

Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Tendring
District Council



Client:
Tendring District Council

Date:
Dec 2022





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All Saints Church

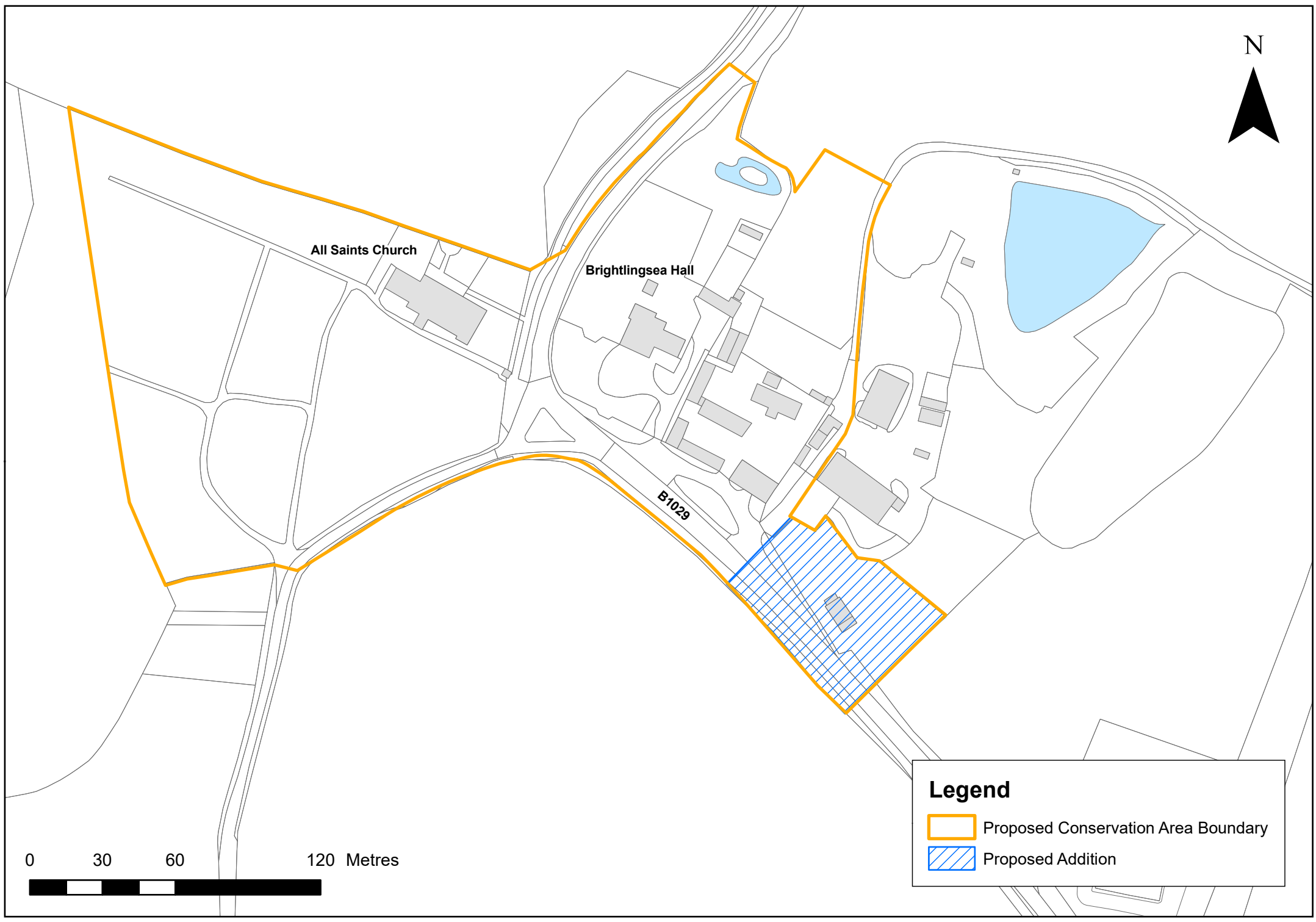
Brightlingsea Hall

B1029

Legend

-  Proposed Conservation Area Boundary
-  Proposed Addition

0 30 60 120 Metres



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.

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 views towards the Church to the north west. The building is red brick with details



Figure 2 Buildings on Church Road

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.

Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church Conservation Area



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.¹

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

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

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.² 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.³ 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.⁴

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.

² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Cinque-Ports>
³ Edward Dickin, History of Brightlingsea (1913)
⁴ 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.⁵

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.⁶ 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



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.⁷ 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 89.⁸

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

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

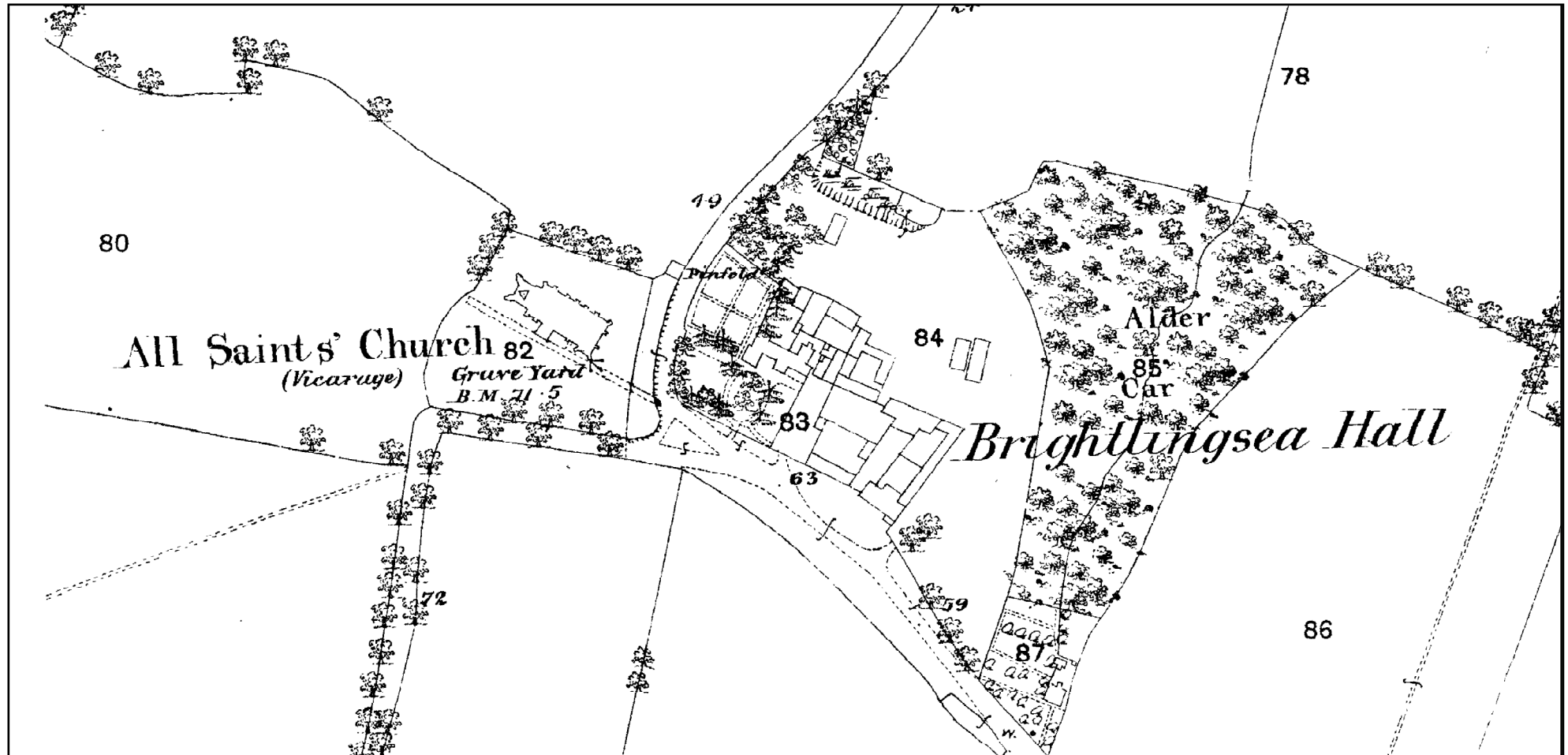


Figure 8 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, c.1881, showing All Saints Church, Brightlingsea Hall and the historic barn complex. The historic buildings to the south of the Church, previously shown on the Chapman and Andre Map, have been removed. 'Alder Car' suggests a watery area of woodland to the east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

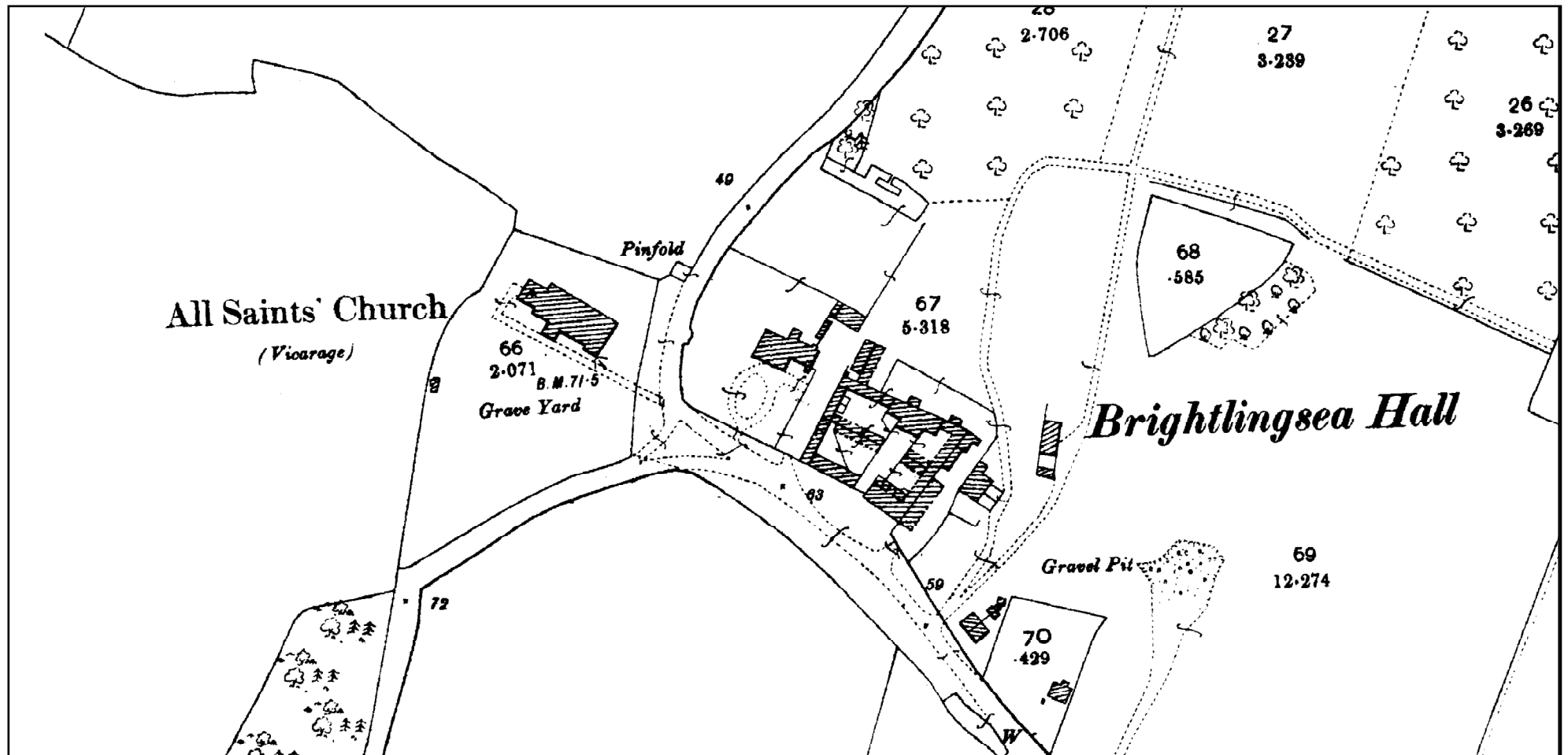


Figure 9 Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, c1897, showing little change to the area, except for the additional cottages to the south, loss of woodland, and new gravel pit.

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 1992.⁹ It was used residentially until it was subdivided into separate properties in 2016.¹⁰

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.¹¹

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

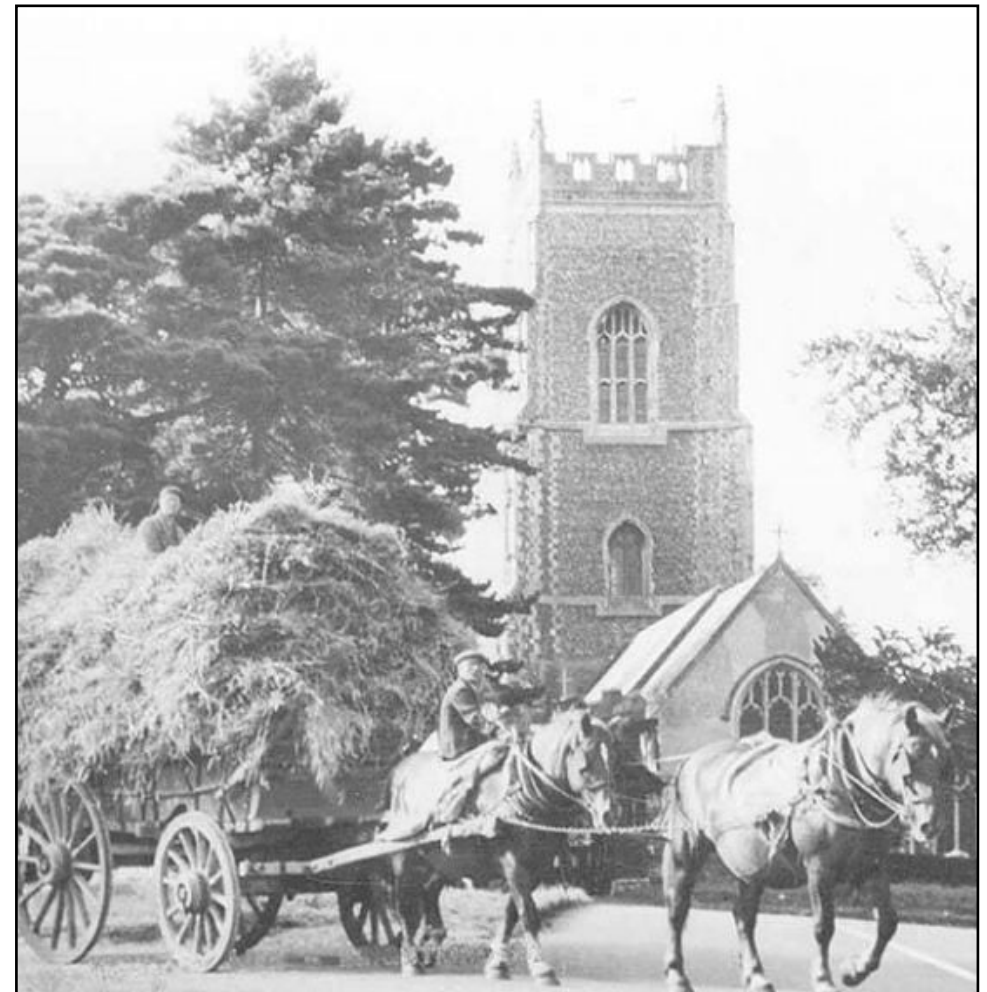


Figure 10 View of All Saints Church, 1940



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.

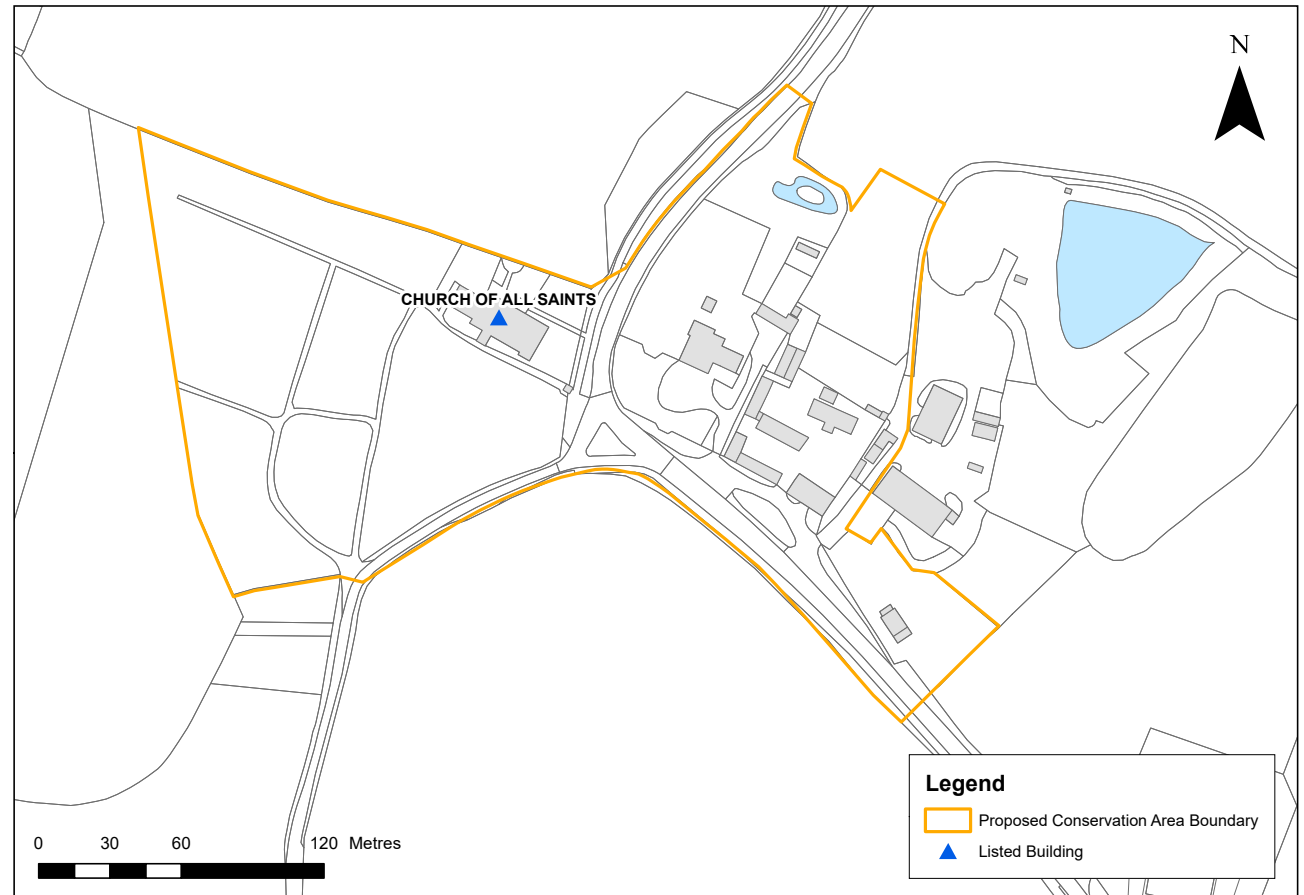


Figure 12 Map showing location of the only designated heritage asset within the Conservation Area

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

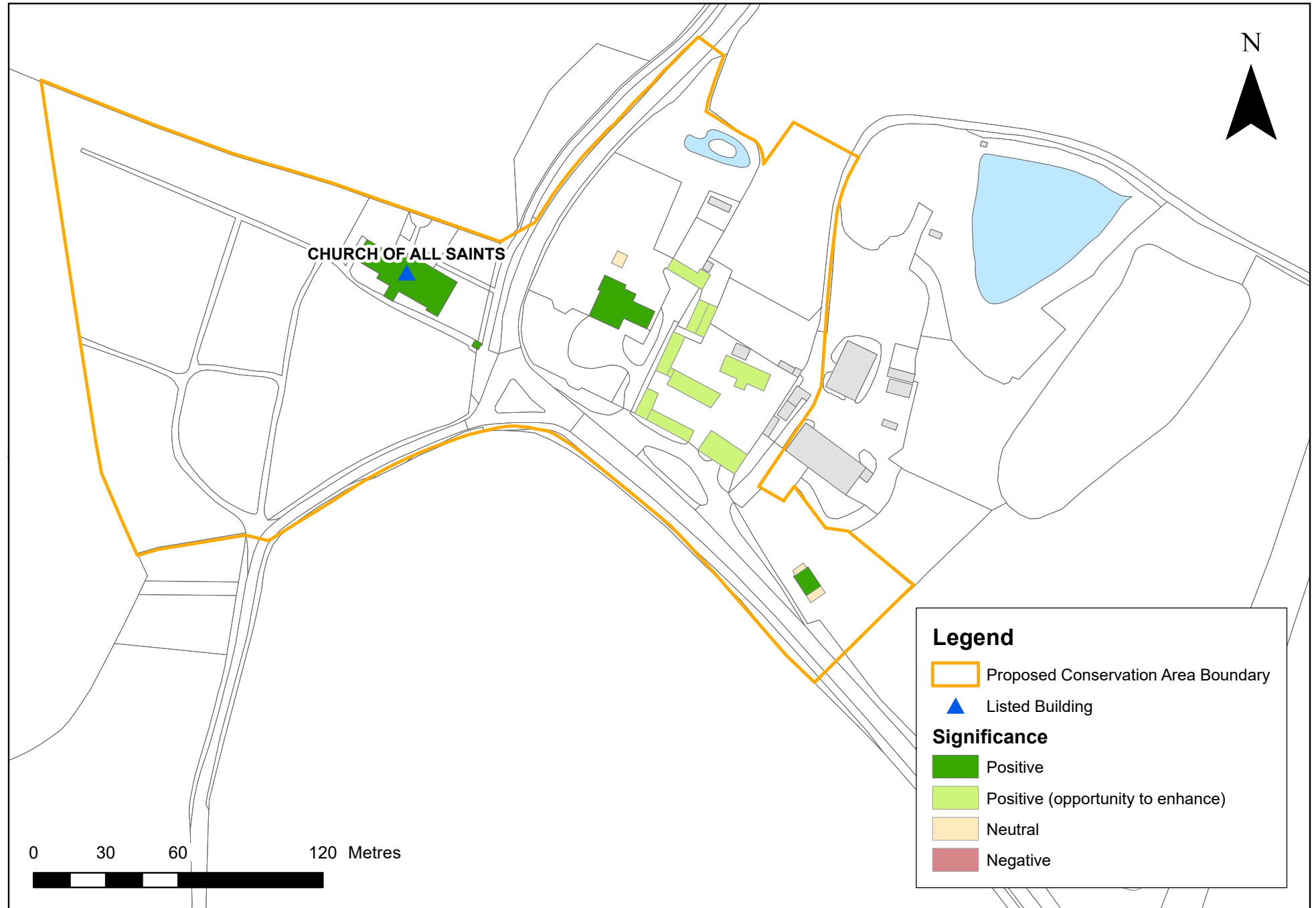


3.2 Significance of buildings

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.

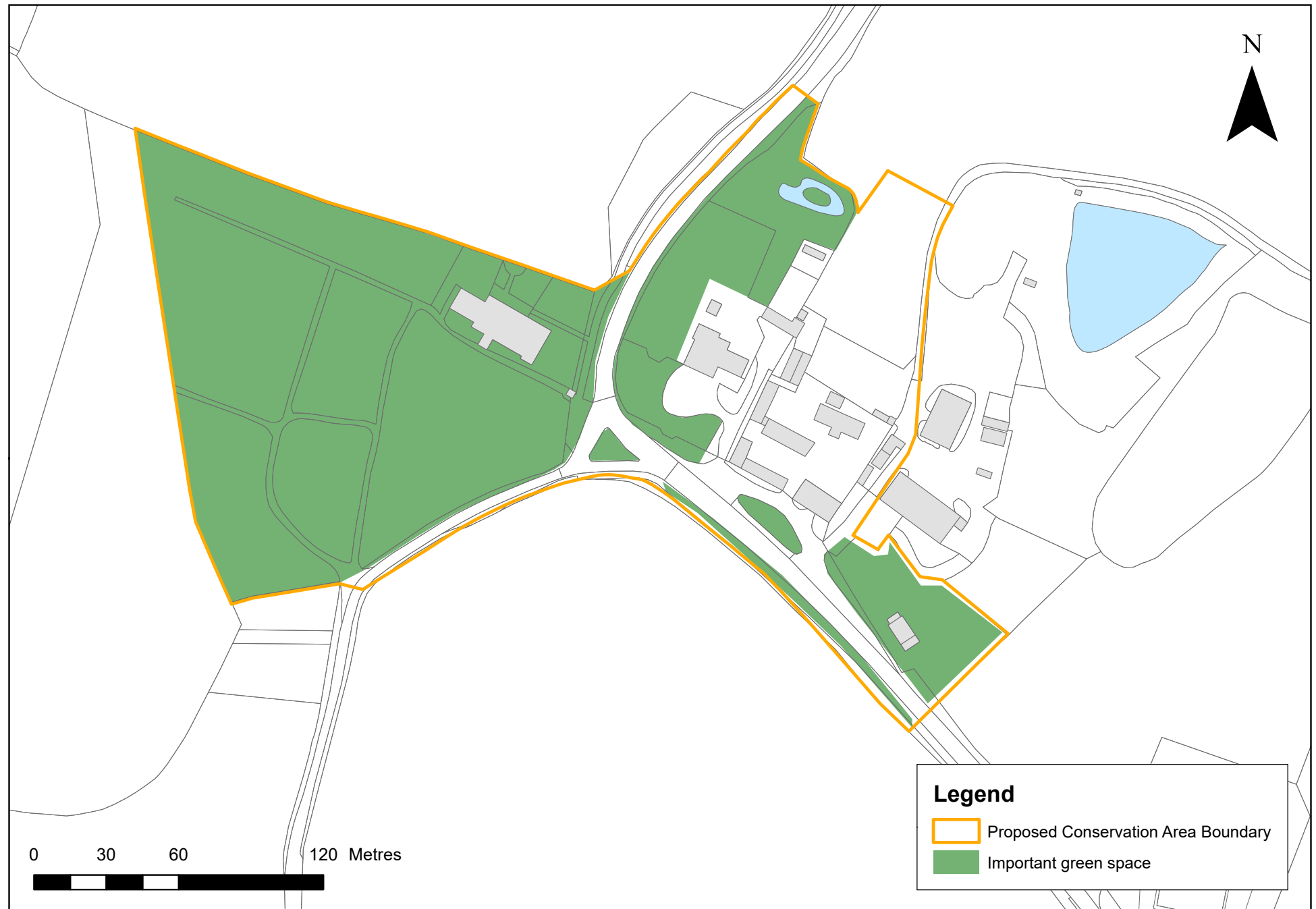
Outside the churchyard there is a small triangular green, its floral display linking with the Brightlingsea name board on a small grassed area on the other side of the road.

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.



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.

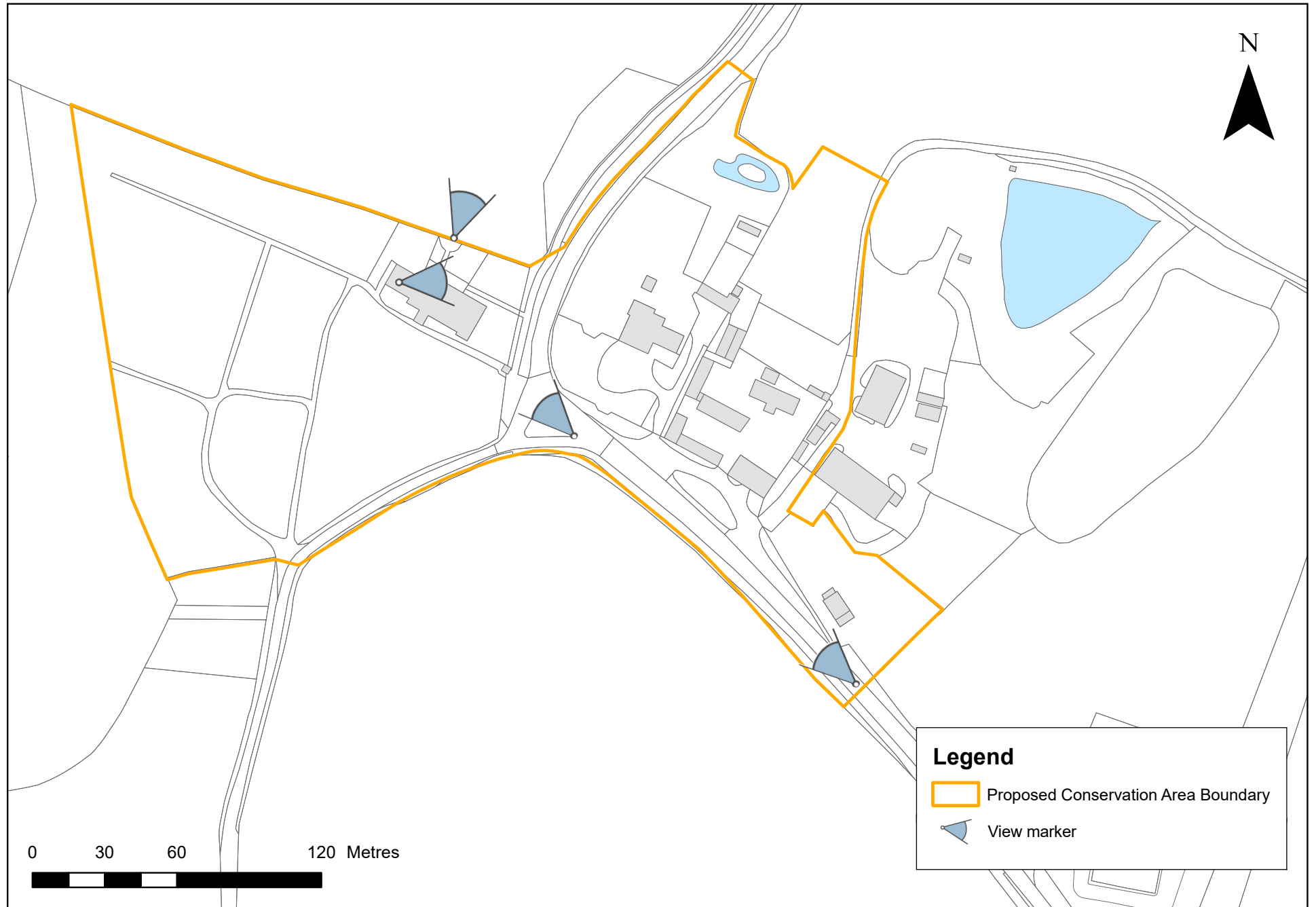
Views from All Saints Church

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 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.



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.



6. Appendices

6.1 Bibliography

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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.

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