

# Brightlingsea Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

**Tendring**  
District Council



Client:  
Tendring District Council

Date:  
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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Summary

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the Brightlingsea 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.

Brightlingsea's significance is predominantly derived from its historic interest most closely associated with its maritime history and continued development resulting from its tidal location. Its special interest also derives from the architectural interest of the medieval and nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, which are located at the core of the Conservation Area.

## 1.2. Conserving Brightlingsea's Heritage

Tendring District Council appointed Place Services to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal for Brightlingsea. This document provides baseline information to support in the conservation of Brightlingsea'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.



Figure 1 The Anchor Hotel (Grade II Listed 1245300)



### **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 Brightlingsea 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 Brightlingsea. 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 homeowners.

It is expected that Planning applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice 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 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 Area can be supported by an appraisal and management plan. This document is the appraisal and management plan for the

Brightlingsea 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 Brightlingsea 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 Brightlingsea Conservation Area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation.





## 1.5 Public Consultation

Tendring District Council held a six week public consultation on the draft Brightlingsea Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan running to Monday 14th November 2022. An exhibition event was also held in the Parish Hall, Victoria Place, on the 10th October from 3-7pm.

Comments received during this period have been reviewed and incorporated into the final draft of this document, including the easternmost boundary change outlined in Section 1.7 below.

## 1.6 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 2021 (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 NPPF.

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 Brightlingsea 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 heritage assets 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*

## 1.7 Designation of the Conservation Area

Brightlingsea Conservation Area was first designated in 1975. At this time, the Conservation Area included the High Street, Hurst Green, Station Road, Queen Street, and the northern sections of New Street and Sydney Street. This was extended in 1985 to include the southern sections of New Street and Sydney Road. It was later extended in 1987 to include the waterfront and marina.

An appraisal was adopted in 2006.

As part of this appraisal, the boundary was reviewed and further extensions were made to take in Colne Road, Silcott Street, Tower Street, John Street and Queen Street. A historic cottage was also added on Mill Street following further information that was shared at the public consultation.

## 2. Brightlingsea Conservation Area

### 2.1. Context and General Character

Brightlingsea is located in the south of Tendring District, at the mouth of the River Colne. The historic town is situated on a slight slope along the ridge defined by the river and its tributaries. Formerly an island, the peninsula is still surrounded by marshland, creeks and tidal mudflats.

Brightlingsea was established as a medieval town notable for its maritime heritage. Its history lends a unique character to the medieval core, a High Street flanked by ancient greens, and to the later expansion towards the waterfront during the nineteenth century.

The settlement has a rich heritage stemming from its tidal location, including its economic development and military connections. It also contains a high density of historic buildings from all phases of its development.



Figure 2 Aerial map showing location of Brightlingsea Conservation Area ©Google Earth

## 2.2. Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of Brightlingsea and its environs.

### *Prehistory (500000BC – 43AD)*

Brightlingsea was settled from an early date, and prehistoric remains are located within the surrounding area which was, until the late sixteenth century, an island.

Brightlingsea's location close to the River Colne on a flat-topped ridge of land overlooking the coast would have provided a place for early settlers with access to various resources and the intertidal zone. Scatters of knapped flints cover the Brightlingsea peninsula, providing evidence of early prehistoric activity. A source of the Palaeolithic flint tools lies in the ancient river gravels which cross the Tendring plateau and discoveries of these tools has been recorded in the vicinity of the Conservation Area (EHER 47073, 2233).

In the wider area, there is evidence of Neolithic ritual activity; a cremation burial covered by a highly decorated bowl was found with a surrounding ditch which contained a large quantity of early Neolithic pottery. The pottery from Brightlingsea combined with that from the nearby settlement of St Osyth is one of the largest collections of early Neolithic ceramics found in the East of England.

There is also evidence for woodland clearance in the area and the laying out of an agricultural landscape from the Neolithic period onwards.

Middle Bronze Age cremation cemeteries at Brightlingsea are well known and important features of its past. These cemeteries are made of clusters of ring ditches (the ploughed remains left behind by barrows) with large and highly decorated bucket urns placed between

them. Both the form of the pottery and the funerary tradition displayed at these sites is distinctive of the area, and largely confined to north east Essex. These cemeteries with their many barrows would have been important landmarks in the middle Bronze Age landscape.

Several cropmark complexes have been identified through aerial photography to the north, northeast and northwest of Brightlingsea, suggesting extensive settlement of the area (Figure 3). Adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary, there is evidence of cropmark features for a trackway, ditches and pits which are likely to represent a settlement site. Where excavated, the features have been dated to the Bronze Age and Saxon period.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Land South of Robinson Road Brightlingsea, Essex: an archaeological excavation Preconstruct Archaeology July 2019



Figure 3 Cropmarks suggesting settlement within the area

There is evidence for the continuation of the prehistoric field systems in the surrounding area into the Iron Age period. Early settlement in the vicinity to the Conservation Area may be indicated by the recovery of a triangular loom weight (a tool used in weaving).

### **Roman (43 – 410)**

Evidence of Roman activity has been uncovered within the area and suggests that there was occupation in Brightlingsea at this time. It is thought that the settlement here may also have served as a port on the Colne estuary during the Roman period.

Notable villas have been identified and indicate occupation, with a fair-sized house to the north west of Brightlingsea and mosaic pavements located at the high point of the land within Brightlingsea, found in 1884.<sup>2</sup> The remains of another significant Roman building underlie the medieval All Saints parish church, outside of the Conservation Area.

Roman finds also have included Romano-British pottery from Hurst Green, which are indicative of settlement here, as well as roof and flue-tiles, 'Samian' (a decorated, bright red clay) pottery, and other pottery, uncovered on Well Street and Spring Road.

Cremation burials have been recorded close to a Roman trackway which may define the edge of the settlement to the northwest of the Conservation Area. One of the most notable finds from this excavation was a leaded-bronze foot in the shape of a Harpy found in one of the Roman trackway ditches (Figure 4).



Figure 4 Image of the leaded-bronze foot Harpy found in a Roman trackway

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<sup>2</sup> Brightlingsea', in *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Essex, Volume 3, North East* (London, 1922), pp. 14-18. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/essex/vol3/pp14-18> [accessed 3 September 2020].

### **Early Medieval (410 – 1066)**

A sizable and significant Anglo-Saxon settlement has been revealed within the environs of the Conservation Area through ongoing excavations at Moverons Pit. This Anglo-Saxon settlement is the largest to be excavated in north-east Essex, and the only one located outside the site of the Roman town.<sup>3</sup> A number of sunken feature buildings, known as Grubenhäuser, have been discovered along with evidence for timber buildings, domestic waste pits and industrial activity dating from the sixth century. Further evidence for Saxon activity was also found to the east of the Conservation Area.

The area continued to develop throughout the early medieval period, and was an important Royal vill, or manorial land holding, in the late Saxon period. The parish church dates from the early Norman period, although earlier Roman bricks can be seen within its walls.

The name Brightlingsea is first recorded in the Domesday Survey (1086), when it was held by Harold Godwinson in 1066 and then after by King William I. The settlement developed as a small coastal trading point. The majority of trade for these small ports was likely with London and other smaller ports in Essex and North Kent, although goods would have also arrived from further afield. Ship-building and repair was probably a significant local industry for the area at this time.

### **Medieval (1066 – 1540)**

Medieval Brightlingsea developed as a typical Essex polyfocal settlement, as an area focussed around the church and hall, with another area of settlement at the water's edge, and further areas of settlement at Hearse Green and North End Green. A number of large

<sup>3</sup> Archaeological monitoring and excavation at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex CAT Report 1097. August 2017 and Archaeological monitoring and excavation at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex CAT Report 1458 August 2019

isolated farmsteads surrounded these built cores, connected by a network of lanes.

In the early twelfth century, the fine house of Jacobes Hall (Figure 5) was first recorded, originally overlooking the sea to the south. A substantial house within the area, it was acquired by the Beriffe family in the fifteenth century, who further extended and made improvements to the hall. The Beriffes were prominent shipping merchants, connected to the weaving industry, whose brasses can be found in the north chapel in All Saints Church.<sup>4</sup>

Documentary evidence highlights the importance of the rich resource of the Colne oyster fishing industry during the medieval period. In 1119, Henry I granted the fisheries and mills in Brightlingsea manor to St. John's abbey; however, the boundaries were ill defined, leading to conflict of ownership.<sup>5</sup> Oyster fishing provided a staple and lucrative industry for the area.

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>6</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.<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> <https://historicensland.org.uk/services-skills/education/educational-images/jacobes-hall-brightlingsea-10993#:~:text=It%20originally%20had%20a%20two,then%20was%20of%20considerable%20importance.>

<sup>5</sup> A P Baggs, Beryl Board, Philip Crummy, Claude Dove, Shirley Durgan, N R Goose, R B Pugh, Pamela Studd and C C Thornton, 'Fishery', in *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 9, the Borough of Colchester*, ed. Janet Cooper and C R Elrington (London, 1994), pp. 264-269. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol9/pp264-269> [accessed 8 September 2020].

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Cinque-Ports>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.open-sandwich.co.uk/town\\_history/cinqueports/limbs.htm](http://www.open-sandwich.co.uk/town_history/cinqueports/limbs.htm)



Figure 5 Jacobes Hall, 1960 (Copyright of the Francis Frith Collection)

### **Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)**

The settlement continued to expand through the post medieval period with buildings dating from the sixteenth to eighteenth century lining the High Street and medieval historic core of Brightlingsea. The Chapman and Andre Map of 1777 (Figure 6) shows settlement along Queen Street and High Street, Chapel Road and around Hurst Green.

Besides major towns, Brightlingsea was one of the first places to have a chapel for the doctrines of the Swedish religious mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg. Its New Church community dates from 1808, and in 1814 the first chapel was built on the north west side of New Street. Several local oyster merchants and shopkeepers were early members of the New Church, and the community quickly outgrew the church premises. Another was constructed in Queen Street shortly after.

The 1874 Ordnance Survey (Figure 7) provides a snapshot of Brightlingsea at this time. The medieval settlement along the High Street and around the greens was balanced by the laying out of New Street and Sidney [sic] Street, though only the land between them was fully developed down to the Water Side at this date. Queen Street and Spring Road were beginning to be developed, while houses were spreading northwards and eastwards from 'Hearse Green'. The settlement comprises commercial properties along with residential and includes a school, hotel, chapels and Inns. The waterfront itself was marked by ship building yards, smithies, a copperas yard and the Cinque Port Warehouse between oyster beds.

Lanes ran from the High Street down a gentle slope to the water's edge, where trade was carried on in oysters, fish, copperas (green pigment from naturally-occurring bisulphide of iron) salt and bricks from the brickfields between Brightlingsea and St Osyth. Oyster cultivation increased from the mid-seventeenth century and evidence of this industry is present all around Brightlingsea Creek (EHER 16950, 16951). The town was home to some of the highest numbers of oyster merchants across the country.



Figure 6 Chapman and Andre Map (1777)



Figure 7 Ordnance Survey Map of 1874

The coastline of Brightlingsea was also a resource for a product known as copperas. Iron pyrites in the form of 'copperas stones' eroded onto the beach and were, using a complicated process, turned into copperas (Ferrous Sulphate) itself. This was a valuable chemical used in the dyeing and tanning industries and also in the production of ink, sulphuric acid and medicines.

Further industry is evidenced in the post-medieval brickworks which were located to the west of Park Road, north west of the town and north of railway station.<sup>8</sup> Additional brickworks were located south of Hurst Green and north of Brightlingsea Creek.<sup>9</sup> A windmill was also located at Hurst Green behind Mill House, close to Mill Farm at the south east corner of the Green. The mill had likely moved to Great Bentley by 1762.<sup>10</sup>

The advent of the railways altered the existing trade patterns and introduced tourism to the area. Brightlingsea obtained a branch line from Wivenhoe in 1866, this supplied two daily services from the 1870's. Largely as a result of this the town grew, and its population of 2,585 in 1861 increased to 4,501 by 1901. The branch line enabled greater numbers of tourists and carried day-trippers, as well as supporting the growth of trade in oysters and fish, enabling large numbers of sprats to be exported by train ferry from Harwich to Eastern Europe.

8 SMR Number 15702

9 SMR Number 15703

10 SMR Number 47482



Figure 8 Ordnance Survey Map 1897

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, further expansion of the town took place. This expansion is demonstrated on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1897 (Figure 8), with development along Colne Road, Wellington Street, Nelson Street, Silcott Street, to the west side of New Street and along Tower Street. This rapid influx of residential terraced houses demonstrates the population growth of Brightlingsea at this time. Further terraced houses also appear on Station Road and York Road, close to the station.

A gas works was erected along Sydney Street around c.1900.<sup>11</sup>

11 EHER 40391



### **Modern (1901 – now)**

The town and its surrounding landscape underwent many notable changes throughout the modern period, although has retained a lot of its historic layout, buildings and character. Further residential development occurred across Brightlingsea in the early twentieth century, as the population of the town continued to grow. This is evident on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1923, with the western side of Silcott Street, Colne Road and the development of Regent Road occurring by this time. A small cinema is also labelled on the map at this time, at Number 40 Station Road. The cinema was known as the Regal Theatre, which first opened in December of 1912 as the Empire Theatre of Pictures and Variety. It was later taken over by the small independent Bostock Cinemas circuit and renamed the Regal Cinema, and operated until July 1959, after which it became a small factory and office before its demolition in 1992.<sup>12</sup>

The Lido Pool in Brightlingsea was opened in 1932 (Figure 13), at the time when it was becoming increasingly fashionable to pursue healthy outdoor activities, particularly along the coast. The lido was a highly popular attraction within the area for locals and day-trippers. It was fed by tidal salt water until the 1970s when it was turned into a chlorinated freshwater pool.

12 <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/21668>



Figure 9 Brightlingsea High Street 1904 (Source: Brightlingsea History Hub)



Figure 10 Ordnance Survey Map 1923



Figure 11 Ordnance Survey Map 1966

Alongside its recreational and tourist industry, Brightlingsea played a crucial role during World War Two as a defensive naval base. The landscape around the island and the coast at Brightlingsea was altered during the Second World War. This was largely due to the town itself being used as a small naval base during World War Two known as HMS Nemo. The shipyards supplied the Navy and Royal Air Force and thousands of pontoons for the Army. Structures were introduced to the coastline which were designed to repel invasion. A double row of World War Two anti-tank cubes were situated across the quay and the access to the road, outside the Anchor Hotel. These were removed by 1960.

The town continued to grow in population, with twentieth century expansion mainly occurring to the north of the medieval settlement, around the main access road leading in past the parish church. This is evident on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1966 (Figure 11).

Many of the post medieval industries no longer continued into the modern period. The oyster industry had declined significantly by the 1920s and was further impacted throughout the century. The Great Tide of 1953 smothered the layings with mud while an extremely cold winter in 1963 killed 85 per cent of the prime stock; this effectively ended the oyster industry at Brightlingsea Creek. The railway line, which was always susceptible to flooding, was also affected in mid-twentieth century, and three miles were lost in the storm of January 1953. The branch later closed in 1964.

Increasingly the marina was home to large steam yachts. The vessels would be moored up when not in use and repair works were undertaken in Brightlingsea.

Substantial development has taken place in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, particularly along the waterfront, with some further infill within the town.



Figure 12 Brightlingsea's Cinema (source: <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/21668>)



Figure 13 Brightlingsea Lido



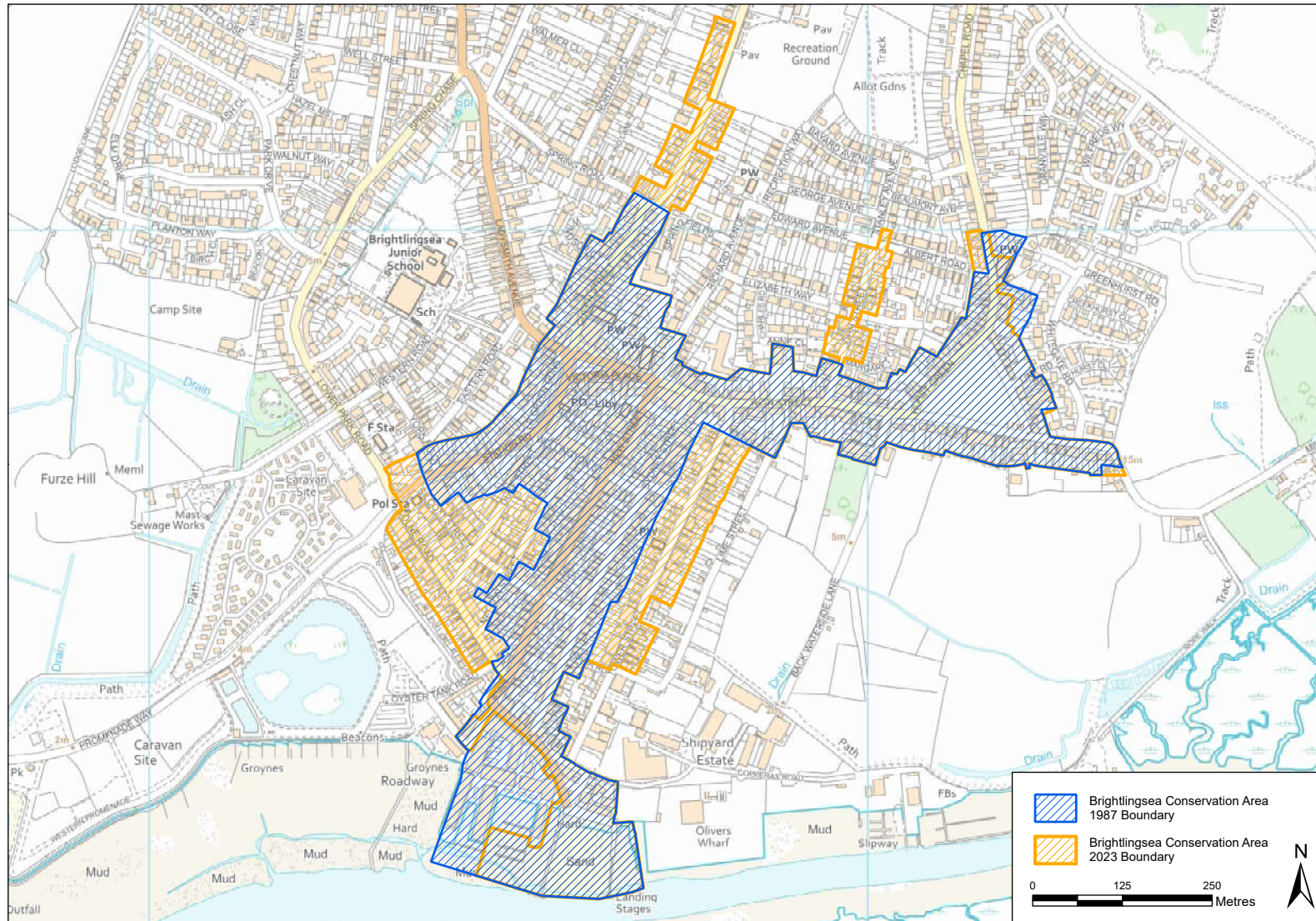
Figure 14 William Francis of Brightlingsea, foreman of the Colne Fishery Company, at the helm of the company smack NATIVE. 1928. (Source Mersea Museum)

### 2.3. Revisions to the Boundary

As part of this review, undertaken in 2022, the Conservation Area boundary has been revised to reflect changing methodologies of good practice and provide a clearer strategy which acknowledges the practicalities of Brightlingsea'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 191).

- Addition: there are areas to the north along Regent Road which appear by the Ordnance Survey Map of 1925 and hold buildings of architectural merit. Many of these are large villas with notable architectural detailing. Also, along John Street are buildings which appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, along with the Congregational Chapel (now converted to residential use). This street has retained its historic character and appearance and would make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The small row of terraced houses opposite the Methodist Chapel also appear on early Ordnance Survey maps and make a positive contribution, so are recommended for inclusion. They have had window and door replacements and porch extensions; however, their inclusion may allow for future enhancement schemes and targeted funding to reinstate features. To the south on Station Road, it is recommended the boundary is extended to include the Railway Tavern, a former Railway Hotel, which is likely a candidate for local listing and a non-designated heritage asset. The small triangle of green opposite is also recommended for inclusion as it makes a positive contribution as green space, and functions as a gateway to the Conservation Area.
- Addition: The area along Colne Road and Tower Street comprises terraced residential buildings which are similar to those on New Street and Sidney Street. They were laid out slightly later, as New Street and Sidney Street appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881. Tower Street, Colne Road and Silcott Street however were laid out between 1881 – 1897, appearing on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897. Although many of them have had window and door replacements and unsympathetic extensions, these streets are similar in character and condition to New Street and Sidney Street. Therefore, they may be worthy of inclusion within the Conservation Area. This would mean that the majority of the Victorian residential expansion of Brightlingsea was included within the Conservation Area and allow for greater holistic preservation of character and appearance going forward.
- Addition: Numbers 40 - 42 on Mill Street were added following public consultation in 2023. These historic cottages appear on the 1898 Ordnance Survey map, marking the historic edge of the settlement.
- Reduction: Some small areas of new development which currently make a neutral or negative contribution due to architectural style, material, mass or orientation are recommended for exclusion. This includes the new development along Chapel Road and Mews, on Brightlingsea Harbour.

Figure 15 Map showing boundary revisions to the Brightlingsea Conservation Area (2023)



## 2.4. Designated Heritage Assets

There are 32 designated heritage assets within the Brightlingsea Conservation Area boundary, including the Grade I listed Jacobes Hall, the Grade II listed Church of St James and New Church of Jerusalem, the Grade II listed Sailmaking Loft, and the Grade II listed Old Customs House. Other designated assets include domestic and commercial buildings, pubs and inns, a war memorial, former hotels and meeting houses.

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 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; Grade II listings are of special interest and most common, making up 91.7% of all listings.<sup>13</sup>

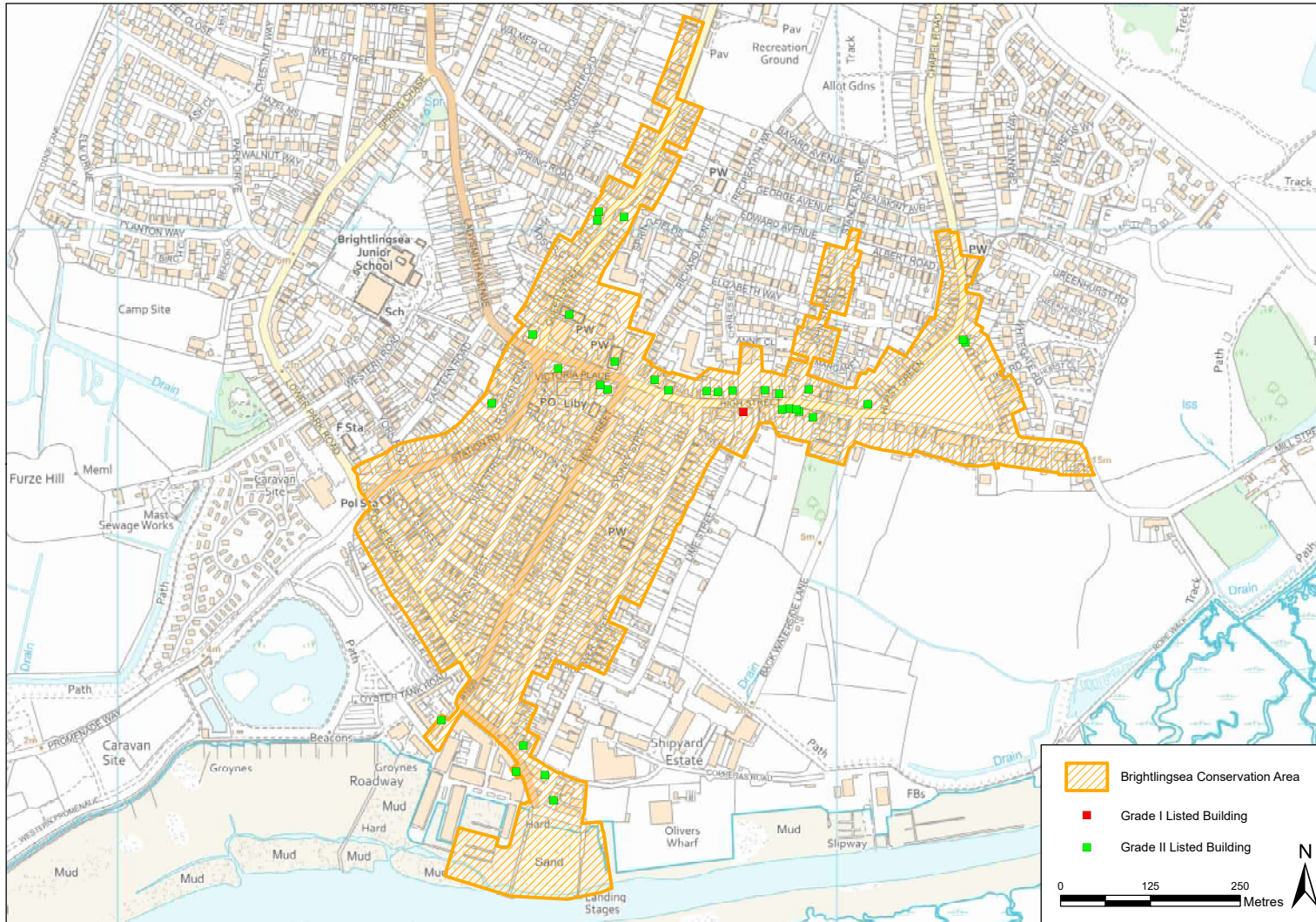
Listed buildings are protected by government legislation and there are policies in place to ensure that any alterations to a listed building will not affect its special interest. It is possible to alter, extend or demolish a listed building but this requires listed building consent and sometimes planning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

Brightlingsea Conservation Area contains a high number of listed buildings which emphasises its special interest. As outlined above, many building types are designated, including domestic buildings, historic inns, cottages and shops, constitutional clubs, and buildings associated with activity on the waterfront, providing a rich and layered representation of English architectural history. The variety is important, highlighting how the town has developed and altered over time and acknowledging the multiple phases of Brightlingsea's development and the impact of its location.

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13 Historic England, Listed Buildings <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>

Figure 16 Map showing Designated Heritage Assets within the Conservation Area





## 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>14</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. Those identified in the descriptions of each character area outlined in Section 3.

Buildings and features within the Conservation Area which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets include:

- The former Royal Hotel, New Street
- Cockleshell House, Wellington Street
- The Co-op building, Station Road
- The Railway Tavern, Station Road
- The YMCA, High Street
- The United Church, Chapel Road
- Florence Cottages, Black Waterside Lane
- The Royal British Legion Club, Sydney Street
- Ancient Order of Foresters Society, Sydney Street
- The Freemasons Arms, Sydney Street
- Former Chapel of the Church of New Jerusalem, New Street

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14 NPPF, p67





## 2.6. Heritage at Risk

There are no buildings or features which are on Historic England's at-risk register within the Conservation Area.

## 2.7. Archaeological Potential

Little structured archaeological work has been undertaken within the town, however extensive and ongoing excavations have taken place over a number of years to the north west which has revealed multi-period archaeological remains and recent excavations on the outskirts of the settlement suggest this activity is spread across the Brightlingsea Peninsula.

The potential for the survival of multi-period remains in open areas, such as at Hurst Green as well as gardens and any empty plots along the High Street and northwards, must be considered high. Topographically this area occupies part of the flat-topped gravel ridge upon which the multi-period remains at Moverons Pit have been discovered.

There is potential for the recovery of further Palaeolithic flint tools from the superficial gravel deposits underlying the area around Hurst Green.<sup>15</sup>

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.

The survival of the medieval and postmedieval street plan of Brightlingsea, and the extensive listed buildings, are an important, well preserved resource.

At the waterside the Conservation Area includes the intertidal area and beach where structural remains relating to the industry and use of the port may survive and be preserved along the coastline. The remains of various World War Two structures may lie within the intertidal zone. Wrecks have been recorded offshore (EHER 16941), many still visible through aerial photography. There is also potential for watercraft from historic periods to be preserved within the intertidal zone.

Waterlogged deposits are significant due to the wider range of archaeological remains that can be preserved including wooden artefacts, textiles and bone, as well as paleoenvironmental evidence which can inform on past environmental conditions.

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15 O'Connor, T. Managing the Essex Pleistocene 2015

## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1. Summary

The Brightlingsea Conservation Area is notable for its historic, coastal character and appearance, and its connection with maritime industries, buildings and spaces. The town predominantly derives its character and appearance from the high density of medieval and post-medieval buildings on the historic High Street and roads leading to the quayside. It is also characterised by this coastal location, and its quayside includes a core of listed buildings associated with maritime industry and an active modern industrial complex. The north of the area is characterised by well-preserved historic buildings and green spaces, including the marketplace fossilised in the medieval street pattern at the western end of the High Street and Hurst Green to the east.

This Conservation Area has been subdivided into Character Areas, which largely reflect those identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2006. These areas demonstrate the distinctive development, character and appearance of the settlement. These are:

- Hurst Green
- The High Street and Back
- The Waterfront
- Residential Roads
- Station Road
- Victoria Place
- Queen Street and Regent Road
- John Street



Figure 17 Hurst Green



Figure 18 The Waterfront

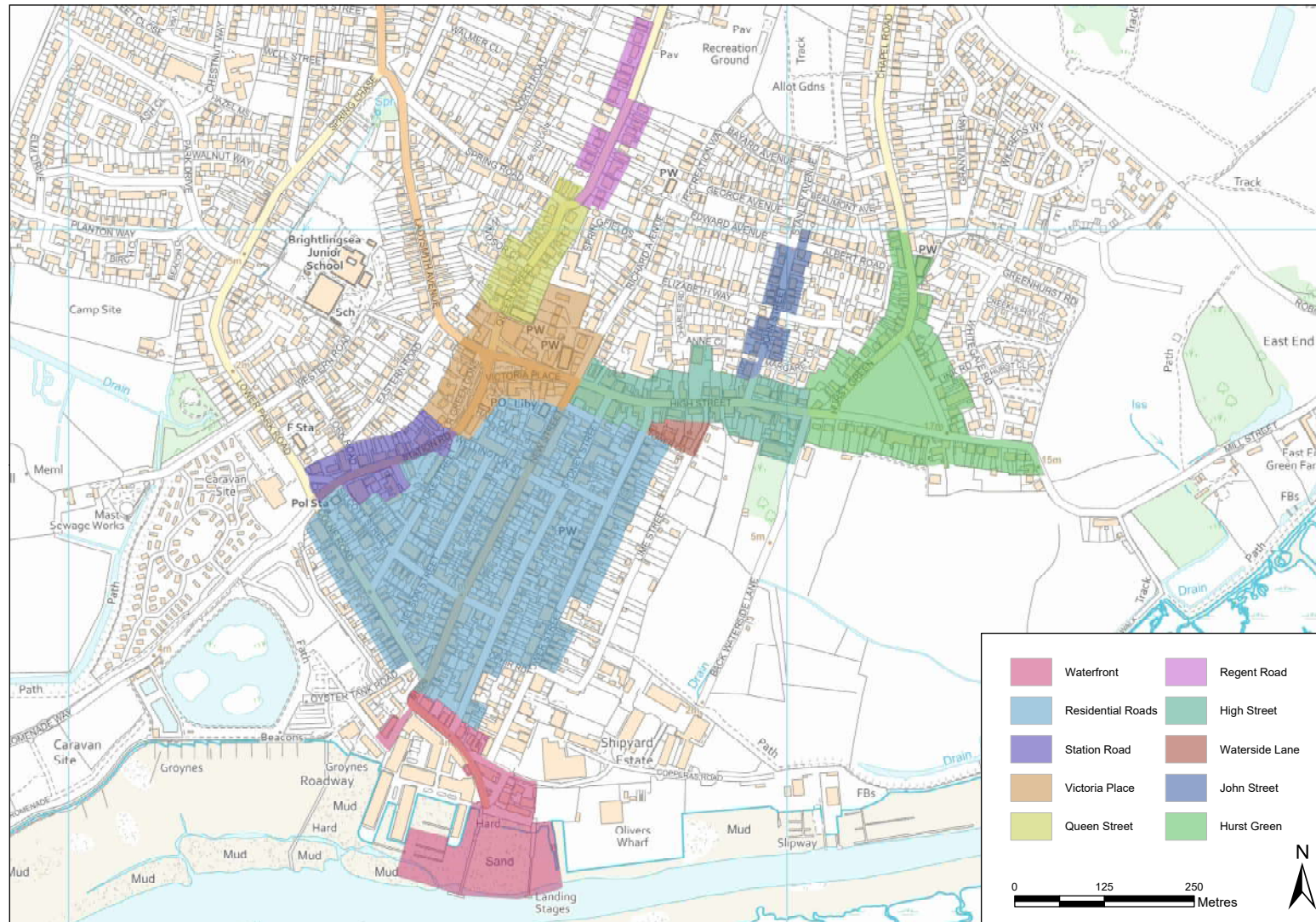


Figure 19 The High Street



Figure 20 Victoria Place

Figure 21 Map showing Character Areas within Brightlingsea Conservation Area



### 3.2. Character Analysis: Hurst Green

#### *Summary of character area*

This area is characterised by the historic Hurst Green and the band of buildings surrounding it, which together contribute to a sense of wide space and openness. There is less vehicular traffic in the area here, which contributes to its quiet, residential character. The land within the area is gently sloping, and falls away to the south of the area, which affords wide reaching views towards the waterfront, and contributes to the sense of openness here.

The Green is located within the centre of this character area and forms a focal point. It is immediately enclosed by Hurst Green road. The buildings along Hurst Green road overlook the green, and are predominantly two-storey dwellings, many of which are detached. The buildings here are typically red brick and cream painted render. There is only one Grade II listed building within the area, the seventeenth century 29 and 30 Hurst Green, which is prominent in views across the Green.

Chapel Road extends to the north of the Green, and is more enclosed in character, with terraced houses lining the west side of the street and a high red brick wall on the east with the Chapel to the north east.

Mill Street extends to the east of the Green, and comprises a row of nineteenth century pairs of houses and terraced cottages, which display a range of façade treatments and small, incremental alterations, although together contribute to the historic character of the street.



Figure 22 Hurst Green Character Area



Figure 23 The Rosebud Pub



Figure 24 View north west over the Green



Figure 25 Architectural detailing of houses on Hurst Green



Figure 26 The Chapel on Chapel Road



Figure 27 Grade II Listed 29 and 30 Hurst Green



Figure 28 Buildings on Mill Street

### ***Land Usage***

The majority of the land within this character area is dominated by the large expanse of the public green, which is laid to lawn with benches along its edge. Surrounding the Green along Hurst Green road, the land use is predominantly residential with some examples of commercial or agricultural use, such as the Rosebud Pub (Figure 23) and a barn complex to the south, and the car dealership to the east.

To the east of the Green, Mill Street comprises a stretch of residential houses (Figure 28). To the north, Chapel Road is predominantly characterised by its residential land use, however the Methodist Chapel is located here and is of ecclesiastical land use.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

Building materials within this area predominantly comprise red brick and painted render. There are some variations, such as the Grade II listed cottage to the north of the Green with exposed timber. These traditional materials make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the area and introduce a sense of cohesion across the dispersed buildings surrounding the Green. There are some twentieth century buildings to the south of the Green in roughcast render, which introduces a modern appearance to the area.

Boundary treatments are traditionally red brick with some hedgerows, iron railings, and picket fencing, which make a positive contribution to the area. However, there are also examples of closeboard fencing, which makes a neutral to negative contribution to the historic character of the area.

Many of the traditional timber windows and doors have been replaced with uPVC, which makes a negative contribution to the character of the area.

The historic plots, which overlook the Green, predominantly contain red brick two-storey houses of generous proportion, with detailing such as sash windows, large chimneys, hipped or gable tile and slate roofs, and in some cases Georgian detailing such as key stone and corncicing, door surrounds and classical columns (Figure 25).

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

The open space of the Green makes a highly significant and positive contribution to the character and appearance of this area, and covers a large portion of the area. The Green is triangular and roughly 2.4 acres in size. It is open in character, as it is laid to lawn with some scattered trees around its edge. The topography is slightly raised to the north, meaning that views across the green include a large expanse of grass, with the surrounding buildings appearing over a 'sea of green' (Figure 24).

The scattered trees are a mixture of species, with a line of trees along the western edge, to the south, and young trees to the east. A line of established trees follows the southern edge, contributing to the historic character of the Green.

Some public benches, waste disposal, streetlighting and a post-box also flank the edge of the Green. Benches are high quality, with cast iron fitting, and the streetlights are a variety of silver and black metal.

The majority of the buildings within this area have small front gardens, many of which contain some greenery in the form of shrubs, hedges and flowers. These make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area; the domestic landscaping is reflective of the residential character of the area.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

There are numerous buildings that contribute to the character and appearance of the area; however some are considered to make a key contribution and have been identified in Section 2.5 and below.

The Chapel is a prominent building on Chapel Road and makes a positive contribution to the area. It is red brick with arched windows and a pedimented porch and roof. Its corners are curved, adding architectural interest to the building. The size and orientation of the building set it apart from others within the area.



Figure 29 Detail of the United Church (Methodist U.R.C.)

### 3.3. Character Analysis: The High Street and Back Waterside Lane

#### *Summary of character area*

This area forms the historic core of the Conservation Area, and it is characterised by the high density of historic buildings, many of which are listed. Buildings within the area are predominantly red or gault brick, or render painted in a pastel colour palette. They are largely two storeys high, fronting onto the pavement to create a dense streetscape. The street layout here contributes to the significance of the area as it illustrates its historical development and provides understanding of the area's medieval origins.

To the west, the High Street typically contains terraced commercial buildings which front onto the pavement, with larger buildings, such as the Brewers Arms and The Swan, set back from the road. These buildings range in architectural origin and style, from the sixteenth century Swan pub to twentieth century infill; this creates a varied streetscape and roofline.

To the east of Tower Street, however, the road bends slightly and buildings often sit within more generous plots which either front onto the pavement or are set behind small gardens with grass, shrubs and hedges. The combination of red brick, neutral painted facades, tile roofs, and greenery make a positive contribution to the area.

The nineteenth century Church of Saint James is located to the north east of this character area. The Church is a prominent feature of the area, constructed in white brick, setting it apart from its surroundings. It has a prominent spire, which can be seen in views up and down the High Street, with a town clock attached to the tower by iron brackets; the Church makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

To the east, Jacobes Hall makes a notable contribution to the area, as it provides a focal point along the streetscape and is the only Grade I Listed Building within the Conservation Area.



Figure 30 The High Street Character Area





Figure 31 View west along the High Street



Figure 32 The YMCA



Figure 33 Grade I Listed Jacobes Hall



Figure 34 Number 53 High Street



Figure 35 Architectural detailing of Number 82 High Street



Figure 36 Numbers 85 - 89 High Street

### ***Land Usage***

The High Street is predominantly commercial, containing shops, businesses and pubs. These historic uses make a positive contribution to our appreciation of the continued historic use of the High Street and enhance the way the Conservation Area is experienced.

To the east of the tower of St James, the buildings are predominantly of residential use. There is a small convenience store to the north of the street and the YMCA building (Figure 32) set back from the road behind a large car park.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

The High Street is characteristically narrow with little open space or room for substantial landscaping or public realm spaces. Streetlights are, in places, attached to buildings, but more often are atop of concrete posts. The main form of landscaping in this character area is derived from the front gardens of the residential buildings to the east of the High Street. These front gardens are typically narrow with grass or shrub planting; however, some do have established tree planting and hedgerows. These residential gardens make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

There is a small area of open space opposite Jacobes Hall, which has two benches orientated to overlook the hall. These benches are set on a semi-circular area of paving with a tall hedgerow behind.

On the western side of the High Street some buildings are set back from the pavement; for example, the old Swan pub is sat behind a well-maintained hedgerow, which adds some greenery to the streetscape. Other buildings often front onto the pavement directly however hanging baskets and window boxes containing flowers are not uncommon and enhance the appearance of the area.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

The High Street has a high density of historic buildings and contains some of the oldest buildings in Brightlingsea. Therefore, the traditional and local building materials are predominantly historic in character.

To the west of the High Street, details are varied due to the diverse range of building styles found here. Buildings are predominantly brick, red or gault, or painted render in light pastel colours. The Grade II listed Swan pub is the earliest building in the area; it is a timber framed and rough rendered building, with a red plain tile roof, which sets it apart from its surroundings and enhances the streetscape. Further west, painted render is more common with slate hipped roofs, with more exposed red brick buildings which are interspersed with rendered buildings to the east. There are some exceptions however, such as the Grade II Listed Numbers 41 – 45 which are timber framed and weatherboarded and add interest to the streetscape, as well as the timber framed Grade I Listed Jacobes Hall, which has a red brick stair turret. The architectural detailing on Jacobes Hall is unique to the area and of significance, making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area (Figure 33).

Typically, windows are sash and classic in their proportions. Ornate door surrounds and historic shop front detail can also be found on many of the commercial buildings.

Many of the details in this area are derived from the historic shop fronts particularly to the west of the area. These features include wooden pilasters, door surrounds, columns, iron signage and tiling. Many of these fronts have been replaced, although some historic detailing has survived.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

The YMCA is a key, non-designated building within the area. It is set back from the High Street within a substantial plot, which also comprises an area of grass, surrounding the building and a large car park to its south. The building, a Victorian Hall, was formerly a chapel until 1948 when it was transferred to the YMCA. The building is red brick, of one-and-a-half storeys, brick arched doorway with decorative key stone and decorative cresting to the ridge of the slate roof. There is an unsympathetic extension to the south west corner of the building, which detracts from its symmetry.

Florence Cottages are set back from the High Street to the south, accessed by Back Waterside Lane. The nine cottages were originally accommodation for coastguards and are now occupied by retired officers of the Salvation Army. They are attractive in yellow brick and are well-maintained with consistent roofing and dormer details (though using modern materials) and a communal garden. They overlook wide reaching views to the south, stretching to the river.



Figure 37 Florence Cottages, Back Waterside Lane

### 3.4 Character Analysis: The Waterfront

#### *Summary of character area*

This area derives its character from its waterfront location. The northern area including Fieldgate Dock, Waterside and Copperas Road, contain many buildings associated with the dock. These buildings are of a mixed use, including the nineteenth century Grade II listed Sailmaking Loft and workshop (List Entry No: 1169170), the Yachtsmans Arms pub, the Grade II listed Sailing Club (List Entry No: 1337209), the Grade II listed Cinque Port Wreck House James And Stone Shipyard (List Entry No: 1235278), the Grade II listed Old Custom House (List Entry No: 1306676), the Grade II listed Anchor Hotel (List Entry No: 1245300). There are some other commercial and residential buildings within the area as well. These streets are enclosed in character, with a variety of building types situated closely together, which creates a densely built environment with a legible historic grain to development.

The land opens to the south with a notable Tourist Information seaside shelter and area of public realm facing onto the water and a short landing dock, overlooking the mouth of the River Colne. The overriding character and appearance of this area is derived from its location on the waterfront; this contributes to the local characteristics of the area. For example, the sensory experiences of the area make a large contribution to its character. From the pavement and landing stage the clanking sound of boats, bird calls, and tidal movement of the water all make a positive contribution to the way in which the Conservation Area is experienced and understood. The sight of the boats and harbour and the smells of the waterfront also work together to contribute to the experience.



Figure 38 The Waterfront Character Area (Oar Store and former Anchor Hotel)



Figure 39 Tourist Information shelter



Figure 40 Town Hard



Figure 41 The Colne Yacht Club



Figure 42 Grade II listed Cinque Port Wreck House



Figure 43 Grade II Listed Sailing Club



Figure 44 Yachtsmans Arms

### ***Land Usage***

The land use is characteristically varied within this character area, particularly to the north. Residential buildings are nestled between commercial premises, with a pub, takeaways and restaurants, a workshop and club houses scattered throughout.

To the south, the waterfront is still active, which makes a positive contribution to its character and understanding of the historic and continued use of the area. There is a landing stage and marina within the south west of the character area.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

The public realm in this area is predominantly paved. The largest area of open space is along the waterfront itself. A wide paved walkway lines the waterfront, which includes some elements of public realm occupied by benches, planters, and an anchor. This area is open in character, due to the minimal street furniture and the views towards the wide mouth of the river, which makes a positive contribution to the sense of place here.

Along the waterfront the pavement is wide. Street furniture such as streetlights, waste bins, benches and bollards are all historic in character, in black metal, and line the waterfront (Figure 41). The benches afford views to the south across the mouth of the river and over the boats moored here. A decorative anchor sits at the midpoint of the walkway, and the western edge of the area is marked by the large Bench Head Buoy.

The area includes a triangular area of paving on Copperas Road which contains the Tourist Information seaside shelter and continues south and south east to follow the bank of the water. The tourist seaside shelter (Figure 39) is a notable feature within the area. Surrounding the

shelter are street furniture such as cast-iron bollards, waste bins, a town sign and public phone box.

Opposite the shelter, on the corner of the Grade II listed Anchor Hotel, is a cast-iron signpost, a rare survival of historic wayfinding signage.

Areas of green space are small and located in private gardens. The most substantial of these is the Grade II listed Anchor Hotel (List Entry No: 1245300), which dominates the corner plot overlooking the waterfront, this is set within a small garden which surrounds the building to its south and west. The garden is largely paved; however, its edge comprises shrubs and a mixture of established evergreen and deciduous trees. These trees make a positive contribution to the area and are visible along the waterfront, demarking the former hotel as a significant building within the area. The Yachtsmans Arms has a rear garden lined by a dense hedgerow, which can be seen from the street and therefore, makes a positive green contribution to the streetscape.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

The building materials used throughout this area are varied. The variation provides a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area as it is illustrative of the phases of development and uses of buildings and spaces.

Close to the waterfront, the former Grade II listed Anchor Hotel (Figure 38) is a decorative building dating from 1901 with ornate half-timbering above a stone base. The surrounding buildings are predominantly timber and render under tile roofs. The Grade II listed Old Customs House is timber framed with brightly painted weatherboarding.

Further north along Copperas Road and Waterside road, buildings are a variety of weatherboarding, red brick and brightly painted render. This reflects the range in use of buildings, from weatherboarded workshops to red brick dwellings and the rendered public house.

Building details are fairly divided, between functional architecture which relates to the workings of the waterfront and the more ornate and decorative buildings, which are positioned such that they are commanding in views. For example, the former listed Anchor Hotel and seaside shelter are decorated with finials and pilasters, while the domestic buildings and working buildings, such as the workshop, Wreck House, and petrol pump are utilitarian in style and detail.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

There are a number of buildings within the area which make a positive contribution to its character and appearance.

The Tourist Information seaside shelter in the centre of the triangle formed by Copperas Road is a notable feature. It is a timber building constructed in 1898, which provides seating with views to the south and heritage interpretation panels and makes a positive contribution to the area. It is open to the south with benches and decorative tiled flooring. The roof is tiled, and half hipped to the east and west with decorative finials on the roofline. The south elevation which overlooks the waterfront also has a town clock.

On the waterfront is a harbour office and look-out. This was constructed in 1898, with a plaque naming it as the 'Town Hard' (Figure 40), and is a small weatherboarded octagonal building with slate roof. This makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area as a historic, harbour building.

The Oar Store is located on the waterfront. It is a narrow, two storey building with a slate roof. Its main gable end fronts onto the street to the south with a garage door at ground level. The garage door and windows have flat headed arches. The south and west elevations of the store are red brick, and its east elevation is painted render. This makes

a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area as a historic harbour building.

The Colne Yacht Club (Figure 41) is a prominent building along the waterfront; it is a two storey twentieth century building, the first floor partly overhanging an area of car parking and supported by columns. There is a small balcony to the west of the frontage at first floor level. It makes a prominent contribution to the streetscape here and is of communal value.

The Coach House is located to the north of the former Anchor Hotel and is of interest as an ancillary building which has retained much of its historic character. The original use of the coach house, now a coffee shop, is still legible, with a large gable with windows at the former entrance, and an attractive tile roof.

To the north of the area along Waterside road is the Yachtsmans Arms (Figure 44). This is a nineteenth century building, two storeys with a hipped roof. The building has retained some historic character, with timber sash windows on the front elevation and a cast iron hanging sign and is of communal value as a historic public house.

### 3.5. Character Analysis: Residential Roads

#### *Summary of character area*

This area is defined by the nineteenth century expansion which took place between the High Street and the waterfront. The overriding character and appearance of the area is derived from its domestic Victorian terracing, in red brick and painted render, which creates a consistent streetscape. The layout of the area is distinctive and illustrative of the Victorian origins, with its grid of streets, affording long views along the roads. The oldest development took place to the north of the area, progressing to the south, where some modern infill has also occurred. Although there are no listed buildings within the area, most are historic, comprising of simple two-storey dwellings. There are also examples of a particular distinctive pattern of detached villas with pilasters. Properties on corner plots have often retained former shop fronts, however many have altered details.

The architectural variations between the residential roads contributes to the character and appearance of the area; therefore, the following provides a summary of each street within this character area to identify these variations.

#### New Street

New Street is one of the earliest roads to be developed in the area, running from the High Street down to the quayside. Its northern end is marked by the rear space behind the Brewers Arms, a large open tarmac forecourt and car parking, which makes a neutral contribution. To the south is Brightlingsea Library, a single storey building with a prominent projecting cantilevered roof painted in red. It is set back from the pavement behind parking bays and the entrance path, which are laid out with different paving materials. Further south is the BT premises; this is a utilitarian building with a plain tarmac frontage, which is out of character with the area.



Figure 45 Residential Roads Character Area



South of the BT building is the former New Church (Swedenborgian), built in 1814. It is a prominent building in the streetscape, with a large front gable facing onto the street. It has since been converted to residential use. Midway along the road, on the western side, is the notable former Royal Hotel; this is a prominent three-storey building with classical detailing and an octagonal roof turret which is visible in wider views.

Predominantly New Street consists of singles and pairs of houses and terraced rows; the buildings comprise of two storey groups, with slightly varying roof profiles and elevations faced in red or yellow brick or in render. Yellow brick is more common towards the Silcott Street junction on the west side. These properties are set back from the pavement edge with small front gardens with brick walls and various types of bay windows. Few original windows remain.

### Sydney Street

Sydney Street follows a more varied building line than the adjacent New Street. There is a slight curve halfway down the street which means that views are terminated in a dense built character.

To the north of the street are a series of large villas which contribute to the varied character and appearance. For example, to the north east is the modern residential Dove's Court, an incongruous two-storey block in white brick with a rendered porch, which makes a negative contribution. Opposite this is the large, red brick, Royal British Legion Club building. This building fronts onto the pavement and makes a positive contribution to the area. Further south are the Freemasons Arms and the Ancient Order of Foresters Society.

Continuing south along the street, buildings are predominantly two-storey residential dwellings in red brick or painted render. Many have retained original architectural detailing, which add to their interest and contribute positively to the area, and there are examples of historic shopfronts on the corner with Francis Street (Figure 46). There are also



Figure 46 Historic shopfront on Sydney Street



Figure 47 Wreck Warehouse Sydney Street

a number which are demonstrative of a planform which is notable within Brightlingsea and referred to as the “Brightlingsea type” within the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2006, further discussed below, such as Numbers 59, 65, 79, 81 (Figure 48) and 95.

The pavement kerbs are blue brick (or scoria brick), which is a detail found across Tendring’s towns, and makes a positive contribution to the area, adding interest to the street.

### Tower Street

Tower Street is comparable in character and appearance to the parallel Sydney and New Streets to its west. To its north are detached pairs of houses, in red brick often painted in white or cream. Many have undergone modern alterations, however many architectural features have been retained, such as keystone detailing, window and door surrounds, and bay windows, which make a positive contribution. Number 17 makes a notable positive contribution; it is a double fronted, two storey villa, in red brick with a bay window with plaster surrounds painted white with decorated panelled infill, and a panelled door with a painted doorcase and flat canopy. Its architectural details, including tiled entrance, decorated eaves, and the boundary treatment, make a positive contribution to the building and streetscape. Although opposite is the rear access for the Sailmakers’ Warehouse and some modern development, which makes a neutral contribution due to its massing, scale and roofline. Further south, pairs of buildings and detached villas line the street, predominantly in red brick and painted render, apart from Number 29, which is in gault brick.

The Masonic Hall, a modern building in red brick with a Dutch style gable and stone detailing (Figure 49), is located on the east side of the street, providing the terminating view of George Cut, and makes a positive contribution.

Further south is a stretch of well-preserved villas in red brick, some rendered and painted in white, with simple architectural detailing.



Figure 48 Number 81 Sydney Street



Figure 49 Masonic Hall

Gault brick detailing, keystones, stone plaques, tiled porches and low boundary walls with planted front gardens all make a positive contribution to the streetscape. To the west side of the street is the Salvation Army building, a two-storey red brick building with stained glass windows above a panelled door and a prominent gable front with three column finials. This building makes a positive contribution to the character area, as a building of communal and architectural interest. South of the building is a modern bungalow, with a paved frontage, which makes a neutral contribution due to its massing and paved front. Further south, on the east of the street, is a large villa which makes a positive contribution; it is two and a half storeys in height, in red brick with gault brick detailing and banding at each level. It has arched window head on the first floor, and bay windows to the ground floor. The front door is recessed behind an arched entranceway, tiled, with a narrow-arched window beside.

Continuing south, buildings typically continue as detached villas and pairs, in red brick, with domestic architectural detail found throughout the area. This consistency in building materials, building lines, apertures and front boundary treatments makes a positive contribution to the area, contributing to its residential historic character and appearance.

### Nelson Street

Nelson Street comprises a mixture of two-storey red brick and painted render residential dwellings. The streetscape character is more varied than the parallel roads of New Street and Sydney Street, with some buildings set further back from the pavement behind hedges, or with a gable end facing the street. These are usually in pairs or terraced rows, set behind small front gardens in the centre of the road and fronting onto the pavement in the north and south.

There are also more open plots along the street, comprising gardens or paving and garages.

### Duke Street

The north west side of Duke Street contains a pleasant row of terraced cottages, in red brick and painted white, with gault brick detailing. Opposite is St James Court, a large residential development which makes a negative contribution to the area, due to its inappropriate scale and massing. Numbers 2 - 18, 23 and 25 are also of modern construction.

Further south, the street opens out, affording views across the rear gardens of buildings along adjacent streets, many of which contain planting. This stretch of the street is dominated by these unintentional views and by modern development and garages, which together make a neutral contribution to the area.

### Silcott Street

Silcott Street is a shorter street which runs east to west and comprises a mixture of detached villas and cottages and rows of terraced cottages. These are predominantly red brick, with some yellow brick exceptions on the north side of the street and gault brick detailing. Boundary treatments have been altered, and front gardens are small and have often been paved over, which detracts from the appearance of the street.

### Colne Road

Colne Road shares similar qualities to New Street, comprising of domestic buildings in red brick and white painted render, often formed in pairs or in rows. The road is wider, which creates a more open character, and experiences more vehicular traffic as a link to the waterfront. There are some examples of the detached villa style found across the area, for example at Numbers 3, 5 and 71.

The west of the road is open in character, due to the rear garden plots of Silcott Street along the northern edge, which are bounded by a red brick wall and closeboard fencing. The red brick boundary treatment and the views into gardens which are planted with trees makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the street, although the closeboard fencing is out of character, and detracts from the appearance and uniformity of the street.

Further east, the building line is consistent, and a row of terraced cottages make a positive contribution, with detailing such as plastered arched headers, gault brick quoining, and bay windows. Opposite, Numbers 46 – 40 are late twentieth century modern buildings which make a neutral contribution to the area. Continuing west, the south side of the street remains consistent in its historic domestic character, with pairs of villas making a positive contribution to the streetscape. These can also be found on the north side of the street, with some neutral elements throughout, for example at Numbers 4, 8, 12 and 20.

#### Wellington Street

Wellington Street is a short but pleasant street with a consistent frontage of nineteenth century development; buildings are of two storeys, either individual or groups of houses, mostly in red brick with one or two rendered with some bright paintwork. Some original windows and doors remain. The most significant building on the north side of the road is Number 10 Cockleshell House, which is prominent in the streetscene, also forming the terminating view north along Nelson Street.

These buildings have also retained their strong boundary treatment, many of which with some planting or potted shrubs, which contribute some greenery to the streetscene.

#### Francis Street

Francis Street runs east to west between Sydney Street and Nelson Street. It includes rows of red terraced and painted render properties, which mostly front directly onto the street. The north east side of the street includes a notable row, labelled as the 'Boarded Row 1882', which consists of groups properties giving the effect of a continuous terrace. All were originally weatherboarded; some side elevations survive but all the frontages are now rendered and painted in light pastel colours. One of the properties has retained its small-pane sash, however the others have undergone replacement.

On the south side is a small terrace of three red brick houses set between rear garden gates and some parking associated with the former pub on south-west corner of Francis Street and Sidney Street.

#### James Street

James Street is characterised by its openness, due to the views into the rear gardens of properties on New Street and Sydney Street and the rear elevations of the buildings. Boundary treatments and materials are varied, but predominantly red brick, and interspersed with access to garages and shed buildings. A modern single storey brick building with plastic fascia is on the south side of the road, behind a small area of paving; this makes a neutral contribution to the area.

#### Thomas Street

This is a short street connecting Sydney Street and New Street, with views over the backs of the High Street frontages. The street is now a series of access ways to rear of properties, comprising of some brick walls and fencing with a variety of paving materials.



Figure 50 View along Sydney Street



Figure 51 Example of Villas



Figure 52 The Freemasons Arms



Figure 53 View of terraced housing



Figure 54 Ornate historic detailing

### ***Land Usage***

The overriding land use within this character area is residential. To the north there are some buildings which are commercial or community buildings, particularly close to the High Street on New Street and Sydney Street. Community buildings include the Brightlingsea Library on New Street, and the Freemasons Arms on Sydney Street which is also located opposite the Royal British Legion Club and the Ancient Order of Foresters Society. There is a stretch of commercial buildings at the north east side of New Street, and to the north on Sydney Street is a hairdresser.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

This area consists mostly of pairs or rows of houses faced in red brick or render. Yellow brick is more common towards the Silcott Street junction on the west side. Properties are set back from the pavement edge with small front gardens with brick walls and various kinds of bay windows.

In some areas, the pavement is lined with blue bricks, or scoria bricks, a material which is found across Tendring District and makes a positive contribution to the streetscape.

The local details within this area are often simple in their architectural style and material. Minor detailing such as brick banding, stone windowsills and keystones are common. There are also some classical doorframes, and in some larger buildings typically Georgian details such as columns can also be found.

Larger detached houses, recorded as the “Brightlingsea Type” within the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2006, can be found through the area and predominantly on Sydney Street. These detached houses

sit within larger plots, with side gardens or yards which probably represent undeveloped plots. The side elevations to the frontage treatment to the street make a unique and important contribution to the area.

The area also includes enamelled street signs which are fixed to the sides of buildings. These make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the area.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

Areas of formal landscaping are predominantly contained within private gardens, as the narrow grid street layout affords very little public open space. Buildings often front directly onto the street, which also leaves little room for considered public realm space. Front gardens, where they do occur, are typically small and set behind low boundary treatment; they sometimes contain potted shrub planting, which make a positive contribution to the streetscape.

More often, landscape detail comes from the more substantial rear gardens which are, in places, visible from the street. This is particularly the case on corner plots, where more established trees and shrubs are visible over fences. The area also includes notable side gardens, which are often associated with larger villas. These gardens wrap around the building to provide side gardens, many of which contain greenery, which make an unusual and positive contribution to the area.

There is little street furniture, although streetlights are predominantly concrete posts with some metal posts; these make a neutral contribution to the area.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

On the corner of Silcott Street and New Street is perhaps the most prominent building in this part of the area, the former Royal Hotel. It is of three storeys, with classical detailing and inventive window tracery to the ground floor elevations. Facades of cream painted render are topped by a prominent octagonal roof turret with a lead cupola. This building forms the most significant town landmark from the water and is a major feature of the town's skyline.

The Ancient Order of Foresters Society, with a big gabled frontage, is set back from the street behind modern brick wall. It is a red brick one and a half storey building, with decorative stone eave detailing, stone flat arched timber sashed windows, and an arched inscribed entrance with glass surrounds around the panelled door. The building makes a positive contribution to the area, and is of historic, communal and architectural interest.

The Freemasons Arms (Figure 52) is of two storeys with rendered brick and half timbering above a traditional pub frontage with pilasters and painted faience tiles. It is architecturally unique within the character area, and therefore notable as making a positive contribution to the streetscape.

The Royal British Legion Club (Figure 55) is a dominant, two-storey building, built in red brick with a substantial historic fascia. It is very simple in its architectural detailing and makes a positive contribution for its architectural and historic interest.

A significant domestic building within the area is located on the north side of Nelson Street. Number 10 Cockleshell House is notable for its architectural style and the contribution it makes to the area. It is a two-storey red brick building with has arabesque ironwork sporting cockleshells on the first-floor window balconies, reflective of the coastal character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This is also a good example of one of the 'Brightlingsea type' houses. It is a substantial detached dwelling and is prominent in the streetscene, also forming the terminating view north along Nelson Street.

The Brightlingsea community of the Church of New Jerusalem (further details for which can be found in Section 2.2) dates from 1808. In 1814 the first chapel was built on the north west side of New Street; however, another was constructed in Queen Street after the congregation outgrew the building on New Street. It has since been converted into a pair of private dwellings. The building is still recognisable for its original use and is therefore of architectural and historic interest.



Figure 55 The Royal British Legion Club

### 3.6. Character Analysis: Station Road

#### *Summary of character area*

This character area stretches between the end of the Lower Green and the end of Station Road, providing a historic route from the core of the town to the former railway station. Its character is derived predominantly from its function as an arterial route to the town centre, and it forms the gateway into the Conservation Area. It also includes a variety of historic buildings, although none of these are listed, particularly to the south and west side of the road, which enhance its character and appearance.

To the north, the road opens with a small triangular area of public realm within which is a modern public toilet block. Behind this block is St James' Court, a modern housing development which sits to the east side of the road on the site of the town's National School. It is set back behind modern railings, grassed lawn, some trees, and red brick walls, and makes a neutral contribution to the area. To the west a series of two-storey Victorian and earlier cottages line the road, the majority of which front directly onto the pavement or are set behind small front gardens and contribute to the historic character of the street. Most of these buildings have had unsympathetic alterations including façade treatments and replacement windows made over the years, and therefore the streetscape comprises buildings with varied surviving details and alterations.



Figure 56 Station Road Character Area





Figure 57 58 Station Road



Figure 58 Example of terracing on Station Road



Figure 59 The Co-op Food



Figure 60 The Railway Tavern

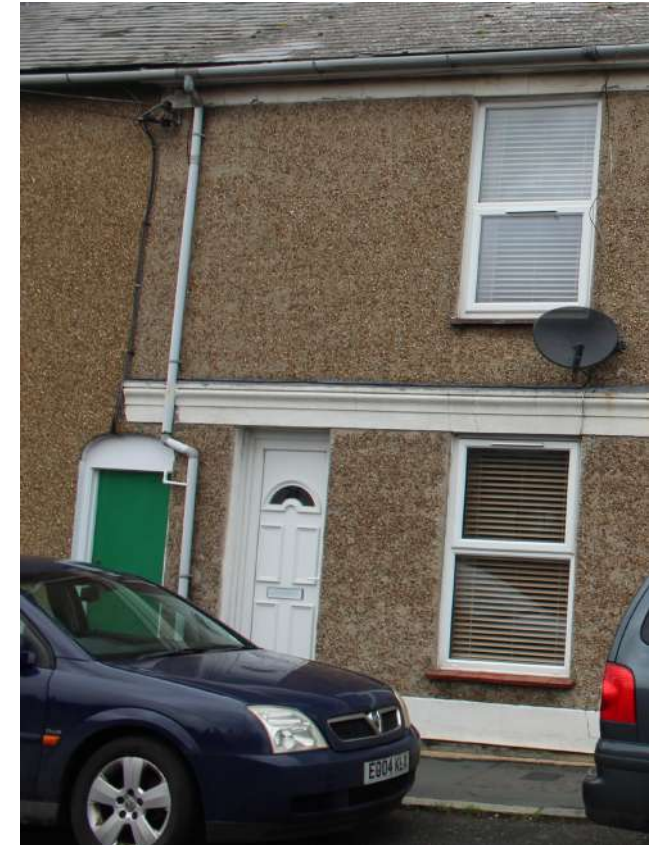


Figure 61 Example of refacing

### ***Land Usage***

Buildings along Station Road are characteristically varied in their use. To the north, buildings are predominantly residential, and largely terraced cottages, which creates a denser streetscape. One building has been converted into a takeaway. To the south, the road widens, and buildings become more varied in their usage. To the east is the commercial building of the Co-op Food, which is a dominant building in terms of scale and plot size. It is opposite a doctor's surgery, with a public house further south, marking the edge of the Conservation Area boundary.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

The majority of buildings within this area have experienced some loss of their traditional windows, doors, roof tiles and boundary treatments. The overriding material of the buildings are brick and painted render.

At the midpoint of the character area along Station Road, Numbers 24 - 30 have been refaced in roughcast stucco, which makes a neutral contribution to the area. Boundary treatments vary and traditionally comprise of red brick. Many buildings have retained painted doorframes.

Local details within this area pertain to its largely residential use, and include detailing such as front bay windows, door casing, and simple domestic architecture such as windowsills and keystones.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

The predominant areas of landscaping can be found in the public realm to the north and south of the area. These are the spaces at the junction of Station Road, Duke Street and Wellington Street, and south the junction of Lower Park Road and Station Road. They include well maintained raised flower beds, which make a positive contribution to the area.

There are small areas of public realm to the north and south of the area, which mark the boundary of the Conservation Area, acting as a gateway. This space includes a triangular area between the intersection of Lower Park Road and Station Road. The area is enclosed by a low brick wall, which contains raised beds for grass, shrubs, flowers, herbs and two cherry trees. There is a circular raised bed in the centre of the area, with flowers and an urn to decorate it. Three benches surround the area, as well as a waste bin. These elements of street furniture are high quality, in cast iron and black metal.

To the north a small area of public realm is formed at the confluence of Duke Street, Station Road and Wellington Street. It comprises an area of paving surrounding the public restrooms, a brick semi-circular raised flower bed and a brick raised bed to the west elevation of the restroom building. Although small, this area makes a positive contribution to the area. The beds are well maintained, and the open space marks the boundary of the character area.

Some private gardens are visible from the road, and therefore make some contribution to the streetscene. The most notable are the grounds of St James' Place. These comprise lawns, shrubs, cherry and evergreen trees. They are set behind a metal railing, which is sympathetic to the historic character and appearance of the area. Other private houses do offer some contribution, particularly to the north of the area and on the dogleg of Station Road to the east, where front gardens are longer and have retained stronger boundary treatment. They often also include established shrubs and small trees, which make a positive contribution.

Midway along the road to the east side, is a large undeveloped plot, which is currently grassed over with two separate shed buildings and a mature tree. This area is partly bounded by a close board fence with concrete pillars. This area of open space currently makes a negative contribution to the area, due to the unsympathetic material of the boundary and unkempt nature of the plot, however the tree provides some welcome greenery to the streetscape.

Streetlights throughout the area are in black metal, which make a positive contribution to the appearance of the character area.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

There are some notable buildings within the area. Midway along the road is Number 12 (Figure 62), a double fronted, two storey villa in red brick with two bay windows with plaster surrounds painted white, and door with a painted doorcase and flat canopy. Its architectural details, including sash windows, and the red brick boundary treatment, make a positive contribution to the building and streetscape.

Further south is the Railway Tavern, a historic public house which has retained much of its original character and appearance. The pub is red brick, with a hipped slate roof and attractive red brick chimneys. It has painted quoin detailing, and painted curved arches to the ground floor windows, and white brick arches to first floor windows. A brick band adds architectural interest to the front elevation of the extended ground floor. The side of the building has an iron signpost with a station sign, which also makes a positive contribution to the building, enhancing its status as the former Station hotel and public house.

To the south east of the area, the Co-op Food building is located on the corner of Silcott Street. It is of architectural interest, with detailing such as the circular window to the gable end, the sash windows, brick

window headers, brick banding and historic sign on the southern elevation. A street sign for Silcott Street and a flood line marker also adorn the southern side. The building has a historic continuous shopfront to its west elevation. It makes a positive contribution to the area, as a well-preserved commercial building.



Figure 62 Number 12 Station Road

### 3.7. Character Analysis: Victoria Place

#### *Summary of character area*

The character of this area is derived from its combination of green spaces, high-quality historic buildings, and its function as a busy through road through the Conservation Area, all of which creates a bustling character and strong sense of place.

This triangular area was originally known as Street Green, and complemented Hurst Green to the east of the settlement. The northern green within the area is surrounded by commercial properties, organised parking, a small gyratory system and the central triangle which includes the Grade II listed War Memorial (List Entry No. 1426590). The long band of green which runs to the south of the area flanks the Lower Green Gardens, and contains walkways, planting and a central fountain. These green spaces are the town's principal formal spaces.<sup>16</sup>

The north east boundary of the area is formed by the Grade II Listed St James Church (List Entry No. 1111402). The church is plain in its architectural design but dominant on the streetscape. The tower is an important vertical accent within the area, contrasting with the otherwise consistent rooflines in its surroundings and forms a significant landmark from the estuary. The tower has attached the clock commemorating Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887.

Opposite the church is the Grade II listed Brewers Arms (List Entry No. 1111403), an attractive vernacular three bay building of two and a half storeys, with rendered walls and old clay tiled roof. The main frontage has small grassed pub garden with a low rendered wall. Part of the former Seabrook's brewery, which once formed part of the Brewers Arms public house, is located adjacent at Number 2 and is a gault brick Grade II listed building (List Entry No. 1169150) which makes a positive contribution to the street and is of group value with the pub.

To the west, the street is lined by commercial buildings which are architecturally varied. The road opens out to surround the central green space and war memorial. Distinctive buildings surround the Green and road, including the Grade II listed, sixteenth-century Kings Head public house on the west side (List Entry No. 1169145).

To the south, the road continues along Victoria Place, with commercial buildings lining the east side of the road. To the west of the road is the stretch of Lower Green, with narrow lawns, trees, a sinuous walkway, and areas of planting. To the west of the Green is Lower Green Gardens road, a verdant residential street.



Figure 63 Victoria Place Character Area



Figure 64 View west on Victoria Place



Figure 65 Grade II Listed Lower Green Cottage



Figure 66 Grade II Listed Kings Head



Figure 67 Lower Green Gardens



Figure 68 Grade II Listed Church of St James

### ***Land Usage***

The land use in this area is varied, however is quite clearly defined and separated by roads which traverse the area. Commercial buildings are located to the north of the area, including two public houses and St James' Church. To the south east, commercial properties continue to flank Victoria Place road to the west, and residential buildings line the Lower Green Gardens road to the west. Areas of public green space sit between the roads centrally within the character area.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

There is a great deal of variety in built forms and materials used throughout this character area, due to the varied uses and phasing of buildings located within it. Predominantly, buildings are constructed in brick, the historic facades in red brick or painted render. Key historic buildings do differ, for example the church is in yellow brick and the earlier pub buildings are timber framed and rendered. A property on Lower Green Gardens road is unique in that it is faced in stone with red brick detailing.

Roofs are typically hipped or gabled, with many gable ends facing the street. Red plain tile and slate tile are traditional building materials and therefore make a positive contribution to the area.

Many of the residential buildings have intricate architectural detailing, such as decorated bargeboards along Lower Green Gardens road and roof finials. While many original windows and doors have been lost, some timber sash windows remain, and these make a positive contribution. Some historic shop front details have also been retained to the north east.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

This area is predominantly characterised by its landscaped open spaces, which run through the centre of the character area. These spaces contain high quality public realm features.

The green space in the centre of these Victoria Place is bounded by a low, yellow brick wall topped with a rowlock brick course. Much of the area is laid to lawn, and the memorial is set within an area of paving which is bordered by a manicured hedgerow, flower planting, and potted shrubs. The Grade II listed War Memorial (List Entry No. 1426590) is located in the centre of Victoria Place, and was created by Richard Goulden, who was a leading monumental sculptor. Cast iron benches provide seating, which overlooks the mast and memorial and benches are regularly spaced along the Lower Green path. Waste bins are black metal and also placed at regular intervals in areas of public realm. Another key feature within this area are the raised flowerpots, which are found on both areas of green space. These add interest to the planting schemes here. Flower beds and flowerpots can be found throughout the area, notable to the west of the area marking the gateway to the Conservation Area. Further west, the path through the garden continues and a ships mast sits in the centre of the Green, reflective the coastal character of Brightlingsea. Large shrub planting surrounds the path here. The green space is surrounded by arterial roads through the Conservation Area; traffic demands have led to a high proportion of this area being given over to circulation and parking.

To the south of the area is the Lower Green, a stretch of green that is mostly laid to lawn with an area of planting at its northern point and midway point, where there is also a foundation. Mature trees line the green. The green, along with its fountain, boxed flower planting and raised hanging flowerpots makes a positive contribution to the area, providing a verdant and formal space which elevates the streetscene.

The private areas of landscaping found in the gardens along Lower Green Gardens road also make a positive contribution to the area. The front garden at the Grade II listed Lower Green Cottage (List Entry No. 1337208) is large and

mostly laid to lawn, with some border planting and a mature tree close to the cottage. This, along with the timber boundary treatment, makes a positive contribution to the green character of this area. Further north, a mature cedar makes a positive contribution also, breaking up the building line and adding visual interest to the streetscape. Continuing north, front garden spaces are predominantly paved, however many contain potted flower planting, shrubs and hedgerows.

To the east of the area, a collection of street furniture sits within the pedestrian crossing island, including a bike rack, telephone box and flowerpots.

Streetlights throughout this area are of a traditional aesthetic, and these make a positive contribution to the historic and more formal character of this area.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

#### *Positive contribution*

The building on the corner of Queen Street and Victoria Place makes a positive contribution to the area. It is located within a prominent corner plot, and wraps around with a curved frontage, which adds interest to the streetscape. It has two gable frontages to the south, with some timber detailing. Modern shop frontages dominate the ground floor of the Tesco Express, which detract from the character of the building, although neighbouring Spirals has retained its historic shop frontage and tile porch entrance.

Number 22 Victoria Place is a large building set within a large corner plot. It has undergone some alterations, including a modern extension to the front, however the building makes a positive contribution to the area due to its architectural interest. Its mansard tile roof in particular is of note.

The largest and most notable building on the eastern side of Lower Green is the Post Office and supermarket. This is a substantial nineteenth century building in red brick with a gable frontage, which makes a positive contribution to the street. It has an open pediment with a circular window, underneath which is an arched window with fanlight and two flat headed sash windows. The ground floor is dominated by modern fascia and blank window displays, which detract from the historic character and appearance of the area.

#### *Negative contribution*

Osbornes Court is a dominant building to the south of the memorial green. It is two and a half storeys, taller than its surrounding buildings, and is built in yellow brick with a rendered and gabled central block. This material is unsympathetic to the area, introducing a large expanse of yellow brick, contrasting the typical predominantly red brick, the only other yellow brick building being the Church. The massing of the buildings and dormer windows are uncharacteristic of the area, and it makes a negative contribution to the streetscape.

The Lloyds Bank building on the north side of Victoria Place is of three storeys under an overbearing mansard roof. It is higher than the surrounding buildings, and the hung tile façade and aperture spacing is uncharacteristic of the area.

### 3.8. Character Analysis: Queen Street and Regent Road

#### *Summary of character area*

Queen Street and Regent Road provide a thoroughfare for the settlement of Brightlingsea, following a historic route along Queen Street. The buildings within this area, however, predominantly date from the nineteenth century to the south, and early twentieth century to the north. A small group of earlier vernacular Grade II listed cottages survive at Numbers 55 – 59 (Listed Entry No's. 1111398 and 1337205), and the Grade II listed house at Number 42 (List Entry No. 1111397) is located opposite at the junction with Spring Street.

The south eastern boundary of the area is marked by the Brightlingsea New Church, a prominent building dating from 1868 in plain Romanesque style with a small, paved front garden. The remainder of the area contains residential buildings. The majority of Queen Street comprises two storey Victorian houses, either individuals, pairs or individual houses. Some modern infill has occurred; however, frontages are mostly in red brick with white painted details. A significant proportion of sash windows and other original details have survived.

Regent Road was established after Queen Street, and laid out in the early twentieth century, following the line of an earlier footpath. The plots along this road are characteristically larger, and the buildings are grander in terms of their scale, architectural detailing, and front garden landscaping.



Figure 69 Regent Road Character Area





Figure 70 Grade II Listed 42 Queen Street



Figure 72 Grade II Listed Anchor Cottage

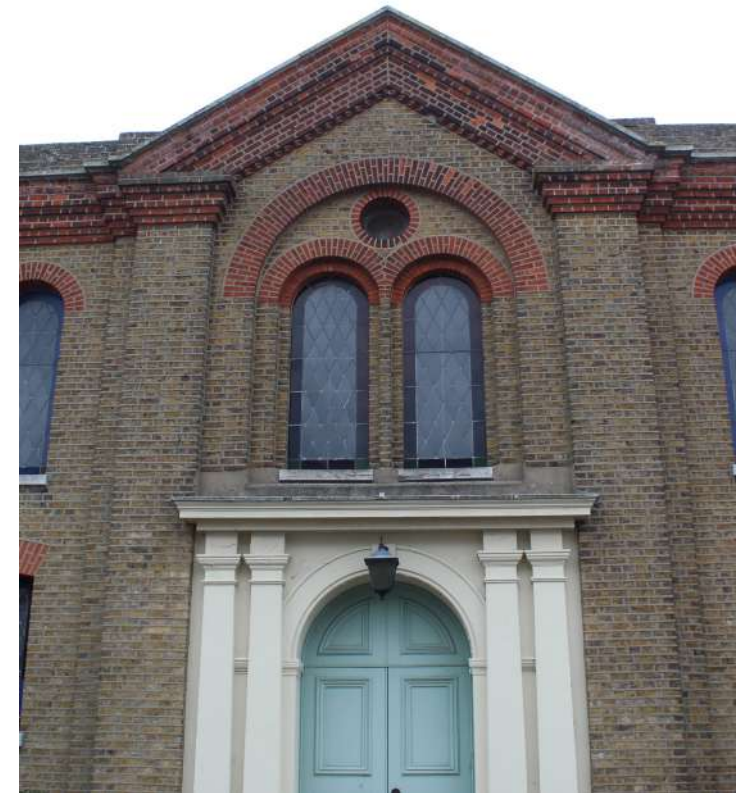


Figure 73 Brightlingsea New Church



Figure 71 4 Regent Road

### ***Land Usage***

The character area's overriding land use is residential; the only exception to this is the Brightlingsea New Church, located at the southern end of the area. This residential character is a defining quality of the area and makes a positive contribution to our appreciation of the development and growth of the settlement as a whole.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

The predominant building materials are reflective of the residential nature of the area and its development in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dwellings are either red brick or painted render, with an example of a pair of gault brick villas on the south east corner of Regent Road and gault brick to the south east of Queen Street, and a weatherboarded cottage to the north west of Queen Street.

Roofs are tiled, often in red plain tile or slate, and some buildings have retained their traditional timber sash windows.

Boundary treatments are traditionally low brick walls, with some iron railing and hedgerows as well.

Architectural details along Queen Street include bay windows, with more ornate detailing also common such as columns and doorcases. These are prominent features and make a positive contribution.

Along Regent Road, buildings are more varied in their architectural details; many have features such as arched recessed porches, and one example has an intricate turret with stained glass and an ornate porch.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

Landscaping within this area is derived from the private, residential front gardens along the street. These are predominantly small scale along Queen Street, set behind boundary treatments including railings, low brick walls and some hedgerows. These all make a positive contribution to the streetscape and enforce a sense of rhythm to the frontages. Some walls have been lost to paving or replaced with close board fencing which are unsympathetic to the area. Front gardens often contain trees and substantial shrub planting, which makes a positive contribution to the historic residential character and appearance of the area.

There is a small triangular paved area at the junction of Queen Street and Spring Road, which has a flower planter; this makes a positive contribution to the area, reflecting the historic boundary of the settlement.

Further north, front gardens are more substantial in size, and their landscaping makes a positive contribution. Boundary treatments are more varied on Regent Road, with more close board fencing and taller hedgerows. In most cases, there is visibility from the street into gardens, and the planting within them makes a positive contribution.

Due to the enclosed character of these residential streets, with building lines and boundary treatments abutting the pavement edge, there is little public realm space within the character area.

There is little street furniture within the area; streetlights are a mixture of concrete and metal posts and make a neutral contribution.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

The buildings on Queen Street and Regent Road are generally of good quality and together make a positive contribution to the area.

Number 40 Regent Road is notable and makes a positive contribution to the streetscape. It has interesting original decoration, including windows with stained glass panes, a porch canopy, decorative barge boarding and other architectural elements such as the turret with pyramid roof which contributes positively to the architectural interest of the building.



Figure 74 Number 40 Regent Road

### 3.9. Character Analysis: John Street

#### *Summary of character area*

This area is formed by a single street, comprising of residential buildings, which were primarily built in the nineteenth century, with some twentieth century development to the north west and some post-war development to the south east. There are no listed buildings within the area, although it has a historic character and appearance due to the historic residential terracing found here.

The street is enclosed in character, with a consistent building line to the north and some buildings set back behind gardens and views towards the back gardens of the adjacent High Street in the south.

The south west of the area contains a row of four well-kept cottages from Numbers 7 – 13. These make a positive contribution to the historic domestic character and appearance of the street, built in red brick with brick boundary treatment and simple architectural details such as flat headed arches over doors and windows. The southernmost building in particular, Number 7, has retained historic details and makes a notable contribution to the group.

Rows and pairs of cottages are typically set back from the pavement behind small garden plots, although some larger front gardens can be found at Numbers 18 – 28 on the east side of the road. These are typically planted with flowers and shrubs, and have retained their boundary treatment, although some have been paved over.

The houses along John Street are two storeys in height, and the majority are painted render, with simple detailing. Numbers 23 and 25 are a symmetrical pair with doorcases that make a positive contribution to the character of the buildings and add interest to their façade. Numbers 35 – 41 comprise of a row of red brick and painted render cottages with door casing, and flat head arched windows, which also make a positive contribution.



Figure 75 John Street Character Area

Opposite is Number 30, a building orientated to the south, which makes an interesting contribution and breaks up the rhythm of the streetscene. It is two storeys with a slate roof but has lost many original features such as its windows.

The area north of Oyster Road presents a more consistent streetscape, and contributes to the enclosed, residential character of the street. It comprises a row of paired villas and terraced cottages to the east side of the street and detached twentieth century buildings to the west. The buildings from Sycamore Lodge to Number 58 are predominantly rendered and painted white,

and weatherboarded. Many have retained their door casing, which makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and enhances the value of the group of buildings here. To the west, the detached buildings are largely red brick, with some painted render, and two storeys in height. They have small garden plots which are often planted and with low brick boundary walls.

The former Congregational Chapel is a notable building within the area. This building is prominent within the streetscape, and makes a positive contribution; it is tall, with its prominent western façade facing directly onto the street. A large pointed arch window with stained glass and two doors with pointed arches, all topped with gault and red brick detail. Gault brick banding also adds interest to the gable front. The building has been converted to multiple occupancy residential use.

A good example of a gault brick villa sits on the corner of John Street and Albert Road, Number 64, named The Manse, which makes a positive contribution to the area. To the north of Albert Road, Numbers 1 -3 are pair of red brick villas under a slate roof, with large bay windows on the ground floor and arched entrances. These make a positive contribution and mark the northern boundary of the character area.



Figure 76 Row of terraces from 42 John Street



Figure 77 1 Albert Road



Figure 78 View south along John Street



Figure 79 Former Congregational Chapel

### ***Land Usage***

The land within this area is largely in residential use, which contributes to its character and appearance. The former chapel building has been converted to residential use.

### ***Local Building Materials and Details***

The residential character of the area and its development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries means that the predominant building materials are reflective of this. Buildings are red brick, and many are painted render, with an example of a gault brick villa to the north east.

Roofs are largely in slate or have been converted to concrete tiling. The majority of buildings have lost their original timber sash windows. Boundary treatments are varied, although traditionally comprise of low brick walls; many are constructed in brick, with some iron railing, stone and concrete as well.

The local details within this area are largely those of simple, domestic architecture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Traditional door cases can be found across the area and make a positive contribution to the street scene.

### ***Landscaping, Open Spaces and Public Realm***

There are no areas of open space within this area, and so the only areas of landscaping are derived from private garden plots. Many of these contain some small-scale planting and greenery, which contributes to the historic domestic character of the area.

Public realm space within the area is limited to the pavements which flank the street; these are lined with modern lampposts and utility poles. Pavements comprise of a variety of surface treatments where repairs have been undertaken. A notable feature is the enamel street sign to the north of the area, located on the side of Number 64 The Manse. This makes a positive contribution to the historic character of the area.

### ***Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings***

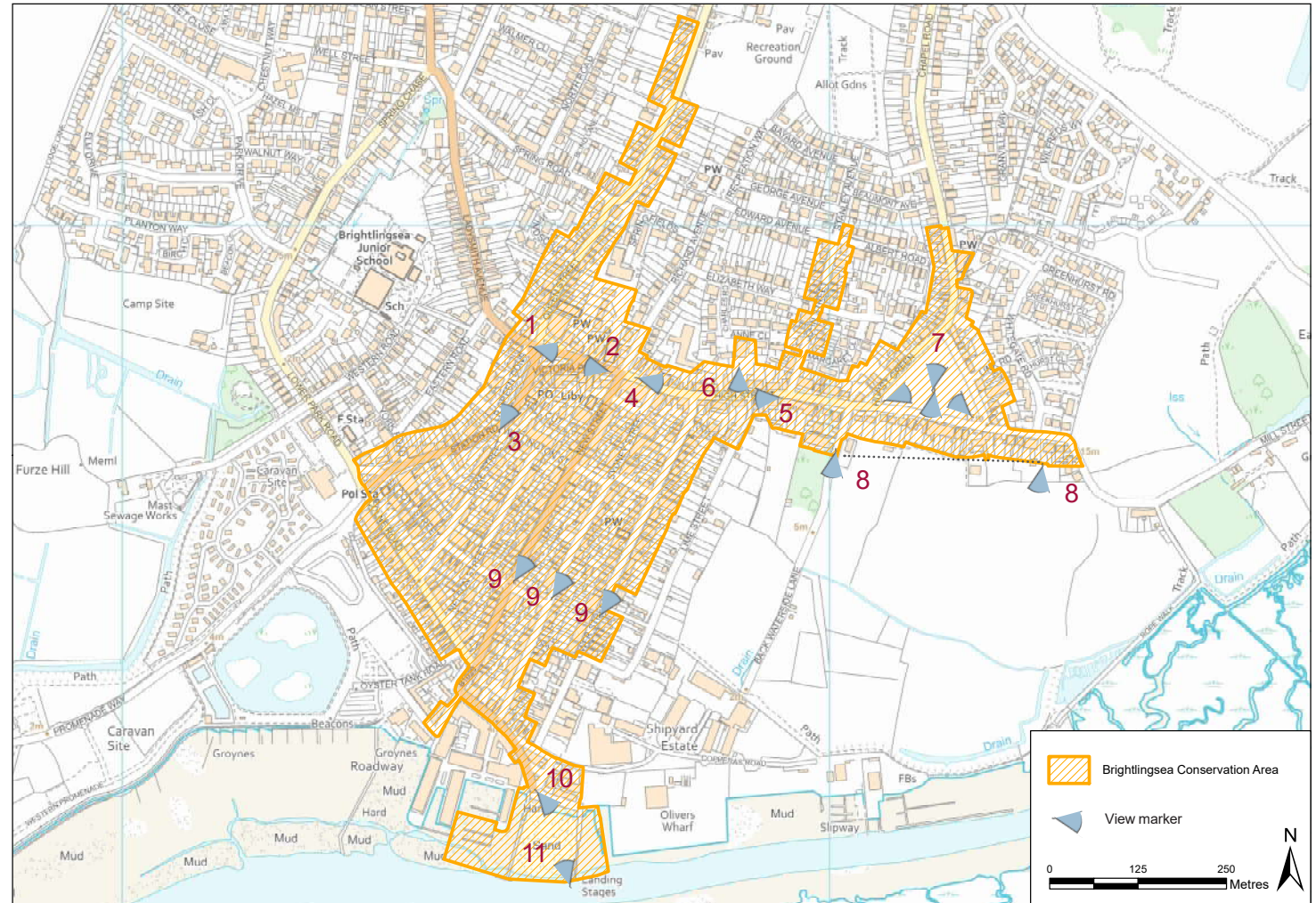
The buildings on John Street together make a positive contribution to the area and reflect its historic residential development. The former Congregational Chapel (Figure 79) makes a unique contribution in particular, as an ecclesiastical building which is prominent in views along the street and introduces a variety of architectural detailing. The Chapel is taller than its surroundings, constructed in red brick with gault brick detailing including the buttresses and banding on the triangular western gable. It has pointed arch windows, with quatrefoil windows on the western façade.

Number 64 is notable as it makes a unique contribution to the area. It is constructed in gault brick, which is not a common material of the area of wider Conservation Area and is named as 'The Manse' on the 1923 Ordnance Survey Map, although was constructed much earlier. Its symmetrical façade and classical architectural detailing make a positive contribution to the area (Figure 75).

Figure 80 Map identifying key views

### 3.10. Views

Key views are identified on Figure 80. The views included in this assessment are not exhaustive and there may be other views of significance. For example, there are also kinetic views and informal glimpsed views gained from streets across the Conservation Area, that contribute to the character and appearance, particularly those towards the waterfront from Hurst Green and Back Waterside Lane. 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.



### ***View 1: East along the Victoria Place***

This view allows for an appreciation of the Green, containing the Grade II listed War Memorial, within its urban setting of Victoria Place. The Green is surrounded by the busy through road, bounded by the building line of Victoria Place and with views stretching east towards buildings which line the High Street. The spire of the Grade II listed Church of St James (List Entry No. 1111402) is a prominent feature within this view. Some modern buildings, which are uncharacteristic of the area, are also fairly dominant within this view.

### ***View 2: West along Victoria Place***

The view west along Victoria Place is characteristically verdant, incorporating an aesthetic view of the War Memorial and the green, along with the line of trees on Lower Green and historic buildings to the east.

### ***View 3: North along Lower Green***

This view is a pleasant vista of the Green, incorporating Lower Green and the buildings which line Victoria Place. The view allows an appreciation of the Green's historic character and notable buildings.

### ***View 4: East along the High Street***

This view follows the High Street, which is enclosed in character with a narrow road and pavement, the building line close to the pavement. The buildings are largely painted brick and render and gault brick, with more red brick further east, and are historic in character.

It incorporates a high number of listed buildings, and the core of the historic settlement of Brightlingsea.

### ***View 5: West along the High Street***

This view follows the High Street, which is enclosed in character with a narrow road and pavement, the building line close to the pavement. The buildings to the east are largely red and painted brick and render with gault brick further west and are historic in character and appearance.

These views west incorporate a high number of listed buildings, and the core of the historic settlement of Brightlingsea.

### ***View 6: Towards Jacobes Hall***

This view incorporates Jacobes Hall, an exceptionally fine late medieval house and notable for its Tudor stair tower. The view provides a notable place to best view the Grade I listed building.

### ***View 7: Hurst Green***

Views of and from Hurst Green shows how buildings of different ages and styles give effective enclosure to the Green. The Green provides a large expanse by which the buildings can be appreciated and is itself an important historic asset.

### ***View 8: Down to the estuary from the buildings on Hurst Green***

The topography here allows wide views from the rear of buildings on Hurst Green down to the waterfront. These are important views, as they enhance appreciation of the development of Brightlingsea and its location within its wider setting.



***View 9: Along residential roads***

These views are significant in that they incorporate long continuous stretches of nineteenth century development within Brightlingsea. They follow the narrow streets which are enclosed and historic in character, the residential buildings providing a strong rhythm.

***View 10: Towards the water***

This view towards the water enhances understanding of the Conservation Area; its location and relationship with the River and sea can be fully appreciated here. The view is also aesthetic and cherished by locals and visitors alike, with plenty of places provided to sit and experience and appreciate the view.

***View 11: Towards the Conservation Area from the water***

This view is of importance in demonstrating the relationship between the water and the Conservation Area. It also incorporates the buildings and features of the waterfront, which contribute to the historic maritime character of the area.

### 3.11. 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 also draws its significance from key features outside of its boundary, most notably from the river and creek to the south. Due to the topography of the Conservation Area, the land slopes to the south towards the water; this affords views from high ground towards the water, particularly from the backs of buildings on the High Street and Hurst Green. This visual link between the Conservation Area and the water makes a positive contribution, as it allows for appreciation of the location of the settlement as well as the deliberate positioning of buildings such as Jacobes Hall to take advantage of these views.

To the immediate south of the Conservation Area is a modern development along the waterfront; this makes a neutral contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area.

To the west and north, the Conservation Area is enclosed by modern later twentieth century development. This residential growth makes a minor beneficial contribution to the Conservation Area and demonstrates the continued expansion of the town. Notable features within the setting here include the boating lake, beach huts and Brightlingsea's Lido.

To the north east, there is a small area of late twentieth century development, beyond which are agricultural fields and Eastend Green. These make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, as its open historic setting with dispersed farmsteads and historic routes through the landscape provides the rural context of the historic settlement.

To the immediate south east of the Conservation Area is an area of twenty-first century development and a car park; these make a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area. Further east are buildings and workshops relating to industry and commerce on the waterfront, which make a positive contribution to our appreciation of the historic development and economy of the area. The former saltings and Oyster Pits are also located to the south east of the Conservation Area and make a positive contribution to the economic history of the settlement, enhancing our understanding of the principal trade of the area.



Figure 81 Open land to the east of Mill Street



Figure 82 Car park near the waterfront

## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

The following opportunities for enhancement have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is not exhaustive and some of the opportunities identified are not unique to Brightlingsea with many being shared with other Conservation Areas.

### 4.1. Access and Integration

The Conservation Area is easily navigable by the roads which traverse it. There is, however, scope for enhancement to generate a greater pedestrian bond between the elements which make up the Conservation Area, particularly the historic core and waterfront.

The waterfront is currently detached from the surrounding Conservation Area, due to poor wayfinding, and there are no cohesive design elements which create a sense of place between the historic core and waterfront. There is a high-quality signpost along the waterfront, so there is potential to introduce similar signage within the Conservation Area while promoting the key features within it.

### 4.2. Car Parking

Many of the residential roads within the Conservation Area are characteristically narrow; this means that on-street parking is a concern across much of the Conservation Area. It impacts how the area is experienced and detracts from the character of the area.

Within Victoria Place, the expanse of tarmac and off-street parking for the Tesco Express in particular also makes a negative contribution, creating a space which is dominated by vehicular traffic and views of stationary cars.



Figure 83 Informal parking signs along residential roads

This is an issue faced by many Conservation Areas nationally and is not, therefore, unique to Brightlingsea. With regard to on-street parking, alternative methods to control parking in conservation areas should be sought; for example, in restricted parking zones, discreetly positioned and minimal information signs should be used, and places on the road where parking is allowed can be indicated by a subtle change in the texture of the road surfacing.<sup>17</sup>

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.

<sup>17</sup>

Colin Davis, *Car Parking in Conservation Areas*, IHBC Context 150 (2017)

### 4.3. 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 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.

#### Terraced housing

Terraced housing makes a key contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and comprises a significant portion of the Conservation Area. Throughout the area, small incremental changes have impacted the historic character of these terraced rows, through the loss of windows, doors, boundary treatments, loft conversions, façade rendering or painting, and satellite dishes. There is an opportunity to provide better awareness of the importance of historic terraces to local property owners and demonstrate the impact that inappropriate changes can have to a building and the wider Conservation Area. Historic England, for example, provides guidance on *Changes to Historic Terraced Housing*, which addresses the key issues relating to changes to buildings of historic significance, and provides a useful resource for property owners to consider.<sup>18</sup>

In many cases, rows of terraced houses have been impacted by the varying approaches to façade treatments, which interrupts the rhythm of the streetscape and the appearance of the buildings. For example, there are examples of exposed brick, painted render, and inappropriate cladding, which impact the significance of a group of terraces.

Many properties have also lost or replaced their boundary treatments, which impacts the uniformity of the streetscape and the historic 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.

Roof tiles have also been replaced in buildings across the Conservation Area and should be reinstated with traditional materials wherever possible.

<sup>18</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/making-changes-your-property/types-of-work/terraced-housing/>

#### 4.4. Inappropriate Modern Development

There are areas of post-war infill which impact the historic character and appearance of Brightlingsea and are unsympathetic to their surroundings and do not respond to traditional detailing and profiles, apertures, palette of materials or design. This has a particularly negative impact on the historic character of the settlement's core, where the continuous proportional facades are interrupted by buildings of a large mass and uncharacteristic material palette. Examples of inappropriate modern development are considered to include:

- Lloyds Bank Victoria Place, a three-storey development which makes a negative contribution to the area and is prominent within the streetscape. It is unsympathetic in terms of its mass, apertures, and building materials.
- Osbournes Court is two and a half storeys in height, and makes a negative contribution to the area, due to its unsympathetic materials and apertures. The blocked massing of the buildings and dormer windows in particular are uncharacteristic of the area.
- St James Court is a two-storey development on Dukes Street within the plot of the former school building. Its massing and materials introduce a modern character to the area, which makes a negative contribution. To the west, it is set within an area of landscaping, which provides some screening.
- Number 70 Hurst Green is a two and a half storey dwelling which has been renovated recently in the twenty-first century. It is out of character with its surroundings in stark contrast within the streetscape, due to its bright render, apertures, materials, and extension.
- BT building New Street, is a large utilitarian building with a plain tarmac frontage. It is uncharacteristic in terms of its mass,

building material and curtilage, which is formed by a variety of paving treatments with no boundary treatment.

- Colne Medical Centre, Station Road, is unsympathetic due to its massing and apertures, as well as its projecting ground floor roof which is visually disruptive on the streetscape.

#### 4.5. Maintenance

Many of the buildings and spaces across the Conservation Area have been impacted by a gradual decline in their condition due to lack of ongoing maintenance. Historic England defines maintenance within *Conservation Principles* as “*routine work necessary to keep the fabric of a place in good order*”. 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>19</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 timber windows should be retained. Any proposals for the replacement of windows should avoid the loss of any historic fabric and should be historically appropriate to the host building. The application of uPVC windows will not be supported.

<sup>19</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. Neutral Contributors**

There are a number of buildings and plots which make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Brightlingsea Conservation Area. Notable areas which make a neutral contribution are considered to be:

- The Victoria Café, Victoria Place
- Modern housing development on Hall Cut
- Brightlingsea Library
- Modern infill buildings, such as those on Hurst Green and Queen Street

There is also historic development which has the potential to make a positive contribution with enforcement and maintenance to rectify inappropriate changes, such as to those on Station Road and within the Residential Roads Character Area.

#### **4.7 Public Realm**

There are many elements of public realm within the Brightlingsea Conservation Area and the majority of these are well maintained. However, the approach lacks a consistent style of street furniture with a varied mix of styles, ages and with some in need of maintenance. There is scope to introduce consistency in quality across the whole area, which may enhance the character and appearance of the area.

#### ***Street Furniture (Lampposts, benches, signage, bins, bike stands, bollards etc.)***

There is a good number of benches and bins throughout the Conservation Area, which are typically high-quality. Bollards can also be found across the area, notable on the Waterfront, Victoria Place and to the north of Queen Street. These are historic in character and make a positive contribution.

Signage across the Conservation Area is typically of historic character in cast iron with some maps and information boards along the waterfront as well. Enamel road signs can also be found attached to the external walls of buildings, and these make a positive contribution to the character and identity of the area.

Also of note is the bike stand sculpture within Victoria Place, which is an unusual feature that makes a positive contribution.

#### ***Hard Landscaping***

There are areas of high-quality hard landscaping across the Conservation Area, with designed elements such as scoria brickwork and small-scale pavers. There is scope for enhancement by ensuring the same high-quality approach is reflected throughout the Conservation Area, as there are some street surfaces that are better maintained than others.

#### ***Open Spaces***

The open spaces within the Conservation Area are notable features and make a significant contribution to its special interest. These are the Lower Green, the memorial green, Hurst Green, the waterfront, and to the south of Station Road. The public realm features within the greens and open spaces are of high-quality and are well maintained. These make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and should continue to be maintained in such a way.

### *Trees and Planting*

Trees and planting are predominantly found in the greens and open spaces in the Conservation Area, particularly on Hurst Green and Lower Green. There are no street trees. All trees should continue to be maintained, ensuring plans for replanting where any trees are nearing maturity.

### **4.8. Shop Frontages**

Brightlingsea contains a number of historic shop frontages which make a positive contribution to the area, predominantly located within the High Street and Victoria Place Character Areas. While many have retained their historic character, some are in need of small maintenance repairs, or reconsideration of modern alterations such as inappropriate signage and overbearing modern fascia. This should be in line with the Essex County Council's Shopfront Guidance.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.placeservices.co.uk/media/108271/shop.pdf>



Figure 84 Clockwise from top: Porch and tile detailing, historic shopfront detail and modern signage



## 5. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of opportunities for the Brightlingsea 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 advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, within the permitted time limits 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 Conservation Area, as well as unsympathetic alterations such as the addition of modern porches and dormer windows. Going forward, 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, and create a new baseline for the future.

#### **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 Brightlingsea Conservation Area and ensure the preservation of characteristic features of the Area including Brightlingsea.

#### **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.

Brightlingsea 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 Brightlingsea 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 a number of buildings within the Conservation Area which are of sufficient quality to be considered for local list status, as highlighted in Section 2.5.

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 opportunities within Brightlingsea 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.

***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, shop fronts, 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 Brightlingsea's built heritage. At present there is a range of interpretation (information boards, signage, webpages) within the Conservation Area, particularly along the Waterfront, 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.

### **Shop Frontages**

There is potential to raise awareness of the importance of historic shop fronts 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. Article 4 Directions could also be used to prevent loss of historic shop frontages.

### **Tall Buildings**

Buildings within the Conservation Area are typically one to three storeys, depending in the use and location of the building. The notable tall buildings are the former Royal Hotel on New Street, the spire of St James Church on Victoria Place and the former Anchor Hotel on the Waterfront. These buildings are taller than their surroundings, and punctuate the skyline, making them wayfinders in the built landscape.

It is considered that the introduction of new tall developments within the Conservation Area would be harmful, and that development should stay at two storeys to be appropriate, or three 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 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.

## ***Access and Integration***

Enhancements should be considered to create a stronger relationship between the historic core of the town and the waterfront, particularly for pedestrians. Currently, the waterfront feels detached from the wider Conservation Area, and although there is a signpost along the waterfront there are none within the towns High Street or historic core. For example, signposted pedestrian routes between the features within the Conservation Area and its setting, or interpretation schemes which promote key features could improve access.

## ***Car Parking***

Consideration of car parking within the Conservation Area 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 residential roads of New Street and Sydney Street, where residents clearly have difficulty in parking evidenced by signposts in windows and on side gates.

## ***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 excludes areas of modern development to the north east of the area, including the building to the north of the Chapel and the development of Chapel Mews, as well as the substantial development on the Waterfront. The boundary now includes areas to the north and south. It takes in the extent of the early late nineteenth and early-mid twentieth century residential expansion between the High Street and the waterfront; this area has retained its historic, residential character. It also extends to include the Railway Tavern on the south west side of Station Road, as well as areas of public realm opposite, and well-preserved residential development to the north along Regent Road. 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 interpretation across the Conservation Area, predominantly found along the Waterfront through the information boards and signage surrounding the seaside shelter. There is scope for further interpretation 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 Brightlingsea as a historic settlement. One key area which may benefit from interpretation is the area of public realm opposite Jacobes Hall; the paved area here, with benches and hedgerow planting, provides a good opportunity for visitors to sit and appreciate the Grade I listed Hall. This is a highly significant asset within the Conservation Area, and therefore would benefit from interpretation.

### ***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 in Victoria Place and Station Road.

### ***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, surfacing, and the continued maintenance of existing, high-quality street furniture.

### ***Shop Frontages***

There is 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 area's character and appearance.

### ***Twentieth Century Premises***

There are some twentieth century developments which make a neutral or negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area as outlined in Section 3. 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.

### ***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.

### **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 either the shop frontages or the architectural detailing.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1. Bibliography

#### *Publications*

'Brightlingsea', in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Essex, Volume 3, North East (London, 1922), pp. 14-18. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/essex/vol3/pp14-18>

A P Baggs, Beryl Board, Philip Crummy, Claude Dove, Shirley Durgan, N R Goose, R B Pugh, Pamela Studd and C C Thornton, 'Fishery', in A History of the County of Essex: Volume 9, the Borough of Colchester, ed. Janet Cooper and C R Elrington (London, 1994), pp. 264-269. British History Online

Brightlingsea 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)

## 6.2. 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) DLUGH	Chapter 16;  Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2019) DLUGH	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 Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond (2022)	Section 2
Local Guidance	Local Planing Enforcement Policy (September 2022)	

### 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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