

CABINET

31 JANUARY 2025

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

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

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

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

The six Conservation Area Appraisals for adoption are:

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

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Cabinet:

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

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

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

REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

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

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

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

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

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

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

N/a.

OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS

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

Crime and Disorder	Heritage assets are, unfortunately, vulnerable to crime. Having a strategy for promoting heritage assets in the district should contribute positively to their maintenance.
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Health Inequalities	There is a growing wealth of evidence that demonstrates the role heritage plays in improving mental wellbeing and physical health. People who visit heritage sites reported higher life satisfaction and happiness scores, as well as lower anxiety (Department for Culture Media and Sport 2015). Across Essex there are a number of schemes and organisations to encourage and support healthy activity, such as Active Essex and Healthy Life Essex. Tendring's heritage provides a positive platform to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors and take positive steps for their personal health and wellbeing. Heritage Trails, for example, are already established in Harwich and Dovercourt, Frinton-on-Sea, Clacton-on-Sea, Jaywick Sands and Walton-on-the-Naze, and encourage walkers to take routes through the historic environment. Promoting these to new groups and partnering with healthy organisations
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	can open heritage to new audiences and increase wellbeing.
Subsidy Control (the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the related Statutory Guidance)	N/a.
Area or Ward affected	All, but with a focus on those specific wards where Conservation Areas are the subject of the Appraisal and Management Plans.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

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

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

Timeline of Consultations

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

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

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

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

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

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

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

Summary of comments received at the Public Consultation

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

Clacton Seafront

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

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

Brightlingsea Hall and All Saints Church

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

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

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

Great Clacton

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

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

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

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

Lawford

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

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

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

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

Kirby le Soken

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

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

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

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

Great Oakley

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

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

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

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

UPDATE ON THE LOCAL LIST PROJECT

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

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

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

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee:

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

Cabinet:

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

APPENDICES

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

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

Appendix C – Great Clacton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix D - Lawford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

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

Appendix F – Great Oakley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix G - Clacton Seafront Conservation Area Consultation Comments

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

Appendix I – Great Clacton Conservation Area Comments

Appendix J – Lawford Conservation Area Comments

Appendix K – Kirby le Soken Conservation Area Comments

Appendix L – Great Oakley Conservation Area Comments

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