

APPENDIX A

Planning Policy



National Policy

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS1 explains the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. The document sets out the need for the planning system to balance social, environment and economic objectives of development to ensure a healthy balance for all. In achieving this aim a particular emphasis is placed on creating well designed places.

Importantly, PPS1 emphasises the need for new development to take place on previously developed brownfield land. This is to prevent sprawl and stop new development from encroaching on undeveloped land. This overarching principle is noted in other national planning policy including PPS6: town centres and PPS3: Housing, as being a priority goal.

By Design- Better Places to Live

Provides best practice guidance on urban design issues in the planning system. The document focuses on how urban environments can be improved and transformed to be places which function efficiently and people can enjoy. It identifies seven objectives of good urban design that need to be considered within the context of an environment. These objectives allow the analysis of the factors that contribute to successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities.

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

Published in November 2006, PPS3 seeks to promote high quality housing, a mix of housing tenures and prices, sufficient quantities of housing, housing developments in suitable locations which offer good access to jobs, and services and the reuse of previously developed land. One of the overarching themes of PPS3 is the need to encourage sustainable homes; this is further supported by the Code for Sustainable Homes published 13th December 2006 which proposes a move towards zero carbon residential developments.

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for town centres

PPS6 details the Government's policy for encouraging sustainable development in town centres. The main theme of the document is that future growth should be concentrated in existing centres. Local authorities are encouraged to achieve this by implementing a sequential test to ensure that the town centre is given priority for development. The policy is focused on ensuring town centres are interesting, accessible and vibrant locations which offer a wide range of retail and leisure uses and that services are located in central locations so they are accessible and sustainable.

PPG13: Transport

PPG13 seeks to promote more sustainable modes of transport including public transport and reducing the need for private cars. There is a recognised need to locate shopping, residential, commercial and recreational uses in places accessible by a range of transport.

Good Practice Guide Planning for Tourism

The good practice guide replaced PPG 21: Planning for tourism in 2006. The updated guidance aims to ensure that planners understand the importance of tourism and take this fully into account when preparing development plans and taking planning decisions. The document also seeks to ensure that planners and the tourism industry work together effectively to facilitate, promote and deliver new tourism development in a sustainable way. This is particularly relevant to the successful future development of Hunstanton.

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment

PPG15 sets out government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other elements of the historic environment. This document is of particular relevance to Hunstanton given the historic assets that exist in and around the town centre.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

PPG17 acknowledges that open spaces, sport and recreation underpin people's quality of life. In planning for new open spaces, PPG17 states that opportunity should be taken to improve the local space network, creating public open spaces from vacant land and incorporating open spaces within new developments on previously-used land.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 22: Renewable Energy

PPS22 seeks to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050. The PPS identifies that increased development of renewable energy resources is vital to facilitating the delivery of the Government's commitments on both climate change and renewable energy.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25: Development and Flood Risk

PPS25 seeks to avoid, reduce and manage flood risk through taking into account present and future flood risk in determining planning applications. It explains how flood risk should be considered at all stages of designing and planning development in order to reduce future damage to property, with consideration of climate change impacts and the vulnerability of particular types of development.

Regional Planning Guidance

The draft East of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 14 - provides the strategic planning and development framework for local authorities in the region to help guide local plans and local transport plans.

Draft RSS 14 contains a number of spatial policies, of which the starting point is the achievement of sustainable development, as set out in draft Policy SS1. This establishes the sequential approach to the location of new development, aiming to deliver urban renaissance principles by maximising the use of previously developed areas and focusing development on those areas with good services and accessibility. Central to delivering this policy is the conservation of the 'region's environment, quality of life, local character and natural resources, whilst adapting to climate change, together with tackling the problems of social inclusion and deprivation'.

Hunstanton forms part of the King's Lynn "Key regional centre for development and change" following amendments to the RSS by Government. It is identified in the RSS that the region's economy is characterised by low unemployment with skills shortages and recruitment difficulties with a dependence on certain sectors. The main focus of policy in this section is to concentrate development and growth in already established areas in line with national aspirations for making efficient use of land. This is an important consideration reflected through planning policy and will need important consideration as part of the masterplan.

Housing provision for Norfolk is outlined in policy H1- distribution of dwelling provision 2001-2021, which highlights the fact that 3,630 net additional dwellings per annum will need to be built in the East of England between 2001 and 2021, a total of 72,600 dwellings. King's Lynn and West Norfolk has a target of 550 dwellings per year which makes the overall number 11,000 over the plan period 2001-2021.

The emerging East of England regional plan places a strong emphasis on promoting renewable energy in the region. This is detailed in policy ENV8: renewable energy and energy efficiency which encourages local authorities in the region to promote and encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy. Part (e) of ENV 8 encourages local authorities to "favourably consider on-shore developments associated with off-shore energy generation."

In addition, there is a renewed government drive for renewable energy with offshore windfarms proposed in the local area. This could be a potential avenue for further investigation as there may be a way of using the windfarms to promote "green tourism".

County and Borough Level Policy

Norfolk Structure Plan

The Structure Plan for Norfolk sets planning and economic policy at a county level. The Plan was adopted in 1999 and is set to 2011, it will however be superseded by the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy when it is adopted in 2008.

Local Planning Policy

The King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan was adopted in November 1998 and will remain a statutory approved Development Plan until it is replaced by appropriate sections of a formally adopted Local Development Framework. Local planning policy in Hunstanton is covered Local Plan 1998, with Section 7 of the Local Plan specifically relating to Hunstanton. The most significant point made in the local plan policy is that Hunstanton is a middle-ranking seaside resort and service centre with a requirement to provide both for local residents and visiting tourist population. It is important that the economy therefore is sustainable all year round and this must be reflected in the land-use policies which supplement and guide economic development. It is also recognised that there are four detailed proposals for the town, these include:

- seek to strengthen the all year round role of the town centre;
- locate new employment development within walking distance of the town centre and where it is also readily accessible from the main road network;
- locate new housing within walking distance of the town centre;
- seek to strengthen the seaside resort whilst keeping its distinctiveness

The last point is important and recognises the need to balance the character and heritage with the need to strengthen the town. This is a similar conclusion to the English Heritage report which also recognises the need to provide this balance.

In September 2007 the Secretary of State has directed that some, but not all of the policies contained within the Local Plan will be retained for future use until the Local Development Framework is adopted. There are two planning policies which relate specifically to Hunstanton which have been saved; Policy 7/5 In Hunstanton the Holiday Development Zones and Policy 7/4 Employment (Hunstanton).

Draft Core Strategy: Preferred Options Paper (October, 2006)

As part of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it is now the duty of all local planning authorities to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). This will replace the current system of local plans and Unitary Development Plans (UDPs). The LDF comprises a number of documents including the Core Strategy and Development Control policies Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

The Core Strategy Preferred Options Paper was produced in October 2006, and is due for adoption in January 2010. This document outlines a number of key priorities for the Borough. The following are of particular significance to Hunstanton:

- SPS3 of the Core Strategy recognises the seasonal nature of the town. During the consultation process with residents, undertaken as part of the core strategy, it was noted that residents want to see the tourist emphasis develop in harmony with the residents of the town. It was also highlighted that there needs to be a balance and ensure quality year-round employment in the town.
- The strategy notes that this will be achieved reinforcing and improving the Victorian heritage of Hunstanton through conservation and innovative design, retaining public open spaces and protecting and maintaining the unique natural environment. Accessibility is another key objective of the strategy and includes the need to create an efficient public transport system, connecting Hunstanton to the wider Borough, improving the cycle and pedestrian network within the town and supporting access to the town by encouraging improvements to the A149.

Hunstanton Parish Plan (2004)

The Parish Plan was produced in 2004. Essentially, the document provides a channel through which the community can produce a vision for future development. Importantly, it identifies a number of problems and opportunities in the town and develops an action plan for how to deal with them.

Two of the most significant problems are noted as being rising house prices which have increased due to a large number of retirees looking for accommodation in an attractive environment and the rise in popularity of foreign holidays. The main challenge identified was the need for Hunstanton to: “develop its role as a seaside destination for visitors while meeting the needs and expectations of those who choose to live and work in the town.” This desire has been carried through at the policy level and is further identified in the Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper.

Some of the key messages to emerge from this document include the need to:

- secure general improvements to the town centre and historic environment
- recognise the important role of tourism and to encourage investment in the facilities which improve the quality of the tourism product
- encourage the provision of affordable housing
- promote initiatives aimed at raising the aspirations and skills of local people
- support initiatives specifically aimed at providing activities for young people
- encourage the provision of attractive and safe pedestrian routes throughout the town centre and seafront of Hunstanton
- Ensure that car parking is effectively managed to meet the needs of the resident population and visitors

Broadly, these aims were reiterated during the stakeholder consultation undertaken as part of the baseline analysis.

APPENDIX B

Consultation and Analysis



The masterplan has developed from a thorough analysis of Hunstanton including the existing built environment, transportation, and socio-economic issues. This section of the report summarises the key elements of the baseline analysis and provides further commentary on the public consultation outcomes. The analysis identifies that the town has a number of unique urban, historic and landscape features while also highlighting the need to regenerate the town.

The details of the community consultation provided in this section illustrate how the community input has informed the masterplan; with the local community acting as a critical “sounding-board” for which ideas have been tested throughout the masterplan’s production.

Geographical Context

The town is located in the County of Norfolk and forms part of the East of England Region. King’s Lynn is recognised as a sub-regional centre and is one of the main employment locations in the County.

Hunstanton is one of the larger town centres in the area and serves as a small but important retail centre for some of the smaller villages in the area. The town also acts as an important employment centre in the local area and provides a number of jobs for the local population, especially in the summer months.

Hunstanton is located on the Norfolk coast, facing west over The Wash and is surrounded by a number of villages including Heacham, Ringstead and Old Hunstanton. The town has a population of approximately 5,000 people with a significant retired population, which is reflected in the age structure of the resident population.

Historical Context

In 1840 Hunstanton was unoccupied apart from the ruins of St Edmund’s Chapel and a lighthouse. It was the vision of Henry Styleman LeStrange to turn the area into an attractive coastal resort. LeStrange used the creation of a railway link to the town in the mid 19th Century as the catalyst to realise his vision with the railway line built in 1862.

The Royal Hotel was the first building built in 1848, it faced on to The Green area to create the main focal point for the town centre. This gave rise to the pattern of the town as it stands today with a series of triangular greens with buildings arranged singly or in groups. The original pier was built in 1870 in front of The Green as the focus of the planned resort and was intended to act as a major attraction for visitors to the town.

From the late 19th century the town developed rapidly to cater for the tourist trade. Development included a number of hotels, residential properties and associated infrastructure including churches and shops. In 1932 the seawall was extended southwards, a swimming pool created and a boat lake constructed. In 1969 the railway line closed and the area previously occupied by the station was given over to car parking to cater for the changes in transport as more people began to arrive by car.

Tourism trends in the last few decades have seen an increase in the number of cheap foreign holidays as aviation became cheaper. Hunstanton attempted to compete with these trends by incorporating a range of low-price leisure facilities, which led to the removal of the pre-war outdoor family attractions like the boating lake. These attractions were replaced by the Sea Life Centre and Oasis Leisure Centre. The pier head pavilion was destroyed by fire in 1939 and later replaced with the current amusement arcade structure. In 1978 the pier itself was destroyed by a storm. Planning permission was granted for a new building in 2002 to stand on the site of the old pier.

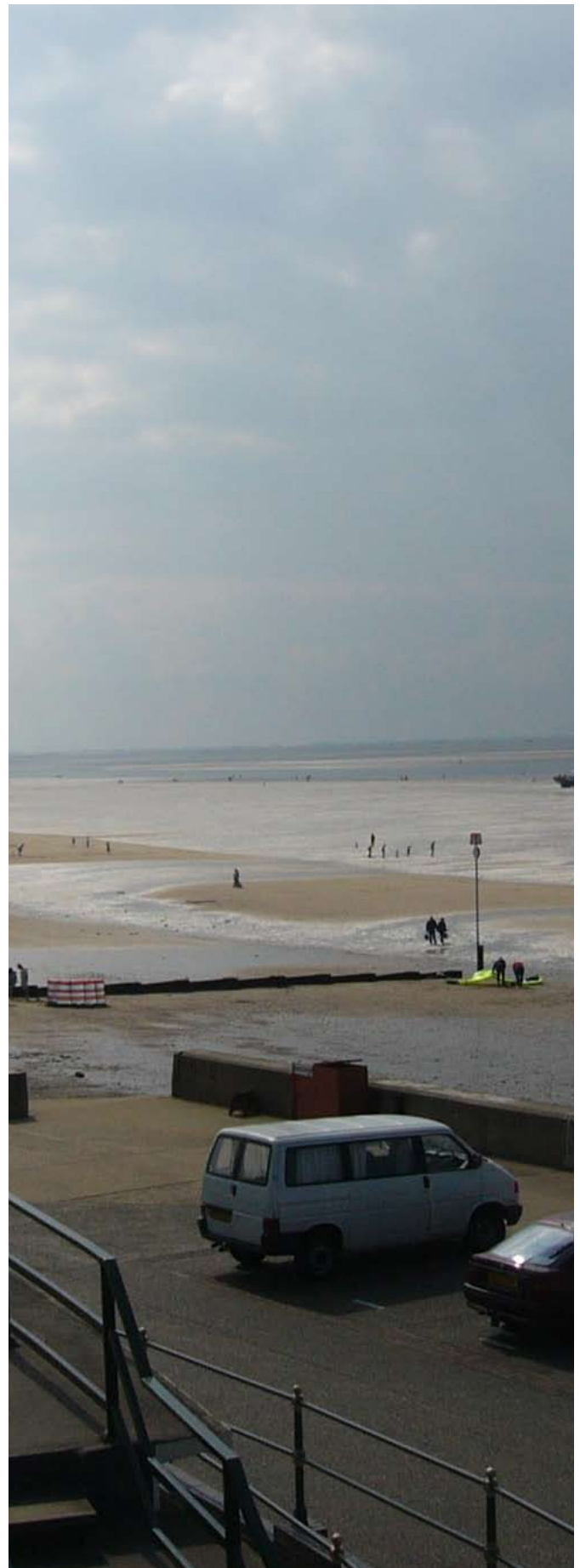
Coastal Town Regeneration

Hunstanton has dual functions as both a tourist destination and an important service centre for year-round residents and the adjoining rural area. This dual function results in a bustling and active town centre in the summer months, while the winter season is characterised by inactivity. The seasonal nature of the economy results in variations in the population of the town and the demand for local services. However tourism makes a vital contribution to the local economy and it is important that the dual functions of the town are maintained

Two recent reports have highlighted the specific problems facing coastal towns. These are the English Heritage Guidance: Regeneration in Coastal Towns (October 2007) and Coastal Towns - The Communities and Local Government Committee Report (March 2007 and October 2007).

Although these reports provide an interesting background to the problems facing coastal towns it should be noted that not all of the issues referred to apply to Hunstanton. However, some of the important issues include:

- The seasonal nature of the coastal economy
- Declining visitor numbers
- Physical isolation and poor accessibility
- The 180 degree catchment area
- Urban design conflicts including the challenge to expand and develop whilst maintaining a historic environment. In Hunstanton's case there is a considerable opportunity to link the town centre and southern seafront by creating a new character for the southern seafront through the implementation of the masterplan and by ensuring that new development reflects the modern principles of sustainability and modern functions of a coastal resort of this size
- Inward migration of older people
- Outward migration of young people



Flooding

Figure B.1 shows the extent of flood risk in Hunstanton as defined by the Environment Agency's flood map data. The map shows that the area with the worst potential for flooding is towards the southern seafront, although much of this is protected by flood defences.

It is noted in the Environment Agency's guidance, that the presence of flood defences does not exclude the area from flooding. However, it is assumed that the risk is sufficiently small not to pose a significant threat to this area of the town.

This is reinforced by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council which highlights the fact that *"much of the district is protected from tidal flooding by the Environment Agency's tidal floodwalls and embankments along the coast."*

There are some additional areas outside the protection of the flood defences that may be at a greater risk of flooding although these are in the immediate vicinity of the coast and the risk is unlikely to pose a serious threat to the type of development located in this area.

The development proposals included in this report have considered the flooding issues in the southern seafront area in light of the Environment Agency's flood advice and Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk.

One of the attractions of Hunstanton is the unique striped effect of chalk and carrstone found in the cliffs at Hunstanton. These, however, are gradually being eroded and there are significant rock falls resulting in the reduction of the cliff top. This appears to be due in part to coastal erosion from the sea but also to the effect of fluvial water filtering through the porous layers of rock. Funds are urgently needed to study these effects and to suggest possible remedial measures to preserve this unique attraction.

Key

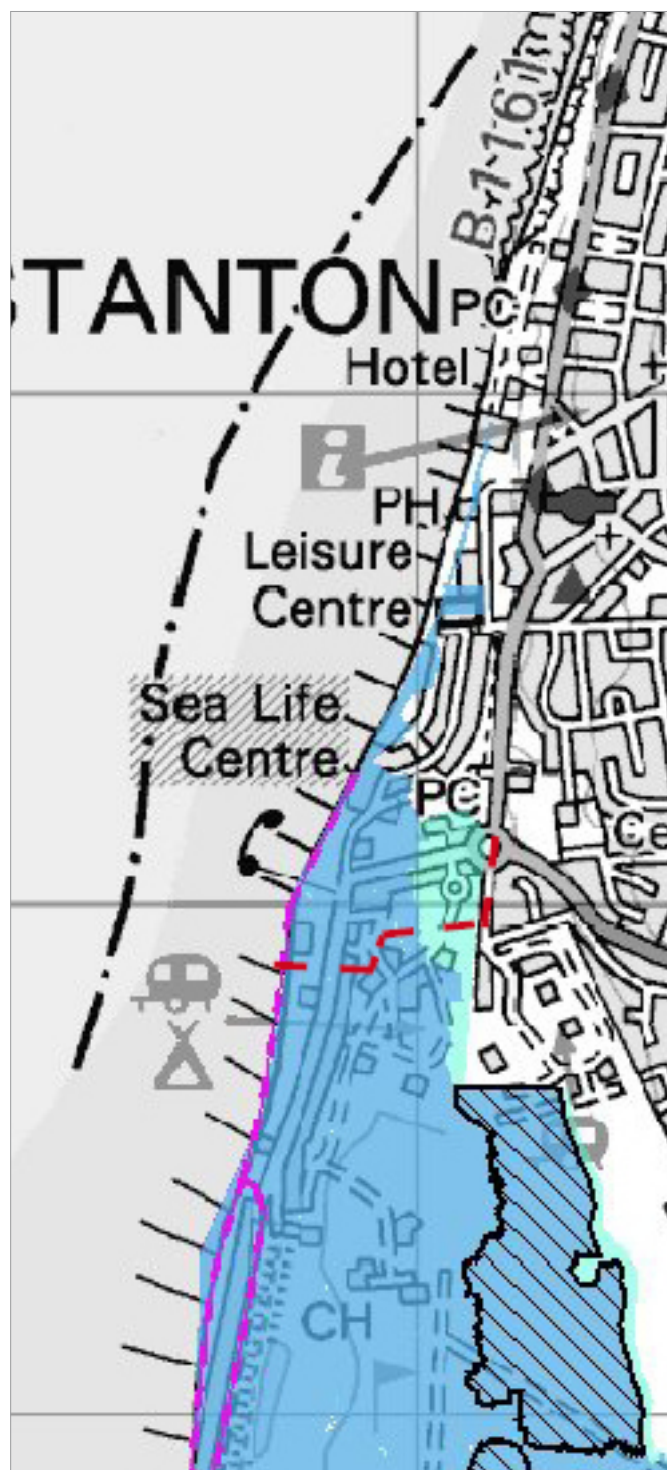
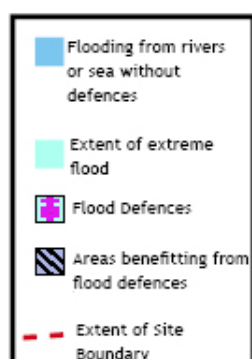


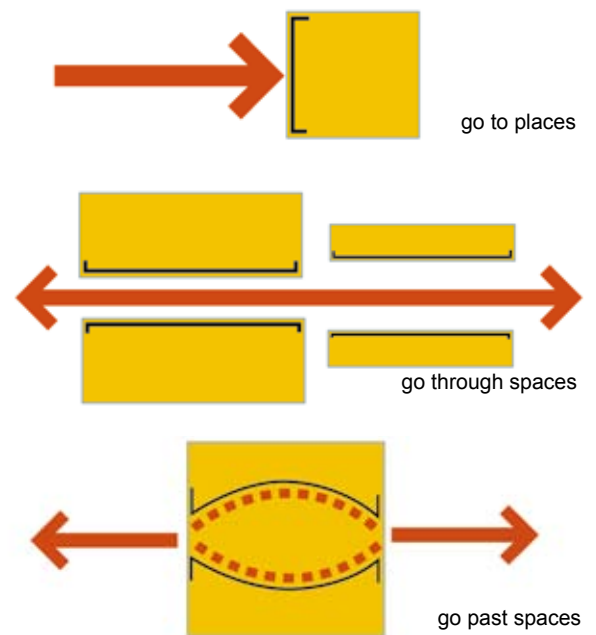
figure B.1 map showing flood risk in Hunstanton
Source: Environment Agency

Urban Design Analysis

The urban design qualities of the study area and surrounding context area were analysed as part of the baseline study. A summary urban design analysis is provided in this section.

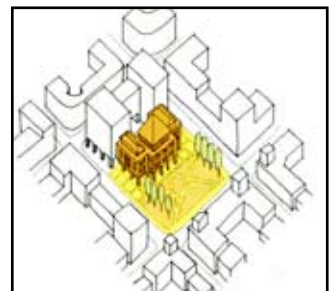
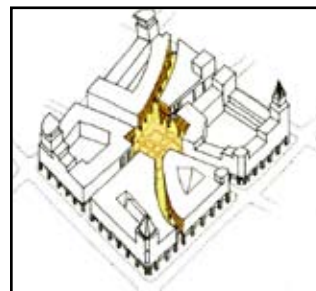
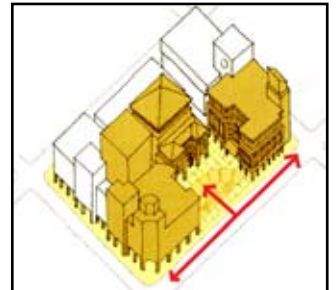
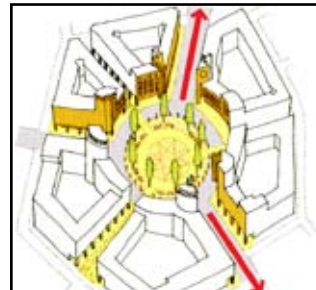
The urban design objectives used in the assessment of the study area are drawn from the governments "*By Design: Urban Design principles in the planning system*", which is referenced as good practice in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development. This approach places considerable emphasis on achieving high quality design based on the principles of making successful places.

2. Continuity and enclosure - a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished. A scheme should promote continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.



1. Character - a place with its own identity. Development should promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.

3. Quality of the public realm - a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas. The redevelopment of Hunstanton town centre and southern seafront should include a series of integrated public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all people.



4. Diversity - a place with variety and choice
Step-change will be facilitated by a delicate mix of uses, promoting diversity and choice through compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

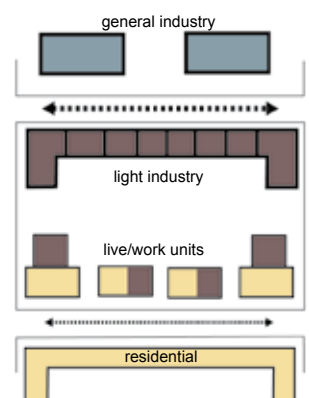
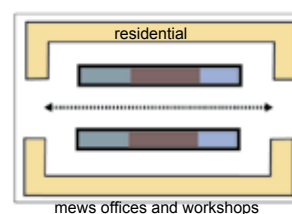
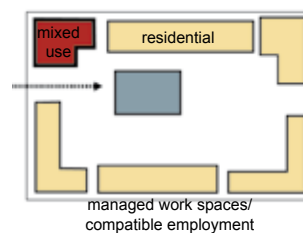


6. Ease of movement - a place that is easy to get to and move through.
Focus on accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.



5. Legibility - a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
The redevelopment of the study area should promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way

7. Adaptability - a place that can change easily
The opportunity to create new blocks and re-define the frontages with adaptable blocks that can be more easily divided or joined to meet the needs of future markets.



Land Ownership

Figure B2 shows a significant proportion of land in Borough Council ownership in the study area. A considerable proportion, especially in the Southern Seafront, is leased to other parties. This may act as a constraint on redevelopment.



figure B.2 - land in Borough Council ownership



02 ANALYSIS & CONSULTATION

Land Use

The land uses in the study area generally consist of residential, retail and open space to the north, with tourism related uses along the promenade as shown in figure B.2. However, in terms of area the most dominant land use is surface car parking. The provision of sufficient car parking spaces is clearly a key priority to ensure that Hunstanton can cater for residents and visitors. However, surplus space can be used to release value from land. This will need to be carefully balanced with the estimated increases in demand for car parking space in the future.



Seagate car park

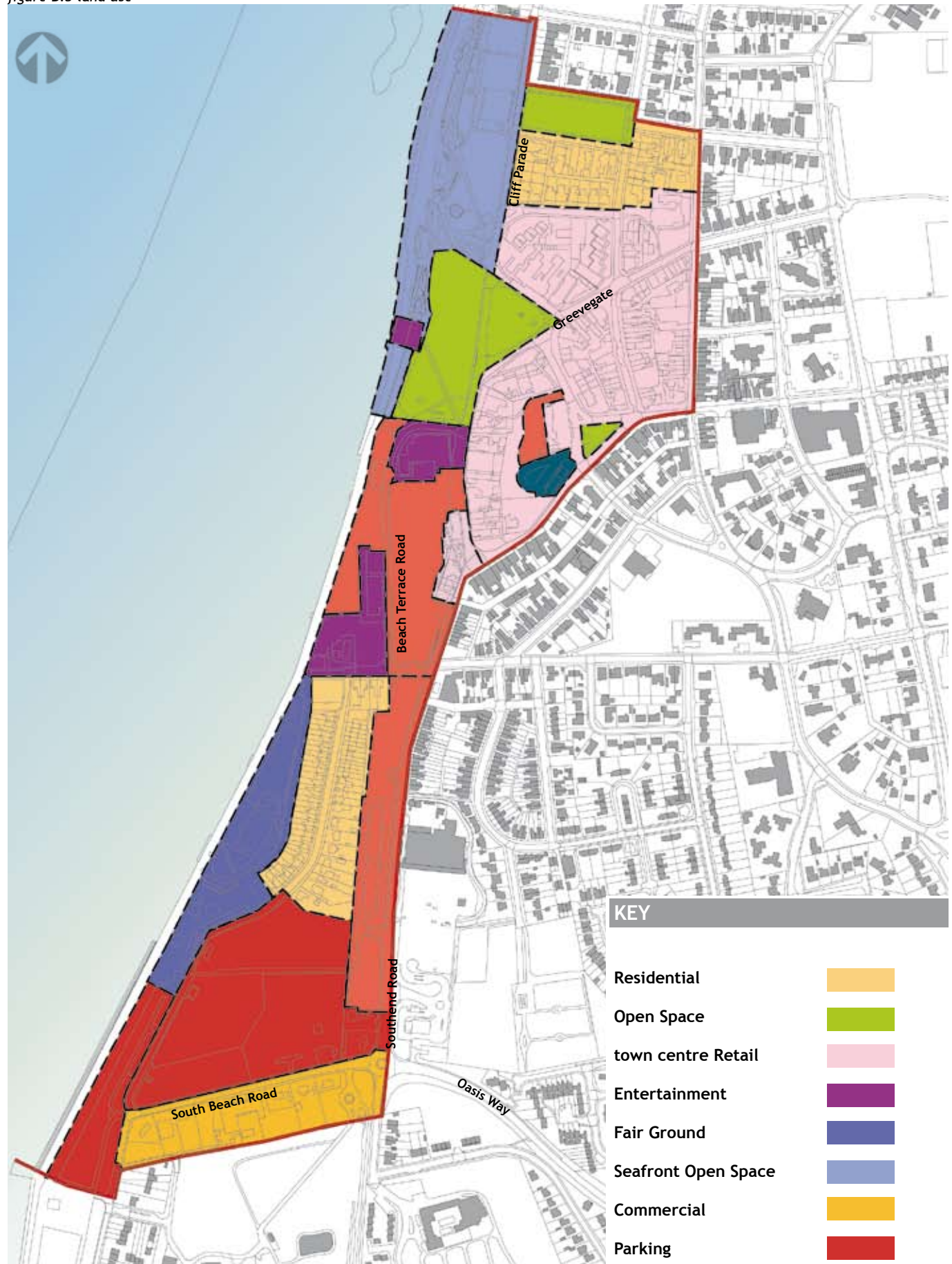


Hunstanton market



entertainment and leisure uses on the promenade

figure B.3 land use



B

Historic Assets

The physical appearance and structure of Hunstanton indicates that the north of the town centre possesses a greater proportion of the historic assets, shown in figure B.3. This is supported by the coverage of the Conservation Area boundary and the location of the few Listed Buildings within the historic town centre.

The area to the south and west of Crescent Lane is noticeably free of any historic assets or points of interest, with the exception of the seafront promenade, which is an important reference to the seaside town's Victorian heritage.

The importance of The Green, the buildings along its frontage, the High Street and the residential properties along Cliff Parade occupy key positions in the vistas to and from the town centre. They are identification markers for the town centre and play an important role in the historic image of the town centre, which is an important tourism asset



The Golden Lion Hotel



the Boston Sensory Garden: an important green space



Hunstanton's historic assets

figure B.4 historic assets



B

Urban Grain

The urban grain and movement hierarchy for the town centre is split between the historic development patterns in the north, and the absence of an urban structure in the south as shown in figure B.4. These patterns have been summarised below:

- Key vehicular movements along the north-south axis, particularly Southend Road and Le Strange Terrace
- Key pedestrian route along the seafront promenade
- East-west routes are required to overcome barriers and points of severance, such as the primary north-south axis and the parking areas
- Connecting routes, predominately within the historic areas, are focused on the diagonal (blue)
- Distinct lack of routes and structure to the south of the study area
- Seaside public open space and The Green act as pedestrian-only islands and major interfaces between the physical development of the town centre and the seafront



connections down to the seafront

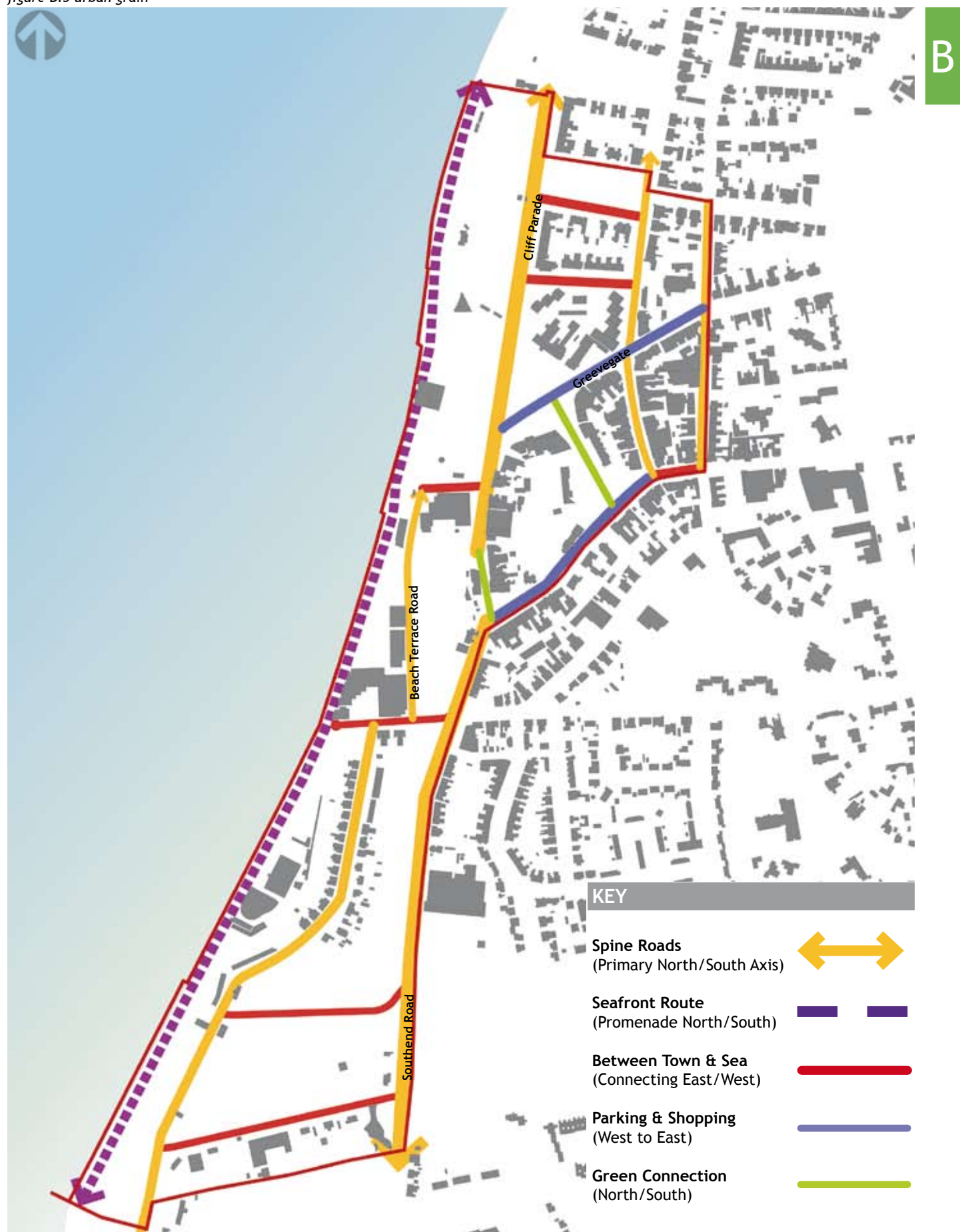


an important pedestrian route: the promenade



Southend road: an important spine road into the town centre

figure B.5 urban grain



B

Views and Vistas

It is widely recognised that Hunstanton's natural views are one of the town's key assets, some of the key views are illustrated in figure B.5. These are enhanced by a number of factors including the natural location of the town overlooking The Wash which is further enhanced by the topography of the town as it gently slopes down towards the sea from The Green. In addition, the fact that the town has a west-facing aspect creates unique sunsets over The Wash. However, it is also recognised that some views are in need of improvement, one of the most important is the view from the sea towards The Green, which is particularly poor due to the blank façade of the pier building.

Summary of Key Issues & Opportunities

For its size and location Hunstanton has a substantial number and array of interesting urban, historical and landscape features that can serve as the foundation for many more interesting developments within the town centre. The proximity of the historic town centre with the unique natural landscape is a key asset which presents many exciting opportunities.

Lack of investment over several decades has left key gateway sites untouched. In many instances a small infill development can help create active and vibrant frontages, such as those along the promenade, Westgate and St. Edmund's Terrace. Such developments would prove useful in creating new pedestrian connections between the historic town centre and the seafront promenade.

The loose and un-designated surface car parks to the south of the study area provide little support to the structure of the southern seafront and should be considered a major opportunity for future development. This will need to be balanced with an appropriate parking strategy for the town.



views towards The Wash

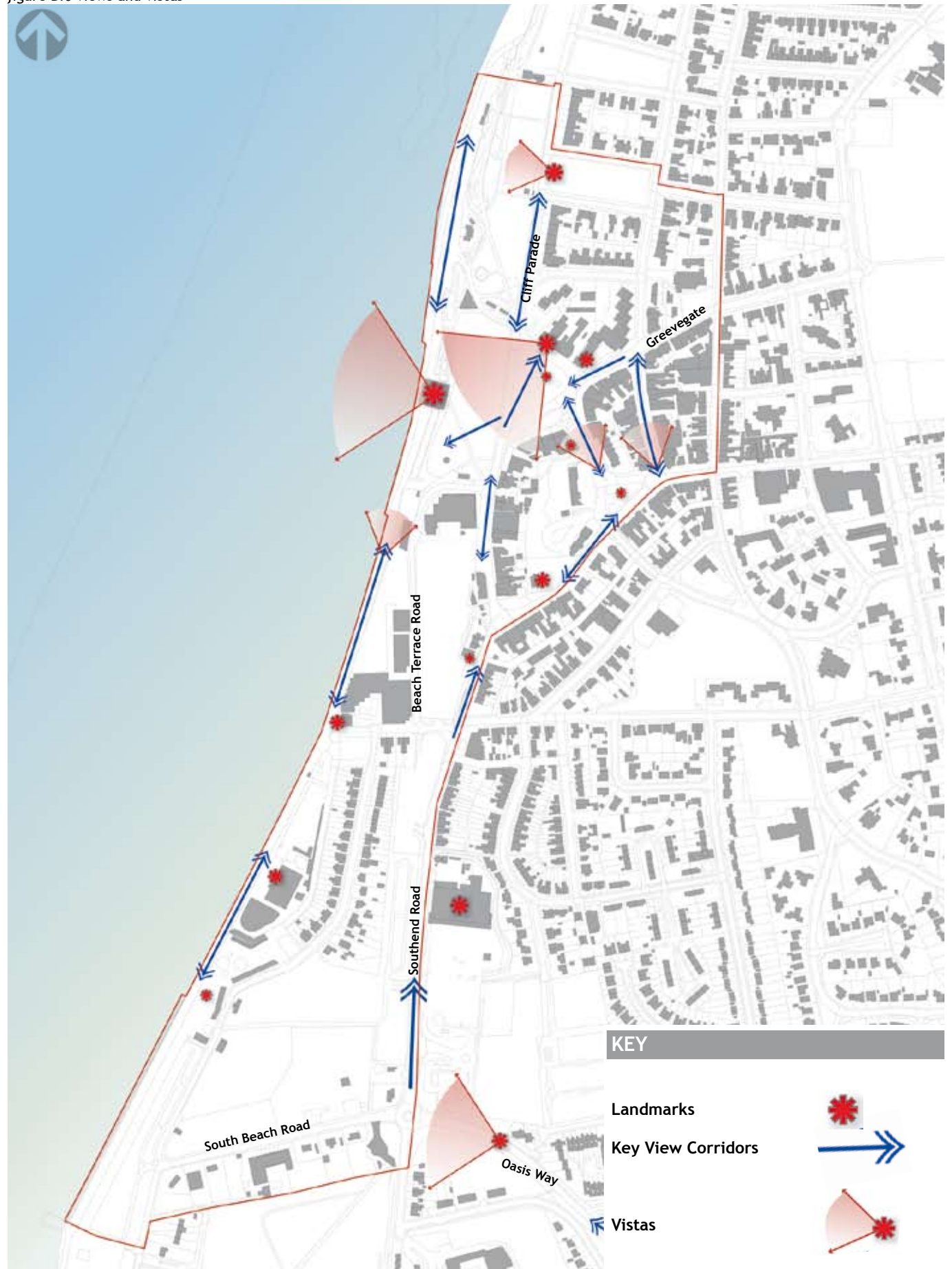


an important view from The Green towards to The Wash



views towards The Wash from the southern seafront

figure B.6 views and vistas



B

Character Districts

- 1. The cliff faces and the uncluttered seafront promenade** - the large landscaped open space to the west of Cliff Parade, and the water activities (sailing and wind-surfing). The strong visual links with the natural features of The Wash and the cliffs makes it the most attractive vantage point from which to enjoy the views and vistas.
- 2. The historic houses that line the eastern frontage of Cliff Parade** - The intact grandeur of the buildings and their attractive landscape and natural settings are central to the identity of Hunstanton.
- 3. The Green is the central public space of Hunstanton.** The town has evolved and continues to revolve around The Green centrepiece, which enjoys some of the most impressive vistas out across the beach.
- 4. The historical retail quarter of Hunstanton-** consists of some contemporary retail units, some of which retain their delicate timber shop-front detailing. The glimpses along the historic streetscapes towards The Green, and further west towards The Wash, are unique to Hunstanton.
- 5. The bright flashing lights of the amusement arcades and leisure uses,** against the backdrop of surface car parks, is in stark contrast to the more refined historic town centre to the east. However, the informal and vibrant nature of this area has its own appeal and value in attracting visitors.
- 6. The amusement and entertainment complexes** become larger and more colourful towards the south of the promenade. Attracting tourists and pedestrian flows alike, these uses provide an undefined and fractured frontage that becomes increasingly diluted to the south.
- 7. One of the few established residential developments** in the southern seafront area of Hunstanton, the properties are largely isolated from the rest of the town centre. The appearance and townscape qualities of the properties could be improved to enhance views along the promenade.
- 8. Occupying a long narrow stretch of gateway frontage,** the surface car park has been treated with some attractive soft landscaping. However, blank frontage of the adjacent Tesco dominates the street scene in this area.
- 9. Large and expansive grassed open space area** that is characterised by caravans and cars. The responsive nature of this space provides an interesting buffer.
- 10. The temporary holiday accommodation and caravans** can be identified with the impact and role of the holiday trade to Hunstanton. However, the location of these units at a key seafront location could be improved.
- 11. Similar to No. 10,** although occupying a potential gateway location, the layout of the caravans diffuses any urban structure of movement networks.



1



2



3

figure B.7 character districts



B

Development Pattern

The building grain of Hunstanton, indicated in figure B.7 by the black blocks, expresses the prominence of historic development in the north of the town centre. The south features large areas without buildings and no clear urban grain or structure.

At street level, these patterns of development are expressed in the number and intact nature of the historic buildings and shop frontages. The few contemporary incursions into this development pattern are focused along the promenade, associated with the amusement arcades.

The island of residential uses to the south (light orange), contained between the narrow surface and coach parking at Southend Road and the entertainment uses along the seafront, reflect a time when these properties were part of a contiguous development pattern that stretched south from the town centre along Southend Road

Along the western boundary of the town centre is the promenade, which ends abruptly at The Green and signified by the redeveloped pier. The confused network of pedestrian routes and active frontages breaks down the urban structure at a key movement junction.

Further north, the linear axis of the cliff faces is again reflected in the alignment of Cliff Parade, the historic properties that align its frontage, and the spaces created further to the east.

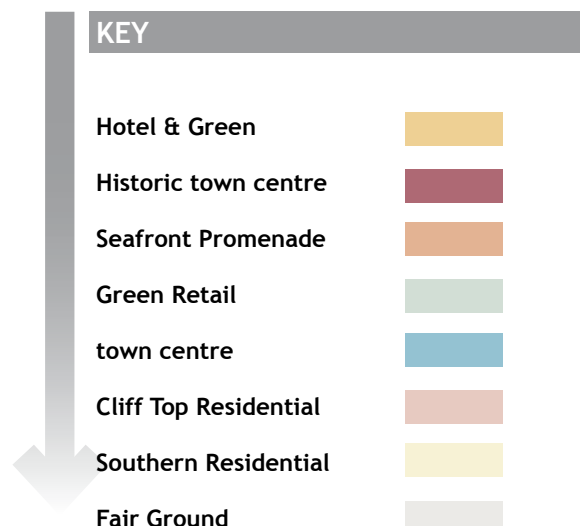
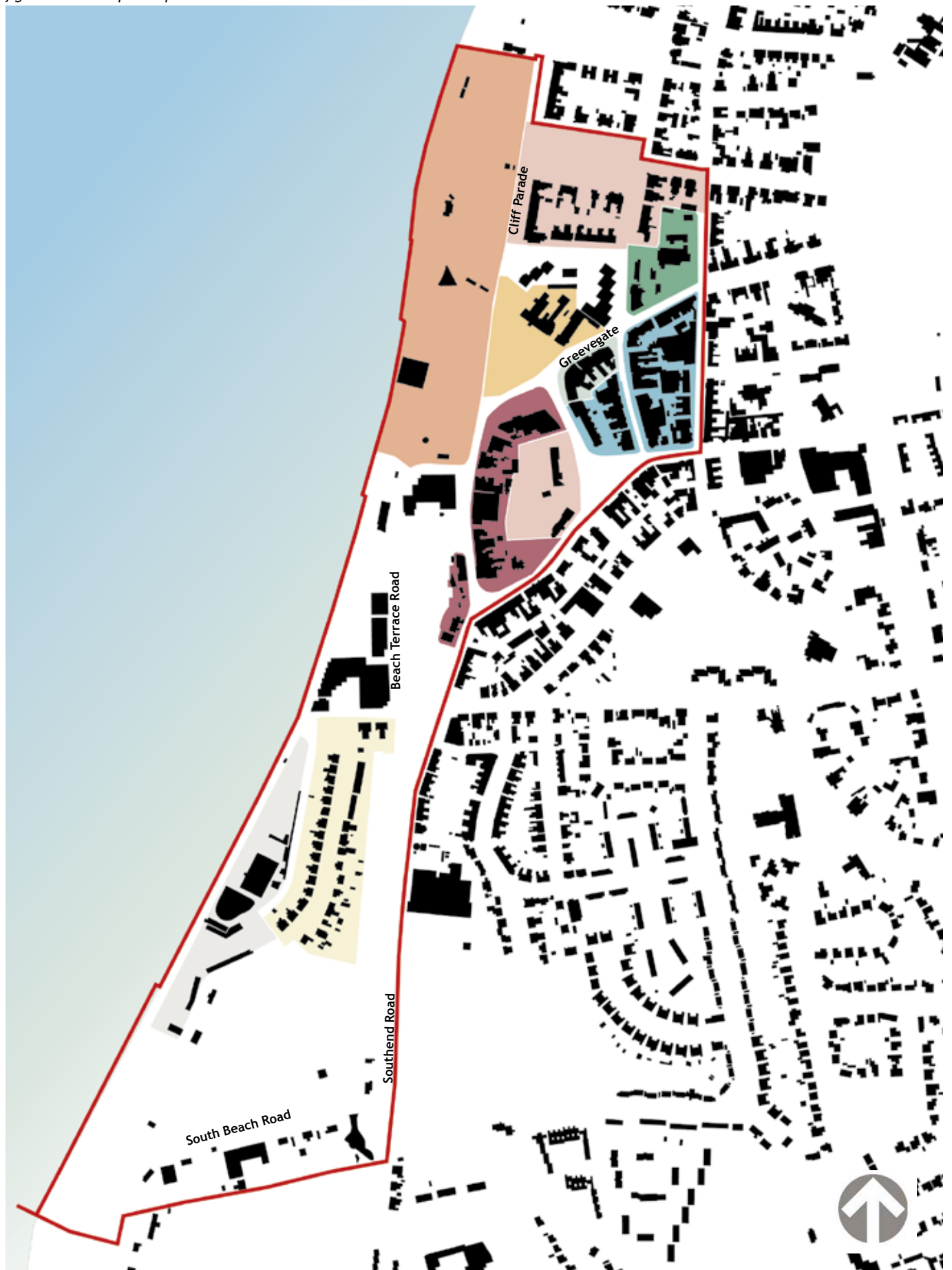


figure B.8 development pattern



B

Opportunity Sites

The urban design analysis highlighted that there are 8 opportunity sites in the study area that would benefit from redevelopment and could significantly enhance the visual appearance of the study area and contribute to creating a more vital and viable town centre. These have since been refined for the final masterplan as a result of further analysis and community consultation.

1. The Pier

A focus of considerable public interest and feeling, the pier plays a considerable emotive role in the future of Hunstanton, but when weighed against the benefits it would bring, it holds only a relatively modest development potential.

2. Mix-Use Development

The subject of developer interest, the site is located at a key interface between the retail uses along the High Street and the Amusement/Entertainment uses along the seafront promenade. A contemporary mixed-use scheme could help rebrand the town centre and reinforce important east-west connections to the promenade.

3. Bus Station

Located adjacent to a potential mixed-use development site, the bus station could reinforce the benefits created by Site 02. The site occupies two important frontages at Westgate and St. Edmund's Terrace. Future development would need to sensitively respond to historic frontages along Westgate.

4. Beach Terrace Road Car Park

Occupying a key gateway site into the town centre, the size, scale, location and layout of this surface car park would attract considerable interest for a substantial mixed-use development. The size of the site could lead to a re-branding of this area, associated with new connections between the promenade and the town centre.

5. Beach Terrace Road

Occupying a key position on the promenade, the surface car park to the west of Beach Terrace Road, Kit Kat site, and the low-grade amusement uses to its south are an ideal opportunity to reinvigorate the seafront.

The location, between the leisure and entertainment activities to the south and the traditional town centre uses to the north west, the site has the potential to attract the greatest amount of footfall in the town centre. Sensitive redevelopment of the site would help enclose the public pedestrian routes and create a central visual attractor for all movements along the seafront.

6. Southend Car Park

Another car park site in a key townscape location, the Southend surface car park has been dressed-up by some soft landscaping although this does little to balance the visual impact of the adjacent blank facades of Tesco.

The site could become the southern gateway to Hunstanton and a strong, interesting landmark development.

7-8. Seagate Road Car Park

Serving as a spill-over car park in peak holiday and summer periods, the grassed open space area and temporary holiday accommodation reflect the broken townscape of the southern seafront. The urban structure, routes and visual connections are loose and confused. Consolidation of the parking and caravans could unlock a substantial development site that could become the focus of the southern seafront.

figure B.9 opportunity sites



B

Seafront Analysis

figure B.10 seafront analysis



Southern Seafront Analysis 01 Oasis Way to Seagate Road

- Un-defined frontage
- Poor permeability from the east
- Access to beach is poorly sign-posted
- Poor connectivity to Southend Road
- Fair Ground occupies important seafront location
- Passive frontages along Seaford Road
- Active pedestrian routes along the promenade



Southern Seafront Analysis 02 Seagate Road to Beach Terrace Road

- Large expanses of surface car parking, accessed from the East, Southend Road
- Long dead frontages along Beach Terrace Road
- Poor connectivity and access to the seaside promenade
- Undefined open space areas adjacent to the Amusement Areas
- Broken frontage along the promenade and un-contained spaces

Broken Frontage

Townscape Features

Connections

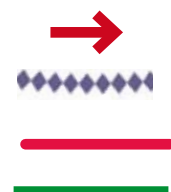


Poor Permeability

Seafront Edge

Active/Defined Edge

Passive Edge





Southern Seafront Analysis 03 Beach Terrace Road to The Pier

- The pier severs long and short views/vistas along the promenade, and is out of scale with the surrounding buildings
- Confused network of pedestrian routes between the seaside and The Green
- Amusement and Entertainment Uses occupy key focal point and movement corridor
- Poor connectivity and permeability between the retail uses to the east and the informal uses along the promenade



Southern Seafront Analysis 04 The Pier to The Cliffs

- The cliffs serve as a block to east-west connections, caused by a dramatic change in levels
- Few attractors and built frontages to the north of the study area, with the exception of the sailing club
- Large open space area serves as buffer between the built edge and natural features (the cliffs), although its defined use is unclear
- The pier breaks any connections, physical or visual between the northern and southern seafront



Seafront Analysis

Southern Seafront

South Beach Road to Beach Terrace Road

A journey along the length of the promenade illustrates the complex interactions occurring between seemingly polarised land uses, characters and activities, all within a condensed linear space.

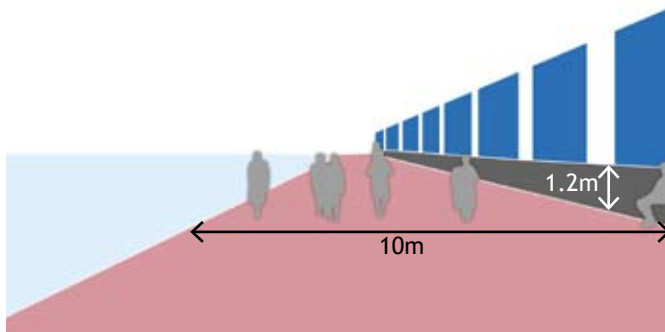
Typical urban design principles, such as permeability, legibility, scale, enclosure and connectivity are not successfully achieved in every instance. However, the southern seafront does possess the structure and foundations for a more complete and vibrant townscape.

The further south you travel the more broken and fractured the developments along the promenade appear. A combination of worn-out amusement attractions and low-grade entertainment complexes are reinforced to the east by large undefined open space areas, small temporary holiday accommodation and residential properties.

There is a distinct absence of contiguity in the frontages, which provides very little enclosure of the promenade and the routes connecting it to the town centre (east) and the beach (west).

Figure B.10 provide a detailed urban analysis of the seafront promenade, the routes that serve it, and the properties that defined its frontages.

figure B.11 southern seafront analysis

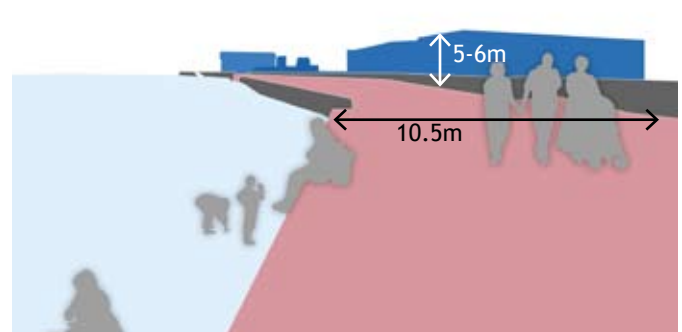


Southern Seafront Analysis 01 South Beach Road to Seagate Road

An uncontained north-south route along this section of the seaside promenade reinforces the broken urban fabric located behind the primary frontage, consisting of fair ground rides, low grade residential accommodation and undefined open space areas.

Visual interest is attracted by the colour and playful structures associated with the amusement and entertainment uses. There is no 'final destination' at the end of the seafront that identifies the edge of Hunstanton.

A stronger built edge with clearly designated routes and access-points would help alleviate some of the movement issues, focusing flow along primary retail frontages.



Southern Seafront Analysis 02 Seagate Road to Beach Terrace Road

The 10.5m pedestrian spaces along the promenade lacks the appropriately scaled frontages to contain the route. A clearly defined 5-6m frontage along the eastern edge of the route, with some taller elements, would help balance the wide expanse of the beach and sea to the west.

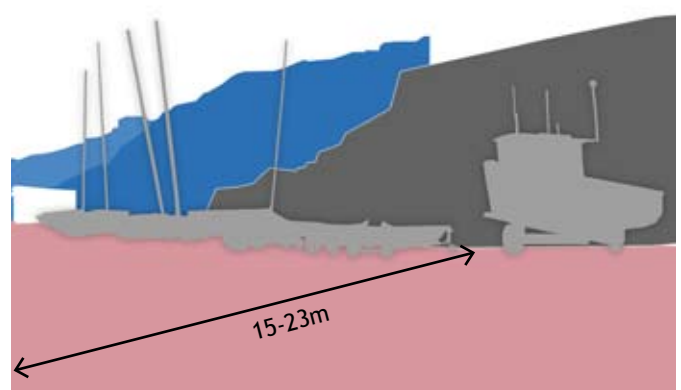
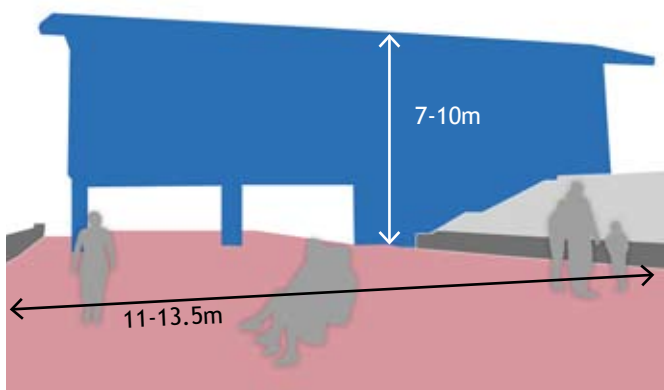
An unbroken frontage, with public spaces and gathering points properly contained, will focus pedestrian flows to desired locations, such as a cafe or restaurant quarter. Connections between the town centre to the east and the seafront should connect logically to the existing street network, retail frontages and access points to the beach.

Seafront Analysis

The most successfully contained section of the promenade is that adjacent to the cliff-face. The contiguous frontage provided by the cliff, its scale in proportion to the width of the promenade, and the network of defined pedestrian connections from Cliff Parade and the residential development to the east can serve as a blue-print for what can be achieved further south.

This example merely reinforces the strength of properly scaled and aligned frontages, even when they're inactive (as most cliffs are), in contrast to the protruding pier development that serves only to sever and block movements and visual connections along the seafront.

figure B.12 northern seafront analysis



Southern Seafront Analysis 03 Beach Terrace Road to The Pier

Further north the seaside promenade begins to widen, up to 13.5m at the base of the pier. The absence of a clearly defined built frontage makes the space feel loose and out of scale. This is compounded by the height of the pier (which ranges from approximately 7m at the end nearest The Green and 10m above the promenade), which means it stands in isolation, reinforced by the open space which removes any element of the human-scale.

The use of informal and temporary structures along the promenade can create more interest for pedestrians. However, these must be in keeping with the character of this section of seafront. More permanent structures for the beach and water activities can help re-characterise these spaces.

Southern Seafront Analysis 04 The Pier to The Cliffs

The spaces continue to expand, although the height and contiguous cliff-face provides the type of containment and reference that is missing elsewhere along the seafront. The scale of the promenade and the beach is balanced against the height and massing of the cliffs, unlike the broken frontages and passive spaces surrounding the amusement uses.

Greater use of the open space area atop the cliff could be connected with more permanent structures serving the active water sports and activities. A greater visual connection between the rest of the promenade and the town centre should be captured where possible.

Built Character Analysis

Building Types and Materials

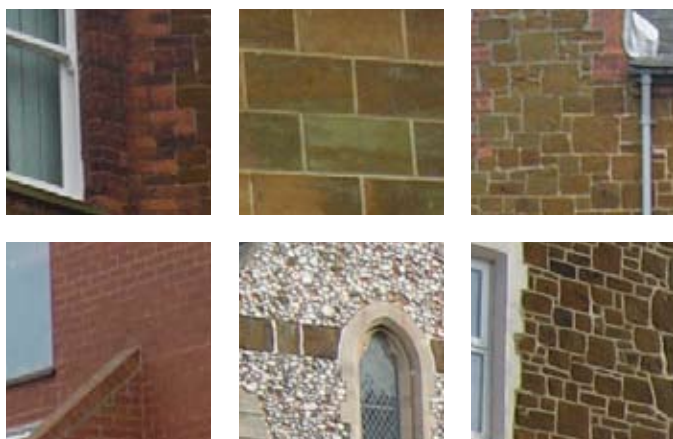
The historic Old Town is characterised by three-storey terraces and groups of semi-detached houses built from carrstone, such as those fronting The Green.

Some of the finer examples, such as those along Cliff Parade, Westgate and Greevegate still feature the black slate roofs, sandstone detailing around the openings, ground and first floor bay windows, and prominent gables.

The generous street widths and proportions are reinforced by many of the properties having either small front gardens or directly abutting the street frontage. The intimacy of this interface between public and private spaces, combined with the numerous public spaces and squares serves to create a unique townscape in the Old Town.

Further along the southern seafront and to the south of the study area the type of built form, and the materials become more random and out of character with the Old Town. The use of red-brick and various cladding materials detract from the visual qualities of Hunstanton, particularly when entered from the south.

Opportunities for the future development of the southern seafront should seek to make the most of the diversity in design and style and look to create a new and more modern character for the southern seafront area.





Transport Summary

The key points from the transport baseline analysis are presented below, with particular focus on the town's current strengths and future opportunities.

Hunstanton, and the north Norfolk coastal area in general, benefit from a rural setting that has a pleasant climate. This natural environment attracts visitors to the area and is also ideally suited for walking and cycling within the town.

One of Hunstanton's main features is the car-free seafront promenade which allows pedestrians to walk along the seafront without the intrusion and potential conflict from motorised vehicles. The town is compact in size making walking (and cycling) realistic, with all major destinations within a reasonable distance of each other.

There is a large supply of off-street parking that allows the town to cater for high numbers of tourists during the peak summer season. Additionally, there is very limited through traffic in the town due to A149 'bypass'. Strategic trips avoid the town centre, greatly reducing potential congestion.

Bus services are run by two operators with varying degrees of service quality and success. The service to King's Lynn is slow and does not connect with onward rail services. However the 'Coast Hopper' service along the coast is experiencing rapid patronage growth year-round.

There are a number of transport opportunities that Hunstanton can take advantage of. These include the following measures or 'interventions':

- reconnect the seafront and town centre areas with clearer signage, landmark visibility, and permeability / legibility;
- rationalise off-street parking (especially Seagate car park) and soften the visual image of car parking through landscaping;
- investigate the introduction of a seasonal Park & Ride service to alleviate town centre congestion;
- active diversion of parking to Cliff site (linked to a possible formal Park & Ride service);
- encourage further year-round growth of the Coast Hopper bus service; and
- investigate the introduction of an express bus service to/ from King's Lynn, possibly connecting directly to the hourly rail service to London and Cambridge.

Some general strategies need to be developed and implemented in order for success to be achieved in Hunstanton. They are as follows:

- a town centre parking strategy - considering both on-street and off-street parking - with explicit links to the planned decriminalising of Hunstanton's parking enforcement; and
- a traffic management plan - identifying and planning main routes for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians - including particular areas where change / improvement is needed.

Socio-economic Summary

A detailed review of the review of baseline statistics and consultation with local stakeholders, illustrated some interesting socio-economic trends in Hunstanton. Key findings from this exercise are outlined below:

Economic activity in Hunstanton is dominated by employment in service (and primarily tourist related) activities. Whilst Hunstanton is reasonably successful as a visitor destination, this does lead to a higher instance of low skilled, low paid and often part-time labour.

Hunstanton has a high proportion of self employed workers and (alongside those working in lower skilled lower paid jobs) a noticeable proportion of professional and management level residents. Whilst a proportion of these individuals work outside of the town (mainly in King's Lynn), they bring wealth into the town and potentially a market for an expanded leisure and recreation offer.

Whilst public services and education make up the next largest employer within Hunstanton, there is some suggestion that Hunstanton still needs better health, post school education and youth provision. Whilst this may not be possible for core and statutory (i.e. NHS, Connexions, JCP) provision, partners could look to encourage and promote Hunstanton as a second tier (beneath King's Lynn) service hub for the rural settlements of North Norfolk.

Unsurprisingly, given its unique situation, Hunstanton 'acts' differently to the King's Lynn and West Norfolk districts; skills is one area where the town faces similar issues for the district as a whole. In Hunstanton skill levels are marginally below national and regional averages whilst consultees suggest a lack of role models and available career routes locally impact upon aspirations of local people.

The age of the population has an obvious impact upon employment levels and productivity within the town. Whilst there is a relatively high level of long-term limiting illness, consultation suggests that the older population within Hunstanton remain reasonably active.

Half the working people who live in Hunstanton also work in Hunstanton. This means Hunstanton is very much part of the King's Lynn Travel to Work area, with people commuting on a daily basis to the centre, and to the surrounding industrial estates. Indeed, King's Lynn's economy is highly important to the successful growth and future of Hunstanton; it is clear with respect to this that links between Hunstanton and King's Lynn must be consolidated and ideally strengthened in the future.

Despite low unemployment overall, seasonal trends in employment represent a key challenge for Hunstanton. Benefit claims are double the July rate in December, as such, developing economic activities in the town that will complement summer employment and support a year round economy are essential.

Importantly for Hunstanton, discussions with local people and stakeholders suggested a great deal of civic pride in the town. All age groups were proud of Hunstanton and expressed a desire to improve the town whilst maintaining its key and unique characteristics.

Consultation - Stakeholder and Options Workshop

Three major consultation events have helped to inform the masterplan. The first stage was a stakeholder surgery which involved one-on-one meeting with a number of key stakeholders and land owners to discuss, in detail, some of the key issues. Approximately 30 people attended this event which was held in Hunstanton Town Hall during November 2007.

The second stage was an options workshop held in Hunstanton Town Hall in January 2008. Approximately 70 people were invited to this with 80 attending. It took the form of an interactive workshop where people were asked how they would like to see Hunstanton develop in the future with discussion based around various themes. Attendees were also asked to come up with a vision for the town as well as ideas and thoughts for the town centre and opportunity sites.

These two stages were crucial in achieving community buy-in and were used to set an additional "*community brief*" which was used to inform the design process.

The third stage was a public exhibition, held in March 2008. This provided an opportunity to meet with and present ideas to the local community. The feedback received has been incorporated into the final report where appropriate.

The following section summarises some of the key themes to emerge from the three consultation events.

The Active Natural Town

Hunstanton's role as an important centre for water sports activity was one of the key themes to emerge from both stages of consultation. The town has a reputation, both in the region and nationally, as a major centre for water sports. This is further reinforced by a number of other sports including the second largest youth tennis tournament outside of Wimbledon. In addition to formal sports activities, the excellent natural scenery and setting of the town means that it is well placed to take advantage of a range of informal recreation activities including walking, cycling and bird watching.

A number of key stakeholders shared their views on this topic including the sailing and water ski clubs which represent the two sides of Hunstanton's water sports fraternity. It became clear that although they are supportive of one another, there is a clear spatial distinction as to where they can locate because of the related safety issues. However, they are both extremely keen to see water sports promoted in the town and the wider area. Significantly, the 2005 water ski world championships were held in Hunstanton, this provided a major boost to the club and is a reputation they are looking to build on in the future. The sailing club is also in a period of positive transition as they prepare plans for submission to Sport England for capital funding. The funding will be used to increase membership, improve training and build a new club house.

A number of other residents and stakeholders also noted the natural scenery including the red cliffs, excellent views of The Wash, unique sunset and wildlife mean that the town centre is a popular base for walkers and bird-watchers. All of these activities present an excellent opportunity to provide year-round and reasonably priced activities which are suitable for residents and visitors alike.

Hunstanton's role as an active town was alluded to throughout the stakeholder interviews and consultation workshops and formed one of the key points for discussion at the community consultation workshop on 31st January 2008. The vision for an active town was very popular amongst the majority of attendees at the event. It was seen as an important way to help create an identity for the town and to help with the idea of place-marketing and promotion.

Economy and Tourism

It was highlighted throughout consultation that the economy, as with any town, is seen as a crucial element for future vitality and viability. Of particular importance is the interrelationship between the economy and tourism. A number of people voiced their concern over the seasonal nature of the local economy which is reflected in the commercial viability of the town centre retail offer with some people expressing concern at the predominance of charity shops, property agents, low-value and vacant units. There was also thought to be scope for improving the number of higher-end restaurants in the town centre. Much of the current offer, in common with the retail offer, is felt to be too seasonal and there is scope to expand this with some high quality restaurants.

Importantly, the stakeholder consultation revealed that Hunstanton has a pro-active business community with two main organisations including Hunstanton United Businesses (HUB) and the Chamber of Commerce who are keen on networking and promoting the town centre and business community. This bodes well for the future and shows a willingness to improve which can often be one of the biggest difficulties to overcome.

Overall, it was considered that by promoting Hunstanton and encouraging visitors to stay in the town and spend more money would be a key way of supporting the town centre and shops. It was pointed out that this could be achieved through the promotion of the “active town” which has the potential to extend the season and improve the patronage of town centre services and facilities.

Young People in Hunstanton

The socio-economic analysis reveals that Hunstanton like many other coastal towns, has a higher than average proportion of people over pensionable age. There is also a pro-active group of younger people in the form of the Youth Council and other youth organisations. Having met with some of these groups it became clear there is a lack of youth related services in the town centre. It was mentioned through consultation that it may be feasible to convert the basement of the Town Hall into a youth focused community use.

The other, more strategic aspect, concerning young people in Hunstanton is the fact that many leave the area for jobs. It was thought that this was largely due to the economy not being able to sustain the 19-24 year old age group

because of a lack of employment opportunities. This is likely to be related to the fact that connections to the larger employment centres, specifically King's Lynn, are not sufficient. This is something that needs to be addressed as a wider economic issue through providing more jobs and employment opportunities.

Transport and Movement

It was noted that a significant number of people feel that Hunstanton is disconnected from King's Lynn in terms of transport connections. This is most obvious with regards to bus connections with the main bus route from King's Lynn taking approximately 45 minutes. Problems with transport are also felt to be interlinked with the economy and specifically the lack of ease for connecting Hunstanton to employment and training opportunities in the wider area, particularly for younger people.

It was noted by some that they felt a park and ride service would work well in the town. This would allow visitors to park outside of the core area and catch a bus into the town centre. This could help to reduce congestion in the busy summer months. It would also have the advantage of freeing up some car parking space in the town centre, allowing land to be released for development.

Parking in the town centre was another issue that people were concerned with. Some people perceive parking as being too expensive whilst others were concerned by the fact that many visitors tried to avoid parking charges in the summer months by parking in residential streets. It was also noted that there is an imbalance in the supply of car parking. During the summer months car parks often operate at full capacity, this is in contradiction to the winter where many of the car parks are fairly empty.

Heritage, Conservation and Design

It was noted during consultation that people felt that one of the biggest attractions of the town centre was the quality of the built environment, particularly its heritage. It also became clear that some factions of the community had a dislike of some of the forms of modern architecture. However, the response received during the work shop revealed that people are not against contemporary modern buildings *per se* but it is felt some of the modern buildings in the town at present do not reflect the community's aspirations for high quality architecture.

The Green was mentioned throughout consultation as an attractive piece of open space that needs to be preserved and enhanced. This has led to various concerns over the pier building which is widely believed to detract from the setting of The Green. However, there is no easy solution to this problem as the structure is unlikely to be dismantled. It also became clear, through the consultation work shop, that there are no strong feelings in favour of reinstating the pier and that funding could be better spent on improving other areas of the town.

It was noted that some people feel that some of the shop fronts in the town centre have a “*tatty*” feel and could be improved. The Borough Council are currently helping to address this issue with the production of a shop front design guide. This will go a long way towards helping to ensure that future shop front applications adhere to good design principles.

The public realm was highlighted as being another key area for improvement. This was a recurring theme to emerge from the consultation work shop and was particularly noticeable in terms of the promenade which is Hunstanton's most significant area of public realm. There was a general impression that some areas of the seafront are considered “*tacky*” and would benefit from improvement.

COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

1. Improve the quality of the seafront promenade.
2. Provide easily identifiable routes and connections between the town and seafront.
3. Improve the year round tourism offer to encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more money.
4. Develop a uniformed public realm treatment throughout the town centre to provide a unique identity for Hunstanton.
5. Use the natural slope of the land to provide views over The Wash.
6. Expand and improve the quality of the retail offer in the town centre.
7. Make efficient use of land while providing adequate car parking
8. Ensure residents/shoppers and visitors can move easily through the town.
9. Improving facilities for young people

Seafront Leisure Activities



B

APPENDIX C

Car parking survey requirements



Introduction

Appendix c provides advice on car parking survey requirements for the summer holiday season in Hunstanton.

As part of the Hunstanton town centre and Southern Seafront masterplan study, the 'baseline' analysis undertaken by MVA highlighted the need for comprehensive car parking data. Currently there is little data available and so qualitative information has been relied upon to inform transport-related comments on the draft masterplan's opportunity sites.

The need to collect additional, comprehensive car parking data is very important. It will greatly aid the ongoing development of Hunstanton (post-masterplan) by providing factual and robust data and analysis in order to support the changes planned for the town.

A recommendation in the draft masterplan is for the development of a 'town centre parking strategy'. This would consider both on-street and off-street parking - with explicit links to the planned decriminalising of Hunstanton's parking enforcement. This strategy requires up-to-date and thorough car parking data in order for it to be successful.

It is important to note that data is required both for off-street parking and also on-street parking. Whilst the focus for the masterplan's opportunity sites is for the partial re-development of off-street car parking, the key role of on-street parking, particularly in the town centre, should not be overlooked.

Linked to this is the ongoing work towards the decriminalisation of Hunstanton's parking (Civil Parking Enforcement). BCKLWN Officers will have a key role in identifying particular areas of interest to be actively managed which will require detailed investigation into the current operation of on-street parking. This data and analysis could be also used to complement other data collected, as laid out in the following sections below.

Daily ticket purchase data

Daily data for all of Hunstanton's car parks would allow a detailed pattern of seasonal use to be built up indicating 'peaks' and 'troughs' at a range of scales (eg between weekday and weekend, by month, by Bank Holiday, by weather).

Currently, electronic-point-of-sale (EPOS) data is prepared by the Council on an aggregated monthly basis that does not allow these daily patterns to be investigated. If it is possible for EPOS data to be extracted on a daily basis this should be facilitated - indeed if time of ticket purchase could also be recovered this should be done too.

If this cannot be done then 'snapshot' surveys should be conducted at all car parks on a range of days throughout the season. These surveys would need to collect the same data (ie location, time/day of ticket purchase, type of ticket purchased).

Parking accumulation

A second survey requirement is for parking accumulation to be quantified. Parking 'accumulation' is the build up over time of parked cars whereby more arrive at the site than leave. This accumulation is then reversed (typically in the late afternoon) whereby there are more departures than arrivals.

Parking accumulation surveys therefore monitor the number of cars in a car park at any one time which can be compared against total capacity. This would be typically achieved with a manual survey process with the number of cars 'in' and 'out' being counted for every 30-minute period. Any queues to a car park should also be counted.

This data will allow a picture to be built of up how the town's parking supply is used - to be viewed alongside the demand-based ticket purchase data.

Again these surveys should be undertaken on a number of days across the holiday season. The opportunity should be taken to survey all car parks on the same individual day if possible to provide a comprehensive, town-wide analysis.



Parking duration

This data requirement is important to understanding how long visitors park in the town - this is both for 'local' visitors and for tourists.

The method of data collection is very similar to #3 (Parking accumulation) except with the addition of vehicle registration-plate details for every observed inbound and outbound movement. With the registration-plate details, the time of arrival and departure can be matched to find parking duration. This can also be cross-checked against duration of ticket bought (EPOS data).

An additional advantage of monitoring vehicles' registration plates is to study any vehicles moving between various car parks trying to find a space.

The vision for Hunstanton is for broadly the same number of visitors and for longer duration visits. This duration data is a key component in understanding current behaviour and also for quantitatively predicting the impact of longer stays on parking accumulation.

Journey information

It would also be useful to understand visitors' journey patterns - such as where they have travelled from and where they are travelling to after Hunstanton. This could assist in estimating Park and Ride viability and also site locations that could 'capture' the most visitors.

Land ownership

A related investigation that should be conducted is a detailed land ownership assessment in order to identify / rule out possible Park and Ride sites. Several possible sites will be included in the masterplan but there are deliverability uncertainties for all of them. The sites are:

- part-use / extension of the Cliff car park site;
- Smithdon High School;
- the land to the east of Redgate Hill roundabout (Le Strange ownership?); and
- the triangular parcel of land to the north of Heacham village.

Conclusions

Ensuring the successful development of Hunstanton in the future depends to a great extent on providing appropriate provision for visitors to (realistically) easily park their vehicles when they access the town.

The vision for Hunstanton is for similar annual visitor numbers and also increased duration of visits. When combined with the potential loss of some existing parking provision (through redevelopment) it is essential to understand the current parking situation in as much detail as possible in order to make informed decisions for the future.

Various types of survey have been summarised above containing a short rationale for why they are necessary and a brief details of what scope / methodology is required. As an extension to the masterplan study MVA would be delighted to assist in further assisting with the design, procurement, and analysis of the surveys.

