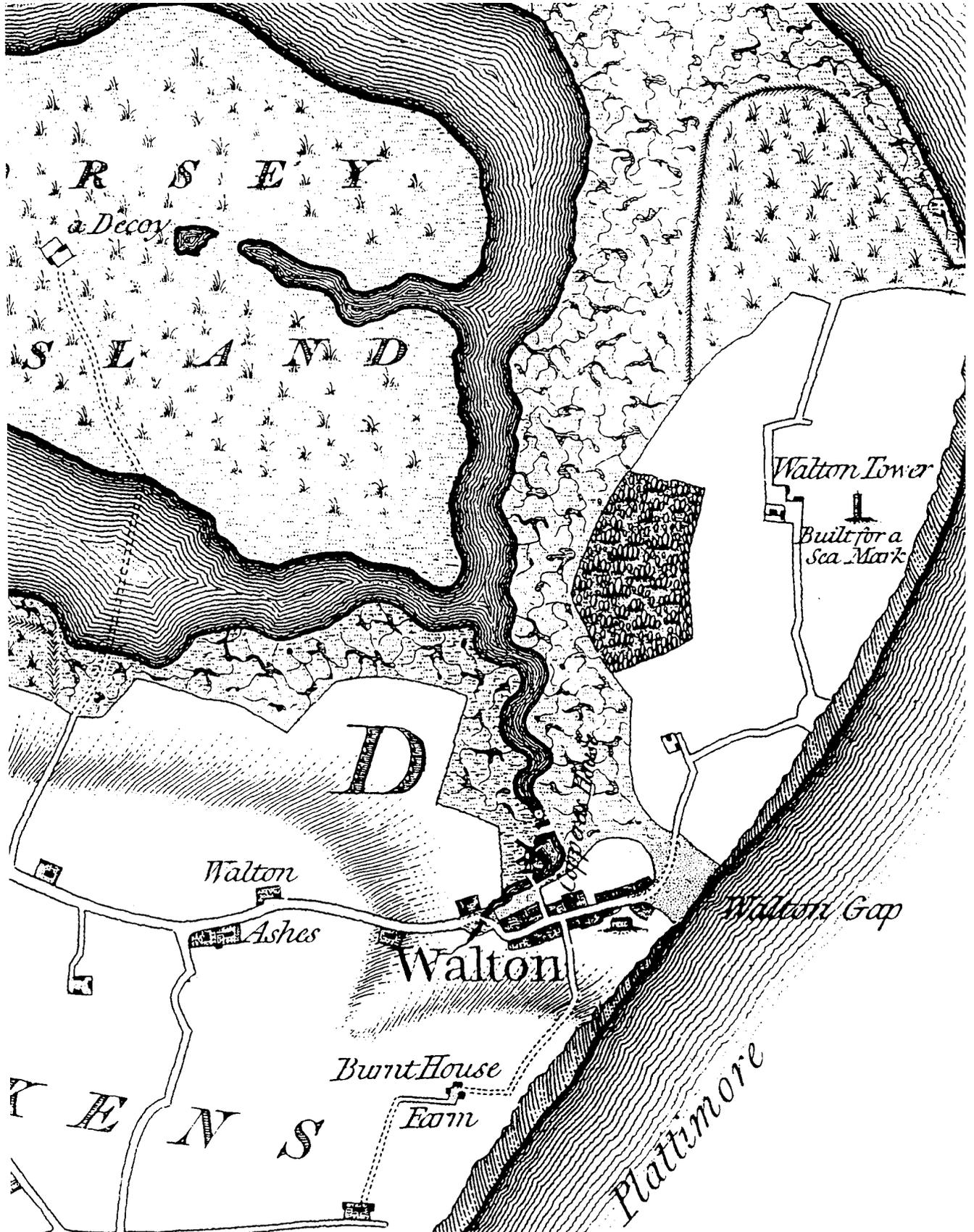




Frinton and Walton Conservation Area

Walton-on-the-Naze



DISCLAIMER

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal adopted by the Council in March 2006 and appearing on this WebPage is derived from an earlier document produced for the Council by consultants Smith Stuart Reynolds in 2001. Subsequently, the Council published these documents for consultation purposes in late 2005. These were then partially updated and amended to reflect the comments received from town and parish councils and other interested parties. No comprehensive revision and updating of the 2001 documents took place.

The Council recognises that over time changes have taken place to various buildings referred to in the Appraisals so that certain comments / statements made in relation to those buildings are now, no longer applicable. For up to date information relating to planning applications, permissions or other developments on individual buildings referred to in the Appraisals you are advised to use the Council's planning public access search engine at www.tendringdc.gov.uk/TendringDC/Environment/Planning+and+Buildings/ or contact Regeneration, Planning and Community Services on 01255 686161.

Frinton and Walton Conservation Area

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This Conservation Area Character Appraisal has been produced by the District Council but is based on earlier work by consultants Smith Stuart Reynolds in 2001. These earlier documents contain the views of the consultant and did not necessarily reflect the Council's Officer's views. Although these documents have existed for some time they had no formal, planning status.

The Council subsequently agreed in 2005 to prepare Conservation Area Character Appraisals for each of its Conservation Areas and as a forerunner to updating the above consultant's documents a consultation exercise took place in late 2005 / early 2006. This involved town and parish councils and certain 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. As a result of this consultation the Appraisal documents have been amended and updated in the light of the comments received from consultees and as a result of certain changes which have taken place since 2001. Much of the descriptive material used in the original SSR documents has been retained.

Proposals originally put forward by the Consultant involving suggested changes to Conservation Area boundaries, enhancement works or proposed Article 4 Directions have been retained in these latest documents. However, it is recognised that town or parish councils do not support some of these suggestions and this is referred to in the appropriate document. Their inclusion in the documents as suggestions only does not indicate that the District Council supports such proposals at this time. They will be subject to further consideration by the Council in due course. Indeed all such proposals for boundary changes, and any new Article 4 Directions will be required to go through quite separate, statutory processes which will also be carried out with further public consultation.

This document has been formally adopted by the Council as part of its planning policies for this conservation area under the provisions of Section 71 of the Planning [Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas] Act 1990. It will therefore be an important material consideration in relation to the assessment and determination of planning and related applications in the Conservation Area.

SUMMARY

Walton is in essence a resort developed from the mid 19th century. It retains an interesting street plan and a wealth of buildings whose understated qualities are only now being recognised. The Area is focussed on the seafront and the main surviving sections of the original resort.

Frinton and Walton Conservation Area

Walton-on-the-Naze

LOCATION

Frinton and Walton occupy approximately 5 km (3.1 miles) of coastline south westwards from The Naze, a natural headland dividing Hamford Water from the North Sea. Both settlements have developed on a wide ridge of relatively higher ground between Hamford Water and the Holland Brook, the valley of which - with a tributary rising below Kirby Cross - separates Frinton from the larger conurbation of Clacton-on-Sea further to the south west. The towns are reached via B roads that divide east of Thorpe-Le Soken.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The medieval village of Walton enjoyed the suffix "Le-Soken" which, as with its neighbours Thorpe and Kirby, denoted special privileges regularised in the early 16th century and derived from the placing of these villages not under the see of London but under the chapter of St Paul's Cathedral. Kirby was the most important of the three. The medieval village at Walton has largely been lost to the sea, with the old church disappearing sometime in the 18th century. The village was the location for small industries, including copperas (green dye for woollens made from naturally-occurring bisulphide of iron) a pump manufacturers, an iron foundry and a brick works.

Medieval Frinton contained two manors but little in the way of built development until the end of the 19th century.

Chapman and André's map of 1777 shows the Lower Street running through Kirby to Walton, with a small dog-leg where Kirby Road curves into the High Street today. Otherwise, Walton is little more than the current High Street, running towards Walton Gap. Frinton is represented by its church, The Hall, The Wick and a parsonage lining a dead end south of Upper Street from Kirby Cross, now Old Road. The eastern ends of Upper Street and Lower Street are connected by lanes now represented by Turpins Lane and Elm Tree Avenue. Upper Street continued due east past where Frinton Station is now, to connect back to Walton High Street on an inland route via Burnt House Farm (now on the coast itself because of erosion) and apparently emerging where Newgate Street runs today.

The modern history of Walton began at about this time, with the advent of visitors interested in fossil hunting and wildfowling in particular. The beginnings of a middle-class resort can be traced to the 1820's with the erection of "The Hotel" (later the Marine Hotel) and the publication of a town guide in 1829. A regatta was started in 1830, and in the same year a small pier was built in front of the hotel: this was lengthened in 1848 but was still not long enough to enable trippers from steamers to disembark at low tide. Walton's centre of gravity began to shift towards the coast south of the High Street, though East Parade is an unfinished attempt by John Warner to redress the balance with houses, a reading room and a bazaar.

With a population of 729 in 1851, Walton's development as a resort gained pace with the construction of a railway line to Colchester in 1843. It gained its own station in 1867, by which time Peter Bruff, an engineer with Tendring Hundred Railway, had commenced his developments. He bought land in the town and constructed Marine Terrace and South Crescent and Terrace, improved the water and gas supply, and in 1862 opened Clifton Baths and Music Hall, which included a 350 seat theatre, a reading room and a billiards room. This building was later the Clifton hotel and is now the Pier Hotel. He began a new pier opposite the Baths in 1869: the old pier at the end of Pier Avenue tried to compete but was destroyed in a storm in 1881. A promenade and marine drive to Frinton was proposed and received the royal Assent in 1879, but was not built because of lack of funds.

Bruff's concentrated later on his developments in Clacton and on Coalport pottery, and he sold his interest in Walton in 1897. The pier was lengthened and a 750-seat pavilion constructed. Walton's population, 1070 in

1871, had grown to 2014 by 1901 by which time a new Town Hall, a theatre and five large hotels had been constructed. 6000 visitors were received annually during the town's heyday.

The steamer trade was finally overtaken by train-borne trippers in the 1930's and the pier was turned over to amusements. The Army took over the town during the Second World War, and South Terrace was destroyed by enemy bombing. Caravan holidays have overtaken hotel and guest house business since the war, and by 1980 only the Pier Hotel of the larger establishments remained open. Tourism remains an important element, however, with just over half of the town's trade coming from this source.

CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

The Area includes the whole of the coast between Albion Breakwater at the end of Walton High Street and the Greensward by Frinton Golf Clubhouse. In Walton it runs north of High Street, taking in older properties in Saville Street and North Street as far as Stratford Place, Alfred Terrace and the small garden on the north western corner of the junction with Kirby Road. Running round the memorial garden, the boundary includes houses on the south side of West Street though much of Station Street and the car park is excluded. Older properties at the top of Church Road are included in the Area, as are the station and houses fronting Southcliff. The Area boundary then runs along the inner edge of the coastal open space, south westwards to Easton Way.

At Easton Way the Area runs inland to include Modern Movement houses. To the same end it similarly runs on either side of Central Avenue as far as Walton Road, including Graces Walk and part of the north side of Waltham Way.

Running round Cliff Road, the Area takes in properties on the Esplanade fronting The Greensward, turning inland to include almost the whole of The Crescent and its gardens. Returning to the Esplanade, the Area includes older property fronting the sea until the boundary turns north again to include Connaught Road as far as the station and its setting. Apart from the central section of Upper Fourth Avenue, the Area includes properties on the east side of Upper Third Avenue, the north side of Ashlyns Road and all the Avenues, the Tennis Club and the Golf Clubhouse before returning to the sea.

REPLACEMENT LOCAL PLAN POLICY CONTEXT

The Conservation Area expands beyond the Development Boundary to include the beach and sea front, which are identified as Protected Open Space. Within the town itself, Round Gardens and The Putting Green, which adjoin New Pier Street and The Parade, are also highlighted as Protected Open Space. This is also applicable to a section of land south of Walton Road before the Kirby Road "T" junction.

The High Street and Old Pier Street are designated as within the defined Town Centre, with Protected Shopping Frontages along the High Street.

The Public Car Park on High Street, next to the town Library, Mill Lane and Station Street are safeguarded for the that use. The station Car Park is allocated for housing development. Also of note, the Town Pier is within the Conservation Area, and is identified as a Leisure and Tourism Development Site.

The whole of the town centre falls within an Urban Regeneration Area.

AREA APPRAISAL

The Walton part of the Area has been divided into six character areas as set out in Map 2.

1. The seafront

This part of the Area includes all those buildings looking out over the seafront and having a positive relationship with it, including the railway station and its surroundings.

The seafront is one of the principal defining areas for Walton, and also the factor which runs as a consistent thread through the whole Area. The view of the town from its substantial pier shows several factors of

importance for the development and current character of the town. First is the topography underlying the town centre, with Walton Gap close to sea level between the cliffs of The Naze to the north and the ridge which leads to Frinton in the south. Secondly, it is clear how the current pier position relates only incidentally to the seaward end of the High Street and Old Pier Street, the former pier location, and is visually distinct from the commercial centre of the town. It is better placed for the railway station, but rail transport was overtaken by car-borne trippers decades ago. Thirdly, there are various prominent buildings on view along the Parade, nearly all of which represent an unfinished or much altered scheme. In this, Walton is no different from nearby locations such as Clacton (developed considerably later) or more distant developments of comparable date such as Gravesend.

Consideration of the seafront will begin at the northern tip of the Area, where the High Street emerges onto Princes Esplanade. The Royal Albion Hotel is prominent in views along the sea front on its projecting island site, and also marks the seaward end of the town's commercial core. While its landward side is a conventional three-storeyed terrace of painted stucco, the seaward end is of two tall storeys, with most of its decorative details still intact as is its slate roof, though its decorative condition could be improved. The junction between the two sections is enlivened on its southern side by a small tower with decorative window details and a pyramid roof. The tourist information chalet on the sea frontage is a simple utilitarian building though of visual significance at the end of the High Street.

The seafront swings round the Hotel past its open forecourt. Inland is the rather barren market area to the rear of High Street, its seaward end framed by no 47, the cut-down remains of another stuccoed survival of the earlier days of Walton's tourist history, now a cafe: the quadrant corners and pilasters indicate the origins of this building. The next property was the location for a pair of Victorian houses until post war period produced the insensitive development which stands today with its picture windows and strongly horizontal roof detailing.

The Parade now turns in a slow crescent around the location of the original pier, the focus of which was originally Barker's Marine Hotel dating from the 1820's. This listed building was in a very poor state of repair when it was demolished. Its replacement is a flats development in red brick under hipped roofs of artificial slate. Its central block of five floors appears over-prominent despite the stepping down of blocks to either side, while its private curtilage area is too blandly finished for such a sensitive location. For much remains of development of a piece with the Marine Hotel, most notably nos 40-44 (consec), an attractive listed terrace of three storeys dating from around 1830 and sporting a typical quadrant corner to its short return to Suffolk Street. Elevations are enlivened by pilaster strips and first floor balustraded balconies above ground floor elevations of channelled stucco surrounding round-headed doors and windows. Original sash windows have survived, and there is some evidence of the original frontage piers and walls, but the small front gardens are generally in a poor state of maintenance. The incomplete state of the terrace is accentuated by no 45 (the Regency Hotel), dating from about 30 years later but already different in style, with two storey bay windows and a low pitched roof. The attractive facade is enhanced by incidental planting.

On the south side of Pier Avenue, the much-altered corner property (1-5 Pier Avenue, another early survivor) leads on to a varied group behind forecourts of an unfortunately ad-hoc nature, of which the most attractive and prominent is 33-35 (consec) a group of three Victorian terrace houses with prominent bays and decorative eaves details. The open forecourts are given over to car parking. The toothings in the northern gable indicate that this is another unfinished scheme, while the half gable of no 35b below suggested that the taller, older buildings were intended to be demolished in favour of two storey houses, which would have been regrettable.

The crescent-shaped area of seafront enclosed by these buildings was still a series of earth cliffs with inlets as late as the 1890's, though a masonry promenade then existed across the northern half of it. The current tiered gardens probably date from the early years of the 20th century and have been the subject of adaptation since then. They are neatly maintained, and the surfacing, facing materials and street furniture are all appropriate to their location and function.

The Parade climbs round an appropriately detailed pub on the corner with Newgate Street to a ramp leading down to the foot of the Pier Hotel and the pier itself. Much of the retaining walling is given a distinctive appearance and texture by the use of fused brick rejects from brick kilns. The area is not as attractive as that to the north, as road surfaces and pedestrian barriers predominate, while a bed of shrub planting on the cliff side cannot mask the unsatisfactory state of the side and rear of the Pier Hotel and its immediate surroundings. It has to be said that the location of the Pier Hotel was always a little anomalous. The sea walk continues past the pier buildings – generally clad in bright materials – to a small esplanade with cafes which in turn leads on to a tiered arrangement of beach huts below South Cliff.

The Pier itself has two distinct characters, the landward end with its amusements and the open quality and robust traditional detailing of the greater part of this impressive structure. Views to the town demonstrate the fundamental inconsistencies in townscape arising from the failure to complete many of the proposed development schemes.

Character is rather indeterminate at the top of the slope. Built development is sporadic, not helped by the loss to German bombs of Bruff's South Terrace. Post-war replacements do not have the civic scale of much of the earlier schemes, while the buildings on either side of Portobello Road are at best neutral in this context. Only the older terrace at nos 26-29 connects with the Pier Hotel in any way: it is of three storeys, with decorative facades of yellow brick with red brick details. The grassed area occupying the site of South Terrace is somewhat visually divorced from the seafront. The shrub planting does not assist in this respect, and the existing trees on the edge of the slope above the back of the Pier Hotel are random and accidental in their position and shape.

The separation from the sea front intensifies as the Parade climbs further south. The next major development is a sinuous terrace of three storey properties, with two-storey bay windows and roofs mostly recovered with profiled concrete tiles. The rears of these properties are rather unkempt: there is an area with chain link fencing, timber structures and lock-up garages while much of the rear gardens are taken up with either garages or run-ins. There is an untended area at the southern end of this terrace on Crescent Road, presumably a survival from the failure to complete this particular scheme. To the front, a small circular garden area is relatively attractive, but the the seafront slopes themselves are marked with hedges growing along the carriageway edge. This is not a place to linger, and does not resume this identity until the next corner where the shrubs are replaced with a simple knee rail, and gentle grassed slopes lead past a deserted *alfresco* chess board to the upper levels of beach huts south of the pier. An attractive mid 19th century terrace with the remains of first floor verandahs makes a pleasant group with the former station buildings, now converted to flats and in the process of extension. On either side of the terrace are later stuccoed houses filling gaps possibly left over after another failure to complete a scheme. At the junction of Southcliff and the station area is quite a large area of tarmac with some seats, and fairly utilitarian railings which might be improved.

The open space opposite the station entrance is a rather wasted space with rustic stone walls and crazy paving: it needs to be retained in the Area if only for enhancement reasons. The houses next to the station are a fascinating group of three weather-boarded cottages in gothic style: they may be timber-framed, and mid-Victorian in date. Below them is a good group of three Victorian houses with slate roofs and full-height bay windows, and beyond these another Victorian villa in gothic style. This one is smooth rendered although once again timber framing may be involved. Houses further down Church Road are decent, late Victorian terraces and pairs but they do not share the interest of other parts of the Area.

At the south end of the Walton town seafront is Southcliff. Included in the Area are a terrace consisting of one double fronted house and a pair with Doric door cases. This group has walls of white painted rough render, and presumably a clay-tiled roof has been replaced with concrete tiles. Next door to it is "Barnard Lea", of three storeys plus a basement, with corner quoins and a prominent full height projecting bay with very pretty brackets picked out in black. On the corner of Southcliff there is a late Victorian or Edwardian house, gable end to the sea, with decorated barge-boards, and a pair of houses with two storey bays and some large dormers of considerable antiquity, under repair at the time of writing.

The coastal path continues along the top of the cliffs past modern housing developments overlooking the tiers of beach huts, and connecting eventually with the end of Southview Terrace. The grassy strand continues southwards with seats overlooking roughly planted cliffs towards Walton: some of the planting is taller and filters the views to the sea, though to the south the views are unencumbered.

The Area widens to take in the site run by the South Cliff Trailer Company Ltd with its neat bordered fence to the strand. Beyond this is Burnt House, a named location of the 1777 map though considerably further inland at this date. Burnt House now stands at a prominent bend in the sea frontage. It is a pretty two storey Victorian villa in white brick with decorative bargeboards, and in good condition. The strand widens at this point but then closes right down, the cliff-top walk descends and there is a splendid view looking southwards to Frinton.

2. High Street

This is the historical and commercial focus of Walton.

The High Street occupies generally level ground on the north side of the town centre, running in an almost straight line from the Frinton and Kirby approaches through to Walton Gap. The centre section of the street has a

strong commercial element, with shops on both sides. The more spacious western end is occupied by the prominent and attractive All Saints Church of 1873-82 and by substantial residential properties opposite, while towards the sea the commercial facades are balanced on the northern side by the trees and front hedges of attractive gardens associated with Victorian terraces. Views of the sea are restricted to glimpses at the eastern end of the street: the closest sea frontage to the south east is hidden by the web of short roads leading up the rising ground to the cliffs.

Opposite the Royal Albion Hotel stand a succession of commercial properties which have little intrinsic conservation value. West of the Hotel, the north side of the High Street within the Area consists of continuous groups of houses set back behind well-planted front gardens. They are generally of two storeys with rendered and painted front elevations, and exhibit many attractive details though little survives of their original fenestration. Two sycamores on the street frontage of nos 103-109 are extremely significant in the street scene. The set back of the houses is reinforced by the solid massing of the Post Office to the west, with its plain though adequately maintained forecourt, and by a coarsely-detailed three storey building outside the Area, with pebbledash elevations and dating from 1923.

The houses and their gardens contrast with and soften the commercial properties on the south side of the street, which are generally of mid to late Victorian date. Most prominent are the pink-painted frontage of The Queen's Head Hotel – possibly completely recast in the 1930's - and its three storey neighbour to the east. The Co-op has a reticent modern frontage which is well-mannered but with a blank glazed facade at first floor level lacks the vitality of its neighbours. These properties are separated from their commercial neighbours in the central section of the street by the Essex County Library - a conversion of a former school with gothic details and a rather unkempt forecourt – and by Millennium Square. The frontage to High Street includes some pollarded trees, seats and telephone kiosks. Behind, cast iron furniture is set in printed concrete parking areas in black and red and surrounded by new walls with gate piers to the market area behind the High Street frontages to the east. This parking and market area retains the feeling of an unhealed wound in the urban fabric: the boundary treatment cannot hide the rear elevations of properties towards the sea. On the High Street itself, the side and rear elevations of the dental surgery are clad in mock half-timbering and are not in a very good state of repair.

Buildings are generally of two or three storeys in the centre section of High Street, presided over in views from the east by the tower of the church. The general character is still that of a late Victorian shopping street, with frontages in brick or painted render and roofs in slate or replaced with profiled concrete tiles. Buildings rise from the back edge of the relatively narrow pavements, making the street a strongly linear experience. A good surviving example of building is the film and video shop at no 44-46: though the shopfront has been altered, the shop fascia is suitably plain, and above it rise two storeys painted white and cream with original sash windows. Amongst the other buildings of greatest visual interest is the block on the north side containing nos 81-87 a symmetrical group of five properties with two gables either side of a central block. Much of the original detail has been lost from this group, and one shopfront appears to be in danger of collapse. Immediately to the east is a welcome new frontage at no 89 in black weatherboarding over an attractively-detailed open shopfront. Further west, a block of unexceptional two-storey properties leads to nos 69-71, an interesting single storey shopfront with good faience details, and nos 63-67, with semicircular-headed windows in pairs over the remains of original shopfronts.

The next block to the west gains additional prominence from its location at the foot of Old Pier Street, originally leading directly from the High Street to the earliest pier. These properties include the former Town Hall of 1900, now three shopfronts in a brick facade with decorative window details at first floor. A large semicircular window at first floor level in the centre bay originally gave access to a stone balcony. The former bank on the corner is of the same build though its red brick elevations have unfortunately been painted white.

At the western end of the High Street, the character changes with a slight bend in the road alignment and with a perceptible widening associated with a broadening of pavements, particularly on the south side. The impressive gabled roof of nos 37-41 forms the pivot between the two sections of the High Street. Next door to it on its east side, nos 45 and 47 produce a strong contrast, being of two modest storeys with front gardens bounded by a rendered front wall of piers and panels reducing the pavement width to that of the commercial part of the street.

On the opposite side of the road stands a pleasant terrace of shops, mostly in one symmetrical design enlivened by boldly-projecting bays over the shopfronts. The corner with Portobello Road is occupied by no 22, a post war redevelopment, the blocky and flat-roofed first floor of which does not relate to its neighbours.

3. All Saints Church and surroundings

A westwards extension of the Area takes in All Saints Church, West Street and the lower end of Church Road, which form the entrance to the centre of Walton from the west.

All Saints Church is prominently sited on High Street at the important junction where the roads from Frinton and Kirby converge. Its position beyond a slight bend in the High Street puts its tower in a position where it is visible along the main length of High Street. Though dating from the third quarter of the 19th century, its simple roof structure, understated details and the medieval silhouette of the tower make an interesting comparison with other local churches such as Kirby, Thorpe and Great Holland where medieval towers have survived though the churches have otherwise been rebuilt. A recent extension by the south porch shows considerable design skill and attention to details and materials. Attractive mature trees set the churchyard apart from the town centre and link it visually with the remembrance garden on the other side of Church Road. The churchyard wall, in red brick with decorative piers and copings, is an important feature.

On the High Street, and beyond Phoenix Car Centre, a simply-detailed garage, groups of two-and-a-half storey apartments make a strong "gateway" feature for the town centre opposite the church. These potentially attractive late 19th century buildings are unfortunately much altered and have lost their front gardens and front walls to the demands of car parking.

The churchyard is framed by a pair of late Victorian villas and the post-war Vicarage on Martello Road, and by an unassuming two-storey terrace of yellow brick houses on West Street. Unhappily, only traces of the original fenestration survive, though there is a decorative bargeboard on the easternmost gable. On the corner of West Street and Martello Road is the diminutive Martello Gospel Hall, with a tiny forecourt and side parking area in need of some maintenance and restoration.

4. Saville Street and North Street

The Area includes two small enclaves north of the High Street. This particular location features a small group of older properties, some of which are listed, which relate to the earliest tourism development of Walton, and are ranged around a grid of minor streets near the seafront.

The entrance from High Street into Saville Street is marked by three two-storey terraced houses with a short return elevation to the High Street. Next to this is Gothic House, listed and dating from the second quarter of the 19th century, with white painted brickwork in a debased Tudor style. It has lost its chimneys, and has a concrete tiled roof and a bland low brick wall, but is otherwise in fairly good condition.

Unusually, the scale of the properties in the next section of Saville Road is greater than on the High Street, though the lack of traffic and commercial bustle contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere overall. The next house on the west side is of three storeys, with prominent bay windows to either side. The original front door was placed centrally, but this has been removed and a replacement contrived in the left-hand bay. The house has an unkempt appearance while the unsympathetic front wall is constructed out of concrete blocks. No 13, Blue Shutters, is listed, and is also of three storeys and double fronted, with a hefty Doric timber portico badly affected by subsidence. The blue shutters referred to are simple planked items screwed to the rendered brickwork on either side of the surviving small-paned sash windows. The end block in this group is nos 15 and 17, a listed pair of Regency style properties with shallow projecting bays sporting original ironwork at first floor level. The paired timber porches have round-headed arches leading to original six-panelled doors: all the original sash windows look as if they are still in place. Maintenance is however generally poor, with a variety of unsympathetic frontage treatments. Beyond is a prominent though accidental group of self-seeded sycamores.

Opposite, on the east side of Saville Road, an unkempt group of lock-up garages and a poorly-maintained yard (both outside the Area) lead to Essex Lodge, with prominent chimneys and period details. Next door is a prominent mid-Victorian, three storey terrace in red and yellow brick with decorative paired chimneys and semi-octagonal two storey front bays with brick and stone. There are five properties and the northern-most has been extended later but in similar style just by one bay with its own small gable chimney.

On the north west corner of Stratford Place is another three storey terrace, its quadrant corner another typical feature of the early to mid 19th century. Of cream or white painted brick, with original sash windows generally still in place, nos 23 and 25 unlike others in Saville Street appear to be incomplete, merely the start of a larger design. The single property beyond this (no 27) is of later date, with decorative stucco work including very inventive eaves detail and band courses below window sills. It unfortunately has suffered much more alteration, with a porch in poor state of repair and replacement windows. Of this group, only no 25 in the centre has a

properly organised front boundary. The other two boundaries are open and the front garden to no 27 is derelict.

The remaining properties in Saville Road are not Conservation Area material. The earliest appear to be Edwardian and the rest very much of the 1930's and 1950's.

The site behind the self-seeded sycamores on the internal corner with Stratford Place is full of parked cars. The frontage to Stratford Place has been planted up with a variety of shrubs in front of a two metre close boarded fence to the back garden of St Dominics on the corner of North Street and Stratford Place.

This early 19th century, listed house has a most unusual rear section, octagonal, of two storeys, with weather-boarded elevations and a central chimney stack. The frontage to North Street is single-storey, of brick with a lean-to roof sloping towards from the octagonal part. The adjoining building towards the High Street by a two storey building, of brick with weather-boarded sides but heavily altered and marred by soil pipes on its front elevation.

What looks like council housing on the north side of Stratford Place does preserve the view through to the estuary but the buildings themselves do not reflect the small scale character of this part of Walton.

Remaining properties in North Street are unassuming two storey buildings, either gable end to the road with varied garden frontages or with roofs parallel to the road and rising from the back edge of the pavement. Nos 16 and 6 have evidence of interesting brick detailing, Facades are generally rendered, with the bakery on the west side prominent in ochre paint, though a pair of terraced houses in brick survives with its sash windows nearer the junction with High Street.

5. Alfred Terrace

This second enclave north of High Street consists of a mid-Victorian square and its approaches.

Alfred Terrace is a square framed on three sides by two storey mid-Victorian terraces. These are unusually served by a central road with the remainder of the square being laid out as gardens for the terraces on either side. There is immediately an interesting mixture of formality and informality underlined by the varied design of the enclosing terraces and the many alterations to the constituent buildings over the years.

Alfred Terrace on the south side of the square group is the grandest, with little Doric porticos. This terrace is the only one with pitched roofs sufficiently steep to give any chance of a loft conversion: one property has taken advantage with a bulky dormer. Many original windows have been replaced with wider variants: there are also some large porches, amounting almost to conservatories. Car run-ins have been achieved with varying success. Alfred Cottages opposite is perhaps the least attractive group overall: though the original window openings are retained at first floor level, this terrace has no original architectural detailing of note, and run-ins have been inserted less sympathetically on this side of the square. The bottom four properties (nos 2-8) have porch and living-room extensions with a lean-to roof.

Facing down the square are nos 28-44, a terrace of nine two storey houses, retaining much of the original slate roofing. Frontages are almost all white-rendered, though there is a great deal of window alteration. Leading from the High Street is nos 48-56, a terrace of five two-storey properties with projecting bay windows at first floor level, all with a maritime flavour though not in a wonderful state of preservation. To the north stands a group of garages with crude front and side elevations visible from the square. The lane dwindles down to a minor semi-industrial area with parked cars and poor surfaces.

Facing into the square on Mill Lane are two rather interesting, probably Edwardian properties, with Dutch shaped gables crowning elevations of render and brick.

6. Between High Street and the seafront

This part of the Area includes the town centre as it was extended to join the old High Street with the new tourism opportunities on the seafront.

The development south of High Street connecting the early part of Walton with the seafront is not extensive but is relatively complex. In plan, the street pattern appears as a pair of five-way junctions of short radial roads arranged along Station Street which bisects the acute angle between the seaward end of High Street and The Parade. With a few exceptions, development dates from the middle quarters of the 19th century, and is usually of two storeys. With the number of short streets and the multiplicity of junctions, corner properties assume great

importance in the street scene. Because the Parade is higher than High Street, there are no sea views to help the passers-by to get their bearings. The result is an area of considerable charm but with a slight feeling of incoherence which is probably the result of shifts in locational emphasis and ad hoc provision of services and facilities during the Victorian period.

Though it no longer leads to the pier, Old Pier Street is perhaps the most significant thoroughfare, and runs through the easternmost five-way junction. The north side is particularly attractive: between High Street and Newgate Street is a pleasant mid-Victorian terrace with pilastered facades supporting slated roofs over a group of fine old shopfronts. At the junction stands a group of three earlier properties, again with hipped slated roofs and much original detailing in windows and shopfronts, while the seaward end consists of three-storey rendered properties of mid-Victorian date with some rejuvenated shopfronts. Development on the south side of Pier Street is less consistent but generally balances the properties opposite.

Newgate Street runs from High Street through this junction and on to the Parade. Its relative narrowness creates an atmosphere of considerable charm, and derives from its probable former function as the beginning of the former back lane to Frinton. This attractive character is reinforced by the junction with Suffolk Street, contrived at a slight remove from the larger junction. With the appearance of surrounding buildings and the use of appropriate street furniture, this is Walton's most successful location. The houses on Suffolk Street are charmingly diverse: boldly-projecting window bays and pretty colours have produced a series of attractive facades behind gardens framed by picket fencing. The more intimate, domestic scale of the street makes a strong contrast with surrounding commercial properties.

The seaward end of Newgate Street continues past buildings of considerable variety. Most striking is nos 17-23, a three storey terrace of red brick with yellow brick detailing to window heads and cornice. Evidence survives of original shopfronts, but this property is in a poor state of repair at present. It is matched on the opposite corner of Paternoster Row by no 15, a mid-Victorian property arrestingly finished in yellow and with some period details surviving. Remaining properties reflect Victorian house styles or maritime influence in design details.

Paternoster Row itself consists of a pleasant terrace of two storeyed Victorian houses with decorative eaves details and some surviving sash windows. Small front gardens are now bounded by a range of fencing and walling materials. At its western end is New Pier Street, more relaxed in development terms at its southern seaward end but closely bound by taller building running down to Station Street. The corners with Paternoster Row are marked by three storey mid-Victorian houses with pitched roofs, while the curve from Station Street is reinforced by a staggered series of late-Victorian houses.

The listed Emmanuel Church, with its foundation stone dated 1878, stands on the corner of New Pier Street and Station Street and dominates the western five-ways junction with its rock-faced elevations, red brick details and sweeping clay-tiled roofs. Commercial activity has almost entirely disappeared with the alteration of one corner property to offices and the loss of another shopfront though the framework survives. This last property, 9 Portobello Road, is of three storeys with a pilastered, rendered facade. Apart from this and the church, remaining development in Station Street is mid to late Victorian houses of two storeys, a simple terrace opposite the church giving way to groups of paired houses higher up with projecting bays and decorative door surrounds.

Portobello Road is the final route running through this particular junction. The lower section from High Street is dominated by the bulk of the post-war development on the High Street corner and, on the east side, by the two-storey club premises in dark red brick. The upper half contains a varied group of generally older properties before emerging below where south Terrace used to stand: the views uphill towards the sea frontage would have been less open before the last war.

At the top of Portobello Road a right turn leads to an interesting group of properties on Crescent Road. Facing, on the west side, is Spring Cottage, of two storeys with a projecting central bay, built in yellow and red brickwork and evidently early to mid-Victorian. Opposite on the corner of New Pier Street are nos 21 and 23, an interesting pair of two storey mid-Victorian villas. Decorative barge-boards and original sash windows remain to enliven facades of rough render with smooth quoins. These relatively early buildings in this location suggest some common link either with the railway station or the route created to the seafront. Just below Spring Cottage is a pair of late Victorian or Edwardian properties, with timber balconies on ground floor bays.

APPRAISAL PLAN

The above analysis has been used to generate Maps 3 and 4, indicating the essential structure of the Conservation Areas and its relative quality. Included in Map 4 are features regarded as either negative or neutral compared to the character and appearance of the Area, as follows.

Negative factors

Walton's future lies in having a healthy economy based on providing services to residents and visitors. Its commercial buildings are the locations for service provision. At present the appearance of the town is visually confusing. It is a fallacy that the character of these buildings and their means of attracting custom, including advertisements, has to be in direct competition to all other businesses. A more consistent approach to the town's appearance based on the identification and promotion of the unique qualities that Walton has to offer would improve matters for all aspects of Walton's commercial future.

Neutral factors

There are a number of buildings from the mid and late 20th century that do not relate to the neighbours in terms of siting or design. The principle offenders are shown on Map 4, though there are others of a more isolated and incidental nature. The Dorlings on The Parade has been included, because of its bulk, its detached nature (not attempting to make a continuous frontage) and the sterile character of its forecourts.

The market area between The Parade and High Street has also been included as it is an unresolved gap in otherwise fairly continuous frontages, and surrounding development does not relate well to it.

Finally, the South Cliff trailer park is a pleasant, well-maintained space, but it does not add anything of architectural or historic interest to the locality.

SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS: BUILDINGS

47 The Parade

This building is still recognisable as early-Victorian given its pilasters and quadrant corners. It is in a prominent location and related to the Royal Albion Hotel and the listed buildings on the Parade to the south. Restoration of lost features, in particular the eaves details, would be a great improvement: the windows and the porch/balcony might be reconsidered at the same time.

Commercial buildings

In line with the negative factor identified above, a comprehensive scheme is recommended for the Area, to include the restoration of lost features, the reinstatement of original shopfronts and the consistent painting of facades. This has been addressed through the recent Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme. However, there are still some buildings in need of attention. Of particular note are the Royal Albion and 17-23 Newgate Street.

SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS: CURTILAGES

Forecourts of commercial property

Much of the street scene in Walton is created by buildings of historic interest in prominent locations providing food and drink, accommodation and other services. In most cases the original front boundaries have been removed: some have been replaced in varied materials, while other curtilages remain open for parking and access. In all cases the consistency and distinctive character of the Area, and a unique selling point for Walton, might be enhanced by a more consistent treatment of these prominent areas.

SUGGESTED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

High Street-Princes Esplanade

This part of the Conservation Area has been the subject of a major environmental improvement with extensive works carried out to the public realm.

Car park, Church Road/Station Street

This car park with its advertising boards is a poor introduction to Walton for those arriving by train. The station has its own car park: though outside the Conservation Area, it is also in a poor visual state, and contributes to the generally unsatisfactory state of this part of the town as a whole. Unless the main car park can be relocated and the site redeveloped, it should be improved and enhanced with better surfaces and the introduction of planting to break up the expanse of hard surfacing.

The public spaces and planting associated with the southern end of The Parade and South Cliff have a rather accidental quality. The scenic possibilities might be improved if incidental planting was reviewed to improve views to the Pier Hotel and along the coast.

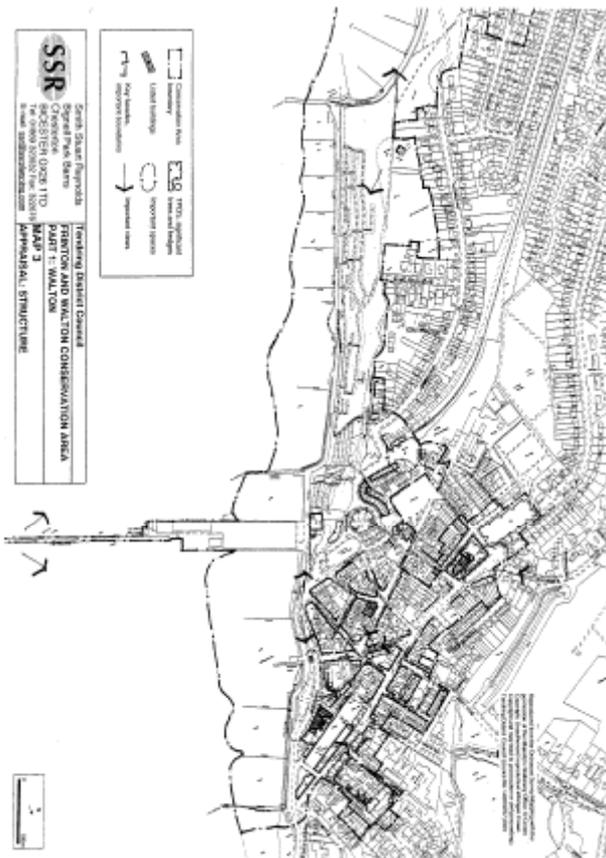
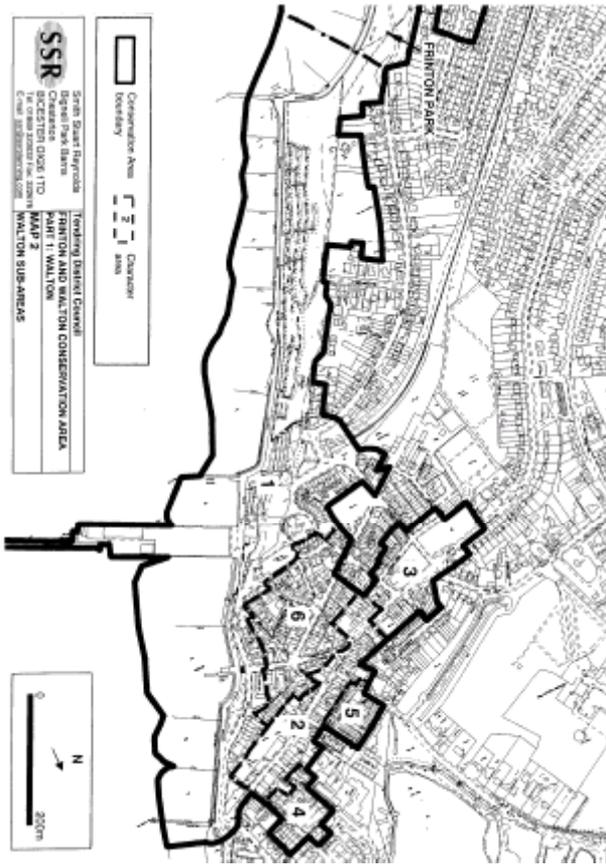
BOUNDARY REVIEW

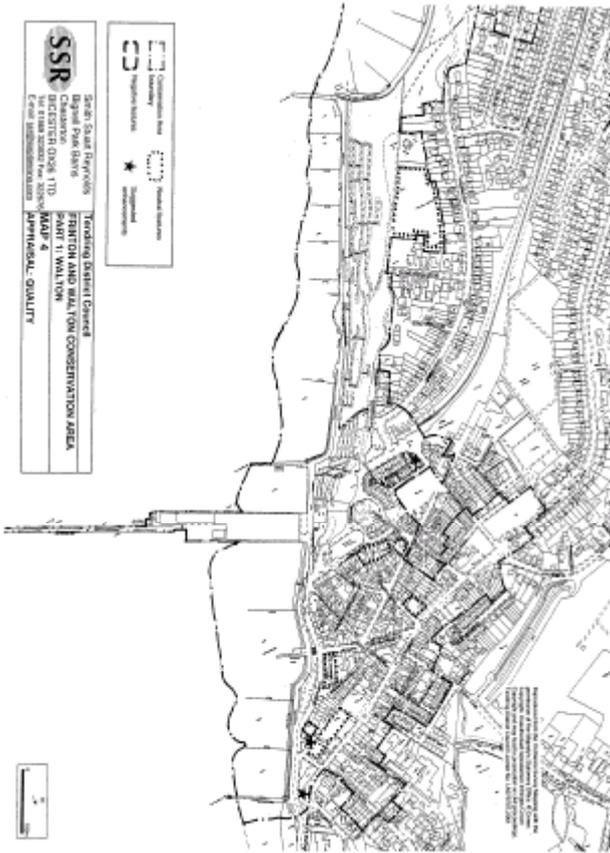
No suggestions are put forward for the alteration of the current boundaries. Instead, the suggestion is made that the Area is split into the three sections on which the three reports have been based.

Further Information

For further information about the Conservation Area Reviews please contact Tendring District Council's Heritage and Conservation Manager on 01255 686170.









1. The view of Walton from the town's impressive pier gives some indication of the variety of buildings found within the town of the Area, but also the failure of resort speculators to produce a coherent image for the town.



2. The low cliffs of the Walton sea-front produce a picturesque townscape, but are another factor in the general feeling of discontinuity that the town presents. The historic buildings in this view have rather lost out to the demands of vehicle traffic and pedestrian safety.



3. The multiple junction on Old Pier Street also results in picturesque juxtapositions, though routes through and around the town are not always clear. Road improvements have, as usual, produced a surfeit of tarmac.



4. The cliffs south of the pier have a less formal character, though the shrub planting that has grown up next to The Parade could be said to interfere with the wide views which would otherwise be available.



5. There are many impressive survivals from the early years of the development of Walton as a resort, including this group on the corner of Saville Street and Stratford Place.



6. With many of the same distinctive features as the buildings in photograph no. 5, this prominent building on The Parade would benefit enormously if it were restored. Greater consideration might be given to the enclosure of its forecourt.



7. This Listed terrace on The Parade retains many of its original features. An important loss, however, is the character and quality of the front boundary walls and the small front gardens. A large proportion of the original front wall could be reinstated without compromising residents' requirements concerning car parking.



8. The Royal Albion Hotel is an important and prominent building at the northern end of the Area. Its surroundings deserve special treatment, including the small pedestrian area in this view, and the hotel's own forecourt facing southwards.



9. This charming corner of Suffolk Street would be an asset in any town. This excellent piece of townscape is achieved without great architecture, but by variety of facing materials and finishes within strict limits, supported by a simple and robust approach to the street surface and "furniture".



10. Walton's High Street focuses on the tower of the Parish Church, and contains a variety of buildings and shop fronts. The dark weatherboarded façade is a prominent and acceptable infill. The properties beyond have sadly lost their original detail, and the best surviving shop front is in poor repair.



11. Old Pier Street again retains many original features. This is an excellent group of old shop fronts in the centre of the village, which are visually supported by the reinstatement work which can be seen on the right.



12. The market is an important feature of the commercial life of the town, but its prominent location does nothing for the character of the Area. The rear elevations of many properties are exposed, boundary treatments are not consistent, and street furniture and surfacing could be improved.



13. This prominent group of The Parade again demonstrates the basic inconsistency resulting from Walton's development history. Forecourts are treated in a variety of ways, which detracts from the interest of this group and from the character of the Area as a whole.



14. The failure to complete some of the grander speculative developments in the town has led to a number of gap sites which have never properly been filled. This particular area is associated with the car park on Station Street, and might be considered along with the unsatisfactory back land development in Agar Road.



15. These houses close to the station, particularly those either side of the terrace in the centre, are an interesting survival and deserve a better setting than they have at present. To the left can be seen the edge of the hoarding site opposite the station entrance which is suggested for improvement.



16. The consistency and simplicity of houses in Albert Terrace has been compromised over the years, compounded by a variety of treatments to front gardens. While remaining of interest, these houses cannot be brought back to their original or even a consistent condition.

