

# Clacton Seafront Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

**Tendring**  
District Council



Client:  
Tendring District Council

Date:  
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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

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

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

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

## 1.2 Conserving Clacton's Heritage

Tendring District Council appointed Place Services to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal for Clacton Seafront; this document is provided as baseline Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. This information is also produced for applicants to consider when

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

designing or planning new development in Clacton which may affect the special interest of the conservation area, including its setting.

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

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

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

## 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

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

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

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

#### 1.4 Planning Policy Context

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

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

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

## 2.0 Clacton Seafront Conservation Area

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### 2.1 Context and General Character

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

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

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

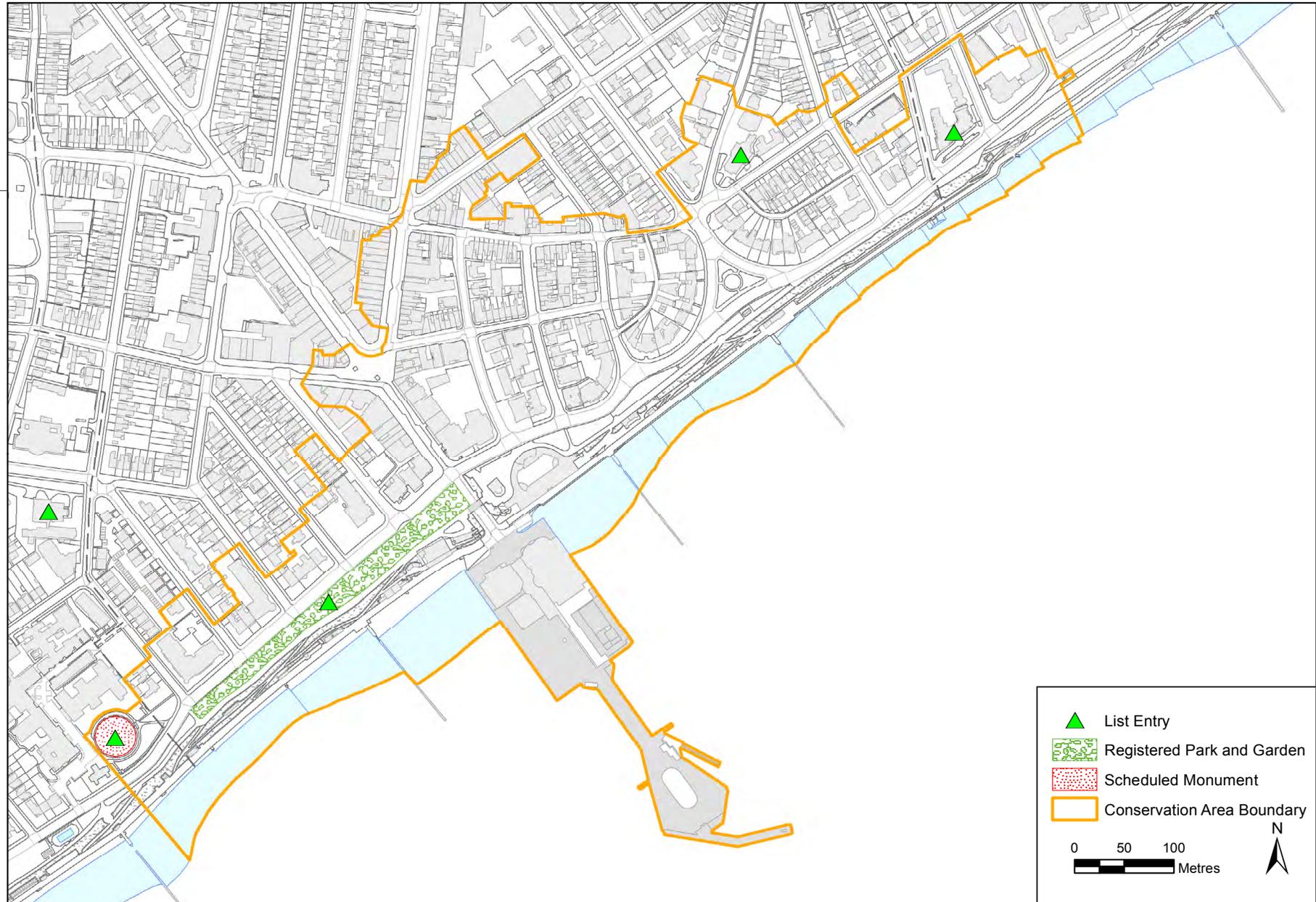


Figure 1 Clacton Seafront Conservation Area within its wider context ©OS Maps

## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

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

### Prehistory

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

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

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

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

### The early environment of the area

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

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

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



Figure 2 Chapman and Andre Map 1777

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

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

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



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



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

### Seaside resort

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

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

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

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

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

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



Figure 5 Ordnance Survey Map 1874

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

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

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

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

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

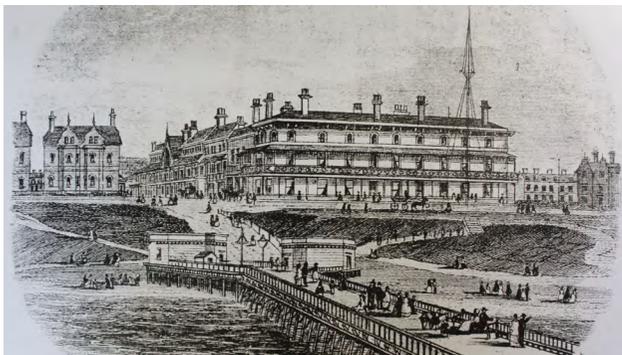


Figure 6 Royal Hotel and Pier 1880 (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)

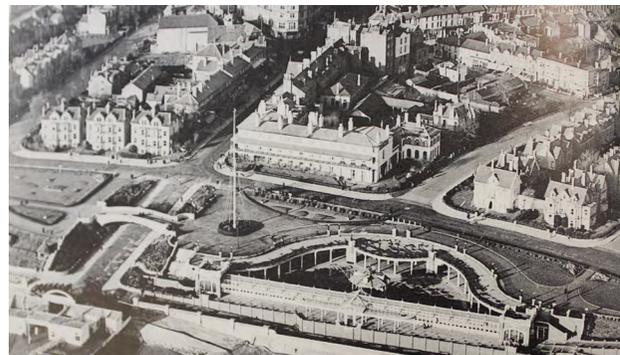


Figure 7 Pavillion. 1920 (Britain in Old Photographs 1995)



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

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

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

By the outbreak of World War One Clacton's predominant character as a resort shifted, as it

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



Figure 11 Ordnance Survey Map 1939



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

### 2.3 Designation of the Conservation Area

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

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

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

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

### 2.4 Revisions to the Boundary

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

#### Necessary Reductions

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

#### Additions

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

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

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

## 2.5 Designated Heritage Assets

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

### Listing

Grade II Martello Tower And Brick Lined Moat, List Entry No. 1111520

Grade II Clacton-on-Sea War Memorial, List Entry No. 1448050

Grade II Lych Gate at Our Lady of Light and St Osyth, List Entry No. 1420919

Grade II Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Light and St Osyth, List Entry No. 1271909

Grade II Colchester Institute Main Building, List Entry No. 1380565

Grade II Row Of 16 Street Lights South Side Of Esplanade Between Beach Road And West Road, List Entry No. 1111519

### Scheduled Monument

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

### Registered Parks and Gardens

Grade II Clacton Seafront Gardens, List Entry No. 1001626

## 2.6 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

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

### Local List

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

## 2.7 Heritage at Risk

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

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

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

### **Martello Tower F**

Martello Tower F (Figure 13 and 14) is a significant heritage asset and prominent feature within the Conservation Area. Its significance is derived from its architectural and historic values, and its relationship as part of a wider military defensive network across the east and south east coast of England. It is also significant as the only remaining moated example on the Essex coast, creating its unique setting.<sup>11</sup> In its current condition, foliage detracts from the appreciation of the site, and tall impervious fencing prevents the site from being seen or

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



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

readily accessed. The twentieth-century coastguard tower, located on the tower, is currently vacant and in a poor condition. This forms a visually dominant feature of the Martello Tower, which detracts from our appreciation of it.

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

### The Pier

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

Some elements of the Pier detract from its significance as they divert attention away from the significance of the structure. While arcades and modern rides contribute to the seaside character of the Conservation Area, other features of the Pier which are kinetic and create noise pollution, such as the LED screen, are not in keeping with its historic character and are harmful to the appreciation of the Pier as a heritage asset.

### Hotels and guesthouses

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

The Anglefield Junction is a noteworthy area of green space within the Conservation Area, and forms part of the key views of significant buildings such as the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Light and St. Osyth, the United Reform Church and the former Lifeboat Station. It also provides inter-visibility

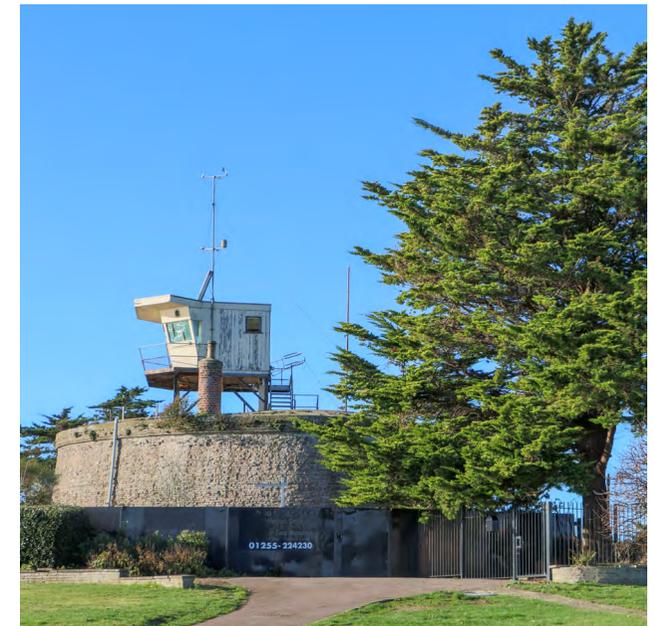


Figure 14 The Martello Tower



Figure 15 Clacton Pier, ERO I/MP 86



Figure 16 Clacton Pier, ERO I/MP 86

between these buildings and the seafront, enhancing their setting. The junction, however, is negatively impacted by the uncharacteristic development to the west (Figure 19). The twentieth century infill is uncharacteristic in terms of its material and massing and negatively impacts upon the attractive row of terraced housing to the east and the designated Church of Our Lady of Light and St. Osyth to the north east.

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

The architectural detailing of buildings (decorative balustrades, prominent turrets and bay windows etc.) is one of the defining characteristics of Clacton Seafront. Few modern developments have embraced this aspect of the built environment and do not incorporate decorative detailing in either a modern or traditional style, lacking the architectural interest and quality of the more historic buildings. This creates disconnect between modern development



Figure 17 View of Clacton Pier

and the historic buildings of Clacton, and these features have been significantly reduced throughout the area as a result of their gradual loss and lack of maintenance.

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

## 2.8 Archaeological Potential

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

The Pleistocene sediments, from which both human and mammalian remains have previously been recovered, underlie the area and are recorded at surface level. These deposits represent the former courses of the Rivers Thames and Medway and are recognised as being geological sediments of international importance and are protected in places as a SSSI (Site of Specialist Scientific Interest). Although some areas have been developed, there is high potential for the survival of further Palaeolithic remains including

Pleistocene faunal remains within the gravels and interglacial fine grained sediments within the Conservation Area that may be impacted by future development. These remains will also be present in the cliffs, and may be exposed in the foreshore at times, so any work in these areas may impact upon the erosion of the Pleistocene deposits.

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

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

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



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



Figure 19 Uncharacteristic development at Anglefield Junction

## 3.0 Assessment of Significance

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### 3.1 Summary

#### Introduction

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

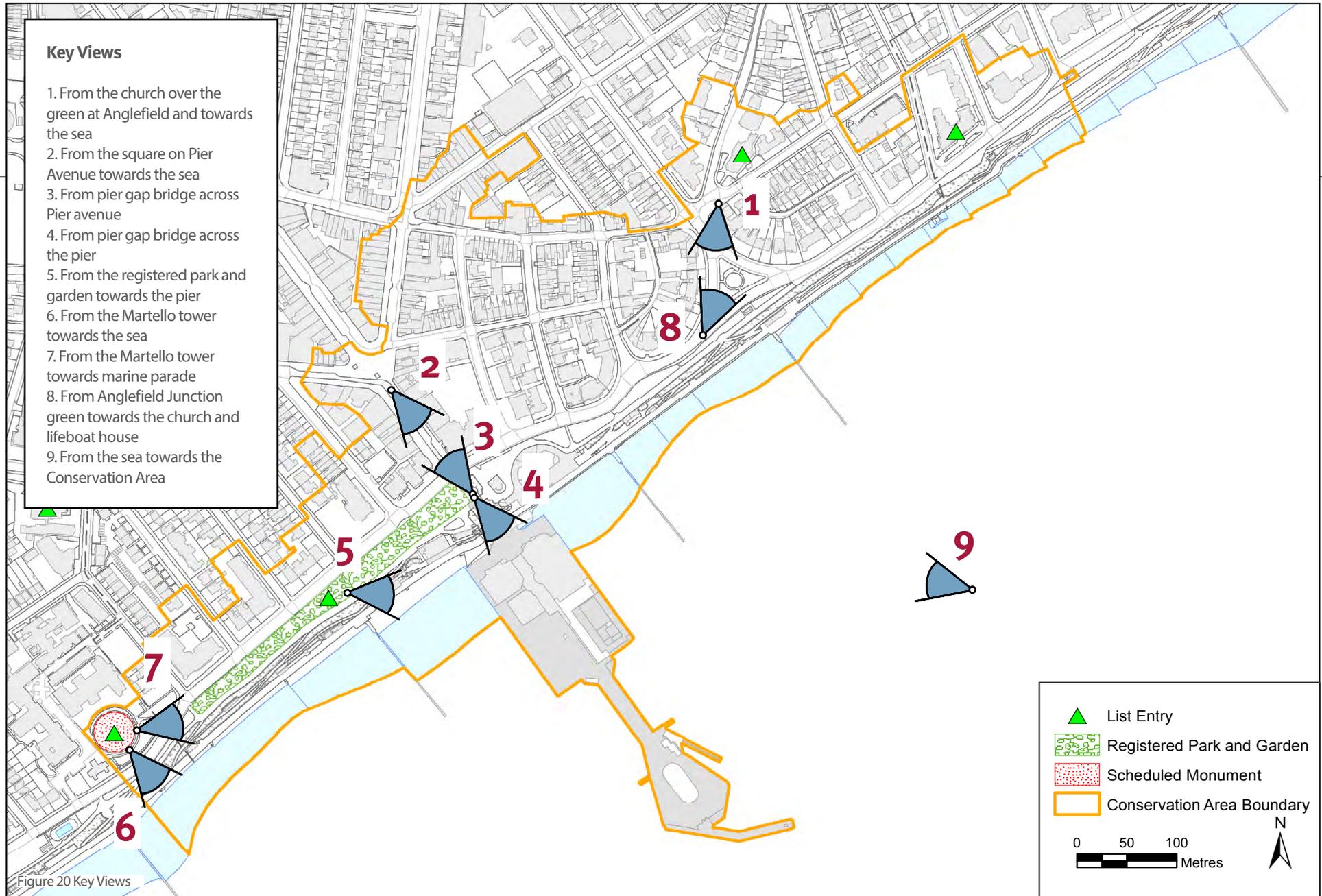
#### Land Usage

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

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

#### Key Views

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



### Landscaping and Open Spaces

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Traditional/Local Building Materials and Details

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

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

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

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

### 3.2 Character Analysis

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

#### The Commercial Centre

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

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

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

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



Figure 21 Pier Gap Bridge (looking South)



Figure 22 Pier Avenue (looking North)

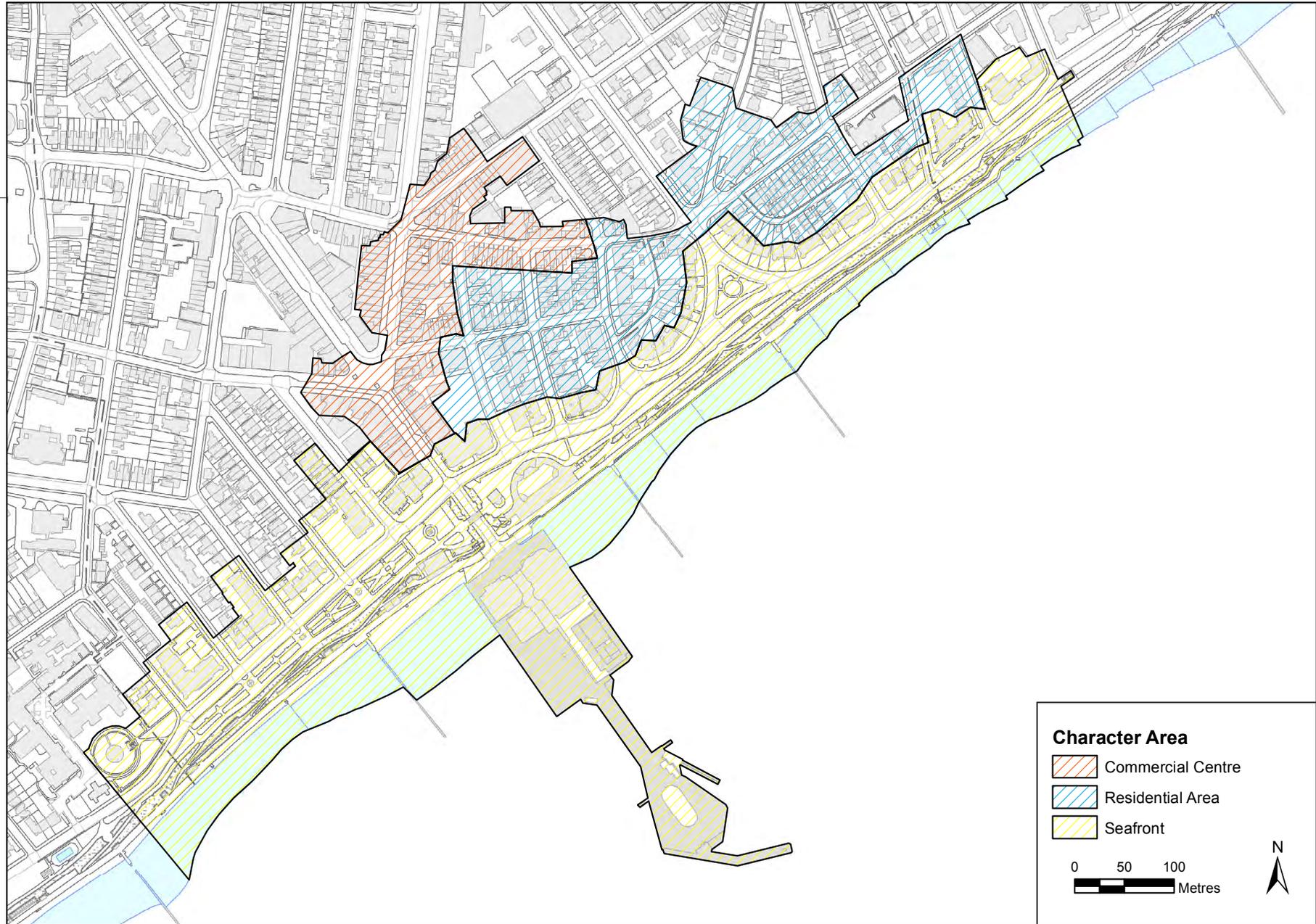


Figure 23 Character Areas Map



Figure 24 Lloyds Bank Building



Figure 25 Natwest Bank Building



Figure 26 High Street



Figure 27 The Operetta

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

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

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

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

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



Figure 28 Corner building of Station Road and High Street



Figure 29 Parking on Orwell Road



Figure 30 Orwell Road

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

### Residential Area

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

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

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

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



Figure 31 Church of Our Lady of Light and Saint Osyth

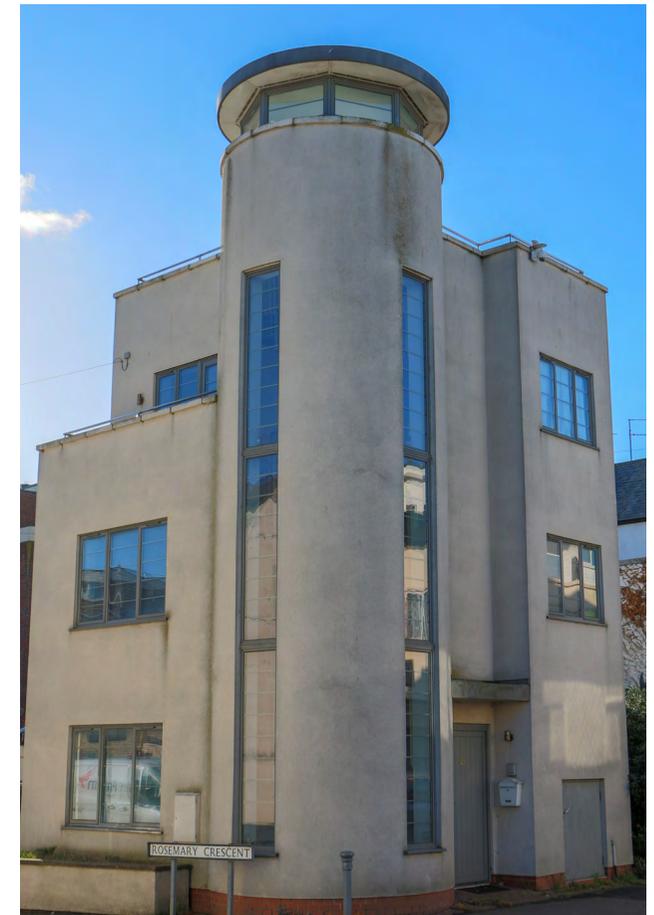


Figure 32 Rosemary Road

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

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

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

and painted in a pastel colour palette. Some historic character has been lost, due to window replacements and loss of front boundary treatments as well as modern infill within the former boundary of the conservation area which now has a negative impact on its character.

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

### **Seafront**

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

The character area terminates at the Martello Tower F, a scheduled monument and listed building, located on high ground at the west (Figure 33). This building separates the Conservation Area from modern development further along the coast. The area terminates to the east at a guesthouse named The Towers, a substantial corner plot building with prominent turrets. The area includes some buildings to the north of Marine Parade, which predominantly comprise of guesthouses and hotels, and extends south of Marine Parade to include the cliffs, beaches and Pier.

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

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



Figure 33 Martello Tower



Figure 34 Colchester Institute (Grade II Listed)



Figure 35 Marine Parade West, Premier Inn



Figure 36 Registered Park and Garden

constructed in 1892-97, the red brick building is three storeys with a dormer attic, symmetrical in its design with prominent single polygonal turrets at the North and South ends, with bays with shaped gables inside these, and 2 central canted window bays in the centre of the building. The architectural features are of a high quality, including decorated string coursing, cast-iron balconies, entrance doorways with pediments raised over shaped aprons, and elaborate Jacobean style timber chimneypieces (Figure 34).

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

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

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



Figure 37 Marine Parade West, Imperial Court



Figure 38 Marine Parade, The Towers

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

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

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

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



Figure 39 Coastguard Cottages



Figure 40 The Sandrock



Figure 41 Agate Road (looking West)



Figure 42 Agate Road (looking East)

### 3.3 Contribution by Key Non-Listed Buildings

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

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

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



Figure 43 The Royal Hotel



Figure 44 The United Reformed Church

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

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

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

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

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

### 3.4 Significance of Buildings

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



Figure 45 The Old Lifeboat House

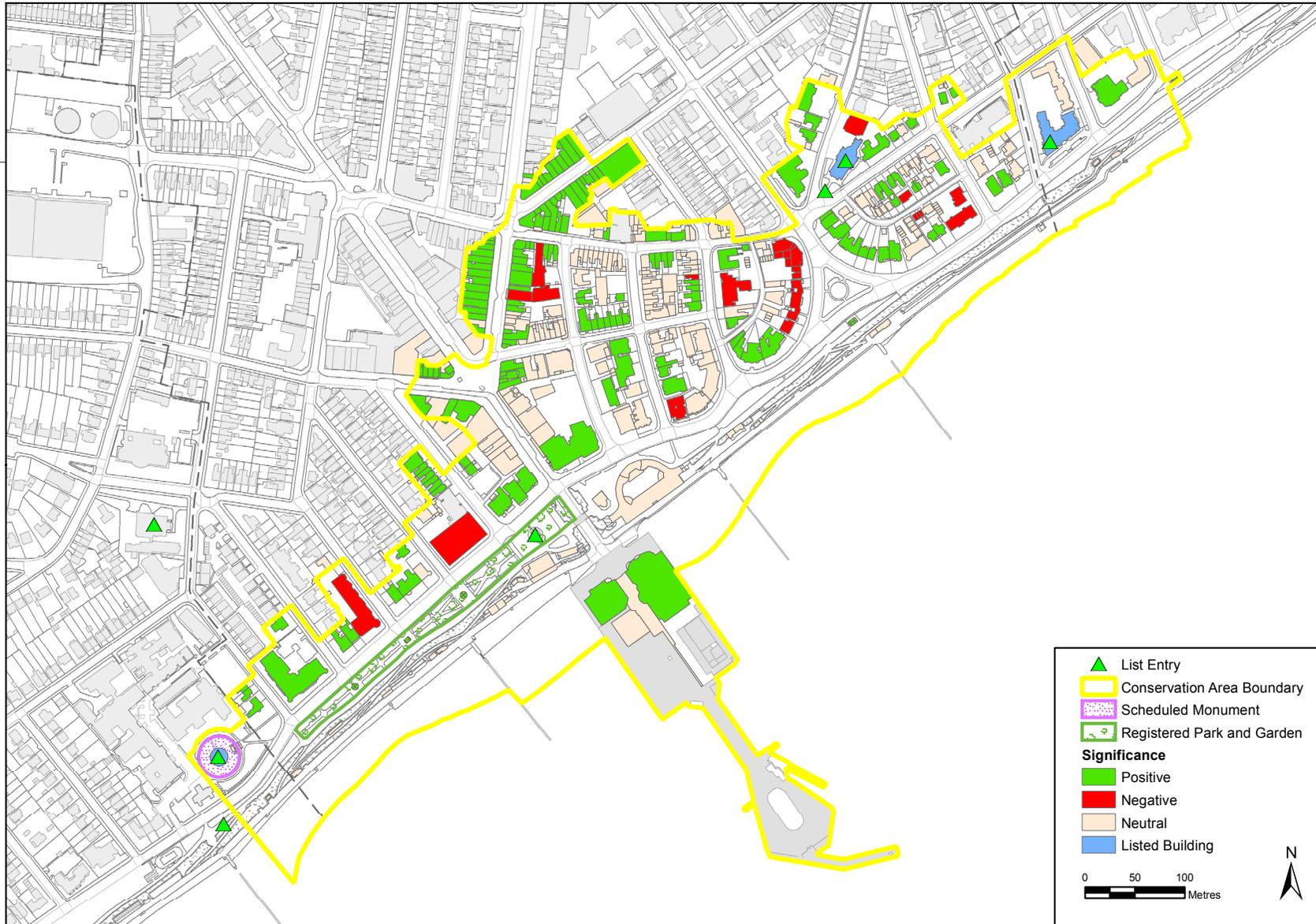


Figure 46 Significance Map

### 3.5 Beyond the Conservation Area Boundary

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



Figure 48 The Station

## 4.0 Opportunities for Enhancement

### 4.1 Car Parking

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

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

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

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

Private parking on a smaller, residential scale also impacts the Conservation Area through the cumulative effect of the prevalence of on-street parking, the loss of front boundary treatments, the loss of front gardens and the creation of areas of hardstanding. There is scope



Figure 49 Parking on Agate Road (looking East)



Figure 50 Parking on Agate Road (looking West)



Figure 51 Signage on Station Road

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

#### 4.2 Shop Frontages

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

#### 4.3 Vacant Premises

A large vacant plot located on the Rosemary Road and Orwell Road junction is a key area for enhancement. The plot was the site of the former Osbourne Hotel c.1871 which was one of

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

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

#### 4.4 Vacant Upper-Floors

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



Figure 52 Vacant property on Rosemary Road

#### 4.5 Access and Integration

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

#### 4.6 Inappropriate Modern Development

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



Figure 53 Development on the west side of Anglefield Junction

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

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

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

#### 4.7 Neutral Contributors

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

#### 4.8 Public Realm

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

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

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

#### Hard Landscaping

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

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

#### Open Spaces

As previously considered, the open and green spaces across the Conservation Area provide great scope to make a positive contribution. The Anglefield Junction is situated in a prominent, seafront location, at a junction of a number of historic routes through the town. It is also overlooked by an appealing row of terraced dwellings, former lifeboat house, and the churches of Our Lady of Light St Osyth and the United Reformed Church on its eastern side. There is scope to enhance the area, and restore it to its historic glory as a more densely planted setting for the surrounding heritage assets. Figure 54 highlights historic planting on Anglefield Green, and shows that the garden once contained typical coastal memorabilia; a

canon. The hedge borders and clumps of shrub and floral planting provided a more enclosed garden, which is currently stark and open within its built surroundings. Further consideration of this area would help to create a unified approach to the open spaces in the Conservation Area, such as an appropriate schedule of maintenance for the upkeep of planting and trees. The area is currently planted with scattered trees; however it appears sparse and would benefit from shrub planting and flowerbeds, as well as the maintenance of existing trees, to emanate the historic sense of the resort (Figure 55).

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

### Additional interventions

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

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



Figure 54 Anglefield Postcard ERO D/DU 1464/13 7



Figure 55 Anglefield green currently

## 5.0 Management Proposals

As outlined in the previous chapter, there are a wide range of issues facing the Clacton Seafront Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This chapter recommends management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### 5.1 Positive Management

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

#### Local Heritage List

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

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

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

#### Shop Frontages

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

#### Enforcement

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

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

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

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

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

### Heritage Statements

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

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

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

### Tree Management

In line with Tendring District Council's policy, all trees in Conservation Areas which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or

lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council.

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

### New Development

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

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

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

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

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

### Neutral Elements

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

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

### Public Facing Resources: Improved Understanding and Awareness

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An

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

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

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

### 5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

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

### Character Appraisal and Management Plan and Boundary

The Conservation Area and its boundary have been revised within this appraisal in accordance

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

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

### Interpretation

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

## 5.3 Council-Led Projects

### Opportunity Sites

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

redevelopment or works to mitigate and enhance the visual impact they make on the Conservation Area.

### Access and Integration

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

### Grant Funding Schemes

#### Shop Frontages

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

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

#### Upper Floors

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

## Design Guides

### Shop frontages

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

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

### Car Parking

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

### Public Realm

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

## 5.4 Funding Opportunities

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

### National Lottery Heritage Fund

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements

change overtime, for up-to-date information on NLHF schemes Tendring District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

### Section 106 Agreements

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

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

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

## 6.0 Appendices

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### 6.1 Bibliography

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## 6.2 Legislation and Planning Policy

| LEGISLATION/POLICY/<br>GUIDANCE | DOCUMENT  | SECTION/POLICY  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Primary Legislation             | Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990   | 66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.<br>72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.  |
| National Planning Policy        | National Planning Policy Framework (2021) DCLG  | Section 16;<br>Annex 2  |
| National Guidance               | National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DCLG   | ID: 18a   |
| National Guidance               | Historic England (2017) Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets |   |
| National Guidance               | English Heritage (2019) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance.   |   |
| Local Policy                    | Tendring District Council Local Plan (2007)   | QL9 – Design of New Development<br>QL11 – Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses<br>ER29 – Amusement Centres<br>EN1- Landscape Character<br>EN17- Conservation Areas<br>EN18- Fascia and Shop Signs in Conservation Areas<br>EN18 (a) and (b)- Advert Control within Conservation Areas<br>EN20- Demolition within Conservation Areas<br>EN21- Demolition of Listed Buildings<br>EN22- Extension and Alterations to Listed Buildings<br>EN23- Development within the Proximity of a Listed Building<br>EN25- Satellite Dishes on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas<br>CL3- Tourist Related Facilities along Clacton Seafront<br>CL5- Amusement Centres<br>CL17- The Gardens Area of Special Character |

### 6.3 Glossary (National Planning Policy Framework)

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

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