed form but there are a regrettably high number of uPVC replacement windows and doors including those on a terrace of nineteenth century rendered brick cottages at 3-11 North Road (adjacent to The Plough), and to the modern extension to Great Clacton Hall. These windows are also ubiquitous on shops and the new housing developments within and adjacent to the Conservation Area.

The eighteenth century Grade II listed Church House features classical detailing of triglyphs and metopes, a dentilled cornice, and fluted and plain columns to its entrance porticos. The building houses a barber's shop (The Barber Royal) with a twentieth century shop front on the western side, whilst flats occupy the remainder. What appears to be an early nineteenth century pair of houses (now a single building) at number 9 St John's Road features an early twentieth century shop front with a canopy at the western end supported by an iron post with an Ionic order capital and scrolled bracket. Grade II listed The Maltings on the west side of Old Road, is an attractive timber framed house which has been dated to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with a



Figure 25 Mature trees and shrubs around the Vicarage and at the western end of Valley Road which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area

principal façade of painted brick with timber vertical sash windows. It features a classical moulded door surround, and former shop window on the right hand side of the ground floor which has been dated to the twentieth century.

Many buildings in the Conservation Area directly front the pavement with no boundary treatments but red brick boundary walls can be found including examples at Three Chimneys (the wall surmounted with plain timber picket fencing), Saddlers Cottage (a low height boundary wall of red brick and septaria) and nineteenth century Eaglehurst at number 6 Valley Road. The twentieth century Vicarage to the south of the churchyard is set back within a large garden plot with large mature trees and shrubs bounded by a timber fence, with hedging and a low



height brick boundary wall directly fronting the pavement. With almost no historical precedent within the Conservation Area, the modern houses on Old Road have traditional black painted metal railings to their front boundary and another recent development of three terraced two-storey houses known as Old Valley Mews on Old Road features modern black painted metal railings on a paved plinth.

### Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm

When facing east on St John's Road, the view terminates with a large horse-chestnut tree which marks the entrance to the churchyard of St John the Baptist, entered via a tarmacked path with a car park on the south side. The churchyard provides the only public open green space in the Conservation Area with a footpath running through it from east to west that provides access to a large development of twentieth century housing to the east of the Conservation Area. Within the churchyard, mature trees, shrubs and grass sit comfortably alongside the peppering of gravestones and monuments which form the setting of the Grade I listed church. There is an attractive avenue of lime trees leading to the south porch of the church and there is a strong sense of enclosure on the south side of the churchyard. It is more open to the north beyond the church and now overlooks a new development of houses just outside of the Conservation Area boundary. Mature trees around the Vicarage and on neighbouring land which fronts Valley Road make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

An area of public realm in front of The Ship is paved and bounded by detracting concrete bollards and there is a tarmacked car park to the east of the pub. To the east of Eaglehurst is a tarmacked alleyway giving access to a twentieth century housing development around Windmill Park (the historic site of the windmill). Next to the alleyway is a small area of unkempt scrubland directly fronting Valley Road and a tarmacked area behind this surrounding the Army Cadets' building. It is proposed that the Conservation Area boundary should be amended to exclude these, which detract from its character and appearance.

### Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings

The following non-designated heritage assets are considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area:

**Eaglehurst** at number 6 Valley Road, is set slightly below pavement level. This is a large, attractive later nineteenth century former house in the style of a medieval hall house with two gabled crosswings, one of which is jettied. The building is of red brick but with a plastered finish to the first floor with timber frame detailing. A corner tower in the angle of the central range and eastern crosswing is a typically eclectic Victorian architectural flourish. This building first appears on the Ordnance Survey map published in 1897.



Figure 26 The Great Clacton Methodist Church on Valley Road, built in 1863

**The Great Clacton Methodist Church** on Valley Road dates to 1863, replacing an earlier chapel on the same site of 1824. The church is one of the more interesting nineteenth century buildings in the Conservation

Area. It is in a pared back Gothic style with narrow lancet windows and has an irregularly shaped central gable to the principal façade, which forms the main entrance. A circular window above the entrance doors has been replaced with modern stained glass of a simple design. The church was extended to the rear and alterations were made in the 1950s and 1970s. It has an area of garden laid to lawn on the east side of the building with a flat roofed outbuilding at the rear of the plot. There is an attractive pair of two storey early nineteenth century semi-detached houses directly to the west of the church, set well back from the street, parts of the front gardens of which have been tarmacked to provide space for car parking.

**Numbers 3-11 North Road** are an appealing terrace of four two storey houses which first appear on the First Edition OS map published in 1876. As noted above, they have suffered from the introduction of uPVC windows and doors, but otherwise make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

**Number 9 St John's Road** (Foxes Furniture Shop) appears to be an early nineteenth century two storey rendered former house with vertical sash windows to the upper storey, converted to shops with accommodation/storage above in the twentieth century. The shop canopy on the western end of the front façade features a cast iron column and bracket which are attractive architectural details.



Neighbouring numbers **19 (the former Post Office) and 19A St John's Road** in red brick date to the later nineteenth century/early twentieth century. These buildings could be enhanced by the sympathetic restoration of their façades including the shop front, to remove and replace the detracting uPVC windows and doors.

**The former Public Convenience** (eastern side of Old Road, adjacent to The Ship public house) in red brick with a clay tiled roof and timber frame detailing to the front gable was erected in 1929 by Clacton Urban District Council. Having already been closed for several years, by 2017 the building had been converted for domestic or commercial use including the insertion of a large tripartite uPVC front window, but appears to have remained empty. It has the potential to be a good example of adaptive re-use of an historic building.

**397 and 399 Old Road** are an attractive pair of single storey nineteenth century painted brick buildings with twentieth century shop fronts and a slate roof located on the west side of Old Road (respectively a vacant shop and the Liberal Democrats office). Number 399 would benefit from more sympathetic signage.

**395 Old Road** adjoining the above, is a distinctive early nineteenth century two storey red brick house with a slate roof (with rendered twentieth century extensions to the rear and on the south side). The brick is laid in an unusual rat-trap bond (bricks laid on edge).



Figure 27 Number 406 Old Road adjoining number 404 to the right

**Numbers 406 and 404 Old Road** situated further south, on the western side of the street are a pair of two storey white painted rendered late eighteenth or early nineteenth century cottages with vertical timber sash windows and a hipped slate roof. Number 406 has side extensions and retains a front boundary wall in red brick whilst number 404 has a replacement boundary wall in yellow brick with a red brick coping.



Figure 28 View north along Old Road towards the centre of the Conservation Area and the church tower



Figure 29 View west along Valley Road towards the historic village centre

**Old Mill Cottage at 402 Old Road** on the east side of the road is a dwelling historically associated with the windmill thus has important local historical associations. It has been unsympathetically much altered and extended in the twentieth century but nevertheless has architectural interest and is likely to retain fabric dating to the eighteenth century or earlier. There is also potential archaeological interest relating to this site.

**17 Valley Road** is a mid-nineteenth century single storey pebble dashed house with three bay windows and an ornate timber porch located just beyond the Conservation Area boundary on the north side of Valley Road which makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area.

### 3.4 Views

Key views are identified on Figure 30. Note the views included are a selection of key views; this list is not exhaustive and there may be other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

Views of the church of St John the Baptist are important to understanding the historic village character of Great Clacton and its significance, and the church tower acts as a marker for the settlement. The church tower appears in longer range views when travelling north and uphill on Old Road, west along Valley Road when nearing the Ship Inn, and can be seen through a gap between a small terrace of four twentieth century houses and the 1960s shops on the east side of North Road.

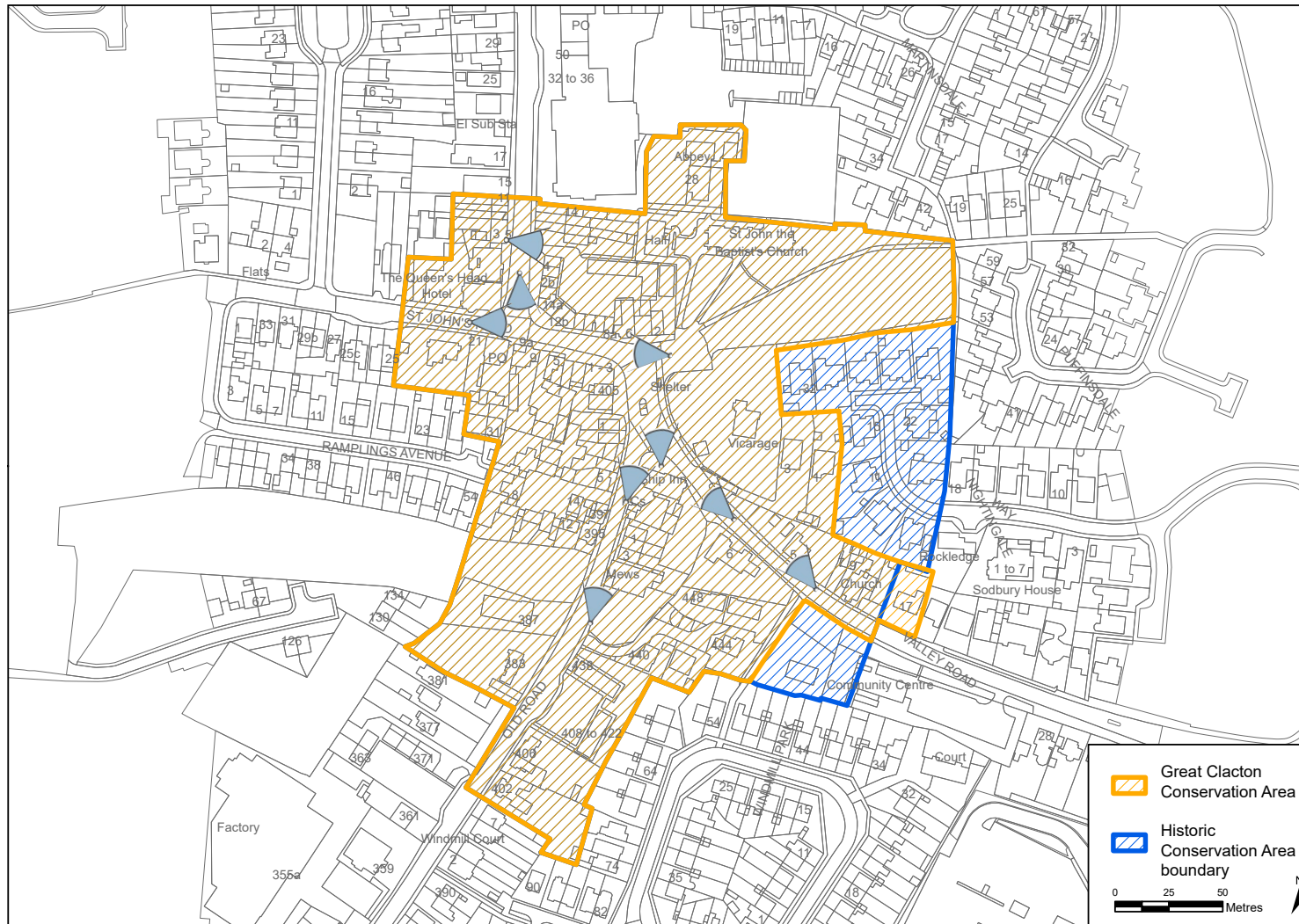


Figure 30 Map showing key views



Views east along St John's Road are terminated by the boundary of the churchyard, marked by a large horse-chestnut tree. Attractive views encompassing Church House, the listed buildings on the corner of St John's Road and Old Road, Saddlers Cottage and the Queen's Head can be gained when looking west from the eastern edge of the churchyard.

Views between The Ship Inn and Church House and the Maltings are also important to understanding the historic nature of the Conservation Area, as are kinetic views along Valley Road which, when travelling west, take in the Great Clacton Methodist Church, Eaglehurst, Forge Cottage, the Ship Inn and The Maltings against a clear sky backdrop.

Travelling south on North Road, views encompass the Plough and the Queen's Head and are terminated by Numbers 9 and 19 St John's Road.

### 3.5 Setting of the Conservation Area

The NPPF describes the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

Historic England *Good Practice Advice Note on the Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017) indicates that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. It notes 'Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset'.

Historic England's advice note on setting includes a '(non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. As the advice note states, 'only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of a particular relevance to an asset'.

This checklist has been used to inform this assessment.

The historically rural and agricultural setting of the Conservation Area has been overtaken by modern housing and small-scale commercial development on all sides and thus it is difficult to gain a sense that the coast lies less than two miles to the south of the church. There are no long-range views from within the Conservation Area that reveal this aspect of its location.

Overall, the setting of the Conservation Area makes a limited contribution to its significance, however, the topography of the setting makes some contribution to how that significance is revealed, particularly where Old Road rises uphill from the south towards the centre of the village, affording views of the church tower. This and other kinetic views into the Conservation Area on the main approach roads are described in Section 3.4 and contribute to setting and significance.

The Conservation Area and its immediate setting is also accessible and permeable with strong patterns of vehicular and pedestrian movement along the main through routes that converge within the area. However, twentieth century housing developments to the east of the Conservation Area are less permeable reflecting the mid-century proliferation of cul-de-sacs designed to discourage through traffic and thus promote safer areas for families with children to live in. The prevailing domestic land use of the setting has generally limited building heights to two storeys which has been beneficial in retaining a sense of openness and permeability and the ability to appreciate

designated and non-designated heritage assets against a clear sky backdrop, in particular the church tower.

There is just one designated heritage asset located in the setting of the Conservation Area:

- Grade II listed Yew Trees (List UID 1111527) to the west along St John's Road



Figure 31 The Mill on Old Road in the setting of the Conservation Area



The following non-designated heritage assets are located within the setting of the Conservation Area:

- 17 North Road (the Great Clacton Surgery) is located just beyond the Conservation Area boundary. It is a later nineteenth century classically detailed house with a two storey bay window, in fair faced gault brick. The clay tile roof still present to the bay has unfortunately been replaced with cement tile on the main roof. Providing one of the only examples of a building from this period in the setting of the Conservation Area, it makes a positive contribution to the street scene.
- The Mill is situated approximately 50 metres beyond the Conservation Area boundary on the west side of Old Road. This is an impressive three storey former corn mill dating to the early twentieth century (on the site of a previous corn mill built in 1867).

It is of white painted brick with a black weatherboarded lucam (the projecting housing for a hoist pulley), and has been converted to house office units. Its tarmacked plot is bounded by a white painted timber picket fence. The Corn Mill was associated with the nineteenth century windmill formerly located to the east of Old Road demolished circa 1918.

- Sodbury Hall is located to the east of the Vicarage at the northern end of Nightingale Way. Dating to 1892, it was designed by architect J O Smith in the Queen Anne style with tall chimneys and retains its impressive rooftop belvedere. The house has been converted to flats and has suffered from some unsympathetic additions and alterations including a large double garage and uPVC windows, however, it remains an important local nineteenth century building.



## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive and neither are the opportunities identified unique to Great Clacton with many being shared with other Conservation Areas.

### 4.1 Road Traffic

As noted in the character summary, there is constant and heavy road vehicle traffic through the centre of Great Clacton which reflects the high level of connectivity of the Conservation Area with the wider local area. However, the noise and congestion arising from this detracts from the Conservation Area's historic village character and the ability to appreciate its significance and the significance of individual listed buildings which line the main routes. Any opportunities to disperse through traffic to alternative routes would be beneficial.

### 4.2 Interpretation

Due to the amount of development surrounding Great Clacton which knits it into the wider area of Clacton-on-Sea, the Conservation Area would benefit from a well-designed interpretation board, perhaps upon entry to the churchyard, which explains the history of the village from its medieval origins and which highlights its historic buildings.

### 4.3 Vacant Buildings

Vacant buildings can have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and without occupation, regular maintenance and repair they may suffer from criminal damage as well as water ingress leading to losses of historic fabric and features. The following heritage assets were vacant at the time of survey in October 2022:

- Grade II listed Great Clacton Hall – there is an opportunity to enhance the significance of this heritage asset by re-instating its use. Ideally, the detracting uPVC windows to the extension would be replaced by timber framed windows sympathetic to the host building. There are also opportunities to improve the area of garden and hard landscaping around the building which has a very neglected feel and reveals nothing of the history of the building and its former grounds. The car park directly to the north of Great Clacton Hall also detracts from its setting and significance.
- Grade II listed 383 Old Road – the site is currently protected by unsightly Heras fencing and the front garden is overgrown, with a large spoil heap from excavations on site. It is clear that renovation work has been undertaken on the outbuildings adjoining the house but the property seems to have been vacant for several years.



- Number 19 St John's Road – this was formerly the Post Office and is now a vacant shop which would benefit from a new use. The shop front could be markedly improved by replacement of the detracting uPVC windows and door.
- Former Public Convenience (Old Road, adjacent to The Ship public house) was vacant at the time of survey but there was evidence of work being carried out to the interior of the building suggesting a new use may be imminent. The appearance of this building would be enhanced by the replacement of the uPVC window with a timber alternative.
- Number 397 Old Road is another vacant shop, which appears to be in good decorative order.

#### 4.4 Loss of Architectural Details

Many windows in the Conservation Area are of a traditional timber framed form but there are a regrettably high number of uPVC replacement windows and doors. These are of a poor quality material which cannot be used to sympathetically reflect traditional detailing and profiles, and often historic glazing patterns are lost when windows are replaced. This detracts from the historic character and appearance of individual buildings and from that of the Conservation Area as a whole.

Poor quality plastic rather than traditional painted metal rainwater goods are also found on many buildings in the Conservation Area, including some listed buildings (for example The Queen's Head). As well as having a poor quality appearance, they are also less robust than traditional metal rainwater goods and may be at higher risk of failure leading to the risk of water ingress and damage to historic fabric.

#### 4.5 Public Realm

##### Street Furniture (including lampposts, signage, bins, bollards)

Street furniture throughout the Conservation Area is generally of poor quality, and unsympathetic in character, particularly with regard to streetlights, bollards and bins. These would be enhanced through replacement with traditional and consistent models which respect the historic character of the area.

Although some traditional hanging and painted signs have been retained to public houses and shops, there is also the opportunity for improvements to be made to shop signage (including to the 1960s commercial development), where it:

- Has proliferated (for example on the Thai Vintage restaurant at 1-3 St John's Road which is a listed building);





- Is overly large;
- Is internally illuminated;
- Features poor quality and unsympathetic plastic fascia and lettering which dominate the facades of buildings and harm the overall historic character of the streets (for example, as seen on Reg's Fish & Kebab on St John's Road and The Royal Barber at Church House).

The use of temporary vinyl advertising banners affixed to buildings in the Conservation Area should be resisted.

### **Hard Landscaping**

Road and pavement surfaces are generally of poor quality tarmac and of patched, inconsistent and poor appearance throughout the Conservation Area. No vestiges of historic surface materials appear to have survived. Where there are areas of paving stones rather than tarmac surfaces, for example to the front of the Thai Vintage Restaurant, these are sometimes of poor quality, are cracked and in poor condition. Areas of block paving have been introduced in the

Conservation Area, for example to the car park of The Queen's Head and the parking area of a new development to the rear of Number 19 St John's Road, which are not sympathetic to the historic character of the Conservation Area.

Hard landscaping can have a particularly harmful impact on the character of an area where areas of private front gardens have been paved over in a piecemeal approach and are inconsistent with their neighbours and adjoining paving (for example at the Maltings and the terrace of four early twentieth century houses on the east side of North Road).

### **Open Spaces**

There appears to be only one managed public open green space in the Conservation Area which is the churchyard. As elsewhere, this features tarmac paths which do not reflect the historic character and appearance of the Grade I listed church. The single storey pre-fabricated twentieth century church hall to the west of the church is of poor architectural quality and materials. Although it is acknowledged to be a vital and valued community facility it detracts from the churchyard setting of the listed building and its significance.



There is a small area of unkempt private scrubland on Old Road located to the south of Number 395 which would benefit from management and maintenance. It is proposed to revise the boundary of the Conservation Area to omit another area of unkempt scrubland directly fronting Valley Road and a tarmacked area behind this surrounding the Army Cadets' building.

### **Trees and Planting**

Appropriate levels of maintenance need to be ensured and, where required, opportunities for enhancement sought to maintain and manage the trees within the Conservation Area which are primarily in the churchyard but also on private land at the western end of Valley Road.

### **4.6 Unsympathetic additions**

There are numerous satellite dishes and some air conditioning units on the principal facades of buildings in the Conservation Area including to listed buildings (for example Church House) which detract from the character and appearance of the heritage assets.

### **4.7 Inappropriate Modern Development**

Not all modern development in and around the Conservation is inappropriate by any means, however, there are a number of examples of post-war infill and backland development within the Conservation Area and within its immediate setting which have had a negative impact on its historic village character and appearance. Most notable amongst these is:

- The large one and two storey commercial development just outside the Conservation Area boundary on the east side of North Road, the scale, massing, design and materials of which are entirely unsympathetic to the historic core. The setting of Great Clacton Hall has been greatly eroded by this commercial development and its car park to the rear. Due to erosion of the hall's historic setting and alterations to the building itself including the addition of a large modern wing at the north end, it is difficult to discern the historic nature of Great Clacton Hall.
- Directly to the North of number 406 Old Road, a mid-twentieth century social housing development of two, two storey blocks of flats which have the appearance of two pairs of large semi-



detached houses faced in red brick at ground floor level and hung with red pantiles to the upper floor, with hipped roofs of the same material. They have replacement uPVC casement windows. The two blocks are arranged on two sides of a large communal front garden laid to lawn and bounded with a timber fence.

- Also on North Road, a poor quality single storey rendered former industrial building set back within a gravelled yard which is currently in use as The Iron Works Gym.

More recent housing developments, whilst of an appropriate form, incorporate poor quality materials such as uPVC rather than timber or aluminium framed windows and cement tile rather than clay tile roofs. It is recommended that a recent development of bungalows at the northern end of Nightingale Way to the east of the Vicarage should be omitted from the Conservation Area. Although these have been carefully detailed, they do not reflect the traditional form or materials of buildings in the Conservation Area nor of other housing in the local area.

#### 4.8 Neutral Contributors

A number of buildings and plots are currently considered to make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character. Notable areas which make a neutral contribution are:

- The 1960s development of shops with flats above on North Road and St John's Road
- The terrace of four mid-twentieth century houses on the east side of North Road
- The Vicarage
- Twenty-first century developments on Old Road including Ship Mews, Old Valley Mews and Mascot Court.



## 5. Management Proposals

There are a range of issues facing the Great Clacton Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This section seeks to recommend management proposals which address these in both the short and long term.

### 5.1 Positive Management

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the Local Planning Authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### Local Heritage List

Tendring District Council is in the process of developing the local heritage list. Suggestions have been made within this document of buildings to be considered for inclusion on this list.

#### Article 4 Directions

Article 4 Directions are additional planning controls which can be introduced by a Local Planning Authority to revoke certain Permitted Development Rights. Permitted Development Rights allow building owners to carry out certain works to their properties without the need for planning permission and are set out within the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO).

Article 4 Directions served on properties within the Conservation Area would introduce the need to apply for planning permission for certain works and this would allow the Council to better preserve and enhance the area by ensuring high quality design and use of traditional materials. An example of an Article 4 Direction that would be beneficial would be the removal of Class A of the GPDO which would limit changes to front elevations of buildings such as replacement windows and doors.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission is not sought for alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority should consider its enforcement powers. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedent being set for similar, uncharacteristic works.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Through the agreement of standard good practice within the Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams and other landowners, long term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm. This could include elements such as improvements to the quality and appearance of materials used on road and pavement surfaces to enhance local character and distinctiveness, and likewise



Figure 32 Poor quality surfaces and street furniture detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

avoiding excessive road markings or signage; and agreeing standard forms of street furniture based on local historic examples to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced. This will have a long-term positive impact on the Conservation Area.

### Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with the NPPF (Para.194), applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

All applications within the Conservation Area and immediate setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures, trees or highways on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design



and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated. This is particularly important for the development of any sites allocated for development as part of the Local Plan process as the change to the setting of the Conservation Area should be fully assessed, understood and, where necessary, mitigated.

### **Tree Management**

Trees that are either located in a Conservation Area, covered by a Tree Preservation Order or planning condition have a degree of protection.

Where a tree is protected consent must be given by the Council in writing before you do any works to it including cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, severing roots, wilful damage or destruction. The Council must be notified of any intended works to trees through the submission of a Notification of Proposed Works to Trees in a Conservation Area.

Where trees contribute to local amenity and the character or appearance of the Conservation Area their retention and appropriate management will be encouraged. If felling is necessary due to the condition of the tree (dead, dying or dangerous) then an appropriate replacement tree should be planted.

### **New Development**

To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the conservation area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

Historic England and CABI guidelines state that successful new development will:

- Relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- Use materials and building methods as high in quality of those used in existing buildings; and
- Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting.



Tendring District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process and Local Plan Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Ensuring medium-large scale development schemes are referred to a CABE Design Review (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it's appropriate to a conservation area.
- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### Neutral Elements

The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character. Tendring District Council must not allow for the quality of design to be 'averaged down' by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must, where possible, seek schemes which enhance the built environment.

### Public Facing Resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publication of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a Conservation Area. Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and results in a loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive to the preservation of Great Clacton's built heritage.



## 5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

These proposals are also focused around positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

### Conservation Area Boundary

Revisions to the Conservation Area boundary have been proposed within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2021) and Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019).

The Conservation Area should be reviewed regularly to monitor change and inform management proposals. The boundary should be assessed as part of this review to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

### Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal should be reviewed regularly to monitor change and inform amendments and additions to the Management Plan.

### Public Realm and Highways

The Highways Department should be engaged to conduct an assessment of existing signage within the Conservation Area with a view to 'de-clutter' the historic environment. Other case studies have found this was a cost-neutral exercise due to the scrap value of signage and posts.

Collaboration between the Highways Department and Local Planning Authority should ensure the maintenance and replacement programme for street furniture (including lampposts) and hard surfacing reflects the character and local distinctiveness of the Conservation Area.

### Improved Understanding and Awareness

At present there is no interpretation (information boards, signage, interactive QR Codes) within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding and awareness. This would be an effective way to improve awareness and re-establish the identity of Great Clacton as a historic settlement.





## Heritage at Risk

Currently there are no assets on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. However, it is advised that officers devise a system to monitor the status of the two Grade II listed buildings (Great Clacton Hall and 383 Old Road) identified in this appraisal to be at possible risk within the Conservation Area, and if necessary, bring these to the attention of Historic England.

### 5.3 Funding Opportunities

There are three main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### National Heritage Lottery Fund (NLHF)

The NLHF is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change over time, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Tendring District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

## Section 106 Agreements

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon Great Clacton. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site specific improvements.

## Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would be suitable to preserve and enhance the shop frontages noted to require improvement.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Designated Heritage Assets

List Entry	Name	Grade	List Date	Amend Date	Legacy UID	NGR
1111525	GREAT CLACTON HALL	II	04/07/1986		119879	TM 17690 16570
1111526	THE SHIP INN	II	04/07/1986		119883	TM 17668 16415
1111528	SADDLERS COTTAGE	II	04/07/1986		119889	TM 17614 16466
1165521	THE PLOUGH	II	04/07/1986		119880	TM 17583 16522
1165532	THE QUEEN'S HEAD HOTEL	II	04/07/1986		119886	TM 17589 16495
1317258	383, OLD ROAD	II	04/07/1986		119882	TM 17596 16329
1317259	CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST	I	04/07/1986		119884	TM 17708 16529
1317265	"CROWN TOP PAGE ESTATE AGENTS REWARDS RESTAURANT" HAIRDRESSERS	II	04/07/1986		119888	TM 17628 16463



List Entry	Name	Grade	List Date	Amend Date	Legacy UID	NGR
1317272	THREE CHIMNEYS	II	04/07/1986		119890	TM 17563 16472
1337151	THE MALTINGS AND SHOP ON CORNER OF ST JOHNS ROAD, ATTACHED TO AND	II	04/07/1986		119881	TM 17641 16454
1337152	"CHURCH HOUSE	II	26/10/1973	04/07/1986	119885	TM 17652 16497
1337153	ST JOHNS HOUSE	II	04/07/1986		119891	TM 17730 16390



## 6.2 Bibliography

### Publications

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Roger Kennell, The Place-Names of Great Clacton (Essex Society for Archaeology & History, 2016 (e-book))

Ed. Christopher C Thornton with Herbert Eiden, Victoria County History Essex, Volume XI - Clacton, Walton and Frinton: North-East Essex Seaside Resorts (2011)

Tendring District Council Conservation Area Review: Great Clacton Conservation Area (March 2006)

Tendring District Historic Environment Characterisation Project, Essex County Council (2008)

Tendring Geodiversity Characterisation Report, Essex County Council (2009)

### Webpages

<https://www.clactonhistory.co.uk/smuggling-tales-great-clacton/>

<https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/2946282>

### Archives

Essex Record Office (ERO)

Historic Environment Record (Essex County Council)



### 6.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions. 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2024) DLUGH	Section 16; Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DLUGH	ID: 18a
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	
National Guidance	English Heritage (2019) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance	
Local Policy	Tendring District Council Local Plan (2007)	QL9 – Design of New Development QL11 – Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses EN1- Landscape Character EN17- Conservation Areas EN20- Demolition within Conservation Areas EN21- Demolition of Listed Buildings EN22- Extension and Alterations to Listed Buildings EN23- Development within the Proximity of a Listed Building



## 6.4 Glossary

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic environment record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

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# Lawford Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Tendring  
District Council



Client:  
Tendring District Council

Date:  
December 2024





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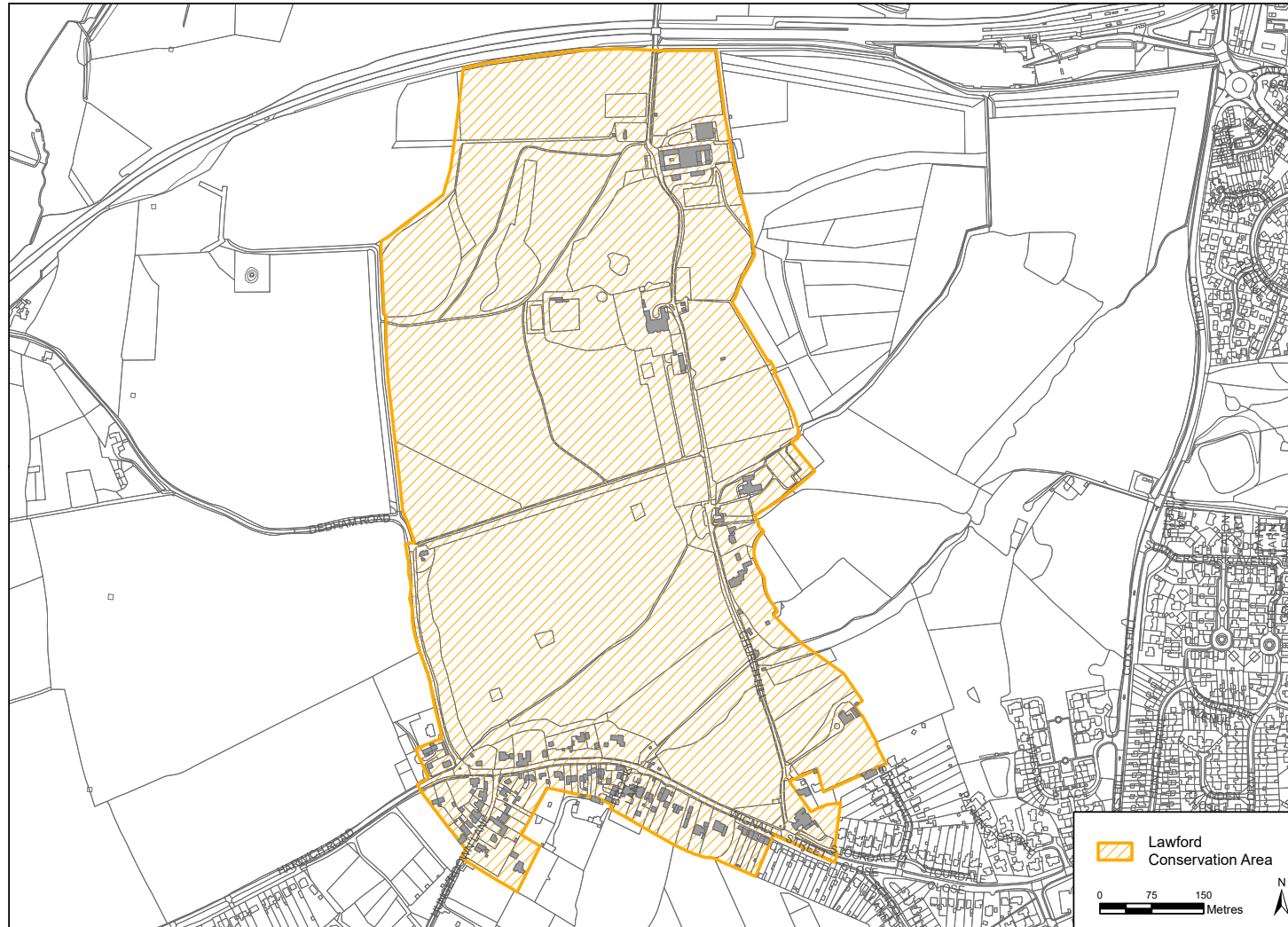


Figure 1 Map showing Conservation Area boundary

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the Lawford Conservation Area, outlining its designation history, alterations to the boundary, and a description of its special interest. The appraisal will also consider buildings, green spaces and features which contribute to the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

Conservation Area designation provides broader protection than the listing of individual buildings as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and appearance and ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the area into consideration.

The special interest of Lawford Conservation Area is derived from its building stock, layout and relatively intact historic character. There are a concentration of historic buildings along Wignall Street, whilst the northern section of the Conservation Area is dominated by Lawford Hall and the parish church of St Marys. Traditional materials and construction methods are commonplace, with large areas of parkland reinforcing the status of the hall and the contributing to the rural character of the Conservation Area.

Historically, Lawford comprised a small settlement on Wignall Street with further settlement along Church Hill linking the main road with the medieval church and hall; this layout is still discernible with little modern infill or encirclement of the historic routes. Lawford Hall is separated from the rest of the settlement by parkland. Most of the historic settlement is located within the Conservation Area, from which it derives its character and special quality. Modern Lawford is located to the east of the historic settlement, linking the historic core with the town of Manningtree.

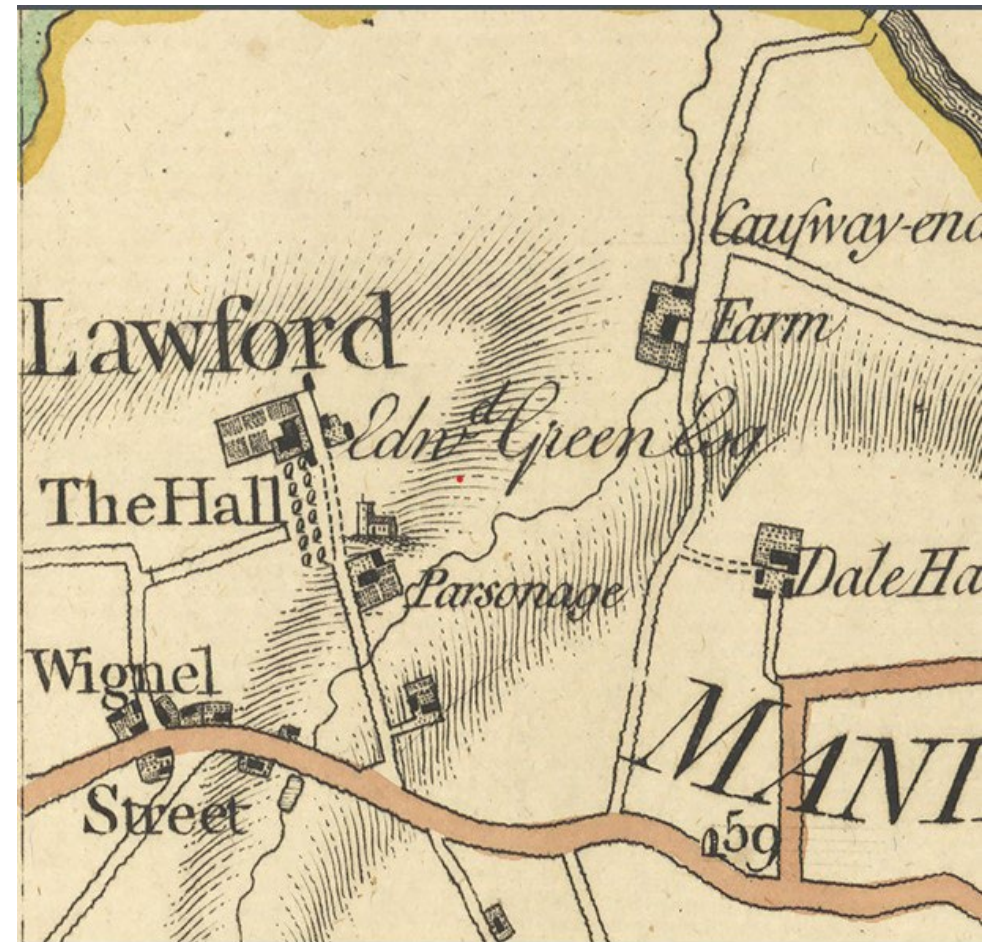


Figure 2 Chapman and Andre Map of 1777 showing Lawford



## 1.2 Conserving Tendring's Heritage

Tendring District Council appointed Place Services to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal for Lawford Conservation Area in 2022. The document is provided as baseline information to support in the conservation of Lawford's heritage.

This report provides an assessment of the historic development and character of Lawford and outlines its special interest. The appraisal will also consider the significance of individual heritage assets within the Conservation Area and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to the character of the Conservation Area as a whole. The understanding of significance will be used to assess the susceptibility of the Conservation Area to new development, highlighting key assets of importance and vulnerabilities.

## 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the area which contribute to its special interest, along with their setting.

It will identify the area's building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities will be used to assess the key characteristics of the area, highlighting what potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research, site visits and analysis of the Conservation Area.

This appraisal will enhance understanding of Lawford Conservation Area and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce appropriate design and positive outcomes for agents and their clients.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in the bibliography.



## 1.4 Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority as areas of special architectural and historic interest. There are many different types of conservation area, which vary in size and character, and range from historic town centres to country houses set in historic parks. Conservation area designation introduces additional planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect an area's special character and appearance and the features that make it unique and distinctive. Although designation introduces controls over the way that owners can develop their properties, it is generally considered that these controls are beneficial as they sustain and/or enhance the value of properties within conservation areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework regards conservations areas as 'designated heritage assets'.

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act specifies the general duty of Local Authorities, in the exercise of planning functions (Section 72). The 1990 Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

### How are conservation areas designated and managed?

The designation process includes detailed analysis of the proposed conservation area and adoption by the local planning authority. A review process should be periodically undertaken, and the Conservation Area assessed, to safeguard that it retains special architectural or historic interest. Threats can be identified, and the boundary reviewed, to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate.

This Conservation Area is supported by an appraisal and management plan. The appraisal describes the importance of an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. The management plan, included within the appraisal, sets out various positive proposals to improve, enhance and protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### How can I find out if I live in a Conservation Area?

Boundary maps of conservation areas can be found on your Local Planning Authority website. Some authorities have an online interactive map search allowing you to search for a property. You can also contact your local planning authority directly to find out if you reside within a conservation area. Tendring District Council's Conservation Areas can be found within the Planning section under Heritage, conservation & trees.



### **What are the Council's duties regarding development in conservation areas?**

The Local Authority must follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These set out in clear terms how development proposals within Conservation Areas should be considered on the basis of whether they preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Applications which fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area are likely to be refused as a result. An authorities Local Plan also typically includes a specific policy on Conservation Areas.

### **Do I need permission to alter a property in a conservation area?**

Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, certain minor works and alterations are considered 'permitted development' and can be carried out without planning permission. However, some permitted developments rights do not apply in conservation areas, and some buildings may not have any permitted development rights at all, such as blocks of flats. Different rules also apply if a building is listed.

Permission is required for any external alterations which involve cladding, rendering, or adding pebble dash, artificial stone or tiles to the exterior of a dwelling within a conservation area. All alterations to the roof of a dwelling within a conservation area also require planning permission.

Extensions to the side of buildings in conservation areas will need planning permission, as will all two storey rear extensions. Porches, subject to size and relationship to the highway, may need planning permission. In all cases, the Local Planning Authority will be able to provide advice as to how to proceed.

### **What is an Article 4 Direction?**

Some conservation areas are covered by an Article 4 Direction, which brings certain types of permitted development back under the control of a local planning authority. This allows potentially harmful proposals to be considered on a case by case basis through planning applications.

Article 4 Directions are written specifically for the area they apply to and are used to control specific works that could threaten the character of an area. As an example, in some conservation areas, an Article 4 direction will remove permitted development rights for the replacement of windows and doors, as these are architectural features which contribute positively to the special interest of the conservation area. The loss of these features would be considered harmful, therefore an Article 4 direction would require that a planning application is required for these works, and the proposals considered by the local planning authority and approved before constructed. Historic England provides information on Article 4 Directions on their website, and the local planning authority will also publish information regarding any Article 4 directions in their district.

### **Do I need to make an application for routine maintenance work?**

If routine maintenance works are to be carried out using authentic materials and traditional craft techniques, on a like-for-like basis, it is unlikely that you will need to apply for permission from the local authority. However, it is strongly recommended that you contact the local planning authority for clarification before commencing any works. The use of a contractor with the necessary skills and experience of working on historic buildings is essential. Inappropriate maintenance works and the use of the wrong materials will cause damage to the fabric of a historic building.





### **Will I need to apply for permission for a new or replacement garage, fence, boundary wall or garden structure?**

Any demolition, development or construction in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. A replacement boundary, garage, cartlodge or greenhouse will need to be designed with the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area in mind. Your Local Authority will provide advice as to how to proceed with an application.

### **Can I demolish a building in a conservation area?**

Demolition or substantial removal of part of a building within a conservation area will usually require permission from the local planning authority. It is important to speak to them before beginning any demolition works, to clarify if permission is required.

### **Can I remove a tree within a conservation area?**

If you are thinking of cutting down a tree or doing any pruning work, the local planning authority must be notified 6 weeks before any work begins. This enables the authority to assess the contribution the tree makes to the character of the conservation area and, if necessary, create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it. Consent will be required for any works to trees that are protected.

The legislation relating to trees is included within Part VIII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which is supplemented by The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012.

Further information on TPOs and trees in conservation areas can be found on Historic England's [website](#).

### **How do I find out more about a conservation area?**

Historic England's website has information on conservation areas and their designation. Further information on the importance of conservation areas, and what it means to live in one, can also be accessed via their [website](#).

Historic England has also published an [advice note](#) called Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management which sets out advice on the appraisal of conservation areas and managing change in conservation areas.

In addition, local planning authorities have information on the conservation areas within their boundaries available on their websites. They will have information pertaining to when the conservation area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation.



### 1.5 Planning Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context, the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England’s revised Historic England Advice Note 1, *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2019) and *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990). In particular section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural and historic interest as Conservation Areas, and section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced. Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposal for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in chapter 16 of the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2024).

The Conservation Area which is the subject of this report is located within the area covered by Tendring District Council. Local planning policy is set out in the Tendring Local Plan, 2013 – 2033 and beyond. Policies which are relevant to heritage assets and Conservation Areas include:

- Local Plan Policy EN1: Landscape Character
- Local Plan Policy QL9: Design of New Development
- Local Plan Policies EN17-20: specific to conservation areas
- Local Plan Policies EN21-25: Importance of listed buildings and the protection extended to them

Additional specific local policies relevant to the Lawford Conservation Area include Archaeological Policy EN29.

Tendring District Council on 9 October 2017 submitted an updated Local Plan and has formally adopted Section 1 of the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: North Essex Authorities’ Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan. A Draft of the emerging Local Plan with updated policies is publicly available and until adoption it is advised you discuss proposals with Tendring District Council.

### 1.6 Designation of the Conservation Area

Lawford Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 and was subsequently amended and extended in 1982. Further to this a Conservation Area Character Appraisal was published in 2006. The boundary and appraisal were reviewed in 2023 and a public consultation and event was held.

### 1.7 Article 4 Directions

The Lawford Conservation Area is currently not covered by any Article 4 Directions.

## 2. Lawford Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

Lawford is a rural village located in the Tendring District of northeast Essex and the parish of Lawford. The Conservation Area comprises the historic core at the western end of the modern village and Lawford Hall and park and Parish Church. Pevsner described the early fourteenth century chancel in the church as 'one of the most splendid monuments of its date in the county'.

The historic development of Lawford, shares a close relationship with the surrounding agricultural landscape which imparts a strong rural character upon the Conservation Area and the neighbouring settlement of Manningtree. The earliest recorded history of Lawford is from a reference within an Anglo-Saxon Will in 1045 and the earliest surviving structure is that of the Parish Church of St Mary, where the chancel dates to the fourteenth century.

The village of Lawford remained a small, isolated rural settlement until the second half of the twentieth century, with sparse development until this point, see the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 (Figure 2). The listed and historic buildings within Lawford are themselves varied, demonstrating the differing phases of development and form distinctive character areas or attractive groups of buildings, which positively contribute to the Conservation Area.



Figure 3 Context and location of Lawford Conservation Area ©Google Earth 2023



## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of Lawford and the surrounding landscape.

### Prehistory

The archaeology of the Lawford area is well documented through excavation and cropmark evidence. These have revealed a widespread multi-period landscape with evidence for settled occupation and funerary activity since the Neolithic period.

To the immediate south of the Conservation Area is the Scheduled Monument *Settlement Site NNE of Lawford House* (NHLE 1002157), this consists of a circular enclosure with opposed entrances showing as a cropmark. Excavation has proved it to be of Neolithic date, the finds suggest a domestic function. It forms part of a larger multi-period prehistoric landscape as evidenced by cropmarks of field-systems and possible enclosures. The Bronze Age round barrow adjacent to Lawford Park is also Scheduled (NHLE 1002125), it is a rare survival of an upstanding prehistoric earthwork in Essex. It was excavated in 1812 when two urns were recovered. Cropmark evidence shows that it forms part of a larger barrow cemetery, with further ring-ditches to the south and south-west. To the north of the Conservation Area, adjoining the river is another Scheduled Bronze Age ring-barrow cemetery (NHLE 1002135) which forms part of a much larger cropmark complex of enclosures, fields and trackways located on valley sides of the River Stour.

Excavation in advance of housing development to the south and south-east of the Conservation Area has identified extensive areas of Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement and agricultural activity, including to the east of Bromley Road.

### Roman

There is limited evidence to date for securely dated Roman activity within the Conservation Area, although Roman metalwork has been recovered from the field next to church. It is possible that some of the cropmark fields and tracks are Roman in date. However there is extensive evidence for Roman rural settlement in the wider landscape, excavations at Dale Hall Farm to the east recorded a Late Iron Age and Roman agricultural landscape, including a cemetery enclosure and kiln.

### Anglo Saxon

Lawford is mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon will of 1045, at which date it was named *Lalleford (Lealla's ford)*. By the end of this period Lawford was a royal manor, held by King Harold prior to 1066. It was evidently a large manor, comprising 57 households. It is probable that many of these would have been scattered across the manor in individual farms, the manor-house would have been located somewhere in the vicinity of either the present Hall or the Church. There was also a second smaller manor held by Aelfric, containing some 15 households.

### Medieval (1066 – 1540)

The Domesday Book indicates that the period immediately post-Conquest was unstable, with the Lawford area claimed by various Norman lords and men-at-arms. However, by 1086 William the Conqueror had apparently gained control of the entirety of the royal manor, with the new Norman tenants paying their dues to him. Count Eustace had seized the second, smaller manorial holding, later known as Dale Hall.

The Church of St Mary is fourteenth century in origin. The chancel in particular is noteworthy for the quality of its carvings, almost certainly funded by Sir Benet de Cokefield, Lord of the Manor and owner of both church and hall, around 1340. Archaeological investigations during the installation of an underfloor heating system in the nave and north aisle recovered medieval foundations, as well as several post-holes, suggesting that there may have been an earlier church on the site.

Banks and ditches adjacent to St Mary's Church have been interpreted as marking the site of a possible deserted medieval village, these are no longer visible. Alternatively, they may have marked the site of a medieval predecessor to the Hall. Numerous medieval and early post-medieval coins have been recovered by metal-detecting from the fields to the west of the Conservation Area.



Figure 4 Photo of Church Chancel

The relatively isolated position of the church and Hall in relation to the remainder of the settlement is typical of Essex. The medieval settlement would have comprised a possible focus around the Church and along Church Hill, a second focus on Wignall Street and scattered farms and cottages, widely distributed across the parish and linked to the church by a complex network of lanes and footpaths.

**Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)**

The 1777 Essex map by Chapman and André depicts Lawford, marking the grouping of church and Hall, with a parsonage and a large house (now Abbots Manor) on Church Hill (Figure 2).



Figure 5 Photo of Church Lane, Rectory

The development at the junction of Wignall Street and Dedham Road is also shown, with the settlement limited to a few dwellings.

Lawford Hall is said to have been built about 1580-83 for the Waldegrave family but may incorporate earlier phases. The south front was altered circa 1756 by Mr Edward Green, adding a red brick façade in the Georgian style. The Hall is depicted in the 1777 map as set within a formal garden, with an avenue of trees framing the view to the south. To the south-east is an eighteenth/nineteenth century red brick stable block, its presence highlighting how the hall developed within this period. Possession of the manor had been in the hands of the Waldegrave and Dent families until it was sold to the Nichols family in 1865.



Figure 6 Photo of Lawford Hall 1908 Klammer

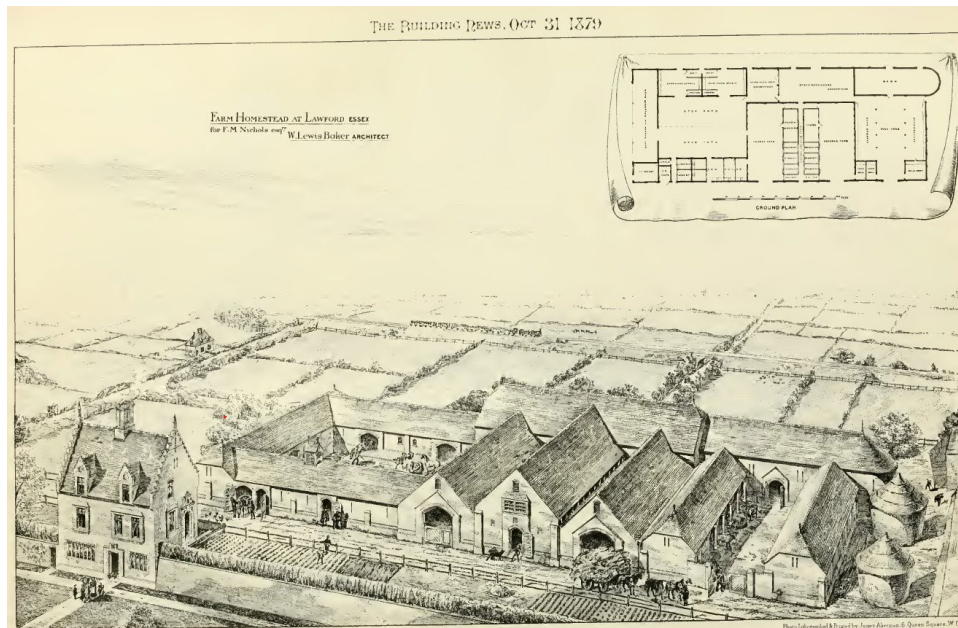


Figure 7 Lawford Hall Farm (<https://archive.org/details/buildingnewsengi37londuoft/page/n489/mode/2up>)

The Nichols family were a family of writers, with John Bowyer Buchanan Nichols and his son Robert Nichols both poets. Their family were responsible for many of the estate buildings and facilities which are a prominent feature of the village. These include Lawford Hall Farm, a late nineteenth century model farm designed by W. Lewis Baker for F.M. Nichols. It was illustrated in “The Building News” in 1879 and is still essentially intact. Wignall Street became part of the turnpike road to Harwich in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, with a tollhouse located next to the Ogilvie Hall site

Manningtree railway station is located to the north-east of the Conservation Area, it stands at the junction of the main line from London to Norwich and the branch line to Harwich. The station was opened by the Eastern Union Railway in 1846 but rebuilt by the Great Eastern Railway in 1899-1901.

By the date of the first 6” Ordnance Survey edition in 1874, Lawford had become established as a village, with a school and a public house on the main road. By this time, development had also spread further along the southern edge of the village towards the junction with Church Hill.

### Modern (1902-Present)

The Ogilvies of Lawford Place were considerable benefactors in the early years of the last century, they are responsible for the 1909 Village Hall.

There was very limited development within the village until the mid- twentieth century when further housing was added along the Harwich Road, to east and west of the historic core. The housing estates that now link Lawford to Manningtree are late twentieth century in date and there has been further development and infilling in the last few decades.

The War Memorial at the junction of Church Hill and Wignall Street was erected c.1920 and commemorates the dead of both World Wars.



### 2.3 Revisions to the Boundary

As part of this review, the Conservation Area boundary has been revised to reflect changing methodologies of good practice and provide a clearer strategy which acknowledges the practicalities of Lawford's unique built environment. This review is in line with the NPPF guidance on Conservation Areas (paragraph 204).

#### Additions

The addition to the Conservation Area includes the Ogilvie Hall and early twentieth century social housing with some later infill development.

The boundary of the Conservation Area was expanded eastwards along Wignall Street to include Nos. 11-16 Wignall Street on the southern side of the road. Together these buildings form a pleasing and uniform group on the approach to the historic core of Lawford. The buildings are of special historic interest and some architectural interest, representing a period of time when social housing was expanded in response to a post First World War national housing crisis.

The boundary change also included the 1909 Ogilvie Hall, which is in the Arts and Crafts style and plays a prominent role in the approach to the historic core of Lawford.



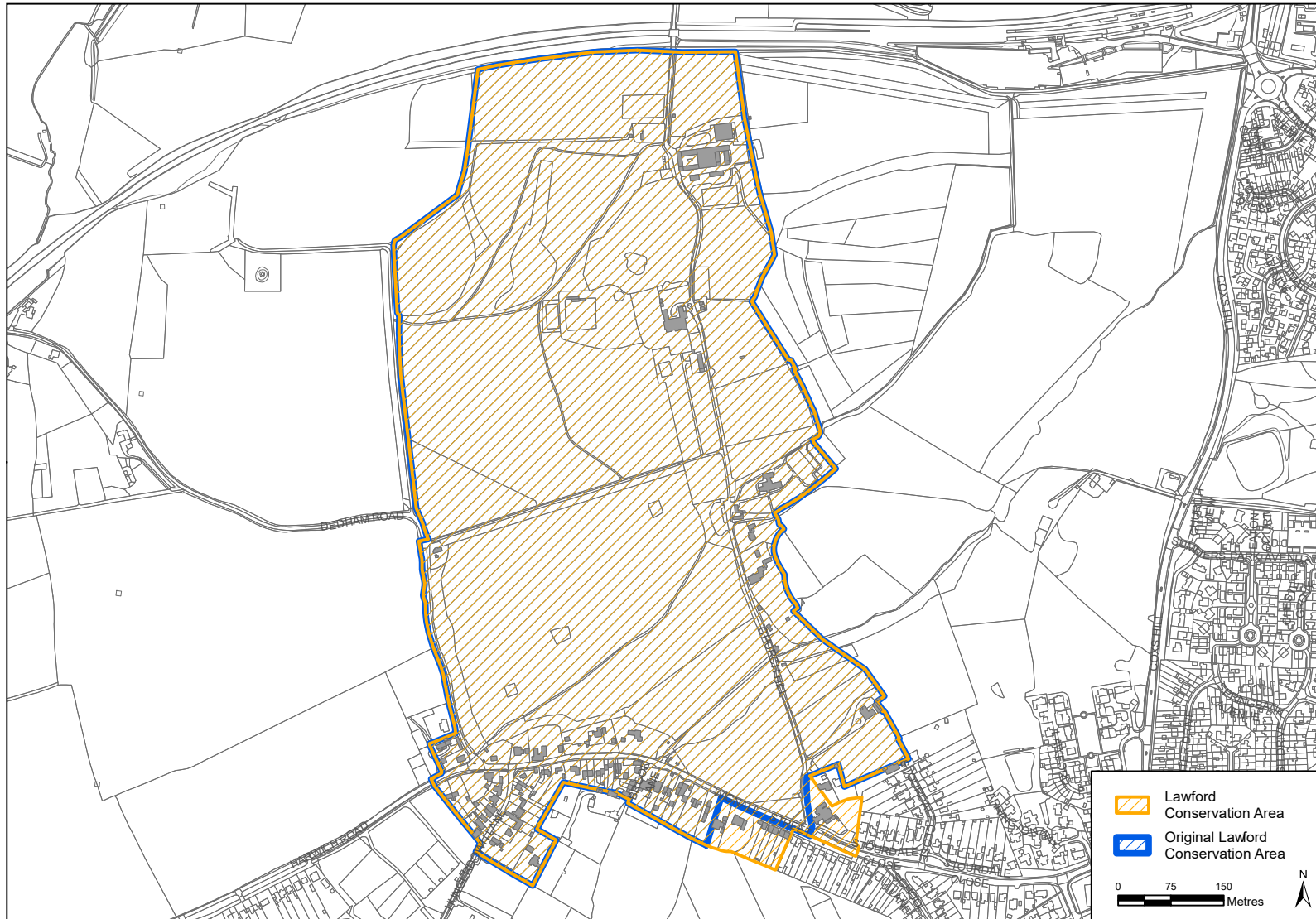


Figure 8 Map showing 2024 revisions to the Conservation Area boundary



## 2.4 Designated Heritage Assets

There are eight designated heritage assets within Lawford Conservation Area, including the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Mary and the Grade I listed Lawford Hall. A full list of all the designated assets within the Conservation Area is included in Appendix 6.1. They are also listed in the description for each Character Area, outlined in Section Three of this document.

These buildings, structures and features have been listed due to their special historic and architectural interest as defined by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings, 2018). Further information about the listing process can be found on the Historic England [website](#).

The Lawford Conservation Area contains relatively few listed buildings, however the variety is important, ranging from the Grade I Church and hall to the Grade II War Memorial and the former King's Arms public house, highlighting how the village has developed and altered over time and acknowledging the multiple phases of Lawford's development.

## 2.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Every building, space and feature within a Conservation Area makes a contribution to its character and special interest, be it positive, positive (in need of improvement), neutral or negative.

Heritage assets are defined in Planning Policy as 'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.'

Not all heritage assets are listed, and just because a building is not included on the list does not mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other smaller features of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area's historic interest and its general appearance. Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the locality. At present there is not an approved Local List for Tendring District Council however this document has identified heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and could be considered for Local Listing in the future. These are also identified in the descriptions of the Conservation Area and each character area as outlined in Section 3.

The buildings and structures proposed for local listing are identified below:

- Hall Farm
- Ogilvie Hall
- The Old School, Church Hill
- Woodman, Church Hill
- Almshouses
- 11-16 Wignall Street
- The Old Laundry

It should be noted that conservation area appraisals are not binary documents and there remains the potential for additional non-designated heritage assets or positive contributors to the Conservation Area to be identified in the future.

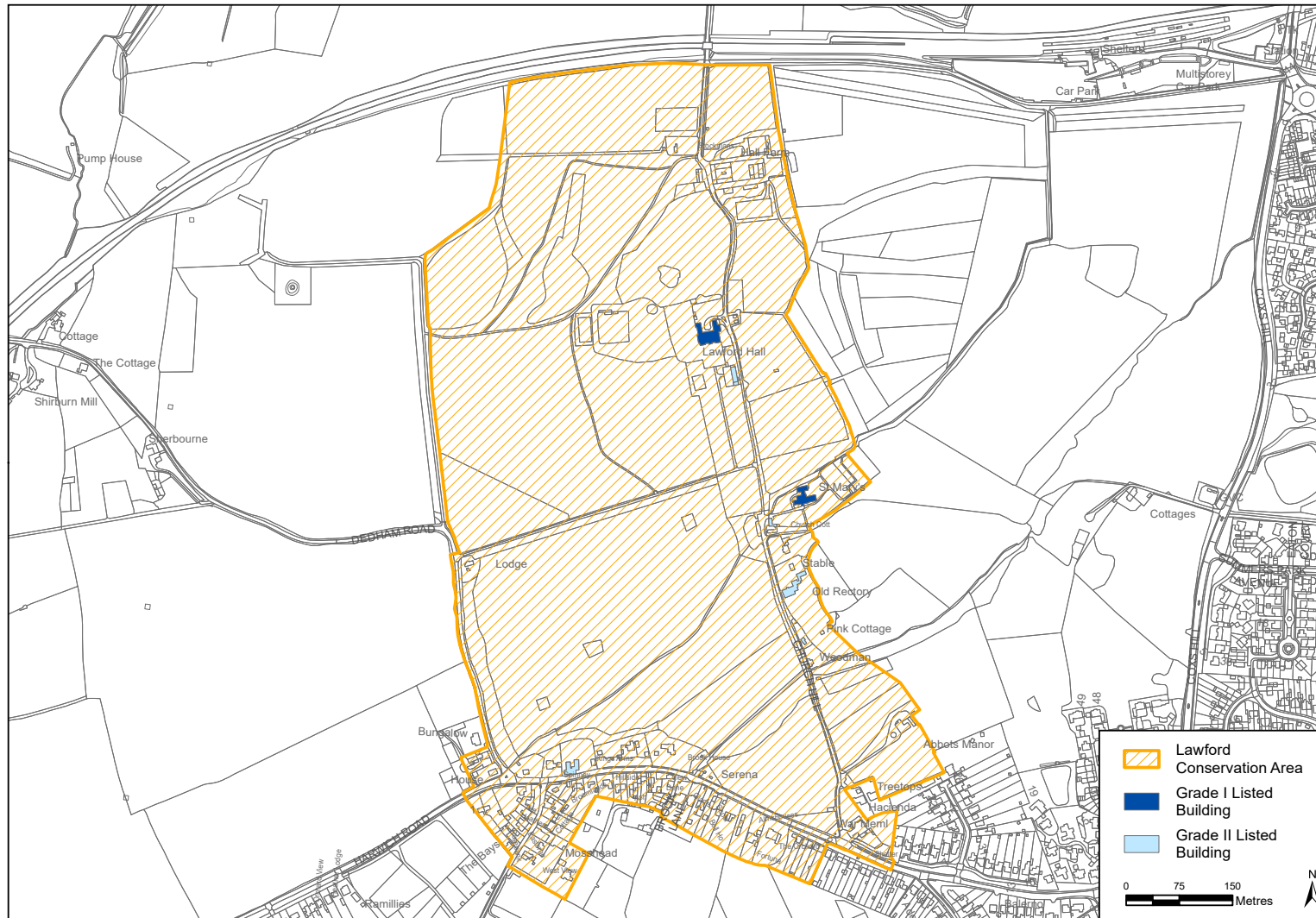


Figure 9 Map showing designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area



## 2.6 Positive, Negative or Neutral Elements

The map opposite (Figure 10) should be read in conjunction with the key notes below. These outline the broad descriptions of positive, neutral and negative attributed to buildings within the Conservation Area. It should be noted that just because a building is positive it does not mean it cannot be enhanced. Some positive buildings may have intrusive aspects but these are more widespread across the Conservation Area (such as inappropriate windows) and are addressed in the management plan. The buildings identified as 'Positive with opportunity for enhancement' tend to have more bespoke or fundamental issues that are not generally observed or widespread across the area.

**Positive:** these are buildings that have been identified as positive contributors to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Whist identified as positive there are likely to be enhancements which can be made to better reveal the architectural interest of the building and improve its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These general enhancements are noted in the management plan. One example for Lawford would be the replacement of UPVC windows and other inappropriate windows and doors, the upgrade of these items would be beneficial as a general rule.

**Positive with opportunity for enhancement:** these are buildings which have been highlighted as they are positive contributors, however, they have been compromised due to intrusive alterations or additions. These buildings can be enhanced through the removal, replacement or redesign of intrusive or unsympathetic alterations. In the case of Lawford, buildings have been highlighted which require changes that go further than the widespread issues such as inappropriate windows and can include buildings with unsympathetic roof extensions, replacement bay windows, and modern balconies.

**Neutral:** These buildings make no beneficial or adverse contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

**Negative:** These buildings make an adverse or intrusive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.



Figure 10 Map showing significance of buildings within the Conservation Area



## 2.7 Heritage at Risk

Tendring District Council published a Heritage Strategy in 2019 using data from the Heritage at Risk Programme (HAR) by Historic England, however there is not a separately published Heritage at Risk Register by Tendring District Council.

At the time of writing in 2023, no buildings within the Lawford Conservation Area feature on the national list of Heritage at Risk published by Historic England.

## 2.8 Archaeological Potential

The Conservation Area has potential for the preservation of significant archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric to medieval period. The extensive and ongoing excavations which have taken place over a number of years to the south and east in advance of development have revealed extensive multi-period archaeological remains.

Previous investigations and cropmark evidence have revealed the Conservation Area lies within a widespread settled landscape dating from the Neolithic period onwards, it includes extensive barrow cemeteries dating to the Bronze Age. There is also the potential for a Saxon predecessor hall and church to have existed within the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area is comprised of the Church, Lawford Hall and its associated parkland and a small area of historic settlement along Church Hill and Wignall Street. The manor is Saxon in origin, however the location of the original settlement

is uncertain, although the vicinity of the Church and hall is the most likely location for the manorial centre.

The isolated nature of the Church and Hall are a common medieval settlement pattern where they lie at some distance from the main settlement area. The survival of the medieval Church is an important, well-preserved resource. Archaeological fieldwork within the church have established the survival of belowground features within the structure. There are records of ditches and banks located next to the church that may mark the location of former associated settlement.

The location of the associated medieval manorial hall is likely to be either within the area of the current hall or closer to the Church. The present hall was built in the late sixteenth century and so belowground remains relating to earlier precursors of the manorial hall are to be expected. The 1777 Chapman and André map shows the original historic farmstead associated with the hall located immediately to the east of the Hall and Church Hill, below ground remains may survive in this area. There may also be surviving remains related to the various phases of the hall gardens and the parkland.

The recovery of pottery, industrial remains, shell and bone from excavated sites on the periphery of the Conservation Area would suggest good survival of most archaeological remains. Environmental remains, preserved in deeper features have yielded information on the wider landscape as well as evidence for food and cereal production. The gravels and brickearths have potential to contain Pleistocene faunal remains.



## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Summary

The special interest and the significance of the Lawford Conservation Area is primarily drawn from its legibility as a small historic rural settlement.

The Conservation Area contains relatively few listed buildings, however the development of Lawford and the shared relationship of its historic building stock contributes to the understanding of the settlement's character and special interest. Three Character Areas have been identified within this appraisal as they mark differing aspects of Lawford's development.

Despite development and expansion of the village in the twentieth century, including large modern developments to the east, the character and understanding of the Lawford Conservation Area is still dictated by its historic core on Wignall Street, and the Church, Lawford Hall and other historic buildings on Church Hill.

### 3.2 Character Areas

As part of this appraisal, Lawford Conservation Area has been divided into three Character Areas:

Character Area One: Lawford Hall and Park

Character Area Two: Church Hill

Character Area Three: Wignall Street and Hungerdown Lane

The areas have been determined by building typology, historical development, land use and appearance. The following descriptions are not exhaustive, aiming instead to provide accessible accounts of each Character Area which will allow for an informed understanding of the Conservation Area's special interest and defining features.

Prevailing architectural styles, building materials, spatial planning, landscaping and boundary materials are detailed in the description of each Character Area to highlight the special architectural and historic value of the three zones. Photographs are included to aid the descriptions, providing examples where appropriate to inform the understanding of this document.

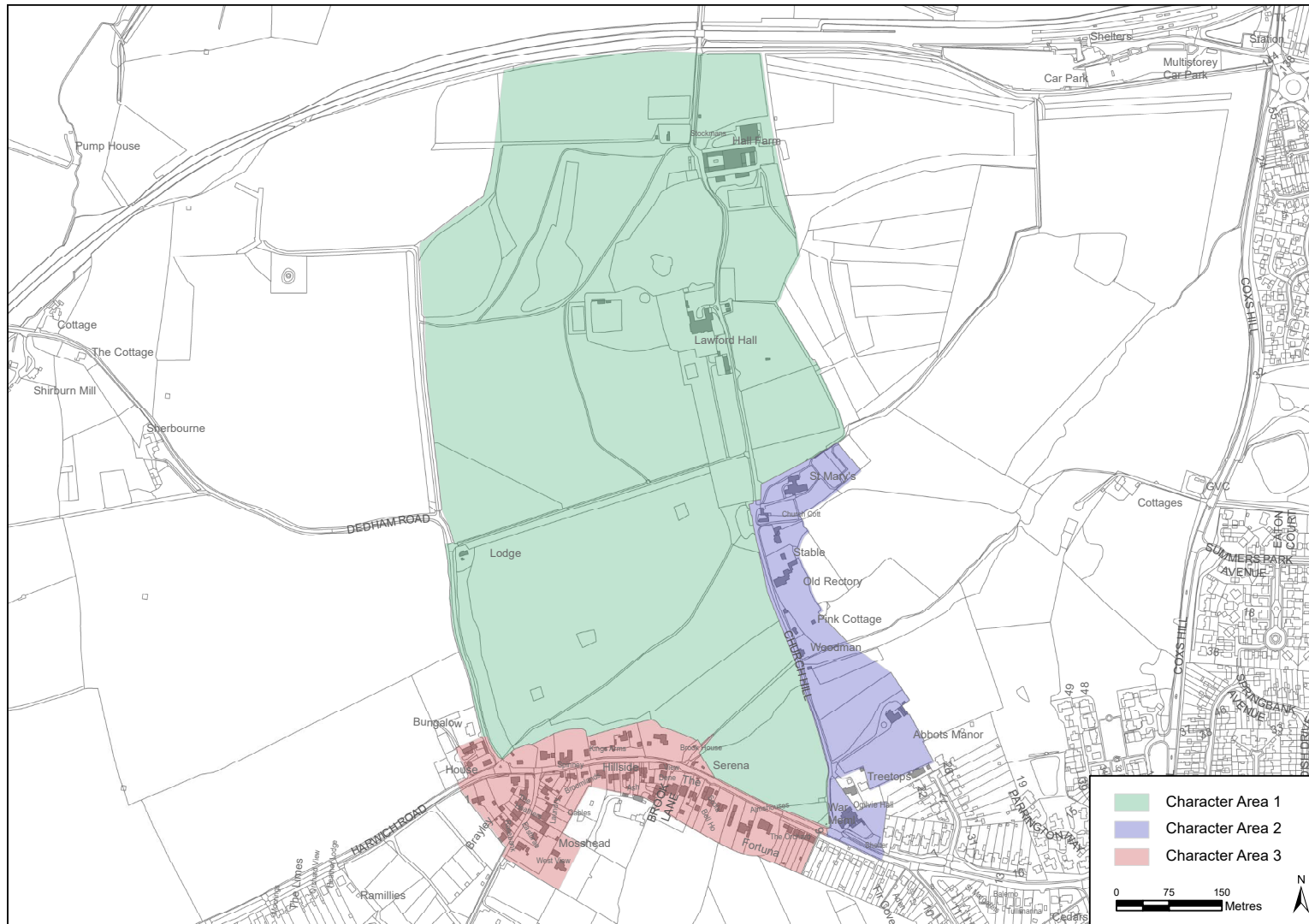


Figure 11 Map showing Character Areas





### 3.3 Character Area One - Lawford Hall and Park

Character Area One is focussed upon Lawford Hall and its associated parkland and buildings, including a late nineteenth century Model Farm. The Hall is one of the earliest surviving structures within the Conservation Area and fundamental to understanding the history of the settlement.

There are two designated heritage assets within Character Area One, as shown on Figure 9. These are Lawford Hall (a Grade I listed building) and its associated stable block (Grade II listed).

Lawford Hall and its parkland have an extensive history, and its parkland and the hall itself remain largely unchanged comparative to their depiction on the 1874 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map. The avenue of lime trees leading up to the hall is depicted on the 1777 Chapman Andre map of Essex; to the north of the Hall is a Wilderness called The Rookery and to the west further ornamental gardens and a walled kitchen garden, a modern tennis-court has been added to this ensemble behind the walled garden. The wider parkland contains copses and individual parkland trees (some of which act as reminders of earlier field boundaries that were removed to make the park). The parkland is bisected by an entrance carriageway, accessed via a former gate lodge on the Dedham Road. A number of footpaths lead across the parkland from the Dedham Road and Wignall Street to the Church, which allows public access to an otherwise private landscape. The parkland historically extended to the east of Church Hill, and the historic layout and parkland appearance of the area is still discernible in the landscape despite more recent planting.

A track continues northwards beyond the model farm, and the edge of the Conservation Area is reached at the railway embankment through which the lane passes under a semi-circular arched brick tunnel.

There is a pleasant view north-eastwards from the other side of the tunnel and attractive views between the outbuildings and the tunnel to fields outside the Area to the east. Magnificent trees and mature hedgerows are too numerous to mention in this setting.

#### Land Usage

This area comprises Lawford Hall and park, and associated buildings, including the model farm and gate lodge. It is a rural, open landscape with extensive views.

#### Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

Buildings within this character area are concentrated to the north, around Lawford Hall. The design of the buildings in the Character Area is predominantly formal and high-status, reflecting the age and development of this section of the village, which focussed upon the day to day activities of Lawford Hall..



Figure 12 Lawford Hall

Lawford Hall is a Grade I listed building. It was constructed in 1583 as a large half-H plan mansion for Edward Waldegrave. The original north elevation is Elizabethan, two and a half storeys in height, with walls of deep pink render under a roof of old clay tiles with projecting wings with jettied ends. Edward Green had the south front re-cased c.1756 in red brick with small-paned sash windows under rubbed brick voussoirs. An elegant door-case is reached via a circular drive set within a small forecourt framed by yews and a low brick wall with decorative brick copings.

A two-storey red brick stable wing (Grade II) with an attractive paved forecourt stands on a relatively prominent position to the south-east of the main front. A conifer screen to the east of the drive restricts views across the river. The east front of the house to the main drive retains its attractive late seventeenth century railings.

To the north of the Hall is a fine example of a late nineteenth century model farm. This comprises a noteworthy complex of agricultural buildings in red brick with blue diaper patterning and arched openings, all now with concrete pantiled roofs. There is a fine pair of cottages of two and a half storeys, dated 1871, with a steep clay tiled roof, a central stack, crow-step gables and small crow-step gable dormers. The outbuildings have a mixture of king post and scissor trusses surrounding a courtyard. These farm buildings come at the foot of a steep grassy slope studded with mature trees. On the west side of the lane just beyond the agricultural buildings is another delightful estate cottage. The historic farmstead with its mature trees positively contributes the understanding of the historic development of Lawford, its close functional relationship to the surrounding agrarian landscape and the rural character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Brick and render are dominant features in this part of the Conservation Area, with the use of blue brick diapering adding to the particular character of the estate buildings, featuring on both the former gatehouse and farm buildings.

Roofs are predominantly tiled. Tiles are typically plain red or brown clay and handmade plain tiles. Replacement concrete tiles on the farm buildings detract from the character and appearance of the area.

Where present, uPVC windows and doors detract from the traditional appearance of the building within this character, as do satellite dishes and aerials placed in visible locations.

Old walling and historic boundary treatments, such as brick walls and established hedgerows, positively contribute to the character area.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces**

Lawford Park dominates this part of the Conservation Area, it is present in all key views and provides an appropriate landscape setting for Lawford Hall. The verdant nature of the park and its numerous trees with some planting to the north contributes to the rural character of the Conservation Area.

Wignall Brook, at the south eastern corner of the character area, is a densely planted area of woodland, through which public footpaths pass. As an area of public space, it is used by dog walkers and other pedestrians, providing a recreational space for the village.

### 3.4 Character Area Two - Church Hill

Character Area Two comprises the Parish Church of St Mary and the scattered linear development along the east side of Church Hill. The Parish Church is the earliest surviving structure in Lawford, and there are a number of associated historic buildings in proximity to the church, as well as a small amount of modern infill.

There are four statutory listed buildings located within this area; the Grade I Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, and the Grade II Church Clerk's Cottage, Old Rectory and Pink Cottage.

The Parish Church is located at the northern end of this character area. The early fourteenth century chancel is considered to be one of the most splendid monuments of its date in Essex. The two most notable features of the church are the extravagant chancel windows in curvilinear Decorated style and the building's striking square tower, faced in an irregular mixture of brick, flint, puddingstone and septaria. The church has seen various additions and repairs in the succeeding centuries, culminating in a general restoration in 1887-9. A While there is plenty of mature planting in the churchyard, from the southern edge of the churchyard there is a splendid view eastward over Manningtree and the Estuary, towards the tower of the Royal Hospital School. There are also attractive views from the Churchyard entrance to the west into Lawford Hall's parkland.

The lane dips through mature trees past the eighteenth-century Pink Cottage (Grade II listed), a pretty thatched cottage of one and a half storeys and pink rendered walls, and The Woodman, a two storey brick cottage. There are attractive glimpses of parkland on either side of the road at this point. At the top of a short rise fringed by dense hedgerows reaching an arch over the road, stands Abbots' Manor, a two storey house with sash windows set in pink render under a hipped slate roof. The attractive grounds include mature trees and a splendid view to the north east.



Figure 13 Church, Church Clerk's Photo



At the junction with the main road is the War Memorial (Grade II listed), supported visually by a large oak tree. Prominent on the opposite corner is the 1909 Ogilvie Hall, a building with Arts-and-Crafts styling with pebble dashed elevations and a roof of concrete tiles. There is a simple modern extension to the front. Its main road frontage contains mature trees and a hedge, the latter has some gaps. It is recommended that the Conservation Area is extended here to encompass the Ogilvie Hall and its grounds, and the Ogilvie Hall is also recommended for Local Listing.

### Land Usage

This area comprises the parish church, the former village school, Ogilvie Hall and a small number of rural residential properties and their associated grounds. All are located on the eastern side of Church Hill lane, with views into Lawford Park to the front and into open farmland to the rear.

The open space to the north of Abbot's Manor formed its historic parkland and is still discernible as such.

### Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

There is a concentration of traditional buildings in this section of the Conservation Area, the design of the buildings in the Character Area is predominantly vernacular, reflecting the age and development of the settlement.

The Church is of brick, flint and stone construction, the west tower in particular shows an extraordinary mix of materials, which adds much to its charm and character.

The church features a smooth rendered north aisle with a slate roof, connected to a new Church Hall of yellow brick with simple detailing. The churchyard wall to the north is identical to that fronting the south forecourt of the Hall; that to the south is also in brick but with plainer copings.

The domestic buildings throughout this area are typically one and a half or two storeys in height with central or flanking chimneys. Brick and render predominantly features in this part of the Conservation Area, with differences in brick colour tone and bond providing a material differentiation between modern and older properties.

A significant feature from both inside and outside the churchyard is the seventeenth century or earlier Church Clerk's Cottage (Listed Grade II), a one-and-a-half storey house with rendered walls under a roof of old clay tiles with traditional dormers. Next to this is The Old School House, a brick-built estate-building constructed in 1848 in the Tudor style with a clay tiled roof. To the south is the modern Rectory, dating from the early 1960's, a pleasant building in red brick with a clay tiled roof and classical details. This is built on the site of an earlier building which formed part of the original Rectory complex.



The Old Rectory dates from 1757 and is a red brick, double pile house of five bays, with a significant pair of gables fronting on to the lane. There is an interesting, moulded brick cornice and string course details to the south elevation and a prominent porch on the principal north elevation, supporting the arms of St. John's College, Cambridge. A number of associated buildings, including the former stables, are located to the rear of The Old Rectory.

Roofs are predominantly tiled. Tiles are typically plain red or brown clay and handmade on older properties, with a few examples of pantiles. Concrete tiles can be found on the more recent twentieth century buildings, which provide a dilution of the otherwise traditional character and appearance of the area. The Pink Cottage is thatched.

Where present, uPVC windows and doors detract from the traditional appearance of the Conservation Area, as do satellite dishes and aerials.

In this part of the Conservation Area, most properties front the lane or are set behind front gardens, which are demarked by low walls or hedgerows. The Church is set within its churchyard. The old walling and historic boundary treatments positively contribute to the street scene of the Conservation Area. There are some instances of unsympathetic fencing, however its presence is not dominant.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

The buildings stand within their own grounds, many with mature planting and trees. The Character Area includes part of the historic parkland associated with Abbot's Manor. The adjoining parkland for Lawford Hall dominates this part of the Conservation Area, it being present in all key views and frames the buildings on its fringe. The verdant nature of the parkland together with the churchyard planting and the trees and hedges associated with individual properties contributes to the rural character of the Conservation Area. The green spaces and mature trees positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### 3.5 Character Area Three: Wignall Street and Hungerdown Lane

The Wignall Street Character Area stretches along the main road, Wignall Street, from the junction with Church Hill to the junction with Dedham Road. It extends into the northern part of Hungerdown Lane and represents one of the historic foci for settlement in Lawford and is still traditional in appearance, despite a degree of modern infill.

There is one statutory listed building located within this area, the former King's Arms Public House. The King's Arms (listed Grade II) is seventeenth century or earlier in date. It is of timber-frame and painted brick construction with a clay tile roof. It was formerly a Public House, but it closed in 2012 and was converted to a private residence. It is a good example of vernacular architecture and contributes positively to the Character Area, as well as the significance of Lawford Conservation Area.

The approach to the Conservation Area from the east comprises the Ogilvie Hall to the north (see Character Area Two) and a row of council houses probably dating from the 1930's and 1950's to the south. The earlier semi-detached buildings (11-16 Wignall Street) are representative of the post First World War response to a national housing crisis. It is recommended that the Conservation Area is extended to include this grouping of semi-detached dwellings.

To the west of the semi-detached group, Wignall Street drops down into the valley. Here, the Almshouses on the southern side of Wignall Street break the pattern of development, facing away from the road.



Figure 14 Photo of Kings Arms



Figure 15 Photo of Charity Farm

Park View occupies an important location close to the road edge on the south side of the road, with Brook Cottage to the south of Park View. The grouping is given more visual distinction by the setting-back of the two modern houses with their gardens to the east.

Wignall Street turns the slight corner and rises from this point, past a varied group of properties on the south side and the commercial premises of Valley Garden Supplies to the north. Development on the south side of Wignall Street consists first of all of five cottages in two groups, with varied access arrangements and garden frontage treatments. The eastern group of three cottages retains many original features, including door cases and, in two examples, the original small-paned sash windows. Three new houses with a shared access step back from the road frontage, and lead on to a pair of unsympathetic three storey houses.

Beyond this again are three detached vernacular properties of two-and-a-half storeys with rendered facades and gambrel roofs of brown clay tiles. The loss of the original windows to these houses have resulted in loss of much of their original character. To the east of these is a small vernacular cottage. On the northern side of the road is the Listed Kings Arms, a former Public House, which occupies a prominent position in the street scene. West of the pub is a modern house of simple design, followed by Forge Cottage in a significant corner location. The delicately modelled brick facades in Flemish bond are extremely attractive, complimented by original door and window features.

Beyond the junction with Dedham Road is Charity Farmhouse, a pleasant early nineteenth century design with other significant features such as its brick front wall, corner planting and an outbuilding to the side. There are no views into the parkland from the road, although a short walk on public footpaths to the north allows attractive views to develop. Views down Dedham Road into the Conservation Area are focused on Crossway on the southern side of Wignall Street, a vernacular cottage with pink rendered walls and a substantial roof of old clay tiles. A pair of estate cottage dating from 1957 and constructed in a simple neo-Georgian style complete the main road frontage in this area These share a single access to the west, behind a high hedge.



The Character Area runs southwards to include the properties fronting Hungerdown Lane, these consist of a mix of historic properties and modern infill. Rose Cottage on the east side was formerly The Rose Beer-house and Post Office, leads past modern houses to a fascinating group of former estate buildings, including The Old Laundry. The Old Laundry complex is recommended for Local Listing. A cottage at the rear has elevations in diapered brick behind a long single-storey brick range under a hipped roof which projects boldly to the road edge. Beyond this is a pretty house with symmetrical elevations behind a prominent hedge, and a pair of estate cottages identical to those at Rose Valley next to The Old School on the main road. On the western side of this short road, a pair of late-Victorian or Edwardian houses stand among modern properties of no overriding historic interest. The lane ends in a series of allotments and open countryside.

### Land Usage

The Character Area comprises linear residential development along both sides of Wignall Street and along the northern, built-up, part of Hungerdown Lane. There is one small area of commercial development, comprising Valley Garden Supplies, on Wignall Street. The properties on the northern side of Wignall Street back on to Lawford Park, those on the southern side of the street and on Hungerdown Lane back onto open farmland or allotments.



Figure 16 Rose Beerhouse

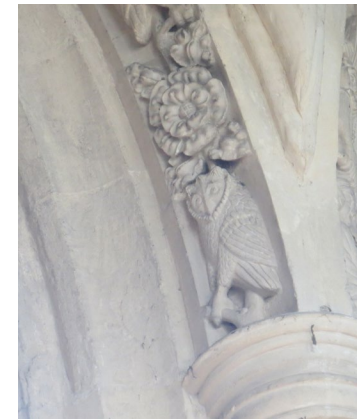


### Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

Buildings are predominantly of two storeys, faced with red brick or render in this part of the Conservation Area. Where brickwork is left exposed decorative features, such as blue brick patterning, quoining and dentil eaves can be seen. Some modern infill residential buildings are of red brick; the variation in brick tone amongst the building stock provide a visual indication of the mixture of building ages present in the Character Area. Some buildings have been painted, the colours are typically sympathetic, reflecting the age and architectural style of the buildings. Pastel colours, creams and white provide variation across the Character Area.

The Almshouses are a notable example of estate buildings which feature brick diaper work. Much more prominent in the street scene is The Old School House, designed by W.L. Baker in 1872-3 in diapered brick with Tudor details and a substantial central stack. The adjacent cottages, 1-2 Rose Valley, also have patterned bricks and may have been designed by the same architect. On the northern side of the road is Serena, a very small vernacular brick cottage with a gambrel roof. Together they make an extremely picturesque grouping. There are significant views northwards into Lawford Park from this point

Roofs are clad in red or brown plain clay tiles and natural slate upon older properties, twentieth century buildings typically feature concrete tiles/pantiles. The concrete tiles/pantiles detract from the traditional character of the area. Roofs are a mix of gable, hipped and gambrel forms, which add to the variety of the scene.





The positioning of buildings along the streetscape varies considerably, which adds to the character of the area. Some of the buildings front directly onto the street, some are set above the road, some are set below the road level, some are set back behind a small front garden and others by a larger front garden. Frontages are demarked by brick walls, fencing or hedgerow.

Street signage and furniture is restrained owing to the few commercial buildings. The Dedham Road has a noticeable amount of traffic calming signs, and these could be considered for rationalisation.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces**

Landscaping and areas of open space comprise front and side gardens, and glimpses to the rear of properties of further trees. These positively contribute to the appearance of the area. The Character Area backs onto Lawford Park to the north and to open countryside and allotments to the south. This setting positively contributes to the historic rural village character of the character area. The eastern end of the character area abuts the modern development that now links Lawford with Manningtree.



### 3.6 Views

Key views are identified on Figure 16. The views included in this assessment are a selection of key views; this list is not exhaustive and there may be numerous other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

The numerous views of Lawford Hall and the park are important to the understanding of the Conservation Area, its history and significance (Views 1). These change as the viewer moves through the park or around its perimeter. The visibility of the church from Church Hill and the park and the public footpaths to the east emphasises the role the church played within the history of Lawford and its development (Views 2), these views change as the viewer moves through the park or along the footpaths and road. There are also views out from Character Areas 1 and 2 to the north and east to the Stour Estuary and the surrounding rural landscape.

Other views comprise views of the historic settlement along Church Hill (Views 3) demonstrating its contribution to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area and its inter-relationships with the other Character Areas. These are kinetic in nature, in that they change as the viewer travels along Church Hill, reflecting the changes in gradient, the sunken nature of the lane and the nature of the vegetation on either side, so that they can be confined in one location and expansive in the next.

There are also views along Wignall Street within Character Area Three (Views 4) demonstrating its contribution to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area and its inter-relationships with the other Character Areas. Again, these are kinetic in nature, in that they change with the gradient, the proximity of the buildings to the road frontage and the nature of the boundary treatments. This variety contributes to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area.

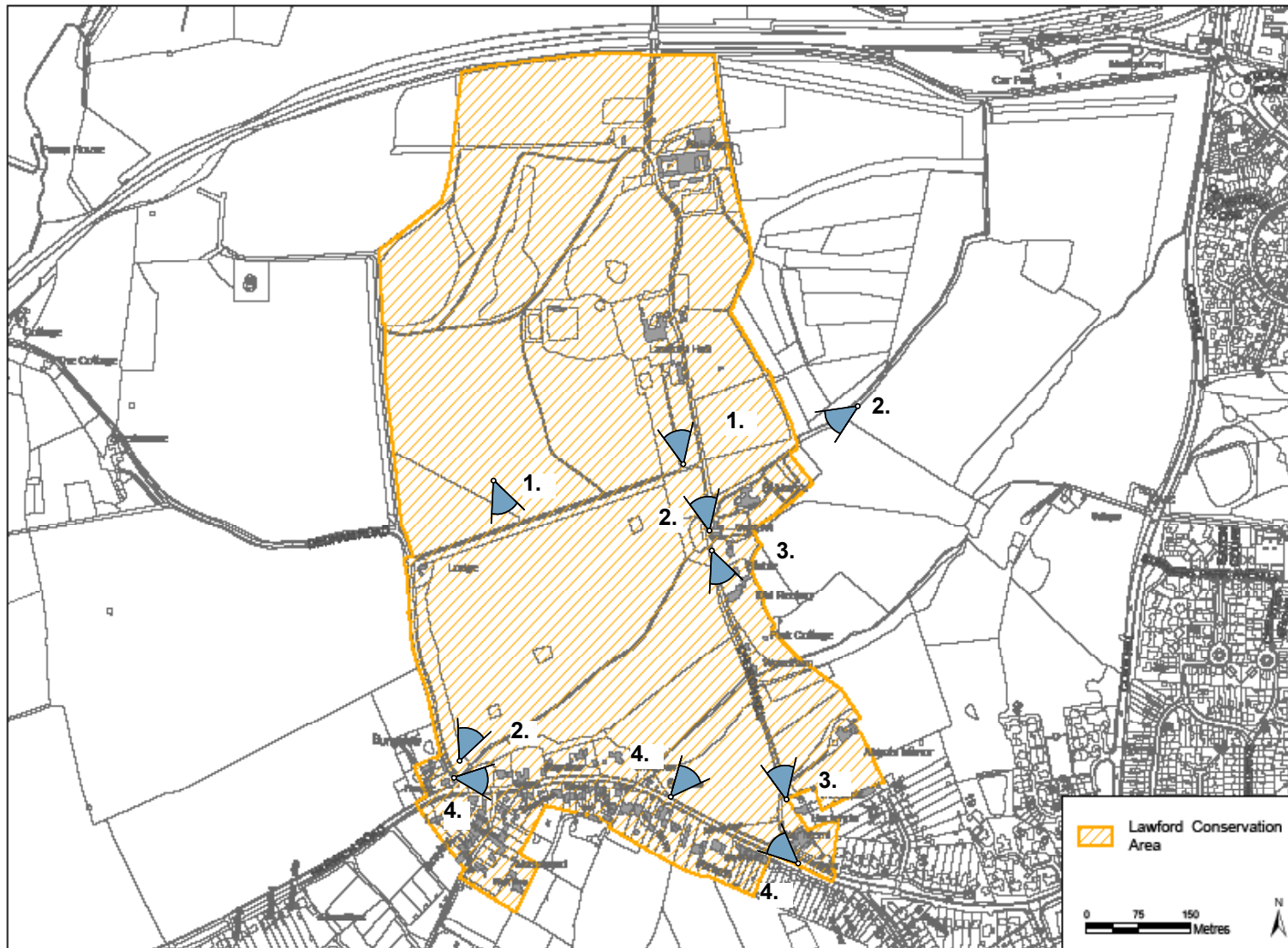


Figure 17 Map showing key views within the Conservation Area



### 3.7 Setting of the Conservation Area

The NPPF describes the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

Historic England provides detailed guidance on the setting of heritage assets, stating that all heritage assets have a setting, whether they are designated or not, irrespective of the form in which they survive. In the analysis of setting, the important contribution of views to the significance of heritage assets and the ability to appreciate that significance is often a primary consideration. Yet the contribution a setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset, such as the Lawford Conservation Area, is not limited to views alone. Setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses. The detrimental alteration of the character of a setting may reduce our ability to understand the historic relationship between places. The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access, view or experience that setting. Therefore, any application for development within the setting of a heritage asset is subject to constraints.

The NPPF states that for any development within the setting of a heritage asset, a thorough assessment of the impact on the setting is required. This should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it (NPPF, paragraph 208).

In addition, paragraph 219 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets (including the setting of Conservation Areas), to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. Therefore, the favourable treatment of proposals that retain the open, agrarian character of the Conservation Area's setting is obligatory by the local authority, while proposals that fail to retain this character would be rejected.

When assessing an application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities should also consider the implications of cumulative change and incremental harm. New developments and changes can not only detract from a heritage asset's significance in the short-term but may also damage its significance and economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its on-going conservation.



### Surrounding Landscape

The Conservation Area draws significance from the surrounding, undeveloped, rural landscape and the loose 'grain' of the surrounding built environment. The Conservation Area's setting within a historically agrarian landscape permits an understanding and appreciation of the historic development of Lawford, as a largely isolated rural settlement until the nineteenth century. The quality of the surrounding rural landscape makes an important contribution to the historic setting and significance of the Lawford Conservation Area.

As demonstrated in the above section upon key viewpoints, there are also strong visual links between the Conservation Area and views from outside the Conservation Area towards heritage assets, such as the church tower.

The approach towards Lawford Conservation Area and its surrounding setting from the west along Harwich Road, the north from Dedham Road and south along Hungerdown Lane is characterised by open fields. The approach from the east, along Wignall Street is more developed with largely twentieth century residential properties. From the north-east at Coxs Hill there are extensive views to the rear of the Conservation Area across open farmland.

Development within the setting of the Conservation Area should be sympathetic to the character of the Lawford Conservation Area.





## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive, and neither are the issues identified unique to Lawford, with many being shared with other conservation areas

### 4.1 Loss of Architectural Details

As highlighted within the appraisal, a number of buildings within Lawford have been subjected to unsympathetic alterations which has resulted in the gradual, and in some cases irrevocable, loss of architectural detailing which would contribute positively to the village's distinctive character. Two key examples of this are the loss of original timber windows and doors and replacement with modern windows and doors, which do not replicate the high-quality detailing of those they are replacing.

Historic England's *Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading* (2017) advises that:

'The loss of traditional windows from our older buildings poses one of the major threats to our heritage. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas. They are an integral part of the design of older buildings and can be important artefacts in their own right.... The distinctive appearance of historic hand-made glass is not easily imitated in modern glazing.'

The loss of historic joinery such as sash and casement windows and panelled doors results in a degree of harm to the significance of an historic building, and the loss of crown or other early glass can also cause harm to the significance of the buildings. Historic England's 2017 advice recommends that '*Surviving historic fenestration is an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved and repaired whenever possible.*'

Where draughts are causing an issue, the repair and refurbishment of windows can improve the thermal performance of historic windows in the first instance, along with the use of shutters and heavy curtains. Alternatively, modern technology allows for well-designed secondary glazing; special timber casements that can be constructed and fixed to the interior of the frame using sections and mouldings to match the primary glazing. These less intrusive methods are advisable within the Conservation Area; however, it is recommended that advice is sought from the Council before any changes to windows or doors are made to ensure the optimum solution.

Throughout the Conservation Area, there are examples of the loss of historic rainwater goods and poor maintenance. The rendering of facades and the decorative brickwork is also evident, often with cementitious render.

There has also been the loss of original boundary treatments which negatively impact the street-scene.

### 4.2 Unsympathetic additions

Throughout the Conservation Area, there are examples of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions which can result in a cumulative impact on the area. The addition of uncharacteristic porches, the installation of TV aerials, extraction flues and air conditioning units to street facades, sides and rear of buildings harm the historic character of the area and its appearance. Care should be taken that unsympathetic additions do not impact key views and the character of groups of historic buildings is preserved.





### 4.3 Neutral Contributors

A number of buildings are considered to make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The buildings that fall within the category still contribute to the area's character and appearance, their contribution should not be considered negative.

### 4.4 Public Realm

**Street Furniture (including lampposts, benches, signage, bins, bike stands, bollards etc.)**

Street furniture is generally of good quality and sympathetic in character. There are a large number of traffic signs at the junction of Dedham Road, and these could be considered for rationalisation.

#### Hard Landscaping

Road surfacing is generally of good quality however there are areas of inconstancies and that would benefit from maintenance.

Hard landscaping can have a harmful effect upon the character of the area and the loss of front garden space in favour of parking would be unsympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area. It is however acknowledged that the use of part of the front gardens for parking does ensure that on-street parking is not a particular issue for the area.

The carpark in front of the Church would benefit from levelling and re-gravelling.

### Open Spaces

The open and green spaces across the Conservation Area make a positive contribution to its significance and are integral to its character in many instances. Appropriate levels of maintenance needs should be considered to these spaces and, where appropriate, opportunities for enhancement sought.

### Trees and Planting

The trees across the Conservation Area make a positive contribution to its significance and are integral to its character in many instances. Appropriate levels of maintenance needs should be considered to these and, where appropriate, opportunities for enhancement sought.

### 4.5 Access and Integration

There is scope for enhancement in terms of wayfinding within the village, to better signpost key features such as the Parish Church and wider public rights of way to enhance the link between the village and its surrounding countryside.



#### 4.6 Colour Palette

The Conservation Area is currently characterised by its red brick and light painted render. Future alterations should respond to the existing and historic palette to preserve the local distinctiveness; however, it should also reflect the age, status and architectural style of its host building. The introduction of an inappropriate modern colour palette into the street scene would be a concern within the Conservation Area, and have the potential to have a cumulative and significant impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is also imperative that appropriate paints are used to ensure that the passage of moisture through historic properties' fabric is not inhibited which can cause decay.

#### 4.7 Inappropriate Modern Development

There has only been small-scale modern development within the Conservation Area and most of this has been infill development located between older properties. These developments have been largely designed in accordance with Essex Design Guideline principles and can be considered as neutral in their impact on the Conservation Area.

Care needs to be taken within the Conservation Area that windows, doors, roofs and other architectural elements are not replaced with those of inappropriate design and materials. The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the historic palette of materials used and this piecemeal loss of fabric can cumulatively have a more significant impact on the character and appearance than any of the other concerns. Examples of inappropriate modern development are considered to include:

- The Fairway and Broomlands, Wignall Street

The impact of modern development on the outskirts of the village or the Conservation Area will need to be controlled or appropriately mitigated so that it does not impact on the setting of the Conservation Area, or on its wider views, and the contribution these make to its significance.



## 5. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of issues facing the Lawford Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This chapter seeks to recommend management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### 5.1 Positive Management: Short term

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the local planning authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works.

### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Through the agreement of a standard good practice within the Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams and other landowners, long term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm, such as avoiding excessive road markings or signage and agreeing a standard street furniture within Character Areas to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced. This will have a long-term positive impact on the Lawford Conservation Area and ensure the preservation of characteristic features of the Area including Lawford.

### Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with the NPPF (Paragraph 194), applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

All applications within the Conservation Area and its setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures, trees or highways on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)*. Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.



### Local Heritage List

Lawford would benefit from the local planning authority adopting and maintaining a comprehensive Local List in order to preserve its historic environment from further deterioration. A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF. A Local List may be beneficial to ensure the upkeep of buildings which are significant to the history and character of Lawford. The exercise would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding. There are a number of buildings within the Conservation Area which are of sufficient quality to be considered for local list status.

### Neutral Elements

The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character.

Tendring District Council must not allow for the quality of design to be 'averaged down' by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must where possible seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate historic features. It is also considered that poor-quality or unsympathetic schemes should not be allowed, both within the Conservation Area and its setting.

### New Development

There are opportunities within Lawford and its setting for development which makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

Successful new development will:

- Relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- Sit sympathetically in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- Use traditional materials and building methods which are as high in quality of those used in the existing buildings; and

Tendring District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Ensuring large scale development schemes are referred to a Design Review Panel (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it's appropriate to a conservation area.
- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.



### Public resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a conservation area. In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and the loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of Lawford's built heritage.

### Tree Management

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, all trees in conservation areas are afforded the same protection as a Tree Preservation Order. Trees which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council. Six weeks notice has to be given to the council under S211 of the Act.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, street trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the Conservation Area should be monitored and maintained appropriately. This will ensure the symmetry along tree lined streets and visual rhythm, as well as maintain the green character of the area. Any tree that makes a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous) replaced with an appropriate new tree.

### 5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

The second set of proposals are also focussed around positive management but are better suited to a longer time frame.

#### Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed every five years to monitor change and inform management proposals.

#### Conservation Area Boundary

The Conservation Area boundary has been revised within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2021) and Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2018). The boundary now includes early-twentieth century development along Wignall Street. The boundary should continue to be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

#### Interpretation: Improved Understanding and Awareness

At present there is no interpretation (information boards, signage, interactive QR Codes) within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding and awareness. This would be an effective way to improve the awareness and re-establish the identity of Lawford as a historic settlement. One key area which may benefit from this would be Parish Church of St Mary. This is a highly significant assets within the Conservation Area, and therefore would benefit from interpretation.



### Public Realm and Highways

The first opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area is through investment to improve the wider public realm. Improved signage such as for Public Footpaths would also be an enhancement to the Conservation Area.

The Highways Department should be engaged to conduct an assessment of existing signage within the Conservation Area with the view to 'de-clutter' and enhance the historic environment. Collaboration between the Highways Department and the Local Planning Authority should ensure the maintenance and replacement programmed for street furniture and hard surfacing.

### 5.3 Funding Opportunities

There are three main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### National Heritage Lottery Fund

The National Heritage Lottery Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes, Tendring District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

### Section 106 Agreements

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon Lawford. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site-specific improvements.

### Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)

*Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas* is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Designated Heritage Assets

LIST ENTRY	NAME	GRADE	DATE LISTED
1254098	CHURCH CLERKS COTTAGE	II	30/11/1987
1254131	LAWFORD HALL	I	21/2/1950
1254186	THE KINGS ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE	II	30/11/1987
1261435	PINK COTTAGE	II	30/11/1987
1261443	STABLES APPROXIMATELT 60 METRES SOUTH EAST OF LAWFORD HALL	II	17/11/1966
1261444	THE OLD RECTORY	II	17/11/1966
1261462	CHURCH OF ST MARY	I	17/11/1966
1391298	WAR MEMORIAL	II	21/3/2005



## 6.2 Publications

Fryer, M. and Horlock, B., 2013, *Revisiting the Past: Maps and images of Mistley, Manningtree and Lawford c. 1769-1926*, pub. R.J. Horlock

Manningtree Museum and Local History Group, 2000, *Pictures from the past of Manningtree, Mistley, Lawford and District*, Harwich printing company

*Pevsner, N., 2007, Essex: Buildings of England Series, Yale University Press*

*Welch, P. and Fisher, D., 1996, Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford in old picture postcards, European Library*





### 6.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	All sections are relevant, although the following pertain to Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans:  66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.  72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2024) DCLG	Section 16;  Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans	
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	
National Guidance	Historic England Advice Note 1 (2019) Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Traditional Windows	
National Guidance	Historic England, High Streets for All (2018) Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places	
National Guidance	Historic England (2020) Conserving Georgian and Victorian terraced housing	



National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Repointing Brick and Stone Walls Guide for Best Practice	
Local Supplementary Planning Document	Tendring District Council Local Plan (2007)	<p>QL9 – Design of New Development</p> <p>QL11 – Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses</p> <p>EN1- Landscape Character</p> <p>EN17- Conservation Areas</p> <p>EN18- Fascia and Shop Signs in Conservation Areas</p> <p>EN18 (a) and (b)- Advert Control within Conservation Areas</p> <p>EN20- Demolition within Conservation Areas</p> <p>EN21- Demolition of Listed Buildings</p> <p>EN22- Extension and Alterations to Listed Buildings</p> <p>EN23- Development within the Proximity of a Listed Building</p> <p>EN25- Satellite Dishes on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas</p>



## 6.4 Glossary

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Cropmark	Where a below-ground archaeological feature, such as a ditch, is visible from the air due to differential growth-patterns in the covering crop.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic environment record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

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# Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



**Client:**  
Tendring District Council

**Date:**  
December 2024





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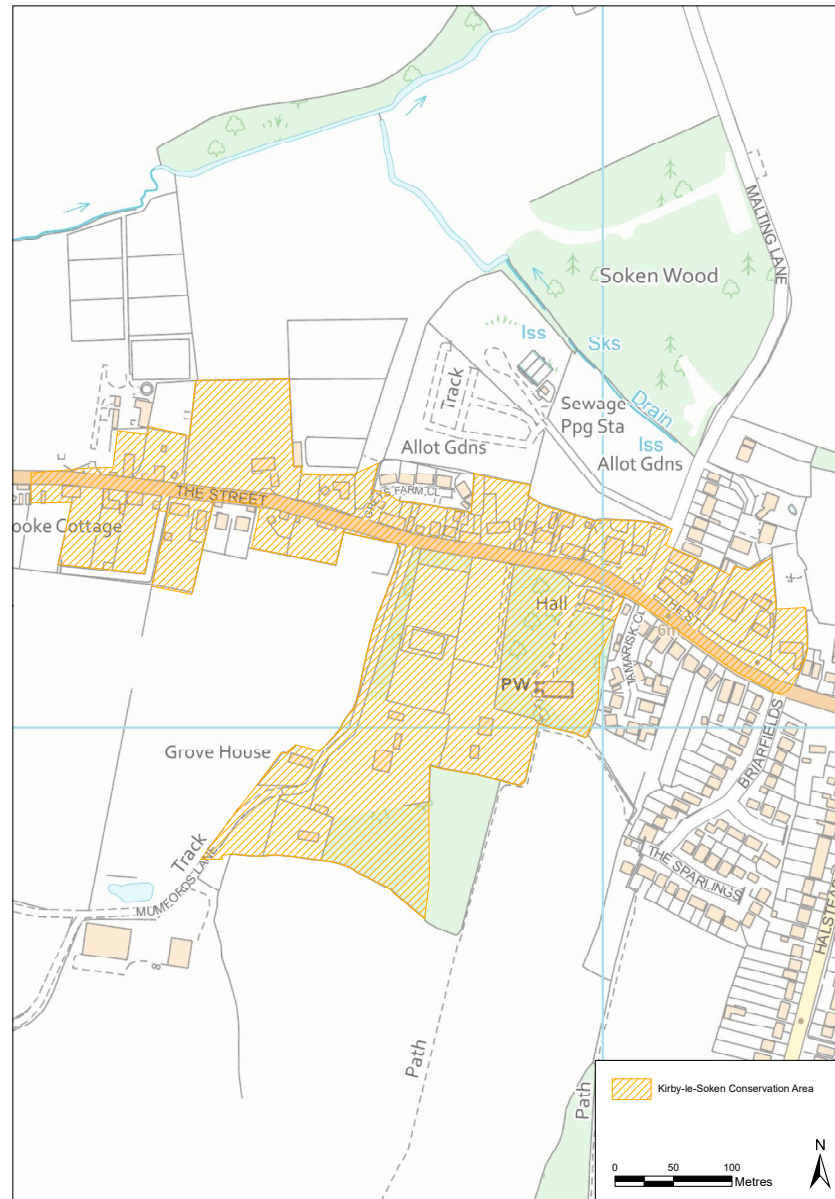


Figure 1 Conservation Area boundary (orange)





# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area, outlining its designation history, alterations to the boundary, and a description of its special interest. The appraisal will also consider buildings, greens, spaces, and features which contribute to the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

Conservation Area designation provides broader protection than the listing of individual buildings as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and appearance and ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the area into consideration.

Kirby le Soken is a small village located between Thorpe-le-Soken and Walton-on-the-Naze. Kirby-le-Soken is an isolated, historic residential settlement surrounded by agricultural land from which its significance is derived.

Its special interest also derives from the architectural interest of its historic building stock dating from the sixteenth through to the nineteenth century, which are located at the core of the Conservation Area.

## 1.2 Conserving Kirby-le-Soken's Heritage

Tendring District Council appointed Place Services to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal for Kirby-le-Soken. The document is provided as baseline information to support in the conservation of Tendring's heritage.

The appraisal will also consider the significance of heritage assets within the area and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to the character of the area. The understanding of significance will be used to assess the susceptibility of the Conservation Area to new development, highlighting key assets of importance. Please refer to Section 1.3 for the appraisal's purpose and details on what it will consider.



### 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character and appearance.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area which contribute to its special interest. It will consider how different Character Areas within Kirby-le-Soken came to be developed, their building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities will be used to assess the key characteristics of each area, highlighting potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Kirby-le-Soken. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the individual character areas, as well as a review of the previous Conservation Area Appraisal for the area (2006).

This appraisal will enhance understanding of Kirby-le-Soken and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character and appearance of a conservation area are more likely to produce appropriate and responsive design with positive outcomes for agents and their clients.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the national guidance outlined in Section 6.2.

### 1.4 Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority as areas of special architectural or historic interest. There are many different types of conservation areas, which vary in size and character, and range from historic town centres to country houses set in historic parks. Conservation area designation introduces additional planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect an area's special character and appearance and the features that make it unique and distinctive. Although designation introduces controls over the way that owners can develop their properties, it is generally considered that these controls are beneficial as they preserve and/or enhance the value of properties within conservation areas.

The designation process includes detailed analysis of the proposed Conservation Area and adoption by Tendring Council. A review process should be periodically undertaken, and the Conservation Area assessed to safeguard that it retains special architectural or historic interest. Threats can be identified, and the boundary reviewed, to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate. This is in line with Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The National Planning Policy Framework regards conservation areas as 'designated heritage assets'.



### **How are conservation areas managed?**

Conservation Areas can be supported by an appraisal and management plan. This document is the appraisal and management plan for the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area. The appraisal describes the importance of an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. The management plan, included within the appraisal, sets out various positive proposals to improve, enhance and protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act specifies the general duty of Local Authorities, in the exercise of planning functions (Sections 71 and 72). The 1990 Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

### **How can I find out if I live in a Conservation Area?**

To find out whether you live within the boundary of a conservation area, you can access boundary maps on Tendring District Council's [website](#). You can also contact your Tendring Council directly to find out if you reside within a conservation area.

### **What are the Council's duties regarding development in conservation areas?**

The Local Authority must follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These set out in clear terms how development proposals within Conservation Areas should be considered on the basis of whether they preserve and enhance the character and

appearance of the area. Applications which fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area are likely to be refused as a result. The Local Plan also typically includes a specific policy on Conservation Areas; for more information, please see Section 1.5 which includes an outline of Tendring's local policy.

### **What is an Article 4 Direction?**

Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, certain minor works, such as domestic alterations, can normally be carried out without planning permission. However, some conservation areas are covered by an Article 4 Direction, which brings certain types of development back under the control of a local planning authority. This allows potentially harmful proposals to be considered on a case by case basis through planning applications. Article 4 Directions are used to control works that could threaten the character or appearance of an area and a planning application may be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted development. Historic England provides information on Article 4 Directions on their [website](#).

There are currently no Article 4 Directions in place within the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area.

### **Do I need permission to alter a property in a conservation area?**

Many conservation areas have an Article 4 Direction which relates to alterations such as the painting, rendering or cladding of external walls. Alterations or extensions to buildings in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. Your Local Authority should be consulted for advice as to how to proceed.



### **Do I need to make an application for routine maintenance work?**

If routine maintenance works are to be carried out using authentic materials and traditional craft techniques, on a like-for-like basis, it is unlikely that you will need to apply for permission from the Council. However, it is recommended that you contact Tendring Council for clarification before commencing any works. The use of a contractor with the necessary skills and experience of working on historic buildings is essential. Inappropriate maintenance works and the use of the wrong materials will cause damage to the fabric of a historic building.

### **Will I need to apply for permission for a new or replacement garage, fence, boundary wall or garden structure?**

Any demolition, development or construction in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. A replacement boundary, garage, cartlodge or greenhouse will need to be designed with the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area in mind. Your Local Authority will provide advice as to how to proceed with an application.

### **Can I demolish a building in a conservation area?**

Demolition or substantial removal of part of a building within a conservation area will usually require permission from the Council. It is important to speak to them before beginning any demolition works, to clarify if permission is required.

### **Can I remove a tree within a conservation area?**

If you are thinking of cutting down a tree or doing any pruning work, the local planning authority must be notified 6 weeks before any work begins. This enables the authority to assess the contribution the tree makes to the character of the conservation area and, if necessary, create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it. Consent will be required for any works to trees that are protected. Further information on TPOs can be found on Historic England's [website](#).

### **How do I find out more about a conservation area?**

Historic England's website has information on conservation areas and their designation. Further information on the importance of conservation areas, and what it means to live in one, can also be accessed via their [website](#).

Historic England has also published an [advice note](#) called *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* which sets out advice on the appraisal of conservation areas and managing change in Conservation Areas.

In addition, Tendring Council has information on the conservation areas within their boundaries available on their [website](#). They have information pertaining to when the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation.

## **1.5 Planning Policy and Guidance**

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990). In particular section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and Section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced. Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context, the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.



National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in Chapter 16 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG).

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2018) and *Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).

The Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area is located within Tendring District. Local planning policy is set out in the Tendring District Council Local Plan. Saved policies which are relevant to heritage assets include:

*Policy LP 6 Rural Exception Sites*

*Policy PP 13 The Rural Economy*

*Policy PPL 7 Archaeology*

*Policy PPL 8 Conservation Areas*

*Policy PPL 9 Listed Buildings*

Tendring District Council adopted its 'Local Plan 2013 - 2033 and Beyond Section 2' in January 2022.

## **1.6 Designation of the Conservation Area**

Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area was first designated in 1981 and subsequently reviewed in 1987. Further to this, an area appraisal review was adopted in 2006. A Conservation Area Management Plan was later published in 2009. The Conservation Area Boundary and Appraisal were reviewed in 2022, and a public consultation period and event was held.

## 2. Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

Kirby-le-Soken is a small rural village located in the Tendring District of north-east Essex and parish of Frinton. The village comprises a single road, named The Street, with properties either side. The Conservation Area is largely residential development with a public house and church. The village of Kirby-le-Soken is isolated from the neighbouring towns and separated by an agricultural and rural landscape. Walton is located to the east, Thorpe-le-Soken to the west and Kirby Cross to the south. North of the Conservation Area is the Hamford Water National Nature Reserve.

Kirby-le-Soken has a distinct residential and rural character afforded by the small-scale dwellings, set within an agricultural landscape (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Aerial Image of Kirby-le-Soken



## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of Kirby-le-Soken and the surrounding settlements.

### Prehistory (-500000 – 43)

The earliest tangible evidence for archaeology within the immediate environs of the Conservation Area dates from the Bronze Age period (2200AD – 700 BC). Evidence for Bronze Age occupation is particularly prevalent within the Tendring district. Evidence for prehistoric activity has been recovered during archaeological investigations along The Street, immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area. Outside of the Conservation Area archaeological investigation to the south-east has revealed further evidence for settlement and activity dating from the Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age period including structural remains and evidence of weaving. Aerial photographic evidence, as revealed in cropmarks, suggests preservation of a widespread Prehistoric landscape in the wider area.

### Roman (43 – 410)

Few Roman remains have been identified within, or close to, the Conservation Area. At Kirby Quay, to the north-east of the Conservation Area, the structural remains of salt making sites known as 'red hills' survive, which is likely to be associated with nearby settlement in the wider area.

### Early Medieval (410 – 1066)

Surviving evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement and activity is generally rare within the region, and no Anglo-Saxon material has been recovered from within or in the vicinity of the Conservation Area. However, the placename of Kirby originates from two Scandinavian-derived words, 'Kirk' for church and 'by' for village. This suggests the presence of a church in this location during the Danish Viking period, in the ninth or tenth century. Additionally, 'Soken' suggests that the area was once the holding of a Danish Sokeman, further indicating that the settlement may have its origins in this period.

### Medieval (1066 – 1540)

The settlement at Kirby-le-Soken developed immediately to the south of Hamford Water, a tidal inlet leading into the North Sea. The presence of an easy access into the inlet, in the form of a creek projecting south towards the village, was significant to the establishment and growth of the settlement. The establishment of a quay in this creek probably dates to the Medieval period, and pottery of that date has been found nearby.

Immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area along The Street medieval pottery has been recovered. The pottery dated from the eleventh to the thirteenth century, providing evidence for settlement in the medieval period.

The village church is fourteenth century in origin but has been the subject of significant alterations and is now largely a nineteenth century building. Archaeological monitoring during repairs to the church exposed three water-logged wooden piles beneath the tower, that were dated as having been felled between 1330 and 1400 (Figure 3).

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Figure 3 Three wooden piles beneath church tower.

### Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)

The post-medieval period is marked by an eastern expansion of the settlement along The Street. Most of the surviving buildings from this period, however, are located within the area of the historic core.

The Chapman and André map (1777) (Figure 4) shows a small, low-density settlement noted as 'Kirby'. The development is predominantly located on the north side of the road which is referred to as 'Lower Street'. Both St Michael's Church and Kirby Hall are present on the Chapman and André Map, located just south of the Lower Street. Kirby Hall dates roughly from 1700, although is possibly of earlier derivation.



Figure 4 Chapman and Andre Map 1777





Figure 5 The 1841 Tithe Map for Kirby-le-Soken '© Crown Copyright Images reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives, London, England. [www.NationalArchives.gov.uk](http://www.NationalArchives.gov.uk) & [www.TheGenealogist.co.uk](http://www.TheGenealogist.co.uk)'

The church has fourteenth and fifteenth century origins, however, was largely rebuilt in 1833 and then restored in 1870. Pevsner makes note of the impressive scale and appearance of the church, although notes the much-altered appearance resulting from the restoration works.<sup>1</sup>

Tithe Map 1841 (Figure 5) shows a linear development with some infill properties, particularly within the central section of the Conservation Area, opposite St Michael's Church, where small clusters of buildings are present. A larger, detached building, immediately south-west of St. Michael's church has been constructed. Although not annotated this building is the Vicarage, which was constructed in 1830. Known today as the Old Vicarage, the property is Grade II listed (list entry: 1337138). A proliferation of outbuildings surrounds Kirby Hall.

1 Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Essex, second ed.*, p. 256



The first edition Ordnance Survey map 1875 (Figure 6) shows that by the late nineteenth century, the small settlement of Kirby had expanded to a village with the development terminating at The Ship Inn, a public house to the east. The dispersed development has been infilled, resulting in a tighter grain of development to the north side of the road and definitive linear development pattern.

The land to the south surrounding the church, Kirby Hall and the Vicarage had remained open and free of development. A School had been established to the front of the churchyard. The road running through Kirby-le-Soken was named Lower Street; the road running through Kirby Cross, south of the Conservation Area was named Upper Street. The two settlements remained separated by open fields.



Figure 6 First edition Ordnance Survey map of Kirby-le-Soken, 1875

### Modern (1901 – now)

In the early twentieth century, the village continued to expand eastwards along The Street.

The second edition Ordnance Survey Map (1925) shows an expansion of Kirby-le-Soken to the east of the Ship Inn, which demarked the edge of the development in the late nineteenth century. Beyond the Conservation Area boundary, new housing developments extending north and south of Lower Street have diluted the linear development. However, the linear development is maintained within the historic core of Kirby-le-Soken. The school to the front of the churchyard has been demolished and replaced with a church hall running parallel to Lower Street. The collection of outbuildings associated with Kirby Hall, which are present on the first ed 1897 OS map, have been demolished; a single barn with midstrey remains. Today this barn is Grade II listed, known as Barn south of Kirby Hall (list entry: 1337139)

During World War II, a pillbox was located to the east of the Conservation Area, and a battery of anti-aircraft guns were mounted in a field to the north-west of the village.

Through the late twentieth century, there has been some infill development within the Conservation Area. However, these are sporadically placed throughout the Conservation Area. Expansion of the village outside of the Conservation Area boundary has been characterised by large housing developments being constructed to the north and south-west.

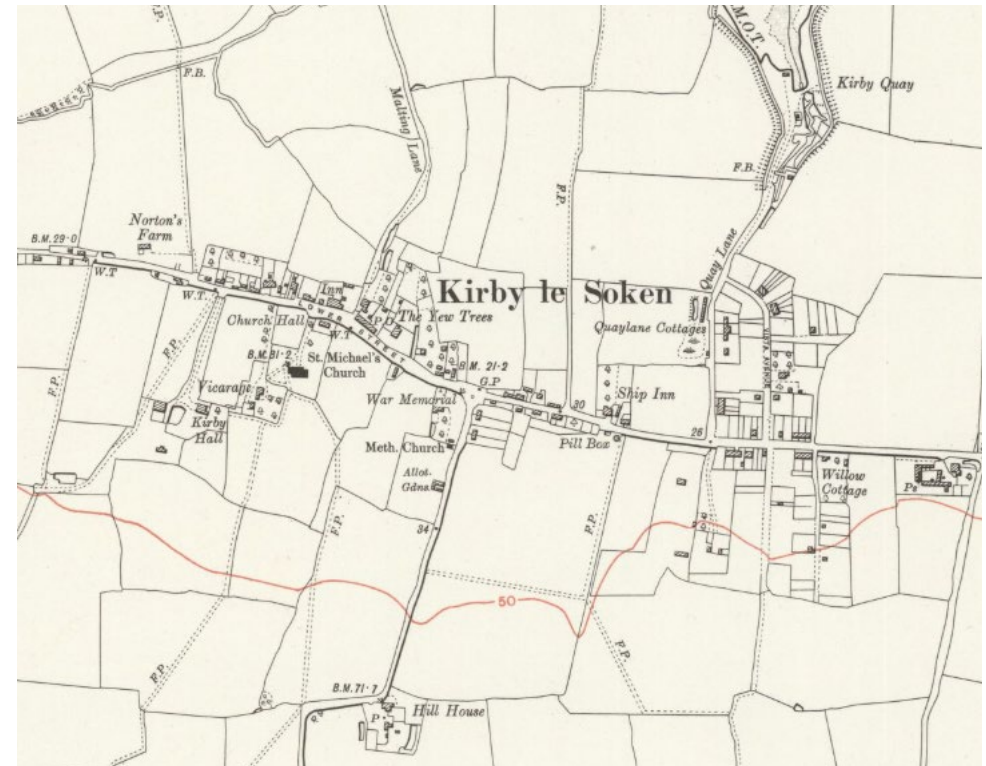


Figure 53 Second edition Ordnance Survey Map (1925)

### 2.3 Revisions to the Boundary

As part of this review, the Conservation Area boundary has been revised to reflect changing methodologies of good practice and provide a clearer strategy which acknowledges the practicalities of Kirby-le-Soken's unique built environment, in line with Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the NPPF guidance on Conservation Areas.

#### Additions

The Conservation Area boundary should include the gardens of the properties within the Conservation Area. They form the domestic curtilage and contribute to our understanding of land use, layout and an indication of the area's development.

It is recommended to include the Oxborrows Yard, Maltings Lane. The site has historically been a service yard as noted on the Tithe Apportionment (1841). Therefore, it is considered to contribute to the Conservation Area's historic development and character. The site was formerly occupied by Oxborrow Engineering but at the time of the assessment was vacant. The Oxborrow Family, Blacksmiths and Engineers, have a long-standing association with Kirby-le-Soken and Tendring dating from 1812. The early nineteenth century forge was demolished for residential development in 2004.<sup>2</sup> The property is visible from within the Conservation Area and is an attractive nineteenth century industrial building, unique within the area, contributing to local character and appearance.

#### Reductions

It is proposed to remove the back land development behind Number 44-64 as it undermines, and is inconsistent, with the historic grain of development. The development is of a low scale, however, it is visible in the skygaps between the properties fronting The Street; this detracts from appreciation of Kirby-le-Soken as an isolated settlement. The quality of the development does not positively respond to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

<sup>2</sup> Kirby-le-Soken History pages, <http://www.kirby-le-soken.co.uk/oxborrow.html>

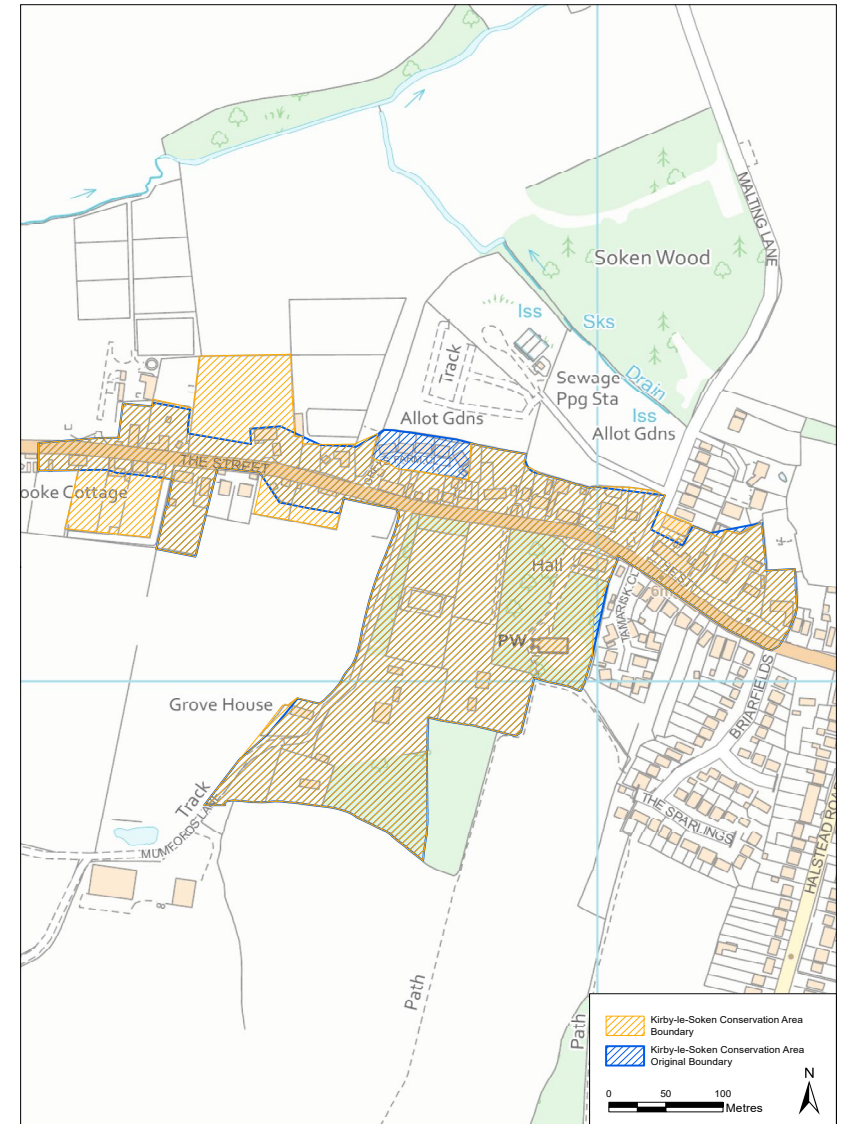


Figure 7 Boundary Revisions made in 2024

## 2.4 Designated Heritage Assets

There are ten designated heritage assets within the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area boundary, including domestic and agricultural buildings as well as a church and a memorial plaque. A full list of all the designated assets within the Conservation Area is included in Section 3 and 6.1.

These buildings, structures and features have been listed due to their special historic and architectural interest as defined by Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (*Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings*, 2018). Further information about the listing process can be found on the Historic England [website](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/).

### Listed Buildings and features

The rarer and older a building is, the more likely it is to be listed. As a general principle, all buildings that pre-date 1700 and are in a relatively intact condition will be listed, as will all buildings that date between 1750 and 1850. There is a strict criterion for buildings built after 1945; buildings less than thirty years old are unlikely to be listed unless they have been deemed as exceptional examples of their type.

Listed buildings are considered under three grades in England. Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest and make up approximately 2.5% of all listings; Grade II\* are of more than special interest; Grade II are of special interest and most common, making up 91.7% of all listings.<sup>3</sup> Listed buildings are protected by government legislation and there are policies in place to ensure that any alterations to a listed building will not affect its special interest. It is possible to alter, extend or demolish a listed building but this requires listed building consent and sometimes planning permission.

Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area contains several listed buildings within the village core which emphasises its special interest and its historical development.

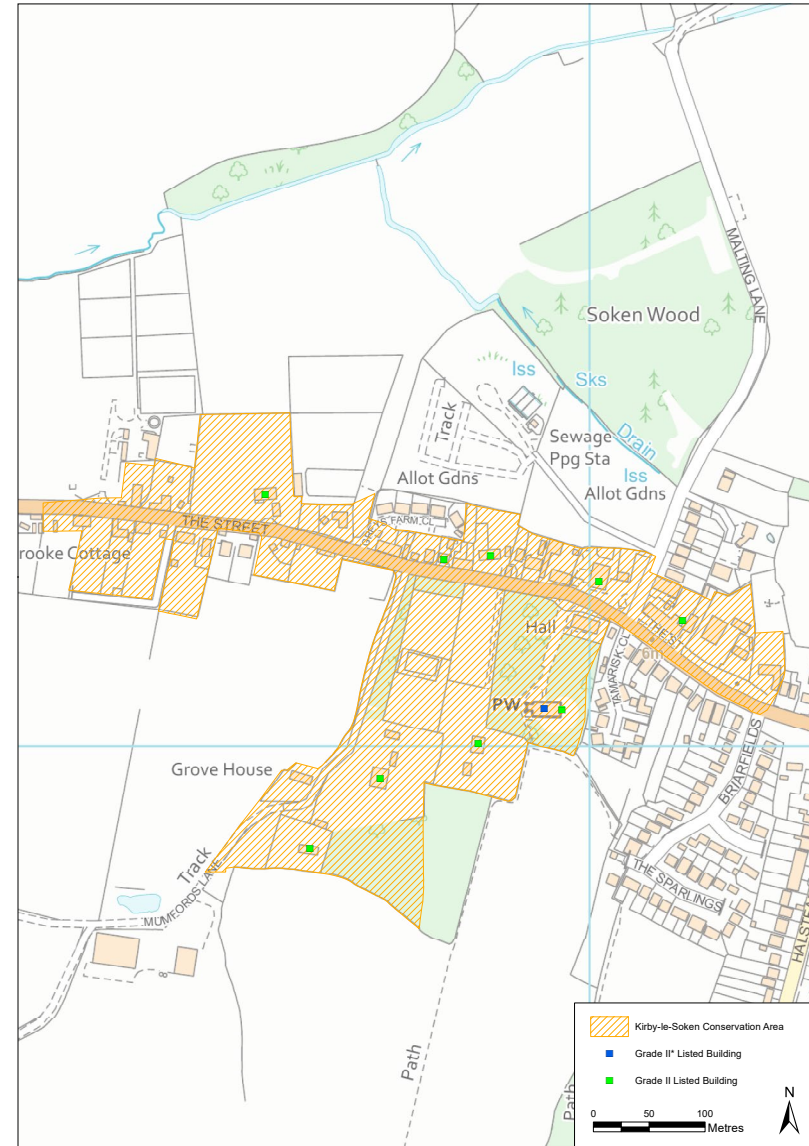


Figure 8 Map of Designated Heritage Assets

3 Historic England, Listed Buildings <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>



## 2.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Every building, space and feature within a Conservation Area makes a contribution to its character and special interest, be it positive, neutral or negative.

Heritage assets are defined in Planning Policy as ‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.’<sup>4</sup>

Not all heritage assets are listed, and just because a building is not included on the list does not mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other smaller features of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area’s historic interest and its general appearance.

Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the locality. At present there is no approved local list for Tendring District. This document has identified heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and could be considered for local listing in the future. Key un-listed buildings are identified in the analysis of the character areas in Section 3 of this appraisal.

The area is comprised largely of vernacular dwellings dating from the sixteenth through to the nineteenth century. There are many positive buildings within the Conservation Area that collectively contribute to the Conservation Area’s significance. Buildings that respond to the local character and distinctiveness are likely to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area’s special interest.

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4 NPPF, p67

## 2.6 Heritage at Risk

Tendring District Council published a Heritage Strategy in 2019 using data from the Heritage at Risk Programme (HAR) by Historic England, however there is not a separately published Heritage at Risk Register by Tendring District Council.

## 2.7 Archaeological Potential

Little archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken around Kirby-le-Soken. The prehistoric cropmarks, Bronze Age-Middle Iron Age pit and recent exposure of a prehistoric landscape to the south-east indicate the potential for Prehistoric archaeology to survive within the area. The Roman red hill at Kirby Quay suggests salt-making is being carried out in the vicinity during this period. The focus of this industry would have been around the tidal inlet, but an associated settlement would have existed, presumably further inland.

The majority of the archaeological remains surviving within the Conservation Area are likely to comprise medieval and post-medieval features, structures and finds, related to the establishment and growth of the village from the Late Saxon period onwards.

Soil conditions are variable; the London Clay allows for the preservation of faunal remains whilst the sands and gravels partially overlaying it are acidic and faunal survival is poor. Artefacts such as ceramics, building materials and metal survive on both soil types, albeit in better condition within the clay. Within clayey soils waterlogged deposits can survive and should be anticipated in deeper features such as wells and cess-pits.



### 3. Assessment of Significance

#### 3.1 Summary

Kirby-le-Soken is a small, rural village with a strong linear development along The Street. The Conservation Area includes the core of the village’s historic development and is made up of two character areas. The first is the village core, comprising of the residential development lining The Street dating from the sixteenth century beginning at Number 51, The Street and stretching eastwards terminating at the Kirby-le-Soken village sign. The second character area is just south of The Street, including the St Michael’s Church, Kirby Hall and The Old Vicarage, including their associated land and green space.

The village of Kirby-le-Soken extends east beyond the Conservation Area boundary, however, the development outside the Conservation Area boundary comprises of housing development predominantly dating from the mid-late twentieth century. There are some historic buildings that are located outside of the Conservation Area boundary to the east, including one listed building (Street House, list entry: 1111539). However, they sit outside the Conservation Area boundary due to the extent of modern development and dilution of the linear development pattern.

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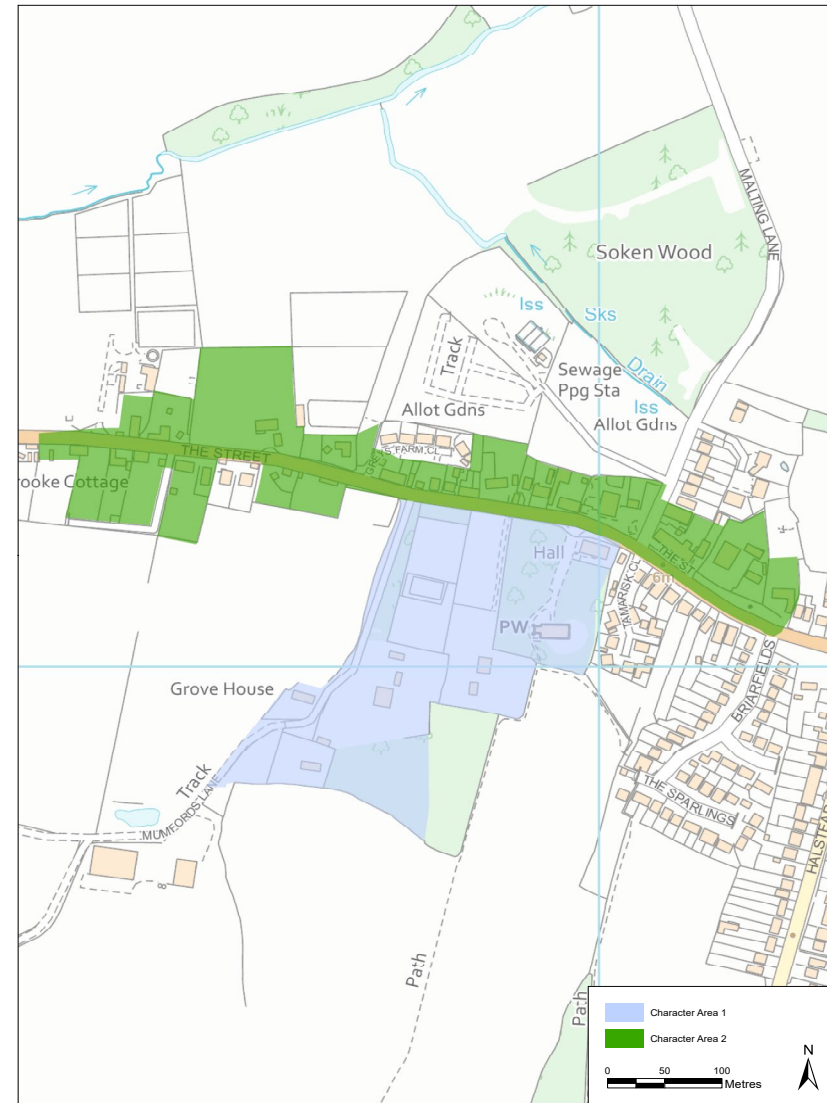


Figure 9 Map depicting Character Area One, The Village Core, in green

### 3.2 Character Analysis: The Village Core

#### Summary of Character Area One

The Village Core character area comprises the properties lining The Street, stretching east to west and is defined by the traditional vernacular buildings dating from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. There are a limited number of modern infill dwellings dating from the twentieth and twenty-first century.

There is one commercial property within this area, The Red Lion Public House, located at the centre of the village opposite the Church of St. Michael. There are five listed buildings within this character area all of which are Grade II listed shown in Figure 8:

- Meadow View Cottage (list entry: 1111499)
- Norton's Barn (list entry: 1337137)
- Post Office House (list entry: 1165726)
- Red House White House (list entry: 1111498)
- The Red Lion Pub (list entry: 1111497)



Figure 11 looking west showing Number 45 The Street



When entering the village from the west, the road narrows from a two-way road flanked by low hedgerow with long views of the agrarian landscape to the north and south to a single-track lane, lined each side with cottages bounded by taller hedgerows and grass verges. This transition is indicative of the extent of Kirby-le-Soken's historic development to the west and defines the entrance of the Conservation Area. The arrangement of cottages is informal but compact, with some fronting the road and others set slightly back (Figure 10).



Figure 10 Photograph looking into the western end of the Conservation Area



Figure 12 Looking west showing number 57 The Street in the foreground and Number 61 and wider countryside in the background



Figure 13 Mumfords Lane can be seen from this character area leading to the south

Travelling east, the residential development to the south of The Street terminates at Number 41. There are glimpsed views of the rural setting and church tower, beyond a modern development. The road here widens and there are long views into the centre of the Conservation Area, framed by cottages on the northside of The Street which have narrow front gardens, including the Grade II listed Meadows Cottage (Figure 15).



Figure 14 Number 41 The Street



Figure 15 Cottages along northside of The Street, including Meadows Cottage which is pastel pink



Figure 16 Photograph of Grade II listed Red House White House

Numbers 46-50 are a row of roughcast rendered terraced properties fronting the pavement, beyond this terrace is Red House White House, which is well set back from the road, enabling a break up in the density of built form (Figure 16). From Red House White House to Number 34, the dwellings are evenly spaced with larger front gardens bound by low red brick walls; the size of their front gardens is unique to this row. Numbers 36 and 38 do not form part of the area's historic development, however their scale and appearance are sympathetic to the setting of Red House White House and the character of the Conservation Area. The setback arrangement of this part affords views looking west of the attractive and complex roofscape of Red House White House.

Waterloo House, Number 34 is contrary to the small scale seen throughout the Conservation Area and is therefore, notable within the streetscene. It is an attractive vernacular and prominent dwelling which contributes positively to the streetscene.



Figure 17 Photograph looking west showing the roofscape of Red House White House in the background with Waterloo House in the foreground

The centre of this character area and the Conservation Area is marked by Grade II listed The Red Lion public house to the northside of The Street (see Figure 18). The Red Lion is a large, rendered building with a red clay tile roof and is separated from neighbouring properties by its large carpark to the east and garden to the west. The spacious plot allows the public house to be understood and appreciated as a focal point within the community. The open carpark also affords views of Lilac Cottage which sits to the northeast of the pub.

The Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area excludes the modern house development along the south side of The Street; although this development reinforces the linear development pattern it dilutes the understanding and experience of Kirby-le-Soken's historic peripheries.

Around the centre and eastern end of the village core, the pavements are wider resulting in a greater sense of openness. After the Red Lion public house is Maltings Lane, which leads out to the Walton Backwaters (Figure 19).



Figure 18 Photograph of the Red Lion Public House



Figure 19 Photo showing the Red Lion, Number 34 and Red House White House in the background



Figure 20 Photo showing Post Office House

Immediately after Maltings Lane is an attractive row of terraced properties, Number 28 – 16, including the Grade II listed Post Office House (Figures 20 and 21). This row of dwellings are rendered with slate roofs and prominent chimneys. The Post Office House terminates the terrace and is a single storey property with a red clay tiled roof. Formerly a shop, which once served as the Post Office, it is now in use as a dwelling. The row is separated from the road by a small green and an tarmacked road for vehicle access and parking. The beginning of the green, and openness afforded, contributes to the village atmosphere.



Figure 21 Close up of maltings Cottages



Figure 22 Photograph looking east along The Street showing the green to the north side.

After Number 14, the green widens to a larger lawned area where there is a War Memorial and formal planting beds. The residential development to the north of The Street is well set back from the road; the properties are detached and sit in spacious plots. The skygaps between dwellings provide views of trees behind, which emphasises the rural and isolated location of Kirby-le-Soken. The Conservation Area terminates at the end of the green, where the pedestrian way narrows, and residential development continues along The Street.



Figure 23 Photograph of Number 14 and Number 12

### Land Usage

The land use within The Village Core character area is defined by the historic residential development of Kirby-le-Soken with a main thoroughfare known as The Street. There is one commercial property, The Red Lion, located at the centre of the Conservation Area opposite the church. There is also a green that runs parallel to The Street after Maltings Lane.



Figure 24 Photograph showing eastern elevation of Red Lion and associated car park. Lilac Cottage to the right.



Figure 25 Photograph of the war Memorial with Number 8 in the background



Figure 26 Kirby-Le-Soken green and village sign

### Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm

The western end of the Conservation Area has limited landscaping and open space due to the compact row of dwellings which line The Street. Landscaping is refined to soft boundary treatments and small front gardens. Travelling east the development is less compact, which affords a greater sense of openness. There are two key open areas in the centre of the Conservation Area where there is a bend in the road; this defines the heart of the Conservation Area.

The green, which stretches from the centre of the Conservation Area to the eastern boundary, is divided in three by vehicle access ways. The green is predominantly well-kept lawn with some mature trees and formal flower beds surrounding the War Memorial (Figure 25). The green also has benches, a streetlamp, post box and a telephone box which are all a traditional and sympathetic appearance (Figure 26). The Kirby-le-Soken Village sign is located to the eastern edge of the green.



Figure 27 the green with stocks and Red Lion carpark in the backgrounds



Figure 28 Postbox and telephone kiosk book exchange on the green

The red post box and K6 telephone box are attractive and contribute to the rural village atmosphere. The K6 telephone box, although not original to Kirby-le-Soken, is now a micro-library offering a free book exchange. The mature trees planted along the green help maintain a sense of enclosure to the north side of The Street and enhance the streetscene

The Red Lion is slightly set back within the road and is surrounded by a tarmacked carpark immediately to the east which can be accessed from The Street or Maltings Lane. The carpark is enclosed to the rear by a close boarded fence demarking the boundary of Lilac Cottage; the large, tarmacked area and pedestrian ways that are flush with The Street afford the centre of the Conservation Area a greater feeling of openness. (Figure 24).





Figure 29 Row of residential cottages Numbers 64--60 located opposite Mumfords Lane

### Local Building Materials and Details

The properties located in this character area are typically small and modest sized vernacular dwellings set over one and a half to two storeys. The small scale of development is a defining feature of Kirby-le-Soken, emphasising its historic rural character. One and a half storey dwellings have small dormers to the attic level, and there are flat and pitched dormers throughout the area.



Figure 30 Numbers 38 and 36 which are modern additions with Waterloo House in background



Figure 31 Photograph of Number 40 The Street, with Red House White House in the background

There is a good use of traditional building materials within this character area. For the most part, dwellings are rendered in soft pastel tones or light-coloured render which contributes to a unified appearance through The Street. There are some dwellings with roughcast render and some redbrick buildings, although these are less common.

There are few properties with weatherboarding as an elevation treatment. Black weatherboarding can be seen at Number 57 The Street, which is a characterful property within the streetscene. It can also be seen to the flank elevations of dwellings.

Roof coverings are predominantly red clay tiles; other roof coverings include slate and clay pantiles. The historic dwellings have open verge detailing. There are instances where traditional roof coverings have been replaced with concrete tiles which detracts from the architectural interest of the Conservation Area.

The architectural detailing in this character area is simple which is indicative of the rural village character. Properties are either gabled or hipped in form. There are some properties that retain traditional timber windows which is positive; however, many have been replaced with modern uPVC and aluminium of untraditional colours which detract.

Boundary treatments within the western end of the Conservation Area where the road is narrow are predominantly hedges which softens the approach into the Conservation Area. Some of the hedges are substantial and frame the entrance into the Conservation Area. Soft boundary treatments are less prevalent progressing into the centre of the Conservation Area from and to the east end. There are some characterful picket fences as well as low redbrick walls which contribute to the traditional appearance of the Conservation Area.



Figure 32 Traditional windows of Number 28 The Street



Figure 33 Traditional low brick wall surrounding the church hall



Figure 34 Terraced housing behind the green including Post Office House

There are some examples of close boarded fencing, rendered walls as well as yellow/ buff brick walls which do not respond to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and appear visually intrusive within the streetscene

### Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings

There are numerous buildings within the Conservation Area that positively contribute to its significance. The buildings that reflect local character and distinctiveness collectively define the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The following buildings, located in character area one, have been identified as key unlisted buildings by virtue of their derivation, scale, form and appearance.

Number 57, The Street is a one and a half storey weatherboarded dwelling with a slate roof (Figure 35). The property sits perpendicular to the road, gable ended with decorative barge boards and a finial painted white. There is a single storey porch entrance to the east elevation and a lean to on the west elevation, both covered in red clay pantiles. There is a slender red brick chimney to the rear. The small scale and attractive detailing make it a noticeable dwelling within the streetscene. The property does have a larger modern extension to the rear, however, this does not visibly detract from the original scale and historic core of the property.

Waterloo House (Number 34, The Street) is a large, detached and double piled dwelling of two-storeys and rendered elevation. The frontmost pile sits under a slate roof and the rear is covered in red clay tiles. It is one of the larger dwellings running parallel to The Street, making it a visually prominent within the streetscene. The single storey outbuilding to the west of the property is present of the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1897) and may be contemporary with the principal dwelling. The first floor has six over six sash windows; the windows to the ground floor windows and central entrance appear to be modern alterations.



Figure 35 Number 57, The Street

### 3.3 Character Analysis: St Michael's Church, Kirby Hall and The Old Vicarage

#### Summary of Character Area Two

This character area is set to the south of character area one and The Street. It includes Mumford Lane, St Michael's Church and the church hall, Kirby Hall, the Barn southwest of Kirby Hall and Old Vicarage including their associated land. There is a dwelling of modern construction opposite Kirby Hall which is contrary to the character and appearance of this section of the Conservation Area. Kirby Hall and the church are fundamental to the village's development and form the nucleus of the settlement. This character area is very green in appearance which is afforded by the mature trees, grassed areas around the church and large private residential gardens.

The properties within this character area are mainly high-status buildings, and one agricultural building barn. All the buildings, apart from the church hall are listed. There is also a Grade II listed memorial plaque below the east window of the church (list entry: 1111501). The listed buildings in this character area are:

- Church of Saint Michael (list entry: 1111500) (Figure 36)
- The Old Vicarage (list entry: 1337138)
- Kirby Hall (list entry: 1111502)
- Barn southwest of Kirby Hall (list entry: 1337139)



Figure 36 St Michaels Church with the Old Vicarage in the background

Pedestrian and vehicle access within this character area is limited as a result of the private residences, resultingly this sub area of the Conservation Area is more isolated from the village core. The lack of through traffic and mature trees contribute to a calmer and secluded atmosphere. Mumford Lane is a single-track lane extending south from The Street providing access to Kirby Hall and Kirby Hall Farm (Figure 38). It is heavily lined with mature trees which frame the lane and affords a sense of enclosure and privacy. Mumford Lane is a public footpath, providing a pedestrian link from the Conservation Area out to the surrounding countryside. Walking south along Mumford Lane the line of trees stops at Kirby Hall; the open grass verges here provide an indication of the transition to the open rural landscape that bounds the Conservation Area. At the southern edge of the Conservation Area boundary just off Mumford Lane is the Grade II listed Barn southwest of Kirby Hall. The barn is still in agricultural use today which contributes to our understanding and appreciation of the agricultural land use associated with Kirby Hall and Kirby Hall Farm.



Figure 37 Barn southwest of Kirby Hall

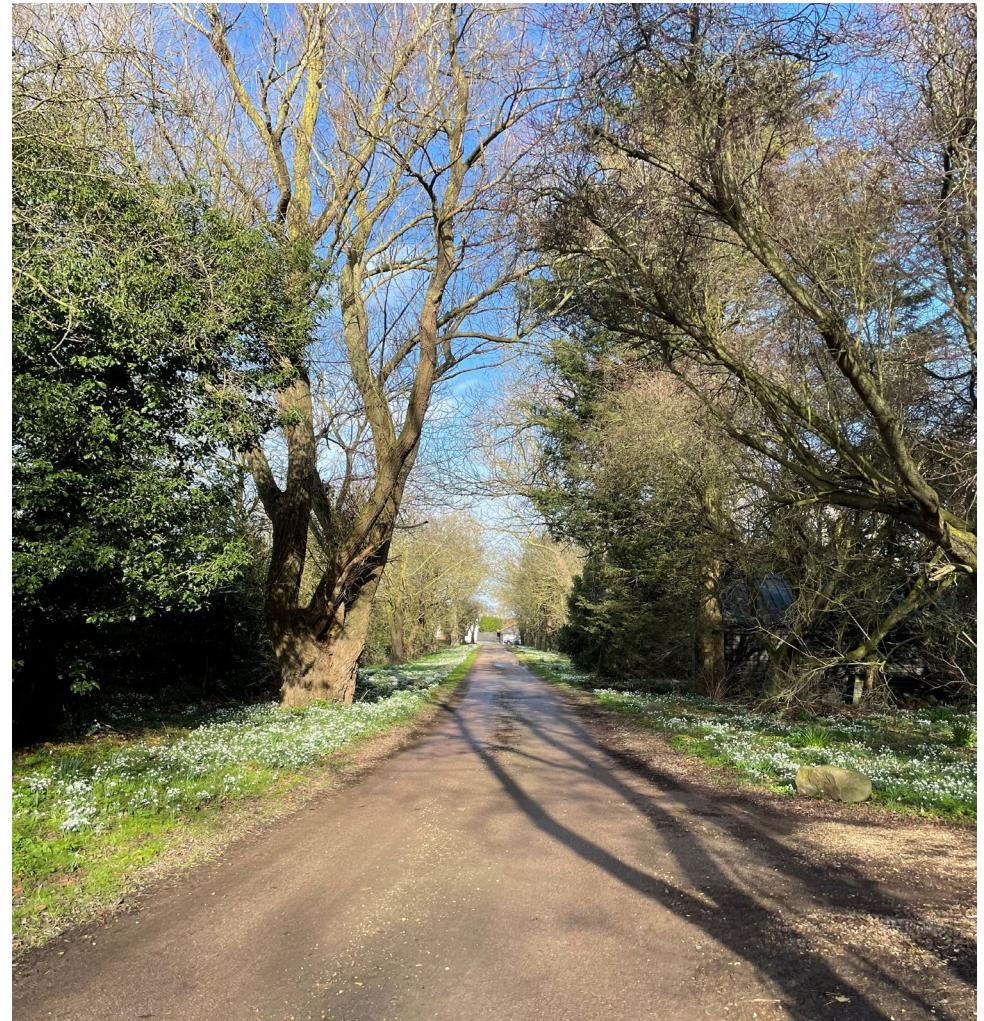


Figure 38 Mumfords Lane



Figure 39 St Michaels Church

The approach to the church is tarmacked and treelined with clear views of the church, the front boundary along The Street marked by iron railings, a unique boundary treatment within the Conservation Area reflecting the pre-eminence of the church. There are some parked cars lining the approach on the right, but parking bays are informal, and the cars are relatively unobtrusive. A public footpath through the churchyard leads to the fields beyond to the south. Although the church hall fronts The Street it has been included in this area by virtue of its functional relationship with the church. The church is a long-range building running parallel to the street and marks the end of the Conservation Area boundary to the south when travelling east.

Kirby Hall and The Old Vicarage are two significant buildings set within large plots surrounded by mature trees (Figure 40). Kirby Hall can be viewed from Mumford Lane; it is a large red brick building set over two and half storeys with a decorated central entrance and sits under a red clay tiled roof. There are limited views of The Old Vicarage, however, there are glimpsed views between the trees from the approach to the church which contributes to our appreciation of their former historic relationship and function.



Figure 40 Kirby Hall



### Land Usage

The land use in this character area is mixed. The north-east section is occupied by the church and churchyard which is predominantly grassed and scattered with gravestones. A large portion is in residential use, occupied by the extensive private gardens that surround Kirby Hall and The Old Vicarage. A small parcel of land to the south-west, the location of the Grade II listed Barn south-west of Kirby Hall, is in agricultural use. The development within character area two is low density and the land to a large extent is characterised by the verdant landscaping.

### Local Building Materials and Details

Buildings materials within this are varied by virtue of the mixed land use and architectural significance of the properties. Four out of six of the buildings in this character area are listed, and therefore they are of national and local significance.

The church is the most architecturally and materially unique within the Conservation Area. It is constructed in stone and flint under a plain red tiled roof.

The materials of the residential buildings are traditional and well preserved due to their statutory listing. Red brick, render, red clay and slate roof tiles are used within this character area. The barn is black weatherboarded which sits on a red brick plinth. However, the traditional roof covering has been replaced with a corrugated asbestos roof which is unsympathetic.

### Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm

The properties within character area two are all set on large verdant plots which is a defining feature of the character area. Public access to open space is limited as the area is largely occupied by private residential gardens. The churchyard is a key landscaped area and open space within character area two; the churchyard is predominantly grassed, bound to the front by metal railings and surrounded by hedging and mature trees; the church hall is located to the north-east corner of the churchyard with a low red brick wall to its front boundary. There are gravestones each side of the approach to the church and a gravelled pathway leads to the rear of the church where there are views out to the agrarian landscape. The churchyard is a significant space within the Conservation Area as it is a focal point for community activity.

### Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings

There are no key unlisted buildings within this character area. The significance of the buildings within this Conservation Area are recognised by their statutory listing.

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Figure 42 The churchyard with The Street in the background and church hall to the right



Figure 41 Approach to St Michaels Church



Figure 43 The Church Hall



### 3.4 Views

Key views are identified on Figure 44. The views included in this assessment are a selection of key views; this list is not exhaustive and there may be other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

Views of the church are limited throughout the Conservation Area due to the linear pattern of development and mature tree screening. However, there are glimpsed views of the church tower throughout the Conservation Area. These views are important to our experience of the area, as the tower forms a nucleus of the historic development and these views emphasise the tower's role as landmark within the Conservation Area.

Views out across to the wider rural landscape are also limited due to the tight grain of development. However, there are some important views out to the wider setting particularly from the west end of the Conservation Area and within character area two.

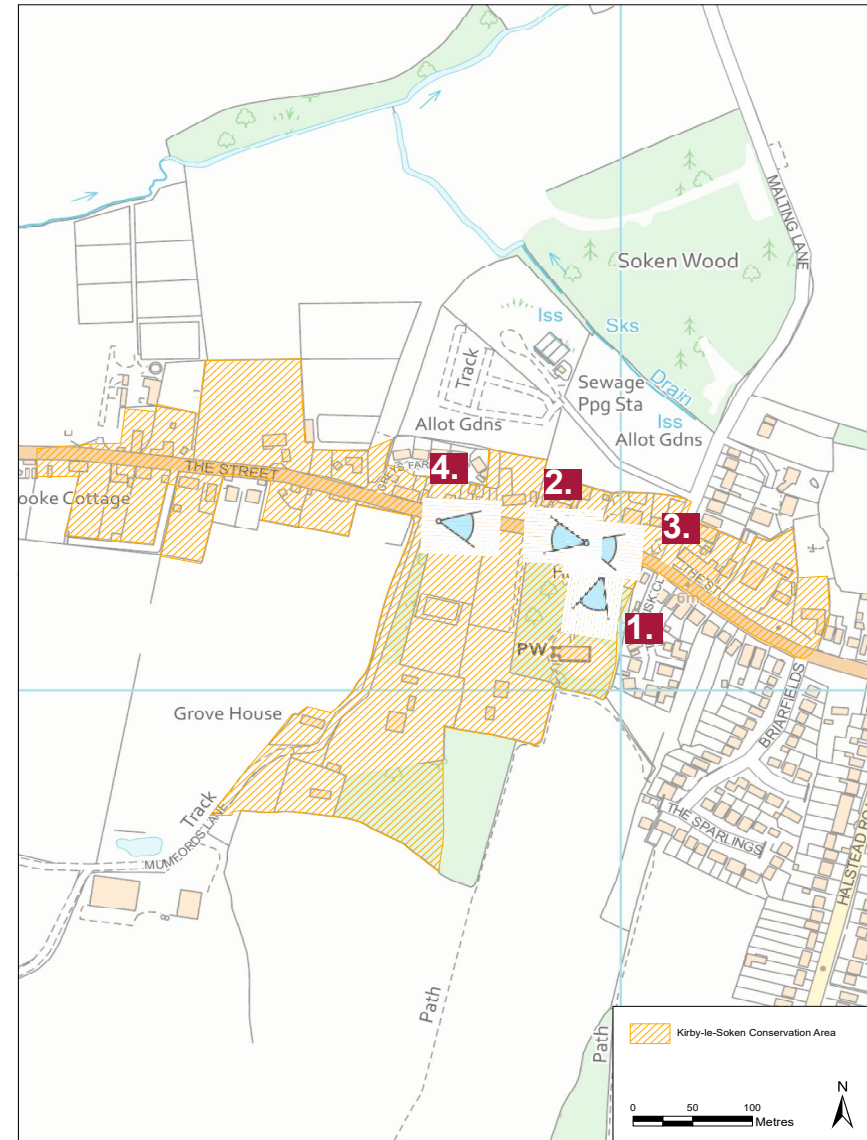


Figure 44 Key Views Map



Figure 45 Photograph of the church and approach from The Street

**View 1: Views of the church from The Street (Figure 45)**

View 1 is positioned at the heart of the Conservation Area. When stood on the pedestrian way near the Red Lion looking south, it affords uninterrupted views of the church and its approach. Due to the development pattern and verdant screening, this is the only location from The Street where there are views of the church in its entirety.



Figure 46 Looking west along The Street

**View 2 and 3: Views east and west along The Street (Figure 46)**

View 2 and 3, these two views are also located at the centre of the Conservation Area. Due to the bend in the road, there are long views east and west along The Street which emphasises the linear development of the Conservation Area. This view is significant because it is the only location in the Conservation Area that affords longer views in both directions.



Figure 47 Photograph from The Street towards the centre of the conservation area

#### View 4: View looking to the Conservation Area centre

View 4, there are long views into the centre of the Conservation Area which is terminated by the row of terraced cottages (Numbers 28 and Maltings Cottages). This view shows the start of the green and emphasises the linear pattern of the Kirby-le-Soken's development.



### 3.5 Setting of the Conservation Area

The NPPF describes the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

*Historic England Good Practice Advice 3: Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) indicates that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. It goes on to note 'Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset'.*

Historic England's advice note on setting includes a:

*"(non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance'. As the advice note states, 'only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of a particular relevance to an asset.'"*

This checklist has been used to inform this assessment.

The detailed guidance on heritage asset setting states that all heritage assets have a setting whether they are designated or not, irrespective of the form in which they survive.<sup>5</sup> In the analysis of setting, the important contribution of views to the

<sup>5</sup> Historic England. 2017 *The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)*

significance of heritage assets and the ability to appreciate that significance is often a primary consideration. Yet the contribution a setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset, such as the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area, is not limited to views alone. Setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, traffic and vibration from other land uses. The detrimental alteration of the character of a setting may reduce our ability to understand the historic relationship between places. The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access, view or experience that setting.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, any application for development within the setting of a heritage asset is subject to constraints.

In addition, the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets (including the setting of Conservation Areas), to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. Therefore, the favourable treatment of proposals that retain the open, agrarian character of the Conservation Area's setting should be reinforced by the local authority, while proposals that fail to retain this character should be considered as harmful to the significance.

When assessing an application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities should also consider the implications of cumulative change and incremental harm. New developments and changes can not only detract from a heritage asset's significance in the short-term but may also damage its significance and economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its on-going conservation.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

### Surrounding landscape

Kirby-le-Soken is surrounded by undeveloped and rural landscape. The rural setting makes an important contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as it contributes to the appreciation and understanding of Kirby-le-Soken as a historic, isolated settlement set within an agrarian landscape that has remained largely unchanged in character for many centuries.

The wider setting of rural and arable farmland can be seen from some aspects from within the Conservation Area (Figures 48 and 49). This is particularly realised from the west end of the Conservation Area, providing strong visual links between the Conservation Area and its rural setting. There are also glimpsed views of the Kirby-le-Soken village, including the church tower, from the surrounding rural landscape which contributes to an understanding of Kirby-le-Soken as an isolated settlement.

The woodland within the setting of the Conservation Area belonging to Kirby Hall also makes a positive contribution, and is under the same ownership.



Figure 48 Conservation Area and its rural setting



Figure 49 Open fields around the Conservation Area

The approach into the Conservation Area from the west is characterised by open, agrarian fields, remaining largely unspoilt by modern development. The surrounding arable land provides a wealth of green and open space, which makes an important contribution Kirby-le-Soken's significance as a rural village and enhances the way it is experienced and understood (Figure 50).

Modern housing development permitted to the north and south-west encroaches into the surrounding rural landscape, particularly to the south (Figure 51). The development north and south of The Street is contrary to the historic development pattern of the village. Due to the important contribution made by the open fields and landscape, further development on the open fields surrounding the Conservation Area would detract from the significance of Kirby-le-Soken as an isolated rural development.



Figure 50 Open, agrarian fields, remaining largely unspoilt by modern development



Figure 51 Modern development to the rear of properties along The Street



Figure 52 Former site of Oxborrow Engineering

Within the centre of the Conservation Area there are views from The Street of a service yard and building (formerly Oxborrow Engineering) which sits behind Number 28 on Maltings Lane (Figure 52). The single storey red brick building with white painting facade is a characterful industrial structure with a chimney to the rear and contributes to a variation in the predominantly residential streetscene. It is recommended to include this property within the Conservation Area.

From the east, the settlement of Kirby-le-Soken extends beyond the Conservation Area boundary so the approach into the Conservation Area is more developed than the west. However, the rural and isolated setting of the settlement can still be appreciated before reaching the development along Walton Road, which bounds the Conservation Area. As evident through historic maps (see Figure 4), the development continued along The Street and terminated at The Ship. There are some properties located outside of the Conservation Area boundary that form part of the area's historic development, including The Ship which is thought to be seventeenth-century in origin that later became an alehouse in the eighteenth century, and are an important part of the Conservation Area's setting.<sup>7</sup> The properties permit an understanding of how the settlement developed along the principal thoroughfare from the seventeenth through to the nineteenth century. However, it is considered impractical to include these within the boundary due to their distance from the Conservation Area and the intervening modern development.

7

The Kirby-le-Soken History Pages: The Ship, [www.kirby-le-soken.co.uk](http://www.kirby-le-soken.co.uk)



## Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive and neither are the opportunities identified unique to Kirby-le-Soken with many being shared with other Conservation Areas.

### 3.6 Car Parking

There are some cars parked informally along The Street, particularly opposite Numbers 46-48 where there is an unsurfaced layby. Also, to the front of Number 16-28 lining the green are parked cars. However, they are relatively unobtrusive and do not encroach onto the main thoroughfare. Some properties have off road parking. Although, there are instances where front gardens have been replaced with hardstanding to provided carparking. This type of development detracts from the rural character and appearance of the Conservation Area through loss of greenness and has an urbanising effect.

### 3.7 Inappropriate Modern Alterations

There are examples of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions within the Conservation Area which can result in a cumulative impact on the area. The addition of uncharacteristic porches, the installation of TV aerials, extraction flues to street facades, sides and rear of buildings harm the historic character of the area and appearance. Care should be taken that unsympathetic additions do not impact key views and the character of groups of historic buildings is preserved.

Care needs to be taken within the Conservation Area that windows, doors, roofs and other architectural elements are not replaced with those of inappropriate design and materials. The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the historic palette of materials used and this piecemeal loss of fabric can cumulatively have a more significant impact on the character and appearance than any of the other concerns.

### Doors and windows

A key concern across the majority of the Conservation Area is the alterations to windows and doors. The replacement of timber windows with inappropriate uPVC windows can impact the historic character of a building, and the contribution they make to the appearance of the Conservation Area. The location of doors and windows within a historic building is also an essential part of its character, and by altering their position, or blocking them up, this can detract from its appearance, for example.

Historic England's *Traditional Windows Their Care, Repair and Upgrading (2017)* advises that *"the loss of traditional windows from our older buildings poses one of the major threats to our heritage. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas. They are an integral part of the design of older buildings and can be important artefacts in their own right... The distinctive appearance of historic hand-made glass is not easily imitated in modern glazing."* The loss of historic joinery such as sash and casement windows and panelled doors results in a degree of harm to the significance of an historic building, and the loss of crown or other early glass can also cause harm to the significance of buildings. Historic England's 2017 advice recommends that 'surviving historic fenestration is an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved and repaired whenever possible.'

Where draughts are causing an issue, the repair and refurbishment of windows can improve the thermal performance of historic windows in the first instance, along with the use of shutters and heavy curtains. Alternatively, modern technology allows for well-designed secondary glazing; special timber casements that can be constructed and fixed to the interior of the frame using sections and mouldings to match the primary glazing. These less intrusive methods are advisable within the Conservation Area; however, it is recommended that advice is sought from the Council before any changes to windows or doors are made to ensure the optimum solution.





### Colour Palette

The Conservation Area is currently characterised by light painted render. Future alterations should respond to the existing and historic palette to preserve the local distinctiveness; however, it should also reflect the age, status and architectural style of its host building. The introduction of an inappropriate modern colour palette into the street scene is considered to be a concern within the Conservation Area and has the potential to have a cumulative and significant impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is also imperative that appropriate paints are used to ensure that the passage of moisture through historic properties' fabric is not inhibited which can cause decay.

### 3.8 Maintenance

Many of the buildings, structures, boundaries, and spaces across the Conservation Area have been impacted by a gradual decline in their condition due to lack of ongoing maintenance. The importance of preventative maintenance cannot be over-emphasised, as ongoing maintenance can not only limit, or even prevent, the need for repairs later, it will avoid the loss of original fabric and is cost-effective.<sup>8</sup>

There are examples of maintenance issues across the area, which are common to historic buildings and Conservation Areas, such as the deterioration of paintwork, timber rot, and loss of historic features. Throughout the Conservation Area a large proportion of buildings have had original features and fittings removed, particularly windows and doors. This impacts the historic significance of the buildings and detracts from the aesthetic and character of the Conservation Area and, therefore, its special interest. There are very few buildings which have retained their historic windows.

The introduction of uPVC windows is a particular concern within the Conservation Area. To preserve the special interest of the Conservation Area, historic windows should be retained. Any proposals for the replacement of windows should avoid the loss of any historic fabric and should be appropriate to the host building. The application of uPVC windows will not be supported.

There is an opportunity to monitor ongoing condition and maintenance issues across the Conservation Area by means of a regular baseline photographic survey. Going forward, this could be an opportunity for local groups and individuals to lead in, and there is scope for the Council to work in partnership with the community to undertake ongoing assessments such as this.

<sup>8</sup> [Preventative Maintenance \(spab.org.uk\)](https://www.spab.org.uk)



### 3.9 Inappropriate Modern Development

There are instances in the Conservation Area where residential development has been permitted behind the existing development. This undermines a defining feature of Kirby-le-Soken as a linear development. Future development that has a poor relationship with the street and does not preserve the historic development pattern should be avoided.

The subdivision of plots to allow for development behind the existing grain of development would also be inappropriate. Land plots and curtilages are a key indication of an area's development; by dividing historic plots it would dilute the special interest and have a detrimental impact on the context of the Conservation Area's development. Not only does the division of historic plots diminish the historical integrity of the property, it can also have an adverse effect on the setting of the individual heritage asset.

### 3.10 Public Realm

#### **Street Furniture (Lampposts, benches, signage, bins, bike stands, bollards etc.)**

Generally, the street furniture within the Conservation Area is of a good quality and a traditional appearance, responding positively to the significance of Kirby-le-Soken.

#### **Character Area One:**

The street furniture in the Conservation Area is limited to the area surrounding the green which is indicative of the rural character of the Conservation Area. The street furniture is well maintained and works to maintain the village character of Kirby-le-Soken. General and regular maintenance would ensure the quality of the street furniture is preserved. There are limited streetlamps along The Street due to the rural context, whilst there are relatively unobtrusive, they are modern in design and appearance. It would be of an enhancement if they presented a more traditional design and colour.

#### **Character Area Two:**

The public realm within character area two is limited due to the limited public access to this space. The approach to the church is tarmacked which transitions into a gravelled footpath leading to the rear of the building. Mumford Lane is an informal, unsurfaced track. Surfaces in character area two are of a satisfactory condition.

Within the churchyard there are benches which are timber and sympathetic to their setting. Public footpaths are clearly marked by traditional timber signs although would benefit from general maintenance. At the time of this assessment the red brick wall to the front of the church hall was in a deteriorated condition and would benefit from general repairs and maintenance. This would greatly enhance the streetscene.



### Hard Landscaping

There is generally a consistent approach to hardstanding of road surfaces and pavements within the Conservation Area which are all tarmacked. The principal thoroughfare of Kirby is of a satisfactory condition. There are areas where the road surface has deteriorated near the green and surrounding Numbers 28-16. The surface of the layby opposite Meadows Cottage has also deteriorated and would benefit from repair.

The Red Lion Public House has a large, tarmacked car park to the side stretching to Maltings Lane. The large expanse of hardstanding does have an urbanising effect, which detracts from the rural character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There is an opportunity to soften the appearance of the carpark through the addition of boxed planters or a gravel surface. Any changes to the carpark, however, should not undermine the openness of this section of the Conservation Area.

### Open Spaces

The open space around the green is well maintained and provides an attractive focal point for the Conservation Area. Improvements could be made to the maintenance of the green with the stocks as this would better integrate this area, so it is read as part of the green.

### 3.11 Vacant Premises

At the time of this assessment, there were two vacant buildings within the Conservation Area.

Number 12 formerly Cygnet Yew Tree: this is a substantial double fronted property set back from the road. The property likely dated from the late nineteenth century. However, modern alterations have resulted in the loss of characterful architectural features of the property. There is an opportunity to greatly enhance the appearance of this property, so it positively responds to its architectural context.

Garage site located on Maltings Lane, formerly Oxborrow engineering: At the time of this assessment no major alterations had been made to the site or structure, and it still presents a characterful appearance. Any future development of this site should make use of the existing building and positively respond to the more industrial 'service' character of the site.



## 4. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of opportunities for the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This section builds on the opportunities identified in Section 4 and seeks to recommend management proposals which address these in both the short and long term.

### 4.1 Positive Management: Short term

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the local planning authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works. The loss of original windows is a particular concern within the Kirby-le-Soken, as well as unsympathetic alterations such as unsympathetic render and render colours as well as and inappropriate materials.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Through the agreement of a standard good practice within the Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams and other landowners, long term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm, such as avoiding excessive road markings or signage and agreeing a standard street furniture within Character Areas to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced.

This will have a long-term positive impact on the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area and ensure the preservation of characteristic features of the Area. The footpaths from the wider landscape into the Conservation Area are well sign posted and marked but could benefit from some general maintenance.

#### Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

**All** applications and development proposals within the Conservation Area and its setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures or trees on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2019). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.



### **Local Heritage List**

A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be ‘non-designated heritage assets’ under the provisions of the NPPF. Local Lists can be beneficial in ensuring the upkeep and maintenance of historic buildings that contribute to the character of the settlements. The exercise of creating a Local List would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding.

Kirby-le-Soken would benefit from adopting and maintaining a comprehensive Local List in order to preserve its historic environment. There are a number of buildings and features within Kirby-le-Soken which make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area, which indicates that a Local List may be beneficial to ensure the upkeep of buildings which are significant to Kirby-le-Soken’s history and character. They are of sufficient quality to be considered for local list status, as highlighted in section 3 of this document.

The Council is currently working towards creating a Local List.

### **Neutral and Negative Elements**

The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character.

Tending Council must not allow for the quality of design to be impacted by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must, where possible, seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate historic features. It is also considered that poor quality or unsympathetic schemes do not preserve the special interest of the Conservation Area and therefore are discouraged, both within the Conservation Area and its setting; this is due to the potential impact to the character and appearance of the area.

### **New Development**

There are opportunities within Kirby-le-Soken and its setting for development which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.



Successful new development will:

- Relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings; and
- Use materials and building methods which as high in quality of those used in existing buildings.

### Tall Buildings

The typical scale of the properties within the Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area is one and a half to two storeys. The small scale and cottage character of the dwellings in the Conservation Area is indicative of its historic and rural character. Any development that does not positively respond to the existing scale of historic development would likely detract from a key feature of the Conservation Area's significance.

There are some residential dwellings of a larger massing and scale. However, these are typically high-status buildings such as the church, Kirby Hall and The Old Vicarage. The scale of such buildings defines their pre-eminence in Kirby-le-Soken's development. It is considered that the introduction of taller developments within the Conservation Area and its setting would be harmful, and that development should remain at two storeys to be appropriate.

**Tendring District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:**

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Ensuring large scale development schemes are referred to a Design Review Panel (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it is appropriate to a conservation area.
- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### Public resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property



within a conservation area. In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. A single Good Practice Design Guide on standard alterations such as signage, shopfronts, windows, doors, rainwater goods, boundaries and roof extensions will ensure inappropriate development does not continue to be the accepted norm.

- Provide guidance on appropriate design and materials for windows and doors and encouraging the retention or reinstatement of historic glazing patterns and door designs and the use of appropriate materials.
- Provide guidance on the traditional form of boundary treatments and encourage their reinstatement where they have been removed or compromised.
- Provide guidance on traditional roofing materials and encouraging the reinstatement of good quality slate and the removal of unsympathetic modern materials such as interlocking concrete tiles.
- Provide and update guidance relating to signage. This should address appropriate size and design, the extent and amount and associated lighting. All further planning applications and advert consent applications should be required to comply, where possible, with this standard, designed to help to restore the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and results in a loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of Kirby-le-Soken's built heritage.

### **Tree Management and Planting**

There are many trees within the Conservation Area particularly in character area two. The trees within character area one that line the street are attractive. Efforts should be made to maintain the existing planting and trees. Where appropriate opportunities for enhancement sought.

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, all trees in Conservation Areas are afforded the same protection as a Tree Preservation Order. Trees which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council. Six weeks' notice has to be given to the council under S211 of the Act.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the Conservation Area should be monitored and maintained appropriately. This will maintain the green character of the area. Any tree that makes a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous) replaced with an appropriate new tree.

### **Twentieth Century Premises**

There are some twentieth century developments which make a neutral or negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area. There is scope to enhance these sites and buildings through a considered design approach which can guide future improvements. Should opportunities for redevelopment arise in the future, high quality design should be pursued and encouraged through design guidance.



#### 4.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

The second set of proposals are also focussed on positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

##### Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed every five years to monitor change and inform management proposals.

##### Conservation Area Boundary

The Conservation Area boundary has been revised within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2024) and *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2018).

The boundary now excludes modern development north of the Conservation Area. The boundary now includes the domestic curtilages of all properties that are located in the Conservation Area and the garage and service yard on Maltings Lane. The boundary should continue to be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

##### Interpretation: Improved Understanding and Awareness

At present there is no interpretation (information boards, signage, interactive QR Codes) within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding and awareness. This would be an effective way to improve the awareness and re-establish the identity of Kirby-le-Soken as a historic settlement. St Michael's Church would benefit from an interpretation. This is a highly significant heritage asset, located at the heart of community interaction.

##### Public Realm

The first opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is through investment to improve the wider public realm. This can be achieved through continued maintenance of the green and street furniture. General maintenance of footpaths and improvements to road surfacing and the appearance of the Red Lion Car Park would greatly contribute to an enhanced public realm.





### 4.3 Funding Opportunities

There are three main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### National Heritage Lottery Fund

The National Heritage Lottery Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Tendring Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

#### Section 106 Agreements

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon Kirby-le-Soken. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site-specific improvements.

#### Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)

*Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas* is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would be suitable to preserve and enhance either the shop frontages or the architectural detailing.



## 5. Appendices

### 5.1 Designated Heritage Assets

#### Grade II\*

##### **Church of St Michael - (list entry: 11115000)**

Parish church of fourteenth or fifteenth century origin, restored c.1833 and mainly rebuilt c.1870 by Henry Stone. The church is constructed from stone, flint and septaria, stone dressings under plain red tiled roofs with pierced and scalloped ridge tiles, cross finials.

#### Grade II

##### **Barn approximately 80 metres southwest of Kirby Hall (list entry: 1337139)**

Barn approximately 80 metres southwest of Kirby Hall. Constructed in the eighteenth century. Timber framed and weatherboarded. Brick plinth. Corrugated asbestos roof. Gabled midstrey outshot to right to include granary. Five bays. Side purlin roof, pegged at ridge. Through bracing to walls. Hanging knees to tie beams.

##### **Kirby Hall (list entry: 1111502)**

Constructed around 1700 with features of possibly earlier origin. Red brick. Red plain tiled roof. Right and left chimney stacks. Rear wing. Two storeys and attics. Three flat headed dormers with two light casements. Moulded brick eaves cornice, central band. Three window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes, gauged brick arches. Central two panelled four light door with traceried round headed light over. Fluted pilasters, frieze, moulded open pediment.

##### **Meadow View Cottage (list entry: 1111499)**

Early seventeenth century in origin. Timber framed and plastered. Grey slate gambrelled roof. Right and left red brick chimney stacks. One storey and attics. Two flat headed dormers. Two small paned casements to ground floor. Central gabled porch with a twentieth century door. Internally the frame is virtually complete with inserted floor, chamfered bridging joists, winding staircase, side girts, top plates and wall studs.



**Memorial Plaque and Enclosing Railings, attached to external east wall of Chancel below east window Church of St Michael (list entry: 1111501)**

Memorial plaque and enclosing cast iron railings, attached to external east wall of Chancel below east window Church of St. Michael dating from the mid nineteenth century. Cast by Coleman and Wallis. Short cast iron railings are attached to the southeast and southwest corners of the Chancel and enclose a small memorial garden. The twisted posts have octagonal bases and arched braces forming 2 centred arches below the top rails. Ornate finials to rails.

**Norton's Barn Opposite and Approximately 40 Metres northwest Of Patches – (list entry: 1337137)**

Barn dates from the eighteenth century and is timber framed and weatherboarded with a brick plinth. Red pantiled roof. Gabled midstrey. Loft door to right return. Two bay cartlodge to left with corrugated iron clad roof. 5 bays. Through bracing to walls. Hanging knees to tie beams. Side purlin, ridge board roof.

**Post Office House (list entry: 1165726)**

House of sixteenth/seventeenth century origin, possibly earlier with later alterations and additions. Timber framed and rough rendered. Red plain tiled roof. Right and left red brick chimney stacks. Two storeys and attics. Flat headed dormer with small paned casement. Two window range. Two light small paned casements to first floor, vertically sliding sashes with glazing bars to ground floor, segmental heads over. Central twentieth century enclosed gabled porch with sidelights, twentieth century plank and muntin door.

**Red House White House (list entry: 1111498)**

Red House and White House, two dwellings. Central range of sixteenth century origin with seventeenth extension and alterations, nineteenth century brick facing and forward right range. Mainly timber framed, brick facing to Red House (right) plaster to White House (left). The two left ranges with red plain tiled roofs hipped to right, red pantiled right range. A red brick chimney stack to each range, central stack with square attached shaft. Dentilled eaves cornices. Interiors with inglenook fireplaces, stop chamfered bridging joists, side girts, top plates and wall studs. Vertically boarded doors with ironmongery.



**The Old Vicarage (list entry: 1337138)**

Constructed around 1830. Gault brick. Hipped grey slate roof, projecting eaves. Right and left chimney stacks. Two storeys. Three window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes, gauged brick arches. Three steps approach the square central porch supported by two pilasters and two fluted columns with moulded capitals, frieze, moulded cornice, two panelled two light door, moulded surround.

**The Red Lion Public House list entry: 1111497)**

A Public House formerly listed as Red Lion Inn. Sixteenth century derivation or earlier with later alterations and additions. Timber framed and plastered brick facade. Red plain tiled roof with gabled crosswing to left. External left and off centre right red brick chimney stacks. Two storeys. Three small paned vertically sliding sash windows, segmental heads over to first floor. Left and right small paned casements to ground floor, central hipped red tiled porch with left and right double doors and three small paned casements. Internally some frame exposed with heavy bridging joists and wall studs. Eighteenth century corner cupboard.



## 5.2 Bibliography

### Publications

Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area Appraisal, Tendring District Council (2006)

### Websites

Kirby-le-Soken History Pages [<http://www.kirby-le-soken.co.uk/>]

### Archives

Essex Record Office (ERO)

Historic Environment Record (Essex County Council)

### 5.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/ GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions. 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2024) DCLG	Section 16; Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans	
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	
National Guidance	Historic England Advice Note 1 (2019) Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Traditional Windows	
National Guidance	Historic England, High Streets for All (2018) Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Repointing Brick and Stone Walls Guide for Best Practice	

## 5.4 Glossary

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic Environment Record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Local List	Local listing is a concept that is designed to ensure that the historic and architectural interest of buildings that are of local importance but do not meet the criteria for being nationally listed is taken account of during the planning process. Local lists can be used to identify significant local heritage assets to support the development of Local Plans.
Non-Designated heritage asset	Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. Only a minority of buildings have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

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# Great Oakley Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

*Tendring*  
District Council



**Client:**  
Tendring District Council

**Date:**  
Dec 2024

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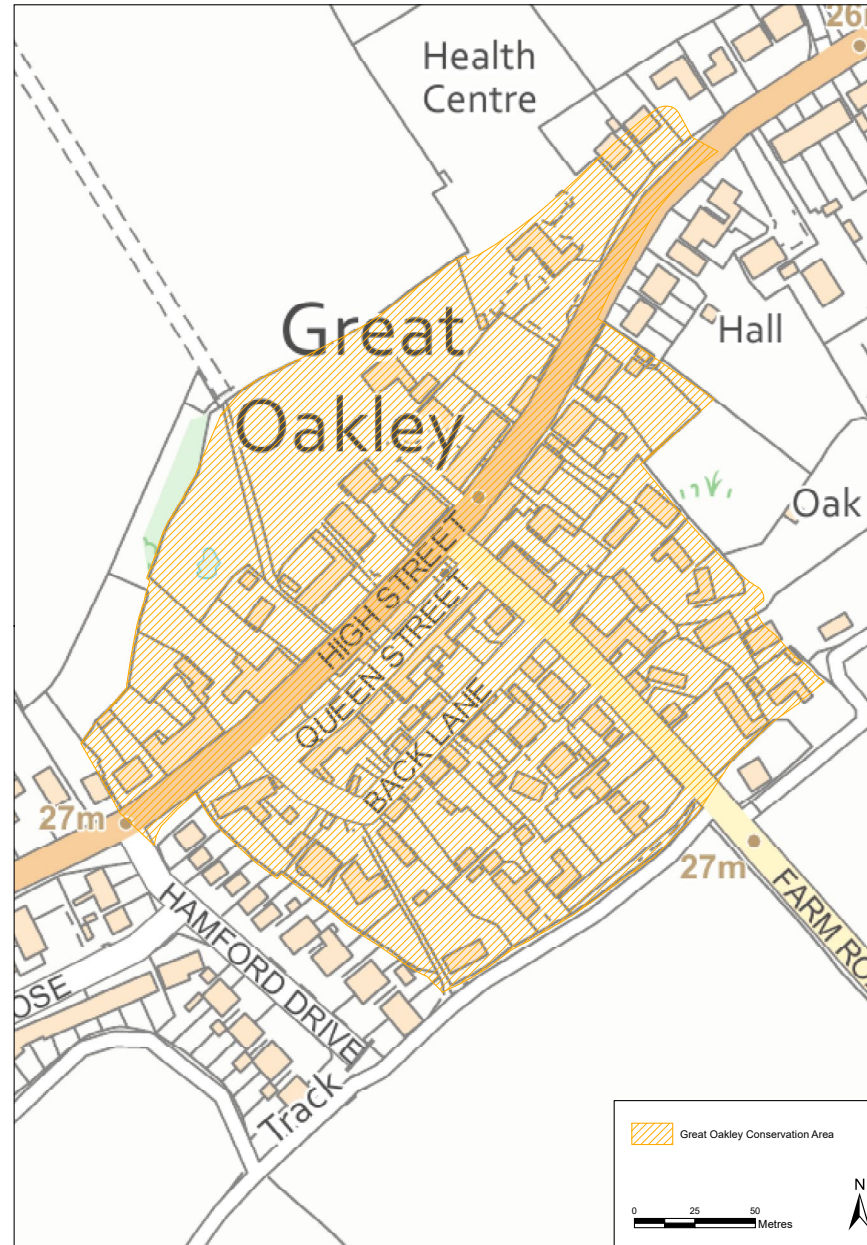


Figure 1 Great Oakley Conservation Area

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the Great Oakley Conservation Area, outlining its designation history and a description of its special interest. The appraisal will also consider buildings, open spaces, and features which contribute to the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

Conservation Area designation provides broader protection than the listing of individual buildings as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and appearance and ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the area into consideration.

Great Oakley's significance is predominantly derived from its historic interest as a small, rural market village. Its special interest derives from the architectural interest of the tightly knit pattern of vernacular houses clustered around the central marketplace, reflecting the area's medieval origins.



Figure 2 Great Oakley Conservation Area central marketplace



## 1.2 Conserving Great Oakley's Heritage

Tendring District Council appointed Place Services to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal for Great Oakley. This document is provided as baseline information to support the long-term conservation of Great Oakley's heritage. The appraisal will also consider the significance of heritage assets within the area and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to the character of the area. The understanding of significance will be used to assess the susceptibility of the Conservation Area to new development, highlighting key assets of importance. Please refer to Section 1.3 for the appraisal's purpose and details on what it will consider.

## 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character and appearance.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area which contribute to its special interest. It will consider how Great Oakley came to be developed, the building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities will be used to assess the key characteristics of the area, highlighting the potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Great Oakley. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis, as well as a review of the previous Conservation Area Appraisal for the area (2006).

This appraisal will enhance understanding of Great Oakley and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character and appearance of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce appropriate and responsive design with positive outcomes for agents and their clients.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the national guidance outlined in Section 6.3.



## 1.4 Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority as areas of special architectural or historic interest. There are many different types of conservation area, which vary in size and character, and range from historic town centres to country houses set in historic parks. Conservation area designation introduces additional planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect an area's special character and appearance and the features that make it unique and distinctive. Although designation introduces controls over the way that owners can develop their properties, it is generally considered that these controls are beneficial as they preserve and/or enhance the value of properties within conservation areas.

The designation process includes detailed analysis of the proposed conservation area and adoption by Tendring Council. A review process should be periodically undertaken, and the Conservation Area assessed to safeguard that it retains special architectural or historic interest. Threats can be identified, and the boundary reviewed, to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate. This is in line with Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The National Planning Policy Framework regards conservation areas as 'designated heritage assets.'

### How are conservation areas managed?

Conservation areas can be supported by an appraisal and management plan. This document is the appraisal and management plan for the Great Oakley Conservation Area. The appraisal describes the importance of an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. The management plan, included within the appraisal, sets out various positive proposals to improve, enhance and protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act specifies the general duty of Local Authorities, in the exercise of planning functions (Sections 71 and 72). The 1990 Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

### How can I find out if I live in a Conservation Area?

Boundary maps of conservation areas can be found on Tendring District Council's [website](#). You can also contact your Tendring Council directly to find out if you reside within a conservation area.



### **What are the Council's duties regarding development in conservation areas?**

The Local Authority must follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These set out in clear terms how development proposals within conservation areas should be considered on the basis of whether they preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Applications which fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area are likely to be refused as a result. The Local Plan also typically includes a specific policy on Conservation Areas; for more information, please see Section 1.5 which includes an outline of Tendring's local policy.

### **What is an Article 4 Direction?**

Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, certain minor works, such as domestic alterations, can normally be carried out without planning permission. However, some conservation areas are covered by an Article 4 Direction, which brings certain types of development back under the control of a local planning authority. This allows potentially harmful proposals to be considered on a case by case basis through planning applications. Article 4 Directions are used to control works that could threaten the character or appearance of an area and a planning application may be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted development. Historic England provides information on Article 4 Directions on their [website](#).

There are currently no Article 4 Directions in place within the Great Oakley Conservation Area.

### **Do I need permission to alter a property in a conservation area?**

Many conservation areas have an Article 4 Direction which relate to alterations such as the painting, rendering or cladding of external walls. Alterations or extensions to buildings in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. Your Local Authority should be consulted for advice as to how to proceed.

### **Do I need to make an application for routine maintenance work?**

If routine maintenance works are to be carried out using authentic materials and traditional craft techniques, on a like-for-like basis, it is unlikely that you will need to apply for permission from the Council. However, it is recommended that you contact Tendring Council for clarification before commencing any works. The use of a contractor with the necessary skills and experience of working on historic buildings is essential. Inappropriate maintenance works and the use of the wrong materials will cause damage to the fabric of a historic building.

### **Will I need to apply for permission for a new or replacement garage, fence, boundary wall or garden structure?**

Any demolition, development or construction in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. A replacement boundary, garage, cartlodge or greenhouse will need to be designed with the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area in mind. Your Local Authority will provide advice as to how to proceed with an application.





### Can I demolish a building in a conservation area?

Demolition or substantial removal of part of a building within a conservation area will usually require permission from the Council. It is important to speak to them before beginning any demolition works, to clarify if permission is required.

### Can I remove a tree within a conservation area?

If you are thinking of cutting down a tree or doing any pruning work, the local planning authority must be notified 6 weeks before any work begins. This enables the authority to assess the contribution the tree makes to the character of the conservation area and, if necessary, create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it. Consent will be required for any works to trees that are protected. Further information on TPOs can be found on Historic England's [website](#).

### How do I find out more about a conservation area?

Historic England's website has information on conservation areas and their designation. Further information on the importance of conservation areas, and what it means to live in one, can also be accessed via their [website](#).

Historic England has also published an [advice note](#) called Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management which sets out advice on the appraisal of conservation areas and managing change in conservation areas.

In addition, Tendring Council has information on the conservation areas within their boundaries available on their [website](#). They have information pertaining to when the Great Oakley Conservation Area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation.

## 1.5 Planning Policy and Guidance

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990). In particular section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and Section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced. Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposal for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context, the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.



National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in Chapter 16 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2024).

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2018) and *Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).

The Great Oakley Conservation Area is located within Tendring District. Local planning policy is set out in the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond. North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 of the Plan was formally adopted on 26 January 2021 and Section 2 was adopted on 25 January 2022.

Policies which are relevant to heritage assets include:

- SPL 3 – Sustainable Design*
- PPL 3 – The Rural Landscape*
- PPL 7 – Archaeology*
- PPL 8 – Conservation Areas*
- PPL 9 – Listed Buildings*

## 1.6 Designation of the Conservation Area

Great Oakley Conservation Area was first designated in 1973. The boundary was slightly amended in 1982, omitting the modern housing on the site of the Corn Mill from the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area occupies the historic core of the village, clustered around the High Street, Queen Street, Back Lane and Farm Road. The western boundary runs along the rear boundaries of modern bungalows on the east side of Hamford Drive. The eastern boundary includes the modern development at Maltings Farm. The north and south boundaries mark the transition from the settlement to the surrounding agricultural land. An appraisal was adopted in 2006. The Conservation Area boundary, appraisal, and management plan were reviewed in 2022, and this document was produced. A public consultation period and event was held as part of the review.

## 2. Great Oakley Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

Great Oakley is located in the north-east of Tendring District. It is situated on a gently undulating plateau in an agricultural landscape of fields, pasture and pockets of ancient woodland.

The historic settlement of Great Oakley lies to the south of Ramsey Creek, which runs to the north-east towards Harwich, draining into the Stour estuary. The district is characterised by dispersed farmsteads and small hamlets. Great Oakley is historically unusual in this area of Tendring as an early nucleated village settlement, with a market recorded from the mid-thirteenth century. The church, which occupies an isolated plot to the west of the historic village, has twelfth century origins.

Post-war ribbon development along the Harwich Road (B1414) has diluted the character of the settlement, so it is now experienced as predominantly linear, stretched out along the main road, although the historic extents of the village can still be appreciated in views from the north and south. The Conservation Area covers the historic core of the village.



Figure 3 Aerial view of Great Oakley



## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of Great Oakley and its environs.

### Prehistory (-500000BC – 43AD)

Evidence for prehistoric archaeology within the area surrounding Great Oakley village is largely derived from historic sources and aerial photography. They include a significant find of a Bronze Age battle axe recorded from the area around Great Oakley Hall and possible burial urn. Although evidence for Bronze Age occupation (2200AD – 700 BC) is particularly prevalent within the Tendring district, no settlement activity is recorded from within, or in the areas, surrounding the Conservation Area. However, aerial photographic evidence, recorded as cropmarks within the fields, indicates prehistoric burial and agricultural activity.

### Roman (43 – 410)

Artefacts recovered from the fields surrounding the Conservation Area suggest there may have been some evidence for permanent settlement during the Late Iron Age and Roman period. Coins, brooches, knives, keys and beads have been recorded with more tangible evidence recovered at Great Oakley Hall, to the north-east of the Conservation Area. Near Great Oakley Dock, to the south-east of the Conservation Area, the structural remains of salt making sites, known as 'red hills' survive, which are likely to be associated with nearby settlement in the wider area.

### Early Medieval (410 – 1066)

Surviving evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement and activity is generally rare within the region, and no Anglo-Saxon material has been recovered from within or in the vicinity of the Conservation Area. However, the entry for 'Oakley' in the Domesday book (1086) records the manor in 1066 as containing 12 villagers, 20 smallholders and 10 slaves. The place name of "Oakley" is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'oak clearing'.

### Medieval (1066 – 1540)

The village of Great Oakley lies along a historic route linking to the historic medieval port and town at Harwich. The medieval village was concentrated around an elongated market square located along the High Street. The surviving listed buildings provide the earliest known evidence of substantial activity within the Conservation Area dating from the fourteenth century. The settlement plan does not conform to a typical Essex medieval village as the Church and manorial hall lay at opposing ends of the village, rather than being located close to each other, as is more usual within rural Essex. The Church dates to the twelfth century and stands apart from the village to the south-west. The manorial Great Oakley Hall is located some distance to the north-east of the village and lies within a moated site, which is likely medieval in origin.

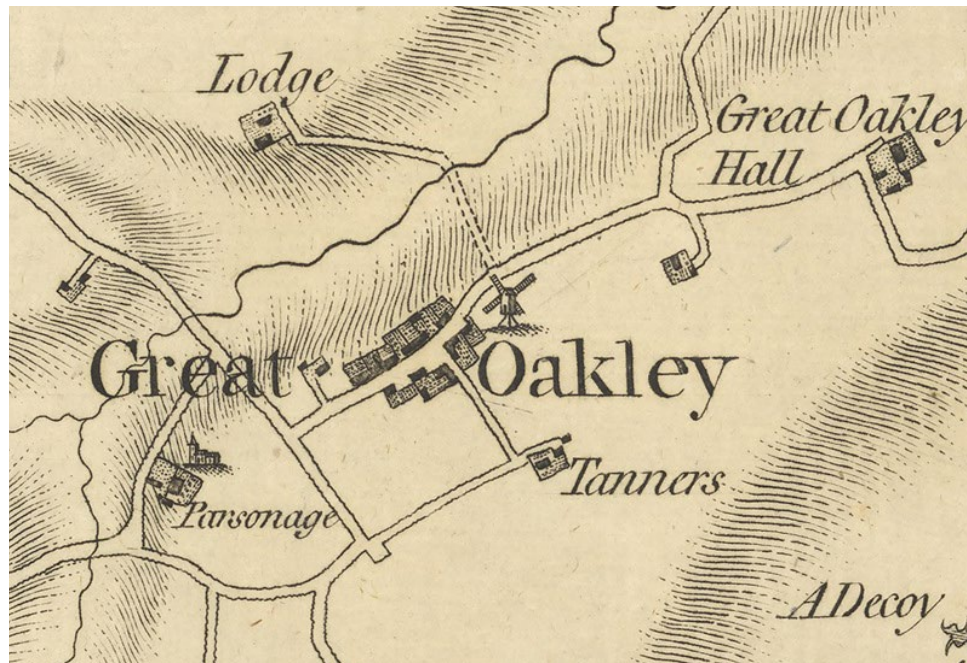


Figure 4 Chapman and Andre map, 1777

### Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)

By the post medieval period, a small-scale road network had developed parallel and to the south of the High Street. The Chapman and André map of 1777 (Figure 4) depicts a tightly clustered village around the marketplace on the High Street. A mill is shown at the north-east end of the village (just beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area today); the eighteenth-century Mill House survives within the Conservation Area and is listed at Grade II (list entry no: 1112135).

The only evidence for post medieval activity within and surrounding the Conservation Area survives in built form; several listed buildings survive from the seventeenth to eighteenth century including the former Post Office and Village Shop (list entry no: 1391206) and Holly Trees (list entry no: 1322594). The Chapman and André map shows the church and parsonage distinct from the main settlement, located close together within a field to the south-west of the village. Several dispersed farmsteads are located within the wider agricultural landscape including the Lodge to the north of Great Oakley and Tanners to the south.

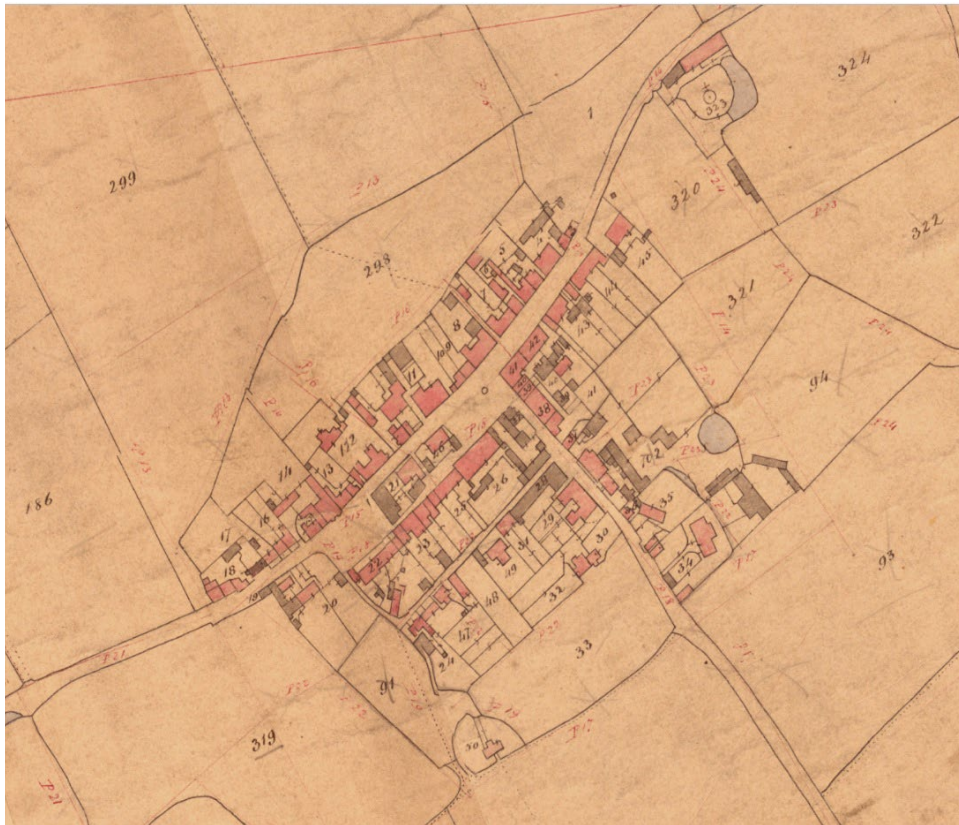


Figure 5 Tithe map, 1840 '© Crown Copyright Images reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives, London, England. [www.NationalArchives.gov.uk](http://www.NationalArchives.gov.uk) & [www.TheGenealogist.co.uk](http://www.TheGenealogist.co.uk)'

The 1840 tithe map (Figure 5) shows that the village had expanded but retained its tightly clustered form around the High Street and Farm Road. Several buildings have been constructed in the centre of the marketplace, forming a central island site, including Whispers, now listed at Grade II (list entry no: 1308597).

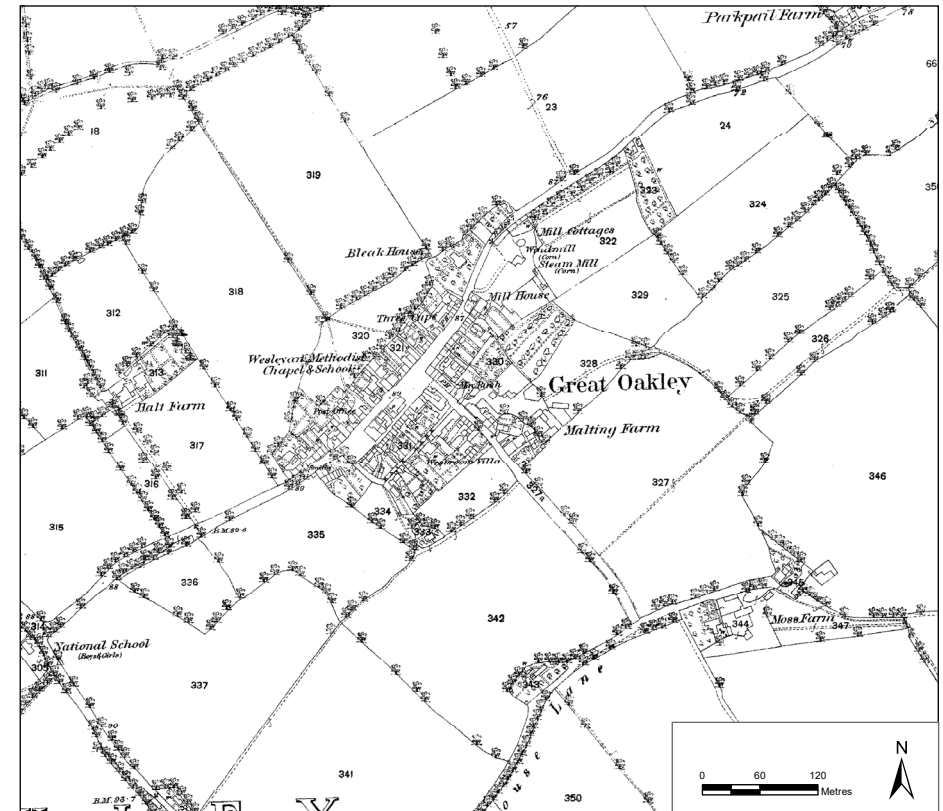


Figure 6 First edition Ordnance Survey map, 1897

By the time of the 1897 Ordnance Survey (OS) map (Figure 6), the village had acquired both a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel and schoolhouse, and a Primitive Methodist Chapel. A school had been built near the church at the junction of Wix Road and Beaumont Road, while the workhouse was located outside the village core at the junction of Pesthouse Lane and Beaumont Road.



Figure 7 Historic image of Great Oakley High Street looking west c.1900

Within the village, there are two smithies shown on the map, plus two public houses: the Three Cups and the Maybush (both labelled as hotels). The name of the Three Cups, the emblem of the Salters Company, indicates that there were salt works in the area, as the village lies near to the salt marshes around Hamford Water. At the north-east end of the village are shown a windmill and steam mill for grinding corn. At the turn of the century, Great Oakley was a busy agricultural hub, with a Post Office, public houses, breweries, slaughterhouses, butchers and blacksmiths.

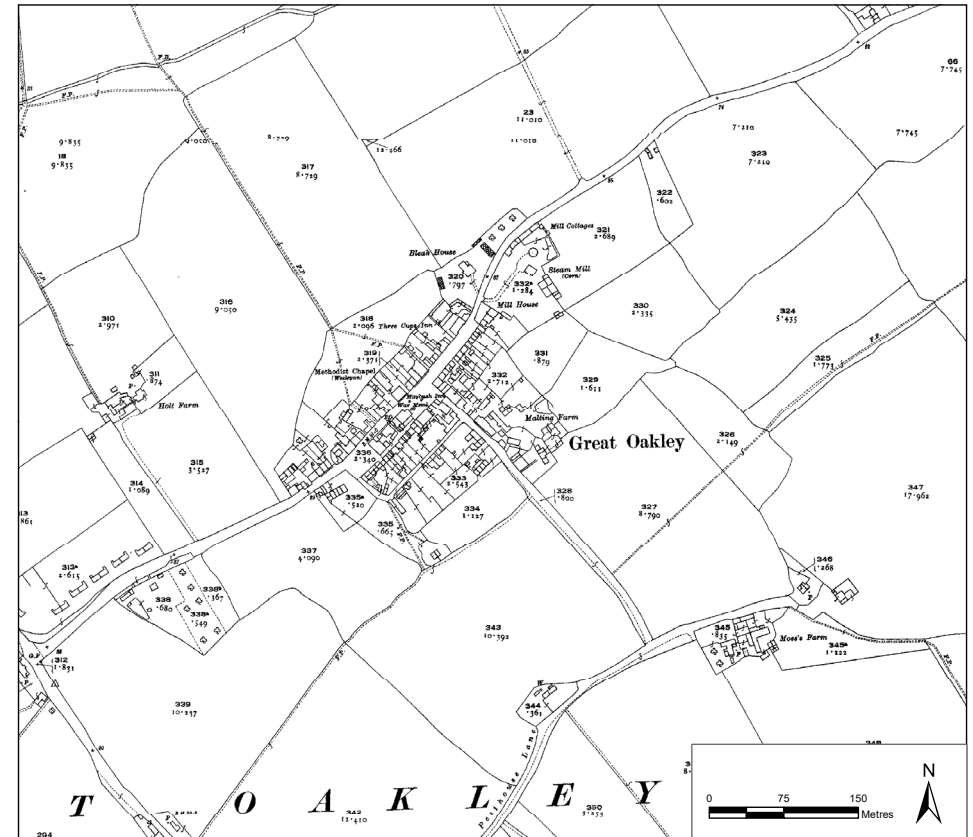


Figure 8 Second edition Ordnance Survey map, 1897



Figure 9 Ordnance Survey map, 1967

### Modern (1901 – now)

In the early twentieth century, the village began to expand with ribbon development along the main road. The 1923 OS map (Figure 8) shows a row of six 1920s semi-detached houses on the north side of the Harwich Road by the junction with Wix Road.

Military sources show that Great Oakley was defended by a number of fortifications during the Second World War. Within the Conservation Area, these included pillboxes, barbed wire, gun positions and spigot mortar emplacements. Many of these have been destroyed, however, one pillbox survives in good condition in the garden of Apple Tree Cottage, close to the main road at the west end of the village.

In the post-war period, further expansion occurred. By the time of the 1967 OS map (Figure 9), ribbon development was scattered along both the north and south sides of the Harwich Road stretching nearly as far as Great Oakley Hall, diluting the strong nucleus of the historic core. A Police House, garage and sewage works are shown.



Further development occurred in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This includes some modern infill development within the historic core, in particular at the north-east corner on the site of the former corn mill and at the south end of the Conservation Area.



Figure 10 Modern development marking the boundary of the Conservation Area

### 2.3 Revisions to the Boundary

As part of this review, the Conservation Area boundary has been reviewed to reflect good practice and provide a clearer strategy which acknowledges the practicalities of Great Oakley's unique built environment, in line with Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the NPPF guidance on Conservation Areas, paragraph 204.

The boundary underwent a minor revision in 1982. The Conservation Area boundary was adjusted to run along the south side of the High Street and the north-east boundary of Mill House, omitting the late twentieth century housing on the former site of the Corn Mill from the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area covers the historic core of Great Oakley. Whilst there have been some clusters of modern development within the area, especially at the Maltings Farm development and southern part of the Conservation Area, the hedges to the south provide a definitive boundary between the residential development and the rural fields beyond the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area can still be appreciated and understood as a small rural settlement surrounded by countryside and the retention of the modern development within the Conservation Area ensures that the distinction between the Conservation Area and its setting remains robust. The new development also appropriately responds to local vernacular through its scale, form and appearance, and makes a natural contribution to the area's character and appearance. Therefore, as part of this boundary review, it is recommended that the boundary remains as existing, with no changes.

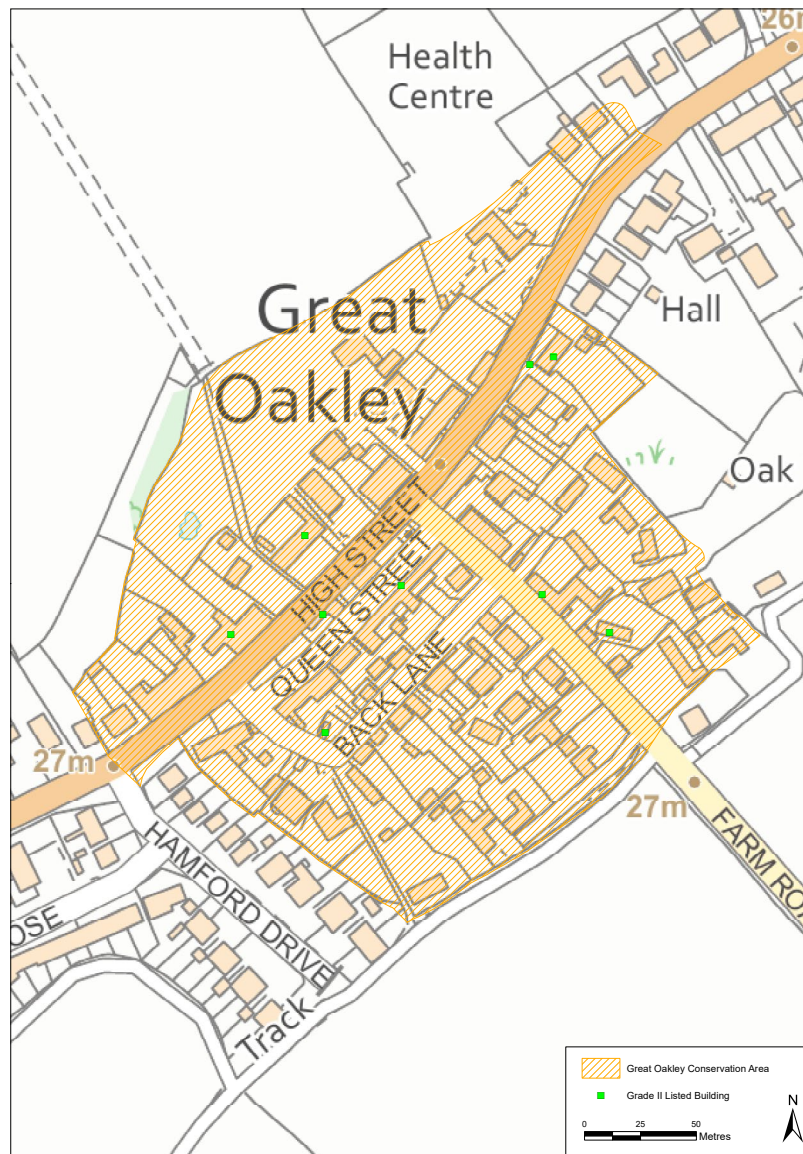


Figure 11 Map of Designated Heritage Assets

## 2.4 Designated Heritage Assets

There are nine designated heritage assets within the Great Oakley Conservation Area boundary, all of which are listed at Grade II. The list entry for “Pett’s Cottage, Armond House and House Immediately to the north-east” covers three properties within a single designation. A full list of all the designated assets within the Conservation Area, including their list descriptions, is provided in Appendix 6.1.

The designated heritage assets are mostly domestic houses and cottages, such as Old Scantlings and Holly Trees, but also include the former Post Office and Village Shop and a telephone kiosk adjacent to Mill House.

Designated heritage assets within the Great Oakley Conservation Area:

- Maltings Farmhouse (Grade II; list entry no: 1147224)
- Pett’s Cottage, Armond House and House Immediately to North East (Grade II; list entry no: 1147280)
- Old Scantlings (Grade II; list entry no: 1322632)
- Whispers (Grade II; list entry no: 1308597)
- Mill House (Grade II; list entry no: 1112135)
- Post Office and Village Shop (Grade II; list entry no: 1391206)
- Holly Trees (Grade II; list entry no: 1322594)
- Florence Cottage (Grade II; list entry no: 1147218)
- K6 Telephone Kiosk Adjacent to Mill House (Grade II; list entry no: 1264047)



Figure 12 Post Office & Village Shop



Figure 13 Old Scantlings



Figure 14 Pett's Cottage, Armond House and House Immediately to North East



Figure 15 Whispers



Figure 16 K6 Telephone Kiosk by Mill House

These buildings, structures and features have been listed due to their special architectural or historic interest as defined by Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and *Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings* (The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018). Further information about the listing process can be found on the Historic England [website](#).



## Listed Buildings and features

The rarer and older a building is, the more likely it is to be listed. As a general principle, all buildings that pre-date 1700 and are in a relatively intact condition will be listed, as will all buildings that date between 1750 and 1850. The selectivity is increased for buildings that date between 1850 and 1945. There is a strict criterion for buildings built after 1945; buildings less than thirty years old are unlikely to be listed unless they have been deemed as exceptional examples of their type.

Listed buildings are considered under three Grades in England. Grade I listed buildings are of exceptional interest and make up approximately 2.5% of all listings; Grade II\* listed buildings are of more than special interest and constitute 5.8% of listed buildings; Grade II listings are of special interest and most common, making up 91.7% of all listings.<sup>1</sup>

Listed buildings are protected by government legislation and there are policies in place to ensure that any alterations to a listed building will not affect its special interest. It is possible to alter, extend or demolish a listed building but this requires listed building consent and sometimes planning permission.

Great Oakley contains a number of listed buildings which reinforces its special interest as an historic settlement. The earliest listed building within the Conservation Area dates from the fifteenth century. There is a preponderance of houses dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, often with later phases reflecting a history of additions and alterations, reflecting a period of prosperity for the village. The twentieth century is represented by the listed telephone kiosk.

The majority of listed buildings are in residential use, reflecting Great Oakley's history as a small market village. The variety of the building ages provides a rich and layered representation of the development of domestic English vernacular architecture. It demonstrates how the town has developed and altered over time and reflects the long history of Great Oakley as an historic settlement.

<sup>1</sup> Historic England, Listed Buildings <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>

## 2.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Every building, space and feature within a conservation area makes a contribution to its character and special interest, be it positive, neutral or negative.

There are many positive buildings within the Conservation Area that contribute to the Conservation Area's significance. The buildings that reflect local character and distinctiveness collectively define the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and make a positive contribution to its special interest.

The following buildings, located in character area one, have been identified as key unlisted buildings by virtue of their derivation, scale, form and appearance.

Heritage assets are defined in Planning Policy as 'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.'<sup>2</sup>

Not all heritage assets are listed, and just because a building is not included on the list does not mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other structures of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area's historic interest and its general appearance.

Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the local area. At present there is no approved local list for Tendring District.

<sup>2</sup> NPPF, p73

This document has identified key unlisted heritage assets which, by virtue of their derivation, form and appearance, make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and could be considered for local listing in the future; these are identified in the analysis of character in Section 3 of this appraisal and are summarised below. This list is not exhaustive, and further buildings may be identified as non-designated heritage assets through the planning application process.

Buildings and features within the Conservation Area which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets include:

- The Three Cups, High Street
- Mill House Cottages (2 – 5 High Street)
- Cambria House, High Street
- Apple Tree Cottage and No. 2, High Street
- Pillbox outside Apple Tree Cottage, High Street
- Romaric, Queen Street
- The Maybush Inn, Farm Road



Figure 17 Pillbox outside Apple Tree Cottage, High Street



Figure 18 Mill House Cottages (2-5 High Street)



Figure 19 The Three Cups, High Street



Figure 20 The Maybush Inn, Farm Road (now a dwelling)



## 2.6 Heritage at Risk

The Historic England Heritage at Risk Register includes Grade I or Grade II\* listed buildings and monuments, Grade II listed places of worship, and conservation areas that have been assessed and found to be at risk.

There are no buildings or features within the Great Oakley Conservation Area which are on the Historic England Heritage at Risk register.

## 2.7 Archaeological Potential

There has been no recorded archaeological fieldwork within or surrounding the Conservation Area. Much of the information on the archaeology of the area is based on findspot evidence, aerial photography, and historic mapping.

The survival of the medieval and post medieval street plan of Great Oakley, and the listed buildings are an important, well-preserved resource. Few areas of open ground survive within the nucleated village, however there is an area of undeveloped land north of the High Street. Open areas within the Conservation Area are likely to contain evidence relating to the historic settlement; historic mapping shows that some buildings predating c.1840 had been demolished by the late nineteenth century. Medieval and later settlement evidence is more likely to be sited along the street frontage; the garden areas may also contain evidence for ancillary activity, such as wells, cess-pits, yards and middens, as well as small-scale industrial activity.

The soils within the Conservation Area are likely to be acidic in places and not beneficial to the survival of bone or organic material, however there is likely to be good survival of pottery, ceramic material and metal.

## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Character Analysis

#### Summary

Great Oakley is a small, compact and predominantly residential conservation area. It is unusual within Tendring District as an early nucleated village, clustered around the central marketplace, rather than being a dispersed settlement around a green or along a road. Few villages of this size would have had a marketplace, as these are more commonly associated with larger towns, suggesting that Great Oakley was likely to have been a focal point in the surrounding agricultural districts because of its market. The core of the Conservation Area is a tightly knit pattern of vernacular houses, grouped around the small scale road network, which developed parallel and to the south of the main road, reflecting the area's medieval origins and historic development.

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Figure 21 View of the Maybush Inn (now a dwelling) looking south-east down Farm Road



Figure 22 View looking north-east along Queen Street



Figure 23 Great Oakley High Street looking south-west



Figure 24 Apple Tree Cottage and No. 2, High Street with pillbox in foreground

The core of the Conservation Area is characterised by a good survival of historic buildings, nine of which are listed at Grade II. Buildings within the Conservation Area are predominantly one and a half or two storeys in height. The majority are timber-framed and rendered, but there are also examples of red brick construction. Render colours are varied including pale green, salmon pink and cream, but they are predominantly muted, pastel shades. There is a varied roofscape across the Conservation Area with several thatched buildings reflecting the local vernacular. The majority of houses are covered with clay tiles. There are also examples of pantiles, especially on outbuildings, and slate roof coverings.

Many buildings front directly onto the pavement, creating a dense streetscape. Some houses are set back from the street, behind front gardens, such as Grade II listed Holly Trees. Private gardens provide welcome patches of greenery, which help to soften the streetscape and make a positive contribution to the rural, green character and appearance of the area.



## Land Usage

The Conservation Area is predominantly residential. There are a handful of commercial buildings remaining, including a convenience store on the High Street, the Maybush Inn (a former community owned pub, now converted), and the One Stop Steel Shop next to Forge Cottage on the High Street, previously a garage services business.

The former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was converted into residential use in c. 2010 and is now called the Old Prayer House. The former Three Cups pub, a substantial red brick building of six bays at the eastern end of the High Street, is also now in residential use.

At the time of the 1897 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 6), Great Oakley is shown as a bustling commercial centre, with two smithies, two hotels/public houses, a steam mill and a windmill for corn, a Post Office and two Methodist Chapels. The subsequent decline in business and community uses reflects changing employment patterns in the wider district, the availability of personal transport and the concentration of shopping uses into larger towns.

## Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm

The marketplace forms the core of the Conservation Area. Historically it was an open space surrounded by buildings, as shown on the 1777 Chapman and André map (Figure 4). By the time of the tithe apportionment in 1840 (Figure 5), several buildings had been constructed on a central island, splitting the marketplace in two. One of these buildings, Whispers, is now Grade II listed.

Today, the open space is still legible to the east and west of the central island, although it is now given over to parking. The surface finish is tarmac with a paved brick strip around the war memorial with a bench and some planters.



Figure 25 Great Oakley central marketplace

Two lantern-type streetlights add to the historic character of the central square. The open space of the marketplace contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a historic market village and provides a setting for the attractive cluster of surrounding historic buildings grouped around the market square.

The main form of landscaping within the Conservation Area is derived from private gardens of residential houses. These provide welcome patches of greenery, including some mature trees and hedges, which help to soften the streetscape. These gardens make a positive contribution to the rural, green character and appearance of the area; the domestic landscaping reflects the residential character of the Conservation Area.



Figure 26 Holly Tree House, High Street. Private gardens make an important contribution to the rural, green character of the Conservation Area



Figure 27 The gravelled yard in front of the former Methodist Church, opposite the central marketplace

At the east end of the High Street, the majority of buildings front directly onto the road, creating a dense urban realm. Where modern buildings on the north side of the road are set back, the front gardens are typically narrow strips with a few shrubs.

Towards the west end of the High Street, there are several buildings which are set well back from the road with front gardens or yards. Apple Tree Cottage, No.2 and Oaklands, on the south side of the High Street, have generous front gardens with grassed areas and some mature trees providing an attractive gateway to the Conservation Area. The back garden of Whispers, in the central island between the High Street and Queen Street, comprises of mature vegetation, which provides an important focal point in the approach to the Conservation Area from the south-west. The mature planting softens the streetscape and provides a green oasis in the centre of the Conservation Area, contributing to the character of the High Street and Queen Street.

Holly Tree House and Oakleigh on the north side of the High Street are set back behind long front gardens with lawns and several mature trees, adding to the looser grain and more rural character of this part of the High Street. In contrast, the front yard of the former Methodist Church lacks any vegetation. Historically, there were buildings fronting onto the High Street here, but these were subsequently cleared, and the area became a front garden for the church. It was gravelled over when the building was converted into residential use, creating an unattractive area of hard landscaping opposite the marketplace. The lack of greenery creates a featureless gap site at the centre of the Conservation Area, detracting from its character.

Along Back Lane, small private gardens, set behind low hedges and fences, provide pockets of greenery, punctuating the streetscape. In some places, garden space has been paved over for car parking, which is a detracting element, but the Conservation Area generally retains a verdant green character, typical of a historic rural village.

Beyond the historic core of High Street, Queen Street and Back Lane, there is a looser grain of development, with detached houses set within more generous plots. At the northern edge of the Conservation Area, large private gardens form a green buffer, with mature hedgerows bordering the agricultural fields beyond.



Figure 28 Vernacular materials including painted render, weatherboarding, clay tiles and pantiles and red brick boundary walls

### Local Building Materials and Details

The Conservation Area has a high density of historic buildings, especially along the south side of the High Street and around Queen Street and Back Lane. Therefore, the traditional and local building materials are predominantly historic in character.

#### Built form and materials

The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are timber-framed and rendered, but there are also examples of red brick construction, such as the former Wesleyan Methodist Church or Mill House Cottages on the High Street, and weatherboarding, such as Grade II listed Florence Cottage on Back Lane.



Figure 29 Timber weatherboarding and clay pantiles on outbuilding with picket fencing

Weatherboarding is also used on some side elevations and gable ends, such as No. 6 High Street. Some brick buildings have been painted, such as Jessica, at the south-western end of the marketplace. Render colours are varied including pale green, salmon pink and cream, but they are predominantly muted, pastel shades. Roughcast render has been used on some buildings, such as Grade II listed Maltings Farm.

These traditional materials make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the area and give the village a sense of cohesion. Some twentieth century buildings at the southern part of the Conservation Area introduce materials which are at odds with the local vernacular, such as yellow or buff brick and concrete tiles.



Figure 30 Grade II listed Florence Cottage with weatherboarded walls, clay pantile gambrel roof and boundary hedge

### Roofscape and materials

Buildings within the Conservation Area are predominantly one and a half or two storeys in height; this contributes to the varied roofscape across the Conservation Area. There is also an assortment of different roof forms and materials. There are several thatched buildings within the Conservation Area, including No. 2 High Street, Rayners Cottage on Farm Road, and Grade II listed Old Scantlings, reflecting rustic vernacular architecture.



Figure 31 Grade II listed Maltings Farmhouse, a timber-framed and roughcast rendered house with fifteenth-century origins

The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are covered with clay plain tiles, some of which have been replaced with modern concrete tiles, which detract from the architectural interest of the Conservation Area. Clay pantiles are also evident, especially on outbuildings such as on the single storey outbuilding by Whispers on the High Street. Slate is used on a number of nineteenth century buildings such as those at the eastern end of the High Street and is also present on some twentieth century buildings. Some later twentieth century buildings, such as Kimberleigh on Farm Road, are covered with concrete tiles, which detract from the vernacular character of the Conservation Area.

Roofs are pitched, several with attractive gambrel roofs, such as Grade II listed Florence Cottage, Holly Trees and Larch House. Other vernacular details include gablets on Grade II listed Maltings Farmhouse.

Rooflights are not a feature of the historic roofscape and are mostly absent within the Conservation Area. Where rooflights have been introduced on more modern infill buildings, they detract from the historic character of the area.

#### Doors and windows

Many buildings display modest historic detailing, such as timber sash or casement windows and dormers. Rose Cottage on Back Lane possesses an attractive pair of shallow curved bay windows. Brick buildings display features including decorative brick banding, flat or arched brick lintels over windows and doorways, and decorative toothed brick cornices. While many buildings have had modern porches added, there are a number of surviving historic doorways with narrow projecting porches, often supported by decorative brackets, such as on Grade II listed Mill House.

Across the Conservation Area, many of the traditional timber windows and doors have been replaced with uPVC, which undermines the historic character of the area. This is particularly apparent on the Red House by the marketplace at the corner of the High Street and Farm Road; as a focal building in views along the High Street, the introduction of unsympathetic uPVC windows makes a negative contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

#### Boundary treatments

There is a variety of boundary treatments within the Conservation Area, giving little consistency to the streetscape. Traditional boundary treatments are dwarf walls in red brick, low picket fencing and hedgerows, which make a positive contribution to the rural character of the Conservation Area.

There are also examples of iron railings, a more urban style of boundary treatment, but often softened with planting behind, which helps to provide greenery to the streetscape.

There are also examples of close boarded fencing, a twentieth century boundary treatment which makes a negative contribution to the historic character of the area when applied to front boundaries, such as by Coy Cottage on Farm Road, but is generally neutral when surrounding back gardens.



Figure 32 Grade II listed Mill House



Figure 33 Cambria House, High Street

### Contribution by Key Unlisted Buildings

There are numerous buildings that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area; however, some are considered to make a key contribution. These have been listed in Section 2.5 and are discussed below.

#### Maybush Inn

The Maybush Inn was first recorded in 1769. It is of vernacular construction with six bays and a clay tiled roof, but the façade has been reworked with render panels separated by courses and vertical strips of bricks, now all painted one colour, which obscures this architectural detail. Its architectural interest has been eroded with the replacement of the traditional timber windows with unsympathetic uPVC units, but as the last operational public house in the village, it possesses historic and communal interest as a focal point for the local community. In 2016 it was taken on by the local community and is run as a co-operative pub.

#### Three Cups

The former Three Cups public house is located at the eastern end of the High Street and is now in residential use. It is a substantial red brick building of six bays with plain white rendered gables and canted bay window. It possesses historic interest as a former public house and hotel, illustrating the historic development of the village. The name refers to the emblem of the Salters' Company, reflecting the importance of salt production as a local industry. It is a large but rather austere Victorian building, which provides an effective termination of the north side of the High Street, but its architectural interest has been undermined by the replacement of all its windows with uPVC units and a modern slate roof.

### Apple Tree Cottage and No. 2, High Street

Apple Tree Cottage and No.2 High Street are an attractive pair of vernacular cottages at the western gateway of the Conservation Area. They are timber-framed and plastered with multi-paned timber sash windows and pitched dormers. The roof of No. 2 is thatched. Their well-stocked front gardens surrounded by rustic picket fencing contribute to the rural charm of the area. The interest of Apple Tree Cottage is heightened by the survival of the Second World War pillbox in its front garden.

### Pillbox

The Second World War pillbox which survives in the garden of Apple Tree Cottage has been identified as a particularly good example with rare surviving features including, uniquely in Essex, part of the cable barrier anchored through the side wall. On grounds of condition, location, typicality of type and rarity of the integral anti-tank feature, every effort should be made to ensure the continued survival of this important part of local history and heritage.

### Mill House Cottages (2 – 5 High Street)

Mill House Cottages are a range of four red brick cottages at the eastern end of the Conservation Area. Each is two bays wide, with simple detailing, such as rubbed brick lintels over windows and doorways, under a slate roof with red brick chimneys. The group is well-preserved and retains their timber sash windows and timber six-panelled doors, preserving the uniformity of this modest terrace.

### Romarc, Queen Street

Romarc is a well-preserved vernacular cottage of two storeys with a rendered elevation and clay pantile roof. The historic six-panelled front door is surmounted with a triangular pediment resting on brackets which adds architectural interest to the front elevation. The attractive vernacular detailing makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. It shares pan tiled roof and picket fencing around the narrow front garden with its neighbour, whose architectural interest has been eroded with the loss of its original windows and front door.



Figure 34 Romarc and neighbouring houses, Queen Street



Figure 35 Pillbox outside Apple Tree Cottage, High Street



### Cambria House, High Street

Cambria House occupies a prominent position in the Conservation Area at the eastern apex of the central island by the marketplace. It is a substantial building of three bays with a colour-washed rendered façade and double-pile hipped clay tile roof with red brick chimneys. It retains its historic timber sash windows, six-panelled door and narrow porch resting on decorative brackets. It makes a positive contribution to the character of the area because of its architectural detailing and prominence within the Conservation Area. There have been some unsympathetic alterations such as a damp-proof course injected into the brick plinth and the removal of the historic red brick boundary wall facing the High Street to facilitate parking, reducing the sense of enclosure and creating an awkward gap site.

### Other positive contributors

In addition to those above, which could be considered for local listing in the future, the following buildings are considered to be important contributors to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### Former Methodist Church, High Street

The former Methodist Church with associated cottage on the High Street forms an interesting grouping and possesses communal significance as a former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. The cottage is an attractive brick building, of two storeys with small-paned casement windows and a tall central stack. The original chapel is two storeys, with rendered walls under a hipped slate roof. A forward extension with a red brick gable is the most prominent feature from the street and is utilitarian in appearance. The conversion to residential has included some unfortunate alterations including the truncation of the round headed window facing onto the High Street and the paving over of the front yard.

### Jessica, High Street

At the north-eastern end of the central island by Cambria House is Jessica, of unusual design, with a bold quadrant outer corner which was presumably a former entrance to commercial premises. Its architectural interest has been diminished by the insertion of unsympathetic uPVC windows and the overpainting of the exterior brickwork, but its prominence in the centre of the Conservation Area and distinctive design makes it a positive contributor to the character of the area.

### Wesbroom Villas, Back Lane

Wesbroom Villas is a red brick building in Flemish bond of two-storeys with attics with eight-over-eight timber sash windows and a characterful tiled central porch supported by slender timber pillars with twinned front doors. It makes an elegant contribution to the streetscape of Back Lane.

### Rayners Cottage, Farm Road

Rayners Cottage, the last house in the area down Farm Road, is a good example of a surviving vernacular cottage within the Conservation Area. It is timber-framed and plastered, of one storey with attics with a thatched roof and a modern tiled extension to the north. It is set well back from the road in a garden with mature trees, fronted by a modern brick wall with rendered panels and contributes positively through its modest vernacular architecture.

### Surgery, High Street

The Surgery, marked on the 1897 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 6) as 'Bleak House', is a large two-storey, three-bay house of red brick with white brick dressings under a hipped slate roof with prominent original chimney stacks. It occupies an isolated position, set back from the roadway in a large plot at the gateway of the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, which sets it apart from its surroundings. While its appearance has been somewhat diminished by the insertion of uPVC windows, but the building is still considered to be of significance to the Conservation Area owing to its scale and architectural interest, although the prominent close-boarded fence detracts from the approach into the High Street.



### 3.2 Views

Key views are identified on Figure 36. The views included in this assessment are not exhaustive; for example, there are also glimpsed and kinetic views from streets and footpaths across the Conservation Area that contribute to the character and appearance, particularly those towards the agricultural landscape that forms its setting, and there may be other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

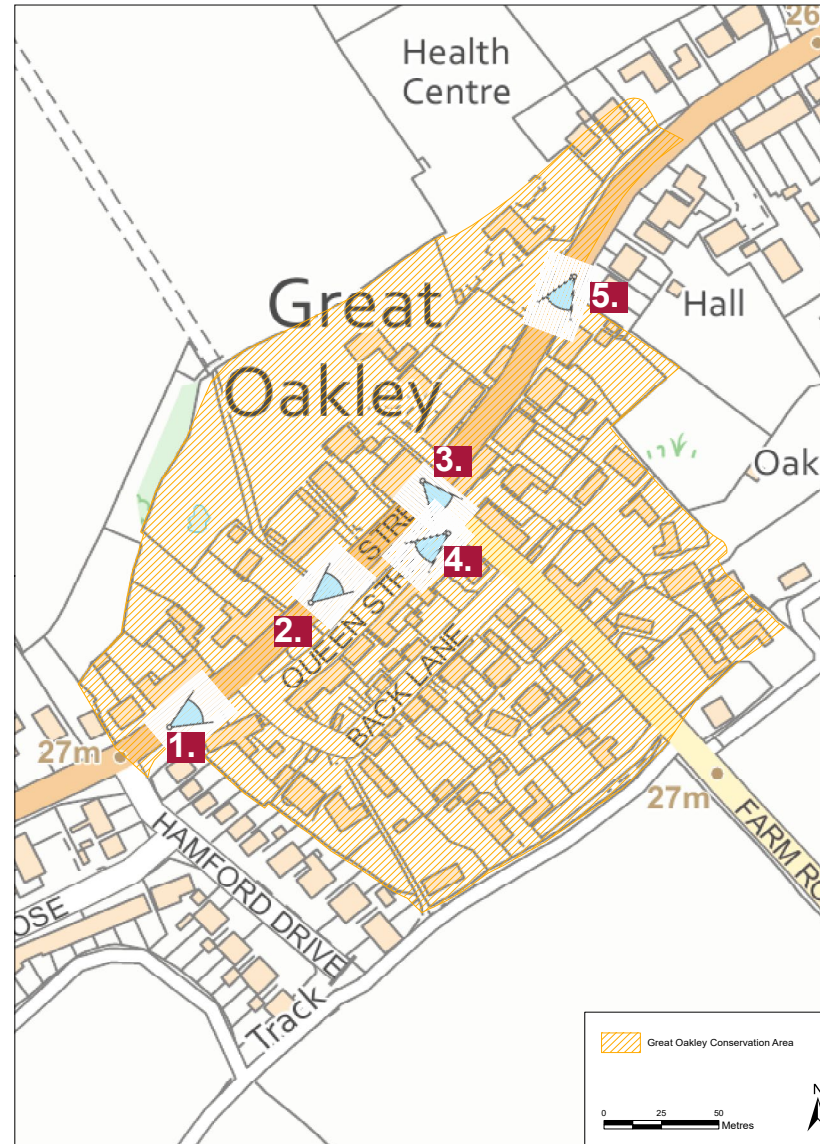


Figure 36 Key Views Map



Figure 37 North-east along the High Street

### View 1: North-east along the High Street

This view is from the western edge of the Conservation Area. The cluster of vernacular buildings at this end of the High Street announces the transition of the historic core of the Conservation Area. In the foreground, the Second World War pill box is an interesting historic survival, while the mature vegetation in the front gardens of the south side of the High Street and the garden of Whispers provides welcome greenery, emphasising the rural charm of the Conservation Area.

### View 2: East towards the marketplace and war memorial

This view is towards the historic marketplace and the heart of the Conservation Area. The different ages and styles of buildings, with their diversity of building heights, render colours and varied roofscape provides an attractive cluster of historic buildings grouped around the open marketplace. The Red House is a key building in this view, occupying a prominent corner position at the junction of High Street and Farm Road. Although in a degraded condition, it is a positive contributor because of its prominent location and vernacular architecture. The three-storey modern terrace on the north side of the marketplace, constructed of buff brick, is a dominating feature which detracts because of its height and uncharacteristic buff brick material.



Figure 38 South-east down Farm Road

### View 3: South-east down Farm Road

This view down Farm Road is dominated by the Maybush Inn, a key unlisted building within the Conservation Area because of its history and long-standing community use. The rural character of the Conservation Area is expressed through the lack of pavement, the varied width of the roadway and the mature trees terminating the view. The deteriorated condition of the Red House on the corner and the gap site between it and the Maybush Inn are detracting features.



Figure 39 South-west along Queen Street

### View 4: South-west along Queen Street

The focal point of this view is the war memorial flanked by cast iron bollards, giving the central square a sense of formality, although its setting is somewhat dominated by parked vehicles in the marketplace. On the south side of the marketplace is an important range of Grade II listed buildings: Larch House, Armond House and Pett's Cottage, a varied range with a complex development history. This view allows an appreciation of the vernacular character of the Conservation Area, expressed through the row of historic houses with their attractive detailing, the narrowness and informality of the carriageway, and glimpses through to other buildings, softened by incidental planting in private gardens.



Figure 40 South-west along High Street

### View 5: South-west along High Street

In the foreground of this view is Grade II listed Mill House, which forms a charming entrance to the village from the north-east. Its characterful stepped parapet, historic red brick low front boundary wall and the mature trees in the front garden are important elements in the street scene. The gentle curve of the High Street draws the eye into the historic centre of the Conservation Area. The former Three Cups public house on the north side of the High Street, now in residential use, is an important surviving building in the history of the village, although somewhat degraded by the insertion of inappropriate uPVC windows and the replacement of its front boundary fence with an unsightly parking area.

### 3.3 Setting of the Conservation Area

The NPPF describes the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

Historic England Good Practice Advice 3: Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) indicates that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. It goes on to note *'Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset'*.

Historic England's advice note on setting includes a:

*'(non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance'. As the advice note states, 'only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of a particular relevance to an asset.'*

This checklist has been used to inform this assessment.

The Grade I listed Church of All Saints is located outside the boundary of the Conservation Area, to the west of the village, in an isolated location. This is characteristic in Essex, where the church typically served a rural parish of dispersed farmsteads and could often be located at a distance from the main settlement. Although an important building in the history of the village, it has not been recommended for inclusion within the Conservation Area because of its secluded location and distance from the historic core, which means that it is not experienced as part of the main historic settlement. It is therefore not discussed in detail in this appraisal because it lies outside the Conservation Area, but it forms an important part of the wider setting.

To the east and west, the Conservation Area is enclosed by modern, twentieth century development, while to the north and south the distinct boundary between its historic development extents and the agricultural land beyond is still clearly legible.

The rural, agrarian landscape is a defining feature of the Conservation Area's setting, enabling Great Oakley to be understood and appreciated as an isolated agricultural settlement which remained largely unchanged until the mid-twentieth century. Therefore, the open and undeveloped nature of the landscape, especially to the north and south of the historic core, makes an important contribution to the historic significance of the Great Oakley Conservation Area.

To the east, the setting of the Conservation Area is formed by a ribbon of modern post-war development. The linear form of the modern development along the main road has affected the character of modern-day Great Oakley, which is no longer experienced as a small, tightly knit nucleated village, but instead as a larger, more loose-grained, dispersed settlement. The sprawl of modern development detracts from the understanding of the historic extents of the village.



Figure 41 Modern development to the east of the Conservation Area



Figure 42 The southern boundary of the Conservation Area is clearly legible, bounded by agricultural fields

The southern boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by mature hedgerows bounded by a footpath with agricultural fields beyond. While there has been some modern development within the Conservation Area, infilling the southern end of the area, the historic boundary of the village is clearly legible. The agricultural fields beyond contribute positively to the setting of the Conservation Area as the agricultural setting with dispersed farmsteads and historic routes through the landscape provides the rural context of the historic settlement.

To the west, the Conservation Area is enclosed by unremarkable twentieth century houses along Hamford Drive. The approach along the High Street from the west is lined by a group of modern detached houses in a vernacular style. This residential growth demonstrates the expansion of Great Oakley in the twentieth century but undermines the legibility of the historic extents of the village.



Figure 43 Post-war housing along Hamford Drive forms the setting of the Conservation Area to the west

The northern boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by large private gardens, delineated by mature hedgerows bordering the agricultural fields beyond that provide a clear distinction between the village and its wider rural setting. There are views out across the rolling agrarian landscape, providing a visual link between the Conservation Area and the wider landscape. The open fields make a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area as a rural market village serving the wider agricultural landscape.

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Figure 44 Private gardens at the northern end of the Conservation Area provide a transition to the agricultural landscape beyond



Figure 45 Views north from the Conservation Area across the agricultural landscape

## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive, and neither are the opportunities identified unique to Great Oakley, with many being shared with other Conservation Areas.

### 4.1 Inappropriate alterations

#### Doors and windows

A key concern across the majority of the Conservation Area is the alterations to windows and doors. The replacement of timber windows with inappropriate uPVC windows has a harmful impact on the historic significance of the buildings and detracts from the character of the Conservation Area and, therefore, its special interest. The location of doors and windows within a historic building is also an essential part of its character, and by altering their position, or blocking them up, can detract from its appearance.

Historic England's Traditional Windows Their Care, Repair and Upgrading (2017) advises that *'the loss of traditional windows from our older buildings poses one of the major threats to our heritage. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas. They are an integral part of the design of older buildings and can be important artefacts in their own right... The distinctive appearance of historic hand-made glass is not easily imitated in modern glazing.'* The loss of historic joinery such as sash and casement windows and panelled doors results in a degree of harm to the significance of an historic building, and the loss of crown or other early glass can also cause harm to the significance of buildings. Historic England's 2017 advice recommends that *'surviving historic fenestration is an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved and repaired whenever possible.'*

Since the previous appraisal was compiled in 2006, several historic buildings have had their windows replaced with unsympathetic uPVC units, leading to an erosion of the historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area. This is particularly apparent on the south-east side of the High Street, where the majority of traditional windows have been replaced, diminishing its historic character.



Figure 46 The insertion of inappropriate uPVC windows has harmed the historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area



Where draughts are causing an issue, the repair and refurbishment of windows with interventions such as draught stripping can improve the thermal performance of historic windows in the first instance, along with the use of shutters and heavy curtains. Alternatively, modern technology allows for well-designed secondary glazing; special timber casements that can be constructed and fixed to the interior of the frame using sections and mouldings to match the primary glazing. These less intrusive methods are advisable within the Conservation Area; however, it is recommended that advice is sought from the Council before any changes to windows or doors are made to ensure the optimum solution.

To preserve the special interest of the Conservation Area, historic windows should be retained. Any proposals for the replacement of windows should avoid the loss of any historic fabric and should be appropriate to the host building. The application of uPVC windows will not be supported.

### Inappropriate materials

Historic roof coverings have been replaced with inappropriate concrete tiles in some buildings across the Conservation Area and should be reinstated with traditional materials wherever possible.

Overpainting of brickwork and the use of cementitious render on facades has resulted in the loss of original architectural features. Removal of overpainting to reveal historic brickwork would be an enhancement to the character of the area. Cementitious render can cause longer-term problems in historic timber-framed buildings; where historic buildings have been rendered with inappropriate materials, the reinstatement of traditional lime plaster would be considered beneficial.



**Figure 47 Inappropriate materials including yellow brick and concrete tiles on modern dwellings**

Some modern infill properties, such as those along Farm Road, have also used materials which are inappropriate for the area, such as yellow brick and concrete roof tiles, which erodes the character of Great Oakley. New developments should employ traditional materials such as render, red brick or weatherboarding for walls and clay tile or natural slate for roof coverings. This has been successfully followed at the Maltings Farm development, which uses traditional vernacular materials to preserve the character of the Conservation Area, such as clay pantiles, red brick, painted render and weatherboarding.

### Boundary treatments

There is a wide variety of boundary treatments in the Conservation Area. Dwarf walls in red brick, hedges and low picket fences add to the character of the area as a rural village. Metal railings are less suitable in a rural context as they are a more urban feature. If paired with well-grown hedgerows, however, they can contribute to the verdant, green character of the area. Existing historic boundary walls make an important contribution to the character of the area and should be maintained and reinstated wherever possible. Where inappropriate boundary treatments have been installed, these should be replaced where possible with boundaries that are with more in keeping with the character of the area.

In several places, modern metal gates have been erected which are oversized and anachronistic, failing to respond to the vernacular character of the Conservation Area.

Removing front boundaries to create car parking should be avoided as it reduces the sense of enclosure on the streetscape, reduces the amount of green space and erodes the special character of the Conservation Area.



Figure 48 Inappropriate modern metal gates to a vernacular dwelling on Farm Road



Figure 49 Removing historic boundary treatments to create parking, such as by Cambria House on the High Street, erodes the special character of the Conservation Area



Figure 50 There is a lack of defined front boundary on modern development on the west side of Farm Road, reducing the sense of enclosure and leading to a blurring between the public and private realms

### Solar panels

A number of buildings within the Conservation Area have been fitted with solar panels on their roofs, including several modern buildings at the eastern end of the High Street. While solar panels are an important element in the move towards sustainable energy sources, they are a modern intervention which can be visually intrusive, introducing large expanses of dark, reflective surfaces onto the traditional roofscape of the Conservation Area which are at odds with its vernacular character and appearance. Some traditional roofscapes, such as thatched roofs and those on listed buildings, are unsuitable for solar panels. Generally, solar panels should be confined to rear roof slopes or secondary roof pitches which face away from the main thoroughfares or placed on outbuildings, to reduce their impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

### Other alterations

Throughout the Conservation Area, there are examples of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions which can result in a cumulative impact on the area. The addition of modern equipment such as TV aerials and satellite dishes, extraction flues and air conditioning units to prominent street-facing or side elevations of buildings harms the historic character and appearance of the area.



Figure 51 Solar panels on modern dwellings can be intrusive to the traditional, vernacular roofscape of the Conservation Area when applied to front-facing roof pitches



Figure 52 Car parking along High Street blocks the pavement in some areas



Figure 53 Car parking dominates the central marketplace

#### 4.2 Car parking and traffic management

Great Oakley is compact and easily accessible by the main thoroughfare (B1414) travelling east to west. The footpaths from the wider landscape into the Conservation Area are well signposted and marked.

The streets and lanes within the Conservation Area are characteristically narrow, reflecting their historic origins. Farm Road, Queen Street and Back Lane lack dedicated pavements because of their narrowness, meaning that pedestrians must walk in the street, sharing the space with other road users.

As the main route through the village, the High Street is a relatively busy road. Parking is controlled along some stretches, but in other places cars are parked on the street, blocking the pavement in some areas. Because of the constraints on parking, there is pressure to provide off-street parking places, in some cases by removing front boundaries and gardens, leading to a degraded streetscape with reduced greenery.

The main areas of dedicated parking are in the former marketplace at the junction of the High Street with Back Lane and Farm Road. These provide valuable off-road parking spaces, but the presence of parked cars reduces the amenity of the open marketplace, creating a space which is dominated by vehicular traffic and views of stationary cars. This diminishes the setting of the handsome cluster of historic buildings in these areas.

Car parking impacts how the area is experienced and detracts from the historic character of the area. This is an issue faced by many Conservation Areas nationally and is not, therefore, unique to Great Oakley. The loss of front gardens to car parking and the creation of large areas of hardstanding should be avoided, as the planting in gardens is important in creating a softening effect on the streetscape and adds to the rural character of the area. There is also the opportunity to reduce car traffic and parking by exploring alternative solutions to car travel, for example through the promotion of sustainable transport solutions.



Figure 54 Modern development on the north side of the High Street



Figure 55 Post-war bungalows are an untraditional building type for the Conservation Area

### 4.3 Inappropriate modern development

There are some areas of modern infill development which are unsympathetic to their surroundings and do not respond to the traditional palette of materials or design, detailing and fenestration, eroding the historic character and appearance of Great Oakley. This is particularly the case at the southern end of the Conservation Area, which was historically an open field and has been infilled since the Conservation Area was first designated in 1973.

Examples of inappropriate modern development are considered to include:

- Modern development on the north side of the High Street, which is not in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area, due to inappropriate design and materials. This includes the three-storey modern terrace on the north side of the marketplace, constructed of buff brick, which detracts because of its height and uncharacteristic buff brick material. Its neighbours employ materials which are uncharacteristic in Great Oakley, such as tile hanging and half rendered facades at first floor level and the fenestration lacks proportion and symmetry. These houses are set back behind narrow gardens, contrasting with the historic urban grain of this area, and bounded by front railings which are overly urban for a rural Conservation Area.
- The One Stop Steel Shop on the High Street, which has a blank utilitarian frontage.
- Modern infill buildings, such as Farndale and Roseacre on Back Lane, which do not respond to local character.
- Post-war bungalows such Kimberleigh, at the junction of Back Lane and Farm Road, which are an untraditional building type for the Conservation Area.
- Modern development at the south end of the Conservation Area, between Farm Road and the western boundary of the Conservation Area; some of these, such as The Pyghtle and Brevelay, could be considered as detracting from the character and appearance of the area through their uncharacteristic materials and design.



#### 4.4 Neutral contributors

A notable area which makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Great Oakley Conservation Area is the modern development on the east side of the Conservation Area at Maltings Farm. This has been designed in accordance with Essex Design Guideline principles and employs traditional vernacular materials such as clay pantiles, red brick, painted render and weatherboarding effectively to preserve the character of the Conservation Area.

#### 4.5 Maintenance

While the Great Oakley Conservation Area is generally well maintained, there are several prominent buildings which have been impacted by a gradual decline in their condition due to lack of ongoing maintenance. The importance of preventative maintenance cannot be over-emphasised, as ongoing maintenance can not only limit, or even prevent, the need for repairs later, it will avoid the loss of original fabric and is cost-effective.<sup>3</sup>

The Red House, a prominent building in the streetscape at the junction of the High Street and Farm Road by the marketplace, is of particular concern. This has suffered the loss of its historic windows and replacement with poorly detailed uPVC units. It is in a state of disrepair with stained and peeling paintwork, cement render and decaying timber door. Exchanging the uPVC windows with suitable timber replacements and carrying out appropriate repairs and maintenance would enable this focal building to make a positive contribution to the area.

There are some examples of other maintenance issues across the area, which are common in Conservation Areas, such as the deterioration of paintwork, timber rot, installation of unsightly flues and cables, and loss of historic features.

<sup>3</sup> [Preventative Maintenance \(spab.org.uk\)](http://spab.org.uk)

There is an opportunity to monitor ongoing condition and maintenance issues across the Conservation Area by means of a regular baseline photographic survey. Going forward, this could be an opportunity for local groups and individuals to lead in, and there is scope for the Council to work in partnership with the community to undertake ongoing assessments such as this.

#### 4.6 Colour palette

The Conservation Area is characterised by its combination of red brick and painted render facades. Render colours are generally cream or muted, pale shades, reflecting the traditional palette of colours for historic buildings, which were based on natural pigments. While a range of façade colours can give a pleasing variety to the streetscape, the introduction of inappropriate modern colours or an overly-strident colour palette would detract from the historic character of the area and could have a cumulative impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area. Generally, colour choices should reflect the historic palette to preserve the local distinctiveness and should respond to the age, status and architectural style of the building. Appropriate paint types which are compatible with the historic fabric should be used. Where lime render survives, paints which are vapour permeable such as limewash or mineral paints should be used to avoid causing damage to the fabric of the historic building by trapping moisture within the façade.

#### 4.7 Public realm

The main area of public realm within the Conservation Area is the marketplace and war memorial. The war memorial was restored by the Parish Council in 2009 and is in good condition. This area is generally well maintained, with good quality streetlights, cast iron bollards and bench which are historic in character and make a positive contribution to the area. Small pots with flowers enhance the public realm. The placing of the litter bin could be reconsidered as it detracts from views of the war memorial; it would be beneficial to move it to beside the bench. This area is somewhat dominated by traffic and parked cars, which reduces its appeal as a space to sit.

##### Street Furniture (Lampposts, benches, signage, bins, bike stands, bollards etc.)

Street furniture is fairly limited within the Conservation Area but is generally of reasonable quality. The bus shelter is a small, well designed timber design which incorporates the stop signage, reducing street clutter.

The pair of concrete bollards outside the Red House on the junction of High Street and Farm Road are constructed of untraditional materials and one is damaged. It would be beneficial to replace them with cast iron bollards such as those around the war memorial, which would improve the consistency of appearance of the public realm.

Other than the two lantern-style streetlights in the marketplace, the occasional streetlights within the Conservation Area are the standard modern grey design, which are fairly unobtrusive. Signage is restrained and there is little modern street clutter, helping to preserve the historic character of the area.



Figure 56 Street furniture at the marketplace includes benches, cast iron bollards and streetlights, bench and flower arrangements



The K6 phonebox outside Mill House is an attractive historic feature and is Grade II listed. It is showing some signs of neglect however, with peeling paintwork and moss growing on it. If it is redundant for telephone use, it would be beneficial to find an alternative use for this characterful historic feature, such as housing a defibrillator or as a miniature library, which would contribute to its long-term conservation.

No bike stands were observed in the area. These could be installed in the marketplace area to encourage alternative forms of transport.

### **Hard Landscaping**

Pavements along the High Street are tarmac-covered and in relatively poor condition, with areas of surface spalling and patched repairs where services have been installed. There is scope for enhancement by improving the surface treatment of the pavement by introducing pavers instead of a tarmac finish. There is also potential for enhancement of the parking area at the junction of the High Street and Queen Street. At present, it is tarmac covered and lacks definition. Introducing a high-quality surface material such as stone setts would help to delineate the former marketplace area and improve the appearance of the public realm.

### **Trees and Planting**

Trees and planting within the Conservation Area are predominantly within private gardens. There are no street trees. Private gardens therefore make an important contribution to the rural character of the Conservation Area by providing green spaces that soften the urban realm. However, trees and greenery in private gardens can be vulnerable to removal and loss.

Trees are protected under Conservation Area legislation that requires the local authority to be notified of any proposed work to a tree in a Conservation Area. Consent is required for work to trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Several areas of private gardens have been degraded within the last few years, eroding the verdant, rural character of the Conservation Area. For example, the space in front of the former Methodist Church on the High Street was formerly grassed over with a large weeping willow tree forming a focal point in views along the High Street and an attractive setting for the marketplace on the opposite side of the road. When the building was converted into residential use, the tree was removed, and the front yard given over to gravel hardstanding. This has created a gap site at the centre of the Conservation Area. The parking area provided is overly large and it would be beneficial to return part of it to garden use. Planting a hedge along the front boundary wall would help to soften the streetscape and reintroduce some welcome greenery to this area.

Similarly, part of the front garden by the Three Cups has been recently removed. The boundary fence and mature greenery has been removed and the area tarmacked over for parking, with a set of utilitarian gates which are out of keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. This has created an unsightly gap site at the gateway of the Conservation Area, reducing the sense of enclosure provided by the boundary fencing and diminishing the verdant green character of the area, detracting from the aesthetic interest of this part of the Conservation Area. It would be beneficial to restore a front boundary with hedging here, locating a small area of parking behind the boundary, as existed previously.





Figure 57 Convenience store on High Street

#### 4.8 Shop frontages

There are few historic shop frontages surviving within the Conservation Area, which is now mostly in residential use. The Grade II listed former Post Office and Village Shop building on the High Street is undergoing maintenance to preserve its historic features and improve its appearance, including the repair of the pair of shallow bay shopfront windows facing onto the High Street.

The Convenience Store at 9-10 High Street has suffered some unsympathetic alterations, most noticeably the overpainting of the red brick façade, leading to loss of historic detailing and lack of coherence with its neighbours. The large plastic signage blocks the lower part of one of the first floor windows, while the ground floor shop window is obscured with vinyl signage. These features detract from the character of the Conservation Area. Removal of the paint from the brickwork elevation, removal of the vinyl stickers and installation of a smaller painted timber sign would improve its appearance. This should be in line with the [Essex County Council's Shopfront Guidance](#).

In general, shop frontages should be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and utilise traditional, high-quality materials such as timber windows, doors and signage. Shop and commercial signage should be sympathetic to the historic character of the Conservation Area, using appropriate materials, colour palette and lettering. Internally illuminated signage is not characteristic of the Conservation Area and would not be supported.



## 5. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of opportunities for the Great Oakley Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This section builds on the opportunities identified in Section 4 and seeks to recommend management proposals which address these in both the short and long term.

### 5.1 Positive Management: Short term

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the local planning authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as building alterations or advertising signage which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works. The loss of original windows is a particular concern within the Great Oakley Conservation Area, as well as unsympathetic alterations such as the replacement of roof coverings with concrete tiles or the removal of front boundaries. It is recommended that an assessment and gazetteer is undertaken across the Conservation Area to ascertain the condition of historic buildings that have been impacted in this way.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Through the agreement of a standard good practice within the Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams and other landowners, long term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm, such as avoiding excessive road markings or signage and agreeing a standard street furniture within Conservation Areas to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced. This will have a long-term positive impact on the Great Oakley Conservation Area and ensure the preservation of characteristic features of the area.

#### Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

**All** applications and development proposals within the Conservation Area and its setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures or trees on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.



### Local Heritage List

A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF. Local Lists can be beneficial in ensuring the upkeep and maintenance of historic buildings that contribute to the character of the settlements.

There are several buildings and features within Great Oakley which make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area and are of sufficient quality to be considered for Local List status, as highlighted in Section 2.5. This indicates that a Local List may be beneficial to ensure the upkeep of key buildings which are significant to Great Oakley's history and character.

The exercise of creating a Local List would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding.

### Neutral and Negative Elements

Tendring Council must not allow for the quality of design to be impacted by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must, where possible, seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate historic features. It is also considered that poor quality or unsympathetic schemes do not preserve the special interest of the Conservation Area and therefore are discouraged, both within the Conservation Area and its setting; this is due to the potential impact to the character and appearance of the area.

### New Development

There are some opportunities within Great Oakley and its setting for development which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

Successful new development will:

- Relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings; and
- Use materials and building methods which are as high in quality of those used in existing buildings, including boundary treatments.

Tendring District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Ensuring large scale development schemes are referred to a Design Review Panel (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be in sympathy with the established character of the area. The



choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it is appropriate to a conservation area.

- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### Public Resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a conservation area. In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. A single Good Practice Design Guide on standard alterations such as windows, doors, rainwater goods, boundaries, roof extensions, signage and shopfronts will ensure inappropriate development does not continue to be the accepted norm.

- Provide guidance on appropriate design and materials for windows and doors, encouraging the retention or reinstatement of historic glazing patterns and door designs and the use of appropriate materials.
- Provide guidance on the traditional form of boundary treatments and encourage their reinstatement where they have been removed or compromised.
- Provide guidance on traditional roofing materials and encouraging the

reinstatement of good quality clay tiles and the removal of unsympathetic modern materials such as interlocking concrete tiles.

- Provide and update guidance relating to signage. This should address appropriate size and design, the extent and amount and associated lighting. All further planning applications and advert consent applications should be required to comply, where possible, with this standard, designed to help to restore the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and results in a loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of Great Oakley's built heritage.

Beyond the information board by the Second World War pillbox, there is no publicly available interpretation within the Conservation Area to improve understanding and awareness. An information board could be added by the central marketplace or near the Maybush Inn to increase awareness of Great Oakley's distinctive history and identity as an historic market village.

### Shop Frontages

There is potential to raise awareness of the importance of historic shopfronts and traditional signage and the contribution they make to the special interest of the Conservation Area through the production of information leaflets or web pages which provide guidance for shop owners on upkeep and maintenance of historic frontages.



### **Tall Buildings**

Buildings within the Conservation Area are typically one to two storeys, depending on the location and use of the building. The new terrace adjoining the site of the former Methodist Church rises to three storeys, which is unprecedented within the Conservation Area and gives these modern buildings undue prominence in the streetscape.

It is considered that the introduction of taller developments, both within the Conservation Area and within its wider setting, would be harmful to its historic character. Development should remain at two storeys to be appropriate to the area, or two storeys with attics as a maximum.

### **Tree Management**

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, all trees in Conservation Areas are afforded the same protection as a Tree Preservation Order. Trees which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council. Six weeks' notice has to be given to the council under S211 of the Act.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the Conservation Area, should be monitored and maintained appropriately. This will maintain the green, rural character of the area. Any tree that makes a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous), replaced with an appropriate new tree.

### **Twentieth Century Buildings**

There are some twentieth century developments which make a neutral or negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area. There is scope to enhance these sites and buildings through a considered design approach which can guide future improvements. Should opportunities for redevelopment arise in the future, high quality design should be pursued and encouraged through design guidance.



## 5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

The second set of proposals are also focused on positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

### Car Parking

This should begin with a car parking survey to establish the need both now and in the future. Once the level of necessary car parking has been established a landscape strategy should be created by the Council in conjunction with local stakeholders. Areas of concern are the High Street and the narrow thoroughfares of Queen Street and Back Lane, where lack of parking places pressure to remove boundaries and tarmac over gardens to provide parking space, eroding the character of the Conservation Area.

### Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed every five years to monitor change and inform management proposals.

### Conservation Area Boundary

The Conservation Area boundary has been reviewed within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2024) and *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management* (2018). It has been decided to retain the existing boundary of the Conservation Area which covers the historic core of the village.

The boundary should continue to be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

### Interpretation: Improved Understanding and Awareness

There is an interpretation board by the Second World War pillbox, but no other publicly available interpretation within the Conservation Area. There is scope for further interpretation within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding and awareness of its historic development and special interest. This would be an effective way to re-establish the identity of Great Oakley as a historic settlement. One key area which may benefit from interpretation is the area of public realm at the central marketplace near the war memorial, which is the historic centre of the Conservation Area. An information board could be added here to increase awareness of Great Oakley's distinctive history and identity as an historic market village.

### Opportunity Sites

There are some opportunity sites across the Conservation Area which, if sensitively redeveloped, may enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Sites which may provide opportunity for enhancement include negative contributors on the south-west side of Farm Road and the One Stop Steel Shop on the High Street.



### **Public Realm**

There is the opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through investment to improve the wider public realm. This can be achieved through continuing to improve and rationalise existing street furniture and the continued maintenance of existing, high-quality street furniture. The central marketplace area could be improved with paved street surfaces and enhancement of the pavement surfaces of the High Street.

### **Heritage Improvement Schemes**

Small grant funding schemes would provide an incentive to encourage private property owners to carry out works to enhance their historic properties and thereby the wider Conservation Area. This may be particularly beneficial for historic shop frontages.

### **Shop Frontages**

Great Oakley was historically a market town with several shops and businesses. There are now few commercial premises within the Conservation Area, reducing its vitality. There is scope for enhancement of the remaining shop frontages to enhance the character and appearance of the historic streetscape, especially the historic shopfront of the Grade II listed former Post Office and Village Shop, and the convenience store at 9-10 High Street, which has suffered some insensitive alterations that detract from the character and appearance of the area.



### 5.3 Funding Opportunities

There are three main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### National Heritage Lottery Fund

The National Heritage Lottery Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change over time; for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Tendring Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

#### Section 106 Agreements

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon Brightlingsea. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site-specific improvements.

#### Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)

*Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas* is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would be suitable to preserve and enhance either the shop frontages or the architectural detailing.





## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Designated heritage assets

#### Grade II

#### **Maltings Farmhouse: (list entry: 1147224)**

House and ancillary building, now a restaurant and flat. C15, altered in C16 and C17. Timber framed, roughcast rendered, roofed mainly with handmade red clay tiles, partly with slate. 2-bay hall facing NE with C16 axial stack in left bay, 2-bay service crosswing to left, 3-bay parlour/solar crosswing to right, both projecting to rear. C17 internal stack at right side of right crosswing, and long C17 extension or ancillary building beyond, now incorporated. C19 lean-to extension with slate roof to rear of hall. Main building of 2 storeys, right extension of one storey with attics. Ground floor, 2 late C19 sashes of 4 lights, one C19 casement. First floor, 3 similar sashes. 4-panel door, the upper panels glazed, in C20 gabled porch. Right extension, one C20 casement, the remainder obscured by dense foliage. Gablet hips at both ends of hall and at rear of both crosswings. Rear elevation (now used as an entrance elevation), scattered C20 fenestration and 2 C20 doors. Shaped sprockets below eaves. The hall has a mid-C16 inserted floor comprising a transverse moulded beam and moulded joists of horizontal section with runout stops, a wide wood-burning hearth (of which the mantel beam has been replaced), and a roof raised in the C17. The left crosswing has a bridging beam with mortices for a former partition between 2 service rooms, plain joists of horizontal section jointed to it with unrefined soffit tenons, jowled posts in the middle and to the rear, a cambered central tiebeam with one arched brace in situ, wallplates with edge-halved and bridled scarfs, and a roof altered in the C17. A former jetty to the front has been cut back to align with the front of the hall. Diamond mortices for an unglazed window, now blocked, in the left upper wall. The right crosswing has an original partition between the middle and rear bays, a chamfered binding beam, plain joists of horizontal section jointed with unrefined soffit tenons, jowled posts, and similar alterations to the roof and jetty. At the junction with the right extension is a bread oven, complete with door. The extension has a chamfered axial beam and plain joists of vertical section. Possibly RCHM 4. In the title award of 1841 this was the farmhouse of a farm of 58 acres, unnamed (Essex Record Office, D/CT 258)



### **Pett's Cottage, Armond House and House Immediately to North East: (list entry: 1147280)**

Complex group originally comprising one C18 house and one C15 house, combined and re-divided to form 3 houses. Timber framed, plastered and weatherboarded, roofed with handmade red clay tiles. All facing NW. The C18 house, at the left, now comprises the NE part of Armond House and the house to NE of it; it has an axial stack, almost central, a lean-to garage to the left, and a lean-to extension to the rear, and is of 2 storeys with attics. On each floor one early C19 sash of 16 lights and one C18/early C19 sash of 12 lights, with some crown glass; at the left end of the front elevation, 6-panel door with plain overlight and moulded flat canopy on scrolled brackets. Gambrel roof with elaborately moulded eaves cornice in the Gothick style. The C15 house to SW of it comprises the SW part of Armond House and Pett's Cottage to the SW; it has a 2-bay hall with an early C17 stack in the left bay, an originally storeyed service bay to the left and an originally storeyed parlour/solar bay to the right. Rear extensions. 2 storeys. 3 C20 casements on the ground floor, 4 on the first floor. At the left end the door to Armond House is of 6 panels, the upper 4 glazed; the door to Pett's Cottage is of plain boarded type. At the time of survey, September 1985, Armond House was undergoing major renovation; a trellised gabled porch was demolished, and a timber-framed false front with parapet was being replaced in breeze block. The ground floor of Pett's Cottage is weatherboarded. The C15 house has jowled posts, heavy studding with curved tension braces trenched to the outside, some panels of original stick wattle and daub, and edge-halved and bridled scarfs in both wallplates. In the service end plain joists of horizontal section are arranged longitudinally. The inserted floor in the hall has a deeply chamfered transverse beam. The inserted stack is much mutilated. Diamond mortices and shutter grooves for unglazed windows. Crownpost roof, heavily smoke-blackened over the hall; the central crownpost is of octagonal section with a square base and a moulded square cap, and 4-way arched braces, complete. Shown as 3 dwellings in the tithe award of 1841 (Essex Record Office, D/CT 258). There are close similarities between the Gothick eaves cornice and that of Oakley House, Thorpe-le-Soken (item 9/96, q.v.).

### **Old Scantlings: (list entry: 1322632)**

House. C17 or earlier. Timber framed, roughcast rendered, hoof thatched. 4 bays facing approx. S, with axial stack in second bay from left end, forming a lobby-entrance. C20 lean-to extension at right end. One storey with attics. 6 C20 casements on ground floor, and one more in gabled dormer. C20 door in glazed gabled porch roofed with red clay 'Roman' tiles. Chamfered axial beams, plain joists of horizontal section. At the time of survey, September 1985, the roof was stripped down to felt for re-thatching, with some red clay 'Roman' tiles below the dormer. No access to the rear or the interior.

### **Whispers: (list entry: 1308597)**

House. Circa 1700, altered in C19. Timber framed, plastered, with facade of painted brick in Flemish bond, roofed with handmade red clay tiles. 3 bays facing north-west, with stack in middle bay behind axis, forming a lobby-entrance. 2 storeys. Ground floor, 2 early C19 sashes of 12+12 lights. First floor, 2 late C19 sashes of 3+6 lights. 6-panel door in fluted doorcase with flat canopy on scrolled brackets, early C19. The brick facade, c.1840, stands forward of the doorcase. In left bay, large wood-burning hearth, and chamfered axial beam without stops, plain joists of vertical section. In right bay, smaller wood-burning hearth, chamfered axial beam with lamb's tongue stops, and similar joists. Primary straight bracing. Original winder stair in front of stack, with at the top a moulded handrail of vertical section and splat balusters. On the first floor, small wrought iron coal-burning grate, altered.



### **Mill House: (list entry: 1112135)**

House. C18. Timber framed, plastered, roofed with handmade red clay tiles. 3 bays facing NW, with central stack, forming a lobby-entrance. Full-length original out-shut at rear, roofed with red clay pantiles, and small C20 extension to rear of it. C19 single-storey extension to right, front wall of plastered brick, other walls of concrete, roofed with red clay pantiles. Early C19 single-storey lean-to extension to left, with internal stack at rear, roofed with machine-made red clay tiles. 2 storeys. 3-window range of C18 sashes of 12 lights, with crown glass. Central 6-panel door, the top 2 panels glazed, the other panels flush. In the left extension, early C19 6-panel door, the top 2 panels glazed, the middle panels fielded, the bottom panels flush. Moulded plinth. Moulded eaves cornice. Stepped parapet at front of left extension. The left return has 2 early C19 sashes of 12 lights on the ground floor of the extension, and one on the first floor of the main house, with crown glass. 2 wood-burning hearths, reduced for C20 grates, and an early C19 cast iron ducknest grate in left extension. Chamfered beams with lamb's tongue stops in rear outshut. Main frame of hardwood, jointed and pegged, exposed in right ground floor room and on first floor. Early C19 half-glazed internal door to left extension. The name refers to a windmill which formerly stood 100 metres to the NE. Central 6-panel door, the top 2 panels glazed, the other panels flush. In the left extension, early C19 6-panel door, the top 2 panels glazed, the middle panels fielded, the bottom panels flush. Moulded plinth. Moulded eaves cornice. Stepped parapet at front of left extension. The left return has 2 early C19 sashes of 12 lights on the ground floor of the extension, and one on the first floor of the main house, with crown glass. 2 wood-burning hearths, reduced for C20 grates, and an early C19 cast iron ducknest grate in left extension. Chamfered beams with lamb's tongue stops in rear outshut. Main frame of hardwood, jointed and pegged, exposed in right ground floor room and on first floor. Early C19 half-glazed internal door to left extension. The name refers to a windmill which formerly stood 100 metres to the NE.

### **Post Office and Village Shop: (list entry: 1391206)**

Shop with residence. C17 or earlier house, re-fronted in late-C18 including shop, and with C19 and C20 alterations and additions. Timber framed core, with rendered brick facade, and wood and glass shop-front.

PLAN: 2-bay front with shop at ground floor and residence above and behind.

EXTERIOR: Main elevation with ground floor late-C18 shop front comprising central doorcase flanked by pair of rounded advanced shop windows. Continuous cornice with diamond and dentil decoration to base of frieze. Central doorcase with recessed door of 4 panes flanked by pair of fluted pilasters beneath ogee brackets supporting flat hood. Shop windows of 5-over-5 large panes above wood plinth, and fluted pilasters under shallow console bracket to outsides. Lower door to left of shop-front under hood supported by pair of console brackets.

INTERIOR: Ground floor with exposed beams, some chamfered and some with redundant joist mortises, and joists to both front bays. Surviving framing to first floor includes beam with central posts, joists, and original front wall plate. Plank and 4-panel doors to first floor. C19 extension to ground floor rear with fireplace and pair of glazed doors set in splayed panelled surround. C20 additions to side and rear not of interest. An elaborate and well-preserved late-C18 shop front, with a significant amount of framing from the or earlier house behind.



**Holly Trees: (list entry: 1391206)**

House. C18. Timber framed, plastered and roughcast rendered, roofed with handmade red clay tiles. 2 bays facing SE, with internal stack at right end. Single-storey lean-to extension to rear. 2 storeys with attics. 2-window range of early C19 sashes of 16 lights, and 2 more in flat-roofed dormers. Gambrel roof. Front elevation plastered and inscribed in imitation of stone blocks, remainder roughcast rendered.

**Florence Cottage: (list entry: 1147218)**

Cottage. C18/early C19. Timber framed, weatherboarded, roofed with red clay pantiles. 2 bays facing approx. SE, with an internal stack at the right end and an external stack at the left end. C19/early C20 single-storey extension to right with end stack. One storey with attics. 2 C19/early C20 casements. C20 door in rustic porch with gabled roof of corrugated iron. In right extension, one C20 casement and one C20 door. Gambrel roof. Shown in the tithe award of 1841 (Essex Record Office D/CT 258).

**K6 Telephone Kiosk Adjacent to Mill House: (list entry: 1147218)**

Telephone kiosk. Type K6. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door



## 6.2 Bibliography

### Publications

'Great Oakley', in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Essex, Volume 3, North East (London, 1922), pp. 128-129. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/essex/vol3/pp128-129>

Great Oakley Conservation Area Appraisal, Tendring District Council (2006)

J. Bettley and N. Pevsner, Essex (Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England), (Yale University Press) 2007

Tendring District Historic Environment Characterisation Project, Essex County Council (2008)

Tendring Geodiversity Characterisation Report, Essex County Council (2009)

### Archives

Essex Record Office (ERO)

Historic Environment Record (Essex County Council)

### 6.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	All sections are relevant, although the following pertain to Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans:  66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.  72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2024) DCLG	Chapter 16;  Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2019) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans	
National Guidance	Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	



National Guidance	Historic England Advice Note 1 (2019) Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Traditional Windows	
National Guidance	Historic England, High Streets for All (2018) Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places	
National Guidance	Historic England (2017) Repointing Brick and Stone Walls Guide for Best Practice	
Local Supplementary Planning Document	Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: Section 1 and Section 2	<p>SPL 3 – Sustainable Design</p> <p>PPL 3 – The Rural Landscape</p> <p>PPL 7 – Archaeology</p> <p>PPL 8 – Conservation Areas</p> <p>PPL 9 – Listed Buildings</p>

## 6.4 Glossary

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic Environment Record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Local List	Local listing is a concept that is designed to ensure that the historic and architectural interest of buildings that are of local importance but do not meet the criteria for being nationally listed is taken account of during the planning process. Local lists can be used to identify significant local heritage assets to support the development of Local Plans.
Non-Designated heritage asset	Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. Only a minority of buildings have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.



Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

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## Clacton Seafront Conservation Area

Name/Organisation	Comment	Action/response
<p>Historic England, Ed James</p>	<p>We welcome the production of these appraisals for the five named Conservation Areas. All five of the areas have been added by Tendring District Council to the national Heritage at Risk Register and identified as being 'At Risk', for various reasons. The production of conservation area appraisals and management plans for these areas setting out clear, robust and achievable proposals for their conservation and enhancement is an important step towards improving their condition and securing their long-term conservation.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our capacity and existing commitments dictate that we are unable to comment on all the proposed appraisals in fine detail, but a review of the five documents shows they are clearly laid out, well written and nicely illustrated using photographs, other illustrations and cartography. Where maps are provided showing the location and extent of the conservation areas and their key positive and negative features these are clear and legible, allowing proposed alterations to be easily identified. Key buildings, spaces and features are individually described and illustrated, which is also helpful.</p> <p>We are pleased to see that Historic England's guidance notes for the Historic Area Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal process (which can be found here: <a href="#">HE Advice Note 1 - conservation area designation, appraisal and management</a>, and here: <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-area-assessments/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-area-assessments/</a>) have been referenced and made use of.</p> <p>We are also pleased to note that all the appraisals include a management plan to help guide the future conservation and enhancement of the areas. Management plan should contain clear, detailed, specific and achievable aims and objectives, setting out priority actions and long-term goals for management, including for any heritage at risk or areas that detract from the character and appearance of the area. It can also set out where the community feel there is scope for sensitive change within the areas, and provide guidance as to how that development</p>	<p>No action needed</p> <p>No action needed</p> <p>No action needed</p>

	<p>can be achieved in terms of form, style, materials etc., in order to ensure that any developments conserve what is special about the areas.</p> <p>It is positive to note that the management plans all consider how CIL or Section 106 monies could be targeted for enhancements within the conservation area. We would, however, suggest that where the appraisals identify specific negative or detracting elements, these should be the subject of targeted policy and interventions in the management plan.</p> <p>For example, in Dovercourt, vacant and derelict sites are one of the principal detracting elements from the quality of the townscape and the significance of the conservation area. We would welcome a commitment towards a proactive approach to their unlocking for redevelopment including consideration of the use of tools such as the preparation of Development Briefs, Design Codes, and potentially Compulsory Purchase and land assembly to bring them forward for regeneration. This could be combined into a single project and adopted policy document.</p> <p>We note the discussion regarding the potential for regeneration at Thorpe Le Soken Maltings, and would be pleased to engage on this subject where it might prove useful. We generally support the principles set out in the management plan of this appraisal, in particular the potential for mixed use development adjacent to the railway station. We consider that the production of an Options Appraisal for the area and its surroundings, leading potentially to a masterplan and design code, may be a beneficial course of action in due course.</p> <p>We strongly encourage the use of Article 4 Directions to help manage inappropriate change, such as the insertion of UPVC windows, in Conservation Areas, and on key non-designated heritage assets included on the Local List. Some of the appraisals incorporate reference to their use, but reference to them is inconsistent across the documents. We would welcome a more consistent approach for clarity. We would refer you to our guidance Stopping the Rot – A guide to enforcement action to save historic buildings: <a href="https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-ooks/publications/stoppingtherot/">https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-ooks/publications/stoppingtherot/</a> (15 April 2016). An audit of existing features, with a corresponding photographic record, is often recommended as a useful way to monitor and manage inappropriate alterations that would contravene any Article 4 Direction imposed.</p>	<p>Noted – specific actions are not included in the management plan, but are identified in the opportunities. We have added text to make more explicit in tying the opportunities section in with para. 206 of the NPPF - Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas... to enhance or better reveal their significance</p> <p>Stopping the Rot added to Section 6.2, along with other HE guidance. Also have updated the Tendring Local Plan reference.</p>
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	<p>To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on or, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise as a result of the proposed conservation area appraisal, where we consider these would have an adverse effect on the historic environment. We would welcome further discussions where there is potential for Historic England to engage on proposals for the enhancement of the conservation areas on the Heritage at Risk Register.</p> <p>If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Edward James Historic Places Adviser</p>	
Natural England	<p>Dear Sir/Madam</p> <p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Natural England does not consider that the Tendring Conservation Area Appraisals &amp; Local List Criteria Consultation pose any likely risk or opportunity in relation to our statutory purpose, and so does not wish to comment on this consultation.</b></p> <p>The lack of comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may wish to make comments that might help the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to fully take account of any environmental risks and opportunities relating to this document.</p> <p>If you disagree with our assessment of these Character Appraisals/Management Plans as low risk, or should the proposed Plans be amended in a way which significantly affects the impact on the natural environment, then in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, please consult Natural England again.</p> <p>Yours faithfully Tessa Lambert</p>	No action needed
M Middleton	I am replying to the letter you sent me dated 1/7/22 Ref CAA-LLC-0622.	

	<p>Firstly please stop sending me these notifications re planning policies.</p> <p>Secondly to motion Clacton Seafront as one of the new conservation area appraisals is blatantly laughable. As a council that has agreed to Victorian buildings, guest houses etc to be replaced with towering flats of concrete bunker designs in some cases you are about 40 years too late. What has gone can never be replaced. Suggest you look at Clacton local history Facebook to see what Clacton people feel. Mrs M Middleton.</p>	Noted, no specific action needed within the document
P James	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I hope that the conservation areas and local list will prevent the loss of amazing buildings like the Waverley Hall Hotel and Art Deco building at 3 Marine Parade East in Clacton, which have been demolished, one to be replaced with a 'box building' (Premier Inn). Here are photos I took of these buildings before they were lost:</p> <p>Waverley Hall Hotel Marine Parade West Clacton-on-Sea Essex UK  <a href="https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Waverley_Hall_Hotel_Marine_Parade_West_Clacton-on-Sea_Essex_UK.jpg">https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Waverley_Hall_Hotel_Marine_Parade_West_Clacton-on-Sea_Essex_UK.jpg</a></p> <p>Art Deco Building Marine Parade East Clacton-On-Sea Essex UK  <a href="https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Art_Deco_Building_Marine_Parade_East_Clacton-On-Sea_Essex_UK.jpg">https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Art_Deco_Building_Marine_Parade_East_Clacton-On-Sea_Essex_UK.jpg</a></p> <p>Could you confirm receipt of this email?          Regards          Peter James</p>	Image has been included within the management plan to highlight the loss of buildings and inappropriate development (Section 4.6)
R Levene	<p>I would be grateful for any information on why Oulton Hall is not included and why the Boundry stops at The Towers.</p> <p>Oulton Hall is an Historic former hotel - just like The Grand &amp; The Towers in the next block. Like them it was converted from a Hotel to Nuses accommodation, then to residential. Clacton Historical Society has/had a feature on Oulton Hall in its display at the library and I can help with lots of further information.</p> <p>Whilst its design is more 1930s than the others, it is still important, and residents have asked me why it is not included and could it be.</p> <p>Strangely the shelter in front is specially included but not the actual building.</p>	Also raised at the exhibition event. We agree, it is worth adding Oulton Hall – this was originally left out as it has lost features (such as windows) but it will be included as a positive building with potential for enhancement to help manage it in the future and

	I am a Director of Oulton Hall Management Ltd, who own the freehold (it has not yet discussed by the Company) as well as a resident. Thanks you Robert Levene	preserve its 1930s character and appearance

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## Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Conservation Area

Name/Organisation	Comment	Action/response
Natural England	Natural England does not have any specific comments on these new Conservation Area Appraisals.	N/A
Historic England	<p>We welcome the production of these appraisals for the five named Conservation Areas which set out clear, robust and achievable proposals for their conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our capacity and existing commitments dictate that we are unable to comment on all the proposed appraisals in fine detail, but a review of the five documents shows they are clearly laid out, well written and nicely illustrated using photographs, other illustrations and cartography.</p> <p>General Comments</p> <p>We are pleased to see that Historic England’s guidance notes for the Historic Area Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal process (which can be found here: HE Advice Note 1 - conservation area designation, appraisal and management, and here: <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/</a>) have been referenced and made use of.</p> <p>We are also pleased to note that all the appraisals include a management plan to help guide the future conservation and enhancement of the areas. Management plan should contain clear, detailed, specific and achievable aims and objectives, setting out priority actions and long-term goals for management, including for any heritage at risk or areas that detract from the character and appearance of the area.</p>	<p>We have reconsidered the boundary in light of these comments. I have reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Historic maps of the area</li> <li>- PROWs.</li> </ul> <p>We were seeking any connections between the church and the fields within its setting which would warrant the inclusion of the fields within the conservation area boundary in their own right.</p> <p>However, we found that there were no historic routes which would have shown a connection specifically to the wider arable land and the church, and historically the arable fields were all owned by the farmers Dorrien Magens and Magens who also owned the barn within the Conservation Area. This has meant that we feel including one field over another would create an illogical boundary - where would the line between setting and church be drawn? It feels more sensible to consider the arable landscape, all under the same ownership, as a whole. Therefore, we suggest no changes to the boundary, however, welcomed the comment</p>

	<p>It is positive to note that the management plans reference use of Article 4 Directions to help manage inappropriate change, such as the insertion of UPVC windows, in Conservation Areas, and all consider how CIL or Section 106 monies could be targeted for enhancements within the conservation area.</p> <p>Conservation Area site specific comment: Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church</p> <p>We welcome the review of the existing boundary to include the pair of early nineteenth century dwellings to the south of the area. Given the importance of All Saints Church as a designated Grade I listed building (currently on the Heritage at Risk register) and associated key views highlighted on pages pp.29-30, consideration could be given to further extending the boundary if appropriate, to include the open space/landscape north of All Saints Church (the boundary is currently tightly drawn around the church), to incorporate the wider setting and contribution this space makes to the setting of the church and character of the conservation area.</p> <p>For further information, we refer you to the above mentioned HE Advice Note 1; in particular, paragraphs 58, 72, 75 and 106.</p> <p>To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on or, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise as a result of the proposed conservation area appraisal, where we consider these would have an adverse effect on the historic environment.</p>	<p>to readdress the boundary with greater consideration.</p>
<p>National Highways</p>	<p>The nature and location covered by this current consultation is unlikely to have an impact on the operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Therefore, National Highways offers No Comment.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Brightlingsea Town Council (submitted twice)</p>	<p>Dear William</p> <p>BRIGHTLINGSEA HALL AND ALL SAINTS CHURCH CONSERVATION AREA</p>	<p>The pond to the east of the boundary, I believe is modern. It is first shown on the 2<sup>nd</sup></p>

	<p>Members of Brightlingsea Town Council discussed the above at its recent Planning Meeting and were disappointed that the pond and field are not included in the conservation area. Members also think that the whole of the burial area should be included, including the wood area.</p> <p>Please find enclosed a copy of the map, highlighting these areas 'in red'.</p> <p>Best Regards Tracey</p>	<p>edition OS, and highlighted already on page 15. It is possibly linked with the gravel works here, and is located where the old alder car wood stood. It does not contribute to the special interest of the conservation area.</p> <p>Wood area to the south of the church was planted between the first and second edition maps; I have added a specific mention of this to the setting discussion on page 31. We do not feel it is of historic special interest to bring into the boundary but certainly should be highlighted as a part of the churchyard and setting.</p>
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## Great Clacton Conservation Area

Name/Organisation	Comment	Action/response
Natural England	Natural England does not have any specific comments on these new Conservation Area Appraisals.	N/A
Historic England	<p>We welcome the production of these appraisals for the five named Conservation Areas which set out clear, robust and achievable proposals for their conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our capacity and existing commitments dictate that we are unable to comment on all the proposed appraisals in fine detail, but a review of the five documents shows they are clearly laid out, well written and nicely illustrated using photographs, other illustrations and cartography.</p> <p>General Comments</p> <p>We are pleased to see that Historic England’s guidance notes for the Historic Area Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal process (which can be found here: HE Advice Note 1 - conservation area designation, appraisal and management, and here: <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/</a>) have been referenced and made use of.</p> <p>We are also pleased to note that all the appraisals include a management plan to help guide the future conservation and enhancement of the areas. Management plan should contain clear, detailed, specific and achievable aims and objectives, setting out priority actions and long-term goals for management, including for any heritage at risk or areas that detract from the character and appearance of the area.</p>	N/A

	It is positive to note that the management plans reference use of Article 4 Directions to help manage inappropriate change, such as the insertion of UPVC windows, in Conservation Areas, and all consider how CIL or Section 106 monies could be targeted for enhancements within the conservation area.	
National Highways	The nature and location covered by this current consultation is unlikely to have an impact on the operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Therefore, National Highways offers No Comment.	N/A
Comments from public consultation event	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concerns about the reason for the document.</li> <li>2. Appendices need updating.</li> <li>3. Logo changes size throughout the document.</li> <li>4. One resident wanted to know if anything was changing and raised concerns about trees and green spaces.</li> <li>5. Chairman of the history society questioned whether there is a local list. One was drawn up approximately 20 years ago.</li> <li>6. Concerns about traffic and lorries going through the village.</li> <li>7. Is Yew Tree House being used, or could it be used, for community shops or small enterprises?</li> <li>8. Has the milestone at 315 Old Road been removed?</li> <li>9. Concern raised about the building behind the pub next to 438 Ship Mews.</li> <li>10. Concern raised about signage for the fish shop.</li> <li>11. Alterations to the Methodist Church in the 50s and 70s.</li> <li>12. Why are there houses included which have not been shown?</li> <li>13. Valley Road and Sodbury?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Spoke to at the consultation event about the purpose of CAAMPs</li> <li>2. Ceri/Meg to do</li> <li>3. Ceri/Meg to do</li> <li>4. Spoke to on the day</li> <li>5. There is not, can pass comment onto Tendring</li> <li>6. Noted</li> <li>7. Not the remit of the CAAMP, but can pass on the comment</li> <li>8. 315 Old Road is well outside of the Conservation Area boundary - having had a look on Google Streetview, the milestone is still there, outside a pair of dilapidated weatherboarded cottages. We do not mention it in our report as it's not in the CA or setting of the CA.</li> <li>9. Noted, can pass on comment</li> <li>10. Noted, this will be supported by the text on signage in section 4.5</li> <li>11. Added a more specific ref to these alterations in the doc, page 35. Was</li> </ol>

		<p>already included on page 19 so no change made there.</p> <p>12. Unsure what this means, in terms of images it would make the document too large to show every house</p> <p>13. Spoke o at the consultation event about this area</p>
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## Lawford Conservation Area

Name/Organisation	Comment	Action/response
Natural England	Natural England does not have any specific comments on these new Conservation Area Appraisals.	N/A
Historic England	<p>We welcome the production of these appraisals for the five named Conservation Areas which set out clear, robust and achievable proposals for their conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our capacity and existing commitments dictate that we are unable to comment on all the proposed appraisals in fine detail, but a review of the five documents shows they are clearly laid out, well written and nicely illustrated using photographs, other illustrations and cartography.</p> <p>General Comments</p> <p>We are pleased to see that Historic England’s guidance notes for the Historic Area Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal process (which can be found here: HE Advice Note 1 - conservation area designation, appraisal and management, and here: <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/</a>) have been referenced and made use of.</p> <p>We are also pleased to note that all the appraisals include a management plan to help guide the future conservation and enhancement of the areas. Management plan should contain clear, detailed, specific and achievable aims and objectives, setting out priority actions and long-term goals for management, including for any heritage at risk or areas that detract from the character and appearance of the area.</p>	N/A

	It is positive to note that the management plans reference use of Article 4 Directions to help manage inappropriate change, such as the insertion of UPVC windows, in Conservation Areas, and all consider how CIL or Section 106 monies could be targeted for enhancements within the conservation area.	
National Highways	The nature and location covered by this current consultation is unlikely to have an impact on the operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Therefore, National Highways offers No Comment.	N/A
Comments from public consultation event on 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resident at Lawford Hall: concerned about the overall condition of the conservation area and the development which has been allowed. Generally frustrated about the planning system and perceived restrictions, particularly in regards to listed buildings.</li> <li>2. Resident at The Old Laundry, Hungerford Lane: concerned about the redevelopment of The Pink House, Crossway, on Harwich Road.</li> <li>3. Many people raised concerns about development at The Pink House being unsympathetic.</li> <li>4. Concerns about the infill development and incremental change.</li> <li>5. Too many restrictions on listed buildings.</li> <li>6. Why is Hungerford Lane included in the conservation area when it has been altered significantly?</li> <li>7. Will the section south-west of Church Hill need to be removed from the conservation area? What is the interest of the field?</li> <li>8. What is the point of a conservation area if new buildings are permitted?</li> <li>9. Should the gardens of Lawford House south of School Lane be locally listed?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Addressed on the day</li> <li>2. Addressed on the day</li> <li>3. Addressed on the day</li> <li>4. Addressed on the day</li> <li>5. Unable to address within the CAAMP</li> <li>6. Review Hungerford Lane addition, responses to boundary queries are included below</li> <li>7. Reviewed, and responses to boundary queries are included below</li> <li>8. Addressed on the day</li> <li>9. Noted – can flag to the Council</li> </ol>
Steven Rose, Managing Director of Rose Builders Ltd (Lawford)	I write in response to the council's consultation on the draft Lawford Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA). The purpose of this letter is to propose additional land for inclusion within the Conservation Area. The land is located	Review whether this addition contributes to the <b>special interest</b> of the area. Note that it cannot be included as protection of future development, it needs to be of interest in its

	<p>south of Lawford House (Grade II listed) on Bromley Road. I enclose a plan that shows its location.</p> <p>The site is parkland around the Grade II listed Lawford House. Part of the gardens of Lawford House were the subject of a planning approval delivering 8 homes in return for the parkland to be transferred to the Tendring Hundred Farmers Club and other community benefits.</p> <p>None of these eventually transpired and the Club has yet to have the freehold transferred to them. This, once complete, would effectively protect the parkland around Lawford House. However, this 'protection' has no planning strength to protect the setting of Lawford House.</p> <p>The houses that have been built in the grounds of Lawford House are 'subjectively' terrible and have blighted Lawford House and its setting on one side.</p> <p>The proposal is that the parkland south of Lawford House is designated within the Lawford Conservation Area to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Protect the traditional and original setting of the Grade II listed Lawford House and maintain its original parkland setting.</li> <li>2) Protect the site that if ever in the future any development of whatever scale is proposed then the land and listed home would have more planning protection.</li> <li>3) Preserve the land for the annual Tendring Show that is very much part of the history of the area. The show providing a very popular Tendring community event showcasing the farming and wider rural businesses within Tendring (20,000+ visitors).</li> <li>4) Protect the historic pasture, veteran parkland trees, landscape and ecology of the parkland in perpetuity.</li> <li>5) Protect the setting of the rural footpaths that covers the site. These give local Lawford residents a good network of rural walks away from the built up areas of Lawford, for their enjoyment, good health and wellbeing.</li> </ol>	<p>own right in its current condition. Responses to boundary queries are included below</p>
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	<p>All these help to embody the very special character of this historic parkland and the necessity to protect the historic setting of the Grade II listed Lawford House as well as deliver wider community benefits.</p> <p>We respectfully ask that the Council include this site within the next draft of the Lawford Conservation Area to protect the historic pasture and parkland, it's trees, it's ecology and the setting of Lawford House, the wider visual landscape.</p> <p>Safeguarding this special area of land for the long term future.</p>	
<p>Tesni Properties Ltd (Bury), acting on behalf of J.E. &amp; S.J. Lucas as landowners</p>	<p>We are instructed by Tesni Homes Ltd (acting on behalf of J.E. &amp; S.J. Lucas as landowners) to present the following representations in respect of the proposed Lawford Conservation Area.</p> <p>Our client raises no objection or concern in respect of the principle of the proposed appraisal of the Conservation Area. However, they query the suggested boundary extension along parts of the southern edge of Wignall Street, in that it includes a number of properties which, whilst not unpleasant, can be perceived as possessing no real architectural and historic interest that warrants special protection. The properties referenced are identified in the pink zone below.</p> <p>We see no merit in including those dwellings or their suburban gardens within a Conservation Area, and suggest that their inclusion will dilute the overall quality of the Conservation Area.</p> <p>We note that the Character Appraisal and Management Plan suggests that the boundary of the Conservation Area ought to be expanded eastwards along Wignall Street to include Nos. 11-16 Wignall Street on the southern side of the road. It suggests that these buildings form 'a pleasing and uniform group' on the approach to the historic core of Lawford, and suggests those</p>	<p>Review these dwellings and outline why they have been included.</p> <p>Unable to comment on the development.</p>

buildings are of special historic interest and some architectural interest, representing a period of time when social housing was expanded in response to a post First World War national housing crisis. Those buildings – highlighted as ‘positive – in need of enhancement’ are seen on the extract below.

Our client is not convinced that those dwellings possess sufficient character or heritage value to warrant inclusion within the Conservation Area. In most respects, those homes are little more than ordinary and hardly unusual or special. Likewise, the two houses to the immediate west (identified as ‘neutral’) are typical 1970s suburban style houses that possess no heritage value whatsoever and are of a type that can be found anywhere. We therefore question the inclusion of those properties within the Conservation Area, and suggest that the Area will be more robust if those are excluded.

Here we would point to §197 of the NPPF, which states: ‘When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.’

We do question whether the inclusion of fairly ordinary houses such as this (none of which are special and are hardly uncommon) will serve undermine (‘devalue’) the strength and integrity of the proposed Conservation Area. We understand that the social housing that is being elevated in the Appraisal was brought forward as part of a national movement arising from The Housing, Town Planning & Country Act 1919. This provided finance for the construction of 500,000 homes across England within three years. That said, this type of housing was fairly commonplace on a national level, and not we suggest unique, special or distinctive to Lawford. On the converse side, it seems to us that much of the remainder of the proposed Conservation Area does reflect the local and historical evolution of the village itself, which provides it with its special character and appearance.

Furthermore, it might be argued that – if those properties highlighted in red warrant special attention as a result of them providing social housing some time between 1921 and 1949, could not a similar ‘social housing’ argument not be extended to the houses identified in blue on the above photograph? Do those not speak equally of ‘social progress’ at a given point in time? We acknowledge that those ‘blue’ houses are different, but they were nevertheless constructed to serve the same housing need as the houses in red. That said, the inclusion of the ‘red’ houses does seem an arbitrary judgement.

Background/Context

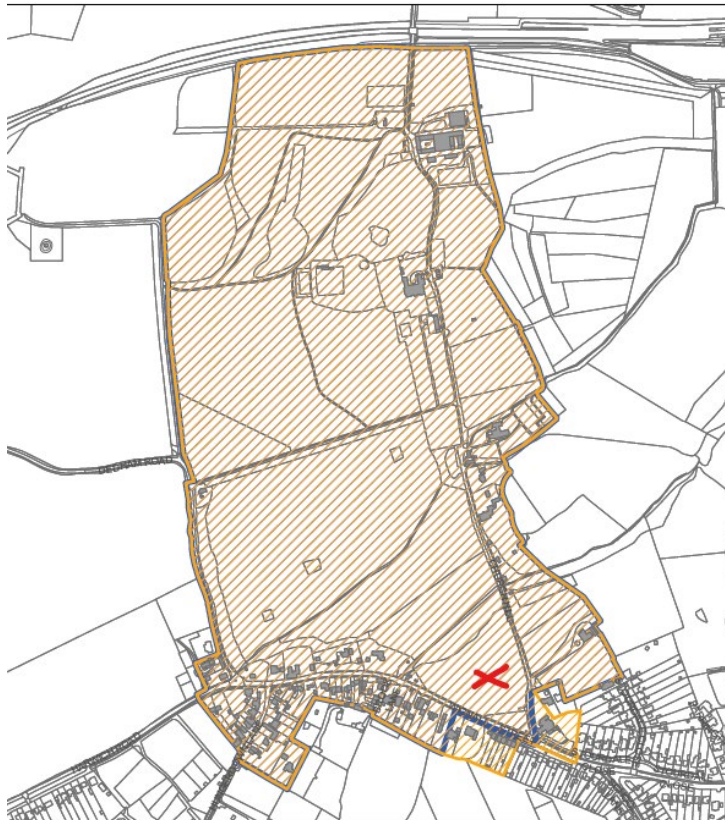
By way of context, it is our client’s intention to promote the southern part of the land identified at Annex A of this letter as housing land, and they do not wish that land to be unfairly fettered by the presence of a close-by Conservation Area that we consider is not fully justified or warranted. Having raised that concern, and whilst the following may be considered irrelevant to the designation of the Conservation Area, it is worth us highlighting that it is our client’s intention to focus any residential development towards the south of their land, at some distance from the proposed Conservation Area.

That decision reflects the presence of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) that is located on the northern part of our client’s land. The SAM comprises a sub-circular arrangement of ditches with two causeways. An outer lip of ditches defines the perimeter measuring circa 30m across. Ditches up to 2m in depth and ranging in width surround an interior roughly 21m in diameter. Although later, construction resembles forms of Neolithic monuments known as ‘causewayed enclosures’. It has also been referred to as a ‘ring ditch’. The Historic England (HE) Schedule describes it as ‘Settlement Site NNE of Lawford House’

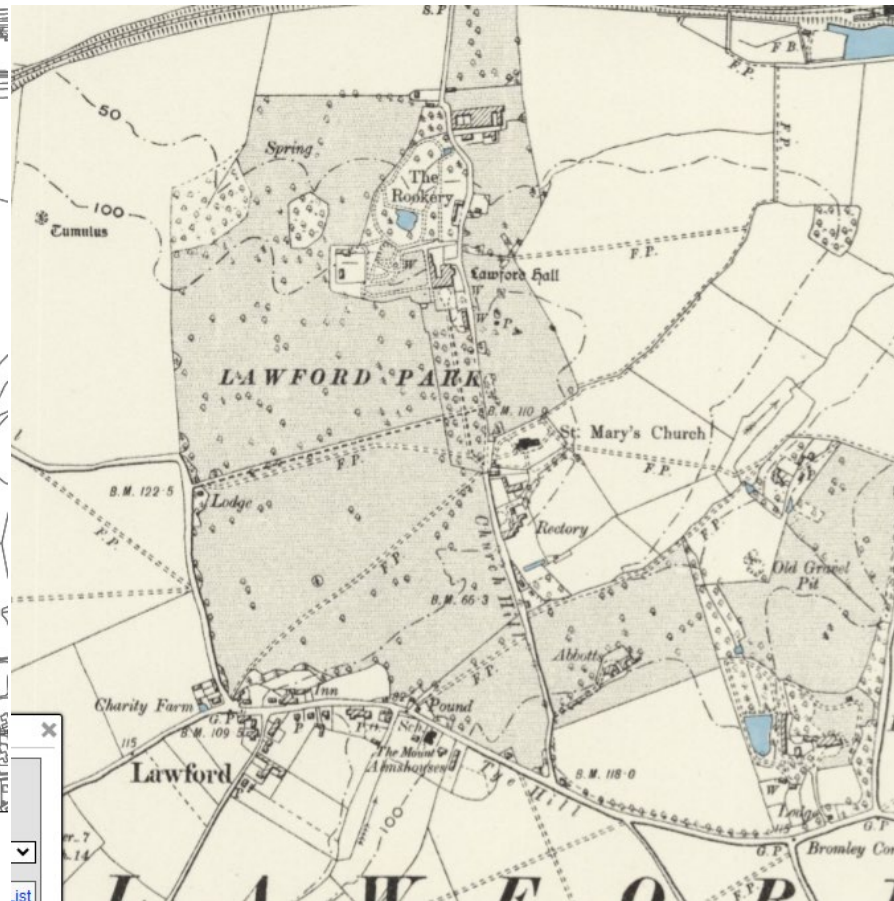
	<p>The SAM is clearly a unique monument and the high significance of the below-ground archaeological remains are reflected in its designation as a SAM and a heritage asset of the highest significance. Our client's proposals will not physically impact upon the SAM, and a considerable 'breathing space' will be factored into any proposal. This can be provided with suitable landscaping, with heritage interpretation boards to inform visitors to the SAM. Towards the northern end of any new housing we envisage the planting of a substantial green buffer to soften the development and show due respect to the SAM to the north.</p> <p>That same 'breathing space' will also serve as a buffer to the proposed Conservation Area to the north, albeit we again express the view that those houses we have questioned do not warrant inclusion within the Conservation Area.</p> <p>We trust that the Council will have regard to the contents of this letter in its further consideration of the proposed Conservation Area.</p>	
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**Boundary responses:**

- We are not adding to the boundary on Hungerdown Lane, there is a small addition on Harwich Road. There are a few houses on Hungerdown Lane which are neutral/not of any age but generally this section is good and has a village, rural edge feel which was felt worthy of retention in the CA. If we were to exclude any dwellings here it has the potential to create an awkward boundary with satellite houses.
- The area marked with an x on the map below (assumed to be the section south-west of Church Hill), is part of the estate for Lawford Hall, so has historic interest in that respect although it may be separately owned now.



Proposed revisions to the Conservation Area boundary



- The park for Lawford Hall is all included. Lawford Place isn't in the CA, it's to the east and has had significant alterations... its GII but now the centrepiece to a modern housing estate, so we don't feel it is justifiable as CA designation.
- The two houses on the southern edge of Wignall Street aren't of any interest but they are inoffensive, and there was a logical boundary to include them within the boundary rather than purposefully exclude them. There's some minor historic interest in the plot boundary for these two houses which is shown on the OS map above (the Ty of 'Tye Hill shows this curved plot) and there are some pleasant trees on the plot. The houses also



form part of the setting of the non-desi almshouses. The land likely has associations with Lawford Hall which can be seen as further historic interest/contribution to the area (albeit limited).

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## Kirby le Soken Conservation Area

Name/Organisation	Comment	Action/response
<p>Comments at public consultation event on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concerns regarding the quantity and speed of the traffic through the village. The number of HGVs and through traffic has an adverse impact on the village atmosphere. Especially noted as a problem during rush hour and school run times.</li> <li>2. Flooding has become an issue due to the new housing development adjacent to the church.</li> <li>3. Limit development to keep Kirby as a small rural village.</li> <li>4. Concerns that development to the south of Kirby le Soken and the proposed solar farm would result in Kirby Cross and Kirby le Soken joining.</li> <li>5. Clearer map overlay needed showing changes to the boundary.</li> <li>6. Damage to the boundary wall to the church hall.</li> <li>7. Why has The Ship and its contribution to the village been excluded from the setting?</li> <li>8. Early twentieth-century map is missing from page 15.</li> <li>9. Brick Barn recommended for local listing.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Noted, unable to introduce additional traffic measures through the CAAMP.</li> <li>2. Noted, unable to comment on within the CAAMP but will pass onto Tendring DC</li> <li>3. It is noted within the appraisal that a key part of the conservation area's significance is that it is a small, rural settlement with a linear development pattern and this should be preserved i.e. back land development would be inappropriate. Text added on page 41.</li> <li>4. This is noted and we can strengthen comments as above which can show the importance of rural setting to help going forward. Solar farm development is currently being decided by PINs.</li> <li>5. Map and JPEGs saved in higher quality during export</li> <li>6. Note in management section about maintenance of boundary walls/surfacing etc on page 45</li> <li>7. Text amended on page 43.</li> <li>8. Added in</li> <li>9. Noted, will pass onto Tendring Council</li> </ol>

Kirby-le-Soken Village Preservation Society	The biggest threat to conservation of the village (KLS) is overuse of the main road B1034 (The Street / Walton Road). To avoid the roundabout at "the Gates" at Frinton, traffic diverts down Elm Tree Avenue or Halstead Road to pass through KLS. This is causing damage to ancient properties in KLS and eroding the road surface. Speed is also an element of discomfort for residents especially in the case of HGVs and other large delivery vehicles. When permissions were granted for commercial premises (e.g. M&S, Aldi, etc) they were asked to respect the fact that this village is in a conservation area and instruct their deliveries to pass along B1366 to avoid passing through KLS itself. Not only commercial vehicles are criticised but a continual source of irritation are the hundreds of extra family vehicles using KLS as a "rat run" due to mass development of new housing in Walton, Kirby Cross and (most recently) Frinton at Elm Tree Avenue.	Noted, action made as above (1) and will pass message onto Tendring Council
Natural England	Natural England does not have any specific comments on these new Conservation Area Appraisals.	N/A
National Highways	The nature and location covered by this current consultation is unlikely to have an impact on the operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Therefore, National Highways offers No Comment.	N/A
Historic England	<p>We welcome the production of these appraisals for the five named Conservation Areas which set out clear, robust and achievable proposals for their conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our capacity and existing commitments dictate that we are unable to comment on all the proposed appraisals in fine detail, but a review of the five documents shows they are clearly laid out, well written and nicely illustrated using photographs, other illustrations and cartography.</p> <p>General Comments</p>	N/A

	<p>We are pleased to see that Historic England’s guidance notes for the Historic Area Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal process (which can be found here: HE Advice Note 1 - conservation area designation, appraisal and management, and here: <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/</a>) have been referenced and made use of.</p> <p>We are also pleased to note that all the appraisals include a management plan to help guide the future conservation and enhancement of the areas. Management plan should contain clear, detailed, specific and achievable aims and objectives, setting out priority actions and long-term goals for management, including for any heritage at risk or areas that detract from the character and appearance of the area.</p> <p>It is positive to note that the management plans reference use of Article 4 Directions to help manage inappropriate change, such as the insertion of UPVC windows, in Conservation Areas, and all consider how CIL or Section 106 monies could be targeted for enhancements within the conservation area.</p>	
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Other changes:

- Basemaps updated
- View 4 removed, due to modern development
- Figure 13 updated, due to modern development, and text below edited to reflect the change
- Added details of the woodland setting, based on the response of the owners of Kirby Hall at public consultation, to highlight it’s contribution

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## Great Oakley Conservation Area

Name/Organisation	Comment	Action/response
Comments at public consultation event	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update base map.</li> <li>2. The Old Forge and Wheel could potentially be locally listed.</li> <li>3. The shop next to Whispers used to be an ord shop (sp?).</li> <li>4. Maybush House has been converted from a restaurant into a dwelling.</li> <li>5. The Village Hall was donated to the village after WWII. It is noted in the conservation area but could be mentioned in the setting or potentially locally listed. Extending the boundary of the conservation area to include the Hall could be challenging.</li> <li>6. Clarify why modern development to the south has been included within the boundary (i.e. design, makes the setting of the rural settlement more robust) and include pictures.</li> <li>7. Need a new picture for the Post Office and Village Shop.</li> <li>8. Clarify the boundary to the north, south, and around Mill Lane.</li> <li>9. Check that protected lanes have been mentioned.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Basemap updated, two new buildings within the CA boundary</li> <li>2. Noted – we will pass this comment onto Tendring Council.</li> <li>3. No changes made. I have done some further research but not been able to find further mention of this to investigate fully to add a write up.</li> <li>4. Updated references to this within the document.</li> <li>5. Noted, agreed RE making boundary changes.</li> <li>6. Text on page 17 amended to clarify inclusion of modern development and photo added.</li> <li>7. Photo updated.</li> <li>8. None needed, no Mill Lane within the CA so not clear what area they are referring to. Assume that this was discussed on the day at the event.</li> <li>9. We have looked into the protected lanes within the area (map below). None fall within the boundary of the CA so we will not mention them.</li> </ol>
Natural England	Natural England does not have any specific comments on these new Conservation Area Appraisals.	N/A

National Highways	There are no Strategic Road Networks in any of the Conservation Areas. Therefore, National Highways offers No Comment.	N/A
Historic England	<p>We welcome the production of these appraisals for the five named Conservation Areas which set out clear, robust and achievable proposals for their conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our capacity and existing commitments dictate that we are unable to comment on all the proposed appraisals in fine detail, but a review of the five documents shows they are clearly laid out, well written and nicely illustrated using photographs, other illustrations and cartography.</p> <p>General Comments</p> <p>We are pleased to see that Historic England’s guidance notes for the Historic Area Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal process (which can be found here: HE Advice Note 1 - conservation area designation, appraisal and management, and here: <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-areaassessments/</a>) have been referenced and made use of.</p> <p>We are also pleased to note that all the appraisals include a management plan to help guide the future conservation and enhancement of the areas. Management plan should contain clear, detailed, specific and achievable aims and objectives, setting out priority actions and long-term goals for management, including for any heritage at risk or areas that detract from the character and appearance of the area.</p> <p>It is positive to note that the management plans reference use of Article 4 Directions to help manage inappropriate change, such as the insertion of UPVC windows, in Conservation Areas, and all consider how CIL or Section 106 monies could be targeted for enhancements within the conservation area.</p>	N/A



## Protected Lanes

(shown in dark brown, and CA in orange hash)



Other changes: reference to NPPF throughout and minor formatting changes

## CABINET

31 JANUARY 2024

### REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PARTNERSHIPS

#### A.5 PROCUREMENT OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICE

##### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

###### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek approval from Cabinet to provide an information and advice service to local residents with revised requirements via an associated specification and procurement process, with the new arrangements commencing on 1 October 2025.

To approve the allocation of **£0.072m** to Citizen's Advice Tending to continue to contribute to the existing information and advice guidance service through direct funding for the interim period up to 30 September 2025 in accordance with a subsidy scheme.

###### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To date the Council has contributed to the funding of an information and advice service available to local residents across the district. This is currently provided through Citizens Advice Tending (CAT) via a Service Level Agreement.

The current payment made to CAT for the above service is **£0.144m** per annum. This arrangement has been in place for 13 years, which has recently been facilitated via the adoption of a local Subsidy Control Scheme.

In line with the high-level external funding framework agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 September 2024 and in demonstrating value for money that reflects the Council's wider best value responsibilities, a procurement process is proposed to be undertaken for the future provision of information and advice services to local residents.

In terms of the procurement process, it is important that the Council sets out a clear specification of what it wishes to procure, which includes understanding the 'market' and what similar services are already available to local residents. This approach ensures a joined-up approach across the various sectors within the area with the underlying aim of maximising the use of the Council's resources.

In terms of the principles underlying the provision of an information and advice service to local residents, it is important to highlight the following:

- the challenges some parts of the community face in relation to housing, welfare and debt,
- almost 30% of our local neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived nationally
- there has been a 20% increase in those claiming out of work benefits between 2020 and 2022.
- In addressing deprivation, residents need to improve their income which can be achieved by employment, accessing higher levels of benefits and adequately managing and reducing debt.

- The provision of information and advice is a cost-effective way of helping to support people in relation to employment, benefits and debt.
- Providers are highlighting the increasing demand, for example CVST reporting a 103% increase in demand around social prescribing and DWP have highlighted the need around 4000 new cases formerly on Employment Support Allowance migrating to Universal Credit
- Partners have also identified the greater complexity of those in need both in terms of the multiple issues they now present with, but also that they now more frequently appear in crisis.

The demand for information and advice services to local residents is therefore demonstrable based on the above and as set out further on in this report a 'gap' analysis has been undertaken in terms of the services offered to local people by other local organisations and providers.

Some funding is provided by Government to support services to assist individuals for example funding for DWP who lead on Universal Credit. Other providers who deliver advice and guidance may receive funding from Essex County Council, Tendring District Council the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance or other partners.

There is a wide range of provision of online services and phone services provided for example by Shelter, money and debt helplines and Christians Against Poverty. Some of the main providers highlighted above such as DWP and Citizens Advice also provide some on line or phone services.

A number of providers including DWP, CAT the Council and also CVST highlight the importance of face-to-face advice and in particular DWP highlighted that a significant number of those needing support will not use digital channels but will also not use the phone to make contact.

Providers also highlight the importance of outreach for those residents who may find it difficult to travel to access services.

Face to face provision is a more expensive way of delivering services than online advice and consequently will have a lower rate of access. However, those people who access via a face-to-face method are those most likely to be furthest away from support and the least likely to engage in existing on-line provision. Any service would need to provide wider than just face to face services as some clients will need different forms of access.

When considering the type and scale of provision of an information and advice service, key considerations include ensuring any provision is easily accessible and in particular has a strong face to face component, has the potential for outreach rather than in one location, has some form of quality assurance and can deal with multiple issues residents face and is complimentary to the existing provision of such services across the District.

With the above in mind, and in maximising the use of the Council's resources, a recommendation is set out below that provides a delegation to the Partnerships Portfolio Holder to approve the specification for the provision of an information and advice service and to then undertake the necessary procurement activities.

In further supporting the maximisation of the Council's resources highlighted above, it is

recommended to take a modular approach to procurement, with providers being asked to indicate the complimentary services they could deliver at different price points to enable the Council to determine the best value proposition from the market.

As highlighted above the Council has historically contributed funding to an information and advice service for local residents via a Service Level Agreement with CAT, with the most recent cost being £0.144m, that has been paid to them annually.

CAT have been made aware of the proposed approach set out above and they may consider submitting their own 'bid' for the work the Council is seeking to procure and respond to the outcome of that process.

To ensure a service to residents continues for advice and information while the procurement takes place and the service mobilises on 1 October 2025, we have extended the grant to Citizens Advice Tending for six months.

Based on the estimated procurement timeline set out in this report, it is proposed that a new contract with the provider will have been procured and can commence on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

Based on the existing arrangements in place with CAT, it is therefore recommended to allocate £0.072m to enable them to maintain the existing provision of information and advice services until 30 September 2025. This will require the withdrawal of the current termination notice issued on 9 December 2024 and the reissuing of a further termination notice reflecting the proposed approach set out in this report and the approval of the Service Level Agreement set out as an Appendix to this report.

To deliver this a subsidy scheme will be required to provide the direct allocation of funding which will need to be published on the Government website, with associated recommendations set out below.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**It is recommended that Cabinet:**

- a) approves the provision of an information and advice service to local residents;**
- b) subject to a) above, agrees to the procurement of such services for a contract period of 3 years commencing 1 October 2025, and agrees to a modular procurement approach to determine what a provider could offer for various levels of potential funding e.g. £50,000, £100,000, or £150,000 per year;**
- c) delegates to the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive to approve the specification for provision of an information and advice services based on the broad principles set out within this report;**
- d) approves for an interim period of six months from 1 April 2025, the continuation of the existing agreement with CAT at a cost of £0.072m, supported by the existing budget for information and advice services to local residents;**
- e) subject to (d) above, in respect of the contribution of £0.072m to CAT, agrees to extend the current Addressing Health Inequality – Advice, Support and Mental**

### **Health Support Subsidy Scheme for 2025/26;**

- f) delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Monitoring Officer, to finalise administrative requirements for the production of the Subsidy Scheme in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2023 and Statutory Guidance and to publish it on the Government website prior to any awards; and**
- g) subject to d) to f) above agrees to extend the current Service Level Agreement with Citizens Advice Tendring (CAT) from 1st April 2025 until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 on the terms and conditions as set out in the updated agreement shown in Appendix B.**

### **REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**Following an assessment of need it has been identified that there is continuing demand for an information and advice service which is repurposed and commissioned, to support improving income and opportunity as residents face increased challenges associated with deprivation. Partners report the importance of a holistic approach and dealing with the multiple issues residents face which can be achieved via an information and advice service.**

**The allocation of £0.072m to the existing provider Citizen’s Advice Tendring will ensure there is continuous provision of a service and allow sufficient time for any new provider to gear up for maintaining provision of an appropriate service.**

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council could not allocate funding for this type of service although an assessment of need has identified there is a demand. The Council has previously allocated funding to advice and guidance services and if no further provision is offered this may leave significant need among our communities not being addressed.

Funding for the next six months could not be provided to CAT however this would potentially leave a gap in service of two months and maintaining the service whilst the procurement is completed will support residents who are most in need.

## **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

Provision of funding is in line with the Corporate Plan priority of working with partners to improve quality of life to promote safer, healthier well connected and inclusive communities as an information and advice service provides support around for example accessing benefits, housing support and connecting residents to wider support and their community.

**OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT** (including with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other stakeholders where the item concerns proposals relating to the Budget and Policy Framework)

Officers have been in liaison with a number of partners in this field including the Council’s

benefits team, CAT, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Peabody and CVST who have identified that residents are often in need of support and are increasingly presenting with multiple issues and the importance outreach and face to face provision as some people will not access services digitally or even by phone.

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)**

Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)	If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant effect on two or more wards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Involves £100,000 expenditure/income <input type="checkbox"/> Is otherwise significant for the service budget
	And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)	21 November 2024

In line with the External Funding Review approved by Cabinet in September 2024 (Public Pack)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 20/09/2024 10:30 Item A7 pages 637-688), if the Council is seeking to obtain services that this would be via a procurement approach.

As the Council is now considering seeking services in terms of advice and support via a procurement approach, this will identify who is best placed to deliver the services required and provide best value for the taxpayer. The Council’s Procurement Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation (depending upon timescales) will need to be adhered to, with clear record keeping and decision making.

As it is proposed to provide a further £0.072m to CAT to continue to deliver a service for 6 months this will be delivered via a subsidy scheme to ensure the Council meets the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

This scheme once approved will be published on the Government website.

The provision of the service by CAT will be in accordance with a service level agreement.

The power to allocate funding is provided under the general power of competence within the Localism Act 2011 which give local authorities powers to do anything that individuals can generally do.

**YES The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

Having been consulted throughout the drafting of this report, the only additional comments to make are to ensure that CAT are clear that whether they are successful or not through any procurement process, they prepare for the outcome to take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

Council resources will have to work together to ensure a robust specification is prepared, and aligns with the new requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 and that sufficient time is allocated to ensure that the documentation is ready and able to be published for tender,

evaluated and contract awarded in time for the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 commencement date.

The report highlights that a number of advice and information services are accessible through other means and providers and the procurement process must be fully open and transparent.

### **FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The current proposal is to seek a service which provides advice and guidance to residents and is obtained via a procurement approach.

An advice and guidance service has previously been funded by the Council and there has been a budget of £144,000 per year for that service.

The amount of funding for this service needs to be determined and the time period over which a contract will run as it is not necessarily efficient to procure the service on an annual basis and will not provide any certainty for the winner of any procurement.

A modular approach is proposed for the procurement setting out figures of for example £50,000 £100,000 £150,000 and what could the provider offer in quality welfare, debt and housing advice with a focus on a face-to-face offer across the district, at those different amounts.

It is proposed to procure a service for three years to which will provide consistent support for residents and certainty for the provider.

Half of the current budget £0.072m for the forthcoming year is proposed to be allocated to CAT to continue to run the existing advice and guidance service for 6 months up to 30 September 2025 to ensure there is no gap in service provision whilst the procurement is undertaken.

**YES** The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:

Although there are no major comments over and above those set out elsewhere in this report, the proposed procurement approach better aligns with the Councils' wider best value / value for money responsibilities and aims to reflect other providers of information and advice services within the district.

### **USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	This report seeks to determine the amount of funding that the Council wishes to allocate to an advice and support service following an assessment of need to ensure the effective use of resources
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and	If approved to procure a service it will be in line with the External Funding Review approved by Cabinet in September 2024 and with the Council's procurement and governance procedures. The continuation of a service by CAT for 6 months is in accordance with previous Cabinet decisions about allocating funding to CAT for this service.



C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

Future allocation of funding to this service is in accordance with an assessment of need to ensure there is effective use of resources.

### **MILESTONES AND DELIVERY**

If approval is given to procure a service it is currently proposed to start the procurement in February and Essex County Council's procurement team have this potential procurement in their planner.

If there is no framework available (which would potentially shorten the procurement timeline) the procurement would be via an open procedure. Once the documents are ready to be sent out it is likely to take 8-10 weeks if below the procurement threshold of £214,904 and up to 12 weeks if in excess of the threshold. A new service could therefore potentially be procured and completed by June 2025.

If approved an indicative timescale for the procurement is as follows

- January 2025 Cabinet approval to develop specification and go out to procurement
- February 2025 Specification approved and ready to send to ECC Procurement Team
- Market engagement undertaken
- Documents prepared by procurement team
- March 2025 Documents sent out for procurement for a 30-day period
- April 2025 Documents returned and evaluation undertaken
- May 2025 Standstill period
- June 2025 Obtain delegation to award contract
- July 2025 Documents drawn up and signed, sealed and exchanged
- August and September 2025 Mobilisation period

Incorporated in this period is consultation with internal services and in particular the Governance Team who have accepted the timeline.

The contracts to be used will be standard contracts and the specification will form one of the schedules.

This procurement is on the Essex County Council Procurement Team's forward planner.

As a modular approach is being offered and it may be over a number of years this procurement could exceed the threshold in the Procurement Act 2023 of £214,904. The ECC Procurement Team have identified that a contract exceeding this threshold would take in the region of 3 months to procure which is in line with the timeline above.

### **ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION**

The needs assessment has identified that there is a significant need in the area for advice and support services and this can effectively support addressing deprivation by supporting improvements around income. The Council has previously funded advice and support services and therefore if no services are now sought this may leave significant need in the community.

The allocation of funding to CAT for 6 months ensures there is no gap in service provision whilst the procurement is being undertaken.

The procurement of any service will ensure need is still addressed but will also effectively test the market to ensure the best placed and most effective provision is delivered.

There is a risk that providers may be unsuccessful and no organisation wins the procurement.

Market engagement should help focus the procurement to ensure there are providers in the market who can deliver the service to ensure the procurement is realistic.

If there are no successful bidders a review will be undertaken with providers to understand why and consideration given to any amendments that can be made to support a successful procurement.

There is a risk that mobilisation for the new provider may take time which could be beyond when the extended service provided by CAT finishes. Pre-market engagement will ensure providers have a long period of awareness of any potential new service and a significant mobilisation period is included with in the timeline of at least 2 months.

A communications message will need to be provided as part of this process to ensure it is clear why the Council has undertaken an assessment of need and then undertaking a procurement to determine the best provider.

Further communications will be required at the start of the contract to promote the service to residents.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

Any providers bidding for the service will need to demonstrate they have effective equality procedures in place and by having a strong face to face offer will provide access to services for those who do not engage digitally or by phone.

#### **SOCIAL VALUE**

As part of the procurement scoping will be undertaken to include within the specification and evaluation criteria a determination of the social value that can be delivered as part of the procurement, as required by the Social Value Policy recently adopted by the Council.

This is proposed to be based on the Local Government Association's National Social Value Taskforce National Themes, Outcomes and Measures method of classifying and scoring social value.

As part of the procurement this will include the value score (the commercial value of the social value) and the supporting statement which determines the robustness of the approach.

In particular this will focus on opportunities for local residents and particularly those not in employment, education or training and also the promotion of greater environmental sustainability by how the service will operate.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030**

None

#### **OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS**

**Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.**

<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	By supporting those with facing significant challenges and helping build resilience an information and support service can help prevent clients either being the victims or perpetrators of crime
<b>Health Inequalities</b>	The service will support those in an area of significant deprivation and builds resilience in residents most in need for example by providing benefits advice which helps address health inequalities.
Subsidy Control (the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the related Statutory Guidance)	The new service will be procured which ensures that provision will not be a subsidy and so will be in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The extension of the service for CAT for 6 months will be in accordance with the process used last year which was approved by Cabinet and will use a subsidy control scheme published on the Government website.
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	All, as anyone can be referred to the service

### PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### BACKGROUND

Tendring District Council have contributed funding for advice and guidance services since 2013/14 which has assisted residents around issues such as claiming benefits, dealing with debt, accessing food and services and housing issues.

In line with the External Funding Review approved by Cabinet on 20 September 2024 ([Public Pack](#)) [Agenda Document for Cabinet, 20/09/2024 10:30](#) Item A7 pages 673-678, and in demonstrating value for money that reflects the Council's wider best value responsibilities, a procurement process is proposed to be undertaken for the future provision of information and advice services to local residents.

In terms of the procurement process, it is important that the Council sets out a clear specification of what it wishes to procure, which includes understanding the 'market' and what similar services are already available to local residents. This approach ensures a joined up approach across the various sectors within the area with the underlying aim of maximising the use of the Council's resources.

In terms of considering the type of service that could be provided Tendring faces significant challenges around deprivation with the most deprived ward in the country (Jaywick) and almost 30% of our local neighbourhoods being in the 20% most deprived nationally. There has also been a 20% increase in those claiming out of work benefits between 2020 and 2022.

To help address deprivation residents need to improve their income which can be achieved by employment, accessing higher levels of benefits and adequately managing and reducing debt.

The provision of information and advice can help residents address these issues and is a

cost-effective way of helping residents manage their income more effectively. For example, one provider has reported that for every £1 invested they estimate the value of benefits advice as £22.

Some funding is provided by Government to support services to assist individuals for example funding for Department of Work and Pensions offices which lead on Universal Credit.

Other providers who deliver advice and guidance may receive funding from Essex County Council, Tendring District Council the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance or other partners.

Significant providers in the area are identified below.

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Advice areas</b>	<b>Number of people</b>	<b>On phone</b>	<b>On line</b>	<b>In Person + where</b>
DWP	Universal Credit Employment support	No specific figure as advice is provided as part of the wider service as all interviews may include some advice	✓	✓	DWP offices Clacton and Harwich 65-70% of provision is face to face
Tendring District Council	Housing benefits Council Tax  Family Solutions, Fuel Poverty and Housing benefits Early Intervention officers	4,700 per year 11,700 per year	✓	✓	Council Offices (Pier Avenue)  Predominantly in person responses with outreach and home visiting although some phone and on line activity
CVST	Social prescribing Resilience support	2,700 received seasonal resilience support	✓	✓	Throughout district with social prescribing in GP surgeries
CAT	Benefits, debt, housing, employment, relationships, consumer, health, poverty,	7,800 per year	✓	✓	Outreach across Tendring including Pier Avenue Council

	energy, hate crime, domestic abuse, food and fuel vouchers, cancer				Offices. Clacton, Harwich, Walton, Jaywick, Brightlingsea, Colchester hospital for McMillan cancer support
Peabody	Housing and benefits support, landlord issues support, homelessness applications	10 workers each with caseload of 16-18 and current waiting list in excess of 50 cases	✓	✓	Outreach across Tendring including Pier Avenue Council offices
Age Well East	Welfare benefits and entitlements, housing and care options	3000 cases per year across Essex	✓	✓	Home visiting and office locations (Colchester)
Specific providers e.g. Open Road for drugs and alcohol	Counselling and practical help for people affected by drug and alcohol addiction and other health and social problems	3600 cases per year over a wider area than Essex			
On line services – Stepchange, National Debt Line, Money Helper, Christians Against Poverty	Debt advice services	No figures available for Tendring		✓ These are on line services only	

There is significant demand for benefits, debt and housing advice which is not funded by Government provision. Although the Council's Benefits Team deal with a significant number of debt enquiries they also refer on a lot of cases to other providers such as Peabody, Citizen's Advice Tendring, CVST and online support.

There is also digital provision via the myTending portal allows for some self-service provision for Council services.

Existing providers are reporting an increase in demand with CVST experiencing a 103% increase around social prescribing, Age Well East stating they had experienced a 26% increase for attendance claims, DWP highlighting the increase demand caused by migration to Universal Credit for example from Employment Support Allowance which is forecast to be 4000 cases. They also highlight the very significant increase in demand caused by poor mental health with up to 65% of cases for those not in work being caused by mental health. Peabody operate a waiting list to manage provision of support.

There is also a legacy from covid when debt increased as action could not be taken against residents to address issues at that time which now result in very high debt costs.

A number of providers including DWP, CAT the Council and also CVST highlight the importance of face to face advice and in particular DWP highlighted that a significant number of those needing support will not use digital channels and will also not use the phone to make contact. These and other providers also do outreach work as well to ensure they can contact those who will not access support other than by face to face means.

DWP report that they are predominantly funded by Government for face-to-face work as this provides the best results and although they do provide other channels this is often adjustments that customers specifically ask for if for example, they cannot access services physically because of poor health.

Face to face provision is a more expensive way of providing services and consequently will have a lower rate of access. However, those people who access via a face-to-face method are those most likely to be furthest away from support and the least likely to engage. It is important that the service provides a wider offer than simply face to face as more people can then access the services but a face-to-face offer should form a considerable part of the provision.

Providers also report an increasing complexity of cases so that individuals now present with more than one issue and are more often in crisis. This is also evidenced by the needs identified by Family Solutions, fuel poverty and housing and benefits early intervention officers who all seek to provide a multiple offer response.

The assessment of need therefore identifies that this type of service is needed to support residents. The Council does not have the capacity itself to deliver further advice and support services beyond that which it already provides as part of its core activities such as housing or benefits advice. Therefore, any further provision would need to go out to the market.

If a procurement is undertaken, it will need to be in line with the outcome of the needs assessment for example around the importance of face-to-face services. In addition, as part of the procurement process information would be sought in terms of how providers will seek to engage those who are otherwise not receiving support.

There is also a need to ensure that the provision of any service has a quality standard or assessment undertaken to ensure that those providing advice are competent to do so and are delivering this effectively.

The provision of this type of service aligns with the developing place-based prevention approach which sees partners aligning around a wider determinants approach including for example around housing, skills and employment.

There is provision of a variety of services across the district which an information and advice service could refer into and this type of service could assist individuals to access those services by helping to transfer them over. This would not be via a basic signposting service but by supporting people to access a wider service.

There is therefore a demand for benefits, debt and housing advice and although there is some existing provision the very significant demand reported by providers and the Council indicates that further support is needed. In addition, this demand is likely to be helping to fuel the deterioration in mental health which a number of providers are reporting.

The Council has previously allocated £0.144m funding to this type of service so there is a budget available and a modular approach to allocating funding is now being considered to determine what a provider could offer for various levels of potential funding e.g. £50,000, £100,000, or £150,000 per year.

The procurement of the service also provides the opportunity to obtain the provision over a longer time period for up to three years to avoid repeated procurement but also to give the provider some certainty about future funding. So even if there is a reduction in funding provided per year, overall the level of funding provided over a three year period could be higher than was previously given on an annual basis.

As part of the procurement process consideration will be given to any wider services the Council commissions for example from Peabody around housing support to ensure there is consistency.

The Council has historically contributed funding to an information and advice service for local residents via a Service Level Agreement with CAT, with the most recent cost being £0.144m, that has been paid to them annually.

CAT have been made aware of the proposed approach set out above and they may consider submitting their own 'bid' for the work the Council is seeking to procure and respond to the outcome of that process.

As the procurement of any new service is likely to take in excess of three months, it is proposed to continue the existing arrangements with CAT in the interim period. Based on the estimated procurement timeline set out in this report, it is proposed that this interim period be for six months with a new contract with the provider identified via the proposed procurement route commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

Based on the existing arrangements in place with CAT, it is therefore recommended to allocate £0.072m to enable them to maintain the existing provision of information and advice services until 30 September 2025.

A termination notice was issued to CAT on 9 December 2024 highlighting that any future provision would be via a procurement approach and that this was being sought from 1 April 2025. This notice will now be withdrawn and a further termination notice reissued reflecting

the proposed approach set out in this report.

To deliver this a subsidy scheme (Appendix A) will be required to provide the direct allocation of funding which will need to be published on the Government website which is in line with how the funding was allocated in 2024.

#### **PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 21/07/2023 10:30](#) Page 37  
[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 26/07/2024 10:30](#) Page 877

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

None

#### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A Health Inequalities Subsidy Control Principles Assessment**  
**Appendix B Service Level Agreement**

#### **REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>John Fox</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Head of Health and Community</b>
<b>Email/Telephone</b>	<a href="mailto:jfox@tendringdc.gov.uk">jfox@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> <b>01255 686746</b>

#### **A.5 APPENDIX A**

**Addressing Health Inequality - Advice, Support and Mental Health Support Subsidy Scheme – Tendring District Council**



Assessment Framework Component	Recommended Evidence
<p><b>Policy objective</b> (Subsidy Control Principle A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Provide details of specific policy objective</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Establish the existence and significance of the market failure and/or the inequality the subsidy seeks to address</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Identify how the subsidy will remedy the market failure (i.e. provide a more efficient outcome) and/or address the equity objective (reduce an inequality)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>State the desired outcome(s)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The policy objective is within the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028 which seeks to work with partners to improve quality of life to promote safer, healthier, well connected and inclusive communities</li> <li>▪ Funding provision to Citizen's Advice Tendring via a subsidy scheme will specifically seek to address poor mental health via the Mental Health Hub which seeks to support, mentor and encourage people who are economically inactive through their poor mental health to gain confidence, skills and build resilience so they are work ready. In addition the provision of a General Advice Service to deal with residents in extreme circumstances for example around eviction, access to benefits, suicide, gambling addiction, domestic violence or relationship breakdown which often leads to people not being able to cope or having poor mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Unemployment:</b> 76.6% of residents (62,700 people) aged 16-64 in Tendring are economically active, 4.2% lower than the average for Essex (80.8%) and 2.1% lower than England (78.7%). This is the third lowest rate of economic activity in the county. Source: (Page 32, <i>Essex County Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2019, Tendring Local Authority Profile</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>Mental Health:</b> The prevalence of anxiety and depression in over 18 year olds across North East Essex at 14.3% is higher than the rest of Essex and England and the prevalence for severe mental health as recorded on general practice disease registers is also significantly higher at 1.00 than the Essex (0.80) or England average (0.94) the prevalence of long term health conditions across North East Essex is also slightly higher than across Essex and similar to England. (<i>Page 81 Essex County Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2019 Tendring Local Authority Health Profile</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>Health Inequality:</b> Tendring is one of the 20% most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England. Approximately 24% (5,500) of children in Tendring live in low income families. Life expectancy in the most deprived areas of Tendring is 10.6 years lower for men and 7.8 years lower for women in than in the least deprived areas. In the most deprived areas people not only live shorter lives than average for England, but also experience worse health. Source: (Page 23, <i>Embedding the Marmot Principles in Tendring, Essex, Ruth Bell, 30th July 2021</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The scheme will effectively seek to address and reduce inequalities by providing mental health support in a key area of mental health inequality and deprivation so as to improve confidence skills and resilience. Outcomes from funding provision for the mental health hub will be provided and are proposed to include addressing ongoing mental health concerns so as to help people become more resilient and reduce numbers of people requiring clinical interventions. In addition the General Advice Service will provide a wide level of support including in relation to benefits, housing, suicide, gambling addiction, domestic violence and relationship breakdown which will also address inequalities. Outcomes of work undertaken by the General Advice Service will also be</li> </ul>

Assessment Framework Component	Recommended Evidence
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Step 4</p> <p><b>Balancing Exercise</b> (Subsidy Control Principle G)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Set out details of the expected benefits of the subsidy (as they relate to the specified public policy objective) and its anticipated negative effects, including in particular any negative effects on competition and investment within the UK, and international trade and investment. This should also include any geographical and distributional impacts. Justify why the negative effects are outweighed.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Please note that it will not always be possible to quantify every element of the assessment, and therefore the balancing exercise may need to include both quantitative and qualitative elements.</i></p>	<p>The expected benefits of the subsidy will be to ensure people are supported in terms of their mental health which will provide the ability to be seen by a professional, receive signposting and access volunteering as a precursor to employment. In addition it will provide a comprehensive general advice service to those most in need and who may be going into crisis.</p> <p>Although there are no significant obvious negative impacts the funding has been offered on a year by year basis, although in terms of the general advice service this is proposed to move to an open procurement process, and there may be a reduction in service if further funding is not allocated. As there is need in the community currently the positive impacts of this subsidy will outweigh any negative impacts.</p> <p>Any negative impact on competition are limited as this work requires specific skills in respect of comprehensive training, routinely audited provided by a local trusted organisation which can deliver a comprehensive approach.</p> <p>CAT provide fully trained staff to undertake the work and are audited and have three monthly monitoring to ensure quality is maintained.</p> <p>Rigorous training is provided over a number of key areas including welfare benefits, housing, debt, employment, consumer support, relationships, domestic abuse and mental health.</p> <p>The stringent quality control standard required by local Citizen's Advice offices is a key feature of this work. This includes daily case checking by supervisors, monthly Quality of Advice Assessments provided to National Citizen's Advice with quarterly audits on random cases, monthly case checking feeding in to staff supervision and annual audits by National Citizen's Advice. This auditing has led to CAT being identified as the highest quality provider across the whole Citizen's Advice network nationally.</p> <p>They are also providing a broad range of services so that a client can be supported in one place across a wide range of issues that they find easy to access because services are provided locally to them by a trusted organisation that they feel happy to access. Therefore, any negative impacts are outweighed by the positive impact that the subsidy scheme can have.</p> <p>It is therefore unlikely that another provider will be in a position to provide a comprehensive general advice service and mental health support with competent trained staff across a wide range of areas which is also a local trusted provider by the community and is highly accessible and has provable quality standards.</p>

## **A.5 APPENDIX B**

### **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

**AN AGREEMENT** made on

**BETWEEN:**

- (1) **TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL** (TDC) of Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 1SE (“the Council”) and
- (2) **CITIZENS ADVICE TENDRING** (CAT) (a company limited by guarantee registered under company number 04345160 and charity number 1091777 registered with the Charity Commission) whose registered office and address registered with the Charity Commission is 8 Carnarvon Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 6QF (“CAT”)

WHEREAS

- (A) General Information concerning the Partnership Working and Targets or Objectives relevant to this Agreement is set out in the First Schedule
- (B) The Council wishes to support the Services of CAT for the purpose of providing an information and advice service operated within the aims, principles and policies of Citizens Advice subject to an agreed grant and to a defined level of service as hereinafter provided

**1 NOW IT IS HEREBY AGREED as follows:**

1. Definitions

1.1 In this Agreement, unless the context requires otherwise:

“Agreement” means this Agreement

“**annexed**” means a copy of which is attached to or placed with this Agreement and which has (for identification) been signed or initialled by or on behalf of each of the parties hereto

“CAT” means Citizens Advice Tendring

“Contact Officer” shall be construed in accordance with clause 7 below

“Citizens Advice” means The National Association of Citizens’ Advice Bureaux (registered charity number 279057) a company limited by guarantee registered with company number 1436965

“Grant” means the monies to be paid to CAT by the Council as provided by schedule 3

“Services” means the Service or Services to be provided by CAT as stated in this Agreement

“Term” shall be construed in accordance with clause 2

1.2 Where in this Agreement reference is made to a Clause Paragraph Schedule Plan Drawing or Recital such reference (unless the context otherwise requires) is a reference to a clause paragraph schedule plan drawing or recital of or (in the case of a plan or a drawing) attached to this Agreement

1.3 Where in any Schedule or Part of a Schedule reference is made to a paragraph such reference shall (unless the context otherwise requires) be to a paragraph of that Schedule or (if relevant) part of a Schedule

1.4 Words importing the singular meaning where the context so admits include the plural meaning and vice versa

1.5 Words of the masculine gender include the feminine and neuter genders and words denoting natural persons include companies, corporations and firms and all such words shall be construed interchangeably in that manner

1.6 Words denoting an obligation on a party to do any act, matter or thing include an obligation to procure that it be done and words placing a party under a restriction include an obligation not to cause permit or allow infringement of the restriction

1.7 The clause headings and table of contents shall not be taken into account for the purposes of the construction or interpretation of this Agreement

## 2. **Term**

2.1 The term of this Agreement is 6 months beginning on 1 April 2025 and ending on 30 September 2025 subject to the right of either party to terminate in accordance with clause 3 below.

## 3. **Termination**

3.1 The Agreement can be terminated by either party giving the other party not less than 6 months prior notice in writing expiring at any time.

3.2 Notice can be served if delivered, posted, or emailed to the Contact Officer.

3.3 If the Agreement is terminated so as to end before the expiry of the Term, a proportion of the Grant shall forthwith be refunded to the Council pro rata to the number of days of the Year remaining at the date when the notice terminating the Agreement ends the Agreement

## 4. **The Parties Obligations**

4.1 CAT agrees to provide the Services specified in Schedule 2 of this Agreement (Service Objectives and Specifications).

4.2 The Council agrees to make the grant payment specified in paragraph 3.1 of Schedule 3.

## 5. **Status of Agreement**

5.1 Each party shall use all reasonable endeavours to honour its obligations to the other under this Agreement, but it is not the intention of the parties that either of them shall be legally liable to the other in damages for failure on its part to observe the terms of this Agreement.

5.2 Nothing in the Agreement shall be construed as creating a partnership or legal relationship of any kind that would impose liability upon one party for the act or failure to act of the other party, or to authorise either party to act as agent for the other party. Neither party shall have authority to make representations, act in the name of, or on behalf of, or to otherwise bind the other party.

## 6. **Management**

6.1 Responsibility for the management of CAT is vested in the Trustee Board, the membership and operation of which is laid down by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of CAT (registered company number 04345160 and registered charity number 1091777)

## 7. **Parties Representatives**

7.1 The Council and CAT will each appoint a Contact Officer.

7.2 The role of the Council's Contact Officer is to:

- Be the initial point of contact within the Council for CAT

- Inform CAT, in writing, of any issues which may have an effect on the implementation of the service provision in this Agreement
- Provide information, advice and support to CAT as reasonably required
- Set up monitoring meetings with CAT Contact Officer to consider the information set out in Schedule 4
- Inform CAT, in writing, of any change in the Council's Contact Officer.

7.3 The role of CAT's Contact Officer is to provide the information required in Schedule 4 of this Agreement and to inform the Council's Contact Officer, in writing, if there is:

- a proposal by CAT to change or reduce the services set out in Schedule 2
- any amount to be taken into account under 3.3
- a major change to CAT's financial budget;
- a change to CAT's constitution; or
- a change in CAT Contact Officer.

7.4 The parties' Contact Officers will be John Fox of the Council and Melanie Hammond of CAT or such other officer as either party shall from time to time appoint to represent it and notify to the other party.

## **8. Confidentiality**

8.1 The Council accepts that CAT offers a confidential service and that all matters raised by individual clients are kept confidential.

## **9. Staffing**

9.1 Paid and volunteer staff will be recruited and selected by CAT with full regard to all human resources policies and procedures approved by Citizens Advice.

9.2 Paid staff will be employed and remunerated by CAT with full regard to Citizens Advice Guidelines.

## **10. Quality Assurance**

10.1 CAT undertakes to operate the quality assurance systems described in Schedule 2.

## **11. Health and Safety**

11.1 CAT shall have regard to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and any other Acts, Regulations, Directives or Orders etc about health and safety.

## **12. Insurances**

12.1 CAT will arrange adequate insurances to cover such liabilities as may arise in the course of CAT's work.

## **13. Dispute Resolution**

13.1 If either party considers the other to be in breach of their duties under this Agreement or has a grievance about some aspect of the Agreement's operation, the parties shall make every reasonable effort to resolve the issue through joint discussions. Where this fails:

13.2 the party wishing to make the complaint should provide the other with written details, including proposals for resolving the matters in dispute;

13.3 a written response should be sent to the initiating party within 14 days;

- 13.4 if the response is not considered to resolve the issue, the initiating party may request in writing to the Contact Officer a meeting of the authorised signatories (or their successor);
- 13.5 where possible the meeting should be held within 14 days of the Contact Officer receiving the request;
- 13.6 where the meeting does not resolve the complaint, the issue should be considered by the Bureau's Trustee Board or the relevant Council committee as a confidential item. Any submissions should be sent in advance to the other party and representation permitted;
- 13.7 If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome as notified to it in writing within seven days of the meeting, arbitration can be requested and this will take place with a mutually acceptable external party.

#### 14. **Review**

- 14.1 This Agreement may require amendments in the light of experience of implementing its terms. Any amendments will need to be negotiated and agreed in writing by both parties.

#### 15. **Renewal**

- 15.1 This Agreement applies to a one-off payment and no guarantee, representation or warranty by or on the part of the Council is given as to its renewal for any year or other period subsequent to the Term or that the Council will pay any money to CAT otherwise than as expressly provided by this agreement.

### **Schedule 1**

#### (Background Information, Partnership Working and Targets or Objectives)

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1.1 The objective of CAT is to provide free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to enable residents of the Tendring District to deal with a wide range of issues, including benefits, housing, debt advice, money advice, employment, consumer, relationships, taxation and many more. The nature of the assistance provided will depend on a client's needs and ranges from the provision of information to full rights based advice.

1.1.2 The standard of service is set out in the Citizens Advice Quality Assurance Standards Membership Agreement and the Advice Services Alliance Generalist Quality Mark.

1.1.3 CAT also receives funds from the Money Advice Service, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, NEE CCG, Essex County Council and other grant making trusts. Loss of any funding streams for specific projects making a substantial contribution to CAT's central costs may affect CAT's ability to deliver the core service. If this were the case the Citizens Advice contact would discuss the position with the Council.

#### **1.2 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

CAT recognises the Council's key priorities identified in its 2024-2028 Corporate Plan.

##### **Pride in our area and services to residents**

We want to put residents' first, by promoting clean and tidy communities, providing decent housing that everyone deserves, and tackling the things that make a big difference to you. This means getting the basics right on our services. The Council will look to harness the power of digital delivery of services while ensuring that no resident is left behind. We also want to promote pride in our communities by encouraging everyone to take responsibility for keeping their area a pleasant place in which to live and work.

##### **Raising aspirations and creating opportunities**

Tendring is ambitious and our residents will be supported to reach their potential and realise their opportunities. To do this, working with businesses and partners, we want to improve access to skills learning and training so that residents can find employment and enable businesses to thrive; particularly taking the opportunities afforded by Freeport East and the Garden Community. We want to maximise the opportunities for young people and see them enthused with purpose. To inspire those dreams we will celebrate business success, encourage cultural, tourism and economic growth.

### **Championing our local environment**

We believe our environment is special, it is the space where we live and work, and therefore deserves protection. We will be tough on those who do not respect our environment. We want to create and maintain spaces for leisure, wellbeing and healthy lifestyles, and deliver access to open spaces and community resources.

### **Working with partners to improve quality of life**

We want to promote safer, healthier, well connected and inclusive communities by working with our partners across government, public, private and third sectors. We will strive to build on the firm foundations, developed over time, with those partners to meet the identified needs of our communities. We recognise the vital role volunteers play in caring for others and our environment, and we will support, encourage and facilitate those opportunities.

### **Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer**

We want to boost our tourism by attracting more visitors to the 36 miles of sunshine coast and to our rural towns and villages. We will support our unique heritage, work with our partners, run events and promote the district for the benefit of our residents and to encourage visitors to come and to stay for longer.

### **Financial Sustainability and openness**

To continue to deliver effective services and get things done we must look after the public purse; that means carefully planning what we do, managing capacity, and prioritising what we focus our time, money and assets on. Tough decisions will not be shied away from, but will be taken transparently, be well-informed, and based upon engagement with our residents. We will give clarity on where the Council spends the money it is provided with.

## **1.3. TARGETS OR OBJECTIVES**

1.3.1 CAT will work in partnership with the Council in order to:

- Prevent homelessness
- Promote take-up of benefits (including Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme)
- Manage debt and improve financial resilience in order to ensure that clients are able to pay priority bills such as rent and Council Tax
- Support clients accessing Discretionary Housing Payments to plan and manage their finances.
- Highlight and resolve community issues
- Address health inequalities
- Promote reduce, reuse and recycle
- Reduce social isolation
- Reduce the number of Tendring residents living in fuel poverty
- Support clients to move into employment and training

## **Schedule 2**

### **(Service Objectives and Specifications)**

#### **2.1 AIMS OF THE SERVICE**

The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. It values diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

The service aims:

- To work proactively to enhance community resilience.
- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face.
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

## 2.2 PRINCIPLES UNDER WHICH THE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

CAT will provide an information and advice service which is:

- free
- confidential
- impartial
- open to all regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership (only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination).

## 2.3 SERVICES FUNDED UNDER THIS AGREEMENT

The service (to which the funding arrangements in [Schedule 3](#) relate) offered by CAT shall be 'assisted information' and 'general help' (as defined by the Advice Services Alliance Quality Mark - see paragraph 2.5 of Schedule 2), and Debt and Welfare Benefits 'casework'.

Assisted information is a service in which staff are available to help clients access information, and to identify where a client needs further information or advice.

General help is:

- Diagnosing the client's problems
- Giving information and explaining options
- Signposting to other organisations if appropriate
- Identifying further action the client can take and
- Giving basic assistance e.g. filling in forms, helping the client draft letters, and contacting third parties to seek information on the client's behalf.

Where necessary for a particular client, the service provided by CAT will also include contacting a third party to negotiate on the client's behalf.

In accordance with the Citizens Advice Membership Agreement the subjects covered will include:

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Consumer Welfare | • Money advice                |
| • Benefits         | • Employment                  |
| • Housing          | • Family and personal matters |
| • Taxes            | • Immigration and nationality |
| • Health           | • Education                   |

The service covered by this Agreement includes Debt casework as defined by the Advice Services Alliance Quality Mark i.e. with casework, the service provider takes responsibility for further action, whereas with a general help service, the client retains responsibility for the case. Casework also includes representing a client at appeal proceedings where necessary, which general help does not.

CAT Tending shall contribute to the priorities and core values of Tending District Council through the following actions:

CAT will:

- Assist TDC with its aim to identify those in the district who have failed to claim ANY benefits to which they may be entitled and in particular Housing Benefit & Local Council Tax Support and assist those claimants with accessing benefits they are entitled to:
- Advise clients seeking debt advice that Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates are priority debts and assist them by liaising with TDC at individual case level to set up a repayment plan;
- Support the tackling of crime and disorder by taking part in TDC's/Community Safety and Health and Wellbeing Board's local "Community Days of Action"
- Signpost and advise residents on matters around crime and disorder and in particular antisocial behaviour;



- Provide clients with support and information to assist them to remain within their own homes as far as possible and prevent them getting into financial difficulties which would render them homeless;
- Assist clients in the prevention of homelessness by providing advice and support.
- Ensure that clients are aware of benefits and grants to ameliorate fuel poverty and assist them in securing the benefits they are entitled to;
- Assist vulnerable people to obtain the benefits that they are entitled to especially those living in the most deprived areas;
- Inform clients of the advantages of fuel efficiency, reducing their outgoings and protecting the environment;
- Work with partners, including TDC, to reduce health inequalities across the district.

## 2.4 MEANS OF ACCESSING THE SERVICE

Post Covid-19 pandemic residents are able to contact CAT via face-to-face, email, and telephone as below:

- a) by phone - 01255 377080, Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm
- b) by email - [supervisor@cabtending.org.uk](mailto:supervisor@cabtending.org.uk)
- c) on the Citizens Advice website (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>)
- d) online chat with trained advisor via the 'Contact Us' section of above website
- e) CAT Advice line (0800 1448848) - as part of their membership of NCA, CAT in the provision of a public advice line to increase access to advice and information over the phone.
- f) by letter
- g) to personal callers on a drop-in basis, at some or all of the locations set out below

Clacton CAT, 18 Carnarvon Road, Clacton on Sea

Harwich CAT, Jobcentre Plus, 164 High Street, Harwich  
Brightlingsea, The Parish Hall, Victoria Place

Jaywick Sands – Community Forum at the Enterprise Centre

Frinton-on-Sea, Community Centre, Triangle Shopping Centre

CAT will endeavour to provide outreach in as many locations as possible.

## 2.5 QUALITY ASSURANCE

National Citizens Advice (NCA) introduced a new membership in 2017 outlining the responsibilities of the National and Local Citizens Advice offices. Citizens Advice Tendring (CAT) have signed up to the new membership which will include the following responsibilities known as The Performance Quality Framework (PQF) :-

- \* Quarterly Surveys of Client experience sampled
- \* QAA - Quality of Advice Assessments conducted monthly (CAT) but reviewed and sampled by NCA quarterly
- \* FCA - Financial Health Monitoring - Financial reports submitted to NCA quarterly
- \* LSA - Leadership Self Assessment - Annually to include 9 areas of People Management, Operations, Research and Campaigns, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Governance, Strategic Management, Finance and Partnerships.

CAB are audited quarterly by National CAB. Currently green audit for last four years for assurance.

## 2.6 SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

CAT has a business and development plan (appendix 1), the monitoring of which, and the results of audits (see paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of Schedule 4) lead to innovation and improvements in its service

CAT will participate in the relevant networks in order to enhance the services provided to local residents.

CAT will work to secure additional funding in order to meet unmet needs for advice amongst the diverse local communities.

CAT will make use of clients' experiences to inform and influence the policy and delivery of other local services, and will inform the Council of relevant issues.

## **2.7 USER FEEDBACK AND INVOLVEMENT**

CAT will operate a procedure for representations and complaints about the service in accordance with Citizens Advice guidelines and shall take all reasonable steps to bring this to the attention of the users of CAT.

CAT undertakes an annual client satisfaction survey. From 2017, the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux will be implementing an external quarterly survey of clients.

CAT will consult both clients and potential clients about service provision and opening hours.

CAT will encourage users to take up appropriate training opportunities within CAT.

The Trustee Board are to be constituted in such a way as to encourage representation from as wide a range of local people and relevant organisations as possible.

## **2.8 CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND CAT'S CONTROL**

CAT will not be held responsible for any interruption in or disruption to the core services due to circumstances beyond its control.

The services specified are subject to any national or local restrictions that may be in force and are dependent on the availability of suitable advisers and the continued availability of rent free accommodation for delivery of the Harwich, Manningtree, Jaywick Sands and Walton service; or additional external funding to meet such costs.

### Schedule 3

#### (Financial and Resourcing Arrangements)

- 3.1 The Council has agreed that the grant to be paid by the Council to CAT for the **six** months beginning 1 April 2025 shall be **£72,000**.
- 3.2 The grant in 3.1 will be paid in one instalment of **£72,000**
- 3.3 Together with the funds from Essex County Council, this grant shall be construed as being sufficient to fund the services referred to in Schedule 2 of this Agreement. Separate grant funding will be sought for new service development.

3.4 Any reduction in funding from other organisations that prevents CAT from providing the service detailed in Schedule 2, including the level of availability in 2.4, will result in the Council reviewing its Grant to CAT.

3.5 All amounts specified under this Agreement are exclusive of VAT.

CAT agrees to submit, to the Council a copy of its latest approved accounts, within the meaning of the Charities Act, 1992 and 1993 within 7 days of their formal approval.

**Any change to the core funding provided by Essex County Council referred to in 3.3 could cause CAT to be unable to provide the services specified in Schedule 2 of this Agreement.**

**Where CAT gains a surplus of income from grants, fundraising or other sources in any one year, the Council will not seek repayment of any part of the grant provided the service level specified in Section 2 has been fully met.**

Schedule 4

(Monitoring Arrangements)

4.1 CAT monitors and evaluates its services in accordance with the procedures and directions set out in the Citizens Advice Quality Assurance Standards Membership Agreement.

4.2 CAT is subject to an annual organisational self assessment and quarterly audit of quality of advice.

4.3 CAT is subject to a yearly audit by National Citizens Advice.

4.4 CAT is required meet the standards set in Section 2.5, following the audits in 4.2 and 4.3, in order to receive the Council's grant detailed in Section 3.

**CAT will provide a copy of the Annual Report to the Council and an invitation for the Council's Contact Officer at the Annual General Meeting of CAT.**

4.5 CAT will provide to the Council figures on the following targets:-

- Number of clients advised from Clacton, Harwich, Brightlingsea, Frinton and Jaywick Sands
- A breakdown of the topics on which advice is sought
- Amount of benefits claimed by supported clients
- Amount of debt managed
- Amount of debt written off
- Number of people seeking housing advice or homelessness issues through the Mental Health Hub

CAT will provide information reasonably required by the Council, subject to those requirements not being in breach of clients' confidentiality. Information will not be required more frequently than at quarterly intervals. The Council's Contact Officer will discuss any concerns about performance with the CAT Contact Officer.

**Subject to Citizens Advice guidelines these monitoring arrangements can be amended by Agreement between the Council and CAT to reflect changes in service practice, for example data collection.**

Signed on behalf of  
Tendring District Council  
by its duly authorised signatory  
and Corporate Director, Place & Economy

Signed on behalf of  
Citizens Advice Tendring  
by its duly authorised signatory and  
Chief Officer





## **Executive Summary**

**Our mission statement:** To provide quality advice that people need for the problems they face. To identify and champion the issues that affect people's lives.

Citizens Advice Tendring has provided free, confidential and independent advice to our local community since 1939. This plan sets out our development strategy for the next three years.

### **2 Who we are**

We are a team of dedicated, professional volunteers and staff, passionate about empowering our community through advice, information, confidence building, education, advocacy and campaigning.

We are uniquely different from all other local Citizens Advice services because we have an additional service where we deliver a Mental Health Recovery Programme in our charity shop in the High Street, Clacton.

### **3 What we do**

Our core service focuses on meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in Tendring, including those with mental health challenges, rather than providing general advice to those people who can access information and services themselves.

- We provide free, confidential and impartial advice to help people overcome their problems
- We are a voice for our clients and consumers on the issues that matter to them
- We value diversity, champion equality and challenge discrimination
- We encourage, empower and educate
- We're here for everyone

## 4 Citizens Advice Tendring (CAT) Strategic Priorities

The CAT board sets aside time in the early spring each year to review progress on achievements over the past year and refresh our priorities for the future. Throughout the year we work with our partners and stakeholders to ensure we maintain a broad understanding of local needs and developments.

We have identified **three key priorities** to increase service impact:

1. Improve access to the services we offer, geographically and digitally, according to need. Develop a marketing campaign to reach those most in need and continue to develop our research and campaigns work.
2. Increase effectiveness and continue to improve our internal systems and financial controls. Continue to review use of assets and explore new opportunities.
3. Raise the profile of CAT as both the lead advisory organisation across Tendring and as a driver of change by innovation. Increase our community profile, engaging with our local communities, particularly those who are hard to reach or hard to hear due to geographic location, physical or mental health challenges, language barriers, cultural differences or other characteristics. Develop a diverse and sustainable funding base.

5

## 6 What we achieved in 2023:

Listed below are some of the successes that we achieved for each of our key priorities:

### **Improve access to the services we offer, geographically and digitally, according to need:**

- We continued to increase the number of face-to-face appointments both at the main office and several outreach sites in Jaywick, Walton, Brightlingsea and Harwich.
- We continued to develop our self-help services by improving the content and access to our website. Over the last year, there were 9592 website visits resulting in 19000 page views.
- We secured 5-year funding from the National Lottery to expand our outreach service into the wider community and increase our reach.
- We secured 2-year funding from ECC to expand our Mental Health Hub into Harwich.

### **Increase effectiveness and reduce duplication:**

- We surpassed targets in the four-year project Warm Homes which ended in February 2024. From this project we developed an energy specialist who is now training others, and this has enabled us to secure further energy contracts such as Cadent and Warm Start Plus.
- We secured subsidised high quality training for our Senior Management Team. Three of the team are undertaking Level 5 management training with the CMI (Chartered Management Institute).
- We continue to successfully recruit volunteers, some of whom have gone on to achieve paid roles in the organisation.
- We continue to recruit to hybrid working where possible, which has enabled us to recruit from a wider skills base.

### **Increase our community profile and develop a diverse and sustainable funding base:**

- We celebrated one year's anniversary of the Mental Health Hub & Charity Shop at the new central location, which has improved visibility and proximity to the advice service office.

- We have developed our website and social media presence, sharing research and campaigns data as well as increased our range of self-help information.
- We have increased our presence in the media with multiple radio interviews on BBC Essex Radio
- We were featured in a news film on BBC Look East, our local television station, promoting the successes of our Mental Health Hub.
- We secured £600k lottery funding over 5 years to increase our community presence.
- We secured £100k two-year funding for an expansion of our Mental Health Hub into Harwich.
- We continue to deliver on our Macmillan project the funding for which has been extended to December 2025 and we hope to have this worthwhile project recommissioned thereafter.



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### **Appendices:**

1. ECC Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Summary 2022
2. Tendring and Essex Public Health 2019 Indices of Deprivation
3. National Citizens Advice Business Plan 2024-25
4. CAT EDI Plan 2022 - 25
5. Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26
6. Organogram Feb 2024
7. Financial Projections
8. ECC Everyone's Essex 2021-25
9. ECC Levelling Up White Paper
10. PFCC Rural Crime Strategy 2023 - 26
11. NEE Alliance Delivery Plan 2023 - 26
12. SNEE Joint Forward Plan 2024 -2029
13. CAT Service Delivery Document
14. CAT Mental Health Hub Service Delivery Document
15. CAT R&C Plan 2024
16. CAT Funding Strategy 2024

## 1. Introduction

Citizens Advice Tendring is an independent charity which works within the policies, quality standards and ethos of Citizens Advice national organisation (CiTA). Its focus is on the challenges and needs of the population of Tendring District in North-East Essex.

CAT currently provides advice services from

- Carnarvon Rd Clacton (Pier Ward)
- High St Harwich (Co-located with Harwich Job Centre)
- High Street Clacton (Mental Health Hub)
- Outreach advice is provided via appointments at Jaywick, Walton on the Naze, Clacton, Brightlingsea and Harwich

Client needs are assessed via an initial triage interview with follow-up by advisers. Our advisers are trained in mental health, suicide prevention and EDI awareness to facilitate an informed and sensitive response. To improve efficiency, we also have different channels of advice accessible via our website.

We provide telephone advice, emails, web advice forms, referrals from other organisations and other Citizens Advice. We also receive voicemails from Tendring residents via the UK-wide Adviceline service.

We gather statistical data from each of our clients (with full client consent) and use the priorities and trends emerging from analysis of both local and national Citizens Advice data, as well as local health and population data, to identify areas of policy and practice which are adversely impacting the population of Tendring. We use this data to advocate for policy change and to highlight local issues.

We are actively seeking to improve accessibility by training existing and recruiting new staff and volunteers to provide outreach services at new venues within our area.

## 7 1.1 Context and Community Needs Assessment

Through advice, empowerment, and advocacy we wish to address key challenges in our community. We use evidence from the multiple sources contained within the attached appendices and the links below to understand the issues our community is dealing with and to identify how we might develop our services.

[Tendring District District Council \(ukcrimestats.com\)](https://www.ukcrimestats.com/)

[Local indicators for Tendring \(E07000076\) - ONS](https://www.ons.gov.uk/indicators-for-tendring)

[2021 Census Profile for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/)

[Appendix 1 Essex-and-Suffolk-Joint-Strategic-Needs-Assessments 2024.pdf](#)

[Appendix 2 Tendring Public Health deprivation index.pdf](#)

Many people and families will experience a complex range of issues which require multiple agency input, and we work with many partner organisations, such as Community Voluntary Services Tendring and the Tendring Community Safety & Health and Wellbeing Board to help prioritise, plan and deliver local services across health, social care, community and police services.

This aligns with the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance delivery plan to help shape service development:

- Start Well - giving children the best start in life
- Feel Well - supporting mental wellbeing
- Be Well - empowering adults to make healthy lifestyle choices
- Age Well - supporting people to live safely and independently as they grow older

- Stay Well - supporting adults with health and/or care concerns to access support to maintain healthy and fulfilling lives
- Die Well – giving people nearing the end of life choice around their care

For further information see appendix 11 or the link below:

[PowerPoint Presentation \(sneeics.org.uk\)](http://sneeics.org.uk)

## **8 1.2 Advice Services**

[CAT Service Delivery Document 060224.docx](#)

(Appendix 13)

## **9 1.3 Mental Health Hub**

[MHH Service Delivery Doc Feb 24.docx](#)

(Appendix 14)

## 2 Strategic Plan Alignment

Our strategy aligns with National Citizens Advice, our funders, other organisations and partners across the Tendring district whose shared aims are to support and empower residents with the problems that they face. Key plans to which we are aligned are listed below:

- The **National Citizens Advice Business Plan 24-25**, which includes securing sustainability and becoming a champion of EDI in its key aims.

[Citizens Advice National Business Plan 24 25.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

- The **Wellbeing Public Health and Communities Business Plan 2022-25** and the **Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026**, which include the priority of improving mental health and wellbeing in Tendring. This is also the ambition of our Mental Health Hub and can be a direct benefit of support from our advice services.

[Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2026](#)

[Wellbeing, public health & communities business plan 2022 - 2025 \(essex.gov.uk\)](#)

- The **Tendring District Council Corporate Plan**, in particular five of the six key themes:
  - Pride in our area and services to residents
  - Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
  - Championing our local environment
  - Working with partners to improve quality of life
  - Financial sustainability and openness

[Tendring District Council | The Council's Corporate Plan \(tendringdc.gov.uk\)](#)

- **Essex County Council's Everyone's Essex and Levelling Up White Paper** which addresses seeks to deprivation and includes family stability, access to work, levelling up health and living healthy lifestyles.

[Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county, 2021 to 2025](#)

[Essex County Council Levelling-up strategy](#)

- **SNEE Alliance Transformation Agenda** and the **SNEE Joint Forward Plan** which are focused on improving the health and wellbeing of local population in North Essex.

[PowerPoint Presentation \(sneeics.org.uk\);](#)

[Joint Forward Plan - NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICB](#)

- **PFCC Rural Crime Plan** In particular we align to the increase of reporting of crime as well as support of victims of crime and crime prevention.

[PFCC-Rural-Crime-Plan-2023-26-web-FINAL.pdf](#)

## 3 Leadership and Service Delivery

Citizens Advice Tendring is led, given direction and quality assured by a board of trustees, working through a Senior Management Team comprising the Chief Officer, Business Development Manager, Advice Service Manager, Projects Manager and HR Manager. Citizens Advice Tendring is staffed by 30 Volunteers, 25 part-time staff members and 3 full-time staff members. An organisational chart showing the structure is shown as appendix 6.

[Appendix 6 Full Organisation Chart Feb24.pptx](#)

The Trustee Board undertakes a skills audit to identify skill gaps and recruit new trustees accordingly. A number of trustees retired or resigned from the board in 2023, and recruitment began again early in 2024 to find more trustees with the appropriate skills to take us forward. Our aim remains to achieve a balance in terms of diversity of the board.

## 4 Governance

Policies, systems, processes, controls and records management are continually improving.

A Board Calendar is agreed by Trustees each year to set out the schedule for the Board agenda and key activities throughout the following year. This includes scheduling of updates to the risk register, annual refresh of the Business Development Plan, signing off accounts, and when policies are due for routine review.

Following each **Local Self-Assessment** undertaken with CiTA every year, the Board agrees a timed action plan to deliver on required improvements. This three-year LSA cycle covers the nine leadership areas below:

- Governance
- Strategy and Planning
- Risk Management and Compliance
- Financial Governance
- People Management
- Operational Performance
- Partnership Working
- Research and Campaigning
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Routine checking of recommended policies takes place throughout the year to ensure policies are up to date with the latest legislation.

## 5 Strategic Planning and Development

The Board holds an annual away day to refresh service strategies and development plans, and for the first time in 2024 this included all staff and volunteers. The board also undertakes an annual board appraisal to test its functionality, effectiveness and working practices. Each trustee has a designated lead role across the organisation which supports the yearly Leadership Self Assessment process.

In the Autumn of 2023, the board began preparations to changes in the way that core funding allocations will take place in future. This will involve a competitive procurement and bidding process, with the prospect that core funding may be limited or reduced. Planning and readiness for this include developing enhanced bidding skills and planning for how a significant reduction in funding may affect service provision.

The Training Manager ensures that up to date records and reminders are issued to all staff, volunteers and Trustees to ensure all have undergone GDPR training and mandatory training to be able to deliver our services effectively, efficiently, safely and legally.

### 10 5.1 Strategic Priorities

Following a review of community needs and funder and partner aims, we have identified the following strategic priorities and principles for the next 3 years.

#### 1 To improve quality and access to the services we offer, we will:

Year 1, 2024-5:

- Review advice service structure with aim to maximise client access and best outcomes
- Provide service resilience by launch of new community outreach team
- Recruit a trainer to support and develop new and existing volunteers. To include focus on upskilling for next steps or paid work.
- Pilot Mental Health Hub in Harwich
- Develop a wide variety of materials, equipment and support for neurodivergent people and those with sensory, mental and physical disabilities (as per EDI Plan).
- Develop all advisers to help clients manage debt and financial concerns.
- Improve visibility of the service through continued improvement to our website, social media and other promotional methods.
- Launch a newsletter to CAT team and to funders and partners, to promote all projects and services and how to contact us.
- Maintain our local profile, through continued use of different platforms such as TV, radio and social media as well as local event attendance.

#### Year 2, 2025-6:

- Review new structure for effectiveness in terms of improved access and client outcomes.
- Review successes and areas for development in new Community Outreach team.
- Review general advice service and its alignment with partners and to community need.
- Secure funding to launch Harwich Mental Health Hub.
- Further roll out the accessibility aims of the EDI plan.
- Develop partnerships with financial institutions and seek funding to provide joined up debt support.
- Increase attendance at a range of community events to promote the service and increase accessibility.
- Maintain our local profile, through targeted use of different platforms such as TV, radio and social media, sharing our local and national research and campaign work.

#### Year 3, 2026-7:

- Conduct analysis on existing accessibility to all services to reflect local demographics.
- Consider all channels of access and implement more to increase reach.
- Review outreach provision to consider further expansion.

## **2 To Increase effectiveness and reduce duplication, we will:**

#### Year 1, 2024-25:

- Roll out the objectives of the Communication Plan to bring more cohesion across the organisation teams. Include Comms survey to staff and volunteers.
- Recruit training supervisor to develop and deliver remodelled advice training programme to new and existing staff and volunteers.
- Recruit to the trustee board in line with skills audit
- Look to establish outreach locations with partners with shared strategic aims.
- Develop a consistent approach to management of volunteers, more aligned to that of paid staff.
- Improve onboarding and induction by creating a consistent and thorough process.
- IT Support Officer to upskill staff volunteers in all IT applications to embed a consistent competency level.
- Implement Connect Phone platform for advice, to improve reporting and data evaluation on client service.

- Work towards Cyber Essentials accreditation for robust IT security and demonstrating effective risk management for funders.
- Devise standard reporting for all areas of the service, which supports promotion of the service, funding bids, decision making and partnership working.
- Develop clear signposting to and from the service with use of Frontline referral platform.
- Improve data reporting to reflect financial outcomes and use of mental health evaluation Recovery Star for funders.

Year 2, 2025-26:

- Review Comms through a feedback survey
- Review new training programme to consider how long advice training takes, retention and any challenges and successes.
- Launch regular IT Safety and Digital Skills training for staff and volunteers
- Evaluate phone system since launch of new platform
- Review progress on Cyber Essentials
- Review success and uptake of Frontline
- Review Manchester Model for measurement of financial outcomes. Recovery Star for MH outcomes.

**To increase our community profile and develop a diverse and sustainable funding base, we will:**

In Year 1, 2024-25:

- Explore new funding routes for debt and other services.
- Launch a newsletter to CAT team and to funders and partners, to promote all projects and services and how to contact us.
- Plan attendance to partner and LCA / network meetings to align with Tendring strategic priorities. External as well as internal focus.
- Promote involvement with ECC and Essex Green Pledge and our Climate Plan.
- Promote CAT as an organisation that upskills local people with digital, retail and other skills which gives them workplace opportunities across Tendring. Aligns with Levelling Up and local health agenda.
- Promote the various projects to demonstrate the range of support from health, energy and debt but also holistic advice – to better define us from other community groups.
- Maintain our local profile, through continued use of different platforms such as TV, radio and social media and attendance to local events.
- Promote CAT as an inclusive service and employer; campaign for EDI, and other research and campaigns in our wider community.
- Maintain our partnership relationships, taking a lead role on joint projects where appropriate and develop new relationships in Harwich.

Year 2, 2025-26:

- Evaluate new funding sources for effectiveness.
- Review newsletter for take up and feedback.
- Share best practice and success through our climate plan and Essex Green Pledge involvement
- Promote MHH in Harwich
- Explore the possibility of providing training (benefits, debt etc.) to other organisations.
- Build on promotion of all CAT services and outcomes
- Establish closer links with funders through mutual promotion and celebration of partnership working.





## 11 5.2 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Priorities

CAT recognises the positive value of diversity, promoting equality and fairness, challenging discrimination and enabling inclusion.

CAT has identified three key priorities for equality:

- challenging discrimination through advice
- championing equality through research and campaigns
- valuing diversity as an employer, volunteer agency and partner

To achieve these, we have an EDI plan in place which covers equality of experience for all clients who access our services, identifying and removing barriers for potential clients who do not.

[Appendix 4 CAT EDI Plan 2024.docx](#)

## 6 Research and Campaigning

Citizens Advice Tendring is committed to being actively involved in research and campaigns both nationally and locally. The aims of this strategy reflect some of those of the organisation as a whole:

- To champion the issues that local residents face
- To encourage, empower and educate
- To demonstrate our values of diversity, equality and challenging discrimination
- To help meet the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in Tendring

See appendix 15 for more details on our R&C plan:

[R&C Plan 2024.docx](#)

## 12 6.1 National Campaigns

With the help of a yearly calendar from national CA, CAT monitors upcoming national campaigns and actively supports and promotes them, with focus on several which align with our strategic priorities. Examples include:

- Big Energy Week (Jan)
- Scams Awareness (Feb/Mar but various)
- Debt Awareness Week (Mar)
- Mental Health Awareness (May)
- Volunteers' Week (June)
- Pride Month (June)
- Trustees Week (October)

We promote these campaigns with posters, digital messaging and social media posts. We also include promotion of CA national campaigns in our main office via a digital display in the waiting room.

We also use our website to campaign on key issues such as Hate Crime, Enough (violence against women) and Universal Credit.

[General 2 — Citizens Advice Tendring logo \(cabtendring.org\)](#)

## 13 6.2 Local Campaigns

In addition to national campaigns we conduct regular local campaigns on issues as they arise. We advertise CAT local campaigns in our main office via a digital display in the waiting room. There are also trends that come through our advice sessions which we highlight in our campaign awareness initiatives such as:

- Promotion of our debt specialist service
- Scams awareness
- Mobile Home Campaign
- Romance Scams
- Winter Warmers
- Promotion of partnership initiatives e.g. Baby Bank Tendring
- Promotion of local authority health initiatives regarding increase in regular exercise
- Promotion of volunteering at the Mental Health Hub
- Mental Health Awareness - this is a permanent campaign for us as we promote our local service.
- Debt – this is a permanent campaign for CAT as we promote and inform our local specialist service through as many means as possible.

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### **6.3 Social Media Platforms**

<https://www.facebook.com/cabtendring>

<https://twitter.com/AdviceCitizens>

Social media has been and continues to be key in raising awareness of research and campaigns as well as increasing our digital presence with other organisations and Tendring residents. CAT post to each of our sites at least on a weekly basis according to general guidelines as set out by Citizens Advice National. Aside from those examples of the types of posts are:

- Staff and Volunteer Vacancies including trustee roles
- Changes to our services – additional opening (Mondays), longer opening hours (Tuesdays), closure over Christmas etc
- Tweets provided by CA Communications Team.
- Promotion of our own services including debt specialist
- Our Mental Health Hub advice service
- We appeal for donations for our charity shop.
- We also ask for financial donations by promoting giving services to which we have signed up e.g. My Donate, EasyGiving etc.
- Links to advice and information from partner organisations e.g. Turn2Us; National Debtline; Mind; Payplan; Refuge, Tendring District Council; CVS Tendring.
- Links to partner organisation or local initiatives that may provide help and support to our clients

We only post for local partner organisations if they are funders, referral partners or recognised business and / or organisations working to the benefit of the local community.

## 7 Finance

### 16 7.1 Funding Strategy

Key aims of our funding strategy are around sustainability and broadening our income streams, such as developing fundraising. See appendix 16 for more details.

[Appendix 16 Funding Strategy 2024.docx](#)

### 17 7.2 Financial Management

Our financial year runs April to March. The Chief Officer and Business Development Manager maintain a day-to-day overview of the organisation's finances and present accounts, trends and issues to each Board meeting. An external qualified book-keeper prepares the management accounts using Quickbooks and presents monthly accounts to the management team.

The annual independent review of our accounts is undertaken by an external accountancy firm. Annual accounts are signed off in time to present to the Annual General Meeting in November each year.

The Board observes trends and issues at Board meetings and makes decisions about spending priorities and financial management requirements.

### 18 7.3 Financial Projections and Budget Assumptions

#### Budget Assumptions:

- Inflation is based on latest projections for RPI.
- Grant Income assumes the continuation of existing funds as well as new funding.

#### Financial Projections:

See Appendix XX

Awaiting treasurer submission



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## CABINET

31 JANUARY 2025

### JOINT REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

#### A.6 UPDATED HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2025/26

##### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

###### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek Cabinet's approval of the updated HRA Business Plan for 2024/25 and 2025/26 along with final HRA budget proposals 2025/26 (including fees and charges, capital programme and movement in HRA Balances) for recommending to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

###### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At its meeting on the 20 December 2024, Cabinet considered the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget Proposals for 2025/26. The updated HRA Business plan / budget proposals at that time provided for a surplus of **£0.418m** in 2024/25 and a deficit of **£1.170m** in 2025/26.
- The initial budget proposals were subject to consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which met on the 13 January 2025 to consider them, and their comments are considered elsewhere on the agenda.
- Since Cabinet's meeting on 20 December 2024, only one amendment to the proposed budget for 2025/26 has been required as set out later on in this report, with 2024/25 remaining unchanged.
- The change required in 2025/26 has resulted in the overall deficit decreasing to **£1.131m** a change of **£0.039m** compared to the position reported to Cabinet in December as highlighted above. **Appendix A** sets out the updated Business Plan, in terms of 2024/25 and 2025/26, with **Appendix B** setting out the proposed detailed budgets that reflect this latest position.
- It is proposed to fund the estimated deficit for 2025/26 by calling money from HRA balances as an alternative to reducing expenditure.
- As has been the case in previous years, the use of reserves strikes a necessary balance of 'protecting' the investment in tenants' homes whilst recognising the need to use reserves to respond to the on-going financial challenges that the Council continues to face. It is however recognised that this is not a sustainable long-term solution, but it enables the Council to meet its key priorities in the immediate term, which can be revisited as part of the HRA Business Plan in future years.
- The above challenge is recognised within Cabinet's current initial highlight priorities for 2025/26.
- The proposed average weekly rent remains unchanged to the figure reported in December at **£103.49**, an increase of 2.7% over the comparable figure of **£100.89** for

2024/25.

- **Appendix C** sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26, which broadly reflect inflationary uplifts of 2.7% where relevant or other inflationary changes to better reflect the cost of providing the associated service.
- The proposed HRA Capital Programme for 2025/26 is set out in **Appendix D**, which reflects the commitment to maintain the necessary investment in the existing homes of tenants.
- The HRA general balance is forecast to total **£2.595m** at the end of 2025/26, which retains a relatively strong financial position against which the associated HRA 30 year Business Plan can continue to be delivered / developed.
- The HRA balances, together with the proposed rent increase for 2025/26 are important elements of delivering a sustainable HRA in the longer term.
- HRA debt continues to reduce year on year as principal is repaid with a total debt position at the end of 2025/26 forecast to be **£31.120m** (A reduction of **£1.415m** compared with the figure at the end of this financial year).
- The overall HRA position described above remains subject to further adjustments that are likely to be required as part of finalising the budget for presenting to Full Council on 11 February 2025, with a delegation included in the recommendations to respond to this possibility.
- The Tenants' Panel play an important role in developing the HRA Business Plan and budget proposals and it is proposed to consult with them shortly, with any comments planned to be reported to Members either ahead of or directly at the Full Council meeting on 11 February 2025.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That Cabinet:**

- (a) approves the updated HRA Business Plan, which includes the proposed position for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A; and**
- (b) agrees a delegation to the Director Finance & IT to adjust the forecast / budget, including the use of reserves, in consultation with the Portfolio for Housing and Planning and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance if the financial position changes prior to Full Council considering the HRA budget on 11 February 2025.**

***That subject to a) and b) above, Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council on 11 February 2025:***

**A 2.7% increase in dwelling rents in 2025/26 along with the detailed HRA Budget proposals for 2025/26 as set out in Appendices B to E.**



## **REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

To enable Cabinet to consider the most up to date HRA Business Plan which sets out the position for 2024/25 and 2025/26 along with the proposed HRA budget for 2025/26, to enable associated recommendations to be presented to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

This is broadly covered in the main body of this report and earlier reports presented to Cabinet as part of developing the forecast and detailed estimates.

## **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

A revised Corporate Plan and Vision was approved by Full Council at its meeting on 28 November 2023. One of the 6 included themes is Pride in our Area and Services to Residents, with a commitment to providing decent housing that everyone deserves.

At its meeting on 20 December 2024, Cabinet agreed a number of initial highlight priorities for consultation, which included:

#### **To develop proposals to secure the long-term sustainability of Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

In respect to the Council's own housing stock, drive improvement with expanded estate management.

To develop the long term HRA 30 Year Business Plan proposals to secure sustainability of the HRA to include:

- Management of long term empty properties
- Responding to the new Government's drive to increase the stock of social housing e.g. additional flexibilities relating to retained "Right-to-Buy" (RTB) receipts

The above form important elements of supporting the Council in delivering financial sustainability over the life of the business plan.

The HRA budget and Business Plan play a significant role in the delivery of affordable and decent housing in the district and the Council's responsibilities as a landlord has direct implications for the Council's ability to deliver on its objectives and priorities.

### **OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Internal consultation is carried out via the Council's approach to developing the budget as set out within the Constitution. External consultation also forms part of developing the business plan / budget and is carried out early in the year with the budget proposals presented to the Tenant's Panel for discussion / feedback.

A consultation exercise with the Tenant's panel is scheduled to take place ahead of the Full Council meeting on 11 February 2025. Any comments arising from this consultation will be provided to members, either ahead of the Full Council meeting or directly at that meeting.

<b>LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation &amp; constitutional powers)</b>			
<b>Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Significant effect on two or more wards</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Involves £100,000 expenditure/income</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Is otherwise significant for the service budget</b>
		<b>And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)</b>	This item has been included within the Forward Plan for a period more than 28 days.
<p>It is a statutory requirement on a local authority to determine its Housing Revenue Account budget before the upcoming financial year and to ensure that its implementation will not result in an overall debit balance on the Account. The plan and strategy which comprise the Housing Investment Programme (HRA Business Plan and Housing Strategy) form part of the Council's policy framework which must be approved or adopted by the Full Council, as set out in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>The self-financing regime for the Housing Revenue Account that came into effect from April 2012 was enabled by the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing and its predecessor bodies have, at the Direction of Government, issued requirements and guidance to registered providers of social housing (which includes Local Authorities) in respect of rents. This has included the maximum levels of rent they can charge and annual increases in rents.</p> <p>In 2016, Parliament passed the Welfare Reform and Work Act, which, together with Regulations made under it, created a legislation-based regime of rent reduction across the sector by 1% per year until 2020. Therefore, over this 4-year period, providers were required to reduce rents by 1% per year across its housing stock.</p> <p>In October 2017, the Government announced that at the end of the 4-year rent reduction period it intended to return to annual rent increases of up to CPI + 1%, implemented through the regulator's Rent Standard rather than through legislation.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government published on 26 February 2019 a 'Direction to the Regulator' to set a Rent Standard that will apply from 1 April 2020. That Direction was published alongside the Government's Policy Statement on Rents (the Policy Statement) and the regulator is required to have regard to this when setting its Rent Standard.</p> <p>The regulator may under section 194(2A) of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 set standards for registered providers requiring them to comply with specified rules about their levels of rent (and the rules may, in particular, include provision for minimum or maximum levels of rent or levels of increase or decrease of rent).</p>			

Under the above direction, the Regulator of Social Housing confirmed rents could increase by up to CPI+1% per year for a period of 5 years starting from 1 April 2020. The Government did intervene in 2023/24, as based on this formula, rents would have increased by amounts in excess of 10% in that year given the high level of CPI at the time. Therefore to 'protect' existing tenants, whilst balancing the financial impact on Local Authorities, the Government set a rent increase 'cap' of 7% for 2023/24. The Government made it clear that this rent 'cap' would be set for only 2023/24 rather than for any longer period.

The Government are consulting on the introduction of a new rent policy from 1 April 2026 and in the interim period have issued a direction to the Regulator for Social Housing applicable to rents in 2025/26 only. Although the potential impact of the emerging rent policy will be considered as part of developing the HRA Business Plan in future years, for 2025/26 the direction issued allows for the continuation of the previous policy of applying CPI+1% to rent increases for existing tenants.

The rent standard does not apply to properties let to high-income social tenants, so rather than this being a mandatory requirement it remains a voluntary decision taken at a local level. In continuing with the approach agreed last year, given the very challenging administrative issues associated with charging higher rents to high-income tenants, it is not proposed to introduce this in 2025. However, it is acknowledged that this flexibility may be subject to review in future years, for example, as part of developing future policy decisions within the HRA and is subject to the Government's development of the proposed new rent policy from April 2026.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 introduced a number of changes that had an impact on social housing, which via associated regulations, continue to be reflected in the HRA estimates as necessary.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 sees the introduction of a new era of regulation for the social housing sector, which the Council has responded to in 2024/25. Work remains ongoing to respond to the ongoing activities associated with the new regulatory regime, which includes reflecting the expected impact within the development of the HRA Business Plan.

The original HRA 30 Year Business Plan was agreed as part of the self-financing reforms and associated borrowing agreed by Full Council in February 2012 and the budget proposed for 2025/26 reflects the latest / updated forecast position set out in **Appendix A**.

As referenced within Cabinet's draft highlight priorities for 2025/26, although it is proposed to develop a revised Housing Strategy, in terms of the budget proposals for 2025/26 set out in this report, they are not in conflict with the existing Strategy and/or wider policy framework.

YES	<b>The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:</b>
-----	--

It is important to highlight that further decisions may be necessary to take actions forward that are reflected in the business plan. Where the delegation as set out in the recommendations is exercised, a decision will be required for publication to show the reasons for such decision.

It is also necessary to highlight the key elements of the Best Value Duty that is set out within the General Fund Budget report presented earlier in the agenda. These equally apply to the HRA with financial management and sustainability a reoccurring expectation of a well-functioning local authority.

Reference is made to the HRA Business Plan and Housing Strategy being part of the Policy Framework, although the Cabinet's Highlight Priorities for 2024/25 and draft priorities for 2025/26 provide for a revised strategy to be presented for recommendation onto Council for adoption, and implementation, it is assumed that nothing within this Report on the HRA Budget and its proposals contradict the existing Housing Strategy adopted by Full Council.

### **FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications are set out in this report and its appendices.

Although the availability of financial resources is a key component in the delivery of HRA services, there will also be a need for appropriate input of other resources such as staffing, assets, IT etc.

**YES**    **The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

The S151 Officer is the co-author of this report.

### **USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	This is addressed in the body of the report.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including;	In terms of an independent view, the Council's previous External Auditor recently submitted their Annual Report that includes their commentary on the Council's use of resources.
C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.	The report was considered by the Council's Audit Committee on 9 December with the Auditor's headline statement as follows:  <i>"Our VFM work for 2020/21 to 2022/23 has not identified any significant weaknesses in the Authority's arrangements".</i>

### **MILESTONES AND DELIVERY**

This report forms part of the Council's wider budget setting processes, with final budget proposals being set out in this report for recommending to Full Council on 11 February 2025.

### **ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION**

There are significant risks associated with forecasting such as cost pressures, inflation and changes to other assumptions that form part of the financial planning process. These have been brought into even sharper relief given the current challenging economic environment and new era of social housing regulation mentioned earlier. The Council's initial / short-term response is set out in the body of this report and will continue to be addressed as part of the future financial update reports.

The inherent risks associated with the 30 year business plan forecast include:

- Changes in income achieved and future rent setting policy
- Emergence of additional areas of spend

Emergence of new or revised guidance  
New legislation / burdens / regulation  
Changing stock condition requirements  
Adverse changes in interest rates  
National welfare reforms

In view of the above, it is important that a sufficient level of balances / reserves is available to support the HRA. HRA General Balances are currently forecast to be **£2.595m** at the end of 2025/26. This is after taking account of the proposal to draw down money in 2025/26 that has been partly offset by the additional estimated contribution to balances of **£0.418m** in 2024/25. The remaining balance continues to be available to support the delivery of the HRA business plan in the medium to longer term.

A 30-year HRA Business Plan is maintained on an on-going basis that continues to demonstrate the sustainability and resilience of the HRA within a self-financing environment and the ability to potentially provide opportunities for housing investment and associated housing services in the future, although it is acknowledged that the longer-term view always remains subject to the Government's housing policies and changes to the regulatory regime. It is worth highlighting the potential impact of Local Government devolution / LGR which could make financial planning even more challenging over the business plan period.

As highlighted within earlier reports and referenced above, one of the biggest impacts on the overall financial position of the HRA in future years is the current regulatory regime for social housing. This is in addition to the national trend of continuing increases in housing disrepair claims made against local authorities. The Council remains committed to providing good quality housing in terms of both its current stock of housing and in its ambition of building / acquiring new homes for local people. Given the financial issues set out in this report, the balance between the two remains challenging in the short to medium term.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

See comments below within the '*Other Relevant Considerations or Implications*' section.

#### **SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS**

See comments below within the '*Other Relevant Considerations or Implications*' section.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2050**

See comments below within the '*Other Relevant Considerations or Implications*' section.

#### **OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS**

**Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.**

In carrying out its functions as a social landlord, the Council has regard to the need to reduce the potential for criminal activity by improving the security of dwellings as part of maintenance and repair programmes and for combating anti-social behaviour through effective management procedures.

Although there are no direct equality and diversity issues, the overall HRA and associated financial planning and decision-making processes will recognise and include such issues where appropriate and relevant.

Work undertaken within the HRA and associated capital programme will take into account any opportunities to contribute to these key priorities where possible. The on-going / cyclical stock condition survey work will also support this approach.

Whilst this report does not have a direct impact on the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality, any work undertaken within the HRA and associated capital programme will take into account any opportunities to contribute to this key priority where possible. The on-going stock condition survey work will also support this approach.

<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Please see comments above
<b>Health Inequalities</b>	
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	

### PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### BACKGROUND AND LATEST HRA BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2025/26

On 20 December 2024, Cabinet considered the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2025/26 for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report set out an estimated surplus of **£0.418m** in 2024/25 and an estimated deficit of **£1.170m** in 2025/26.

The development of the forecast / budget has continued as necessary since Cabinet's meeting on 20 December 2024, to reflect the most up to date information. There has only been one change to the budget proposals for 2025/26, with 2024/25 remaining unchanged. The detailed position is set out in **Appendix A**.

The one change made to the 2025/26 position is summarised as follows:

- **Line 4 of Appendix A** – The budget for management costs has been reduced by **£0.039m** that reflects the most up to date position against budgets such as employee costs.

All other figures reported to Cabinet in December and considered by the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee remain unchanged with some key headlines as follows:

- Rents are proposed to be increased by 2.7% resulting in an average weekly rent of **£103.49** in 2025/26.
- **£9.453m** is included within the forecast that relates to major refurbishment and repairs to the housing stock, an increase of **£1.900m** compared to 2024/25.
- Current estimates put the total HRA reserves at **£7.042m** by the end of 2025/26, with the general balances element within this amount being **£2.595m**.
- With forecast repayments of principal of **£1.415m** in 2025/26, the level of HRA debt at the end of 2025/26 is forecast to be **£31.120m**.

Taking the above into account, the overall estimated deficit has reduced to **£1.131m**, from the

**£1.170m** position reported to Cabinet in December, with 2024/25 remaining unchanged.

As set out in the report to Cabinet in December 2024, in terms of 2025/26, it is proposed to meet the above deficit from HRA balances rather than reduce other lines of the budget which could be an alternative approach. Many of the other lines of the forecast are effectively 'fixed' or largely unavoidable, for example the financing of loan repayments, with the only viable option therefore relating to potentially reducing officer capacity or expenditure on tenants' homes etc. These options would be a significant risk given the new era of social housing regulation and it would see a potentially significant reduction in the investment in the housing stock, which would be challenging ahead of the revised decent homes standard that is expected this year.

As has been the case in previous years, the use of reserves strikes a necessary balance of 'protecting' the investment in tenants' homes whilst recognising the need to use reserves to respond to the on-going financial challenges that the Council continues to face. It is however recognised that this is not a sustainable long-term solution, but it enables the Council to meet its key priorities in the immediate term, which can be revisited as part of the HRA Business Plan in future years.

Notwithstanding the above, based on current forecasts of future years of the business plan, the potential use of reserves would deplete the general HRA balance over the next two to three years. It will therefore be important that the Council explores opportunities to balance the various competing issues during 2025/26, to inform the business plan and budget from 2026/27, which has been acknowledged within the Cabinet's initial highlight priorities mentioned earlier.

In terms of 2024/25, it is proposed to contribute the revised net surplus of **£0.418m** to HRA balances. When taken together with the surplus reported as part of the outturn position for 2023/24, a total of **£0.938m** would have been paid into the general HRA reserves during 2024/25. This therefore more than offsets the use of the same reserve (**£0.860m**) to successfully complete the Spendells House capital scheme that was agreed earlier in the year. In terms of this latter point, it is also important to repeat the point included in the separate report considered by Cabinet in May 2024 and within associated discussions, that there remained a value for money case for the Spendells House project with the project therefore going ahead as planned, so it was not a case of diverting investment from elsewhere in the HRA or other opportunity costs emerging.

It is acknowledged that the forecast may change as part of finalising the budget that will be presented to Full Council in February 2025, with items such as the recharges between the GF and HRA yet to be finalised. An associated recommendation is therefore included above to enable the final position to be reported to Full Council in February 2025.

The business plan will continue to be updated during 2025/26 to reflect on-going adjustments to the forecast as part of continuing to deliver the long term financial sustainability of the HRA.

After taking into account the changes to the business plan highlighted above, the proposed detailed HRA budgets for 2025/26 are set out in **Appendix B**.

It is also worth highlighting a number of issues presented within the Financial Performance Report that was considered by Cabinet on 21 October 2024, where a number of changes relating to the Right to Buy regime were set out, which included the following increased

flexibilities in 2024/25 and 2025/26:

- The maximum permitted contribution from RTB receipts to replacement affordable housing has increased from 50% to 100%.
- RTB receipts will be permitted to be used alongside section 106 contributions which was previously prohibited.
- The cap on the percentage of replacements delivered as acquisitions each year (currently 50%) has been lifted.

As part of its Autumn Budget Statement, the Government made further announcements on a number of key HRA issues, which included the following:

- The Government will make 100% retention of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts permanent from 1 November 2024.
- RTB discounts will return to their pre-2012 levels from 21 November 2024.
- The Government will consult on a five-year rent settlement of CPI+1% for social landlords, with potential for this to be extended to 10 years.
- Preferential Public Works Loan Board borrowing rates for local authorities to build social housing will be extended to March 2026.

The impact and flexibilities that all of the above may bring to Local Authorities will be reviewed and considered as part of the on-going development of the HRA Business Plan, and Capital Programme.

### **Fees and Charges**

These are set out in **Appendix C** and broadly reflect inflationary increases of 2.7% where relevant (in line with the same increase applied to rents) or other inflationary changes to better reflect the cost of providing the associated service.

### **HRA Capital Programme**

The detailed Capital Programme set out in **Appendix D**, which reflects the increased investment set out above and within the earlier report to Cabinet in December 2024.

### **HRA Reserves**

The only change required to reserves is the reduced use of reserves of **£0.039m** in 2025/26 that reflects the amendment highlighted above. The detailed position is set out in **Appendix E**.

The forecast position for HRA balances at 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2026 will vary over time depending on the outturn positions for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as well as the potential emergence of other unexpected or unplanned matters that could occur in or across these years.

### **HRA Debt**

There are no changes proposed, with the level of HRA debt at the end of 2025/26 forecast to be **£31.120m** as highlighted earlier.



## BUDGET SUMMARIES

Based on the adjustments set out earlier in this report, the proposed HRA budget for 2025/26 is summarised below.

### HRA Revenue Budget

Table 1

	2024/25 Original Budget £m	2025/26 Original Budget £m
<b>Direct Expenditure</b>	10.253	12.097
<b>Direct Income</b>	(16.720)	(17.513)
Indirect Income / Expenditure including Financing Costs ( <i>including use of planned revenue commitments reserve in 2024/25</i> )	6.127	6.547
<b>NET (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT</b>	<b>(0.340)</b>	<b>1.131</b>
<b>Contribution to / (from) Reserves</b>	0.340	(1.131)

### HRA Capital Programme

Table 2

	2025/26 Original Budget £m
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	5.106
<b>FINANCING</b>	
Major Repairs Reserve	3.556
Direct Revenue Contribution	1.550
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>5.106</b>

## PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

Financial Performance Report 2024/25 – General Update at the end of July 2024 - Item A.2 Cabinet 21 October 2024.

Financial Performance Report 2024/25 – General Update at the end of September 2024 - Item A.8 Cabinet 15 November 2024.

Updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2025/26 – Item A.11 Cabinet 20 December 2024.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

<b>APPENDICES</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	Updated HRA Business Plan (2024/25 and 2025/26)
<b>Appendix B</b>	Detailed HRA Budget Proposals 2025/26
<b>Appendix C</b>	HRA Proposed Service Charges / Fees and Charges 2025/26
<b>Appendix D</b>	HRA Capital Programme
<b>Appendix E</b>	HRA Reserves

<b>REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Richard Barrett</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Director (Finance and IT)</b>
<b>Email/Telephone</b>	<a href="mailto:rbarrett@tendringdc.gov.uk">rbarrett@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> <b>686521</b>



## Revenue Estimates 2025/26

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

<b><u>Analysis by Type of Spend</u></b>	<b>2024/25 Original Estimate £</b>	<b>2025/26 Original Estimate £</b>
<b>Direct Expenditure</b>		
Employee Expenses	1,933,820	2,073,680
Premises Related Expenditure	4,384,690	5,181,050
Transport Related Expenditure	37,870	37,870
Supplies & Services	696,590	679,060
Third Party Payments	1,030	61,030
Transfer Payments	17,000	37,000
Interest Payments	1,153,530	1,062,330
Direct Capital Financing Costs	2,027,930	2,964,570
<b>Total Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>10,252,460</b>	<b>12,096,590</b>
<b>Direct Income</b>		
Other Grants, Reimbursements and Contributions	(8,440)	(8,440)
Sales, Fees and Charges	(628,230)	(644,010)
Rents Receivable	(15,754,250)	(16,531,760)
Interest Receivable	(329,120)	(329,120)
<b>Total Direct Income</b>	<b>(16,720,040)</b>	<b>(17,513,330)</b>
<b>Net Direct Costs</b>	<b>(6,467,580)</b>	<b>(5,416,740)</b>
<b>Indirect Income/Expenditure</b>		
FRS17/IAS19 Pension Costs	0	0
Service Unit and Central Costs	2,911,930	3,124,200
Capital Financing Costs	3,389,630	3,633,610
Recharged Income	(174,390)	(174,390)
<b>Total Indirect Income/Expenditure</b>	<b>6,127,170</b>	<b>6,583,420</b>
<b>Contributions to/(from) reserves</b>		
Contributions to/(from) Reserves	340,410	(1,166,680)
<b>Total Contributions to/(from) reserves</b>	<b>340,410</b>	<b>(1,166,680)</b>
<b>Net Contribution to/(from) Reserves</b>	<b>340,410</b>	<b>(1,166,680)</b>
<b>Total for HRA</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## Revenue Estimates 2025/26

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

<b><u>Analysis by Section/Function</u></b>	<b>2024/25 Original Estimate £</b>	<b>2025/26 Original Estimate £</b>
<b>HRA - I&amp;E - Capital Grants</b>		
Indirect Income/Expenditure	0	0
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>HRA - MIRS Items to be excluded from HRA balance</b>		
Direct Expenditure	613,630	1,550,270
Indirect Income/Expenditure	345,570	(62,000)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>959,200</b>	<b>1,488,270</b>
<b>HRA - MIRS Reversal of Capital Grant</b>		
Indirect Income/Expenditure	0	0
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>HRA - MIRS HRA - Contributions Payable to the Pension Scheme</b>		
Direct Expenditure	0	0
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>HRA - MIRS Total IAS 19 Adjustments</b>		
Indirect Income/Expenditure	0	0
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>HRA - MIRS Minimum Revenue Provision</b>		
Direct Expenditure	1,414,300	1,414,300
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>1,414,300</b>	<b>1,414,300</b>
<b>Total for Finance - Financing Items</b>	<b>2,373,500</b>	<b>2,902,570</b>
<b>HRA - Lease Holders Charges</b>		
Direct Income	(90,470)	(90,470)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	16,530	16,530
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(73,940)</b>	<b>(73,940)</b>
<b>Total for CD Operations and Delivery Management and Administration</b>	<b>(73,940)</b>	<b>(73,940)</b>
<b>HRA - Policy &amp; Management</b>		
Direct Expenditure	53,940	53,940
Indirect Income/Expenditure	445,880	445,880
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>499,820</b>	<b>499,820</b>

## Revenue Estimates 2025/26

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

<b>HRA - Tenancy Management &amp; Rent Collection</b>		
Direct Expenditure	1,128,660	1,236,070
Direct Income	(8,440)	(8,440)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	584,240	596,770
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>1,704,460</b>	<b>1,824,400</b>
<b>HRA - Tenant Relations</b>		
Direct Expenditure	107,390	130,260
Direct Income	(2,200)	(2,200)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	36,600	36,600
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>141,790</b>	<b>164,660</b>
<b>HRA - Right to Buy Administration</b>		
Direct Expenditure	51,940	54,210
Direct Income	(19,500)	(19,500)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	76,040	76,040
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>108,480</b>	<b>110,750</b>
<b>HRA - Unapportionable Central Overheads Contribution</b>		
Indirect Income/Expenditure	275,720	275,720
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>275,720</b>	<b>275,720</b>
<b>HRA - Pumping Stations</b>		
Direct Expenditure	6,570	6,570
Direct Income	(2,920)	(2,920)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	5,520	5,520
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>9,170</b>	<b>9,170</b>
<b>HRA - Sewerage Expenses</b>		
Direct Expenditure	22,200	22,200
Direct Income	(22,980)	(22,980)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	5,420	5,420
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>4,640</b>	<b>4,640</b>
<b>HRA - Communal Central Heating</b>		
Direct Expenditure	249,500	249,500
Direct Income	(92,130)	(92,130)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	13,660	13,660
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>171,030</b>	<b>171,030</b>

## Revenue Estimates 2025/26

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

<b>HRA - Sheltered Units</b>		
Direct Expenditure	360,150	374,820
Direct Income	(182,760)	(198,540)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	35,960	35,960
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>213,350</b>	<b>212,240</b>
<b>HRA - Sheltered Units ECC Grant Funded Pilots</b>		
Direct Expenditure	3,000	3,000
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>HRA - Estate Sweeping</b>		
Direct Expenditure	104,500	104,500
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>104,500</b>	<b>104,500</b>
<b>HRA - Communal Cleaning</b>		
Direct Expenditure	85,250	85,250
Direct Income	(37,710)	(37,710)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>47,540</b>	<b>47,540</b>
<b>HRA - Communal Electricity</b>		
Direct Expenditure	256,940	256,940
Direct Income	(84,510)	(84,510)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	3,350	3,350
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>175,780</b>	<b>175,780</b>
<b>HRA - Estate Lighting</b>		
Direct Expenditure	19,120	19,120
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>19,120</b>	<b>19,120</b>
<b>HRA - Maintenance Of Grounds</b>		
Direct Expenditure	22,620	22,620
Direct Income	(93,050)	(93,050)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	187,190	187,190
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>116,760</b>	<b>116,760</b>
<b>HRA - Tenants Rentals</b>		
Direct Income	(15,622,370)	(16,367,670)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(15,622,370)</b>	<b>(16,367,670)</b>
<b>HRA - Rents &amp; Other Charges</b>		
Direct Expenditure	77,830	149,290
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>77,830</b>	<b>149,290</b>

## Revenue Estimates 2025/26

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

<b>HRA - Rent Income</b>		
Direct Income	(23,790)	(28,800)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(23,790)</b>	<b>(28,800)</b>
<b>HRA - Interest Receivable</b>		
Direct Income	(329,120)	(329,120)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(329,120)</b>	<b>(329,120)</b>
<b>HRA - Rent Arrears Provision</b>		
Direct Expenditure	55,440	55,440
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>55,440</b>	<b>55,440</b>
<b>HRA - Interest Charges</b>		
Direct Expenditure	1,153,530	1,062,330
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>1,153,530</b>	<b>1,062,330</b>
<b>HRA - Capital Charges</b>		
Indirect Income/Expenditure	3,044,060	3,695,610
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>3,044,060</b>	<b>3,695,610</b>
<b>HRA - Use of Balances</b>		
Contributions to/(from) reserves	340,410	(1,166,680)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>340,410</b>	<b>(1,166,680)</b>
<b>Total for Housing</b>	<b>(7,708,850)</b>	<b>(9,190,470)</b>
<b>HRA - Jaywick Flexible Workspace</b>		
Direct Expenditure	25,100	27,960
Direct Income	(108,090)	(135,290)
Indirect Income/Expenditure	81,440	105,740
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(1,550)</b>	<b>(1,590)</b>
<b>Total for Economic Growth</b>	<b>(1,550)</b>	<b>(1,590)</b>
<b>HRA - Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>		
Direct Expenditure	3,620,470	4,344,980
Direct Income	0	0
Indirect Income/Expenditure	973,070	1,148,510
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>4,593,540</b>	<b>5,493,490</b>
<b>HRA - Repairs &amp; Maintenance - Surveyors</b>		
Direct Expenditure	820,380	873,020
Indirect Income/Expenditure	(3,080)	(3,080)
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>817,300</b>	<b>869,940</b>
<b>Total for Development and Building Management</b>	<b>5,410,840</b>	<b>6,363,430</b>
<b>Total for HRA</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



## Housing Portfolio - HRA

## Scale of Charges 2025/26

		(A) 2024/25	(B) 2024/25	(C) 2025/26	(D) 2025/26	
	Date last revised	Charge Exclusive of VAT	Charge Inclusive of VAT where applicable @ 20%	Charge Exclusive of VAT	Charge Inclusive of VAT where applicable @ 20%	VAT Ind
Effective from		01/04/2024 £	01/04/2024 £	01/04/2025 £	01/04/2025 £	
<b><u>GARAGE RENTS AND ACCOMMODATION CHARGES</u></b>						
Guest room accommodation at sheltered units per night:						
With en-suite facilities (St Marys Court, Groom House, Greenfields, Ironside Walk, Belmans Court)	Apr-18	25.00	30.00	25.00	30.00	V
Without en-suite facilities (Vyntoner House, Kate Daniels House, Mead House, Crooked Elms)	Apr-18	20.83	25.00	20.83	25.00	V
Garage rents HRA (not subject to VAT unless separately let to non-council tenants)	Apr-24	11.06	11.06	11.36	11.36	*
<b><u>QUESTIONNAIRES</u></b>						
Second mortgage enquiries (per enquiry)	Apr-18	158.33	190.00	158.33	190.00	V
Solicitors enquiries on resale of council flats	Apr-18	158.33	190.00	158.33	190.00	V
<b><u>SERVICE CHARGES (per week)</u></b>						
<b>Sewerage charges (not subject to VAT) (See Note 1):</b>						
Treatment Works:						
Goose Green, Tendring	Apr-18	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	Z
Coronation Villas, Beaumont	Apr-18	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	Z
Whitehall Lane, Thorpe	Apr-24	6.66	6.66	6.84	6.84	Z
Shop Road, Little Bromley	Apr-16	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	Z
Horsley Cross, Mistley	Apr-08	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	Z
<b>Bio Systems</b>	Apr-24	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	Z
<b>Septic Tanks</b>	Apr-24	3.52	3.52	3.62	3.62	Z
<b>Pumping Stations (not subject to VAT)</b>	Apr-24	6.43	6.43	6.60	6.60	Z
Sewerage charge cap where tenant in receipt of benefit	Apr-08	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	Z
<b>Communal central heating charges (not subject to VAT) (see note 1):</b>						
Heating and hot water:						
Single units	Apr-24	8.59	8.59	8.82	8.82	N
Double units	Apr-24	9.90	9.90	10.17	10.17	N
Belmans Court	Apr-24	2.00	2.00	2.05	2.05	N
<b>Other Service Charges (not subject to VAT):</b>						
Sheltered Housing:						
Grounds Maintenance	Apr-24	1.86	1.86	1.91	1.91	X
Communal Electricity	Apr-24	3.24	3.24	3.33	3.33	N
Non Sheltered Housing:						
Grounds Maintenance	Apr-24	1.40	1.40	1.44	1.44	N
Communal Electricity	Apr-18	1.24	1.24	1.27	1.27	N
<b>Communal Cleaning (not subject to VAT) (See Note 1):</b>						
Langham Drive, Clacton	Apr-24	3.35	3.35	3.44	3.44	N
Nayland Drive, Clacton	Apr-24	3.33	3.33	3.42	3.42	N
Boxted Ave (3 Storey), Clacton	Apr-24	3.27	3.27	3.36	3.36	N
Boxted Ave (2 Storey), Clacton	Apr-24	1.86	1.86	1.91	1.91	N
Polstead Way, Clacton	Apr-24	1.86	1.86	1.91	1.91	N
Porter Way, Clacton	Apr-24	1.57	1.57	1.61	1.61	N
Tanner Close, Clacton	Apr-24	1.48	1.48	1.52	1.52	N
Mason Road, Clacton	Apr-24	1.68	1.68	1.73	1.73	N
Maldon Way, Clacton	Apr-24	1.68	1.68	1.73	1.73	N
Groom Park, Clacton	Apr-24	1.73	1.73	1.78	1.78	N
Leas Road, Clacton	Apr-24	1.73	1.73	1.78	1.78	N
Rivers House, Walton	Apr-24	1.48	1.48	1.52	1.52	N
Rochford House, Walton	Apr-24	1.48	1.48	1.52	1.52	N
D'arcy House, Walton	Apr-24	1.48	1.48	1.52	1.52	N
Churchill Court, Dovercourt	Apr-24	1.91	1.91	1.96	1.96	N
Cliff Court, Dovercourt	Apr-24	2.23	2.23	2.29	2.29	N
Nichols Close, Lawford	Apr-24	2.95	2.95	3.03	3.03	N
Grove Avenue Walton	Apr-24	0.93	0.93	0.96	0.96	N

**Housing Portfolio - HRA**

**Scale of Charges 2025/26**

**SHELTERED UNITS SERVICE CHARGES (Not subject to VAT) (see Note 2):**

Housing Related Support Charge	Apr-17	6.34	6.34	6.51	6.51	X
Landlord Costs	Apr-15	13.60	13.60	13.97	13.97	X
Careline Alarm	Apr-17	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	X

**Notes**

- (1) These charges are based on the principle of full cost recovery.
- (2) Only applies to tenants who are not in receipt of Housing Benefit

*	Garage Rent - VAT:					
	Parking:					
	Council Tenant	N	Storage:			N
	Non-Council Tenant	V	Homeless persons goods			N
			Premises suitable for parking			V
			Premises unsuitable for parking			X

**APPENDIX D**

**HRA Capital Programme**

	<b>2024/25 Base £</b>	<b>2025/26 Budget £</b>	<b>2026/27 Budget £</b>	<b>2027/28 Budget £</b>	<b>2028/29 Budget £</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Improvements, enhancement & adaptation of the Council's housing stock	3,447,870	4,626,230	4,626,230	4,626,230	4,626,230
Disabled adaptations for Council Tenants	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
Information Technology upgrade and replacement	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Cash Incentive Scheme	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
	<b>3,927,870</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>
<b>FINANCING</b>					
Major Repairs Reserve	3,314,240	3,555,960	3,555,960	3,555,960	3,555,960
Direct Revenue Financing of Capital	613,630	1,550,270	1,550,270	1,550,270	1,550,270
	<b>3,927,870</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>	<b>5,106,230</b>

**HRA RESERVES**

**APPENDIX E**

	<b>Balance 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Contribution from Reserves 2024/25</b>	<b>Contribution to Reserves 2024/25</b>	<b>Est. Balance 31 March 2025</b>	<b>Contribution from Reserves 2025/26</b>	<b>Contribution to Reserves 2025/26</b>	<b>Est. Balance 31 March 2026</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>HRA Reserves</b>							
HRA General Balance	4,167,839	(860,000)	417,940	3,725,779	(1,130,820)	0	2,594,959
HRA Commitments	2,266,753	(2,266,753)	41,780	41,780	(35,860)	0	5,920
Major Repairs Reserve	4,441,572	(3,314,240)	3,314,240	4,441,572	(3,555,960)	3,555,960	4,441,572
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>10,876,164</b>	<b>(6,440,993)</b>	<b>3,773,960</b>	<b>8,209,131</b>	<b>(4,722,640)</b>	<b>3,555,960</b>	<b>7,042,451</b>