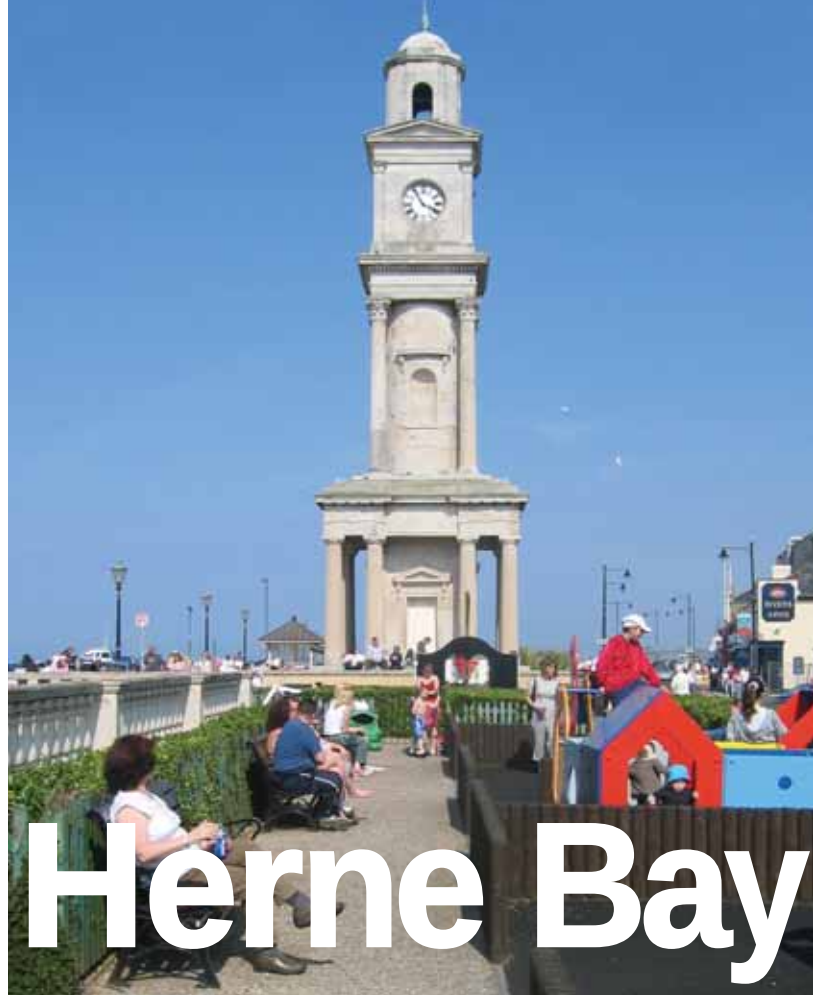




Herne Bay

Conservation Area Appraisal

The character of
a seaside town

Herne Bay

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The character of a seaside town

- Shops
 - The freestanding single storey row of shops.
 - The single storey shop or shops attached to the end of a house or row of terrace houses.
 - The single storey shop built into a gap in a taller street frontage
 - The single storey shop or shops added to the front of an earlier row of terrace, or other, houses.
 - Shop with a flush front built into the ground floor of a former house.
 - Single storey shops built integrally with a house or flats above.
 - Two storey purpose built shops.
 - Surviving historic shop front character.
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- The Article 4 direction.
- The conservation area boundary
- Street trees, greenery and open space.
- Public realm enhancement
- Possible enhancement schemes
- Advertising and advertisements.

J. Ray Harrison – David Kincaid and Simon Hopkins: August 2008.



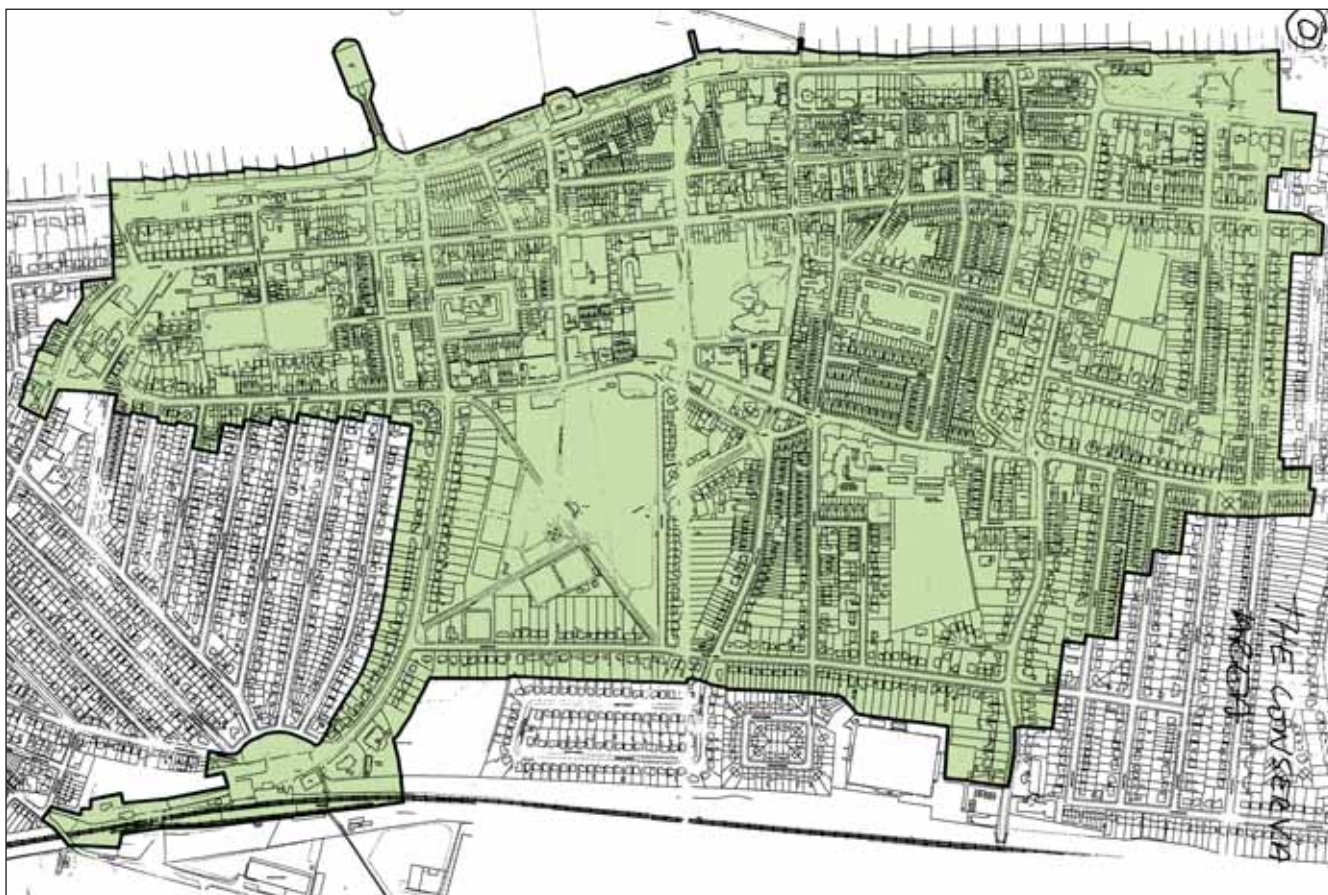
1. Introduction

This appraisal examines the key elements that contribute to the special architectural and historic character of Herne Bay. The character of any town is determined by the topography of its site, the layout of its streets and open spaces and the age, material and style of its buildings. The combination of all these factors creates enclosure, vistas and in the case of historic towns such as Herne Bay a unique, a special, 'sense of place'.

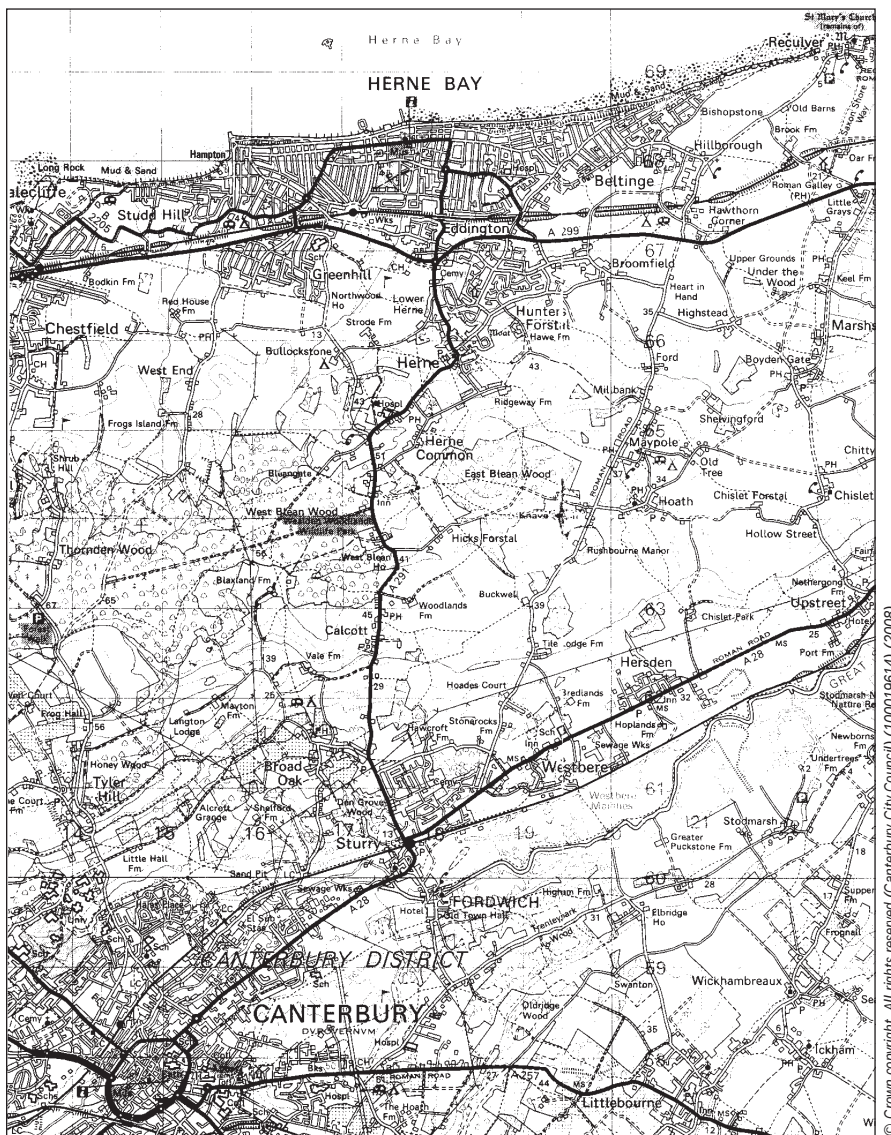
Conservation areas were first introduced in 1967 and are currently defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' (Section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Two conservation areas were designated in Herne Bay on 3 July 1970 and were known as Central Parade number 1 and 2. These areas included the groups of listed buildings on Central Parade, one section extended from Canterbury Road to Cooper's Hill and the other section from 81 Central Parade to 20 St George's Terrace. The conservation areas were identified for review in the Interim Local Plan written statement of July 1989. The area was surveyed and possible extensions to the conservation area were put forward at a public exhibition in 1990. The Herne Bay Conservation Area was designated on 5 February 1991 and it incorporated the two earlier Central Parade designations (see the conservation area plan below).

The City Council considers that the special interest justifying designation of a conservation area should be defined and analysed in a written appraisal of its character and appearance.



The Herne Bay conservation area



Herne Bay Location Plan

2. Location

Herne Bay is in the parish of Herne about 8 miles north east of Canterbury (see location plan). It is built around the mouth of the shallow valley of the Plenty Brook where this enters the North Sea. The conservation area, centred on the town's urban core, is historically and architecturally important for its early 19th century 'planned' seaside resort layout, developed and extended through the 19th and into the 20th centuries. Herne Bay's population today is approximately 35,500.

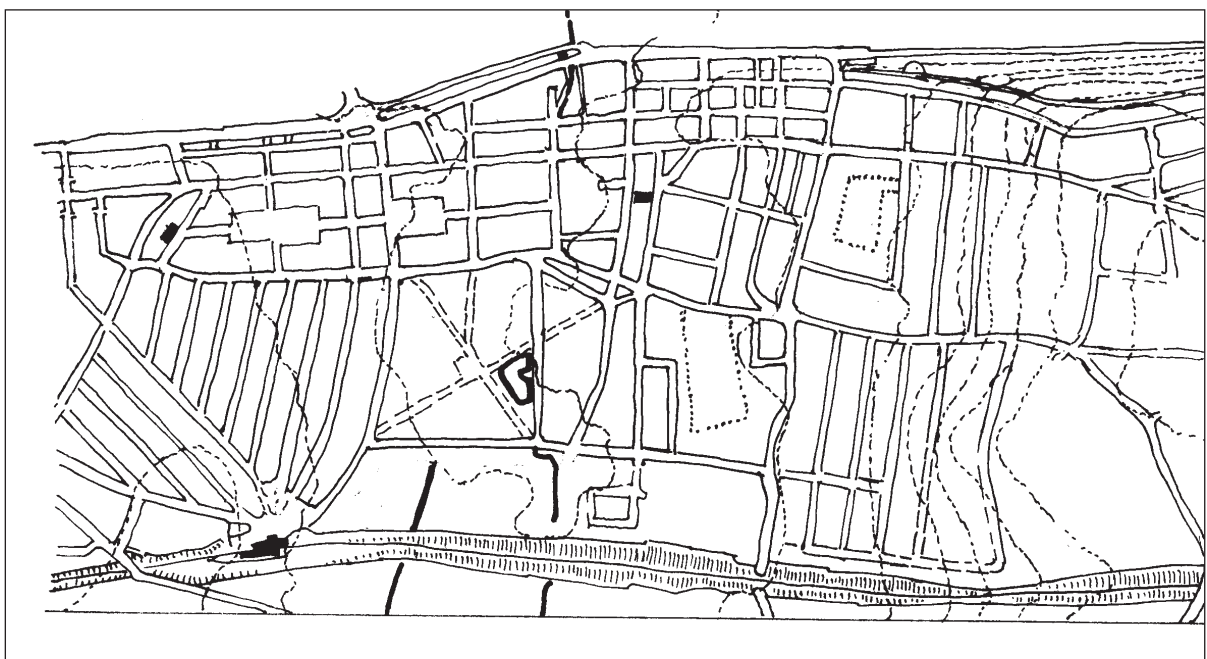
3. Landscape setting

Due to the spread of the modern town there are no 'Special Landscape Areas' or 'Areas of High Landscape Value' associated with the Conservation Area. One 'Landscape Character Area' (as defined in the Herne Bay and Whitstable Landscape Appraisal of 2000) known locally as 'the Downs' adjoins the east side of the Conservation Area and is formally known as the Beltinge Coast Character Area. This narrow strip of open space formed on sloping London Clay between Beltinge and the coast is a popular recreation space for the town's inhabitants. It is also a Site of Scientific Interest, a 'Ramsar' site and a Special Protection Area for Birds.

Local topography is developed for the most part on London Clay which is overlain by head Brickearth to the west of the town. This material continued to be used locally to make the bricks for at least some of the buildings in the conservation area until late into the 19th century. To the east of the town the sands and clays of 'The Downs' are subject to landslips where they come down to the sea.

The modern town had a precursor in tiny fishermen's hamlet and beaching point for coastal trading ships. This was established on the shore a little to the east of the Plenty Brook where the road from Canterbury reached the sea. In the late 18th century it seems to have comprised little more than the still surviving Ship Inn, sited above the high tide mark, at the foot of a steep bank overlooking the sea. At this period colliers brought coal here from Newcastle and Sunderland for onward transport to Canterbury by road.

There was also regular sea traffic for people and goods from here to London. The valley of the Plenty Brook is flanked by an area of relatively high ground extending to the coast immediately east of the hamlet. Rising ground levels eastwards beyond the old settlement around the Ship Inn are reflected within the conservation area with the 25 metre contour line being reached on its eastern boundary. This is matched by rising ground in the west of the conservation area but here by contrast it hardly gets much above the 10 metre contour line. Where they meet the sea the areas of high ground at the extreme east and west of the conservation area are known respectively as the east and west cliffs. In the centre of the town, around the channel of the Plenty Brook, a considerable area is, or originally was, below the five-metre contour. Taken together these facts have had a significant effect on the town's development – building first took place on the higher ground to the east and west, leaving the central area mostly undeveloped. There are two distinct and differently aligned seaside bays, a smaller one to the east and a larger one to the west, pivoted about the town's clock-tower and separated by the outflow of the Plenty Brook.



Main, discrete, historic development areas. C.1933-34

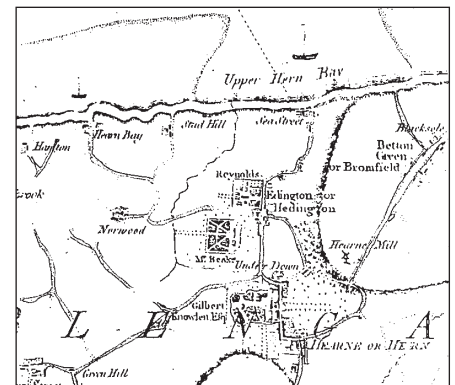
4. Archaeology

On the coastal plain between Seasalter and Bishopstone, recent excavation has demonstrated the presence of a widespread pattern of intensive Neolithic, Late Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement with some sites continuing in occupation into the Roman period. Archaeological evidence for early settlements in the vicinity has been found on the hill slope within the eastern quarter of the conservation area. Here, within the former Beacon Field, now crossed by Dence Park, a sewer trench in the 1920s revealed pottery extending from the Late Bronze Age to Iron Age through to the Roman and Saxon periods. More recent excavation in Hillborough Road and Beacon Hill Road has uncovered evidence of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age settlement. To the south, along Beacon Avenue, evidence of a Late Bronze Age/Early Roman settlement and cremation cemetery have been found. Roman coins have also been found along Beltinge Road. Beacon Field was the site of a late medieval beacon that remained in use through to the early 17th century. An earlier Roman beacon was possibly sited at or near Reculver. A Saxon charter of 949 AD setting out the boundaries of the monastic estate of 'Raculf' mentions 'macan broc', a reference to the modern Plenty Brook which flows into the sea at the centre of the conservation area.

5. The historic development of Herne Bay

Introduction

The conservation area includes the original core of the town and a series of later extensions to the urban fabric, each characteristic of its historic period. This sequence of developments, together with the addition of the piers and seafront, form the background to the examination of the town's historical development, the subject of this section. The unravelling of the detailed workings of the socio-economic engines driving development in Herne Bay over the period 1800 to 1940 is however beyond the scope of this exercise.



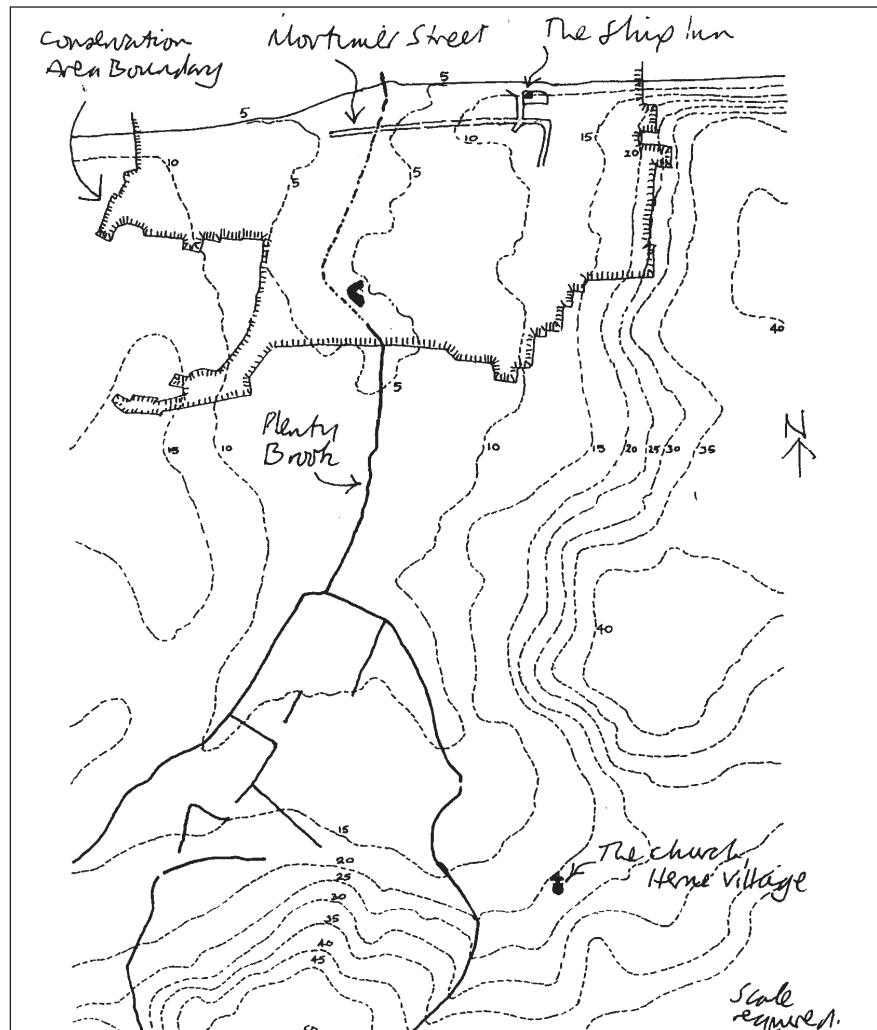
Sea Street in relation to local topography



Early view of Herne Bay - looking east c. 1823



View of Herne Bay from the Downs



Map of local topography, contours, stream and conservation area boundary

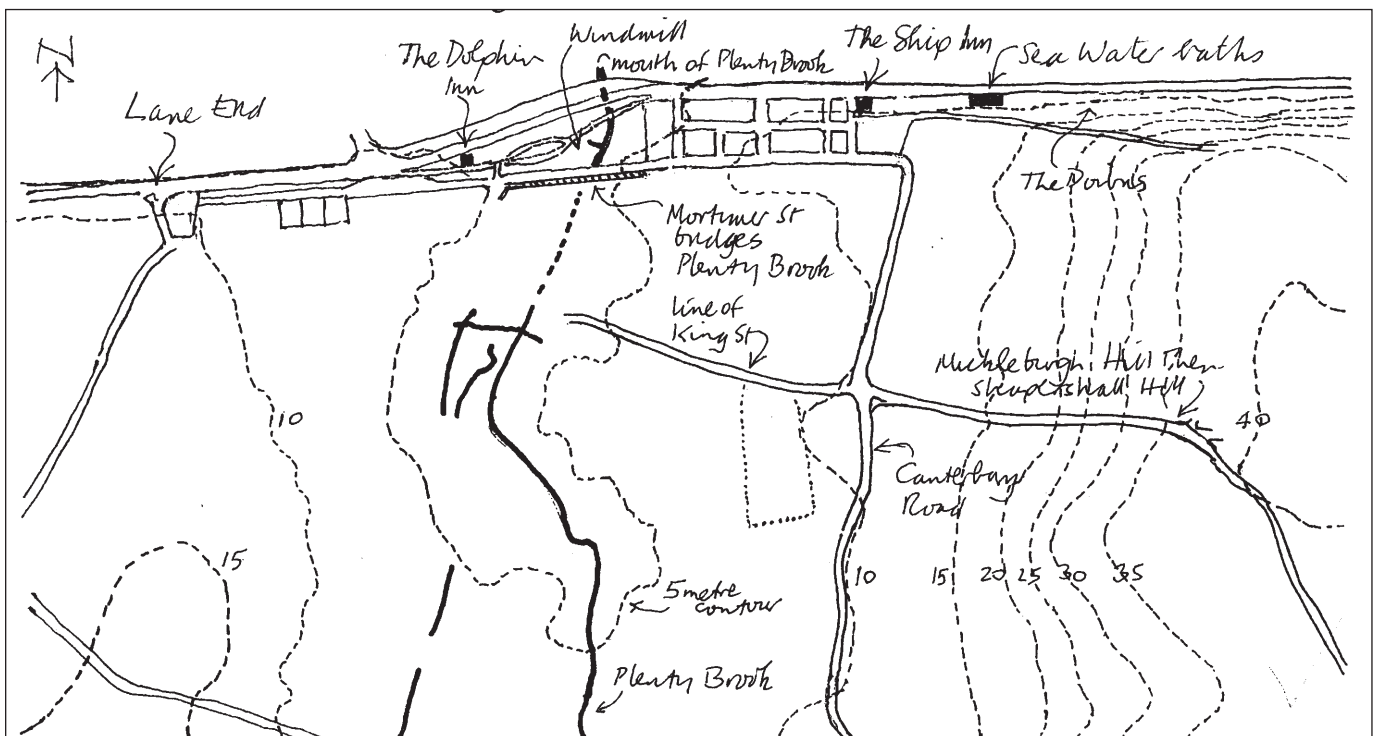


The Downs from the town. c 1823.

The development of the Oxenden Estate and the new town of St. Augustine c.1815-1842

In the late 18th century the hamlet around the Ship began to attract holiday visitors from Canterbury; a newspaper advertisement in early 1770 announces that a bathing machine, 'the equal of any in Margate', will be available by the middle of June. "Sea water baths" were established below the east cliff in 1792. By 1800 Herne parish's permanent population was around 1,200 (1,232 in 1801) and a few houses had already been built along the beach front near the Ship Inn to meet visitors' needs. These buildings no longer exist.

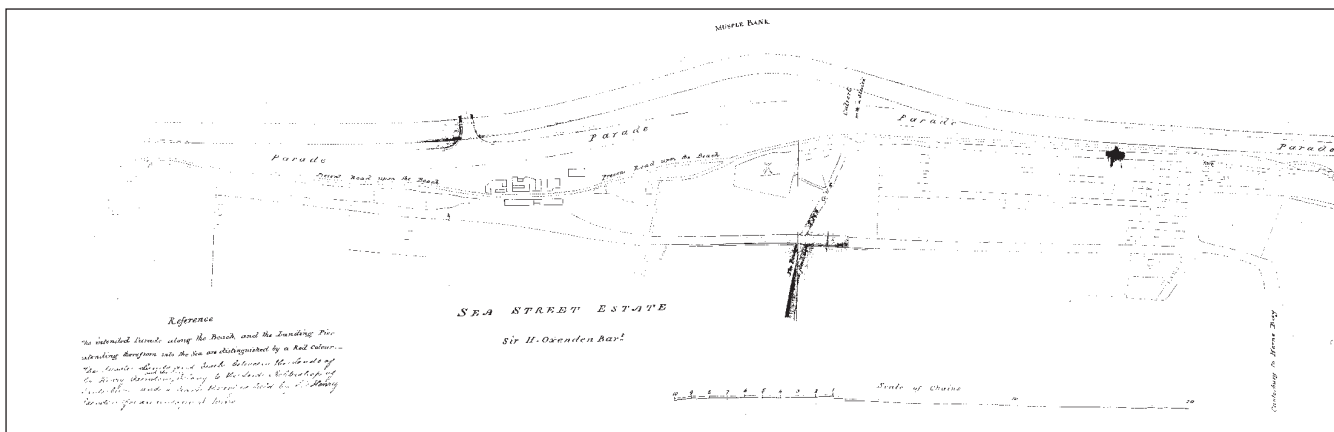
From 1814 the old Herne Bay to Canterbury road was improved and 'turnpiked', making visitor access easier. A now lost Turnpike cottage once stood at the junction of the Canterbury Road with King's Road and Mickleburgh Hill (known as Sharpershall). Following these highway improvements, from 1816, Sir Henry Oxenden of Broome Park near Canterbury began to develop the farmland he owned south and west of the Ship Inn with an eye to the holiday trade. Oxenden laid out a grid of small streets on the low sea bank behind the Ship, parallel to the beach and running west towards the mouth of the Plenty Brook. By the late 1820s there was enough trade for a post office and a bakery to have been established and for an assembly room to have been added to the Ship Inn. The present Mortimer Street formed the southern limit of the Oxenden Estate.



6 inch traced map with contours and Sea Street estate layout c1820.



The former assembly room section of the Ship Inn.



Telford's 1830 map

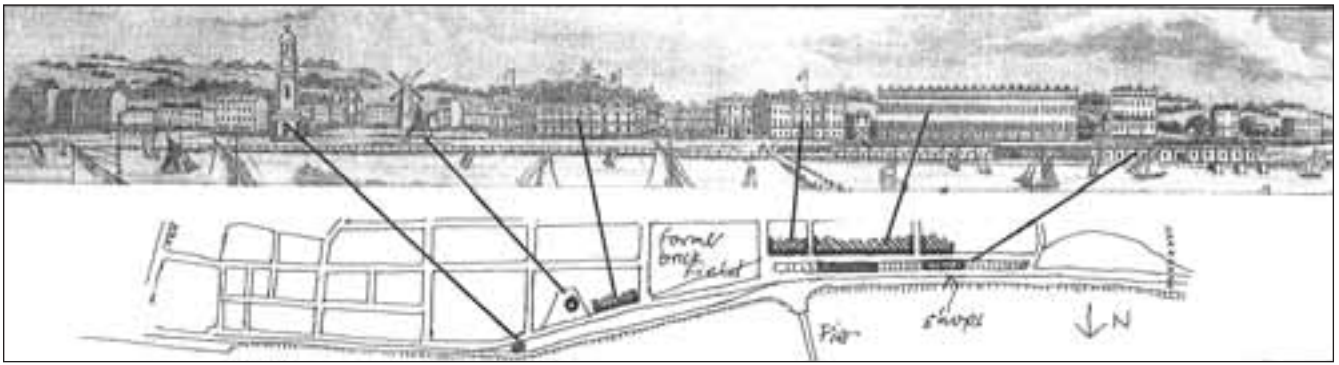


The survey of 1830, from the office of Thomas Telford gives some of the detail of these arrangements. Though not showing every building extant at the time, it confirms that fourteen years on from its inception the Oxenden Estate had been slow to flourish with the parish population having grown over 30 years by about only 600, to 1,876 in 1831. In this underperformance it was characteristic of much subsequent planned development in the town. A few modest Regency style terrace houses had been built close to the Ship Inn in East Street and Chapel Street. The two opposite ends of a more substantial terrace on the bank overlooking the beach, which became Marine Terrace, were in place just beyond these. A second pub, the Rodney's Head, had opened in North Street in 1826. Further west along the beach close to the mouth of the Plenty Brook the Bay windmill had been built in 1825 (it lasted until 1878). With its base less than five feet above the high water mark the land around it often flooded during storms. Still further to the west a third pub, the Dolphin Inn, stood literally on the beach within the town's west bay. The substantial sea front 'parade' suggested in the 1830 map was then, and remained for some time thereafter, an aspiration rather than a reality.

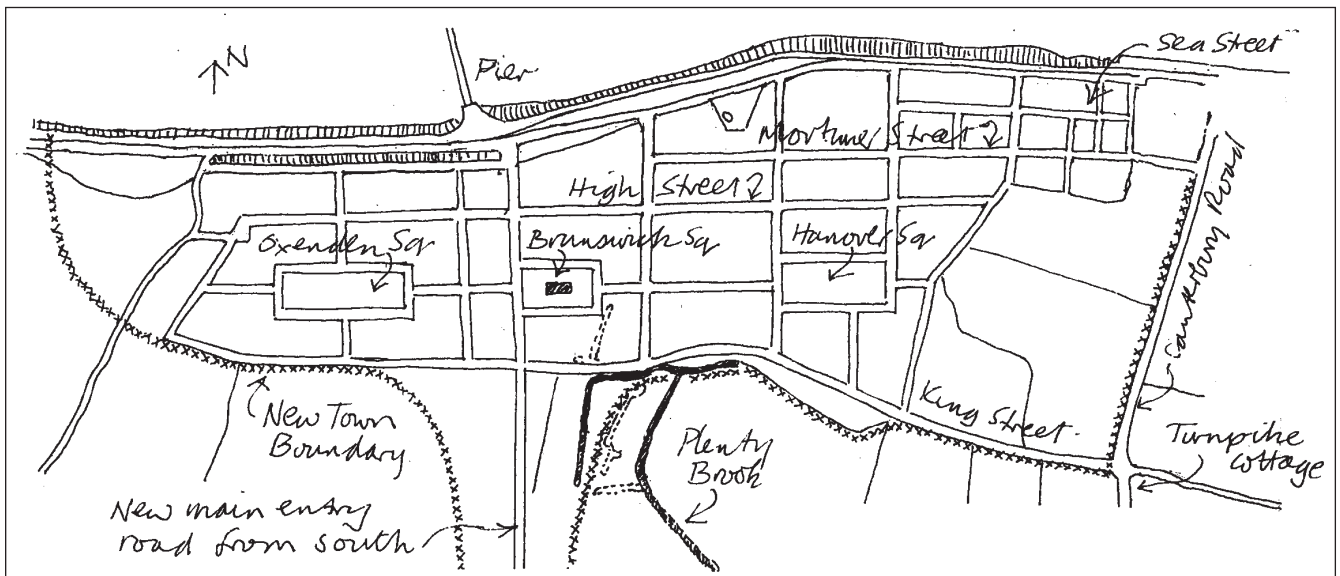


Early images of Herne Bay.





The new town of St. Augustine



Hacker's plan for the new town of St. Augustine.

1830 saw two interlinked moves intended to improve the town's commercial fortunes. One was the making of a design by Samuel Hacker, a Canterbury surveyor, for a planned new town greatly enlarging on Oxenden's original concept. The other was the formation of a consortium, which invited Thomas Telford to design a three quarter mile long wooden pier. It was hoped among other things that this might attract holidaymakers travelling on the paddle steamers plying from London to the Thanet resorts. The pier, the first of a succession of three in this location, was sited in the centre of the west bay and was opened in May 1832. In the same year the new Pier Hotel, with 40 bedrooms, was opened at the pier's shore end, helping to move the town's centre of gravity westward. Telford Terrace, an 1834 block of nine sea front houses stands as a reminder of the engineer's brief involvement with Herne Bay

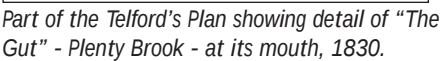


Telford Terrace.

Development arising from the building of the pier was effectively controlled by Hacker's New Town street plan. This defined the limits of the authority of the Board of Commissioners appointed by the Act of 1833, which established the New Town of 'St. Augustine'. Hacker's plan extended the Oxenden Estate south and west and involved a new 'High Street' and south of this three squares 'in line' from east to west (Hanover, Brunswick and Oxenden). There was also a proposed 'open piazza' looking out to sea to the north of the central square.



Tithe map showing local field pattern c.1840



It was thought necessary to raise street levels where these crossed the lowest part of the land surrounding the course of the Plenty Brook. At the valley's lowest point the High Street may be raised up as much as seven feet or more above original levels. The latter may possibly be seen in the north west corner of the Hanover Square car park close to the High Street's junction with Beach Street. The High Street from just west of New St. to just east of Dolphin St. was raised on brick arches.

Initially the open Plenty Brook had been bridged by Mortimer Street as part of the original Oxenden Estate plan. Then a short section towards the sea was culverted. Eventually the whole thing, from King's Road in the south to the sea front, was put underground. Part of its line is preserved in a diagonal pedestrian passage cutting across the grid to the promenade. All this took place, perhaps in further stages, sometime between 1840 and the 1870s. The brook's culvert was closed at high tide by valves at the outlet on the promenade. At low tide these were opened and the outfall

of pent up waters flushed out the system, including the town's sewage. Today the large pond in the Memorial Park is the main reminder of the existence of the brook north of the railway embankment. It can still make itself felt on occasion in other places nearby however; a branch still flows along the east boundary of the allotments at the corner of Spenser and Station Roads and its main course flooded in Stanley Gardens in 2001/2.

In 1835, with the holiday industry by then in full swing, 30,402 people are said to have landed at Herne Bay, almost twice as many as had come in 1834. With the pier purpose-designed to receive passengers, goods such as coal and timber continued to be 'run ashore' for unloading at low tide until the 1930's. Unloading into carts took place around a hardened slipway in front of the Diver's Arms at the divide between the east and west bays. The slipway, described on the O.S. maps as a 'landing stage', was just east of Clock Tower, given to the town by Ann Thwaytes' in 1837. This is the first purpose-built freestanding Clock Tower in the country.

The construction of St George's Terrace, a row of substantial town houses overlooking the bay at the west end of the town, with single storey shops in front followed on from the building of the pier. An assembly room and swimming bath took the place of shops at the far end of the terrace. The baths continued in use into the 1900s. A 'sea wall' in the form of a revetment to the front of the promenade, is recorded as having been constructed between Lane End (beyond St George's Terrace) in the far west and William Street in the east in 1831. Stone from old London Bridge was used to face it.

1842 was the record year for visitor arrivals by steamboat. It is said that Herne Bay Steam Packet Company steamers brought 40,957 passengers with 11,248 coming by other boats and that 26,000 visitors stayed in the town. Parish population now stood at about 3,000 people (3,041 in 1841). It is startling to compare the visitor figures with the state of development of the town's built environment at the time, as shown by the 1840 Tithe Map, and by the writings of a contributor to the magazine Punch in 1842, see next page. The majority of the streets shown in the New Town plan then ran through open land. A few had still not even been set out. A section of the High Street had either not been dedicated or had reverted to field. The Tithe Map gives us the extent of Regency style development in the town; most of this survives but often altered or disguised in varying degrees. Two blocks of livery stables stand out; these catered for the horses needed for the sea bathing business. A similar block existed until recently in Ramsgate. Herne Bay is very fortunate that part of one of the blocks shown on the 1840 map still survives though it is more or less derelict.



Diagonal passage is the line of "The Gut", now Beach Alley from Mortimer Street.



The street front of the White Horse today. This is a 'threatened building', derelict and a potential target for vandals. The two storey elevation to the right masks an earlier arrangement in which the curved corner at second floor came lower down.

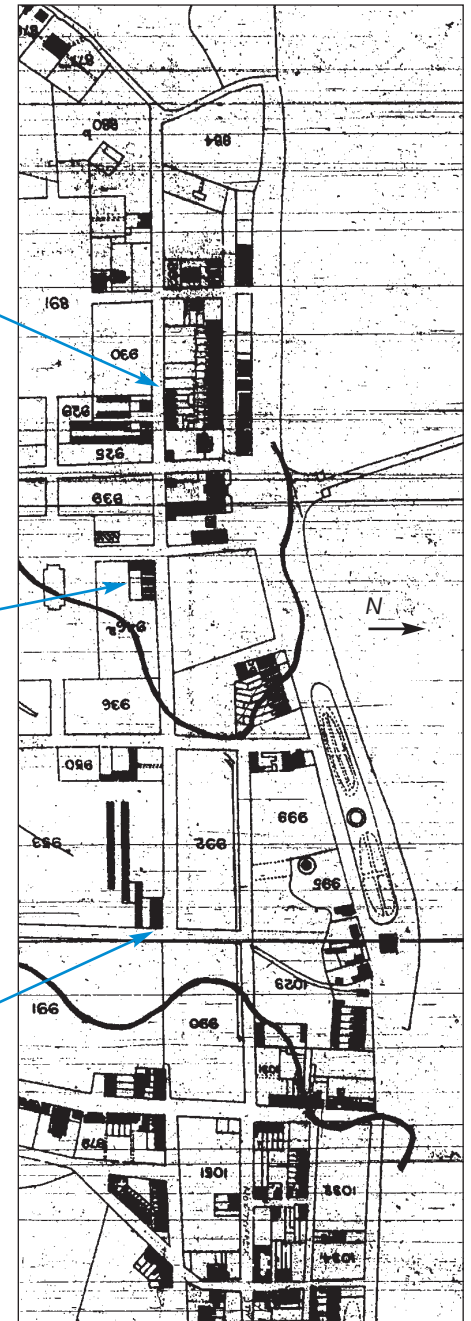


View of the junction of Beach Street and High Street with north west corner of central car park on right.



St George's Terrace and shops.

Left: 1842 view of arches supporting the High Street. Looking south at the house block on the corner of Beach Street and the High Street. (still exists)

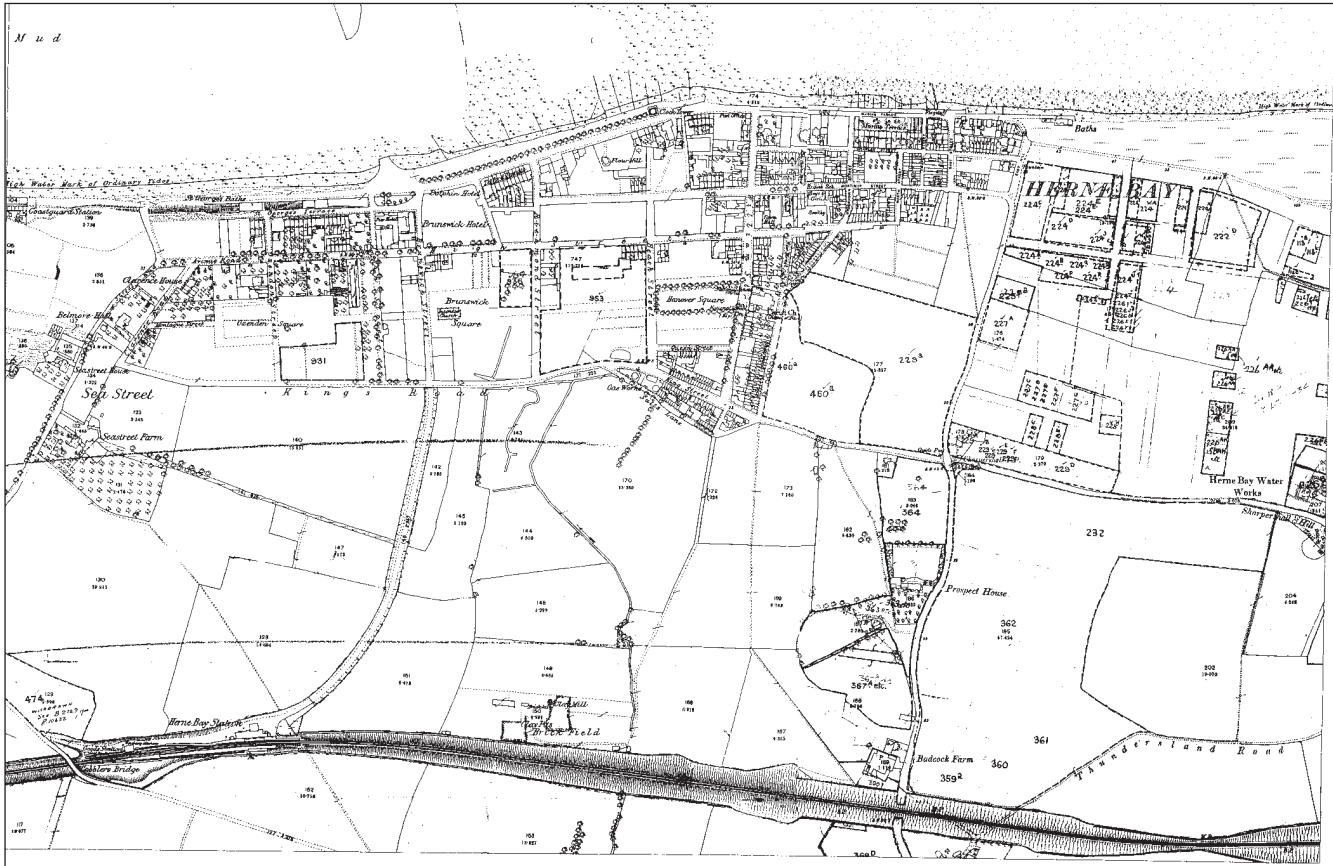


The character of the High Street in the early 1840s can be gauged by identifying three still existing short, widely spaced apart, sections of early 19th century four storey terrace housing within its main length. These are all that were built of what were intended to be continuous four storey and basement terraces running the length of the High Street.

Study of the line of the 5 metre contour superimposed on the 1840 tithe map, shows that up to this time development had largely avoided the lowest, central, part of the town, through which the Plenty Brook runs. At times this area flooded and it is recorded as having done in 1897, 1949 and 1953. Thus the two main sectors of Regency style development are found at opposite ends of the town.



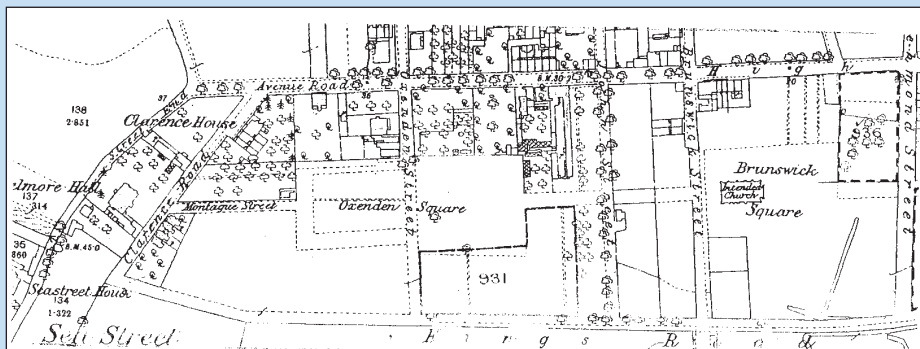
View north to town centre from Gordon Road.



1872 OS plan

Development between 1840 and 1872

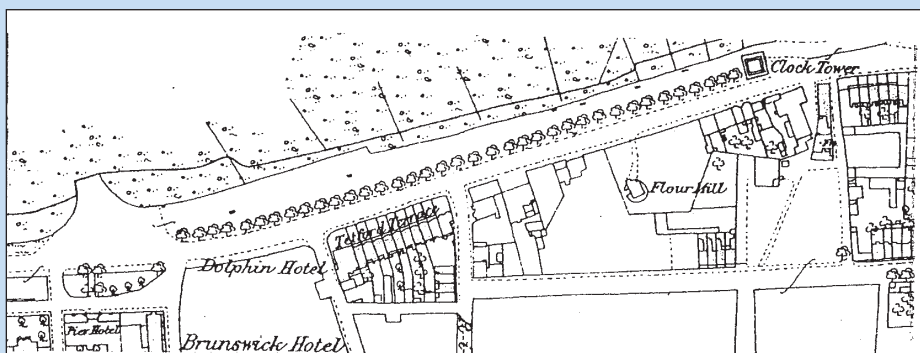
The railway from London to Dover reached Margate in 1846 and this began to affect the steam packet trade. In 1847 the Clerk to the Pier Company, in evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee, complained that 'In consequence of the traffic being so much decimated since the railway opened the steamboats do not supply the place well, they do not think it worth their while, we have great difficulty in getting boats to call there at all'. Seventeen years later in 1863 Herne Bay got its own station, on the new Ramsgate line. The high railway embankment to the south, closing off the valley of the Plenty Brook severed the town from its hinterland and disrupted all landward views from the town. A new 'Station Road', cutting a swathe through open fields, connected the station to the town. This road (shown on the 1872 O.S. map) entered the 1833 street grid precisely where Hacker had intended his new central access point to the town to be. Built by the railway company, it was initially gated at Brunswick Street.



Oxenden Square



Flooding seen from High Street, 1897 (Gough)



Central Parade



The trees planted in 1872 continue to contribute to the character of the town

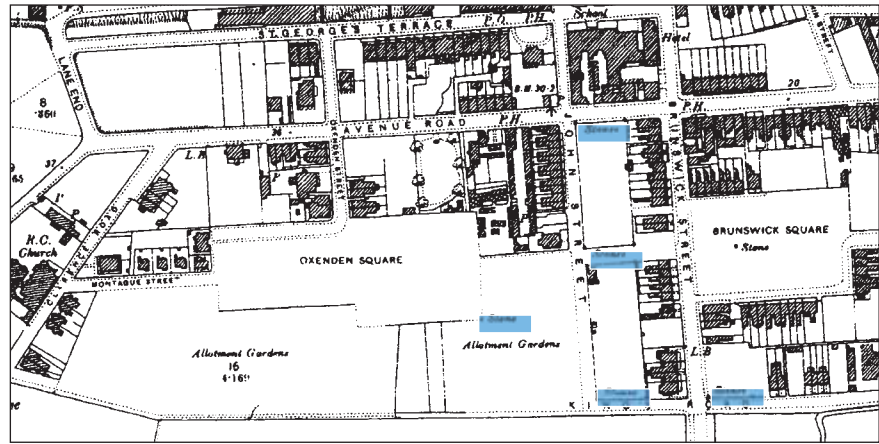


Hanover Square

The 1872 O.S. carries evidence of a drive to enhance the town's appearance. In 1852 the Board of Commissioners had begun a tree-planting programme within the main streets and spaces. 1000 trees were planted over two years at 8d (pence) each and the effect of this is to the fore on the 1872 map. Street trees remain a characteristic and very important feature of Herne Bay's townscape. They evoke similar reactions, for and against, among the modern public just as they did when first introduced.



Typical circa.1830 small terrace,
Underdown Road.



Blue shows boundary stones site in 1887.

With the pace of development in the New Town so slow, with numbers of streets still not constructed, in 1871 the Board of Commissioners got into a legal dispute with landowners who had planted crops over putative road lines in Oxenden Square. After a protracted legal battle the Commissioners came off worse, ending up with a £3,000 bill in a town that had a rateable value of £6,000.

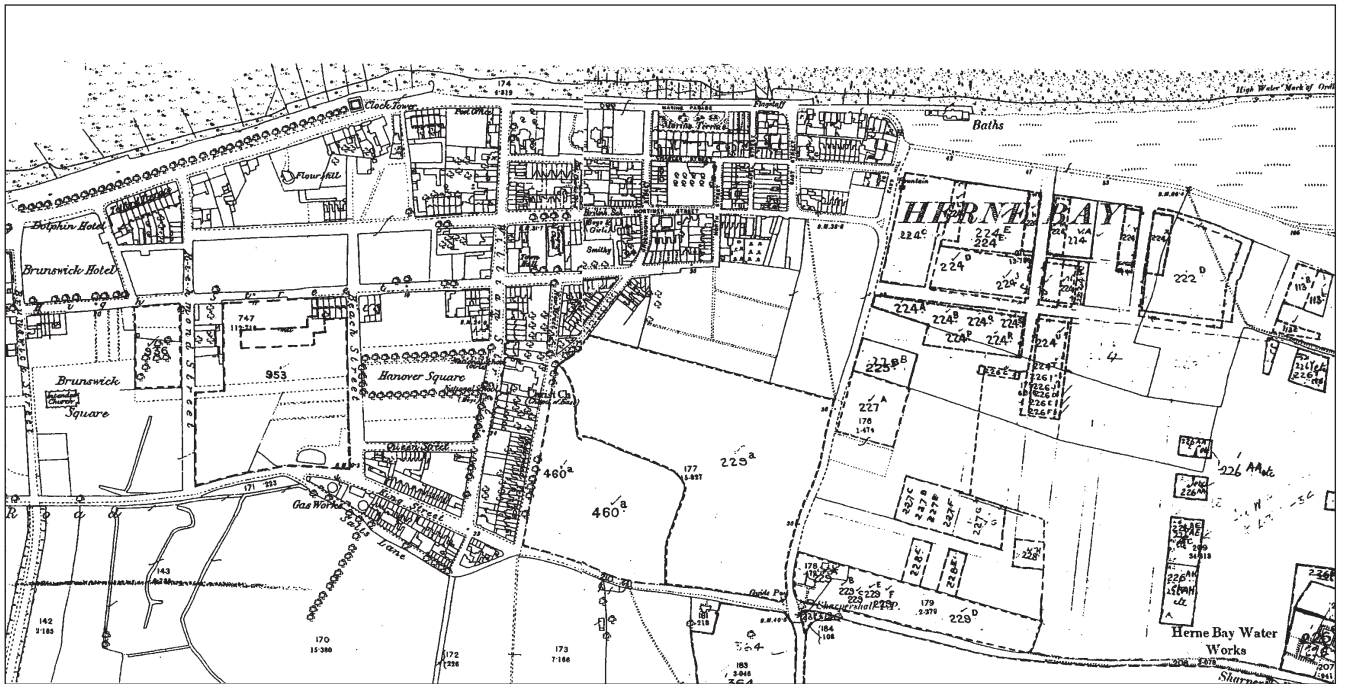
In spite of the arrival of the railway the development of Herne Bay continued to stultify; by 1871 there were about 1000 more residents in the parish than there had been in 1840. The 1872 map shows that 9 years after the coming of the railway the built up area was not much increased over what it had been in 1840. A large part of the High Street and of the three proposed new squares remained undeveloped.

Development between 1872 and 1898

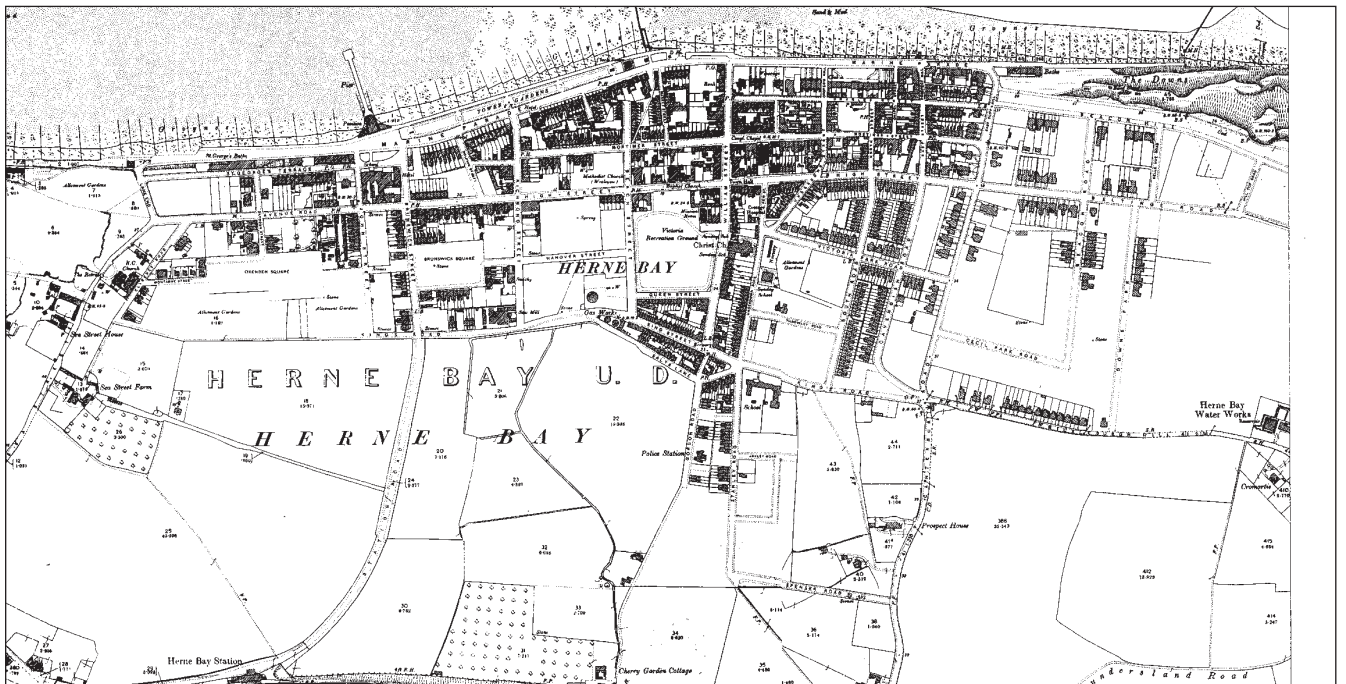
By the date of the next O.S map in 1898 things had at last begun to pick up, although in 1891 the Parish population was still only about 5,500 people. The east end of the High Street had finally been extended to join the Canterbury Road. South of this the new Throwley, Cavendish, Victoria Park and South Roads had been laid out in the fields and development begun. This area, close to the town centre, was well on the way to becoming an enclave of substantial Victorian terrace houses. Across the Canterbury Road climbing the hill slope east of the town similar road laying-out and building activity was beginning.



Oxenden Square today.

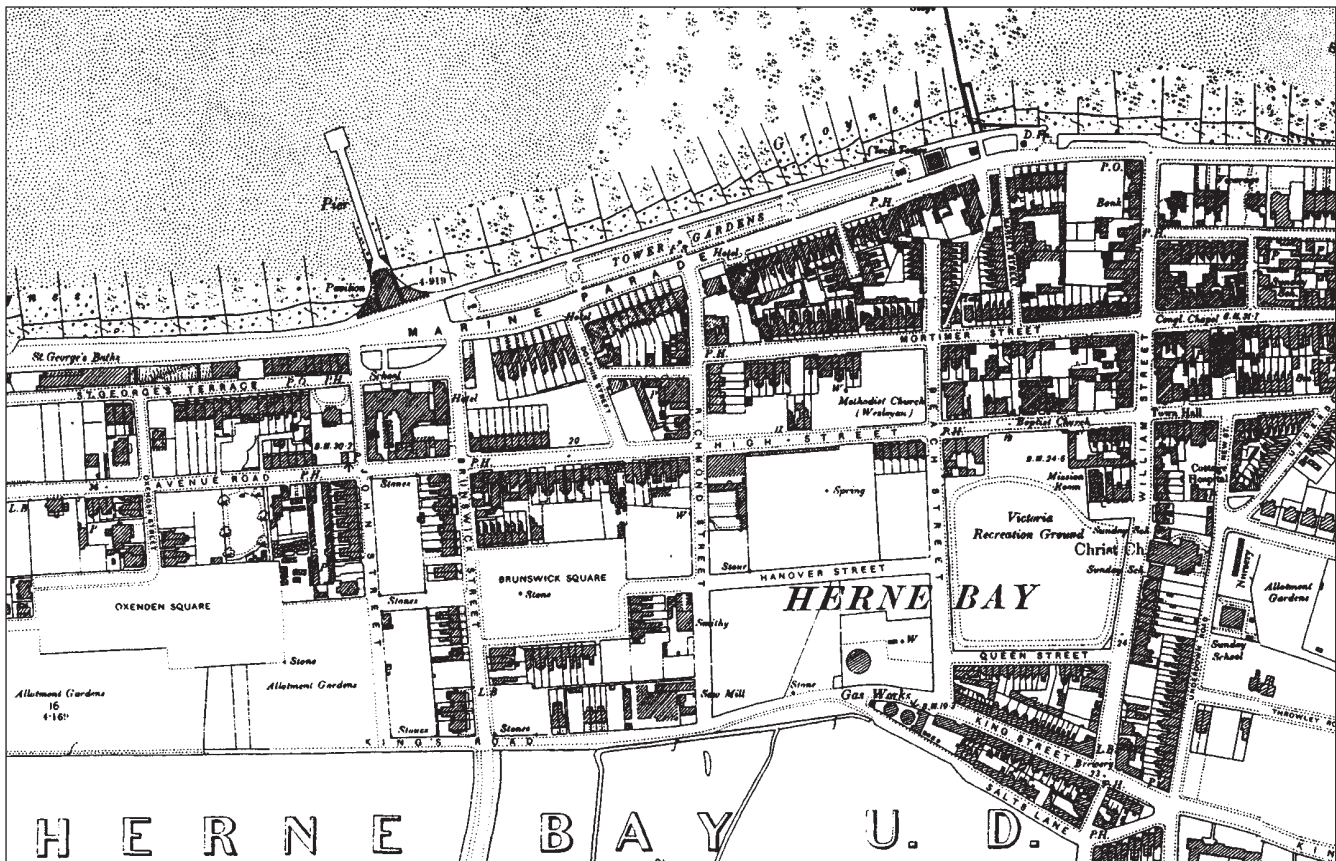


1872



1898 OS map





1888 OS map



High Street/Avenue Road/Richmond Street junction - looking west:
shops with flats over original houses.

The low land immediately south of the High Street at the centre of the New Town grid still remained largely open. The gas works now encroached onto it at the south east corner. Land immediately across the High Street, abutting the Beach Street junction and extending to Mortimer Street, again low-lying (the former line of the Plenty brook) also remained largely undeveloped. By contrast the sea front and its immediate hinterland had by this time been more or less continuously, and densely, developed.

Collard, J. W. job master and contractor
 11 Whiddett, James Alfred
 12 Beal, Wachter
 13 Pullinger, Miss, dress and mantle mkr.
 14 Casselton, Mrs.
 15 Solari, Mrs.
 16 Hopkins, Mrs.
 Adams, E. T. J. builder, contractor
 and surveyor
 Adams, W. J. farrier and general
 smith

MICKLEBURGH HILL.

(*Canterbury Road to Mount Pleasant*)
 LEFT FROM CANTERBURY ROAD.

Barkby, Checkley, John
St. Ninian's, Thompson, Archibald
Glebe Cottage, Thompson, Thos. Alexander
 Warfield, Hudson, Mrs.
The Forstals, Southey, Miss

MORTIMER STREET.

(*Canterbury Road to Richmond Road*)
 LEFT FROM CANTERBURY ROAD.

91 Skeffington, Rev. William
 92 Reynolds, Mrs. dressmaker
 93 Hammond, Arthur
 94 The Creameries. Gore, Robert.
 dairyman

Post and Money Order Office
 —Here is East Street

East Street Stores. Collard, E. D.
 corn, hop and seed factor, fodder
 and manure merchant. Agent for
 Barclay and Co.

Booking Office, Wachter and Co.

1, 2 Iggulden, E. & Son, complete house
 furnishers, auctioneers and valuers

2a Harndon, Alfred
 3 Clay, John William, tailor

4 Harrison, G. bootmaker
 5 Woodcock, Henry, saddler

—Here is North Street

9 Furley, Ernest

10, 11 Furley, Henry, furniture and
 wardrobe dealer

12 Holness, H. pork butcher & grngrr.

15 Miller, B. bootmaker

—Here is Underdown Street

16 Crouch, J. plumber and decorator

17 Longley, Miss, pastrycook & cnfctnr.
 18 Homersham, E. J. corn & seed mrcht.
 19 Gibbs, Stephen, veterinary surgeon.
 R.V.S. ironmonger & coach builder

20 Jones, William, L.H.

21, 22 Admans, G. ironmonger

23 International Tea Co. Wood, F. mngr.

24 Rogers, T. pork butcher & dairyman

25 Taylor, E. general shop

Rogers and Anderson's coal depot

26 Holness, W. A. watchmaker

27 Wright, John, bootmaker

28 Rogers & Anderson, coal merchants
Congregational Church

29, 30, 31 Wilbec, F. H. house and estate
 agent and complete house furnisher

32 Field, T. fishmonger

33, 34 Neale, F. H. chemist and druggist

American Dentists' Association

Young, F. R. butcher

—Here is William Street

Hogbin's furniture warehouse

35 Millgate, W. F. printer

36 Green, George, shirt and collar dresser

37 Spenceley, F. W. grocer

38 Butler, Francis Henry

39 Gibbs, Stephen R.

40 Culling, W. restaurant

Barnwell & Sons, mineral water mnfrs.

Devonshire House, Smith, A. greengrocer

Canterbury House, Horton, C. and J.

oil and colourmen

Conville House, Coulson, T. pork butcher

Mortimer House, Cutting, N. C.

pastrycook

Sinclair Villa, Palmer, J. J.

Myrtle Villa, Farley, C. builder

The Herne Bay Bazaar and Bon Marche

Pago, G. hairdresser

Laburnum Villa, Griggs, Robert

EDITH VILLAS—

5 McNeil, D. brass finisher

6 Tenn, Brufton, Mrs.

7 Nash, William

8 Newlyn, Penny, Alfred H.

LEFT FROM RICHMOND ROAD

Richmond Cottage, Farley, H. auctioneer,
 valuer and builder

SUNNYSIDE—

20 Tapper, William

TURNER'S for Drapery & Millinery,

Mortimer Street and North Street, Herne Bay.

ADOLPHUS M. HILL, High Street, & Mortimer Street,
 Herne Bay. Plumber, Decorator, Gas Fitter, Agent, Guardian Plate Glass Assurance.

N. C. CUTTING, Baker, Pastrycook, etc., Mortimer House,
 Mortimer Street, and next Kent Coast Stores, Herne Bay.

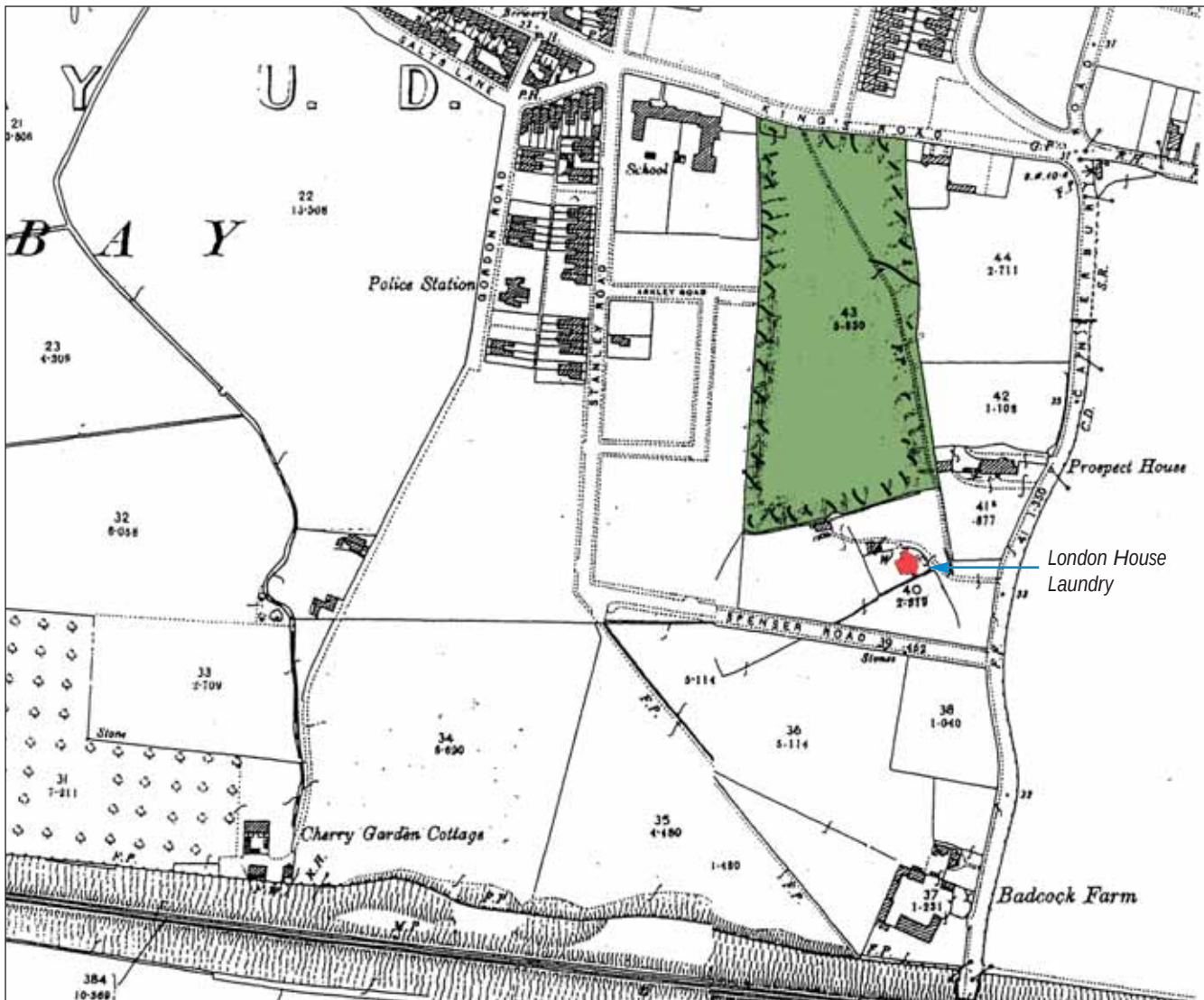
ROOT & CLARKE, Refreshment Contractors & Cycle
 Agents, 9, St. George's Parade, and 12, Marine Crescent, Herne Bay.

N. S. MITCHELL, Cycle Stores, High Street, and Pier
 Pavilion, Herne Bay. Machines on Hire. C.T.C. Repairs.

Part of the Mortimer Street section of the Herne Bay Street Directory for 1893-4.

In 1883 a report from the Registrar General, based on an examination of the death rate, described Herne Bay as 'the healthiest watering place in England'. In the same year the main sewer was extended at great expense and the drainage of the whole town was fed into the sea.

The sea water baths continued in operation at the town's east and west extremities while William Street remained the main shopping street. Between 1891 and 1901 the parish population jumped from 5,482 to 8,442. At this period the town specialised in holidays for nursemaids and their charges.



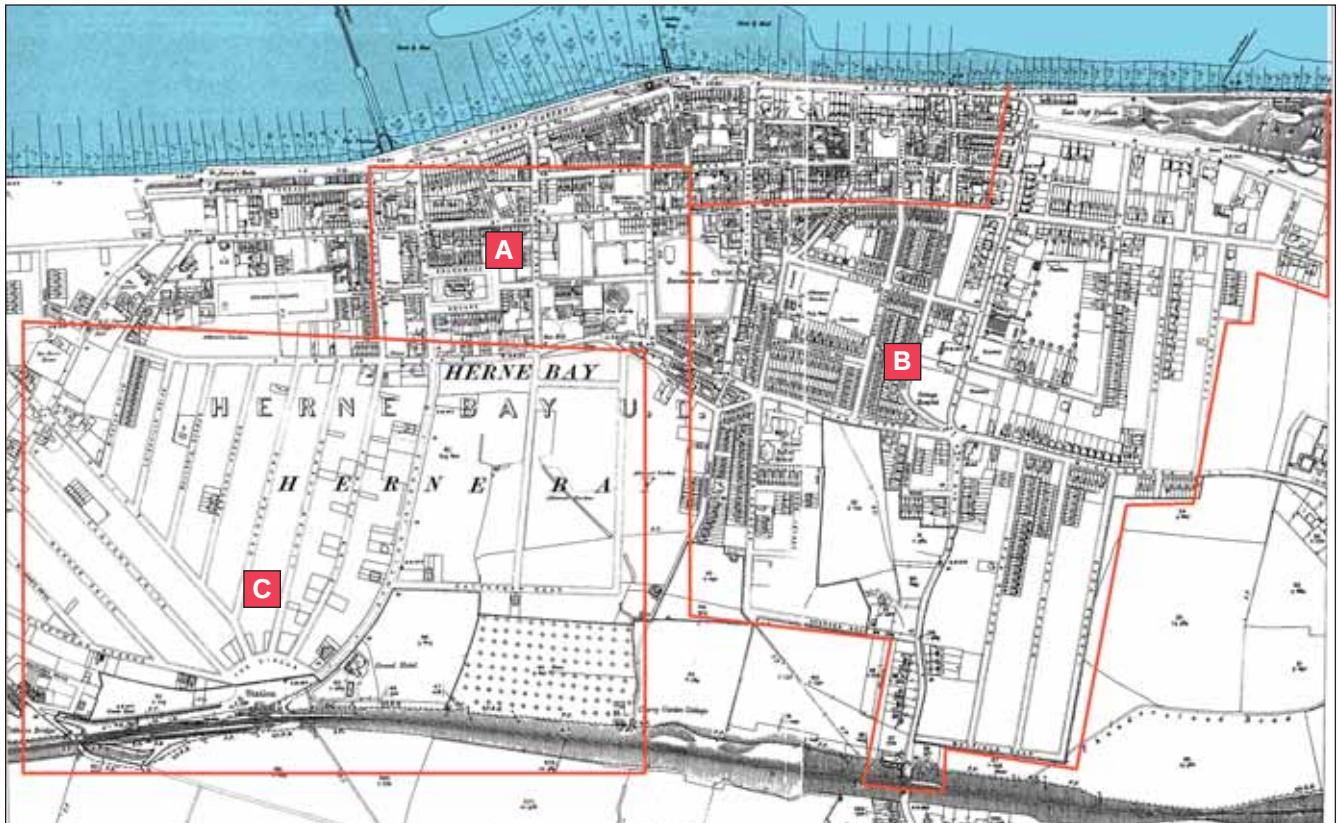
Above: Enlarged map extract showing Plenty Brook and location of 'London House Laundry' in red, in the grounds of Prospect House. Both subsequently demolished.



View east along King's Street with school grounds on right. Note the serpentine curve of the road, reflecting its original rural context - quite a rare layout characteristic within Herne Bay, that it shares with the Canterbury Road

Development between 1898 and 1907

Herne Bay continued to grow as before, in fits and starts, dependant as before on the tourist trade. The lasting importance of this is underlined by the fact that as early as 1903 town advertising was being undertaken by the Chamber of Commerce. It can be seen from the 1907 O.S. map that infilling on plots within the New Town, generally with terrace housing, was now on-going. Brunswick Square was almost filled up. John Street (later re-named Pier Avenue), Richmond Street and even Hanover Street had



Development from 1898 to 1907 with red map extract outlines



Abstract A: 1907 map showing extent of undeveloped plots in green



St John's Church in Brunswick Square.
Subsequently demolished.



Left: South side of the High Street, looking west from William Street. The gradual development of the street front here shows in the variety of architectural façade styles, the products of different building periods. At the date of the 1907 O.S map the two storey parapetted brick building - the town library - in the middle distance did not exist. This site was the last gap to be filled on this particular block. All the ground floors of the buildings seen here are built level with the footway, on basements that rise six feet or more from ground level immediately to the south.

new terraced development. The last major gap on the sea front, close to the end of William Street, was filled, but the two halves of the town were still not fully joined together along the High Street.

The record of the slow but continuing development of farm land for housing is also to be seen in one section of the 1907 map. One set of the new streets laid out some 10 or 15 years earlier was now built up; this is the South Road/Victoria Park area at the south east end of the High Street. A small playing field, a nursery and allotment gardens at this time occupied part of the core of this area see I on map. By happenstance this extended Hacker's theme of a string of open spaces at the heart of the town. Not part of anyone's master plan this important urban 'lung' was later lost to new local authority housing.

Beacon Hill, Canterbury Road, Mickleburgh Hill and Beltinge Road were being built up, with elaborate new semi's and detached houses and smart new terraces lining the main roads into the town. A grandiose new hotel and shops replaced the old toll cottage at the foot of Mickleburgh Hill. On the slope between the main roads some substantial terraced and semi-detached housing blocks had appeared. More estate roads had been laid out south of Mickleburgh Hill on the slope parallel with the Canterbury Road. This was the high point of late Victorian and Edwardian building at this end of the town. Again development expectations embodied in new road layouts were not met in the buildings. It was to be the 1920's before any more houses were built in significant numbers along these streets.

On an estate map of late 1913 several proposed roads are shown across 'wet marsh' at the centre of what is now the Memorial Park. Towards the end of the Great War the Council accepted the idea, first mooted in 1894, that this area might become a park and recreation ground. Housing development here was abandoned and the low-lying area did indeed become the Park. The east and south perimeter roads of the Park survive from the pre-war plan. That at the south, initially called Culverden Road, was eventually joined to Spenser Road, when it lost its separate identity.

Development between 1907 and 1938

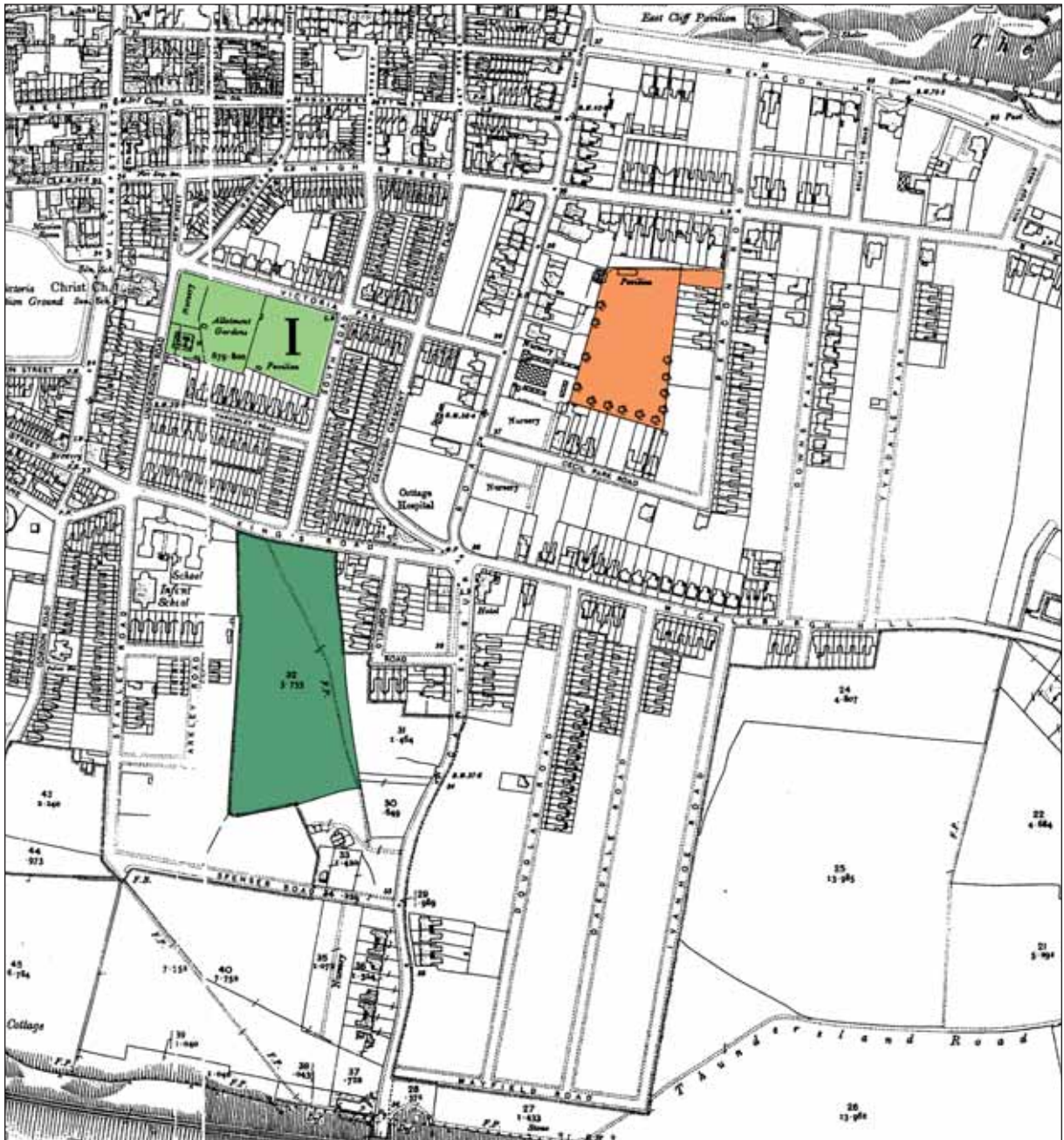
By 1931 the parish's population had risen to 14,533, from a figure of 9,680 in 1911. In the summer at this time its numbers grew to approximately 50,000 (1927). Herne Bay had developed no industry other than tourism and it was said that '...as the health-giving breezes attract visitors each



Three storey semi on the corner of Canterbury Road and Beltinge Road



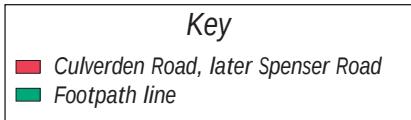
Terrace of semis in Downs Road



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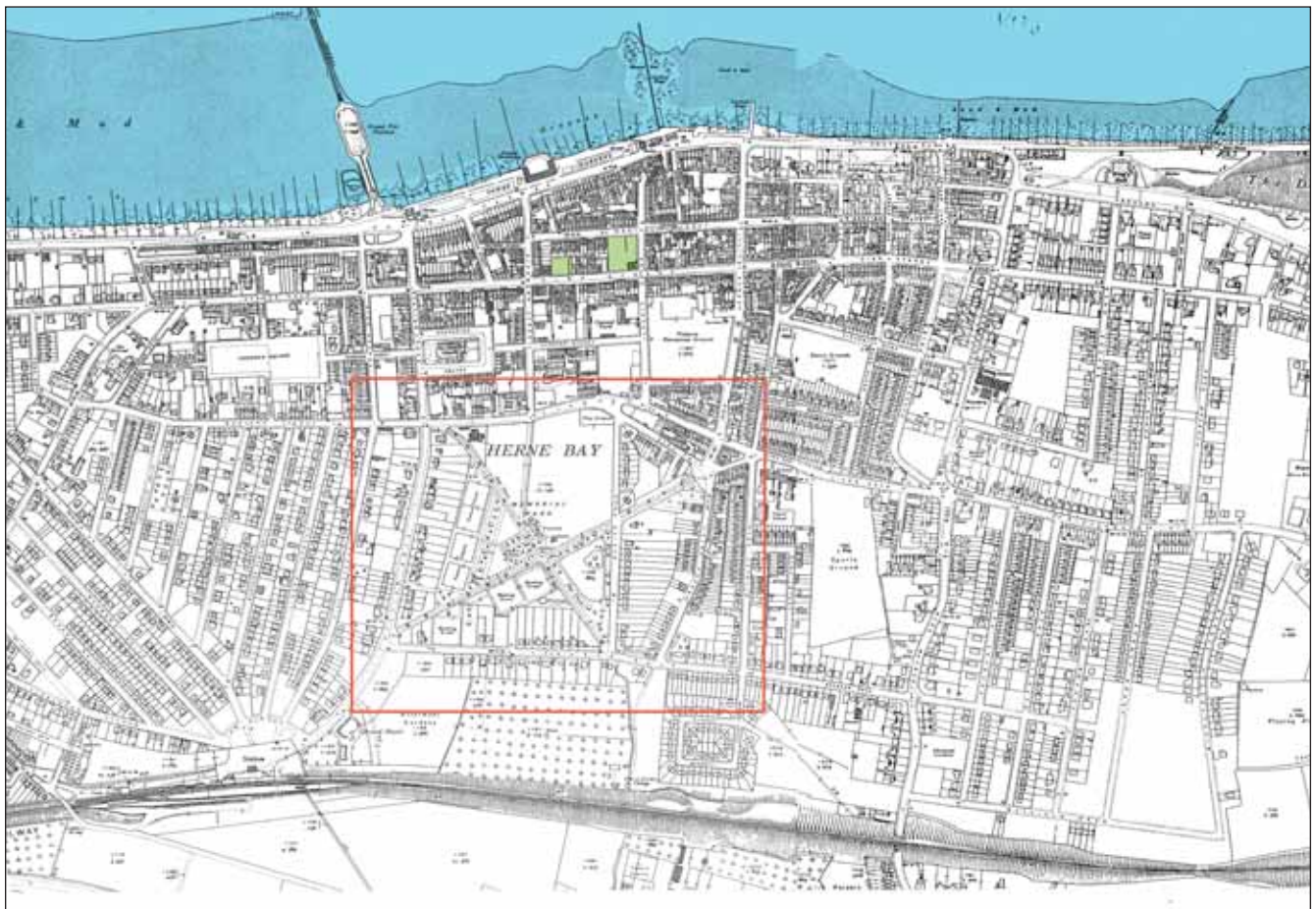


Abstract **B**: Note the 'square' coloured orange hidden by houses on Canterbury Road, Beltinge Road, Beacon Road and Cecil Park Road. Housing developments of this time often enclosed communal open spaces or squares - here it is a games court.



year...the town had adopted the slogan that its only industry is “Health-making”.’ The record of a lecture to the Institute of Municipal and County Engineers by the town’s Surveyor gives some insights into municipal matters in 1927. Prior to his appointment all the roads had been surfaced with ‘pit flints’ some dressed with tar. These roads did not have enough foundation to carry modern traffic and were being gradually resurfaced with improved materials. The whole of the High Street was to be re-laid in reinforced concrete. House refuse in the built up area was removed daily, that from partially developed areas three times weekly. The Council had recently acquired the whole of the bathing rights from Hampton Pier in the west to Beltinge in the east. It also owned 67.5 acres of parks, pleasure grounds and open spaces. Apart from the Downs the largest of these was the War Memorial Park of about 20 acres, which was in course of development. Five hard tennis courts and a ‘Cumberland sea-washed turf’ bowling green had recently been installed and a sports pavilion erected. With regard to the ‘newly-arisen and difficult problem of motor parking places...’ the Council had permitted a restricted free parking of private motors on certain sections of the sea front.





1938 OS map – park area outlined in red (see over).



The bandstand prior to the addition of the screen around, and roof partly over, the auditorium area.



The library - the building with a parapet - had now been built to fill the last gap in the south side of the High Street beyond William Street.

housing but along parts of the High Street and around Mortimer Street 1930s commercial development is an integral part of the local streetscape. The gaps in the commercial frontage to the south side of the central part of the High Street were at last built up but even now one or two open plots on the north side remained.

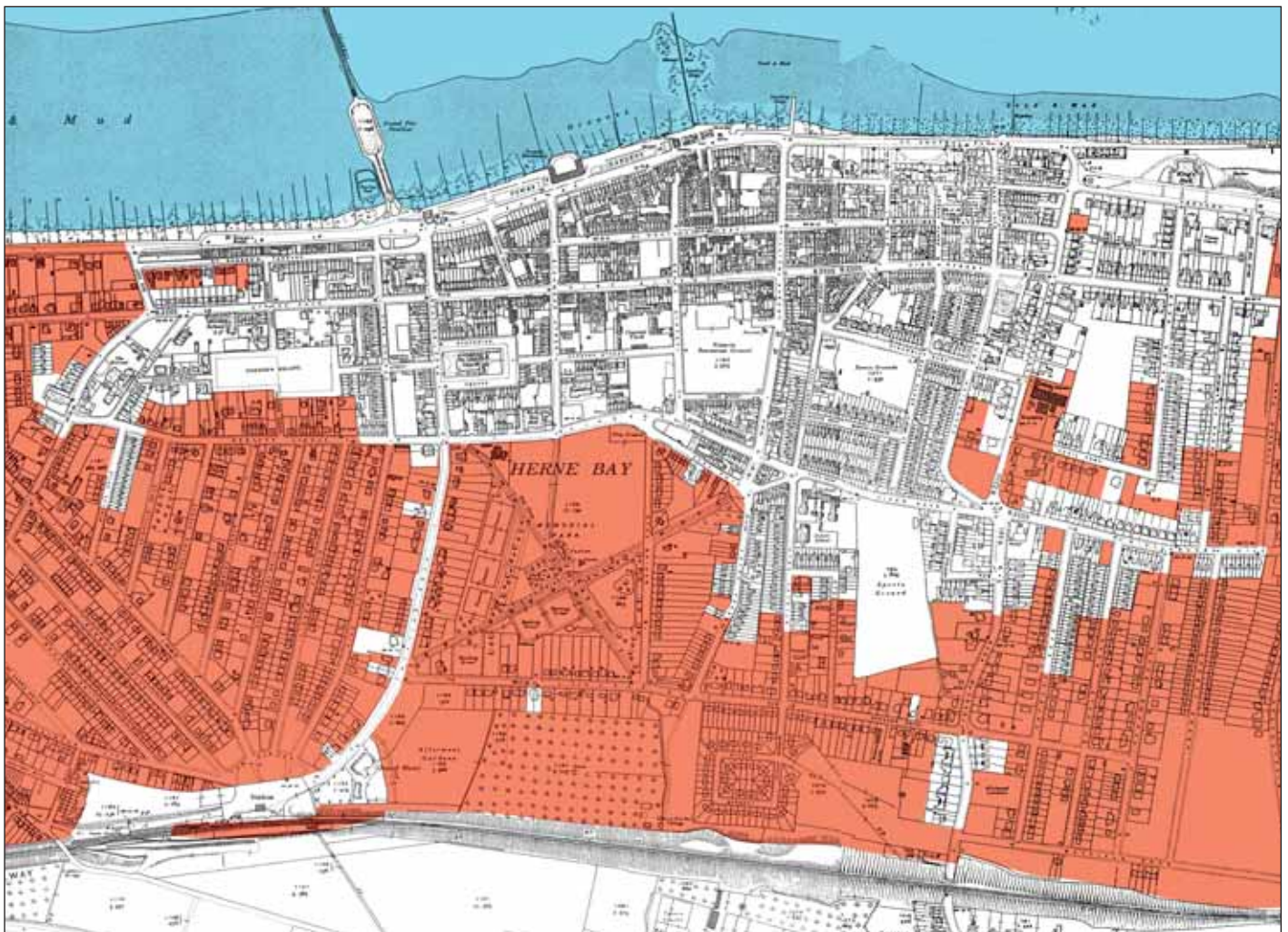
The Memorial Park was the major new feature within the conservation area recorded on the 1938 map and was, and remains, an important asset for the town. It replaced what seems to have partly become a mix of allotments and rubbish tips around the course of the Plenty Brook. In 1923 the local paper recorded that earth from road widening operations at the top of Mickleburgh Hill had been used to build up ground levels of the park. Some 2000 tons of soil was eventually spread over the area of the park, providing work for the unemployed, giving it its present level appearance and obliterating all trace of the Plenty Brook.

The park layout is arranged around tree lined pedestrian 'desire lines' – formally named 'chines' – which pass through it. One runs from the station towards the east end of the town centre, the other crosses this at right angles to connect the east section of Spenser Road with the west end of the town centre. These routes, especially the one to the station, are still heavily used. The latter has an eastern extension into the built up area of the town in the form of a wide tree lined walk. A third route – an avenue – runs from the south end of Richmond Street directly to the War memorial, unveiled in 1922, at the centre of the Park.



Enlargement of section of 1938 OS. map.

Right: Aerial view circa 1970. The Memorial Park etc., looking south west. The visual fragmentation of the environment resulting from detached and semi-detached house and bungalow development is evident. The park area has been levelled up, making the landform here much blander than originally. This levelling up extends to the Gas Works site - now a car park - to the north beyond King's Road, which is two feet and more higher than its surroundings. The station is towards the top right of the photo. Note the allotments which are outside the conservation area, abutting it to the north. These are on the site of the eastern side of the former Lower Great Field. The ditch along their east side is thus an original field boundary from a landscape pre-dating the town. In East Kent such named 'Great' fields may sometimes be medieval in origin.



The 1938 O.S. showing general line of division between pre and post First World War residential development in Herne Bay. Post war development is shown in orange. Almost all the post war development shown is laid out along road lines already established in 1907.



Above: Visual fragmentation in Cecil Park – on the left inter-war and post war houses jumbled together to compete visually. On the right a glimpse of the more ordered townscape world before the Great War.

Right: Façade of purpose-built bus garage on south side of the High Street built post the Great War. The fact that what elsewhere might be a 'prime' retail street front is still occupied by a bus parking compound and covered servicing area, suggests that retail provision in Herne Bay had reached saturation point a while ago. The arrangement is now a good example of functioning mixed use, placing a public transport hub in the town centre.



Below: Pollarded trees in Western Avenue, giving crucial character to the street scene.



In whatever part of the town new housing was built after the Great War, its form betrayed a fundamental shift in attitudes to living. The view that the urban terrace house was an appropriate form of habitation for all classes of society had gone. Detached and semi-detached mansions and semi-detached two storey houses had put in an appearance in Herne Bay from the late 19th century but after the War these types became 'de rigueur'. The private terraced house almost disappeared from the town from this point onward; with it went the visual coherence that derives from this built-form. The effect of this change on 'townscape' is particularly apparent in streets such as Douglas and Oakdale Roads, on the slope east of the Canterbury Road, or in nearby Cecil Park Road. In such circumstances street trees assume particular importance as a visually unifying element.



Ardenne Road, 1912; a sign of things to come.



The pier, with the modern sports pavilion (opened in 1976) in the late 1970s when it still retained its full length.

The three town piers

Today only the shore end of the pier, occupied by a very large late 20th century 'box' containing a sports centre, and its seaward landing stage end, detached in the distance, survive. The gap between the two confirms that it was once a major engineering structure. The first pier, three quarters of a mile long, was built in 1831. Its purpose, as noted earlier, was to help tap into the Thanet towns' holiday trade which by then already involved passenger paddle steamers plying between London, Margate and Ramsgate. At low tide, on this part of the north Kent coast, the sea withdraws a very long way exposing wide expanses of mud and sand. To reach deep water, for round the clock working, a long pier was required. Such functional circumstances were the genesis of all Britain's early long piers. Only afterwards did the idea of the pier as a place in its own right for 'amusements' and the like take root. At 3,600 feet Herne Bay's pier was so long that a transport from ship to shore along it was provided from the start. This was then took in the form of a 'car' running on tracks and powered by wind and foot.



With competition from the railways undermining the passenger steamer trade from the 1840's, the first pier may have seen less and less use. Constructed of timber, it fell into ruin from the 1860s and was demolished in 1871. In 1873 a replacement, in iron but extending only about 100 yards from the shore, was built. This had a small bandstand at the seaward end – perhaps a sign that the London steamer traffic was giving place to 'amusement'. In fact the structure was much too short to allow steamers to call. In due course, in 1884, a wooden theatre and shops were built across its entrance.

In 1899 a third pier was built and had a long history of service with steamers continuing to call right up into the early 1960s. Again of iron, it was once more designed to reach deep water, being 3,787 feet long. The theatre at the entrance was retained and a landing stage and 'Pier Head Restaurant' provided at the seaward end. In addition a short distance out there was a large marquee for band concerts. From this an electric tram service ran out to the head of the pier. In 1910, following the acquisition of the pier by the Council, the site of the marquee was widened and a substantial 'Grand Pier Pavilion' built in its place. This stood alone from 1928 when the old theatre and shops at the entrance were burnt down. After this there were various proposals for, and some small-scale changes made to, the entrance. These have all now disappeared. Even the curved stone balustrading to each side of the entrance (see below left), taken from old London Bridge in the 1830s, went in a great storm in 1953.

In 1968 the pier's seaward end was closed and abandoned. In 1978/79, after damage by storms the remaining elements of the pier, inland as far as the present sports centre (replacing the original 'Grand Pier Pavilion' in 1976) were removed. The pier head with its landing stage proved too solid for demolition and remains today.

The development of the promenade front of the west bay, 1840 to 1938

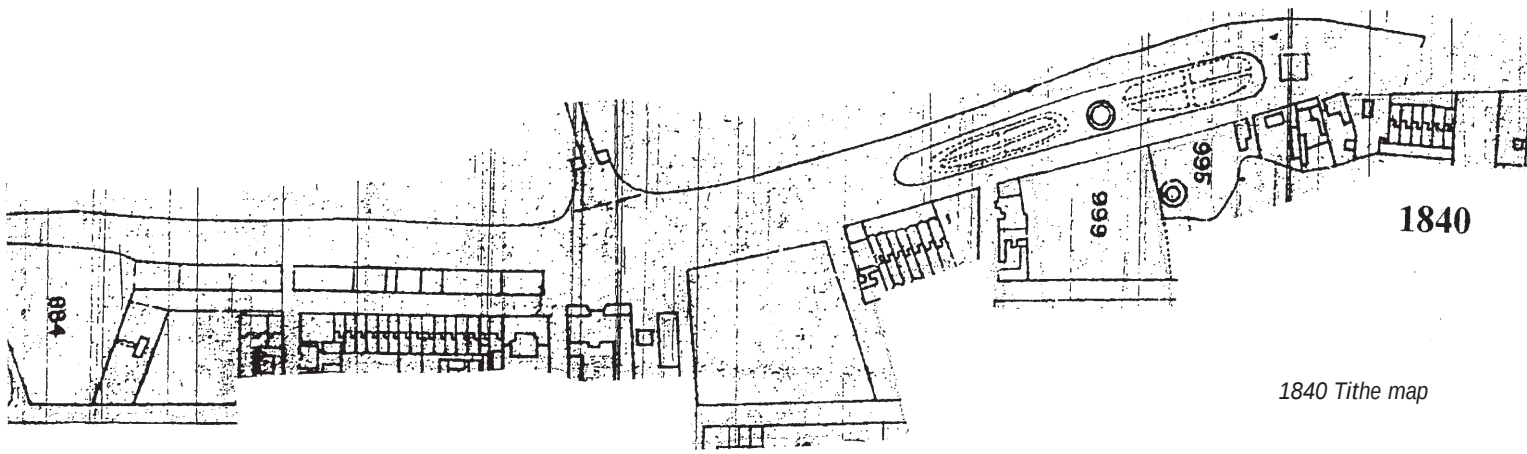
Comparison between the 1840 tithe and 1872 O.S. maps shows that over a period of more than 30 years property development within this part of the sea front was more or less at a standstill. Public landscaped space on the front did, however, evolve and change a little over this time. In 1837 the clock tower was built just west of the then main beaching point for local trading and fishing vessels. This area seems to have been a focus around which holiday making and sea-side commercial activities mixed, on the beach and promenade. A public garden centred on the clock tower, islanded to north and south by roads or paths, is shown on the 1840 map. At its centre is a round structure and to each side of this are crossed walks dividing up four beds or lawns.



The first pier.



The third pier with theatre and shops at entrance and marquee beyond.



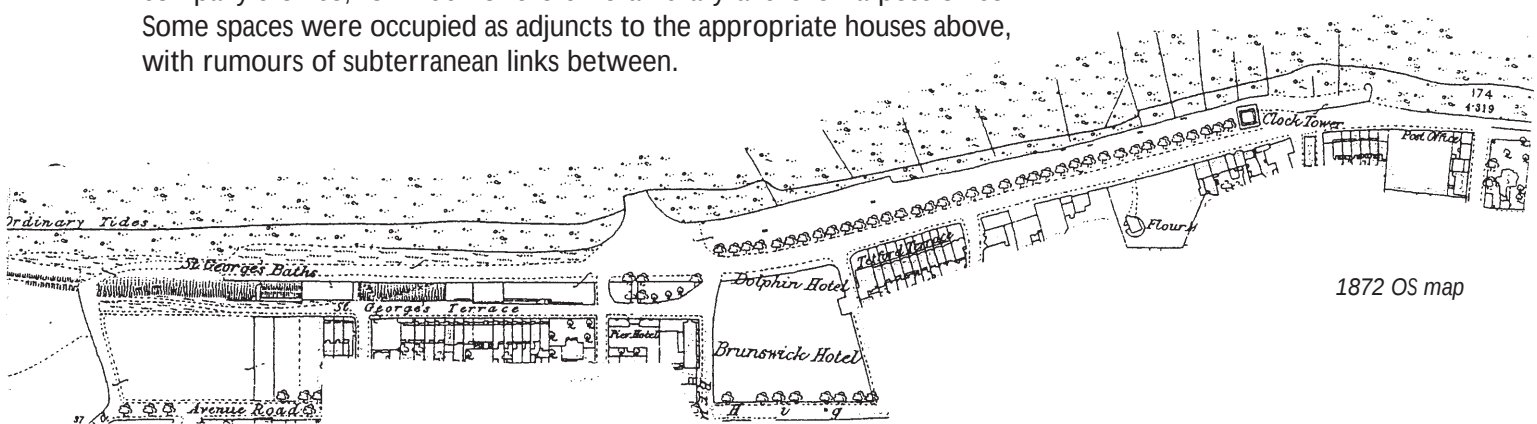
1840 Tithe map

The garden extends west to about half way along Telford Terrace. It was called 'St George's Gardens and Promenade'. In 1842 it was described as "...an enclosed gusset of weeds and brambles, in the centre of which stands a stucco building, constructed in the style of a half-bushel measure, with an inverted funnel on top" (Punch). No details as to the nature of the rest of the public realm along the front are given, though a lot of open ground between the buildings and the sea is shown.

The map of 1872 gives more information and records a major change – the replacing of the garden by a long avenue of trees running west from the Clock Tower almost to the pier and the removal of the former road or track along the edge of the beach in front of the trees. A new small area of landscaping now appears in front of the Pier Hotel. A path through the middle of this planted 'island' leads from the pier directly to the front door of the hotel. Though the hotel has gone, the landscape 'island' survives today, deprived of much meaning now. Study of the area of foreshore recorded in front of St George's Terrace shows that a rather rustic public environment along the edge of the sea was still to be found there then. Uses of the single storey buildings here, apart from the Baths section, included a billiard saloon (which soon became the Kent Tavern), a steamer company's office, for much of the time a library and even a post office. Some spaces were occupied as adjuncts to the appropriate houses above, with rumours of subterranean links between.



From the Punch article of 1842.



1872 OS map



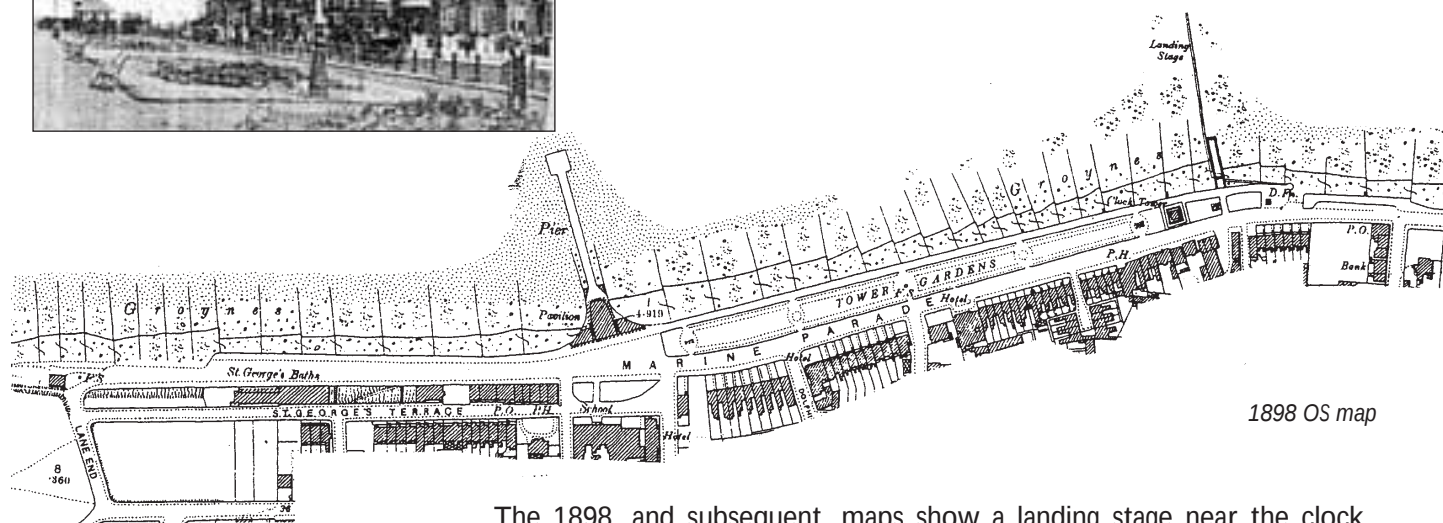
The third pier with 'Grand Pier Pavilion' and reduced scale entrance structure.



The present sports hall pavilion.



View of the clock tower from the Tower Gardens. Note the steep sawn off pyramidal roof of the building to the right of the lamp post. This has vanished. The building is again a public house.

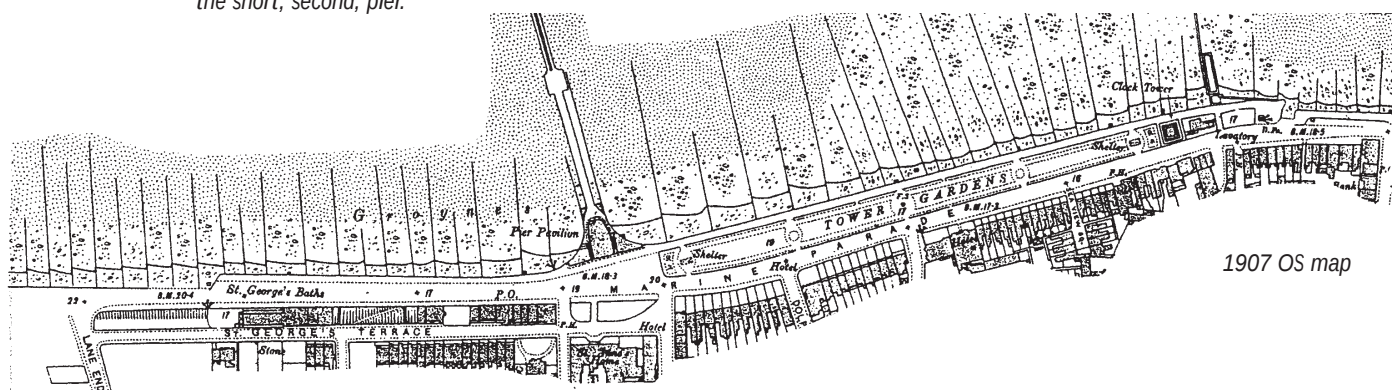


1898 OS map



The other end of the Tower Gardens and the short, second, pier.

The 1898, and subsequent, maps show a landing stage near the clock tower built out to low water mark. Constructed in 1873, this covered the outfall of the culverted Plenty Brook. Serious gap infilling, to the building line, and a new 'Tower Gardens' (a product of the Jubilee year of 1887) replacing the row of trees west of the Clock Tower, are key features of the 1898 map. The open 'square' – the former brick field - between the Pier Hotel and the Dolphin pub has gone. The new 1887 Tower Gardens with a promenade on the seaward, and a road on the landward, sides, provide, essentially, the plan-form we see today. Sea View Square has been squeezed onto the old windmill site following the latter's demolition in 1878. The building at the pier entrance, put up around 1884, is the



1907 OS map



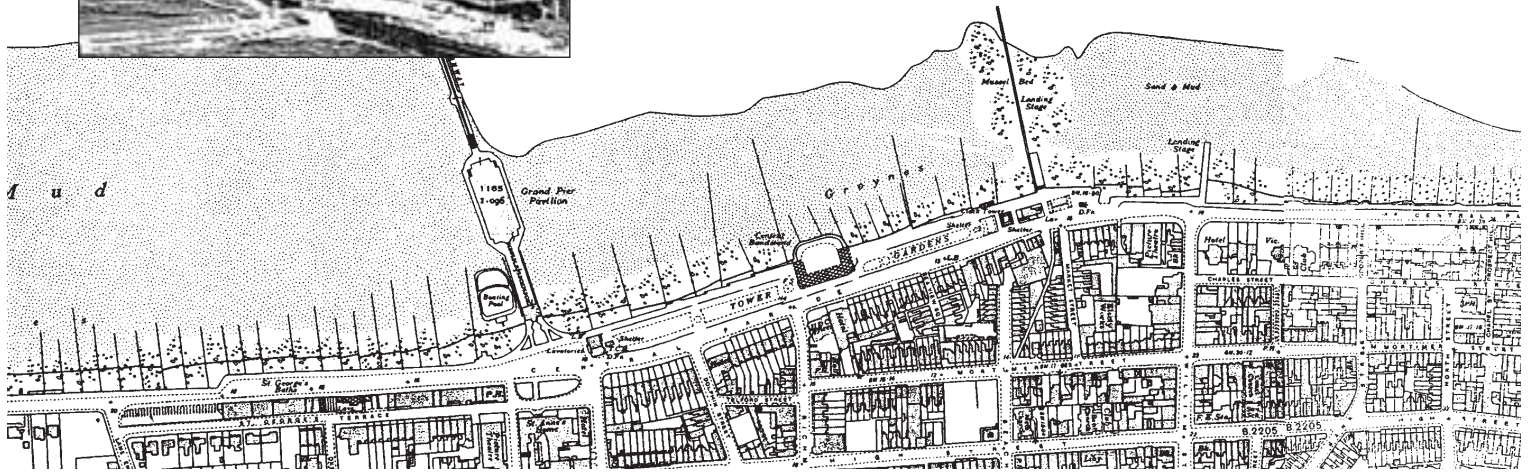
Tower Gardens looking east in about 1900.



The bathing station beyond St George's Baths; these are on the left of the photo.



The Tower Garden shelter of circa 1923, the large structure just east of the Clock Tower. Now demolished.



1938 OS map

wooden theatre and shops described earlier. The Pier Hotel was by now a convalescent home for children from south London parishes. The promenade in front of St George's Terrace has been widened as far as the Baths.

The 1907 map shows further, very minor, changes in the buildings facing onto the Parade. The Gardens have acquired two shelters and an underground public lavatory has been built close to the east side of the Clock Tower. Little further housing development is evident on the 1938 map and St George's Baths are seen expanded to their maximum size with new public lavatories added close to them. More lavatories have been built at the west end of the Tower Garden. These were combined with 'The life saving rocket house'. The first version of the Central Bandstand, cantilevering out over the beach, was built in 1924. In 1932 the continuous roofed, screened, area shown on the 1938 map completed the structure. A second 'landing stage' is shown opposite the end of William St. Built in 1933, this was called Neptune's Jetty.



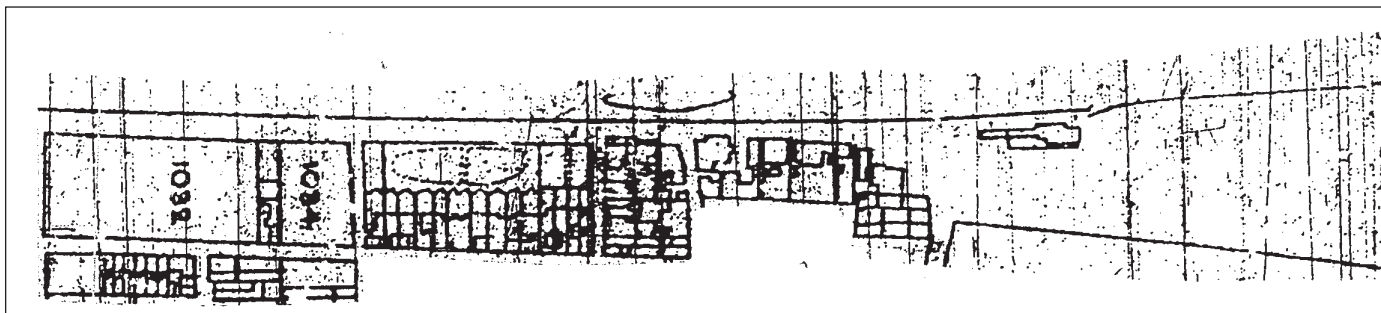
The Pier Hotel, Cinema and Pier entrance arrangements circa 1972. Now demolished. Note the railway station, centre, distance.



Shelter and Rocket Saving House at Pier entrance. Demolished. Superseded by information office and now café.



The Central Bandstand in its final form.



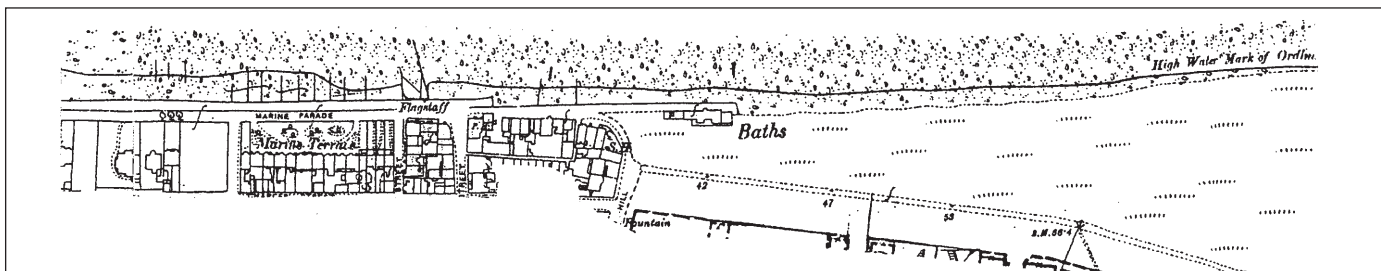
1840 Tithe map.



The east bay, looking east. Part of the picture that has hardly changed.

The development of the promenade front of the east bay, 1840 to 1938

By 1840 all the main components of the grouping of buildings here, including Marine Terrace, the Ship Inn, the narrow, utilitarian, section of promenade and the east facing east-end return of the housing block looking over the Downs, were already in place. So too were the Baths, on the seafront a little further to the east. These stood within the west end of Cliff Field beyond where this joined into the Canterbury Road. A probable reference to the original hamlet's former role as the local landfall point for in-shore vessels, the name of the field behind the Ship Inn is recorded in the Tithe returns as 'Capstan Field'.



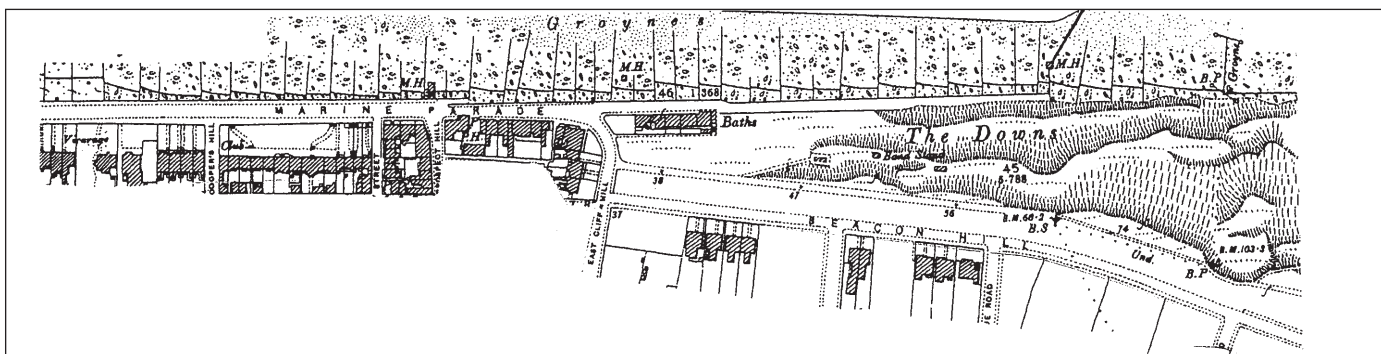
1872 OS. map



1860s. Detail of the Parade in front of the Ship, then little changed in 50 years or so.

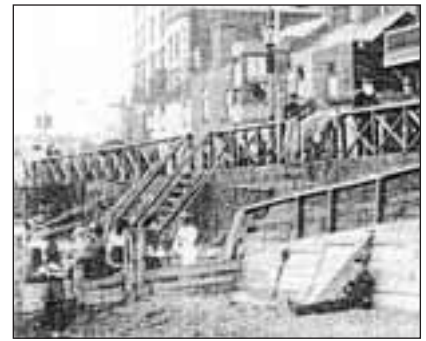
The 1872 map shows much the same picture as thirty years earlier. Marine Parade appears to have been slightly raised up with a ramp to the beach in front of the Ship Inn. One or two Victorian houses were starting to colonise the sea-bank immediately west of Marine Terrace. An historic footpath line following the former boundary between Cliff Field and Horse Race and Camp Fields ran off behind the Baths, south of east along the edge of the Downs. This line is roughly preserved today in the present footpath from Canterbury Road across the Downs. The track to the Baths, an extension of the Parade, ended there.

The 1898 map shows the Baths possibly rebuilt. The low level 'promenade' to the Baths had been extended east as far as a new sewer

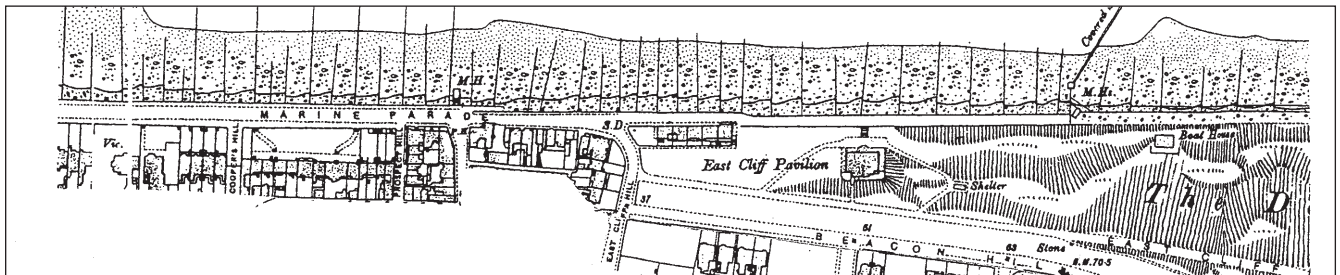


1898 OS. map

outfall built within 8 acres of land bought in Cliff Field by the Herne Bay Urban Sanitary Authority in 1881. Development at Marine Parade remained as before but the promenade had been formed as a wide road with pavements, as far as the ramp down to the beach in front of the Ship. Victorian houses were now filling up more plots to the west, for the sea views. A small bandstand had been erected on the Downs. Beacon Hill road had been constructed, set away from and parallel to, the path shown on the 1872 map, to maintain the latter's rural quality, it is assumed. A few 'desirable', if close spaced, detached and one semi-detached pair of houses with wide views out to sea had been built along the south side of this new 'esplanade' type road.



The beach below the Ship ramp circa 1900.

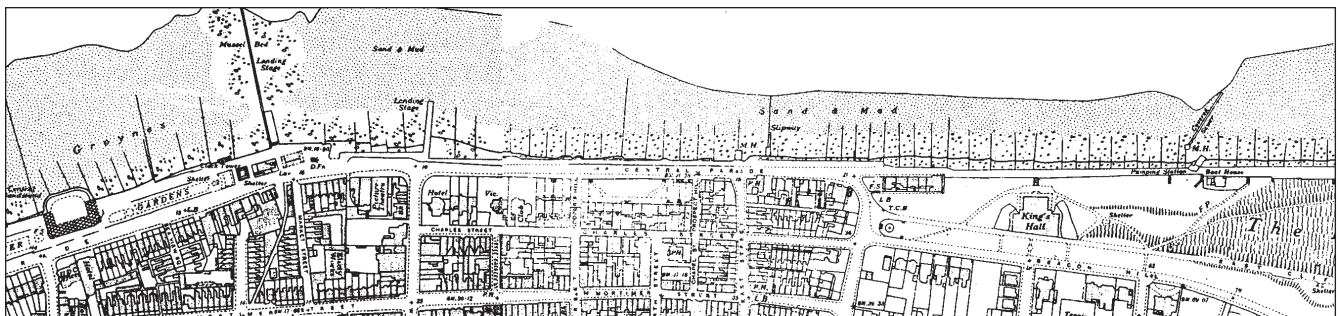


1907 OS. map

The 1907 map shows the East Cliff pavilion of 1904, the gift of Thomas Dence. This was essentially a bandstand, on top of a deck chair store and small auditorium, for use by the band in bad weather. The footpath system up the Downs had been developed, and part diverted away from the old field path line. By 1938, the East Cliff pavilion had been replaced (in 1913) by the larger and more elaborate King Edward Memorial Hall, now the Kings Hall, still operating today. This was the work of the Urban District Council, which converted the existing shelter building into the foyer of the new hall, dug into the cliff. The original bandstand remained on top until 1969.



The Downs on Whit Monday 1911.



1938 OS. map

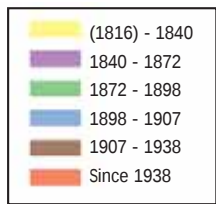


The Downs today, looking back to the east end of the Oxenden New Town and framed on the left by the Edwardian and later houses on Beacon Hill. In the middle distance to the right of the path is the top of the Kings Hall, its bulk set down into the slope of the cliff. Just beyond this are the roofs of the old east cliff baths. Towards the horizon on the right, far out in the bay, is the end of the pier. At the lower far right is part of the town sewage pumping station.



The East Cliff bathing cabins circa 1930: bathing machines were a thing of the past.

Herne Bay - periods of development



Changes to the town, post 1938 to date

The diagrammatic map above uses colour coding to identify and locate various periods of development within the conservation area. Post 1938 development (highlighted in red) is shown to have only taken place (and continues to take place) within the established infrastructure of the previous periods. Like much that went before, this development has been essentially opportunist. It has filled in existing open spaces within the street grid, occupied the sites of redundant workshops or other industrial



Top: the cinema and swimming pool in Hanover Square, seen from the main car park.

Centre: view from Victoria Park road down the entrance road into the former council house scheme on Victoria Park/South Road.

Bottom: view west along High Street up Avenue Road. On the left is the 1960/70s former council housing scheme. True to its time, this does not come near the original building line and makes no concessions to historic context. In this it contrasts with the more recent housing block on the right which is built up to the back line of the footway.



buildings, or completed existing patterns of street development. Examples of late colonisation of long established open spaces within the street grid are the council houses in Pier Avenue, on the sites of the former playing fields of the old St, Anne's Home (the Pier Hotel) and those in Victoria Road/South Road, and the new Leisure Centre off William St./Queen St. (all shown above, right).

Right: View of 1971 showing Beach Street. and High Street. and at the top, Mortimer Street. The rear corner of the bus depot building is in the bottom left of the view. At this time the Supermarket site was occupied by Council storage buildings, yards and mortuary. It may still have been the Council depot. Some of the buildings appear to be of 19th/early 20th century date and may originally have been stables. This was a very interesting historic complex, now completely lost. Low grade asbestos or galvanised iron sheet roofs can be seen on many retail and other commercial buildings put up in the 1930s. The site on the corner of Mortimer Street. and Beach Street now filled by a sheltered housing scheme, is here still vacant as it had been from the beginning.

Below: 1960/70s slab and tower blocks, King's Road.



Examples of infilling in order to complete street frontages can be seen in various places along Canterbury Road and also in the High Street, for instance in the central area, extending to Mortimer Street.

Examples of redevelopment involving demolition are; Morrison's supermarket, the tower blocks and slab block on King's Road replacing two storey houses, the block of flats replacing the Cinema at the east end

Right: former Pier hotel site today. The modern block of flats, on the former Cinema site, extends the end of St George's Terrace eastward .

Below: the same site before the demolition of the Pier Hotel and the Cinema.





Left: the church in Brunswick Square, 1971.

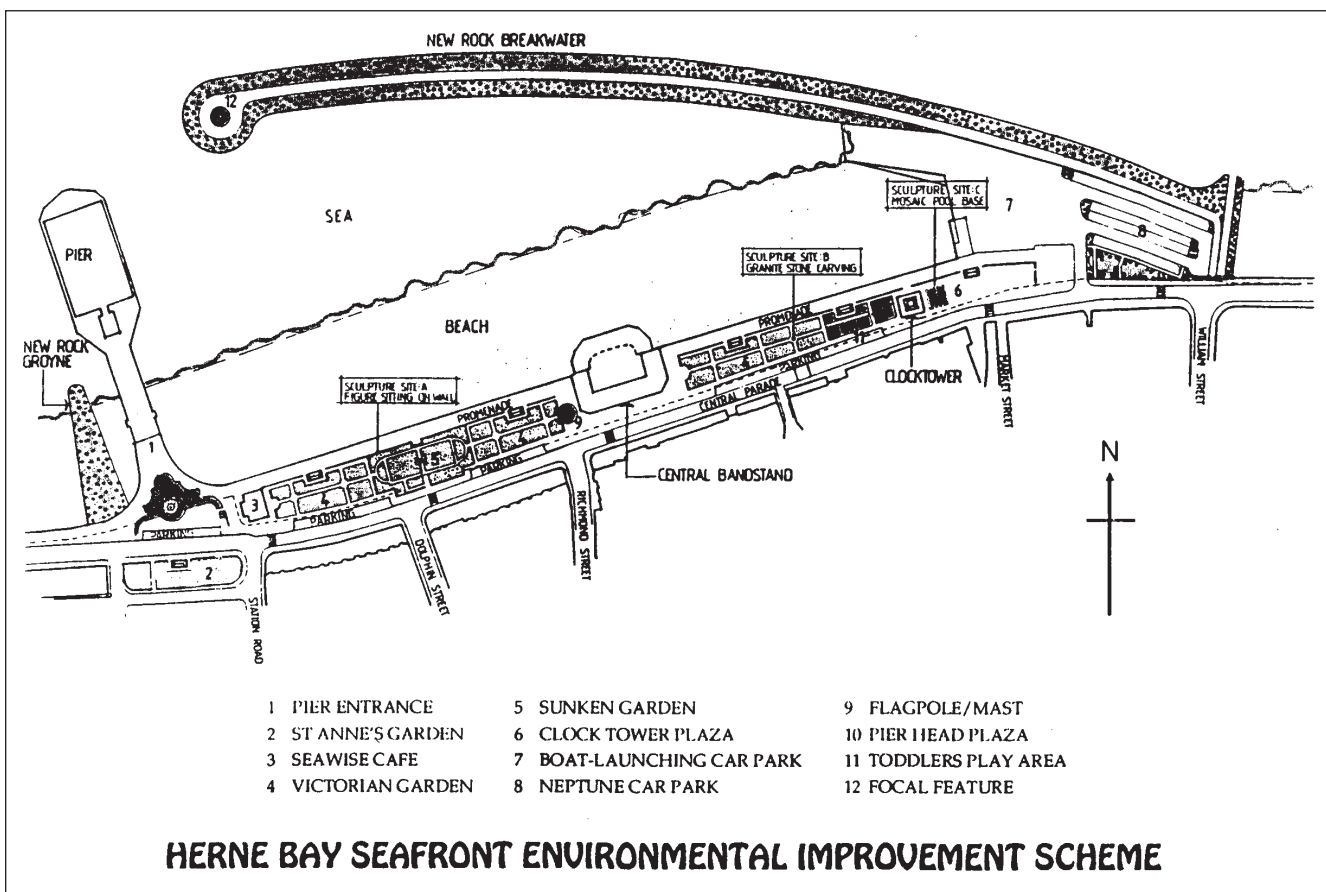
of St George's Terrace, and the tower block replacing the Pier Hotel. A unique case is the sheltered housing block in Brunswick Square. For a while the square had a church in its centre, as originally intended. This was demolished in 1973 and replaced by the present building. The domestic nature of this new building and the demands of economy, cause it to appear to occupy more of the square than its predecessor. It is fortunate for the local townscape that so many trees survive in Brunswick Square.

Hacker's eastern most public open space, Hanover Square, originally intended to be surrounded by houses, became the Victoria Recreation ground. The Council obtained it in 1948 since when it has been a car park, with a small public open space on William Street.

The only other large-scale piece of recent development affecting the town's character is the 'Neptune's Arm' breakwater and associated promenade and sea front works completed in 1993. This key, post 1938, development adds good new elements to the character of the conservation area. The Neptune car park is an area of artificial fill extending from the previous beach line out to a new rock breakwater. The

Below: the present housing scheme filling the Brunswick Square site and forming an entirely new frontage to Station Road.





Above: diagram of seafront works, first half of 1990s.



Above: view of beach and enclosed water, 'Neptune's Arm'.

Right: view east from foot of Clock Tower showing new pedestrianised area.

Below: Neptune car park.





Above: view west from Clock Tower towards bandstand.

breakwater, in turn, extends almost to the present end of the pier and thus encloses and protects a small area of sea and beach in front of the Central Bandstand. These arrangements help protect the most low-lying part of Central Parade, and hence the town centre, from flooding and also provide a sheltered haven for small boats. In addition a ramp from the car park provides a launching place for small pleasure craft within this 'haven'.

In concert with the breakwater project and the rehabilitation of the Central Bandstand, Canterbury City Council have also upgraded the adjoining Tower Gardens area. Within the area of the former gardens modern, more elaborate, interpretations of the original arrangements have been developed. A hedged play area has been introduced alongside new 'historicist' artificial stone, brick and iron railed grass and flower plots. Exact copies of original seaside shelters have been included in these layouts. A sunken garden area, Waltrop Gardens, gives better protection to plants and users. The bandstand forms the centrepiece of the design. The fountain from the Victorian garden east of the Clock Tower has been moved into this area.



Waltrop Gardens looking north west to Pier sports hall.



View east to bandstand with Waltrop Gardens on right, with re-sited Victorian fountain.



The former Connaught Hotel, Central Parade, 1890s. Originally brick and 'stone dressed' construction with classical arched ground floor.



The Dolphin Hotel today.

6. The qualities of buildings and spaces, and their contribution to the area.

Hotels

As in some other English seaside resorts, the purpose-built hotel was much less common in Herne Bay than the boarding house. The town seems to have had relatively few genuine hotels and those surviving do not form an important part of its townscape. Examples still to be seen but converted to other uses are the former Dolphin Hotel at the west end of Telford Terrace on the west bay promenade, the former Queen's Hotel at the junction of Mickleburgh Hill with Canterbury Road and the former Grand Hotel on Station Road close to the Station. The original Pier Hotel opposite the entrance to the Pier ceased quite soon to be an hotel, becoming a school and then a 'home' before being demolished and replaced by a modern tower block.

Pubs

Some Pubs operated almost exclusively to serve a localised clientele, others catered for the wider market offering rooms to holidaymakers. Probably because redevelopment pressure in Herne Bay has never been great, a number of Victorian pubs, retaining much of their external decorative quality, have survived. Individually, each of these buildings makes a very important contribution to the character of the conservation area. In a few cases they are all that is left of a former more extensive local historic environment. One pub already mentioned, the White Horse in Avenue Road, retains in the courtyard behind it, livery stable buildings built for the horses that pulled the bathing machines and the Canterbury/Dover coach.

Characteristic features: Herne Bay pubs.

- The only consistent major feature is that of siting – almost all are on street corners, one exception being the Rodney's Head, a 20th century 'road house' style building on a site in the Oxenden Estate cleared of earlier buildings.
- Other than this, quality of material and detail is invariably very high.



The 'Royal' Pier Hotel, built in 1832 to catch visitors arriving at the pier. Demolished in the 1960's.



Top left: Queen Victoria, corner Beach Street/High Street. 1840-50. **Top right:** Richmond Inn, corner Mortimer Street/Richmond Street. 1840/70. **Centre left:** Druid's Head, corner Bank Street/High Street. Two phases pre 1840 and late 19th century. **Centre right:** Bun Penny, 1865. Built as Doctor's premises. Corner William Street/Central Parade. **Bottom left:** The modern 'Pier Hotel' – formerly the Brunswick. Corner Central Parade/Station Road. circa 1837 & late 19th century. **Bottom right:** Prince of Wales Hotel rebuild of circa 1900. Corner Mortimer Street/East Street.

Herne Bay

The character of a seaside town

Top: The Rose, corner Mortimer Street/
Bank Street. 1834/35.

Middle: Royal Oak, corner Park
Road./William Street. 1840-1850.

Bottom: The Ship, showing circa 1800
assembly room extension. Main building
possibly circa 1650.



Below: Divers' Arms. Central Parade
1840/1850.



Below: Rodney's Head, North Street, 1938.



Boarding houses

In its early days, wealthy visitors intending to stay in the town often rented entire properties for the holiday season. Later, apart from taking rooms in the town's pubs, most visitors were 'put-up' in what were essentially dwelling houses minimally adapted for paying guests. This tradition continued into the 1960s. Today, with the disappearance of the long-stay holidaymaker, it is often impossible to know whether or not a particular terrace house in the town has at some time or other been a boarding house. It is likely however that the blocks of tall Victorian terrace houses on Central Parade, with their 'sea views' were specifically built for 19th century the holiday trade.

Characteristic features: purpose built 19th century boarding houses

The type is not common in Herne Bay and, therefore, does not warrant detailed categorisation. The two examples shown on this page date from the late 19th century.

The boarding house terrace above, dates from the late 1880s. The details of the rendering show references to the classical design tradition. The building would originally have had a slate roof, possibly with crested ridge tiles. The bay-window top treatment here is a low, hipped-back roof.

The earlier terrace (1883-4) below, has 'Housing Act' fire break walls projecting through the roof slope. Again, the roofs would originally have been of slate with crested ridge tiles (as the property to the left). The pointed bay top gables suggest a 'Gothic' influence.

A distinguishing feature of purpose built boarding houses are equal storey heights throughout the building, as demonstrated in the picture below.



Above and below: Later 19th century boarding house terraces, Central Parade.



Dwelling houses

This section is sub divided under the following headings:

- The 'Regency' and Oxenden Estate period
- The New Town of St Augustine.
- Regency/Victorian period crossovers.
- The Victorian and Edwardian periods.
- Dwelling houses from 1917 to present.

Although scattered and relatively small in numbers, surviving dwellings from periods a) and b) discussed in greater detail here as they illustrate development contemporary with, and complementing, the two original town plans. Development that came after was essentially ad hoc and opportunistic in nature.

a) The 'Regency' and Oxenden Estate period: circa 1815 to circa 1840.

The history of the dwelling house in Herne Bay starts in the Regency period (the style extending in this case into the late 1840s). Examples of individual large, medium and small terrace houses of this period survive on the original Oxenden Estate and elsewhere within Hacker's New Town. The larger terrace houses had little in the way of rear extensions. Those forming Marine Parade had mews arrangements to the rear along Charles Street. Some Marine Parade houses had their roofs raised and extra top floors added later in the 19th century.



Weatherboarding in Mortimer Street, circa 1825, note hipped roofs.



Stuccoed house, 1825, Marine Parade, original detail with added Victorian top floor. Note glazing division differences.



Unaltered 1816 terrace house, East Street. Note surviving dentilled eaves gutter and small dormer.

Detail of later bay window added to 1816 house in East Street. Note mathematical tiles and large glazing divisions.



Mews development in Charles Street, pre-1840.

The majority of the houses of the Oxenden Estate period, large and small, are stuccoed at the front though there are a number of cases of painted mathematical tiling. Bow windows are a feature and later 19th century first floor canted bay windows have been added to most of the smaller terrace houses in East Street. Weatherboard survives on the Ship and another small, but later building (now a shop) on Mortimer Street. Before 'slum clearance' took place, the island of land now occupied by Elizabeth Court, was lined with terrace houses, the smallest of which were also weatherboarded.

Characteristic features: Herne Bay dwelling houses, The Oxenden Estate period.

- Overhanging eaves with gutters.
- Attic rooms with small, well separated dormers.
- Shallow roof pitch for (characteristic) slates, steeper for (less common) peg tiles.
- Chimney stacks.
- Painted stucco front elevations on frame or stock brick. Stock brick rear elevations. Painted stucco always originally 'blocked out' to imitate ashlar.
- Cut, rubbed and gauged brickwork wall opening arches, where applicable.
- Timber weatherboarded elevations, painted (not stained).
- Mathematically tiled elevations, now painted.
- 2 & 3 storey bow fronted bay windows.
- 2 storey canted bay windows, or first floor canted cantilevered bay windows
- Smallest dwellings lack bay windows.
- Timber box sash 6 over 6 pane vertically sliding windows & six panel front doors

b) The New Town of St Augustine

From 1830 with the production of Hacker's New Town design, attempts at 'planned' development around Mortimer Street began but then petered out. Many houses here date from the late 1830s/early 1840s. Parapets replaced the exposed overhanging eaves of the previous phase. Away from the sea front, the use of yellow stock brick for formal front elevations increased; a change from the idea that fronts had to be stuccoed, with rear elevations in brick. An example is a pair of three storey, parapeted, stock brick terrace houses wedged in between later development on the south side of Mortimer Street near the church. A pre 1840 stuccoed-front composition of small houses with parapets can be seen at the west end of Charles Street, designed originally to look out to sea over open space, now built on. (see overleaf)

The east side of William Street, south from the High Street, is lined to begin with by blocks of tall four storey stuccoed Regency terraces with basement areas in front. Their ground floors have not, therefore, been colonised by shops. A number of their original exteriors are greatly altered, confirmed in the condition of their windows and the nature of their present roofs. The group is continued a little way eastward around the corner along the High Street. (see overleaf)

Smaller scale late Regency style terrace houses survive in New Street and in the south part of Bank Street. Though again many of these are damaged visually by later alteration to their detail and finish, they remain an important house-group sociologically and in townscape terms. (see over)

Further south from these, along Underdown Road, is a long row of distinctive mostly small two storey terraces built in the late 1830s/early 1840s. In a minority among the buildings described for this period, these have overhanging eaves with visible low pitched slate roofs. Two storey canted sided bays give extra architectural quality to the composition.



Unaltered pre-1840 houses, Marine Terrace



Mortimer Street: original first and second (mansard) floors. Rare cornice gutter. Later shop fronts.



Pair of houses, Mortimer Street. Later shop fronts.



Top right: late classically proportioned row in Mortimer Street. Rose Inn 1834/35.

Top centre: Small brick terraces, Bank Street. Note sunk panelling.

Top left: Corner of High Street/William Street. Classically designed properties, one with basement area dating from 1844. Late Regency style shallow pitched hip roof and wide overhanging eaves of corner building contrast with parapet beyond. This is said to be a modern replica and to date from 1925. Ground floor possibly heavily altered.

Centre right: Formal stuccoed composition, small terraces, Charles Street.

Centre left: William Street: terraces with front areas, characteristic of national style of period, 1839. Badly altered ground floors.

Bottom: Modern alterations disguise what had been a delightful piece of 1840 town planning. Small terrace houses of the late Regency. Note surviving original detail to windows of dwelling on the left. Bank Street.



Unfortunately parts of this terrace have, again, been inappropriately altered, mostly during the late 20th century.

As we have seen, sporadic attempts in the late 1830s at development along the High Street and its extension, Avenue Road, produced a number of 'islands' of tall four storey and basement terraced town houses. Many now either have shops or offices on the ground floor. Originally their street elevations were of stock brick but where shops were at first not present, their ground floors may, in some cases, have been finished in rusticated stucco – render with incised joints to look like stonework. In one block, shops were certainly there from the beginning, easily arranged because the building's basement floors were at least six feet below road level with ground floors opening directly onto the footway.

A concentration of four-storey late 1830s/early 1840s development on the High Street at its junction with Station Road involves a block of six houses that turn the street corner as the 'Victorianised' Four Fathoms pub. A



similar pattern terracing, further west along Avenue Road beyond its junction with Pier Avenue, was built in 1835. Close to the junction of Pier Avenue and Avenue Road is the early 19th century building complex comprising the White Horse pub, the site of its livery stables and a second three storey street front house whose curved corner (pre-1842) has been built over by slightly later development.

Further west in Avenue Road is what was originally Herne Villa, with a tall stuccoed classical façade to the road. Though extended, this still remains

Top left: Post 1840 houses, Underdown Road, very much in the Regency idiom.

Top centre: Tall New Town first phase terraces, 'metropolitan' scale, corner High Street/Station Road.

Top right: Pub forming corner of block on High Street./Station Road. Note tall bays and Victorian ground floor extension of 1867, over former garden.

Centre left: general view down Avenue Road to 1835, 4 storey, terrace block on north side near junction with Pier Avenue.

Centre right: detail of same block showing rusticated render to ground floor, original iron balcony rails and vertical party wall slot in brickwork.

Far left: White Horse pub and associated contemporary and later development, High Street. Pre and post 1840.

Left: present condition of White Horse livery stable yard. Some original buildings survive to full height, right of view.





Former Herne Villa, pre 1840, now incorporated into later school buildings.



Early 19th century group at corner of York Road. and Sea Street.

Above right: the former St Augustine's Terrace (1835) today.



Three bays of Telford terrace on Central Parade.

entirely characteristic of its period. Still further on, just beyond the west end of the New Town, on Sea Street, is 'The Retreat', another late Regency/early Victorian gentleman's house (completed after 1842) set in its own grounds. It is largely concealed behind walls and hedges. Finally, beyond the 'New Town', at the top of the hill in the suburb of Sea Street, is a group of rendered late 18th or early 19th century two storey dwellings. The nucleus of this group was actually Sea Street farmhouse, relating to a farm west of the road. Typical of such development in any small town or village in east Kent, enough survives for this group to be architecturally/ historically significant.



St. Augustine's Terrace, named after Hacker's New Town, was in place by 1840, on the sea front dangerously near the mouth of the Plenty Brook. To further increase its vulnerability to flooding this row of six four storey terrace houses was built over the classic half up/half down basement. It survives but what is visible of its original fabric is terribly mutilated. Within the former railed basement areas and front gardens squats a single storey terrace of attached flat-roofed shops built between 1896 and 1907. In their turn, these particular shops have suffered drastic erosion and destruction of their original character at the hands of the modern shop-fitter and sign-designer/manufacturer.

Its public elevation, entirely stucco on brick, Telford Terrace, built 1833/4 just beyond the 5-metre contour on the west Promenade carries on the curved front-bay theme of Marine Terrace on the east bay. However, instead of individual curved bay windows being 'applied' to a flat elevation, each individual dwelling elevation is itself planned on the curve. This produces a striking overall appearance but leaves each front entrance pushed to the side and looking slightly uncomfortable. The terrace, initially built as seven bays, was eventually stretched to nine, all raised again on a sub-basement. Originally four storeys high throughout, some bays have been made higher by the addition of a matching extra storey.

St George's Terrace and its associated shops is one part of Hacker's original concept more or less implemented as intended; what we have here was complete by 1835. At the west end of the west bay, it remains the town's major architectural composition. This is because of its siting on rising ground on the bank-top above the beach, its height (five storeys including basements), its great length, (originally 15 bays) and the fact that its stuccoed north elevation retains its proportions as designed. It was



Rear of St George's Terrace, with modern additions.

further lengthened by the equivalent of three bays at the west end, in matching storey heights and style, between 1907 and 1938 by St Peter's Convent, which still occupies this end of the terrace. Beyond St George's Terrace, west across Oxenden Street, is a further matching terrace of three bays contemporary with the main block. Across and below the Terrace's front service road to the north is the row of former single storey shops leading onto the beach. The whole complex was one composition, planned so that the first floor reception room (the piano nobile) of each grand house had a clear view out to sea. The north elevation of the terrace has suffered some damage to detail, (i.e. to windows, railings, balconies etc), but much original fabric remains.

There are two other fragments of the Regency style in Oxenden Street, one being the castellated brick and stucco 'Gothic House' behind St George's Terrace. This is another gentleman's residence, extant by 1854, hidden behind a brick wall in its own grounds. The other is a section of four storey terracing partly in Oxenden Square itself. This comprises the



View of part of Gothic House – Regency, moving towards Victorian style.



Close up view of further section of Terrace to west showing continuous iron balcony.



View of St George's Terrace and shops, looking east.



Close up of St George's Terrace, inter-war extension.



View of St George's Terrace and shops, looking east.



Corner detail of 1835 house group at Oxenden Square/Oxenden Street junction.



Former Regency period double bow-fronted house on Central Parade. Much altered. Original ground floor façade lost.



'Victoria Terrace'. Regency, grading into Victorian, styles, 1865-72. Mortimer Street.

block on the corner of the Square and its neighbour, Montague House, both of 1835, and the only piece of the original concept for the square that was built. Though altered, these three houses make an important contribution to our understanding of the development of the conservation area.

Summary of characteristic features, Herne Bay dwelling houses: The New Town.

- Ironwork to delineate private spaces and to front steps.
- Parapets, at least on public side, hiding roof, (one block only has mansard roof and a 'cornice' gutter.)
- Occasional roofs with wide overhanging eaves.
- Shallow pitched roofs for (characteristic) slates.
- Fire break walls above roof, between dwellings.
- Chimneystacks.
- Vertical sunk slot and panel decoration to parts of front elevations and street corner angles (occasionally).
- Painted stucco front elevations, stock brick rear elevations. Painted stucco always originally 'blocked out' to imitate ashlar stonework.
- Alternative: Some plain stucco to ground floors, some rusticated brick above
- Classically proportioned windows within facades.
- Windows etc set back 4 ½" (half a brick) from face of brickwork.
- Cut, rubbed and gauged brickwork wall opening arches, straight and cambered.
- Timber box sash six over six pane vertically sliding sash windows and panelled front doors painted.
- Stucco string courses to front elevations.
- Substantial 'stone' window cills.
- Iron balconies to 'piano nobile' floors (occur sporadically).

c) Regency/Victorian period crossovers

Terraces from the years 1815 to 1840 adhered to the Georgian or Regency formula. After 1850 the design of the terrace becomes more decorative. In the central part of Mortimer Street is a block of plain, three storey and basement, bay-less, terrace houses that evolves (without change of basic form and proportion) from the late Regency style into early Victorian. Both parts are of the same stock brick with rusticated rendered ground floor elevations. The Victorian section has red & yellow brick dressings to openings and, instead of a parapet, the terrace has overhanging eaves. Sited towards the low point in the street, its front basement areas have the traditional railings and steps. Unique in the town for its "cross over" of period detail, it was completed between 1865 & 1872. It extends the plain, bay window-less, metropolitan architectural idiom of the New Town into the mid 19th century. At a smaller scale the same approach, with design references to the earlier Oxenden Estate development, can be seen in a group of two storey flat-fronted terraces on the High Street put up in the late 19th century. Flat-fronted dwellings of this date are rare in Herne Bay.



*Post 1840 3 storey terrace in High Street
Lower scale contrasts with earlier 4 storey
buildings beyond, Built on full basements.*



*Simple small scale flat fronted Victorian
terraces, High Street/North Street junction,
pre-1866.*

The long vista along Mortimer Street is closed at the west end by a terrace of four houses in Richmond Street. Built in 1863, these too are very much in the Regency manner. They are of two storeys over a basement, with railed areas and front steps, all much damaged. The simple pitched roof with eaves is hipped at each end and is reminiscent of some earlier buildings in the Oxenden estate. The two over two sash window panes confirm the post Regency date; however, the cantilevered single storey projecting bay windows and round headed entrances are nice early 19th century references.

The last piece of substantial terrace house building in the Regency tradition within the town centre is a four storey block put up on the High Street in 1883/4, close to the junction with Station Road. This has a deep basement and narrow decorative iron railed basement areas with unusual projecting two storey front entrance lobby arrangements. These have visual affinities with the projecting porches to the listed terrace houses at Sheerness and Chatham Dockyards. The terrace is also unusual for the town in the very visible mansard form of its roof, complete with dormers. Like the earlier mansard roofed terrace on Mortimer Street there is no parapet; in this case there is simply a brick cornice. Though much damaged, this building is still of considerable historic and architectural interest. Designed to look north, originally over open space to the sea, it is fully balconied on its north elevation.



'Sunnyside' terrace, Mortimer Street, 1880, showing original brickwork. Almost the last terrace to show the influence of the "New Town" style.



*Terrace of 4 in Richmond Street, facing up
Mortimer Street, 1863. Original form of
cantilevered bay window is on left.
Somewhat mutilated.*



*1883/4 terrace on High Street, close to
Station Road. junction.*



Above: Tiny single storey bay windows on later 19th century artisan housing, Market Street.



Above centre: Two storey bay windows, later 19th century, Mortimer Street.



Above right: Three storey bay windows, 1880s, Victoria Park.



Three storey terrace with two storey bay windows, later 19th century, designed, as are all examples here, to meet the Housing Act criteria. Note the fire break walls. South Road. 1890s.



Later 19th century terrace –two storey canted sided bay windows with attic window over. The tall gable became a trademark feature through the centre and east of the town, 1890s. Mortimer Street.

d) The Victorian and Edwardian periods

The Victorian period quickly set its mark on the appearance of houses throughout the town. Certain features persist from the Regency such as – canted sided bay windows, and they become a constant theme in the Town's architecture. The expressed, overhanging, eaves of the earlier Oxenden Estate period houses also became standard again in Victorian times.

Within the conservation area, house types can be sub-divided into three categories – terraced (which might comprise as few as three dwellings), semi-detached and detached. The majority of houses built at this time were terraced or semi-detached. While the houses of the poorest people were invariably two storeyed, those of the better off might be anything up to four storeys high, although three storeys are more common.

Houses built between say 1860 and 1914 followed their own standard patterns influenced particularly by the 1858 Local Government, and succeeding Acts, which among other things prescribed their plans. In 1901 some 60% of the population in England lived in a dwelling of five rooms or more. The greater part of these lived in five roomed houses – two rooms on the ground floor plus a scullery (or kitchen cum scullery) and two or three bedrooms upstairs. These terraced houses are often known as the byelaw type. For the vast majority there was no hall entrance. However, in Herne Bay the hall-entranced type is prevalent, with three bedrooms, and a kitchen and scullery in the rear extension. From about 1890-1900 the houses generally had an upstairs bathroom and toilet. During this time substantial rear extensions became commonplace. There are a few cases in Herne Bay of a single rear extension for each house but usually extensions are paired, creating a bulky effect. As noted earlier, fronts were invariably given bay windows.

The projecting bay window is the key secondary feature, over and above basic block form, giving character to the Victorian and Edwardian architecture of the town. Bays may be rectangular in plan, or they may be canted (splay sided); the latter arrangement is most common. Differences in bay design at roof level however, produce the greatest 'townscape' variety. There were two basic themes. Firstly, bays with tops formed with the eaves gutter line running unbroken around the bay projection. Secondly, bays whose design breaks through the gutter line with gabled tops.

The close of the period saw the rise again of the individual, detached villa. It also saw the appearance of the two storey semi-detached house, prefiguring the new direction taken by speculative development throughout the country following the First World War. Examples include the west end of Avenue Road (built 1914) and the west end of the High Street (late Victorian/Edwardian).

Right: Three storey terrace with ostentatious two storey curved sided bay window and porch (balconies over) and oriel window, 1885. Central Parade.



Below: Exceptional composition employing very simple elements. Note the light effect of the small deftly detailed dormers. 1880s. Cavendish Road.



A precursor to a world of two storey semis after the First War. Paired bay windows with doors at each side. Half of this example has lost its front garden to a later shop, 1875-80. High Street close to Station Road junction.



Block of 3. Non-handed plan. Bays to all 3 dwellings. No bay to top floor but gable introduced above notwithstanding. Special corner entrance detail. Iron balcony arrangement at first floor level may be original. Canterbury Road.



Double bay fronted villa at east end of High Street. Iron balcony has affinities with the Regency style, 1879.



Finely detailed terrace with full height two storey shallow hipped-roofed canted-sided bay windows. Late 19th/early 20th century.



A pre First War house, with bay window and timber trimmings and an attached double motor house. 1910-15: to the west of St George's Terrace.



Summary of characteristic features, Herne Bay dwelling houses: The Victorian and Edwardian periods.

- All sizes of terrace house plan-form standardised within 19th century Local Government Act criteria.
- Fronts set back from back of pavement to a greater or lesser extent. Front basement 'areas' rare.
- Front gardens walled and gate posted. Formerly iron gated and railed. Occasional tiled front path.
- 'Handed' plans producing front doors side-by-side plus combined chimneystacks and rear extensions.
- Open inset porches – front doors set within these.
- Original Victorian front doors often survive.
- Bay windows to fronts, from one storey upward.
- Occasional metal 'hoods' to bay windows at lower levels.
- In certain 'one off' terraces balconies occur. May be brick or metal railed or timber framed and balustraded. Sometimes with roofs.
- Public building fronts in brick. Options: red or yellow stock. May be yellow with red dressings, red with red dressings, low key polychrome use. Moulded brick panels on occasion.
- Building rears generally yellow stock and simplified detail.
- Cut, rubbed and gauged brick lintels to front elevations, often cambered. Sometimes stone lintels, but not very common. Snap header brick arch lintels to rear openings.
- Render not common as main exterior finish. If not used throughout, may be found as panels below windows etc.
- Window cills deep (one brick course min.), heavy stone, or render to match stone.
- Windows double hung timber sliding sash set 4 1/2" (100+ mm) into brickwork. Often 2 over 2 panes to sashes.
- Gutters running round full height bay window tops, or bay window tops formed as gable, thus disrupting guttering.
- Slate or lead covering to bay tops. Lead rolls as appropriate. Also decorative cresting.
- Overhanging eaves with cast iron gutters and cast iron rain water pipes.
- Welsh slate roofs pitched from 30/35 degrees upwards.
- Dormer size modest in relation to roofscapes. Front only, and front and side, lit dormers,
- Fire break walls above roof, between dwellings.
- Chimneystacks.
- Decorative clay ridge tiles with option for decorative finials on gable ends/peaks.
- Roofs generally gabled but sometimes hipped (see villas).
- Options for gable roof verges: decorative bargeboards or parapets or slated over and tilt fillet.

Semi-detached houses in Avenue Road, 1912. Forerunners of the post war private housing estate.

e) Dwelling houses and flats from 1917 to present.



View north along Downs Park Road from junction with Mickleburgh Hill. The mature street trees in the middle distance mark the end of the pre Great War terraces.

Changing attitudes to the concept of the terrace house hardened after the First War when semi-detached and detached houses and bungalows became the preferred forms of development. In addition, exteriors became plainer and the town's bay window motif began to be used with less assurance, in some cases becoming a vestigial apology for its former florid self. Reductions in quality of exterior detail after the war may have initially have been connected with a shortage of skilled building workers. In any case the characteristic stuck; the time when cheap labour allowed builders to indulge in lavish display had passed for good.

The passing of one age into another, nicely shown in the mixture of housing along Downs Park Road, is highlighted in the three illustrations above. The upper right view shows, in the centre, a substantial semi-detached Edwardian style pair with large bays. Next to them is a "semi" emblematic of the inter-war suburb. The lower right view shows the continuation of the same frontage up to Mickleburgh Hill junction. Here, at the end of the road, are four 'almost-terrace' houses with the main body of each dwelling projected forward to again stress separateness from the neighbours. These are rendered, for economy. Tiny gestures towards 'styling' are seen in the reduced area of 'half-timbering' in the gables and the simplified decorative motif above the little bays.



Street frontage on Downs Park Road. Houses further away from, and nearer to, the junction at Mickleburgh Hill are shown above and below.



Far left: View south along Gordon Road. Just beyond the Police Station the 'tight' street frontage development of the 19th century fragments into separately expressed 20th century buildings in the distance.

Left: View south along Canterbury Road beyond junction with Mickleburgh Hill. Street trees hide deteriorating street frontage enclosure.



Victoria Park, 1960s.



Station Road. looking north. Quite high quality materials and design in this suburban context.



Late 20th century 'form follows function' style tower block, King's Road.

Within this new pallet of suburban options quality of individual building design and materials varied. Spenser and Station Roads and Western Avenue have a number of cases where buildings are given interesting character, in spite of use of the ubiquitous external render. However, with this type of development street enclosure is only produced when it is combined with street-side tree planting such as is found in Spenser Road

The 'stripped-down' building design theme continued without a break from 1920 onward. The 1950s council flats on Victoria Park had very plain exteriors concealing good quality 'working class' accommodation, and with good gardens.

The period of council tower block construction came and went in Herne Bay, as it did in other north Kent towns. The scale of the block on the Promenade, and its verticality and mass obviously bear no relation to its historic context, but then that was not a concern of the time. The experiment was repeated on King's Road where tower blocks with central lift lobbies stand each side of a classic 1960's 'slab block' with its prominent 'access balconies'.



Brunswick Square: 1960/70s development.



1960/70s: classic slab and tower blocks

Since the demise of 'social housing', designers (and Planners) have become nervous of the 'bold gesture'. Thus modern examples of 'Housing Association' and similar private sector projects in Herne Bay tend to be palely reflective of their contexts – possessing bay projections of a sort for



Modern slab sided housing block, Mortimer Street. 'Bays' have become flush strips up the walls and 'gables' have shrunk down and retreated behind the gutter line.



Considered attempt at marrying historic and new housing together, 1990s. 'Chislet Court' former Cinema site on Avenue Road.

instance – but are completely lacking in the élan, skill in the use of materials and the visual conviction of their Victorian and Edwardian predecessors. An exception, where some effort at a more sophisticated approach has been made, is Chislet Court on the site of the former Cinema at the junction of Avenue Road and Pier Avenue.



Above: View south from pier entrance. Chislet Court on right. Tower block on former site of Pier Hotel. Present day "Pier Hotel" is public house at extreme left margin of view.

60/70s council housing corner of Avenue Road and Pier Avenue. Homely and alternative in its own right, but layout and design inappropriate for the urban location.



Above left and right: The Rose pub Mortimer Street at the turn of the 19th century and a detail of its signboard today. The doorway is on the chamfered corner. Above this the building corner is rounded off – an elegant solution.



Above: Early chamfered ground floor entrance, rounded corner above, Charles Street/Little Charles Street. Note shallow depth fascia for signboard.

Shops

A modest network of shopping streets is developed around the eastern half of Mortimer Street and the north end of William Street. From here shops extend to the High Street, more or less lining it throughout its length. They are less concentrated in the most eastern part of the High Street, which was the last road section to be put in place in the town centre, and also along its middle section, one of the areas most likely to flood.

Apart from those on the William Street cross axis, the only other north/south running collection of shops, small by comparison, clusters at the Station Road/High Street junction. Shops here may struggle to survive even more than at the east end of the town; one or two appear to have been converted into houses recently.

At the Promenade the shops forming the west side of William Street turn the corner onto the sea front, here becoming ice cream parlours, amusement arcades and the like. The north end of William Street is, thus, an important point of change from retail to 'amusements'. The amusement arcades in front of St George's Terrace, by contrast, do not form part of any wider shopping complex; they are isolated and may have to rely principally on sea-front users for their survival.

There are two other small concentrations of shops, at opposite ends of the Conservation Area. In the west is the purpose built local neighbourhood group at the Sea Street/Avenue Road junction. Further along Sea Street is the last commercial building in this part of the Conservation Area, a motor showroom and workshops. This is paralleled in the east by a similar, purpose built, showroom close to the Canterbury Road/Mickleburgh Hill junction. Here also there is another short terrace of shops.

Isolated small shops – 'corner shops' – occur in a number of places, for instance either on, or close to, King's Road.

The following review of the various basic forms of shop premises in Herne Bay is prefaced by a very brief consideration of the principles of design of the traditional shop front using examples taken from the town.



Regency shop front at the corner of Charles Street and Little Charles Street. The chamfered corner for the shop door with overhanging square first floor corner above later became a motif widely repeated through the town.

The foundation of the design of shop fronts in Herne Bay, as elsewhere, was laid down in the 'Regency' and early Victorian periods when the classical architrave, frieze and cornice supported at each side on little columns or 'pilasters' formed a basic architectural framing to shop windows. Almost from the outset the frieze was utilised to carry lettering advertising the shop – there is one remaining excellent example of this use at the Rose Inn in Mortimer Street.

Over time this arrangement developed with the frieze being given extra depth to accommodate higher profile advertising and the wall below the shop window coming to be called a stall-riser. The word stall harks back to the open marketplace and its 'stall-holders' and here there was a crossover with the conventional shop of the sort we are considering. Many Victorian shops in Herne Bay still have tall and wide sash windows. The lower sashes were raised to allow produce to be displayed, as on a stall, directly to the street; shops commonly using this system were greengrocers and fishmongers.

Through the Victorian period the design of pilasters took on a life of its own, diverging widely from true classical precedent. In particular, pilaster tops were embellished in various ways to provide, as it were, bookcase ends - framing the signboards between them. These features are called console brackets. The concept of 'cornice' sections on top of signboards was retained and the arrangement was sometimes modified to take blind boxes housing roller blinds to protect fronts from the sun. When extended, these fabric blinds were supported on metal arms. A blind box might alternatively be added by fixing it on top of an existing cornice.

As the examples show, the development of what became in effect a 'folk' design tradition retaining, however tenuously, its classical roots, continued through the 19th and on into the 20th century. The most recent examples date, in all likelihood, from the 1930s and show high quality in design and



Simple shop front in New Street with Victorian tall and wide sash windows, small signboard above and, on top of this, a large, added, blind box. The small panes are the modern stuck-on sort not historically related to the original design of the sashes.



Top left: Nicely carved acanthus leaf style console brackets on a single storey Victorian shop extension to a house, New Street.



Very simplified later console bracket, signboard and cornice. The sloping part of the cornice is the front of the blind box for a canvas roller blind.



Curved glazed tile stall-riser and tiled in-go. 1920/30s.



Glazed tile stall riser and pilaster. 1920/30s.



Shop signboard on the High Street to show Victorian deepening of fascia to allow more room for advertising, with a more elaborate cornice above.

materials. It was at this time that a fatal blow to the tradition was given by the arrival of 'modern' design with its distaste for classical ornament. A good example of a shop front in the 'modern' manner stands at the corner of Market Street and Mortimer Street.

Herne Bay possesses numerous intact and partially intact examples of various forms of historic shops from various periods, each making a slightly different contribution to the character of the conservation area. In the light of this, the analysis of types that follows is sub-divided under a number of headings:

- The freestanding single storey row of shops.
- The single storey shop or shops attached to the end of a house or row of terrace houses.
- The single storey shop built into a gap in a taller street frontage
- The single storey shop or shops added to the front of an earlier row of terrace, or other, houses.
- Shop with a flush front built into the ground floor of a former house
- Single storey shops built integrally with a house or flats above.
- Two storey purpose built shops.
- Surviving historic shop front character.



'Moderne' shop front. Market Street/Mortimer Street.

Single shop units in the Mortimer Street. area. That immediately to right was in use as a boot repairer's shop in 1907.





Above left and right: the shops in front of St George's terrace in about 1900, and the only remaining original front section left today.

The freestanding single storey row of shops

The key example of this form is the long row in front of St. George's Terrace. The photograph from the early 1900s, records this building with much original early 19th century fabric intact. It was partly flat roofed from the start; new – and relatively untried – flat-roofing materials were then available. Part of the building still remains in its original flat roofed form. One short section of the original façade, comprising two round headed windows and a door survives today; the rest of the facade has been lost.

Two other rows of single storey shops survive at opposite ends of the town. One, at the junction of Sea Street and Broadway, was built in the early 1930s. The other, on the corner of Bank Street and the High Street, may date from just before the First World War. This latter development may have been conceived as a one storey building or it may have been intended for an upper floor that was never built. As it stands, the building is evidence for relatively low land values within the town centre in the early 20th century. Its attractive front is a typical late example of the mainstream Victorian/Edwardian shop front design tradition characteristic of Herne Bay. Much remains undamaged with key features such as original blind boxes and iron blind stays and chains and decorated glazed tile Ingo's and pilasters intact. At one end of the row is a very delightful small front in a later style, perhaps also of the 1930s (opposite page, bottom right). This is derelict and in very poor condition.

Set tight to the back of the footway, the 1920/30s development at the opposite end of the town, at the end of Avenue Road, is a self-conscious piece of 'town-planning', for visual effect. While land values again seem not to have called for anything higher than one storey here, the leading corner at the junction is given great emphasis, raised up to three storeys high if the prominent roof is included. The group makes an important contribution to the character of this part of the conservation area; simple original shop front detail survives in places.



A view of shops at Avenue Road/Broadway, early 1930s.



Shops at corner of High Street and Bank Street.



Single storey shop, High Street.



Single storey shops, Mortimer Street. Note toothed brickwork to first floor facade.

The single storey shop or shops attached to the end of a house or row of terrace houses

Number 49 Mortimer Street is an example of a small single storey extension attached to the end of a house. It has a low key but well detailed, intact, classical front and good slate roof. In Herne Bay this arrangement could, in principle, come about in two ways. The shop unit might occupy a formerly open piece of ground at the end of a terrace. Alternatively it might be part of an uncompleted two-storey development. A 1920/30s example of the latter can be found in Mortimer Street. (Note the brick toothing in the end of the upper floor façade, intended to accept an extension at first floor level. Illustration, left, below).



Single storey shop, 49 Mortimer St.

The single storey shop built into a gap in a taller street frontage

Late examples of this can be seen in Mortimer Street. Here 1930s two storey facades are interspersed with single storey frontages. In one case a new modern shop façade, 'Curry's', fills a street front gap probably not closed before. A blind wall bridges the gap above the shop, at first floor level. In fact in this case this rather bland and poverty stricken visual device conceals an upper storage floor. The design problem of the single storey shop between higher buildings was by no means a new one in Herne Bay. Macari's may be the most extreme case in the town, at the corner of



High Street: gap infill rebuilding following a fire in 1908.



Mortimer Street: gaps in 1920/30s development.

William Street and the Promenade. Some of the little two-storey house may be relatively early (it may already have existed in 1826) while the low tile fringed section to its right appears 1950/60s in date. The tile fringe hides the usual flat roof. To the left of the house earlier 'infilling' involves some quality Victorian/Edwardian decorative plasterwork (albeit damaged) in the panel that conceals the roof above 'Margot Gowns'.



Corner of William Street and Promenade – "Macaris".

The single storey shop or shops added to the front of an earlier row of terrace, or other, houses

This type of extension was usually built on the existing front garden of a house, or more usually a terrace of houses. There are numerous examples in Herne Bay, particularly in the High Street. Depending on space available the new shop front might be erected less than a metre forward from the original house front, or it might project 3 – 6 metres.

Where there was a major projection the flat roof was often used as a first floor roof terrace for the house behind. Terrace railings were sometimes an opportunity to introduce good quality detail, as at the Four Fathoms pub on the High Street (see overleaf). Sometimes a number of sets of facade alterations can be seen in extended terraces such as Garibaldi Terrace, towards the east end the High Street (see overleaf). Here the top floor windows are original late Regency work and the first floor bays are later 19th century alterations as are the projecting shopfronts with their simple pilasters, console brackets and sign boards.



Corner of Western Avenue and Station Road.



Station Road.



Added-on shop fronts. **Left:** Four Fathoms pub, High Street. Victorian pierced masonry balcony.

Right: Garibaldi Terrace, High Street.



Shop with a flush front built into the ground floor of a former house

This is one of the commonest forms of shop front in the town. A frequent arrangement was for the stair to the upper floors to come down at the back of the shop. This is a satisfactory arrangement if the premises have rear access. There is however a problem if the stair to the first floor can only be reached through the shop. This makes it impossible to let the upper floors separately from the ground floor.



Shop fronts inserted into early 19th century houses –“front” doors open into shops only, Mortimer Street.

The examples above and overleaf all show shop fronts inserted into earlier buildings. This often involved relatively simple structural arrangements. The most basic was the hole cut through a wall and bridged above by a lintel, usually of timbers bolted through a central iron ‘fitch plate’. The timber was in turn concealed by the shop signboard. Sometimes the lintel might be given intermediate support from piers within the opening. Later



Left: glazed tile decorated shop front inserted into brick building, Bank Street.

Right: later chamfered corner door with shop fronts both sides, inserted into timber framed building, Mortimer Street.



Ornate glass panelled 19th century inserted shop front, Bank Street.

the development of small diameter circular iron and steel columns made it possible to take away even more of the ground floor wall to provide the maximum amount of unencumbered glazing. The deep recesses in the shopfront (or Ingos) were an Edwardian/1920s way of catching the eye of the shopper as they passed by.



Left: much altered regency house, corner William Street/Charles Street. The corner of the original brick building is held up, within the inserted later shop front, by a series of circular steel columns set behind glass

Bottom left: deep "in-go" on an inserted early 20th century shop front, William Street.



Intact Victorian pub front in Regency house, Bank Street.





*William Street looking towards Mortimer St.
Bays at second floor level.*

Single storey shops built integral with a house, flats or offices above

The next stage in the developmental chain, commencing in the later Victorian period and running on into the 1930s, was the purpose-designed shop with a flat or flats above. In this a separate access from the street to the flat was included in the overall design, often forming part of the shop frontage. Bays are still 'de rigueur'. One example (above) from the 1930s, has them at second floor, whilst another (below right), has one at first and two at second floor level.



Pilaster and cornice etc 'enclose' from left to right, door to flats above, shop window and shop entrance, East Street.



*1905-7. Separate doors to shop and flats,
High Street.*



*Post Great War. Two high level bays, one at
first floor, High Street.*



One block of flats over shops, close to the junction of North Street with the High Street, is an exception to the bay window rule. The upper floors of this three-storey building are without any modulation. The red rubbed and gauged brickwork around the windows etc, the cornice and the window details, are all references to the 18th century while the shopfront designs and scale are entirely Edwardian. Contrasting with so much else of its period in the town, this is an unusual and interesting, if lonely, building.

Two inter war developments, approaching department stores in their scale occur on opposite sides of the High Street close to its junction with Beach Street. In spite of its plainness, height and the large scale of its ground floor, the classical character of that facing the Methodist Church across Beach Street remains in tune with its location. This was built as the gas company premises, in 1925. The Mills store across the road comprises a modern inserted front in an earlier building joined to a 1920/30s three-storey block. The latter is also in the classical mode, very discrete and with good 'art deco' detail in its shop front and upper floors.

The few post 1945 shop and flat developments in Herne Bay are generally quite small in scale; this is fortunate since they have little architectural merit. One block stands out on account of its size and location however. This is the major three-storey development on the corner of the High Street and William Street. Problems of scale and detailed design are self evident in this case.



Circa 1900, North Street/High Street junction.

Left: well preserved intergral fronts, High Street.



Beach Street, 1925. Former Gas Company offices/showrooms.



Circa 1985, High Street/William Street.



Above: High Street. adjacent former cinema, circa 1960 infill over line of cellars shown in Punch article of 1842.



Right: High Street. 1960 replacement of conservatory/greenhouse nurseryman's shop of circa 1900.

A particular variant of the 'shop integral with flats (or offices) above' arrangement is the street corner unit. This is seen both as the classic 'corner shop' in residential areas and within developed commercial street frontages.



Top left: Stanley Road/Park Road. **Top right:** Mortimer Street/East Street.
Bottom left: William Street/High Street. **Bottom right:** Mortimer Street/Market Street.
 Examples of street corner treatments.



Corner, High Street and East Street



Corner, High Street/Beach Street – early 19th century.

Two storey purpose built shops

When living over the shop ceased to be common practice, an alternative to constructing self contained dwellings at first floor and above was the two storey shop. One remarkable example of this form survives, in Mortimer Street. Built between 1872 and 1879 as one premises, as a Victorian department store, this remained one unit until very recently. Its elevation is designed as three bays. The central 'turret' bore the firm's name and the wall spaces between the upper windows carried lists of the goods available, still visible in some lights. Only slightly damaged, this row retains most of its original detail and thus makes a unique contribution to the local character of the street.



Mortimer Street two storey purpose built shop.



Single storey shop with 'mirrored' corner shops in housing blocks to each side. King's Road/Stanley Road/Park Road/Underdown Road junction.

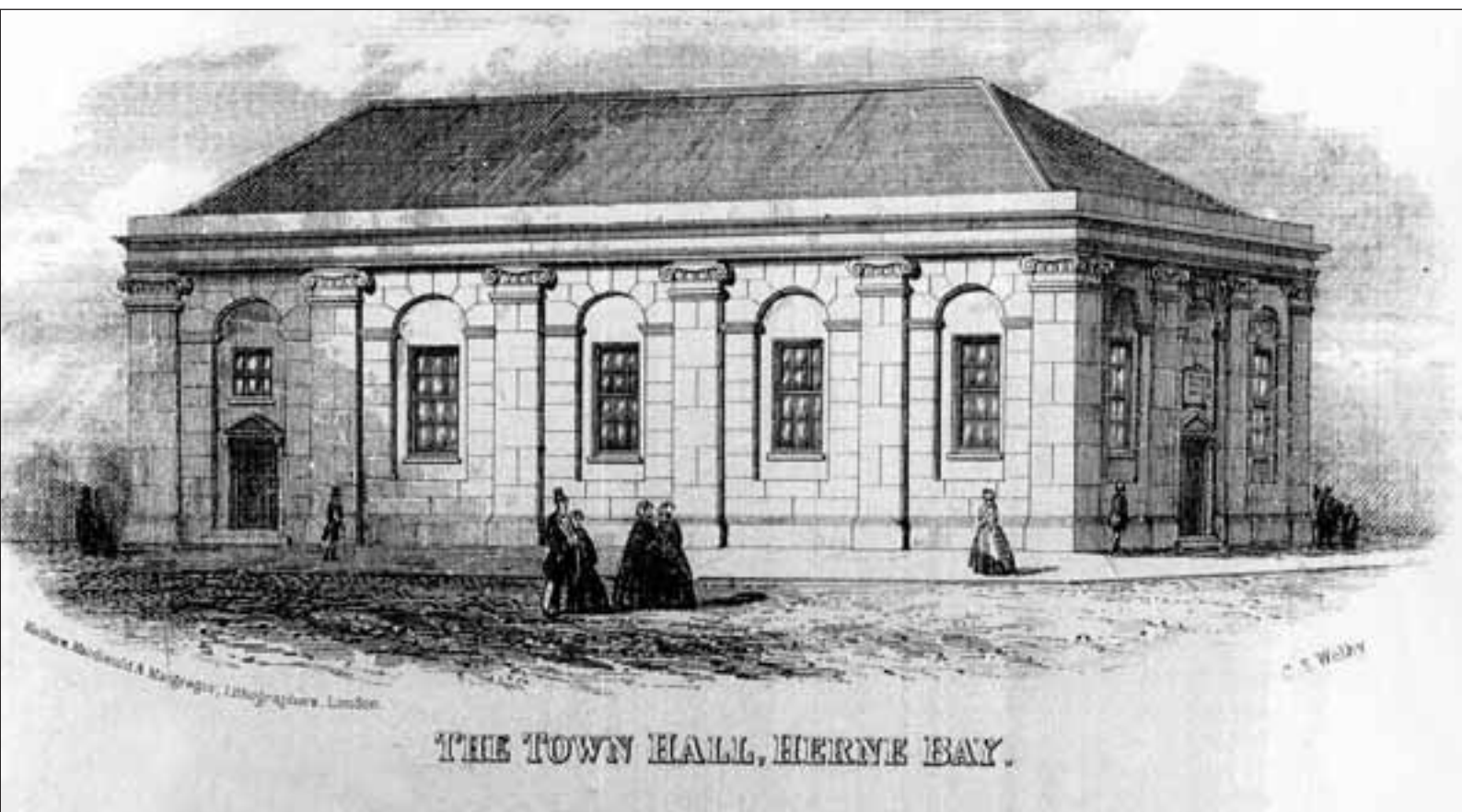
Surviving historic shop front character

It is important to remember that there are many more shop fronts in the town where some or all of the irreplaceable work of the designers and craftsmen of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries can still be seen. In addition there are numbers of fronts where inappropriate later 20th century amendments such as deepening or overlaying of signboards, are likely to hide surviving, and valuable, original details.



Civic and other public buildings

Herne Bay formerly had its own town hall built in 1858. It stood on the corner of the High Street and William Street (see previous page). In 1925 it was burnt down and was not rebuilt. The present HSBC corner building and the adjoining block of three high level bay-fronted shops in black and white 'half timbering' occupy its site. The shop fronts are good examples of the continuing 19th century shop fitters' tradition, the 'art deco' style showing in places (see p70). The stripped down neo-classicism of the HSBC building, completed circa 1934 as a bank, is a reversion to the plain Regency approach to façade design. Unfortunately, poor modern windows have replaced the prominent original ground floor ones. Conceived first as a single storey building, the bank ended up with a 'Public Room Extension' at first floor.



The original Town Hall as proposed but not exactly as built. Opened in 1858.



Fire Station.



Burning of the Town hall, 1925.

Also in the stripped down neo-classical mode, the adjoining fire station, built in 1932, is a first rate example of the style, influenced by the modernism of the period. The visual contrast between this bulky structure and its immediate neighbour to the east is extraordinary.

A third example of the neo-classical theme is the pairing of former Post Office and GPO telephone exchange buildings in Cavendish Road, one with a high pitched tiled roof, the other with a lower roof behind a parapet. Both are purpose built and again are first-rate examples of their period, with considerable 'presence' and beautifully made. They were built in 1934 and 1929 respectively. Again, poor modern windows have replaced the originals, damaging the integrity of the elevations of the GPO telephone exchange building.



First purpose built Post Office, High Street.



Second purpose built Post Office and Telephone Exchange (nearest camera) Cavendish Road.

An earlier purpose built Post Office, a late building of 1907, is now the town library, on the High Street. This is another good piece of restrained civic work, in the late Victorian rather than classical mode. The title 'Herne Bay Post Office' formed in the wide render band at first floor level has been removed. Unusually this small group of buildings has good rear elevations to the central car park.

The former town gas works administration buildings on the corner of King's Road and Beach Street survive at the site of the works, now a car park. One half is likely to have been the site manager's house. A mixture of motifs, both the commercial and domestic, make this an unusually interesting building. So far it has been relatively well preserved. It is in a very prominent 'stand alone' position.

The railway station, built in the 1860s, is a classic example of design for its purpose and of its time. Of brick and slate with decorative detailing, the addition later of the 'port cochere' with its iron columns and lantern lights, gives it extra interest. It remains little damaged by modern interventions.

All the buildings described above add to our understanding of the development of the town and make important contributions to the character of the conservation area. In addition there are two more recent relatively large scale commercial developments, on a par with the civic developments in terms of scale, that as they stand have a negative impact on the character of the conservation area. These are the petrol station in the High Street, and the former Safeway, now Morrison's, supermarket building on Beach Street.



Late Victorian/Edwardian buildings on former gas works site, corner King's Road and Beach Street.

Below left: *Texaco petrol station on High Street with equivalent 'canopy' over the pumps.*

Below: *railway station building, 1860s, with later porte cochere.*



Comparison between the petrol station with its freestanding canopy and the railway station with its equivalent port cochere, highlights the insensitive detailed design of the former, which fails to respond to its town centre location. Standard main road petrol station designs are simply not appropriate to such contexts.

The supermarket building is unusual in that it has its own roof level car park. As with the detailed arrangements of the petrol station in the High Street, the concept is American, and has hardly changed in more than 50 years. The idea of the roof level car park could be suited in principle to a town centre site but in the case of Morrison's the location leaves the building crudely exposed on two sides. On the third side, facing the William Street car park, the large 'fringe' roof of gap-laid slates around the car park 'deck' appears strange and visually ambiguous.



Safeway-Morrison Supermarket, Beach Street.



The most recent civic arrival in the town centre is the combined swimming pool and cinema building, the 'Herons Centre', in Hanover Square. This appears to seek maximum contrast with its built surroundings. Its site planning and appearance certainly make it 'memorable' and distinctive.

Religious buildings in Herne Bay are not architecturally in the first rank but they contribute special local character through their scale, materials and design and are therefore included under this heading. The oldest, Christ Church in William Street, was built in 1834 and was probably designed by A G Clayton. Externally the church is basically a humble brick box with very simple 'Gothick' windows. It was, at first, a non-conformist chapel but became C. of E. in 1840. The transepts and chancel were built in 1868. Its west front was altered – and visually damaged - in 1878. Either side of the church are two little square single storey buildings dating from 1839. These extensions housed schoolrooms and have quirky octagonal buttresses terminating in pinnacles.

Herne Bay Methodist Church is on a corner site on the High Street at its junction with Beach Street. It was built in 1885, of Kent ragstone. It is an object lesson in the Victorian stonemason's craft of polygonal stone walling (on brickwork) combined with smooth 'ashlared' dressings. Its little tower topped by a slender ragstone faced spire is a key landmark in the town. The building has much visual interest but is easily overlooked in the 'street scene' partly because it is railed off from the footway. Sadly, and worryingly, it is now vacant.

The economical expedient of only giving expensive decoration to gables exposed to public view, or of cladding these in stone, again expensive, while leaving the rest of the walls in brick, can be seen at the Congregational Chapel in Mortimer Street, 1864. Here the gable is clad (onto brickwork) in coursed ragstone. The dressings are again ashlar stone. Here too the building makes a valuable contribution to the local street scene. The use extends south across the block to form another frontage on the High Street. This extension is a substantial brick building in stripped down classical style, of 1934. When seen from the end of the road opposite it 'masses up' well into a satisfying architectural composition, but it is less convincing when viewed at an angle from along the High Street.

Top: 'The eagle has landed' – swimming pool and cinema, Hanover Square, seen from car park on the site of former gas holders.

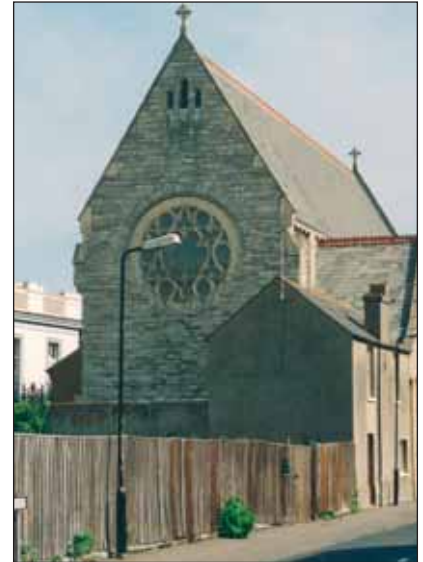
Left centre: Methodist Church.

Left: Congregational Chapel.

Left top: Christ Church, William Street.



Herne Bay Baptist Chapel.



Herne Bay Roman Catholic Church.

On the High Street just to the east of the Methodist church is the Baptist Chapel of 1879. Like Christ Church, this is really a big brick building but with a street elevation given the classical treatment. Although in classical terms the assemblage of motifs on the street gable, carried out in plain render, is rather gauche, this part of the building still makes a very valuable contribution to the character of the town here. The chapel is of interest internally for its original full immersion baptismal pool under the floor. The raised up nature of the High street at this point, to produce basements in buildings abutting the street, helped the incorporation of the pool.

At the other end of the town, in Clarence Road, the Catholic church of 1889-90, a local landmark, is externally quite a refined example of Victorian work. Again, the form is relatively simple, allowing the random coursed ragstone walling to feature as a major aspect of the building's character. Unlike some of the previous examples this is a building designed to be seen externally fully in the round.

The only surviving worthwhile set of school buildings within the Conservation Area are those of the Herne Bay Infant and Junior schools on King's Road. When built (1887) they were set back from the road on virgin ground away from the town centre, designed as an in the round composition. This is a quite architecturally distinguished scheme using good quality materials and is well detailed. 'Sympathetic' extensions have recently been added. The building and its setting make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area.



Herne Bay Infant and Junior Schools.

Buildings for entertainment and recreation

These can be divided into two groups, buildings put up by commercial operators and those provided and run by the council. The only purpose built commercial premises for entertainment within the core of the town – other than pubs etc. - is the former Cinema in the High Street. This was erected about 1899 as the Washington Arcade, running through to Mortimer Street. In 1911 it became the 'Cinema de Luxe' and in 1912 was further altered, probably achieving its present form. It has long since ceased to show films and is now a second hand furniture warehouse.



Former Herne Bay Cinema, High Street.



Cinema entrance and cupola add visual interest to the High Street.

The design involves a central entrance with a 'feature' tower above, with, to each side, pairs of steeply gabled two storey houses with shops on the ground floor. All these features survive but in a mutilated condition. The body of the cinema also survives, to the rear. The cinema entrance with its tower and cupola is an important visual 'incident' on the High Street.



Typical amusement arcade and entertainment signage etc, Promenade.

On the seafront the tradition of seaside entertainment halls and shops stretches back to the late 1830's. The appearance of what survives of historic fabric here today is much debased, compared to its condition even between the wars. One important façade within this area, however, has recently been much improved; this is the prominent two storey gable of the 'Talk of the Town' amusement arcade. This building was originally the Casino cinema rebuilt after a fire in 1928.



'Talk of the Town', the Promenade, refurbished façade.



The Promenade bandstand building today.



East Cliff 'sea baths' building, seen from east, as it is today.

The fate of the original privately operated East Cliff 'sea baths' has been little different from that of the St George's Terrace shops. Although of considerable architectural and historic interest they remain unlisted and much degraded. The original 'baths' building occupied the eastern end of the row and has been completely subsumed by later development.

One council building, the Central Bandstand, has fared better. This focal point on the promenade has been completely refurbished recently and in its restored form makes a key contribution to the quality of the seafront promenade. It is a quite complex and historically interesting piece of 'seaside architecture', providing a rare link to the long history of seaside entertainment in the town.



The King's Hall today.

A second link is the King's Hall on the East Cliff, which, because of its location, does not make a major contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Lastly there is the Pier Sports Hall dating from 1974/5. It would be a mistake to believe that it is the sheer size of this building that makes it 'jar' with local Conservation Area character. It may be a large 'box' but it is the particular form of its cladding, its visual 'inscrutability' and the roof structure extending outwards to produce a continuous sequence of overhanging trapezoidal panels that cause the problem. In addition to its exterior design the building's colour scheme also now looks rather dated and modish. This might be a case where a major 'face lift' could transform things for the better.

View of beach and enclosed water, 'Neptune's Arm'.



Abandoned Park pavilion in Memorial Park.

Top: stone masons yard off Mortimer Street.

Bottom: 'backyard' industry', High Street.



Workshops, depots, showrooms, warehouses, stores etc

For reasons that have been rehearsed already, development pressure on land in central Herne Bay never seems to have been great. As a result pockets of 'back yard' service industry still exist scattered through retail, and also central residential, areas of the town.



Modern plant-hire depots occupy part of the foreground in a view looking west from the roof top car park of the former Safeway (Morrison's) building. Immediately beyond these are very large bus depot sheds and to the left of the latter is a fenced-in bus-park. It is unusual today to find such 'extensive' public transport land uses literally in the centre of a town – in their openness they are the equivalent of the shoppers' car park space on Hanover Square. To the far left of the view is a smaller scale back-land workshop building hidden behind street front houses.

The foregoing examples highlight quite different aspects of non-retail commercial development in the town. The visual impact of small-scale operations is minimised as they are often accommodated in pockets

within areas of dwellings and/or shops, and can contribute to localised variety in the townscape. The large-scale operations, as in the case of the bus depot, are more negative in their contribution to the town's character.

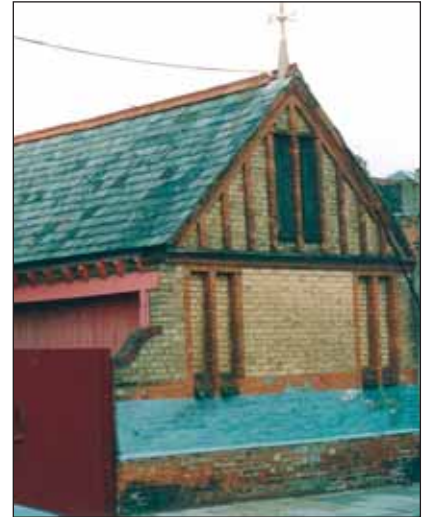
Surviving 'works' and warehouse buildings up to the First World War are usually well built and often of architectural interest, contributing to the character of the town. Almost everywhere these buildings are brick, or brick and stucco, some with tiled, some slated, roofs.

Left - from top:

William Street.

Underdown Road.

Park Road.



Above: Former pumping station off Mortimer Street.

Above top: Richmond Street.



Two particular buildings are worth special attention. The first is the motor showrooms, Queens Court Garage, on the Canterbury Road. Its design is now much debased. The historic photo shows this to have originally been



Detail from historic photo showing quality of execution and design.



Queen's Court garage, Canterbury Road, today.

a very elegant structure. The second was presumably, at one stage, a two-storey motor repair building on King's Road. The ramp and staircase may be later (post 1918), additions to an earlier building that was part of the first town gas works. Both these buildings are of significant historic interest in the context of the development of the town. The first relates to the early days of motoring, the second to early stages in the provision of town gas for cooking and lighting.

Former industrial building on Park Road and King's Road.



Another, and later, small industrial building of local interest stands at the western extremity of the Conservation Area at the junction of Western Avenue and Sea Street. This was built for its present use and is another motor showroom. As initially built in the 1930s, the forward-standing two storey corner block was its main feature. It was later given single storey industrial type extensions on both sides.

'County Garage', Sea Street.



Post First World War buildings in this category tend to employ lightly clad steel or concrete structural frames rather than brick load bearing walls. Such buildings generally have a 'paper thin' external appearance as a result. As is to be expected, the building of this form least in conflict with the historic character of the town is the earliest. This is the 'Tin Tabernacle', the Air Cadet Corps Hall in the corner of the William Street car park, dating from 1883. Its steeply pitched roof, small section corrugated iron cladding and Gothick window all align it with 19th century design in Herne Bay. Later buildings of this sort, where the roof span is modest and the roof pitch anything down to 30 degrees can also relate well with their surroundings. Even larger span sheds such as that of the bus depot retain in the roof pitch a reference to characteristic Herne Bay form. There is however more of a problem with later 20th century sheds of this type. The appearance of such very low roof pitches combined with crude detailed design in such stores/workshops is alien to the established conservation area character.

Public car, and bus parks

Four car parks are sited within the central street block defined by William Street on the east and Beach Street on the west. These are the William Street/Queen Street, Market Street, east Beach Street and the Neptune's Arm car parks. Within the next street block westward are two more car parks – one on the former gas works site and one on the west side of Beach Street.

The car parks off Beach Street occupy land on which small terrace houses formerly stood. That off Market Street occupies the site of the original, planned, Town Market. The last of the covered perimeter booths built for this were destroyed sometime post 1971. The construction of the other car parks referred to above has not involved loss of important historic fabric. All are reasonably well sited to serve shoppers coming to the town centre. None contribute anything of quality to the character of the town; rather the reverse. The appearance of all of them is detrimental to its overall character.

The same has to be said of the bus parking areas behind the bus workshops on the High Street. The street frontages of these, on Hanover Street and Richmond Street, are seriously detrimental to the area's character.



Air Cadet Corps hall, adj. William Street car park.



Warehouse, adj. William Street car park.

View looking west, showing the poor townscape relationship between the bus depot yards and the surrounding streets of Richmond and Hanover Streets.



Public open spaces

Five publicly owned spaces are considered here. These are Memorial Park, the small grassed area in the corner of the William Street/Queen Street car park, and the three sea-front spaces of The Downs, Tower Gardens and the sloping bank beyond the site of the former St George's Baths in the west of the Conservation Area.

Memorial Park has already been described. It makes a key contribution to the town's character, through this could be enhanced. This valuable open space with tennis courts, football pitches, bowling green, boating lake and children's play area is separated from the historic core of the town by the very real 'negative' spaces of the main car park area and the King's Road. The town centre is thus severed from and effectively 'turns its back' on the Park.

The small grassed and treed area in the north west corner of the William Street car park is a vestigial space (space left over after development). In this case most recent developments have been the forming of the adjoining car park and the building of the cinema and swimming pool. Formerly the whole open space between William and Beach Streets had been a small park and this is now all that is left.

The part of the Downs within the conservation area is visually well integrated into the whole. Its perimeter is an interface between the town and the low, open, cliff land to the east – semi-natural open space penetrating into the built environment.

The promenade, or Tower Gardens, has recently been refurbished and developed with the Bandstand as their central feature. Their stylised 'architectural' character is in contrast to the 'natural' appearance of the Downs. This is not inappropriate, given the central position the gardens have within the overall layout of the seafront.

The bank at the far end of St. George's Terrace seems always to have been open space, left as a simple sloping feature. Conservation area character is much damaged here, however, by the crudity of the great hole in the slope left by the removal of the old St. George's Baths.



7. Character Appraisal



Introduction

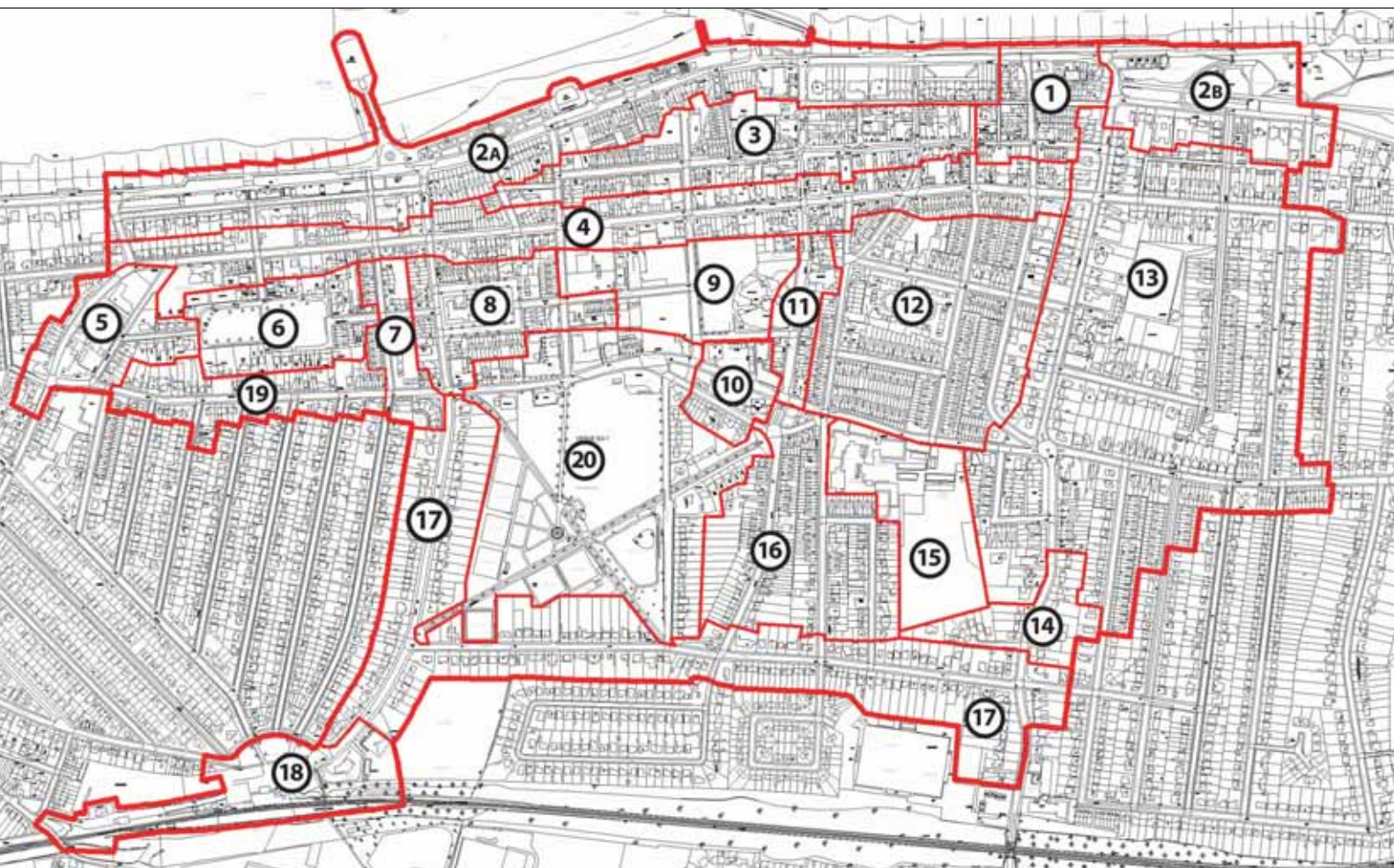
Every settlement of any size can be sub divided into a number of neighbourhoods each with its own special character given by the layout of its streets and open spaces, the nature of its buildings and the relationships between these elements. Division of a conservation area into a number of individual 'character areas' that together make up the whole is one way of defining the character and quality of its overall 'townscape'. Drawing the division lines between character areas is not an exact science but the exercise is essential if discussion of 'townscape' is to be coherently structured. An important element of character in urban environments is the interplay between 'open' and 'enclosed' spaces.

Herne Bay is quite a large and complex conservation area and has been divided up into 20 discrete character areas (see plan). These notes are expanded, and spatial analysis added, in the detailed examination of each character area that follows. Important to each examination is the highlighting of development that is detrimental, as well as development that contributes, to "townscape" quality.

Above: View of Herne Bay and the start of the Downs from the beach to the east. The Pier Head – all that survives of the Pier – is to the far right of the photograph.

Central Parade looking west from in front of the Ship Inn. On the left are the backs of houses climbing the sea-bank on East Street. Westward the view is closed by the two storey bulk of the amusement hall beyond William Street; just beyond this the east bay ends and the west bay begins. Key landmarks here are the clock tower and, further off, the pier sports hall.





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Character areas within the Herne Bay conservation area

- 1.** Narrow street grid of small scale terraces and individual terrace houses with vistas to sea and west along Mortimer Street. Building street frontages set at back of pavement form local linear enclosure.
- 2.** A continuous linear 'promenade' space following the coastline; open to the sea to north, and enclosed and overlooked by building fronts to the south. The large scale (three to five storeys) terraces of Area 2A give this an urban character not achieved elsewhere. Two major spatial 'markers' – pier building and clock tower. Enclosure to the south side of Area 2B is more fragmented, with wide, open, grassed promenade falling towards the sea being fronted by large detached and semi-detached houses.
- 3.** Mortimer Street forms an east-west spine. Compared to Area 1, a wider street grid of two and three storey terraces. Important vista to the sea along William Street. Building street frontages set mostly at back of pavement form local linear street enclosure. Views along Mortimer Street at its intersection with William Street are closed at each end. This, and part pedestrianisation, produce a locally self-contained environment.
- 4.** High Street. Main east-west traffic through-route with very long, unbroken vista diminishing in perspective in both directions. Mostly two and three storey terraces with occasional visual disruptions. Building frontages set largely at back of pavement form linear street enclosure.
- 5.** Historic route flanked one side by wall concealing space with important freestanding buildings. No public impact to the west but church is a key marker seen from the east. Linear terrace street-front on the west with visual disruptions. Separate environment of small detached dwellings to the east side with important view into Oxenden Square and back to church.

6. Planned as Oxenden Square. A key open space with special character arising from: a) its semi-rural, informal spatial quality; and, b) the sporadic and visually low density development surrounding it. To the east it links to Area 7, with a poor view closed by the modern building in Brunswick Square. The church in Area 5 is a key marker to the west.
7. Single-street linear area, generally of poor architectural and spatial quality. Cuts across the main east-west 'grain' of the town and thus visually relates to six other character areas.
8. Centred on Brunswick Square. This character area contains the Square surrounded by two storey terraces with the central space occupied by a modern non-contextual building. Trees in footpaths are crucial to the spatial quality. There are two north-south through-routes with vistas northwards to the sea. Station Road has linear terracing on west side that increases in density towards the north. The west side is broken by Square and trees. There are views east from the centre to key marker church in Area 5. Poor spatial quality where these streets flank Area 9. Key view south to tree-framed entry to park from Richmond Street.
9. The town's central space together with the bus depot. Combined car parking and road spaces make a largely neutral character contribution to the character of the area. Central space enclosed by varied quality of development. East side of William Street and adjacent north east corner development conform to intended plan for a square in this location. Most other surrounding buildings 'turn their backs' on the space. The adjoining bus depot and service area are visually disruptive (as seen at present)..
10. Key small townscape area dissected by roads. Makes a largely neutral or negative contribution to the character of the conservation area. Development is out of scale, and character (slab and tower block housing) with adjoining small scale 'traditional' industrial and terrace development.
11. William Street. An area of two and three storey terraces, detached and semi-detached buildings set mostly at the back of footway that form linear enclosure on the east side. The west side is enclosed, from the south, by further terraces and the side of leisure centre building. There is then a spatial break in the built form with the grassed open space followed by a return to linearity in the form of further terraces up to the High Street. This area has an important continuation, with an eventual sea vista, crossing areas 4, 3 and 2A successively.
12. Detached and terrace houses set back from the highway form a fairly consistent homogenous area. Some visually unrelated modern development.
13. Substantial detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, set back in varying degrees from highway form a fairly consistent homogenous character. Ground rises eastwards. Private tennis courts, concealed from public view, are a significant open space. Two east-west roads allow views towards the town centre and out of the conservation area.
14. Area of modern housing, of no historic value, makes a neutral contribution to the character of the conservation area.
15. Main school complex and playing fields. Freestanding school building and extensions of good quality have a significant street front presence. Grounds are a significant semi-public open space.
16. Area of terraced and detached two storey dwellings, most set a little back from footway to form a linear street enclosure. A number of road/route junctions are located at the northern end and have a separate character from rest. Tower block in Area 10 dominates townscape here.
17. Character area boundary formed by suburban style avenues - Spenser Road and Station Road. Roads lined both sides with detached and semi-detached dwellings; the key elements are the relatively low density and the mature street trees. Long street vistas are closed by slight curves to both roads.
18. This area divides into: a) the railway station with related hard landscaping and public space; and, b) an area of open trackside land extending west from the station to the railway bridge.
19. The conservation area boundary is formed by Western Avenue, a suburban style avenue with a slightly higher density and a more intensive architectural character than Area 17, including some terrace dwellings on the north side. Trees make a valuable streetscape contribution. View out to west closed by curve in road.
20. Memorial Park. A key feature of the conservation area. Well established park with mature tree planting on 'chines'. Bounded on north by varying developments on King's Road. The modern flats here are made prominent by being three storey plus. Bounded on west and south by back gardens of dwellings. Fronted to the east by Dering Road, giving an informal suburban character to this edge of the park. A pedestrian route, or chine, extends the spatial boundary of the park north east into Area 16.



Area 1: The Old Town - Oxenden layout

Street pattern

The road grid here comprises some of the earliest streets in the town including one of later, Victorian, date. Most streets are quite narrow. Two parallel east/west running streets, Mortimer Street and Charles Street are on the bank top with a third, Central Parade, at the bank foot at the water's edge. East Street crosses the first two roughly level east/west streets at right angles and then falls abruptly down the sea bank to meet Central Parade at the Ship Inn. A second south to north connection, Chapel Street/Prospect Hill, repeats this sequence while the third, parallel, North Street runs only between Mortimer Street and Charles Street.

Buildings

Houses are largely terraced, narrow frontage form, mostly built at back of footway or with small front basement 'areas'. Some are among the oldest in the town. A few later examples in Charles Street have small front gardens. Piecemeal terracing in East Street and Chapel Street/Prospect Hill contrasts with runs of continuous terracing in Charles Street. The 'stepped up' form of the houses on the slope of Prospect Hill and the north end of East Street contrasts with levelled-through terrace ground floors elsewhere. Some shops cluster around the junction of Mortimer Street and East Street and extend west along Mortimer Street. Historic York Stone paving survives in one or two places.

The general effect is of high density, with great local variety in historic narrow fronted terrace house types, storey heights – two or three storeys – and age: but also of homogeneity due to the overall small scale nature of the buildings and streets. The historic character of many of the buildings survives; in the case of most others it is, in principle, retrievable. The Rodney's Head pub in North Street designed to be seen partly 'in the round', disrupted local character at the time it was built, though now it is an accepted part of the local scene. Recently more, poor, modern domestic developments, out of place, cheap, boundary fencing etc, has further degraded local character around the pub. The small scale of the area makes it very vulnerable to such insensitive incursions. The only other unsatisfactory building within the area is the Co-Op building in Mortimer Street which is of very poor design compared to its immediate surroundings.



View east along Charles Street, former mews buildings on left.



Original York Stone paving and granite kerbs, East Street.



The Rodney's Head pub in North Street.



View east along Mortimer Street to past junction with Chapel Street.



Key landmark development block seen from the Downs to the east. Baths in foreground. Pier head to far right.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

The street grid/terraced building form of development means that vistas along streets are the overriding spatial characteristic of this area, as of so many other parts of the town. Vistas take two forms: 'closed end' views, as looking east along Mortimer Street, and 'open end' views, as looking north along East Street and Prospect Hill. The former looks into the urban area, the latter, out to sea. The presence of the sea is 'sensed' from the south side of the area in the character of the light at the end of the north/south streets. It comes into view as a 'surprise' once the bank edge further north is reached.

The section of Central Parade within the Oxenden layout offers a different kind of spatial experience. The houses here, again narrow fronted, crowd close to the edge of the beach with a relatively narrow strip of road between, buildings in closer proximity to the sea than anywhere else on the seafront. On the Canterbury Road side of the area similar terracing looks out over the 'Downs' and the sea to Reculver. The building "block" fronting Prospect Hill, Central Parade and the return to Canterbury Road, is a key visual 'marker' on the seafront, prominent from east and west and defining the eastern limit of the original planned town.



View north down East Street looking towards the sea.



Key landmark buildings in the north projecting development block fronting Central Parade.

Below: *Reculver Towers, the Downs and the sea frontage of the Ship Inn and the Oxenden Estate development looking east from the Neptune's Arm car park.*





Detail of Marine Terrace looking west. Victorian development beyond.



The footpath down the sea bank at the divide between Regency and Victorian development of the front.



Detail of the tower block juxtaposed with - and dwarfing - the Pier pub.

Area 2a: Central Parade west from Prospect Hill

Street pattern

The regular street grid of the New Town is 'deformed' here with Central Parade forced to follow the curves of part of the east, and all of the west, bays, while it only begins to climb away from beach level noticeably at its east and west ends. At its west end it is paralleled, a little way south, by St George's Terrace which is on top of the sea bank – an equivalent location to Mortimer Street in the east. At intervals the ends of north/south roads within the New Town grid come through to form junctions with Central Parade.

Buildings

Most buildings along the south side of the Parade were originally built as narrow frontage terraced housing, with the occasional hotel. They form a generally continuous wall of development and range in age from early 19th century to the 1960s and 70s. Their overall scale is larger than for equivalent buildings in Area 1. They 'turn their backs' on the rest of the New Town, facing north over the sea and are consistently taller than those in any other part of the New Town. Their sites are large enough for terraced compositions of considerable length to be achieved. They do not, however, form one overall composition, varying building dates and changing architectural styles make this impossible. While this puts the various sections of the front into visual competition with one another it does provide a gallery of characteristic smart terrace housing types from the Regency through to the 1880s and 90s.



Two significant exceptions to this rule are Marine Terrace in the east and St. George's Terrace in the west. Both have great importance in townscape terms because of their scale and siting, and both are set well back from, and high up above, Central Parade. Marine Terrace with its lawns and St George's Terrace with its terrace of single storey shops, in front of them. They thus have more visual 'status', are more noticeable, than equivalent scaled terraces fronting directly onto Central Parade.

Many of the buildings fronting the Parade are excellent examples of their type; the historic character of most survives, and in others it is retrievable. The few small-scale inadequate modern insertions made within this interesting panorama are self-evident. There are, however, three places where modern development is so detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area as to require comment. The worst case is the tower block and 'podium' building between the Station Road and Pier Avenue junctions. When this and the other tower blocks in Herne Bay were put up, the physical and psychological importance of historic built contexts was not understood. The tower's construction destroyed an important piece of architectural history and townscape in the form of the Pier Hotel. Its siting has disregarded what was left of that building's setting and has created a wide gap in a former continuous frontage to the sea. Its general and detailed design combined with its overpowering verticality will always be alien to the character of the town.



Gradual curve of the west bay Central Parade reflected in the frontage line of Victorian and then Regency terraces. Tower block on site of former Pier Hotel.



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Looking west from clock tower. Dichotomy in residential building styles and blocks along the low part of the front. Central Bandstand in middle distance. Pier beyond. Pier Hotel tower block on horizon.





The west side of the William Street/Central Parade junction.



Detail of boarding houses overlooking the west bay. Tower block and St George's Terrace in background.



Point of change between commercial/retail properties and boarding houses, Central Parade opposite clock tower.

A second, more minor, weakness in the street frontage centres around the Bun Penny pub, extends to the north west side of William Street and runs round onto the Central Parade, westward as far as the Saxon Shore pub. Part of the problem here is a combination of a single storey corner building on a key townscape site that calls for a structure with more visual 'presence'. Much, again, is down to the depredations of the modern shop fitter and sign designer, whose handiwork has replaced that of the 19th, and early 20th centuries. The recent work of these same trades has had the same effect on the rare row of Regency style shops in front of St George's Terrace.

Lastly, there is the Pier Sports Hall. As noted earlier the appearance of this building jars with conservation area character; it might however be possible to ameliorate its effect, perhaps by redesigning its exterior.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Generally, breaks in the built-up frontage facing the sea are small in scale apart from the two cases mentioned above, the tower block site at the west end and the junction of William Street and Central Parade, which make locally large 'holes' in it. East/west vistas along Central Parade are thus a key conservation area feature.

From William Street immediately westward, the lowest part of the front, tall terraces, mostly with short front gardens, line the south side of the road. In front of these Tower Gardens interpose between Central Parade and the sea wall. A key spatial marker here is the clock tower, visible from far away in Area 1, as well as Area 2. The pier Sports Hall is also prominent as a free standing structure here and from far off. Westward, beyond the Pier, Central Parade climbs gradually again as the sea bank appears once more. As noted, St George's Terrace stands on top of this with the row of shops in front of it. Beyond these early 19th century buildings, the 'wall' of the earlier terraces becomes individual two storey houses, forerunners of the typical 20th century form, lacking in space-enclosing quality.



St George's Terrace, the tower block on the Pier Hotel site and the Pier pub, seen from the Pier.



Westward of St Georges Terrace succeeded to west by early 20th century houses.

The eastward street vista from the Hampton end of the Central Parade is closed in the region of the clock tower by the northward projecting 'knuckle' of, now architecturally degraded, amusement buildings which form the transition between the east and west bays of the sea-front.



View east from Pier. Reculver Towers in distance. Clock Tower marks transition point from west to east bays. Telford Terrace on right. Bandstand in centre foreground.



View west from the mouth of the footpath up the sea bank, dividing Marine Terrace from the Victorian development shown here. Key features as before – amusement hall building, Clock Tower, Pier Sports Hall. Neptune's Arm car park on seafront, right.



Area 2b: The Downs



View east from Canterbury Road in front of north projecting development block. Baths on left, Kings Hall beyond these.



View west from Downs to north projecting development block, Oxenden layout. Kings Hall in right foreground.



Street pattern

This comprises the north end of the Canterbury Road and Beacon Hill, on the west and south sides respectively of the area of the Downs within the Conservation area. Pedestrian routes are the East Cliff promenade and the footpaths on the Downs.

Buildings

Various late 19th and early 20th century individual and terraced houses are ranged along Beacon Hill, facing over the Downs. Although there are some poor recent lapses many of these buildings retain significant historic interest which should be protected and appropriately reinforced, given the sensitive nature of the historic space onto which they face. Architectural character is that of substantial two storey, often gabled and balconied, semi detached and detached construction. Two other building blocks are within the open space of the Downs – the eastern Baths building and the King's Hall. Both are of special architectural and historic interest and make important contributions to the character of this part of the conservation area. However, both buildings are in need of attention.



Eastern Bath building.



Promenade. View west from sewage pumping point showing key north projecting development block beyond Kings Hall.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Enclosure provided along the south side of Beacon Hill is weak in places where modern infill has occurred. This is especially so around its junction with Beacon Road; there is little that can be done about this. The key characteristic of the area is the wide and open nature of the grassed slope of the Downs. Views from this space eastward extend locally to the top of the Downs, beyond the conservation area, and embrace the coastline as far as Reculver. Looking west the sloping open space is closed by the historic buildings and building line at Canterbury Road with the Baths building prominent in the foreground.

Area 3: Mortimer Street



Mortimer Street looking east from the junction with William Street. A range of building, and building alteration, dates is visible. The corner building is Regency in origin, with Victorian bay windows and a (probably) early 20th century shop front. The town's Congregational Chapel occupies the street front gap in the middle distance.

Street Pattern

This area centres on the rest of Mortimer Street (beyond the Oxenden Estate section) and related sections of its cross streets, and also the parallel part of Charles Street. At its west end the line of Mortimer Street is carried a little further by Telford Street, the latter pulled “off grid” to accommodate the back gardens of Telford Terrace.

Mortimer Street widens out immediately on leaving Area 1, this reflects its role as an important street in Hacker's New Town. It divides into three main sections from east to west. That on the very top of the sea bank between North Street and declining slightly to William Street; that falling gently from William Street to Beach Street; and that at the lowest level from Beach Street to its termination at Richmond Street. An important cross axis occurs at William Street where Area 3 and Area 11 conjoin.

Beach Street belies its name as it never reached the beach; it ends in car parks behind the houses on the Parade. The top of the clock tower seen above the roofs of these houses shows roughly where it was once supposed to go. Market Street running north off the central section of Mortimer Street, is also included here; it is narrow and still lined on one side by small terraces. Telford Street was originally a back service lane to Telford Terrace.



View east from the widened end of Mortimer Street, part of Hacker's New Town Plan, along the narrow section of Mortimer Street developed earlier under the previous, Oxenden, regime. Note the variety of building dates visible within the latter development.





A Victorian terrace pair in Mortimer Street, successors to a Regency pattern.



Charles Street. Street-fronting Regency terrace composition designed for a view out to sea. Street is narrow corridor formed of fronts and backs of residential properties.



The 'end' of Beach Street – two more town centre car parks with no redeeming features. The surrounding house backs could become genuinely picturesque once more if their originally designed character was reinstated.



Detail, street improvements including planting, opposite the Congregational Chapel.

Buildings

These are generally greater in scale than many within Area 1, but less grand than those on Central Parade. Shops with accommodation above predominate in the eastern section of Mortimer Street with a mixture of commercial and housing in the central, and houses only in the western, sections. Sporadic building on individual plots, or groups of plots, over a considerable time span has resulted in a close jumble of styles, especially within the eastern, shopping, part of the street. Buildings from all periods of the town's development survive. Even those of the 1930s play a modest part in contributing to the street's low key but appealing character. Modern buildings and modern signage tend to detract more from the character of the street than earlier examples, but the damage is usually relatively small scale. The exception is the block of modern housing at the corner of Mortimer Street and Beach Street, Brian Roberts House, where external appearance is far below that of the buildings surrounding it.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

The environment is one of closed vistas in each direction along the length of Mortimer Street. This produces a locally self-contained linear space, entirely confined by two and three storey building, dropping gradually



Mortimer Street looking west from William Street. Note intimate overall scale and view closed by houses on Richmond Street.

down westward. The excellent building closing the view at the far west, on Richmond Street, is thus of considerable townscape importance.

Access to or from the wider world is via the various cross streets with particular emphasis on William Street. This offers routes both ways, to the sea front and to the rest of the town centre. The junction of the two streets is the point of greatest urban density on Mortimer Street.

There are no key marker buildings. Limited modern tree planting and pedestrianisation in the eastern part of the street enhance its user friendliness and character.

There are views north to the sea front along Bank Street, William Street and Market Street. At the north end of Bank Street, steps lead down to the sea via Cooper's Hill. As we have already seen in the case of William Street, there is a gentle widening out of the street as the sea front is approached. The Bun Penny pub (a local focal point building), however, appears as a free standing building with indeterminate 'space left over between buildings' around three sides of it.

The narrow northward looking vista along Market Street opens on its right into a car park that was once the town's market. It tightens up again close to the Parade, down the side of the Diver's Arms. Within the grid block to the west, a footpath cuts across to Central Parade, giving views of a local chaos of rear extensions, untidy back yards and another back-land car park. Still further west off Beach Street is another, arbitrarily sited, small car park amid the back areas and yards of surrounding houses.

Charles Street and its offshoots of Little Charles Street and Bank Street (narrower than Mortimer Street), are again linear in character. As noted earlier, the west-looking vista along Charles Street is closed at William Street, while to the east there are views out to the Downs.



Bun Penny public house. (Character Area 2A)



View north along Market Street to Central Parade and bright light over the sea beyond.

Area 4: High Street and Avenue Road



View east down High Street from beyond Dolphin Street. Gap for petrol station in mid distance. Methodist Church spire is key space marker.



Ornate Victorian three storey gabled shop fronts, High Street, junction with Dolphin Street. Two storey buildings to each side.



Very good quality, street enclosing, late Victorian shops and terracing on the north side of the High Street beyond Dolphin Street.

Street pattern

The High Street and Avenue Road, between Canterbury Road in the east and Sea Street in the west, form the central highway 'spine' of the settlement. Area 4 is defined by a notional boundary drawn at the backs of the properties fronting onto this spine. Short sections of grid roads joining the spine at right angles therefore fall within the Area. This is functionally appropriate as the retail uses that are spread over much of the length of the High Street often turn the corners at junctions, extending for a little way down the side streets.

Buildings

As in Mortimer Street a wide range of building dates occurs, from the Regency period to the 1960s and 70s. The east end of the High Street was completed late on, this explaining why it is partly fronted by late narrow frontage two storey terraces. Those on the south side have small front gardens. Between its junctions with Bank Street and Pier Avenue, retail uses predominate, though occasionally, residential uses intrude. Again, because of the intermittent and historically sporadic nature of the development of the High Street, varying building styles are jumbled together apparently at random. Building scale varies from plot to plot with





Left: view east at junction with Beach Street. Distant view closed by curve in High Street. Bulk of modern retail building on William Street corner shows above rooftops. Methodist Church in foreground, left.

extremes of contrast such as that between the fire station and the next-door two-storey house with its projecting front shop, being not unusual. Retail building frontages are again, generally narrow, producing, as elsewhere, a close spaced visual rhythm in street elevations. This is broken in places by other building types such as churches and chapels.

The historic character of the facades of most of the buildings in the area survives and in others it is retrievable; many are excellent examples of their type. The few, small-scale, inadequate modern insertions made within the overall length of the street are self evident. A better, large scale, recent addition is the road frontage housing block on the corner of Avenue Road and Pier Avenue. Other late 20th century developments in



Ariel view of modern block, corner of William Street. confirming alien overall scale.

Area 4 have not been so satisfactory. The modern shops with two floors of accommodation over, on the corner of William Street and the High Street, are a case in point. The serious problem created by the detailed architectural scaling, materials and poor shop front designs of this building would be less if its siting was not so central, and prominent, within Herne Bay's overall townscape.

There are four other noticeable cases of failure in recent design. These are Cavendish Court - a new housing block on the corner of Cavendish Road, the High Street elevation of the Co-Op building, the Texaco petrol station and the former two storey council flat blocks at the corner of Pier Avenue. As things stand the appearance and/or siting of all these buildings is detrimental to the character of the conservation area.



Extremes of scale, High Street. Fire Station, Congregational Chapel Hall and single storey shop extensions.



Extremes of scale and form, High Street. Modern retail building, three storey narrow frontage houses/shop, wide frontage Chapel elevation, more narrow front two storey houses, Methodist Church – key spatial marker. Out of scale modern shop fronts (fascia problem).





View west down High Street south side, corner of Beach Street. Gable in mid distance is front of bus depot.



View east along High Street past Regency terrace and frontage gap at Pier Avenue.



View from the Roman Catholic primary school, west along Avenue Road and out of the conservation area.



View west down High Street from close to Canterbury Road. Long view masked by change in street direction around South Road/North Street junction.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

The High Street/Avenue Road area is a continuous enclosed corridor, a linear space closed by buildings on each side with generally small gaps between them where cross streets on the grid form junctions. Entering the corridor from the east from the Canterbury Road, the vista westward is closed by a bend at the South Road junction. Once past this, the remaining combined length of the High Street and Avenue Road is seen, the road and the building fronts lining it tapering away almost to vanishing point.

There is a very gradual fall in street gradient towards the junction with Beach Street, the road then runs level and then starts to climb gradually again from its junction with Richmond Street. A hill top is reached in the distance where the corner is turned to meet Sea Street. From either direction this is a very long and visually unrelieved vista.



View west down Avenue Road, from junction with Oxenden Street.

West, from Avenue Road's junction with Oxenden Street, narrow frontage plots cease and are replaced by high boundary walls and trees concealing setback dwellings and large gardens. The effect is briefly broken by the houses adjoining the Roman Catholic primary school, and then returns again in the well treed entrance to Clarence Road. Opposite, the row of large pre-first war semis provides the last substantially built-up frontage at this end of the conservation area.

Around the Avenue Road/Pier Avenue junction, 'opening up' of the streetscape has occurred on the north side. This is due to the demolition of the old Pier Hotel. At present a mess of low modern structures and poor spaces extends west and south from the base of the giant tower block occupying the site. Enclosure is also weak immediately west of the bus depot, buildings and to a lesser extent around the Texaco garage opposite, at the Richmond Street/High Street junction.



A 'blown wide open' street junction High Street/Richmond Street seen from north, from Richmond Street. Petrol station forecourt in foreground, left. Bus depot beyond this, over the High Street, set down in a dip. Visually detrimental slack roof-pitched large modern bus shed. Bus parking exposed to view. Right hand side – view south along Richmond Street to entry to tree lined Avenue of Remembrance in park. To left of trees is a modern retirement housing block not matching quality of equivalent pre-first war examples in the town. Raised nature of High Street carriageway is apparent.



View of the Pier head from Oxenden Street.



The former petrol station site fronting Avenue Road at Pier Avenue, from the west.



View west at the Avenue Road/Pier Road junction. Catholic school building on left in distance is spatial marker. Gable of White Horse pub stands out on left middle distance. On right, open street front site (part of former Pier Hotel site) backed by return elevation of recent block of flats fronting Avenue Road and Pier Avenue. On left, two storey 1960/70s council flats set back from building line. Small front garden trees have no significant impact on street-scene.



The wide gap broken through from the Avenue Road to the sea front at the north end of Pier Avenue. Pier sports hall shows beyond this.



View north east from York Road junction into conservation area around County garage. Sea Street on left, end of Western Avenue on right.



The Catholic Church seen from the Sea Street forecourt of the County Garage. To the left is the first floor of the grade 11 listed house.



The listed house group at the south east end of the conservation area, at the York Road/Sea Street junction.

Area 5: Sea Street, Clarence Road, Montague Street

Street pattern

This area is of considerable historic interest. Sea Street seems to have existed in some form before the founding of the New Town. Clarence Road was designed as the original 'closing off' road at this end of the New Town layout. It had clearly proved impossible to buy up the land on which the Presbytery now stands in order to allow an extension of Montague Street to join directly to Sea Street. The problem was finally dealt with between the wars when Western Avenue was extended to make the connection to Sea Street.

Buildings

Within a small space there is much variety. Ranged along the west side of Sea Street are early 19th, late 19th, early 20th and late 20th century developments of greatly differing scales, all of some interest, though as usual, not relating architecturally to each other. Within the area islanded by roads are a listed house and its ancillary buildings, almost entirely concealed behind high street walls and trees. At the south end of the 'island' is a motor repair garage and showrooms with external car display at back of Sea Street footway. Clarence Road is mostly walled in, fully enclosed, with the tall and narrow Catholic Church overlooking it on the west. At its south east end is a row of good late 19th century semi-detached cottages. Montague Street is lined on the north side with small, usually altered, bungalows. Some of these are of interest for the early date of their original elements.



View along Clarence Road from Avenue Road.



Avenue Road looking west. The purpose built flat and shopping parade at the divide of Sea Street and The Broadway. Conservation area runs round to left including everything in this view.



Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

As one moves west towards where Avenue Road becomes Sea Street the trees in Clarence Road on the left make an important contribution to conservation area character. The corner of the block of inter-war shops on the junction of Sea Street and the Broadway assumes importance as a key local marker. The eye is drawn straight on past this along Broadway but the conservation area carries on around the corner to the left. Immediately round the corner a reduction in character quality occurs at a row of set-back 1950s houses. Beyond these, 19th century terracing picks up the building line again. Opposite these, character is lost in the modern open forecourt of the County garage. Across the road a modern petrol station opens another gap at a street corner, isolating a small group of listed houses at the extremity of the present conservation area.

The high boundary walls around the listed house make a valid conservation area contribution. The church, also within them, is another key local marker sited on the centre line of Hacker's three New Town squares. Its flank closes the view looking west along Montague Street. A few street trees in Montague Street add quality to an otherwise quite ordinary space. Eastward, the view from Montague Street is into and across Oxenden Square – one of Herne Bay's most delightful, and secret, spaces.



View from end of garage forecourt, York Road, looking north east down Clarence Road. South west end of Catholic Church on left.



View west along Avenue Road. End of Clarence Road. first on left; Sea Street second on left. High garden walls conceal single storey modern buildings within.



View west along Montague Street to south east flank of Catholic Church. Trees important in streetscape.

Area 6: Oxenden Square



Oxenden Square seen from its south east corner. In the centre, middle distance, is the sole section of Regency terrace to be built here.



Lavish mock-timber framing to a house on the north east side of the square.



Street pattern

Short sections of metalled road provide access from the surrounding roads to three sides of this grassed open space. On the fourth side the equivalent access route is a grassed pedestrian way. The road the Regency designers intended originally to encircle the square and to join up the four access points never materialised. Unadopted lanes creep round from the southeast and northeast corners of the grassed open space to serve houses and bungalows around its perimeter.

Buildings

These are a 'mixed bag' including pre first war terracing in the south east corner and three units of late Regency housing on the corner of Oxenden Street – the access point in the middle of the north side of the square. This is all the early terraced work ever built here. Everything else is later, a modest terrace row, individual small houses and bungalows and some terracing. Architectural merit varies greatly, from reasonable 1930s (and earlier) work to late 20th century buildings, which have a neutral effect.



From the south east corner of the square, looking west along the path at the garden line of 20th century detached houses facing its south side, to the path's junction with the north/south pedestrian connection to Western Avenue.



Clarence Street leading off east from the south side of the square. Note the variety of building-dates/types.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

The key feature is the large open space intended originally to be surrounded by tall terrace houses. Everything else, around its perimeter, is subservient to this space in terms of scale and character. It comprises two sub spaces, one slightly narrower than the other, falling slightly eastwards, separated by an informal gravelled pathway running between opposite exits to north and south. Trees flank this dividing pathway and are also irregularly disposed around the edges of the space, merging at times with bushes and hedges. The road within the east end of the space quickly turns into gravelled tracks. The grass to the open spaces is roughly cut. The result of all this is space of high, almost rural, informality. This characteristic is reinforced by the low key, low rise, form of the bulk of the surrounding buildings many of which stand on individual plots, separated from each other by trees and hedges.

The view from the grassy square to the Catholic Church at the western end of Montague Street, confirms this as the only 'marker building' in the local townscape – and this is outside the Square. Oxenden Square is a case (an exception proving the rule), where existing character requires that any attempt at further urbanisation by enclosure-forming building, or increases in density, should be strongly resisted. The present sylvan quality of the space should wherever possible be protected at its perimeters.



Looking west down Montague Street to the side of the Catholic Church, on the square's axis.



View into Oxenden Street from Oxenden Square.

Area 7: Pier Avenue



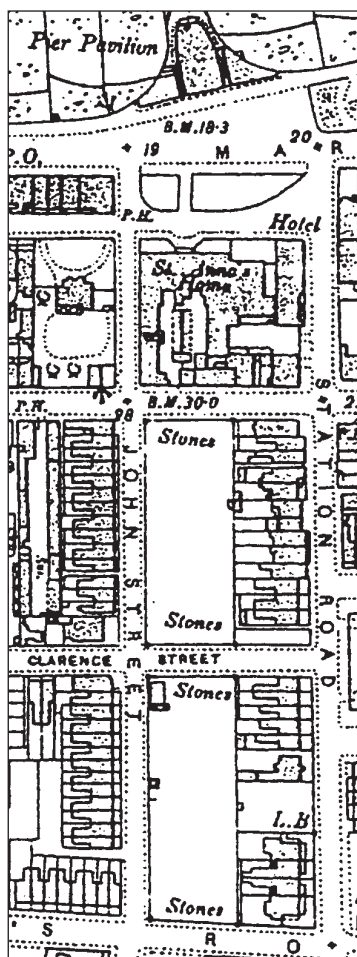
Street Pattern

An original New Town grid street, over three quarters of the east side of Pier Avenue remained undeveloped open space until the 1960s. The remaining quarter, at the Central Parade end, was the site of the Pier Hotel. The character area extends south across Western Avenue to include the modern block of flats on the corner of that street and Station Road.

Buildings

The buildings on the seaward grid-block facing east onto Pier Avenue comprise firstly, on the west side, the recent four storey flats built to the line of the back of footway. These, though a little over designed in detail, are well considered modern 'infilling' within an established local development pattern. The choice of stucco and brick was a good one given the historic context. The earlier redevelopment on the Pier Hotel site, east across the road, is as already noted, a negative feature in historic townscape terms. Until recently a modern garage stood within the south west part of this site.





Map detail, 1888, shows original build up on Pier Hotel site and open sites on John Street. (Pier Avenue)



Junction of Pier Avenue and Western Avenue looking west along the latter. Note lack of enclosure/open streetscape on right.

The buildings on the southern and central street-blocks on the west side of Pier Avenue are classic small two storey Edwardian terrace houses with modest bay windows. They are set slightly back from the street with small front gardens. They are entirely characteristic of this age of development through the town and retain much historic character.

The staggered 'in and out' terraces of modern two storey flats fronting the southern and central grid-blocks on the east side of Pier Avenue would have been more contextually appropriate had their layout followed the building line more closely and had their street corners been built up. As things are, there is too much 'space left over after planning' around these dwellings for them to contribute to local street enclosure. It has to be recognised however, that this left over space is an important amenity for the people living in the development.

The 1960/70s block of flats south across Western Avenue is not in character with its surroundings. That said, it is an attempt to produce continuity of built form around a corner from one street to another, a strong feature of the historic town. While its detailed design is uncompromisingly late 20th century, with no references to what has gone before, its scale is similar to other, earlier, isolated cases of tall building elsewhere in the conservation area.



Modern detrimental 'anywhere' concrete, brick and tarmac 'design' around west side of tower block on Pier Hotel site. (Overlap with Character Area 2A).

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

From all the above it will be understood that recent development on the east side of Pier Avenue does not contribute anything of value to local townscape. In addition the form taken by redevelopment of the former Pier Hotel site is detrimental to the character of the conservation area.



The 1960/70s four and a half storey 'corner turning' flat block on the corner of Station Rd and Western Ave., seen from Western Ave.



Modern three storey flats at the corner of the High Street and Pier Avenue. These abut a four storey Regency terrace.

Area 8: Brunswick Square

Street pattern

This area comprises the roads forming Brunswick Square, the two north/south streets of Station Road and Richmond Street and sections of east west connecting roads, Clarence Street and Hanover Street. Station Road forms one side of, and Clarence Street extends west from, Brunswick Square. Hanover Street extends east from the Square. All are integral components of the original New Town Plan. Brunswick Square is the only one of the original three squares to be fully built-around.



Buildings

Houses and shops along Station Road vary between two and three storeys and date from the early and later 19th century; much of architectural interest survives. The dominant form around the Square is that of the late 19th/early 20th century two-storey terrace house with two storey gabled bay windows. Plainer, well-preserved, bay windowed late 19th century terraces line the west side of Richmond Street. The south side of Hanover Street has a mix of small scale workshops, a small hall and some open lots interspersed amongst the houses.



Looking west at the poor townscape relationship between the bus depot yards and the adjacent Richmond and Hanover Streets.

A large modern block of retirement flats occurs at the corner of Station Road where this meets King's Road. This is a four storey building with a block plan benefiting from the corner site. Its design, detailing and use of materials cannot match its Victorian/Edwardian equivalents such as the great mansion block at the corner of the High Street and East Street.

Brunswick Square is occupied by an earlier, modern, version of the retirement flat form, here only three storeys high. The building fails in detailed design, materials and 'townscape' terms. Though it may be satisfactory in its own terms, its siting and design remain detrimental to the character of the conservation area.



North side of Brunswick Square looking west to Station Road. Street-trees dominate.



Shops on the west side of Station Road, close to its junction with the High Street.



Corner shop and terrace arrangements at the junction of south arm of Brunswick Square, and Station Road. Corner fully enclosed by development.



Modern central development within Brunswick Square. Elevation to Station Road.



East side of junction of Station Road and King's Road. Recent retirement flats.



Regency terrace, north east corner of the Square.



View north east from just within Hanover Square car park adjacent to new leisure centre, across small public garden to Richmond Street.



View northward from corner of park towards main town centre car parks with presumed former gas works offices in foreground on right.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Streets within this area are the usual linear spaces found elsewhere. Those around Brunswick Square are wider than the rest and have associated mature tree planting. This helps to ameliorate what would otherwise be the dominating effect of the modern housing block in the centre of the Square. Long views are to be had west on the axis of Brunswick Square along Clarence Street into Oxenden Square with the Catholic Church in the distance.

Street tree planting also features in Station Road. This street looks one way towards the sea and the other into King's Road. The view south along Richmond Street is framed at its end, by the ironwork gateway to the formal route through Memorial Park to the war memorial. Mature trees along the route in the park form the background to this view.

Area 9: William Street car park (originally intended as Hanover Square)

Street pattern

This area comprises, firstly, the site of the proposed Hanover Square, now largely the William Street car park. Secondly, it includes the sites of the former gas works, now a car park and the site of the Saturday market, and the Safeway Supermarket on the west side of Beach Street. Thirdly, it includes the adjoining bus depot site along Hanover Street. Though part of the original New Town plan, Hanover Square and Queen Street were not put in until the second half of the 19th century. Queen Street would have been the mews street to houses on the south side of Hanover Square that never materialised.



Buildings

The only buildings within this area contributing to the architectural and historic character of the town are the short Regency terrace at the north east corner of the area, the former gas works offices and the house at the south east corner of the gas works site/car park (though these actually fall into adjoining Area 20). The bus depot buildings have good north facades but the structures themselves have no special merit. The new sports centre/cinema block lies partly in the area; this draws none of its design inspiration from existing town character but its scale is reasonable in terms of its context. With further improvements to its setting, it could be made a visually acceptable feature in the conservation area.



Panorama from leisure centre round to Dering Road. and the Park, looking east from within the 'negative' space of the gas works car park. Presumed former gas works offices in centre foreground; looming tower and slab housing blocks on King's Road. are beyond this.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

This area lacks any significant urban building frontages, being formed partly at the backs or sides of other street front development. One section, from south of the supermarket to King's Road is open (save for a metal fence) across the highway into Memorial Park (Area 20). Views out from this part of the Area are dominated, in the east, by the former local authority slab and tower blocks on King's Road (Area 10).

The backs of buildings fronting the High Street form an untidy visual 'edge' to the north of William Street car park. This 'edge' would not have been exposed had the proposed Hanover Square been completed. South-facing buildings would have backed onto the High Street properties in the same manner as the Regency terrace at the north east corner of this area. There is, however, potential for visual enhancement and development here. The two car parks are negative open spaces showing as huge, unrelieved, areas of tarmac when empty. The walls around the former Gas Works site are of architectural and historic interest, pre-dating the car park.

The supermarket building has already been described as making an essentially negative conservation area contribution, partly because of its visually exposed siting. It is very prominent in the street scene – exposure which its poor quality design could do without.

The buildings and yards of the bus depot are large in scale. The big sheds are unpretentious industrial buildings which in other circumstances could be acceptable within a conservation area. The quality of their setting to the south is, however, very low grade in relation to that of the surrounding town. It comprises large open parking space for buses, secured from Hanover and Richmond Streets by six foot high wooden boarded fences. In combination with the out of scale side of the supermarket this results in exceptionally poor streetscape, having a negative effect on the character of the conservation area.



View east down Hanover Street. Bus depot and supermarket street elevations visually degrade local environment.



Detail from fig below showing architectural potential of backs of buildings fronting High Street.



View north west from same location as fig right above. Beyond car park, supermarket on Beach Street on left, spire of Methodist Church in centre, small public garden running up to Richmond Street on right.



View west within gas works site car park.



Area 10: King's Road towers and slab blocks

Street pattern

Three streets run east/west through this small area – Queen Street (north side), King's Road (centre) and Park Road, formerly Salts Lane (south side). Queen Street was added last, after Salts Lane and King's Road.

Buildings

These date from the late 19th to the late 20th centuries. The surviving gas works building, Beach House, is of historic and architectural importance locally. One or two other pre-1914 buildings of interest survive. Otherwise there is a low-key mix of two storey dwellings of differing, later, dates. Two 1960/70s residential tower blocks and a slab block dominate the townscape.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Late 20th century redevelopment of the island sites formerly occupied by part of the gas works and 'slum' housing has effectively isolated them. Both sites – between Queens Road and King's Road and between King's Road and Park Road – have had their interiors 'scooped away' to produce in one case a residents car park exposed to the road, and in the other a residents garden, again exposed to the road, both at the foot of slab and tower blocks. The row of properties along the south side of Park Road retains some visual coherence and appropriate local scale.

From whatever point it is seen, far or near, development in the area is visually disruptive due to the great scale of the modern buildings and their failure to form useful street enclosure at ground level. Taken on its own this area could not be considered as conservation area material.



Dominance of tower in Area 10, seen from Richmond Street outside the Area.



Two ground level views from the streets and spaces around the slab and tower blocks.



The 7 storey tower and 5 storey slab – 'gallery access' – public housing blocks on the 'island' between Park and King's Roads, seen from the east along King's Road. Ground level environment is 'blown open' visually by car parks and roads.



Left: Late 19th century (refurbished), 1930s and modern terraced buildings co-exist relatively happily, and close the view appropriately, on the south side of Park Road.



View south across King's Road from corner of 7 storey tower block (left) to former gas works buildings site. 10 storey tower block looms behind, eastward across the main road. Exposed parking arrangements for cars dominate the scene.

Area 11: William Street

Street pattern

This is a major cross-axis street developed within the New Town Plan. It joins together, or crosses, the King's Road, High Street, Mortimer Street and Central Parade, among others.

Buildings

A great variety of building dates occur along the length of the street, from early 19th century to the 1970s or later. Most of the buildings are of historic and architectural interest. The new sports hall/cinema (discussed earlier) features here also.

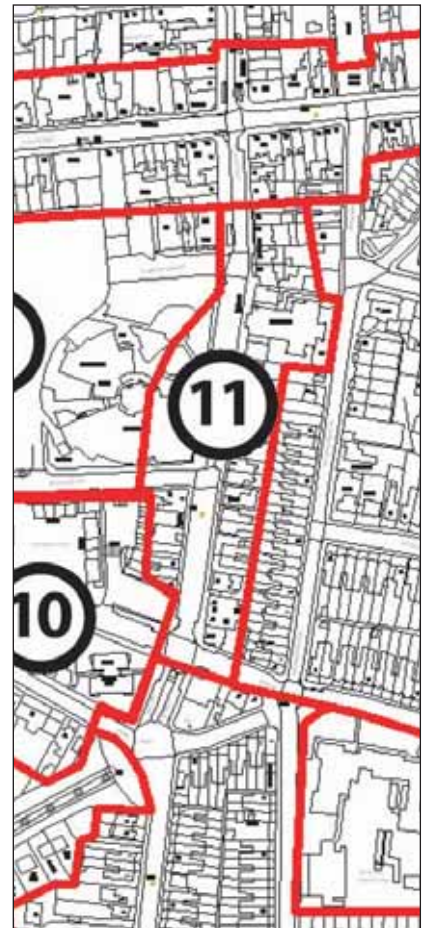
Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Coming from the south there is a build up in density, with good street enclosure, to the crossing with the High Street and the section from there to Mortimer Street. At the street's north and south ends the buildings are often later in date and development patterns can be more visually informal, with scale reducing in places. Townscape enclosure fades away significantly, (as noted earlier), at the street's junction with Central Parade, around the Bun Penny pub and the ice cream parlour buildings opposite.

Long views out to the open sky above the sea can be had from some way south within the street. Views in the other direction extend into more suburban development south across King's Road.

Mature trees make an important townscape contribution around the opening to the little green 'park' abutting the west side of the street where it faces the William Street car park. This green space partly mitigates the appearance of the car park itself as seen from William Street.

The terraces on the west side of the street south from its junction with Queens Road, and the new sports centre/cinema, offset, to a degree, the very detrimental visual effect of the large, over-scaled, blocks in Area 10.



View north along the curve of William Street from the leisure centre. Trees are an irreplaceable townscape element; the parked cars are detrimental to area character.



North beyond the curve in William Street. Light over the sea.



View on north end of William Street looking south west from in front of Bun Penny pub (on far left). The New Dolphin pub, centre left, is under threat. Building scale and townscape space run down and out at Central Parade, from where this view is taken.



View south from north end of William Street towards the High Street.

Area 12: Victoria Park, Queens Gardens



North end of Cavendish Road. View south past PO buildings to trees closing view on King Street.



Street pattern

The area is bounded on the south and west by the early-established King's Road and Underdown Road/New Street. The remainder of the grid is of later 19th century date. Ground levels change only imperceptibly from one part of the area to another though there is a slight climb from Underdown Road/New Street up to the High Street.

Buildings

Built form is predominantly terraced with a very few detached, and quite a number of semi-detached, units. There is strong visual continuity resulting from the 19th century terraced form, though scale, from two to three storeys, varies from one street to another. Stucco elevations rule in the earlier buildings along Underdown Road and New Street; everywhere else bay windows, stock brick and Victorian detail etc. lend particular character to the area. Survival of original fabric is very high and where this has been damaged it is retrievable. Original boundary treatments, paving, etc to front gardens also survive in quantity.

On the east side of the north section of Cavendish Road the two former GPO buildings make a good local townscape contribution; the same cannot be said for the adjoining, recent, sheltered housing scheme at the corner of Cavendish Road and the High Street, a particularly mundane design shown up by the quality of surrounding Victorian buildings.



View down west side of Underdown Road to junction with King's Road. Mostly early 19th century terrace houses. Change to late 19th century very evident at King's Road.



South Road, looking north from its junction with King's Road. Victorian terraces. Mature street and garden trees and chage in road alignment closing view. Distant roofs at street end belong to buildings on High Street.



Queens Gardens. Good urban development.

The street frontage dwellings to King's Road are perhaps more damaged visually than the frontages of some of the streets further north, but these too are largely retrievable.

The most significant defect in local townscape here is the former council housing estate on Victoria Park and South Road. The South Road frontage of this later development is particularly unfortunate in its effect on local character due to its fragmented nature, scale and detailed design.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

This is largely an environment of closed vistas down 'planned' streets lined by terraces, usually with small front gardens. The main 'through' streets are Underdown Road/New Street/Bank Street, South Road and Cavendish Road. These link King's Road and the High Street. The most important in terms of through pedestrian movement is Underdown Road, the route from its south end extending further south, down Stanley Road. Vistas out from the northern ends of these streets tempt the pedestrian into, or north across, the High Street.

Though the east/west streets are simple linear spaces, visual interest, through variety of streetscape, is sustained as they are quite short, the 'T' junctions at each end facilitating easy cross grid movement. As noted above, the internal spatial quality of the area is disrupted by the modern former council housing estate at its centre. There is a lesser breakdown in character along the east side of the south end of Cavendish Road where a series of low rise modern properties are set back from the building line giving a suburban effect.

There is a subtle change in townscape appearance at the north ends of New Street and Bank Street, where early 19th century buildings crowd the back of pavement.

In certain streets and locations throughout the area, mature street trees are a key element of its character.



Mature pollard street trees in South Road. Important local character features.



Bank Street. Part of early 19th century terrace facing south down Underdown Road. Original windows survive. Street trees here are a valuable local character feature.



North end of Cavendish Road. North across High Street to East Street and the sea.



Mid 20th century, contrasted unfavourably with late 19th century, development, South Road looking north to High Street.



Canterbury Road. View north to Mickleburgh Hill junction. Huge scale change in originally contemporary buildings.



View west down Mickleburgh Hill to its junction with Canterbury Road.



View east from the Downs to the junction of Canterbury Road and Charles Street. The corner building is modern and fits well into the historic streetscape.



View south along Canterbury Road, corner of Downs. 20th century infill lacking visual quality of earlier periods, on right.

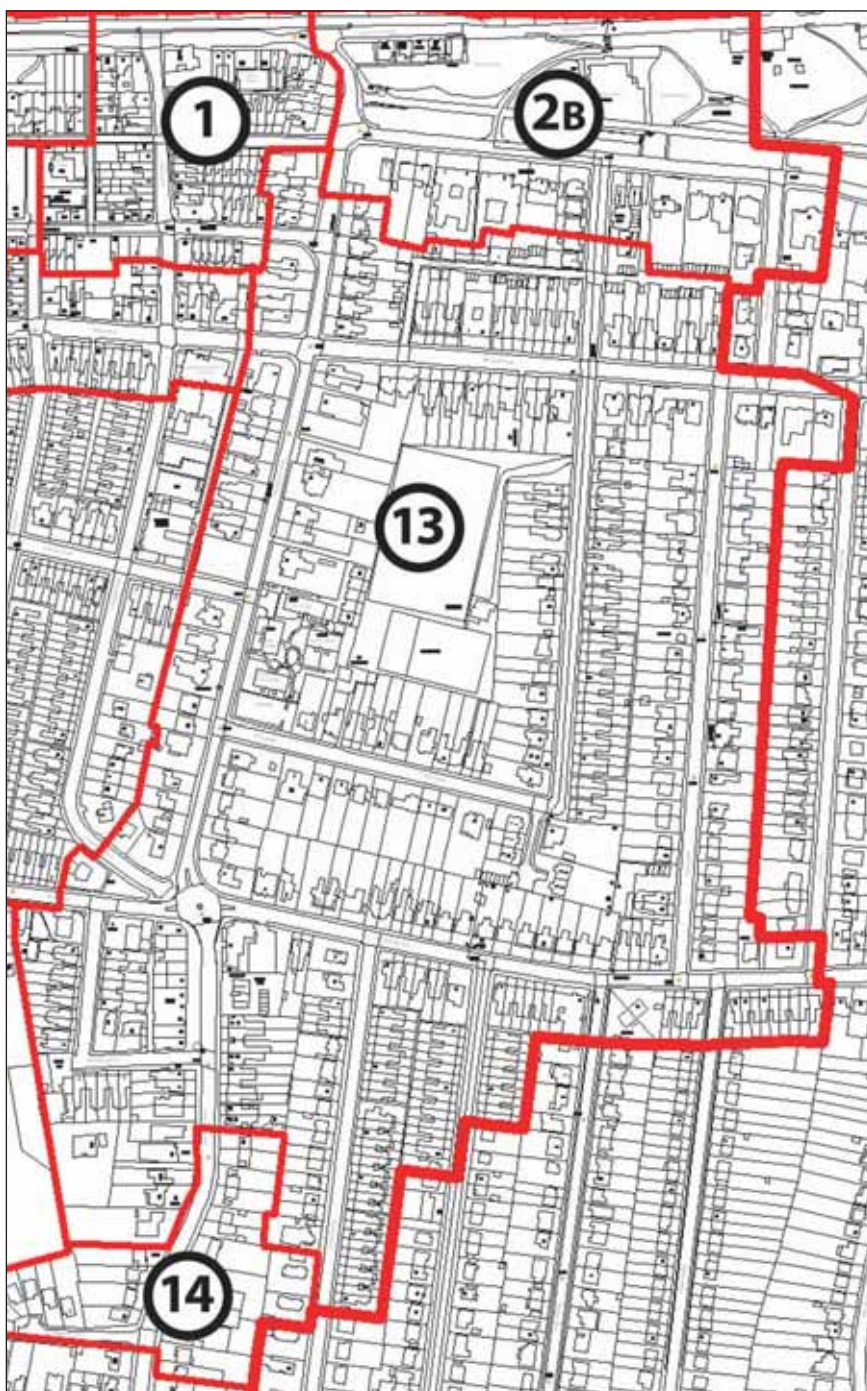


Looking north along Downs Park. Reduced townscape quality.

Area 13: Canterbury Road, Beltinge Road and Mickleburgh Hill

Street pattern

The foundation of the street plan here is the crossed routes of Canterbury Road running north/south, and Mickleburgh Hill/King's Road running east/west. The modest serpentine curve of part of Canterbury Road confirm it as originally passing through open country and of pre New Town date. The remaining grid of roads that fills out the area dates from the late 19th /early 20th century, designed for continuous rows of tall terraces, as in Area 12. The road layout between Beltinge Road and Mickleburgh Hill produces some very long terraces running parallel to, rather than against, the hill slope. Ground rises steeply eastward, the Canterbury Road lying at the foot of the bank. This creates a sudden drop down to the sea front at its north end to meet the end of Central Parade.



Buildings

The best buildings are of similar date, character and quality as the best in Area 12. Unlike that area however, where the grid was largely built up by 1914, here large parts of the roads running off from the main through routes were only partly built up by that time. So, for instance, within the building block bounded by Beacon Hill, Downs Park, Mickleburgh Hill and Canterbury Road, major pre-war architectural compositions such as that along the east side of Downs Road, and low key one and two storey detached houses of later date with little or no townscape value, can be found side by side.

Main routes, where a larger building scale was sometimes attempted, were also not fully built up by the time of the First World war. The Edwardians attempted a concentration of larger buildings at the Canterbury Road/Mickleburgh Hill junction and there are a number of well set back, large scale villas and 'semis' along the length of the Canterbury Road from this point northward.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Along the eastward rising east/west streets the large, set back, pre 1914 blocks are stepped up the hill and on Mickleburgh Hill follow its curvature. The effect, combined with poor modern infilling to frontage gaps, often at junctions, is of incomplete enclosure. Historic fabric dominates the streetscape nonetheless, and where the opportunity to arise, some of the presently weak corner sites might benefit from more intensive, good contextual, replacement design. Views up the hills are confined by road curvature and rising ground. Those in the opposite direction look out over the town.

Within the major street block on the hillside east of the Canterbury Road is the open sports ground, concealed behind the houses fronting the surrounding roads. This is large-scale private space. As noted earlier it is of great intrinsic historic interest in its own right, a planned feature of this part of the town since its inception, and should be protected as such. Spatially, because of its size and open nature, it dominates its surroundings. It has great potential for enhancement through improved boundary treatments, access paving, perimeter planting etc.

Conventionally, the corner site between King's Road/ Canterbury Road/ Cavendish Road could have been expected to carry a substantial building, which it does not. The street closing arrangements at this end of Cavendish Road are utilitarian, with much opportunity for improvement. From this junction west along King's Road the alien feature of the tower block in Area 10 looms up. South along Canterbury Road the view is confined, and the modern semis and detached houses fronting the road here are concealed by tree planting combined with a curve in the road, enhancing features for any conservation area.

As in many other parts of the conservation area street trees are important contributors to character in places, a contribution that should be reinforced and extended where possible.



The Canterbury Road./Mickleburgh Hill junction seen from the end of King's Road. Tall Edwardian buildings face each other here, an abrupt change in scale from what is around them, as though the developer intended to give this point on the map special importance. The grouping fails spatially as the corner site immediately beyond the left hand side of the photo is un-built, and unplanted, on.



From Canterbury Road looking north to same junction. Enclosure reduces to each side of former hotel on corner. Note inadequate appearance and detail of modern infill.



Mickleburgh Hill/Canterbury Road junction, looking west down King Street. Failure of enclosure on north west side.



Looking south along Downs Park. Quality townscape.

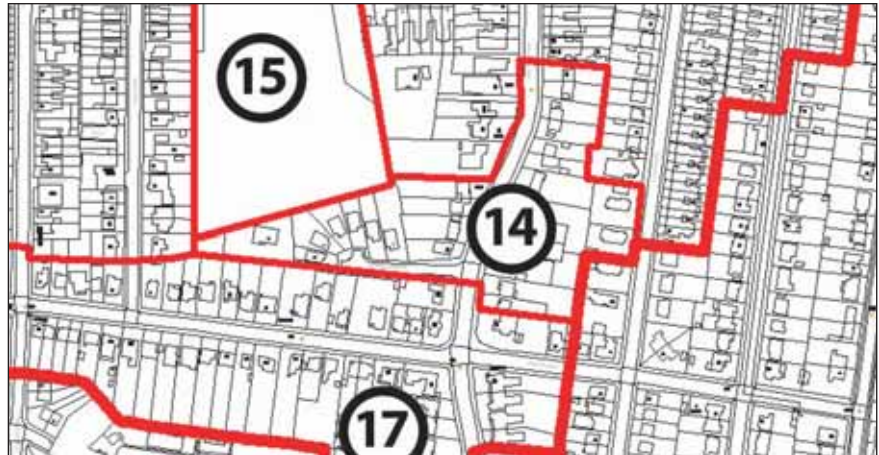


Above: Two views of conservation area character at and near St Andrews Close.

Area 14: St. Andrews Close/Canterbury Road

Street pattern

This small area includes one street, St Andrews Close off the west side of the south end of the Canterbury Road and a related section of the latter road. At the time of the 1938 O.S. the St Andrews Close area contained various small sheds and a footpath. The modern O.S. shows it developed with 8 modern houses around a cul-de-sac.



Buildings

Squat-roofed rectangular plan freestanding modern houses of no historic or architectural merit stand within St Andrews Close. On the Canterbury Road itself the houses are more architecturally mixed but are again essentially modern suburban in character.



East side of Canterbury Road. looking towards Edwardian townscape 'build up' at Mickleburgh Hill junction. Established trees etc help to mask poor suburban townscape.



View in opposite direction along Canterbury Road.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Within the Close, separate buildings are set back slightly against each other around a modern highway turning head, with gaps between them. The entrance to the cul-de-sac is formed by wide bell-mouth curves designed for maximum vehicle visibility. A two metre high close boarded fence hides the garden adjacent to the road-entry. The local environment is completely suburban, vehicle access derived, in character. It contributes nothing to the intrinsic overall character of the conservation area.

On the Canterbury Road, building lines are set very well back from the footway and two storey houses, detached and semi-detached, stand clearly as separate units. On its own this fragmented form of development is too individualised to give any overall townscape quality to the street here. However, street front planting is good, and mature, and this does help to give some sense of an individual place to this curving part of the main road.

Area 15: Former 'Quick Meadow' – Junior School and playing field site including related section of King's Road – and Gosfield Road

Street pattern

This comprises a section of the pre-New Town street of King's Road and the late Victorian Gosfield Road off the east end of King's Road.

Buildings

The north side of King's Road here is lined by turn of the century two-storey terraces with varying length front gardens. Detail is damaged in places but much remains and the rest could be retrieved. The frontage to the south side of the road is occupied to the west by the good quality Victorian and later permanent school buildings. At the east end of the former 'Quick Meadow' a number of temporary school buildings stand, set back from the road. These are currently being replaced by new housing which will drastically change the appearance of this part of the street.

Gosfield Road is fronted by classic turn of the century three storey bay windowed terrace houses. These are a well preserved group. The commercial garage buildings at the entry to Gosfield Road from King's Road are of no architectural merit.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Enclosing trees and hedges along the south side of King's Road contrast well with the open front gardens of the terraces opposite. This 'green' boundary is a very important feature of this part of the conservation area and should be preserved and reinforced with new planting where possible. The view to the roundabout at the Mickleburgh Hill junction is partly concealed at its east end by the curve of, and the trees along, the south side of this once rural road. Vistas west along the road corridor are closed by the alien bulk of the tower block in Area 10.

Within the area the school playing field is surrounded by the back gardens of houses on adjacent streets. Like the similarly sited sports space within Area 13, this is an important historic feature within the town.

Enclosure in Gosfield Road itself is good. At its junction with King's Road townscape is damaged by the modern buildings of, and the set-backs and highway splays and entrances serving, the petrol station and car wash to the west and the car workshops to the east. These are locally disruptive elements, not especially visible in distant views but, as they stand, detrimental to the visual character of Gosfield Road/King's Road.



The west side of Gosfield Road from the north. A first rate piece of townscape.



View east along King's Road from in front of the school, to the backs of the four storey buildings at the Mickleburgh Hill junction. Key townscape features demanding maximum protection – mature trees, hedges etc.



*Above two pics: two views west along King's Road, **top** from just east of the school; **lower** from close to the west end of the school site (on left). Note again the great importance of the planted school frontage to local conservation area character. Note also the seemingly arbitrary, almost surreal, character of the siting and appearance of the tower block beyond.*



Stanley Road crosses King's Road to become Underdown Road. Trees in school grounds on right are an important local visual marker providing variety to the townscape here.



Park Road/Gordon Road junction. View into the tree lined pedestrian footway to Memorial Park. Note car parking in footway area.

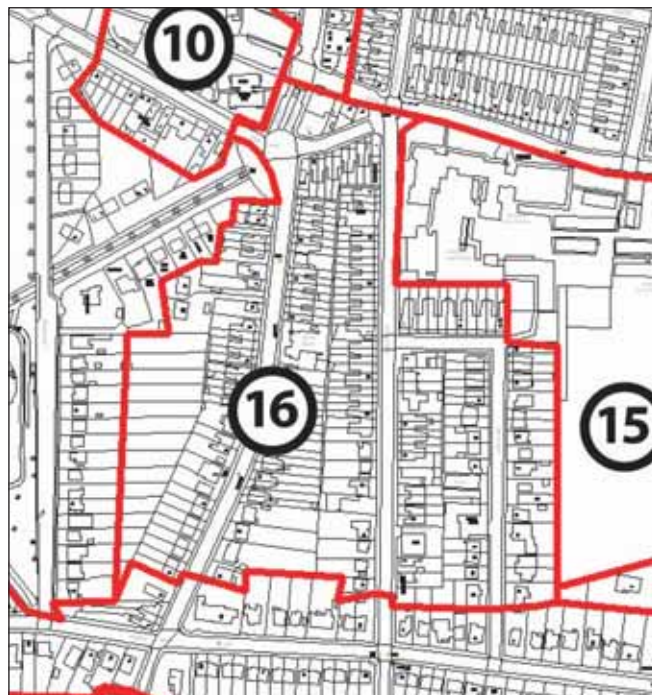


View from end of Pier Road. to entrance to park. Good street enclosure, good townscape character. Mature trees a key townscape element.

Area 16: Stanley Road area

Street pattern

The street pattern of this Area comprises firstly two north/south aligned streets, Gordon Road and Stanley Road, which connect Spenser Road in the south to King's Road in the north. Stanley Road is a direct connection, its line extending north across King's Road to become Underdown Road. Gordon Road is interrupted at the north end by part of Park Road and becomes an extension of William Street before King's Road is reached. A second, sub-section of, road layout is formed by Arkley Road which extends north from Spenser Road and then dog-legs to join Stanley Road half way up the length of the latter. All these streets arrived quite late in the development of the town, constructed in the later 19th century.



Buildings

Within the triangle formed by King's Road/Park Road and William Street, buildings date from the 1840s/50s with a later Victorian, single storey, shop section at the east end of the site.

Late 19th/early 20th century two storey terrace housing occupies the northern end of the land block between Gordon, Stanley and Park Roads and parts of the west side of Gordon Road, the east side of Stanley Road and the north dog-leg end of Arkley Road. These houses are in the characteristic period style, usually with single storey ground floor bay windows. There is considerable modern alteration but much of quality survives. The contemporary police station on Gordon Road, much altered, provides an 'incident' in the street frontage of that part of the area. At the junctions of Stanley and Gordon Roads with Park Road there are purpose designed corner shops with living accommodation above, with shop windows onto two streets and corner doorways. These are mirrored north across King's Road by a further purpose designed shop unit on the corner of Underdown Road. The arrangement is of particular interest as it appears to be 'planned'.



South from the last of the early 20th century development just described, the remaining road frontages were mostly built up between the wars in modern detached and semi detached houses and with a few gaps not finally filled in until after the last war.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

The area can be sub-divided into three sections: that immediately related to the 'nexus' of roads and routes centred on the north end of Gordon Road, that relating to the northern half of Gordon Road and much of Stanley Road and that relating to Arkley Road.

King's Road/Park Road/Stanley Road/ Underdown Road junction seen from end of Underdown Road. Trees on school site, on left. Tower block intrudes visually as before. Good original townscape damaged by modern redevelopment in places.



Five routes, four roads and a footpath from the park, converge at the north end of Gordon Road on a townscape 'void' formed by the very wide highway junction here. Views into and out from this point vary, some being enclosed, and others open, vistas. The view north up William Street has been very badly damaged by the huge opening in the original streetscape created by demolition and the siting of, and ground level treatment around, the modern tower block. The dominating width of William Street here is underlined by the functionless road island at its centre. Mature trees cluster around the entry of the footpath to the park. This part of the conservation area could benefit from enhancement.

The view south along Gordon Road is closed by a change of direction in the carriageway, reasonable townscape extending up to this point. From the change in direction character deteriorates southwards as modern individual houses predominate. Trees on the railway embankment close the wider view south. The tower block in Area 10, with its alien scale, is prominent in views north along this road.

Views along Stanley Road are unconfined at each end. Modern houses, low in townscape value, dominate its south end with density and townscape quality picking up in the north where earlier terracing extending to King's Road. This quality runs on northward across King's Road into Underdown

View north across Park Road along William Street. Historic sites comprising tower block and road island severely damage conservation area character. Good long view up William Street starts on north side of King's Road, enclosed by curve in road. Damaged townscape immediately beyond King's Road. has much potential for retrieval.



View south down Gordon Road. from area of pre-first war terraced development to breakdown in street enclosure at the bend in the distance.



Two thirds of the west side of Stanley Road retains good quality townscape, continued right up to King's Road.

Road. Towards the junction with King's Road, mature trees and planting on the east side of the road heavily obscures the Infant School buildings that are set back from the footway here. This planting is an important 'marker', softening local character.

Arkley Road has an exceptionally good quality late 19th/early 20th century terrace on its north side; views along this dog-leg section of carriageway are closed by buildings at each end. Its south running section is generally poor in townscape quality; dwellings fronting it are mostly products of the modern suburban builder.



View north along Gordon Road to end of terrace in William Street across King Street, and beyond this, top of new leisure centre. Right hand side of street here is reasonable conservation area quality; character on the left hand side is damaged by post-first war infill and by the tower block.



Stanley Road looking north. Point of change between pre-first war terraced development and post-war detached single and semi-detached development, the latter producing second class townscape in this case.

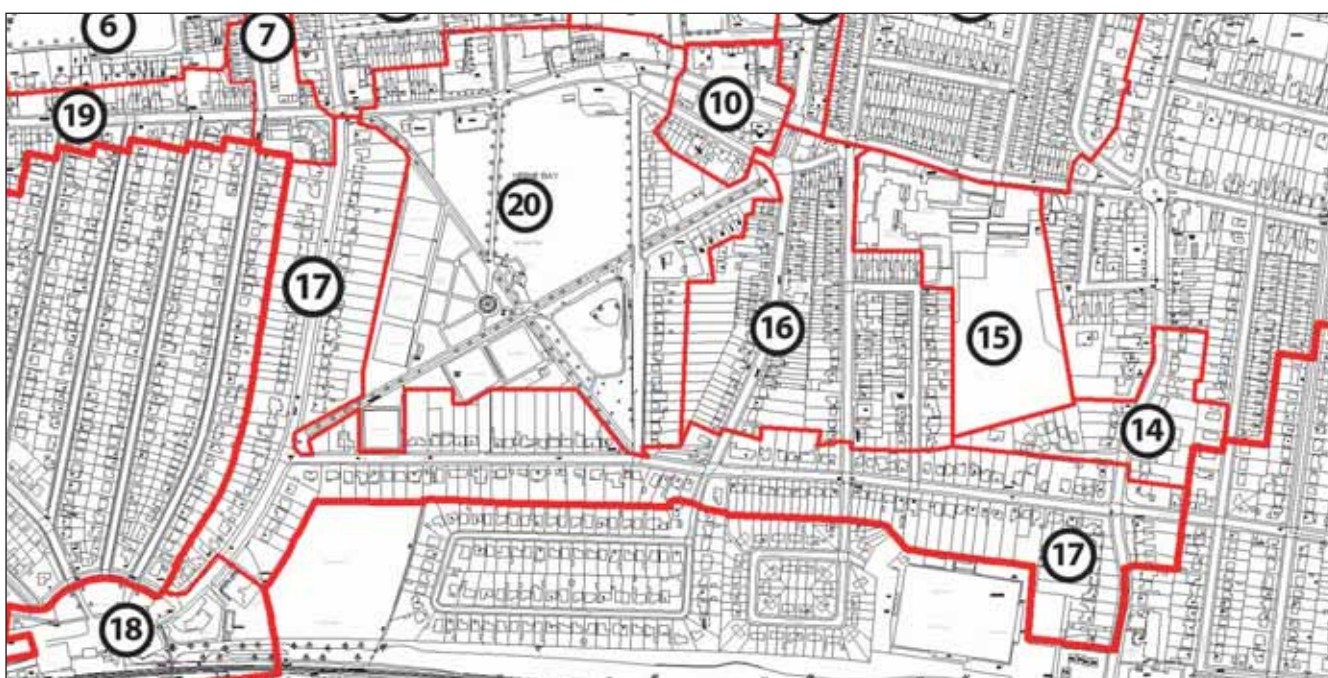
Area 17: Canterbury Road/Spenser Road and Station Road

Street pattern

This comprises a short length of Canterbury Road, the whole length of Spenser Road and most of Station Road. There are various right angle street junctions along the length of Spenser Road.

Buildings

A few late 19th/early 20th century tall detached and semi-detached houses occur on the Canterbury Road section and also scattered through



the length of Station Road. Good historic detail survives and could be reinforced. For the rest, buildings are later one and two storeyed detached and semi detached suburban dwellings. A number of these are of better than average architectural quality with good surviving 'between the wars' details, materials and features. Rendered elevations dominate much of the streetscape. All the buildings in this area are set back from the footway in a typical suburban-layout.



Spencer Road looking west.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Views along Station and Spenser Roads are characterised by mature street-trees, often closing the long views. These trees combined with roadside hedges and front gardens give the suburban development here a level of visual continuity, enclosure and character that it would otherwise lack. Without these features Station and Spenser Roads would not be worthy of conservation area Status. Care may be needed to stop them being eroded.

The two pedestrian entrances to the park offer valuable breaks in, and views out from, the continuous suburban development along Spenser Road. Other junctions on Spenser Road however, have little to add to area quality.

Taken together, the good townscape quality of the late 19th/early 20th century and later houses on Canterbury Road, provides a 'rounding off' point in the conservation area, as the road swings away to the bridge under the railway.



Canterbury Road. Pre first-war semi-detached houses at the southern extremity of the conservation area.



Mature street trees in Station Road.



Corner of Spencer Road and Canterbury Road looking south out of conservation area. along Canterbury Road.



Inter-war building brought to conservation area level by mature planting and street trees. East side of Station Road at junction with Spencer Road. Entrance to Memorial Park on right.



Station Road looking south from corner with Western Avenue.



The former hotel at the south end of Station Road. Street trees are prominent in the closed view towards the town along Station Road.

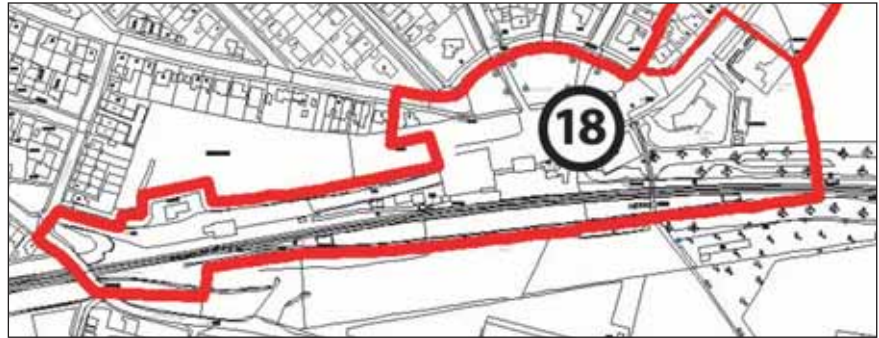


Approach to the station from Station Road. Curve in road plus mature trees close vista.

Area 18: The Station

Street pattern

The pattern is of late development, the first stage contingent on the arrival of the railway, the second developed from this.



Buildings

The area focuses on the Station and its outlying buildings, vehicular approach, platforms, former sidings, cutting features, fences, underpasses, etc. All these are of architectural and historic interest, contributing to local character. They also ensure that the station buildings themselves stand within their original wider setting, itself worthy of protection. Much original fabric remains. Some is damaged but its character could be retrieved.

The four storey former hotel in the east of the Area is of major historic and architectural interest and makes an important contribution to the street scene. A purpose designed freestanding pub between the hotel and the station appears to date from the 1950/60s, and may originally have been of some architectural interest.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

The area round the station is hidden from view by the curve of the road as one approaches it from the town. A very clear change in character, from the street corridor of Station Road to a widening out of public space, occurs as the station is reached. A line of mature trees makes a very strong visual divide between the potentially quite urban station forecourt and an area of more suburban grassed open space to the north. This latter space makes no contribution to conservation area character, but the late 19th/early 20th century pair of houses at its west extremity are an important visual marker.

As implied earlier, the combination of the station and its buildings and forecourt, the pedestrian underpass and former railway sidings in their cutting, and with all the associated structures, walls and fences, forms a valuable character sub-zone of its own. On the public access and parking side of the buildings, much might be done to enhance character.

Below right: View west across the grassed area open to Station Road. The pair of gabled houses centre left, are an important spatial marker. They lie beyond the hedge which extends the line of the tree screen hiding the station forecourt to the left in the picture.

Below: View east over the station forecourt. The derelict tarmac area in the foreground does not, in its present condition, contribute anything of quality to the conservation area.





View from the west end of Station Road. looking north of east. The tree-line/hedge in the centre of the view definitively separates the station and forecourt from the grassed public space edged by the road, on the left. This latter space is fronted entirely by bungalows. The contrast between the two spaces could not be greater. The suburban space is not of conservation area quality.

Area 19: Western Avenue

Street pattern

Though part of Hacker's Town Plan, Western Avenue was not fully in use until quite late on in the development of Herne Bay. Numerous junctions with later streets occur on its south side. Pier Avenue runs off at right angles at the north east end. The line of Western Avenue continues east, becoming King's Road, while its west end runs through to Sea Street. A grassy pedestrian access half way along Western Avenue gives onto Oxenden Square.



Buildings

These vary from late 19th/early 20th century terraces and semis to individual modern houses and bungalows, mostly of pre-war date. As in Area 17 good historic detail survives in places including in one or two excellent small 'arts and crafts' houses.

Street enclosure/spatial characteristics

Western Avenue rises gradually westward. As with the roads in Area 17, views along it are characterised by mature street-trees, closing the long vista westward. East, the view is down the hill towards the park with its trees, and beyond to the other side of town. Again, as in Area 17, the trees combined with roadside hedges and front gardens give the suburban development here a level of visual continuity, enclosure and character that it would otherwise lack. Without these features much of Western Avenue would again, not be worthy of conservation area status. Care will, again, be needed to stop them being eroded; towards the west end of the street at least one tree was noted (during survey) as having been recently removed.



View from near the east end of Western Avenue to where it becomes King's Road. Trees in Memorial Park, on right, middle distance, are an important contributor to conservation area character. Long view is to development on the hillside opposite beyond Canterbury Road. Such long views are outside the Central Parade and High Street.



Another view west along Western Avenue. Pollarded trees very important to the streetscape.



Detail of good conservation area quality development at the north east end of the road with trees etc., again significant.



Entry to park from south west corner, off Station Road. Small public garden behind low hedge in centre.

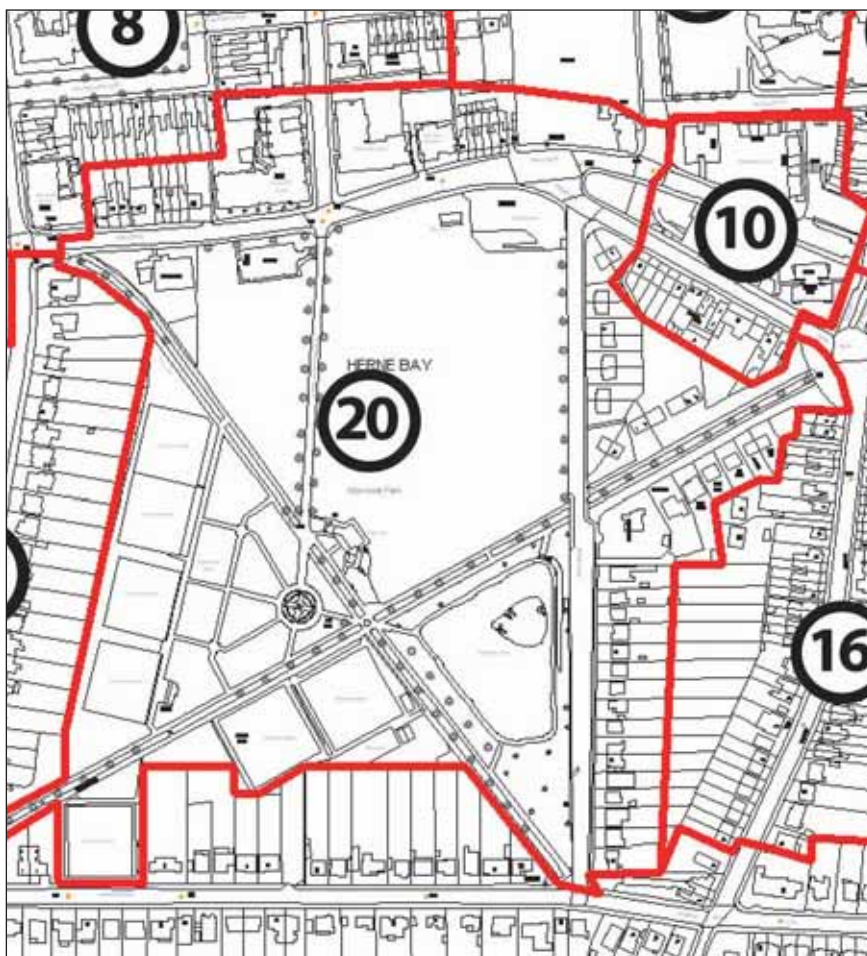


North west entry to the park, from corner of Station Road and King's Road.

Below: View north from the war memorial avenue towards King's Road, the former gas works site and building and the roofs of buildings on the High Street. Left, beyond the trees, is the intrusion of parking for the youth centre. Vehicles impact on what was formerly a green space. Centre right is part of the recent retirement flats block and doctors' surgery building on King's Road. As noted earlier, the design of these falls below the standard of equivalent Victorian and Edwardian development in the town.

Area 20: Memorial Park

Street pattern



The main part of this character area is a large roughly rectangular park space surrounded on two sides by the back gardens of houses fronting Station and Spenser Roads, and on the other two sides by King's Road and Dering Road. An offshoot on the east side of the park carries a footpath through to Park Road in the north west corner of Area 16. Footpaths, Station Chine and Pier Chine, form a diagonal cross within the Park, exiting at its north west, south west and south east corners. The northeast (Station Chine) arm of the cross extends to Park Road. A separate formal pedestrian route leads south from King's Road, from a point opposite the end of Richmond Street, to the War Memorial itself, which stands close to the central crossing of the diagonal footpaths. There is a separate entrance to the bowling greens direct from Spenser Road halfway along the south side of the park.

Buildings

Of the three main structures within the park, the Youth Club in the northwest corner, the Bowling Green pavilion and the central park pavilion, only the last, which is derelict, is of any potential architectural/historic interest. The Youth Club buildings with their associated fences and recent car park, are enlarged over the original park service buildings that once stood here. The group, and in particular the car park (by reason of its size and prominent siting), is detrimental to the character of this sensitive and visually exposed part of the park.

Buildings and abutting spaces on the north of King's Road are included in the area as they form an element of visual enclosure to the park. Few, if any of the buildings here are of architectural merit though some much altered two storey late 19th/early 20th century terrace houses survive.

The inter-war houses on Dering Road are modest examples of their kind, and historically they complement the park layout which, of course, dates from the same period.

Enclosure/spatial characteristics

The park is enclosed to west and south by the fences of adjoining back gardens. The effect of these is partly concealed from within by mature trees and by the siting of the bowling greens and tennis courts close to them.

The park is open to Dering Road that forms its eastern boundary. The front gardens and facades of the detached and semi-detached inter-war houses lining the road here thus close the view on this side. Station Chine crosses Dering Road to continue to Park Road. The park character is retained over this 'corridor' of footpath, grass and trees, which is enclosed north and south by visually low-key modern development.

The north side of the park is open to King's Road. Sense of individual place is very weak here, development on the north side of the unusually wide road failing to give satisfactory quality of enclosure. This is exacerbated at the park's north east corner beyond the children's play area. Here all sense of enclosure is lost as space 'leaks out' across the expanse of the King's Road/Park Road junction and over the wall and through the railings to the open tarmac spaces of the car park opposite.

Seen from the park, the west pointing 'prow' of the former gas works island site projects into view from the right. It is open and occupied by a motor caravan sales area. Because of their great scale King's Road and Park Road are dominating features of the local townscape, producing a desolate tarmac 'no mans land'. The only redeeming feature of the view is the (presumed) former Gas Works office building (Beach House) in the corner of the car park opposite; this is a key 'marker' building.



The youth club from the park.



View south from gas works car park to houses in Dering Road, left, and trees in the park, right.



View towards park from entry from Park Road. in the north east.

The former gas works buildings in the corner of the gas works car park with the seven storey tower and slab blocks behind them. On the right are motor caravans for sale parked on the west end of the 'island' between King's Road and Park Road. All seen from the park playground.





View south from roof of supermarket over gas works car park to north east corner of park. Childrens' playground is in park foreground. Space 'leaks out' from park at this point. Dering Road, screened from park by row of mature trees, is on left. The row of trees across the park beyond the playing fields, lines the 'Station Chine' footpath. Trees along the horizon are on the railway embankment.

The four points of entry/exit of the two footpath 'chines' and that to the route to the War Memorial, all have special landscaping treatment. These interesting arrangements give special local character to the park where pedestrians leave the highway to walk through it. That at the north west corner involves a curved concealed approach confined by hedges and boundaries, before one breaks through into more open space.



Above left and right: view into park from south west corner and view out ditto. Small public garden on left of latter view.

The entry from the park's southwest corner takes one past a separate well planted small garden bringing public space through to the road, with a long view through the park between an avenue of trees.

The entry from the park's south east corner is wider, the view closed to the west by trees and hedges to gardens, but open, beneath more trees, towards the park pond and along Dering Road.



View into park from south east corner. Dering Road on right. Spencer Road on left. The park pond is glimpsed through the mature trees.



The 'Avenue of Remembrance' has a formal gateway with a view between two avenues of trees running straight to the memorial.

Within Avenue of Remembrance, looking towards King's Road.

The entry from Park Road, in the north east, is along the tree lined grassed 'corridor' towards the park as described earlier. At its east end this opens out into a wider, potentially very attractive, public space that, at present, has the misfortune to be used as a car park.

Each of the four quadrants of the park within the cross of paths was assigned a separate function from the beginning. The largest area in the northeast quadrant was planned as level grassed playing fields, which it remains. The children's play area in its north corner is an old established feature. This is rather bleak in landscape terms and is directly exposed to the road junction. The quadrant is further sub-divided by the Avenue of Remembrance and eaten into by the park car park. The derelict pavilion overlooks the fields from their south end

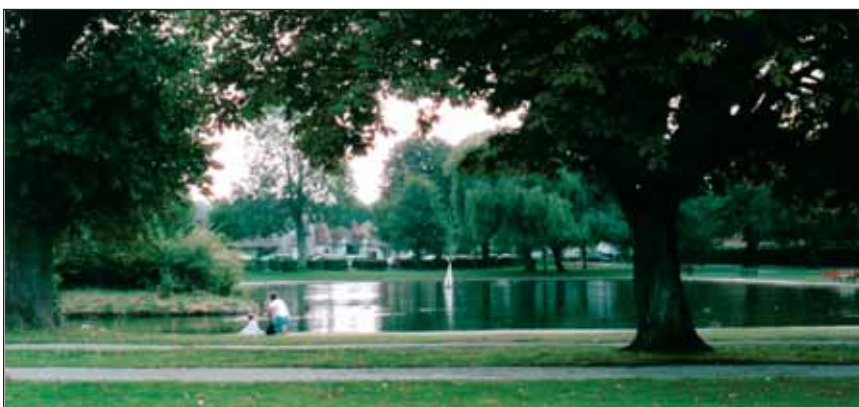
The western quadrant contains the games courts and formal gardens and paths associated with the War Memorial. The southern quarter has the bowling greens. These two areas are thus partly occupied by the fences, hedges and courts etc. associated with the two sports, from which their essentially utilitarian character is derived. Landscape value and therefore sense of special place is increased within the part-enclosed small-scale gardens lying between the sports courts and the memorial. This is in strong contrast to the grassed monotony of the playing fields to the east.



Entry to the Avenue of Remembrance, King's Road.



The long walk alongside the sports courts. Formal war memorial gardens on left.



The south east quadrant of the park, generally grassed, contains the boating lake, a circular walk around it, and liberal tree planting extending the length of Dering Road and along other paths. It is informally planned and attractive, offers views out in various directions and, with the lake, is user friendly enough to make it a place where people want to congregate.



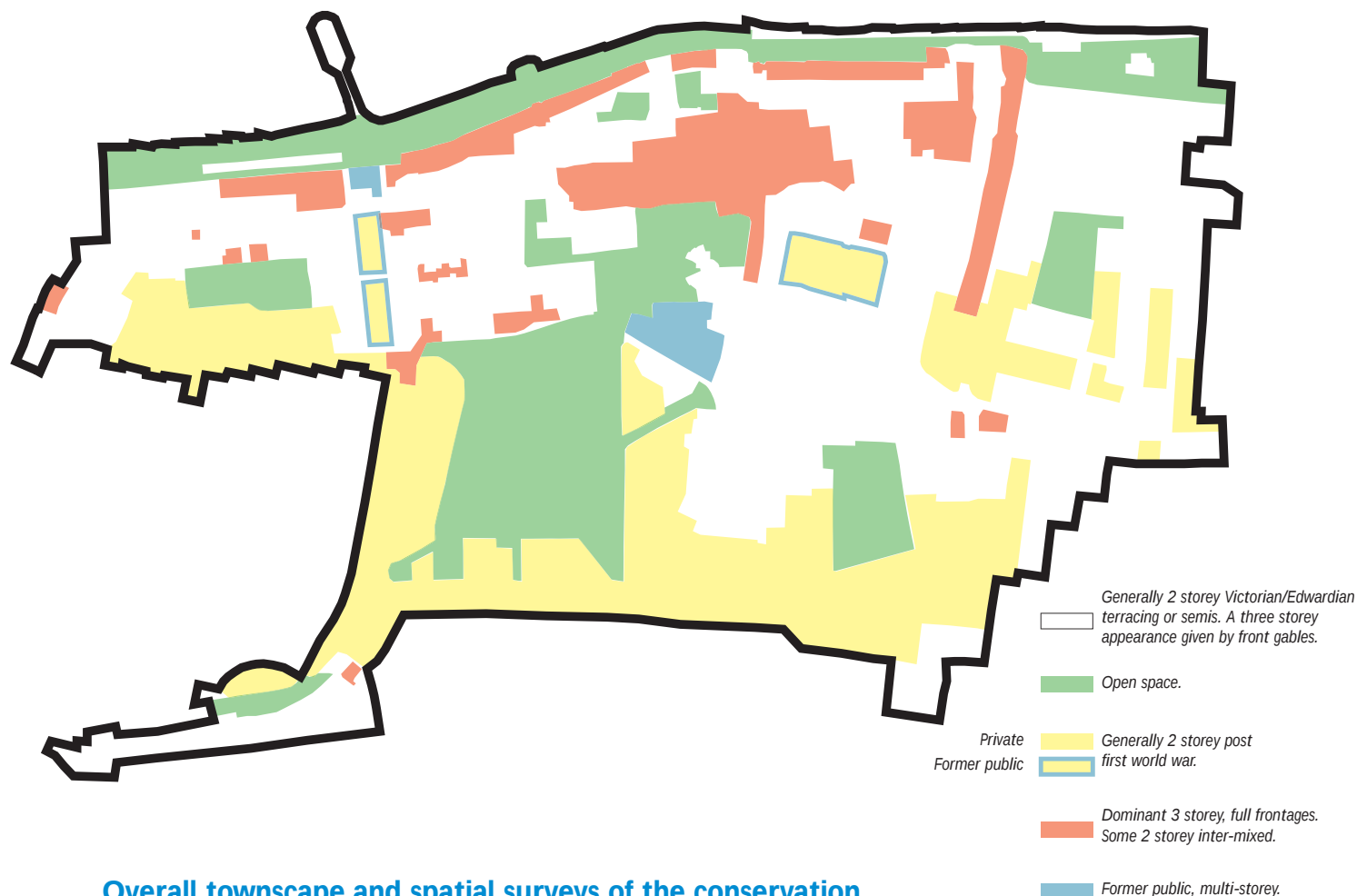
Looking south down Pier Chine towards its junction with the war memorial avenue.



The trees lining Pier Chine. Playing fields in foreground. Park pavilion on far left.

The remaining important element in the design of the park not so far described in its own right is tree planting. This is used throughout to form shaded avenues along the major pedestrian routes and also, in places, along roadsides and other boundaries. The avenues of trees alongside the 'chines' and the Memorial Avenue are key features of the design of the park and should be protected and allowed to remain as 'freestanding' forms 'structuring' open space. These and the other lines and groupings of mature trees give life and variety to what would otherwise be a rather dull, pedestrian, and flat landscape. Where trees are largely lacking in situations where 'structural' reinforcement is needed, as on the King's Road boundary of the park, conservation area character fails.





Overall townscape and spatial surveys of the conservation area

This section comprises two maps of the conservation area that summarise the main townscape and other spatial themes identified.

The first map shows the conservation area zoned into four main areas of differing general townscape character/building height, with a fifth zone for significant areas of public, and other, open space. The main features of each of the zones are as follows:

Zone 1, white. Victorian/Edwardian properties dominate though early 19th century buildings make localised impact also. Bulk of development is residential and street layout is generally grid, or distorted grid, pattern. Built-form usually relatively narrow frontage, at back of pavement or slightly set back, terraces or semi-detached houses. Three storey 'effect' resulting from tall street gables is common but general effect is two storied.

Zone 2, brown. Varying dates from early 19th century to 1930s. Mix of retail and domestic buildings. Built-form comprises narrow frontage terraces and shops often at the back of pavement. Street layout is generally grid, or distorted grid, pattern. General effect is of three storeys, but some buildings are lower and a few higher than this.

Zone 3, yellow. Buildings date from 1918 to the present. Almost all development is residential and comprises, with a few exceptions, two storey detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows. Street layout is grid or typical inter-war suburban slightly curving pattern.

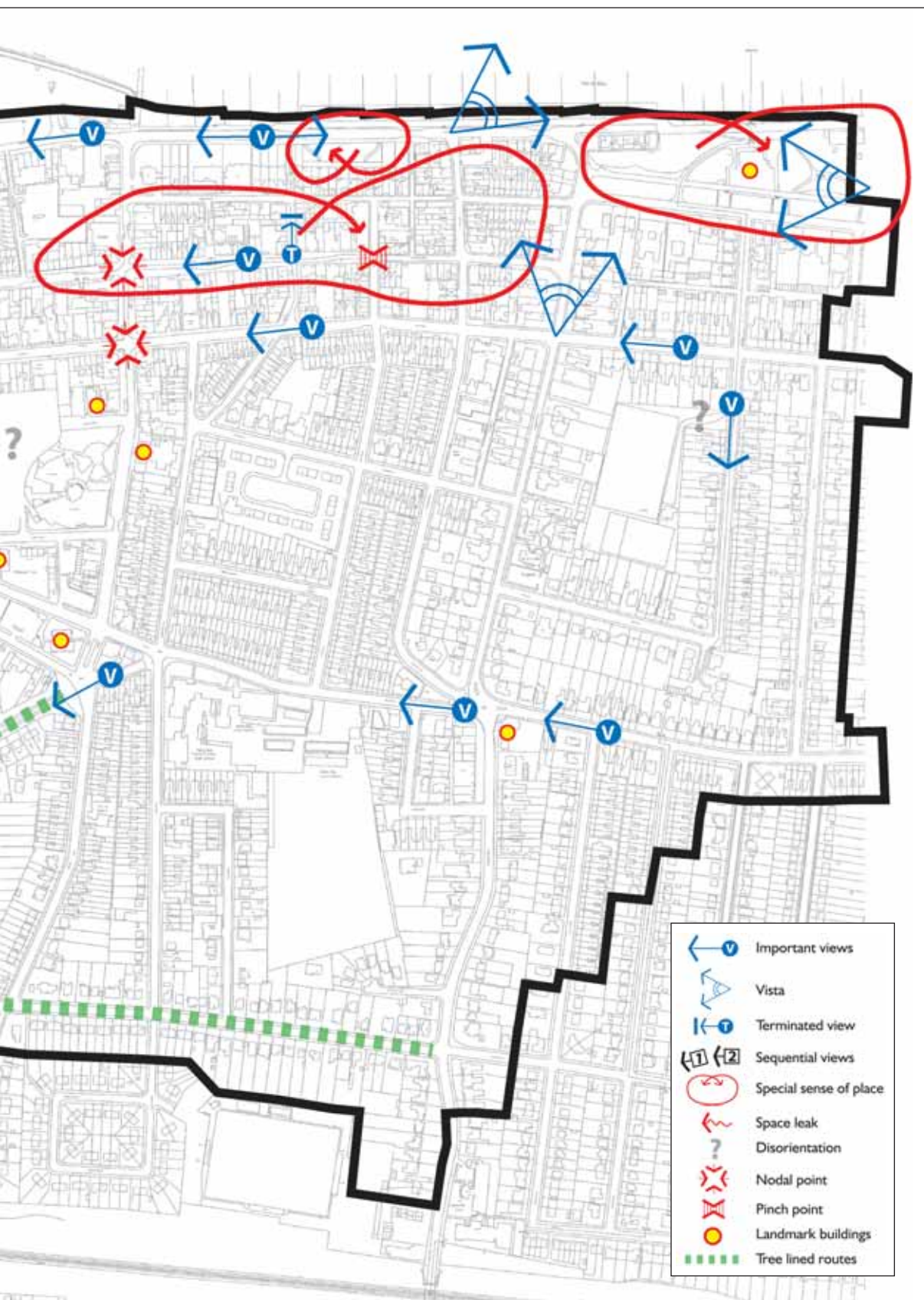
Zone 4, blue. Former public housing circa 1960/1970. Multi-storey 'island site' developments, fragmenting the grid.

Zone 5, green. Public, and other, open space.

Townscape and urban character appraisal



Some of the issues highlighted in this map (which have already been analysed in detail in the individual character area studies) are examined further in the next part of this appraisal, which deals with 'enhancement'.



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1870 entrance surround in gable of terrace on Central parade, un-listed.



Late 19th c. shop front, console bracket/pilaster top, Mortimer Street.



An unlisted house of the 1840s with surviving original porch detail, including door and fanlight, and much damaged windows and area railings.

8. Conservation area management

Introduction

Conservation area designation is not intended to imply that development is prohibited and change not possible. Conservation area management is therefore concerned with how change and development can take place and positively respond to the area's character.

Policy guidance

The primary means by which the City Council ensures the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area is through the development control process and by applying the policies of the Canterbury District Local Plan (2001 – 2011).

The Canterbury District Local Plan, adopted in July 2006, sets out the spatial strategy for the Canterbury district, including Herne Bay. It includes policies on housing, the economy, town centres, the natural and built environment, community infrastructure and many others. A number of designations are particularly relevant to Herne Bay, including those relating to conservation areas, open space and flood risk. Proposed allocations related to housing, mixed uses, leisure and open space are also in the Local Plan.

The Kent and Medway Structure Plan is also an important planning document and was adopted in June 2006. It provides strategic planning policies for the whole county, and includes policies on retail and tourism that are particularly relevant to Herne Bay town centre. Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) sets out key principles for development in the South East Region. Specifically it identifies a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration (PAER) at Herne Bay.

The planning system has recently changed and the Local Plan will be replaced by a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF consists of a collection of Local Development Documents, including Area Action Plans, which will address a wide range of land use and planning issues. Area Action Plans have the following key features, they: provide guidance on layout, design and the distribution of uses make site specific allocations have a strong focus on implementation set the timetable for the implementation of proposals.

The intention is to prepare an Area Action Plan for the town centre of Herne Bay under the new planning system. It will provide the context for the preparation of detailed plans to be prepared before and during the development process and assist in the delivery of planned development that will contribute to Herne Bay's regeneration. It will be a guide to how buildings, circulation routes and spaces should be best organised to produce exciting comfortable and vibrant places.

The conservation area appraisal, carried out in some depth, has confirmed the wealth and quality of surviving Victorian buildings and building detail through the larger part of the conservation area. Its Victorian flavour is, after all, the overriding characteristic of the town. When considering new development this need not necessarily mean exact copying of earlier styles in new work though on occasion this may be the only way. It does, however, require developer and designer to come to an understanding of, and a respect for, the character of the historic town when drawing up

their proposals. Every new proposal within the conservation area should be backed up by a thorough 'townscape' analysis of the site and its historic context. This exercise should 'inform' the design process and be part of a design statement submitted with a planning application.

Key aspects of the character of 19th and early 20th century development in Herne Bay

A process of incremental, relatively small scale, development spread over some 125 to 130 years, has formed the character of much of the town. As a result, the conservation area is a patchwork of buildings of differing dates and styles. The few extensive homogeneous developments, such as the late Victorian quarters at the southeast end of the High Street and east across Canterbury Road, stand out as exceptions to the rule.

A second feature contributing to the special character of the town is the result of the urban, street-frontage format of the pre-1914 development. Plot widths are invariably narrow and buildings rise to three, or at most four, storeys high. With few exceptions, such as the free-standing early villas at the west end of the conservation area, buildings are terraced with frontages looking onto the public highway. It is on these fronts that the builders lavished their attention, spending money on decorative 'features' and materials. The backs of the buildings were invariably seen very much as 'secondary' quality.

As the 19th century progressed the use of elaborate decorative forms and materials on street front facades came more and more to the fore. When combined with extreme contrasts in the heights of adjacent buildings, this sometimes produces abrupt changes in building mass and heightens the patchwork 'townscape' effect arising from the sporadic nature of the development process.

A combination of low building costs and a developing taste for visual complexity gives a very high architectural quality and character to many individual pre-1914 buildings in the town. This cannot be matched in the average modern building today. For the Victorians, labour and materials were relatively cheap. Labour today is expensive as are the sorts of materials and decoration such as gauged, cut and rubbed brickwork, wrought and cast iron railings, welsh slates, complex joinery, that the 19th century Herne Bay builder exploited to the full. In the light of this, should historic precedent be needed when considering new development within the conservation area, it may be sometimes be more advantageous to seek lessons from the town's early 19th century designers rather than from their successors from later in the century.

Key character areas for post 1914 development are those around much of Oxenden Square and along Western Avenue, Station and Spenser Roads. Here low density, low-rise suburban style development dominates. Local conservation area character is formed through the interplay of open space, trees, highways, mature street trees and established planting within front gardens. Street trees are a dominant, visually unifying, element, with the dwellings themselves taking second place. This is appropriate as, without their partial screening by greenery, neither the buildings nor their site-planning, would be of sufficient interest overall for inclusion within a conservation area.



Two shots to show the relative complexity of exterior design in the second half of the 19th century (below) contrasted with the plainness of an elevation from earlier in the century (above).



Victorian railings to raised section of High Street.



Late 19th century and early 20th century detail in Richmond Street, the High Street and Brunswick Square Note the tiled front garden path and cast iron railings in the last example.



Late 19th century house and front details.

The Article 4 direction

Given the extensive amount of 19th century building in Herne Bay it is not surprising that much high quality historic detail survives everywhere in the town. This extends from the buildings themselves to the gates, railings, steps and boundary walls and the rest, that form the buildings' street setting. As the majority of the buildings are unlisted, all such features would be vulnerable to damage through alteration or loss, with a consequential damaging effect on the character of the town, were they not protected to a great degree by planning law and in particular by the Article 4.2 direction covering the conservation area.

An interim Article 4.2 direction covering all the dwellinghouses in the Herne Bay conservation area was designated on 19 December 1996. The direction was advertised locally and an explanatory leaflet was delivered to all affected properties in May 1997. A letter explaining the effects of the direction was also sent to local builders and window installers. There were no objections made to the interim direction and it was formally confirmed on 1 August 1997. The introduction of the direction did cause an increase in the number of planning applications received for 'alterations'. However after approximately 18 months the numbers of applications had declined to similar levels before the direction was introduced. There were a number of planning enforcement cases that came about due to the direction and in 2001 the criteria for dealing with planning applications for window alterations were reviewed and confirmed. The criteria adopted in October 2001 for assessing planning applications to replace windows are as follows:

1. Use of purpose made, or high quality factory made timber sash windows. Planning permission not required if windows are an exact copy or replica.
2. Use of factory made 'economy' timber sash windows or uPVC vertical sliding sash windows as replacements for Victorian/Edwardian one over one or two over two sash windows (i.e. windows with one or two sash windows, not Georgian styles which are divided into six or eight small panes). Approve subject to choice of manufacturer and detailing, ensure that vertically sliding sashes are proposed.



Original 19th century railings, Mortimer Street.

3. Use of uPVC replacement windows in suburban houses (post 1920). Approve subject to choice of window style. In many cases the uPVC replacements can match the appearance of original joinery.
4. Applications to replace inappropriate modern windows in pre 1920 houses (i.e. houses originally built with timber sashes). Approve subject to choice of style of replacement unit. The replacement should match the appearance of traditional sashes as far as possible.
5. Applications to replace traditional vertical sliding timber sash windows with standard uPVC units (i.e. side hung, top hung, bottom hung, horizontal pivot, vertical pivot or louvre). Refuse

It cannot be over emphasised that the pre 1914 detail thus protected is today, in large part, literally irreplaceable. With historic detail such a key component of the character of the conservation area, its reintroduction should be encouraged wherever reasonably possible, so long as the original arrangement can be identified.

The conservation area boundary

An important part of the appraisal process is the consideration of the boundary of the conservation area. The current boundary was designated in 1991 following a public consultation exercise and exhibition held in October 1990 which over 800 people attended. At this consultation the public were asked if the Railway Station/Station Road area, Spenser Road and Mickleburgh Hill areas should be included in the conservation area (Character areas: 13,17 & 18). There was clear support to include these areas – 91% of the 477 respondents wanted the Station included. However 61% thought Spenser Road should be included and 63% considered Mickleburgh Hill suitable for inclusion. At the Planning Committee meeting on 5 February 1991 the three areas under discussion were all included in the conservation area.

The appraisal does not conclude that the existing boundary is inappropriate. However it is now 15 years since the area was designated and there is a need to review and re-assess the current boundary. The plan below identifies certain parts of the conservation area where development of the same date lacks street trees or is otherwise negative in character. In these cases their validity as contributors to conservation area character must be in question. The removal of these areas and the effect on the conservation area boundary are shown on the plan below.



1840s 'Gothick' detail in Richmond Street. Listed building.



Plan showing (in blue) possible amendments to the conservation area boundary.

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View east within pedestrianised section of Mortimer Street.

Street trees, greenery and open space

As was shown earlier, the planting of street trees has a long history in Herne Bay and they remain important, giving character to parts of the conservation area today. A management plan for the existing stock of trees should be prepared, to include a location plan showing all existing specimens and their type. Enhancement proposals should include recommendations for reinforcing or replacing the existing stock and carrying out additional planting in new locations where possible (see below).

The town's three main purpose designed open spaces, the Downs, the seafront Tower Gardens and the Memorial Park, each have, as has been shown, their own distinctive qualities and make valuable contributions to conservation area character.

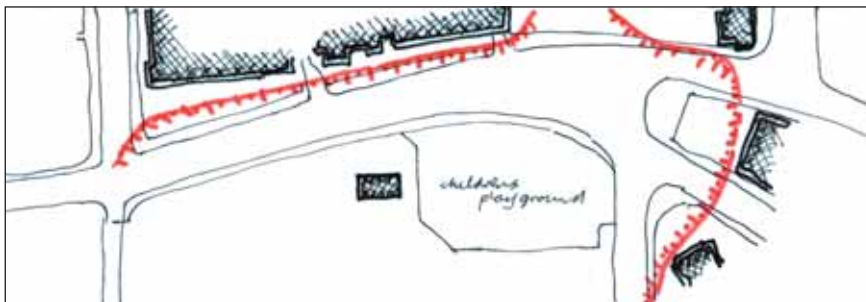
The open, wide sloping form of the Downs funnels westwards to the eastern edge of the original Oxenden street layout. The height and scale of the terraces facing east here over the Canterbury Road, is greater than that of the later north facing row of buildings ranged along Beltinge Road. The earlier development is thus accorded appropriate visual 'status' within its local setting. It is an important building group at the interface between historic, enclosed, urban, and open cliff-top, spaces.

Tower Gardens are a recently completed project (1993) carefully designed to enhance their location. They nicely combine the skills of modern landscape design with an understanding of pedestrian movement patterns and the considered management of car parking. Only in the Neptune car park with its extensive area of tarmac does the spatial design and use of materials fall short of the high standard set elsewhere.

Memorial Park combines the discrete functions of sports grounds and fields, bowling greens, war memorial and garden, processional route, pleasure park area around the lake, children's play area, youth centre location and sports area car park with the diagonal cross of footpaths mentioned earlier. This is a lot to expect one area to cater for and at the same time to convey significant 'sense of place.' The tree-lined pedestrian

routes and some perimeter tree planting do, however, provide the park with a potentially strong visual structure. Unfortunately this excellent spatial device fails in places, most noticeably it is lacking at the park's boundary with King's Road, where it should be introduced as an important visual enhancement.

The City Council owns the series of car parks in the town centre, all of these presently having a negative effect on conservation area character. All could, however, be enhanced by re-design, with defined new pedestrian routes, improved parking layouts, road surfaces and boundary treatments as well as new planted landscaping. This is especially so in the case of the William Street car park. When preparing enhancement proposals for this and the adjoining Herne Bay Market car park, improved pedestrian links across King's Road to the Memorial Park should be included. The crossing point at King's Road should be enhanced by road-narrowing and by new tree planting on land taken from the highway.



Sketch plan of existing layout, north boundary of Memorial Park with King's Road.



Sketch plan ditto, with road re-alignment and new tree planting shown.

Public Realm enhancement

There is, in conservation area character terms, scope for redevelopment for other uses in whole or in part of all the City Council's town centre car parks. At the Market Street car park evidence of the old market buildings has been destroyed, the space as it stands is relatively confined and is of little townscape merit. This former historic space could be built on without much loss of character; indeed such a development could enhance the appearance of the area. Development around the site perimeter will be most appropriate in the case of the William Street car park; this would respect the aims of the founders of the New Town who intended a large public square, Hanover Square, in this location. If a particular car park is to be only partly developed, then proposals should be part of a master plan for the whole space.

As identified earlier in this Appraisal, there are two main council-owned 'negative-effect' sites in the conservation area that might be enhanced. One, the old Pier Hotel site, centres on the Pier Avenue/Avenue Road junction, the other on the area between Queen Street and Park Road, bisected by King's Road. The tower block on the former Pier Hotel site



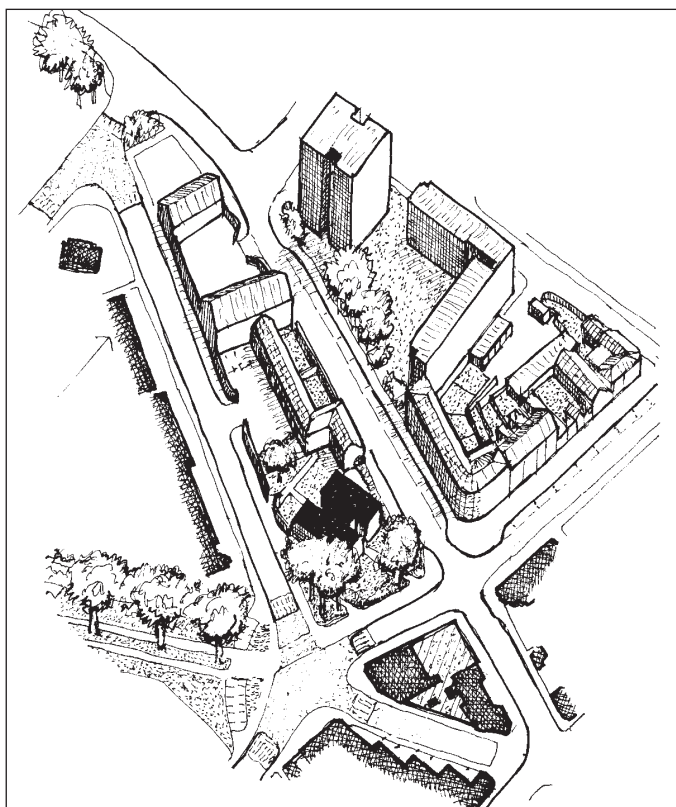
Above: 2 sketch options for improvement to spatial character at the Avenue Road/Pier Avenue junction.

dominates this side of the High Street here. Those on the site south of the junction with Avenue Road comprise setback blocks of two storey former council flats. The open space between these two sets of buildings extends over Avenue Road from one side to the other. This space has potential for positive forms of enhancement.

The character of the town between Queen Street and Park Road has suffered terribly from the building of tall blocks of former council housing. The intimate historic relationship between houses and streets, characteristic of Herne Bay, has been lost to flatted blocks, laid out in such a way as to surround them with all sorts of 'left over' space. A feasibility study to improve the local townscape quality of this area should be undertaken. It should prioritise pedestrian movement, over traffic, through the area. The attached drawing gives some possible pointers to the complex design issues arising here, and offers some thoughts on indicative approaches to improvement/enhancement.

Street enclosure along the length of the former council house development along Pier Avenue fails badly at every corner. There may be scope for public landscaping to improve this situation. The same is the case for the former council housing on Victoria Park, where again some strategic new planting might improve the townscape.

At the bottom of Mickleburgh Hill, a large-scale Edwardian development fronts only a part of the road junction. Visual improvements helping to underline this as a 'gateway' point into the town might be achieved by substantial tree planting around the end of Cavendish Road, in the public domain, where this is closed off at its junction with the roundabout.



Indicative sketch of ways to improve townscape around the modern housing blocks between Queen Street and Park Road.



Possible enhancement of Beach Street between Memorial Park, William Street and the town centre.

Lastly, there is the problem of the Sports Hall on the Pier. A study could be undertaken to help determine if it would be realistic to improve its appearance by re-cladding (as is commonly done with office, and other, modern buildings), rather than to demolish and re-build. The study might extend to investigating ways of making the full extent of the Pier more accessible, attractive and user-friendly to visitors.

Shared space

Cars parked along the High Street simply serve to underline its 'endless corridor' nature while those parking in William Street visually dominate an historic location. In both cases landscaping and revising the parking bay formation could greatly improve the situation.

In addition, pedestrians could be given more priority over vehicles and parking within the section of William Street running from the leisure centre to the junction with the High Street and also from the Charles Street junction to Central Parade. Pedestrian priority should extend across the High Street to physically link the Mortimer Street pedestrianised area back to the William Street car park. It is important to make this as physical a link as possible because at present traffic flowing along the High Street induces a very real sense of division between areas north and south of it. The link of William Street north from Charles Street to Central Parade (opposite the Bun Penny) also needs to be enhanced to create a strong, attractive pedestrian link from the seafront to the town centre. A similar strategy might be employed at the Beach Street/High Street and Pier Avenue/Avenue Road junctions.



Sketch map to show possible improvement to townscape at Mickleburgh Hill/Canterbury Road junction.



Central section of High Street looking west, showing visually obtrusive continuous parking.



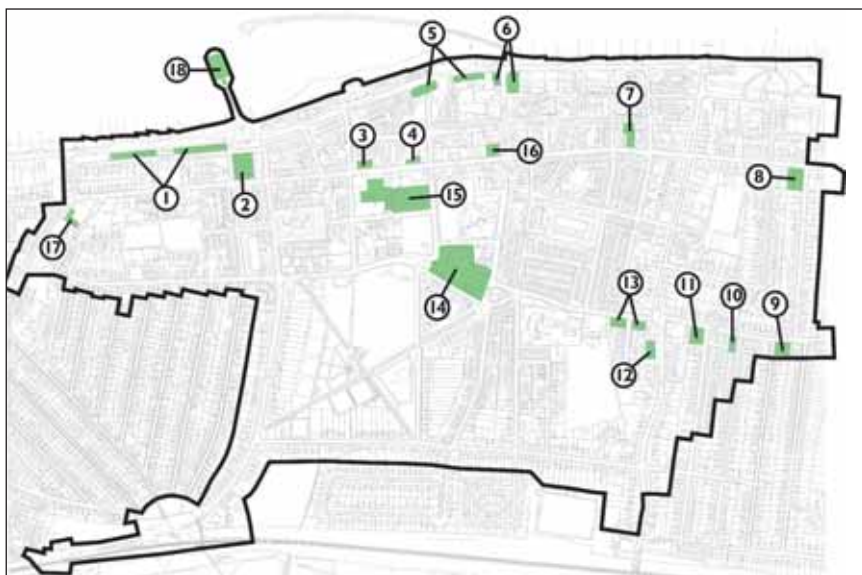
Richmond Street immediately south of its junction with the High Street area for possible extension of pedestrian priority.

Proposed enhancement schemes

The following sites have a neutral or negative effect on conservation area character. The conservation area would benefit from suitable enhancement (or in certain cases redevelopment) proposals if the occasion arose. The site number/location of each of these is shown on the map below.

The sites are as follows:

1. Amusement arcades etc. and site of former baths building, St Georges Terrace. Buildings for reinstatement of historic character and/or enhancement. Baths site for possible reinstatement of original grassed sloping bank
2. Old Pier Hotel site (Avenue Road/Pier Avenue) – redevelop the tower block and associated single storey buildings
3. Petrol station on High Street. Enhancement of existing buildings or redevelopment
4. Row of visually poor modern shops,- enhancement of street façade
5. Amusement arcades - reinstatement of historic character and/or enhancement.
6. Single storey ice cream parlour - possible partial redevelopment at two storeys. Open space around Bun Penny - improvement to garden
7. Co-Op supermarket, modern building for enhancement/improvement.
8. Bungalows in area of Victorian/Edwardian two and three storey development
9. Bungalows ditto
10. Bungalows ditto.
11. Bungalows ditto.
12. Motor car showrooms - possible reinstatement of original historic character
13. Petrol station and single storey commercial uses in area of Victorian/Edwardian multi storey development
14. Motor caravan open sales site and former garage on a prominent site – possible redevelopment
15. Supermarket and bus garage buildings – redevelopment and enhancement
16. Modern building of flats over retail - enhancement of shop fronts
17. Modern single storey 'temporary' building in historic garden space
18. Enhancement of the Pier Pavilion



Map showing proposed enhancement scheme areas.

Advertising and advertisements

A lack of care in the maintenance of buildings on the part of some property owners, and difficult times for the small retailer, has resulted in a slightly 'dog-eared' feel in places in the town centre. While the economic factors at play here are outside the scope of this appraisal, another potential contributor to this dowdiness, modern advertising, can be mentioned. Whether it is the street hoarding carrying giant posters, or neon or other illuminated signs crudely mounted on cantilevered box-canopies or fascias, this can seriously, and damagingly, erode the underlying solid 19th century character of the town.

When circumstances permit, every opportunity should be taken to reduce the effect of such poor modern advertising by reinstatement to the earlier Edwardian or Victorian pattern. Alternatively, improvements may be possible through the use of more appropriate modern design, detail and material, or by complete removal with a replacement that better recognises the historic context.

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