

SEATON

Prepared for East Devon District Council by John Fisher BA, MA, MRTPI
with contributions from Town and Parish Councils and Amenity Societies in East Devon

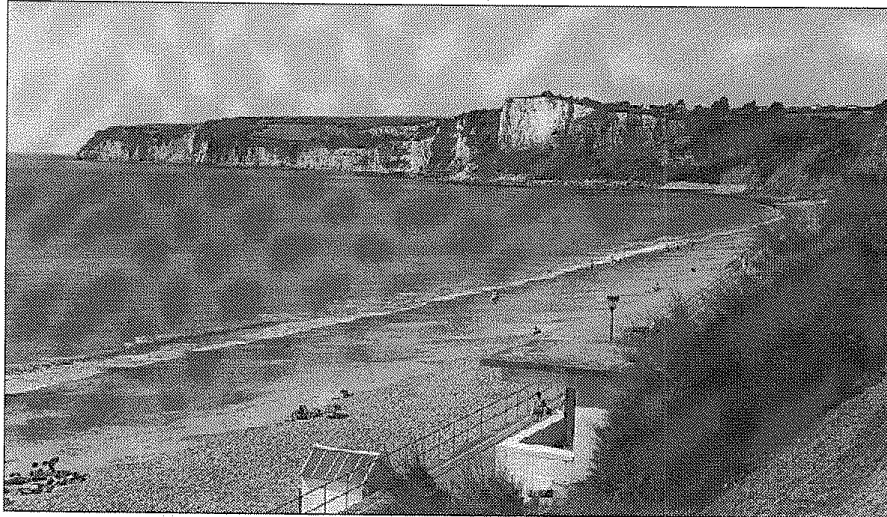
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SEATON



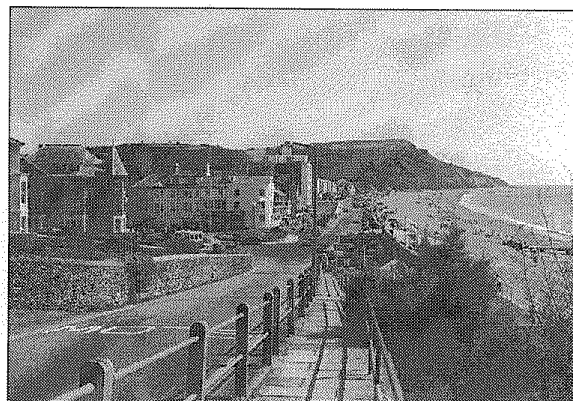
The main attraction of Seaton is its dramatic coastal setting. In this context the impact of seafront buildings is somewhat secondary

1. HISTORIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1.1 A small seaside town on the west side of the River Axe, Seaton together with Axmouth, further inland on the opposite bank, is known to have been of considerable commercial importance, but a pebble ridge forming at the river mouth appears to have led to the quite early decline in maritime prosperity. There is evidence of Roman settlement nearby as the remains of a villa have been discovered at Hannaditches, or "Honey Ditches" as well as Roman coins and pottery. According to some sources, Seaton is also believed to be close to the Roman site of Morindunum - mentioned in the 12th and 15th Antonine Itineraries - and was acknowledged by the insertion of the ancient place-name in the wall of the Esplanade - but more recent research suggests that this was at Hembury.

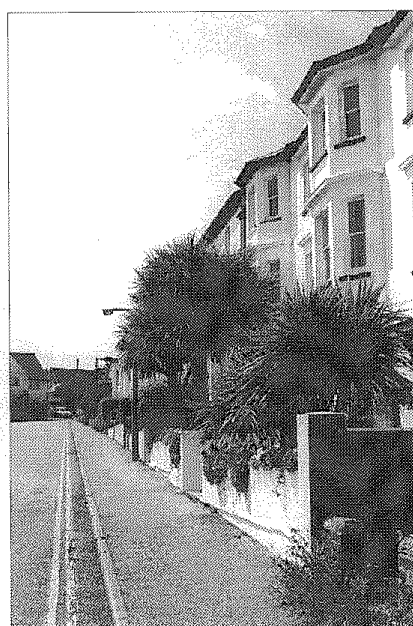
1.2 In Leland's time it was "a mene fisschar towne...it hath been far larger when the haven was good". In 1830 John Hallett of Stedcombe built a quay at the mouth of the river under Haven Cliff and this kept the tiny port going. The wharves were deserted when the railway came, although some are still discernible having been converted to other uses.

1.3 Seaton remained a fishing village until the mid 19th century, then started to develop as a modest resort encouraged by the Trevelyans, the major local landowners. There is now a continuous sea frontage of about half a mile representing its modest development as a holiday resort after the railway branch from the L.S.W.R. Waterloo to Exeter route arrived in



1868. This followed the estuary well to the east of the earlier settlement which extended inland on slightly higher ground beyond the estuary marshes.

1.4 The railway did not lead to spectacular growth as in some other Devon resorts, the population only increasing from about 800 in the 1850's to 1,300 by 1900. Most of the earlier settlement appears to have been replaced by much fairly commonplace late Victorian and Edwardian building, which provides a different character and reflects a contrast with Sidmouth in terms of social history. One source of reference (Baddeley) suggests that Honiton lace was made at Seaton and Beer until about the 1920's.



(This page and opposite) Seafeld Road contains the most ambitious 19th century speculative development. Much original detail survives.

1.5 There is a monument in the parish church to Abraham Sydenham, "Salt Officer for 40 years" - a reminder of the old salt pans in the levels by the Axe, and of the long forgotten salt tax.

1.6 The cliff scenery on either side of Seaton is particularly striking, especially in its varied colouring.

2 SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 The present Seaton Conservation Area mainly comprises a 350 metre section of seafront, containing some but not all of the 19th and early 20th century development of architectural importance. Also included is virtually the whole of the town centre and an area of mainly 19th and early 20th century development immediately to the north.

2.2 The conservation area was first designated in June 1991. Within the boundary are 11 individually listed buildings giving 8 separate list entries, with some 65 additional individual buildings included on the local list, which is non-statutory. Both types are shown on Map 1.

Basic Form and Layout

2.3 The road layout of the earlier settlement centres on Fore Street, Queen Street and Manor Road was clearly established by the beginning of the 19th century and logically developed on a spur of rising ground above the sea. Later development has for the most part colonised still higher land to the north and west of the town centre.

2.4 Very early settlement which would have grouped around the Parish Church, almost three-quarters of a mile inland has largely disappeared such that this part of the settlement was not considered to justify inclusion within the existing conservation area. This decline was probably accelerated when the once extensive salt pans in the Axe estuary were abandoned, which may well have occurred when salt-mining and canal transport developed in the late 18th century. The 1805 map appears to indicate that the church was already well to the north of the main development.

2.5 Fore Street and Queen Street now form much of the commercial heart of the town and represents much of the pre-resort settlement. Towards the south end in particular these streets are narrow and curving as they descend gradually towards the sea. Elsewhere the conservation area contains a proportion of mainly mid 19th to early 20th century development of the seaside resort. Such buildings are solid, often of three storeys, and create a strong visual impact, although as will be seen, some are scattered and well beyond the existing conservation area boundary.

2.6 The large proportion of buildings on the local list (see 8.7) is a reflection of the intrinsic quality of many buildings in Seaton with potential for greater recognition in the future.



Seaford Road

3 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.1 The conservation area can be subdivided into several different identity areas. These are as follows:

1 The Seafront

3.2 This represents the focal point of the resort centred on the circulatory system where Seahill, Marine Place and Esplanade converge. The layout clearly dates from the late Victorian development of the resort, but much character has since been compromised by typically bold seaside commercialism. Attractive public gardens adjoining Seahill and floral displays on the roundabout and at the western end of Esplanade are alleviating features, and the large, sometimes idiosyncratic, villas (e.g. Cliff Castle and Washington House) mark the start of land of more open character with footpaths above the steep coastal slopes, culminating in West Cliff Terrace about 150 metres east which is listed, but is not within the present conservation area.

2 Seafield Road/Beer Road area

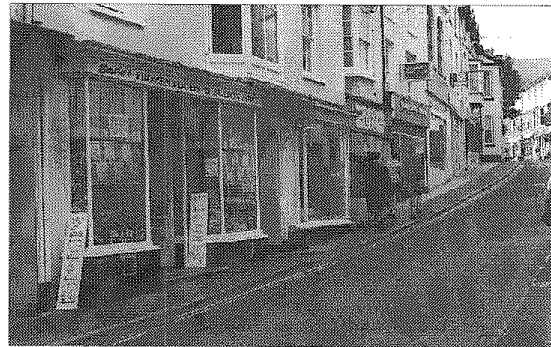
3.3 Beer Road contains a few early 19th century villas with typical ornament, and a small group of late 19th century houses with good detailing which includes small beach boulders in a variety of patterns. These are somewhat overshadowed by the dominant three-storied stucco villas in Seafield Road. At first sight this is a continuous terrace, but is divided into four separate blocks of slightly varying frontage detail. The area also comprises some early 20th century houses in Seahill grouped around an area of public sport facilities.

3 The Town Centre

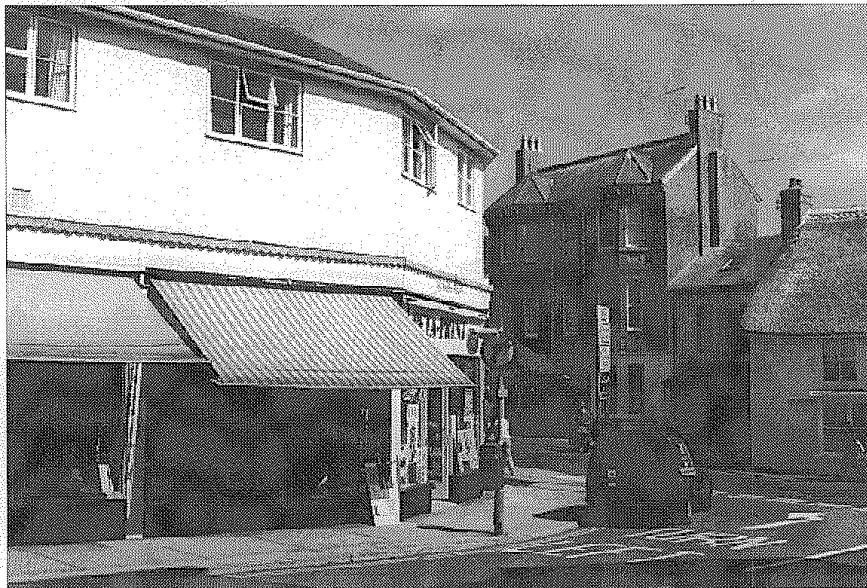
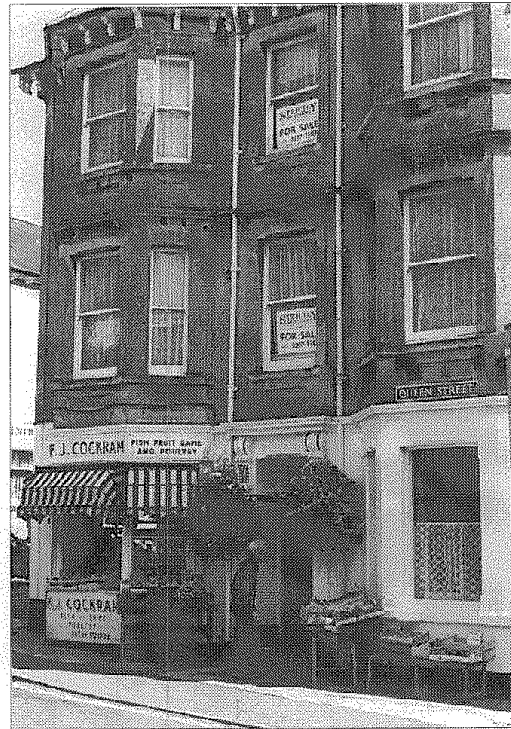
3.4 This is the main commercial centre of Seaton along the diverging lower part of Fore Street and Queen Street, linked by Cross Street. There are a few good buildings retaining much of their original detail interspersed with some rather disappointing modern infill and bland shopfronts. There is still considerable undeveloped backland between the upper end of Fore Street and Queen Street, and similarly to the east of Fore Street.

4 The Northern Suburbs

3.5 An area of surprising quality with some good examples of early 19th to early 20th century housing (e.g. Major Terrace and Manor Road) and including the fine red brick frontage of the late 18th century Manor House. Some recent housing at Manor Court is plain but robust in style, and fits in happily with otherwise predominantly 19th century development of two to three storeys.



The quality of townscape in Fore Street is greatly enhanced by trees (left). There is a noteworthy survival of early shopfronts and entrances. Such original detail is often removed and upsets the balance between ground floor and upper floor(s).



Late 20th century development often fails to integrate satisfactorily with earlier periods. Shop blinds are of the older roller type, which can be less intrusive than the later folding type, especially when the latter have reflective surfaces

4 LANDSCAPE AND TREES

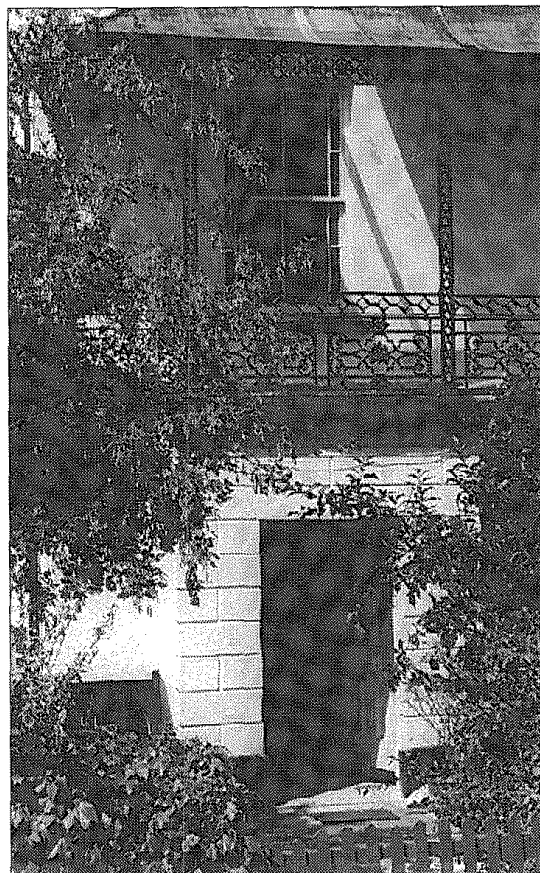
4.1 There are two important areas of public open space within the conservation area; Seaford/Festival Gardens near there seafront and Windsor Gardens in the town centre. Both have formally landscaped areas, the former with few trees because of its exposed location, but the latter having several mature and younger trees which make a very significant contribution to the townscape.

4.2 A further important open space, communal rather than public, and with the finest group of mature trees within the conservation area is at Major Terrace off Queen Street. This group are an especially important feature at the northern approach to the town centre.

4.3 A substantial area of undeveloped back-land between Queen Street and Fore Street, is an important vestige of open land that formed the edge of the built up area of Seaford at the end of the 19th century. The view looking east towards the rear of Fore Street must have changed little since. By providing a significant break to the rear of long established frontages, and defined by walls, hedgerows and a scattering of young trees, any future proposals for development of this site would need to be balanced against the impact upon the character of this part of the conservation area.

4.4 Elsewhere in the conservation area is a scattering of trees, mainly in private gardens, with the remains of an orchard north of Mulberry Cottage on the east side of Fore Street.

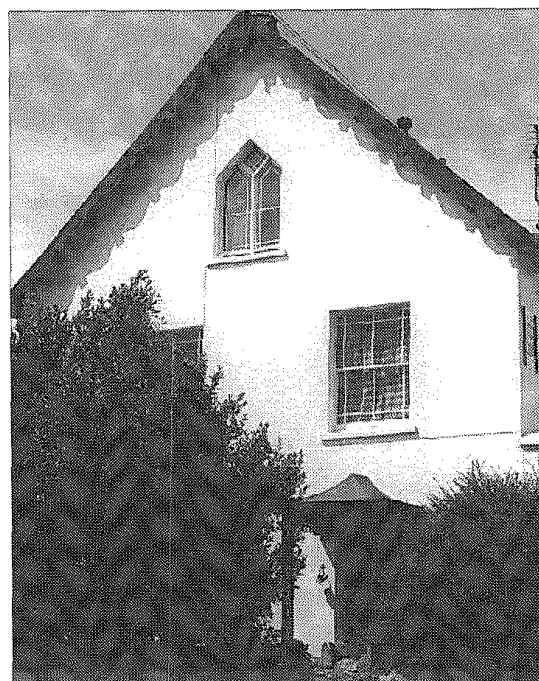
4.5 Two large car parks west of Queen Street and east of Fore Street adjoin the conservation area. The treatment of edges to the former is more successful than the latter, but both have large areas of tarmacadam virtually unrelieved by conscious landscaping or tree planting.



5 HARD SURFACES

5.1 The survey detected virtually no areas where natural paving or surfacing material has survived. Tarmacadam and concrete paving slabs appear to be universal, although some very uneven natural stone kerbs were noted to the front of Netherhayes, Fore Street. It is understood that a comprehensive enhancement scheme involving traffic calming and improved pedestrian provision is proposed for much of the town centre. This could provide an opportunity for enabling some use of local natural stone to be incorporated, albeit on a limited basis having regard to the prohibitive cost of use on a large scale.

5.2 Access to forecourts fronting Major Terrace is via a private road of loose chippings which is a pleasing contrast to an otherwise largely monotonous uniformity.



There are small pockets of early 19th century development (Beer Road) reminiscent of Regency Sidmouth (right and above right)

6 BUILDING MATERIALS AND ORNAMENT

6.1 Much of Victorian Seaton is characterised by painted stucco render or brickwork. There are a few good examples of brick building; e.g. Manor House, and use of local stone; e.g. Town Hall with an attractive frontage of chert rubblestone and elaborate ashlar Beer stone dressings. Chert is also widely used in boundary walls. There are also a few examples of local liassic limestone.

6.2 An interesting example of use of materials in a local idiom can be seen in a group of c.1900 houses off Beer Road with round pebbles forming decorative patterns, ornamental ridge tiles and tile hung gables. A few examples of early 19th century decorative ironwork and fenestration can be found.

6.3 On close inspection Seaton is found to have a number of impressive entrances, with hoods, pediments, fanlights, recessed doorways, cornices etc. and there is also a reasonable distribution of original shopfronts of mainly late 19th to early 20th century date.



These c.1900 houses have delightful detailing, but original doors and windows are starting to disappear



A workshop/builder's store. Such unadorned but authentic survivals within the conservation area, although not yet considered to be of listable quality, should be retained if possible

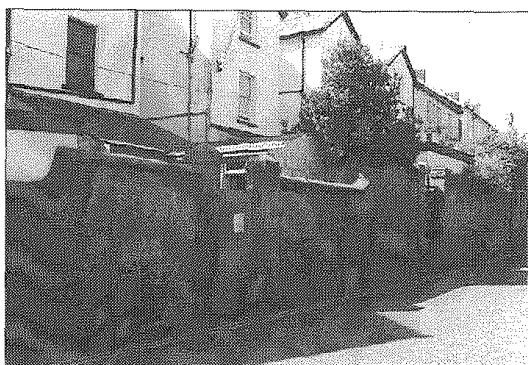


Ornament can be easily overlooked or taken for granted, but the sophistication of design and craftsmanship that created them has been largely lost. Examples shown are (above left) Cross Street; (left) Beer Road; (above) Manor House, Fore Street

7 STREET FURNITURE AND SPECIAL FEATURES

7.1 Time constraints have not enabled a full inventory to be prepared, but Seaton appears to have little surviving street furniture worthy of special consideration. The most obviously striking feature is the group of metal poles with ornate finials carrying overhead power lines which are prominent across and beyond the north of the conservation area.

7.2 There are many stone boundary walls to street frontages and these can often be quite low. Taller examples (up to 2.5 metres high) are to be found, mainly to the rear of frontages and sometimes incorporated into outbuildings. Some are not particularly well maintained. Concrete blockwork can be an unfortunate replacement in some instances, possibly replacing iron railings.



The rear is a mixture of haphazard extensions; their effect is lessened by retention of the wall which is in some need of repair/enhancement

8 SYNOPSIS OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Distribution and Summary of Listed Buildings

8.1 As already noted there are few listed buildings in Seaton with most to be found in Fore Street, narrow and curving as it descends gradually towards the sea, and representing much of the pre-resort settlement.

8.2 At the top of Fore Street is the Manor House very urban in appearance with a large red brick three-storey frontage with triple stone keystones and a Doric doorway. A little to the south is a small group which includes the Pole Arms Hotel a large early 19th century hotel with a range of period features, including panelled door and entablature hood supported on later piers. 32 and 33 Fore Street opposite are houses of the late 16th to early 18th century. No 32 has plank and muntin screens, one with a Tudor arched doorway, and chamfered ceiling beams with truncated pyramid stops.

8.3 No 11 Harepath Road is a former 1840 School Room and Master's House in a stuccoed Tudor style. Towards the lower end of Queen Street are Nos 27 and 31, a long stuccoed range of

thatched cottages of 18th century origin. To the right are sash windows with glazing bars, and a Victorian shopfront. No 31 (left) has a 19th century square bay.



Thatched cottages in Queen Street are no doubt typical of many prior to the development of the resort. So few now remain it is vital to protect their character

8.4 On the slope to the west of the town centre are several prominent individual villas (now often sub-divided into flats). Among the most prominent are Cliff Castle, and St Elmo a castellated pair, but much altered.

Important Building Groups

8.5 In recognition of the town's development as a Victorian resort, and in the context of the character of the conservation area, it is considered appropriate to highlight certain building groups which tend to be a visual entity, and of importance to the townscape, even though not listed at this stage. These are indicated on Map 2.

8.6 The largest groups of 19th century villas are in Seafeld Road, and though not listed, are of an impressive scale enhanced by their south-facing aspect overlooking gardens.

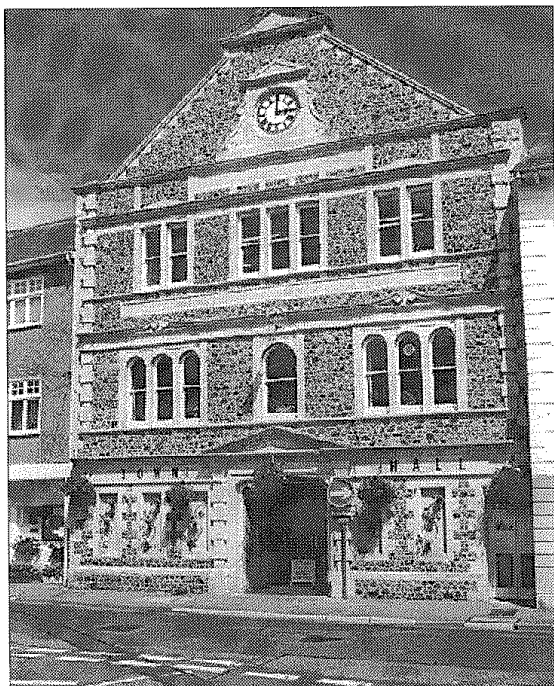
Buildings on the Local List

8.7 As previously referred to (2.6), Seaton has a remarkable number of buildings on the local list; far more than are statutorily listed. The quality of some of these would seem to merit updating in order to afford them greater protection. Among the more important are the following:

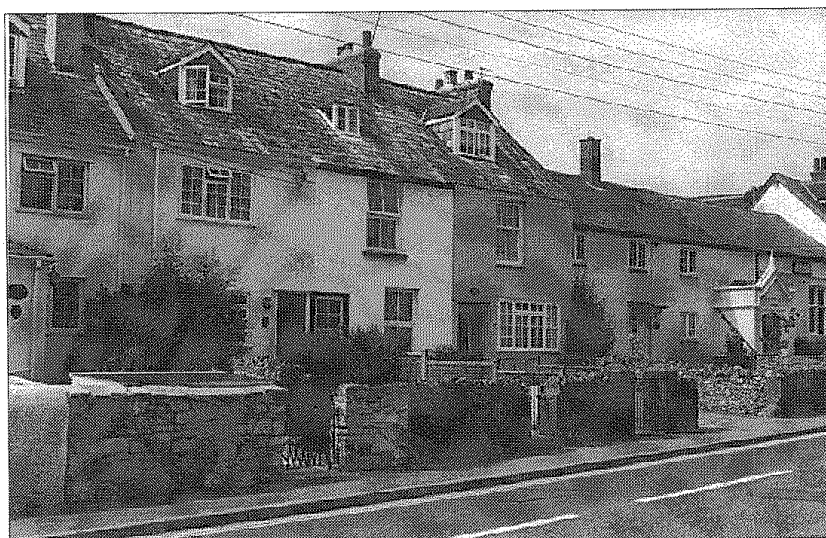
The Town Hall (former Masonic Hall) is a 19th century in a debased classical style with a shallow pediment, but with an attractive stone frontage enhanced by the use of chert with Beer stone dressings.

The former Royal Clarence Hotel is a six-bay stucco building and one of the larger Victorian holiday establishments.

In **Manor Road** are a number of free-Gothic style semi-detached houses built c.1900 of rubble stone, with mullioned windows and picturesque turrets at a 45 degree splay to Meadow Road.



The Town Hall (left) though not listed is a reminder that the town was once a separate local authority. It is also the finest example in the town of the use of locally available building materials



Examples of housing in the conservation area. The quality of much 19th/early 20th century housing in Seaton is high. There are a few examples where plain detail can be attractive (above). Manor Court (far right bottom) is a good example of recent housing where earlier styles are respected but not imitated. The solidly built Edwardian houses (above right) may in time become considered suitable for listing. They already contribute to the character of the area by virtue of the quality of workmanship displayed.



Other Important Buildings outside the Conservation Area

8.8 Seaton also has a considerable scattering of significant buildings not included within the conservation area which should be mentioned in the historic building context and development of the town. Chief among them are the following:

The Parish Church of St Gregory at the upper end of the main street is mainly decorated in style having been rebuilt in 1360, but the south tower was partly removed in the 15th century and another built at the west end. Later alterations, particularly a restoration of 1866, by Ashworth when an old screen was removed, have left little but poor Victorian furnishings. Further work was undertaken in 1901, when the roof was renewed.

The Check House (formerly Calverley Lodge), Old Beer Road, was built 1865-66 for W.C. Trevelyan and his wife who were patrons of the pre-Raphaelites. It was designed by John Ruskin's protege Benjamin Woodward and is remarkable for its extensive polychromy with a chequer pattern of squares of dressed Beer stone interspersed with small squared blocks of greenish-blue stone. The chimneys and strainer arches are of red brick and the windows have shouldered heads, with roofs of variegated slates. The lavish specification continues inside with much solid joinery, some with trefoil motifs. Recent extensions, as part of its current use as a rest home, although considerable have been largely sympathetic.

Seaforth Lodge, Old Beer Road, was built by Henry Clutton 1864-65 for Lady Ashburton, a friend of the Trevelyans. It is stuccoed with shallow pedimented gables, bracketed eaves and a good balcony and veranda.

Ryall's Court, Marlpit Lane, was originally built in 1840 but has been much extended since with an embattled parapet, projecting porch, ogee-arched doorway and oriel over. It is essentially a cottage orne of the type found in Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton.

Westcliffe Terrace (east of Check House) is a group of eight 19th century stucco-fronted houses with plain cast-iron railings. Built on a north west/south east axis with red brick and upper bow windows at the rear to catch the evening sun.

Axe Bridge was built in 1877 by Philip Brannon and was one of the first concrete-arched bridges. There are three arches with classical detail.

8.10 At the east end of the Esplanade in Trevelyan Road is a good Edwardian terrace in an Arts and Crafts style, rendered, with Tudor doorways, large external stacks and a gabled roof-line. An attempt by Devon County Council to have them listed has proved unsuccessful.



Arts and Crafts style housing c.1905 in Trevelyan Road (well to the east of the conservation area)

9 FEATURES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

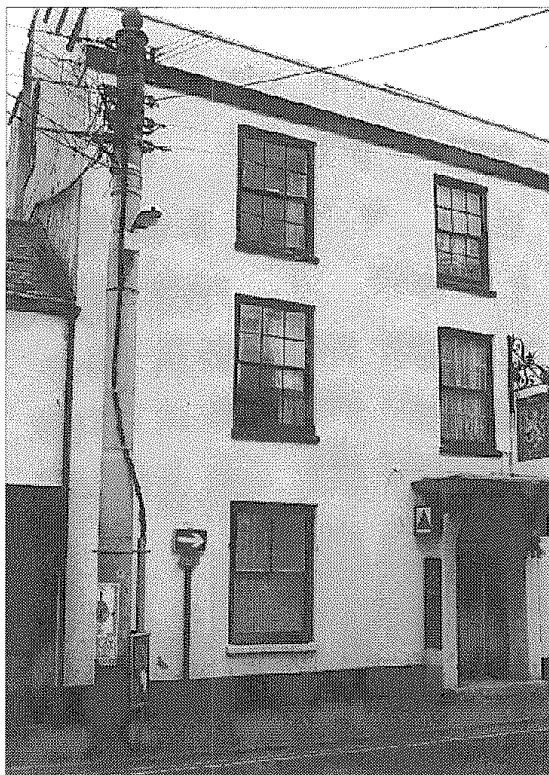
9.1 Among the main character elements considered most worthy of attention when seeking to resolve development control issues are the following:

- the importance of the setting of the town between chalk capped cliffs
- the surviving street pattern of the early inland village and coastal fishing settlement together with a remaining scattering of vernacular buildings
- several good examples of Regency villas and associated ironwork
- the spacious layout and grand concept of the 3-4 storey buildings of the Victorian development of the resort including large villas and hotels, and at Seaford Road an impressive terrace
- localised groups of largely original (late 19th- early 20th century) shopfronts
- several good individual buildings of considerable size and scale e.g. The Town Hall, Royal Clarence, The Manor House, Cliff Castle
- some attractive public open spaces which provide important space between buildings and allow outward views (e.g. Seaford and Festival Gardens) or with trees that have an important juxtaposition to buildings (e.g. Windsor Gardens).

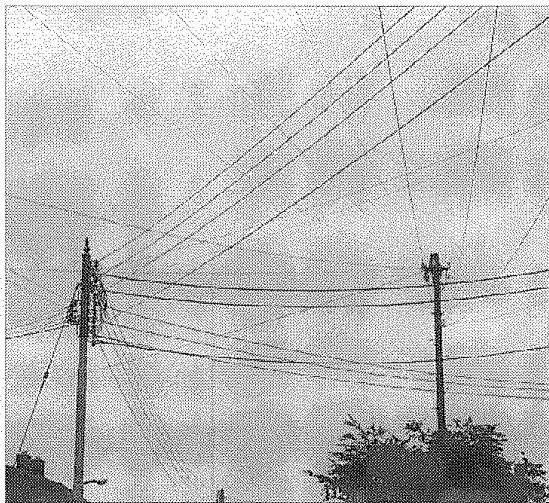
10 LOSS OF CHARACTER AND INTRUSION

10.1 The character and appearance of the conservation area is considered to be suffering as a result of the following detracting features:

- external neglect to some upper floors; (e.g. bay windows above shops in Marine Place)
- instances close to or on the seafront where original frontages are being unduly compromised by barely restrained seaside commercialism introducing a cocktail of contemporary artificial materials, intentionally eyecatching, but that can be judged as having little regard to the historic context, or original architectural detail
- largely featureless car parks immediately adjoining the conservation area to the rear of Queen Street and off Harbour Road.
- prominent overhead power lines especially in the north of the conservation area.
- boundary walls in blockwork or other artificial materials
- buildings in multi-occupancy becoming subject to piecemeal alterations affecting the cohesion of frontage detail



The presence of overhead power lines in Fort Street is detrimental to the appearance of the northern part of the conservation area. The unusual metal poles may have come from an abandoned tramway





Areas within town centres close to the conservation area boundary often lack refinement, often being given over to car parking and servicing. Earlier detail being no longer functional can become neglected, isolated or unsuitably adapted. As an ad hoc process it is difficult to reverse; only a carefully prepared design brief is likely to result in a satisfactory solution. The car park west of Queen Street (above) is more acceptable in relation to adjoining buildings but there are few refinements (e.g. surface treatment, tree planting/landscaping).



An example of ground floor modifications unsympathetic to the building as a whole

11 SUMMARY

11.1 Seaton Conservation Area is difficult to appraise without consideration of the town as a whole. It will have been noted that a number of important buildings, significant to the history, character and development of the town, even the Parish Church, are well beyond the existing boundary. The few statutorily listed buildings belie the considerable intrinsic worth of the historic town centre and early origins of the resort. The lack of an obvious focal point where character is concentrated, or where representative dates or styles of architecture are on a large scale, make the town's qualities difficult to pinpoint. However the extent of 19th century development, mostly unremarkable in detail but important in terms of group value, is clearly significant to the town's development and present status as a seaside resort.

11.2 It is not therefore necessarily appropriate to isolate the rest of the town from the conservation area when taking account of issues affecting the historic environment. There has already been more than average erosion of original detail in some places. This appears to have arisen from a lack of application of coherent design principles which appear to have been more readily afforded to neighbouring towns where character and quality of townscape are obviously apparent.

11.3 On close inspection it will be found that Seaton retains much that is worthy of conserving, if not by statutory control, at least by encouragement and demonstration of what has been a significant part of the town's development. There is a strong sense that the town has an ancient history bound up with early patterns of agriculture, fishing and the estuarine salt industry, not to mention associations with the end of the Fosse Way and the possible site of Morindunum, a reported but apparently undiscovered Roman settlement in the locality.

11.4 The prospect of forthcoming comprehensive enhancement proposals linked to traffic management and better provision for pedestrians could be dovetailed with the promotion of appropriate conservation measures, including the encouragement of appropriate repair or replacement of existing features, rather than full-scale redesign or redevelopment unless of a high standard. This would particularly apply to development control measures in the town centre and on the seafront.

11.5 Seaton has modest charm, probably largely overlooked by visitors as there is no obvious historic core. In terms of understanding and interpreting the town's architectural and archaeological development it is necessary to look well beyond the boundary of the existing conservation area. This could lead to an extension of the present conservation area or further separate designations in the future.

11.6 Since the town has tended to lack adequate statutory control in respect of historic buildings, measures could be pursued to reverse current trends, including the possibility of removing permitted development rights from parts of the town, particularly the Victorian terraces, and some shopping frontages. Such features can now be afforded additional protection by applying an Article 4(2) Direction where there is a presumption in favour of retaining elevational detail, even of entire groups of buildings where they make a significant contribution to the character of the area.

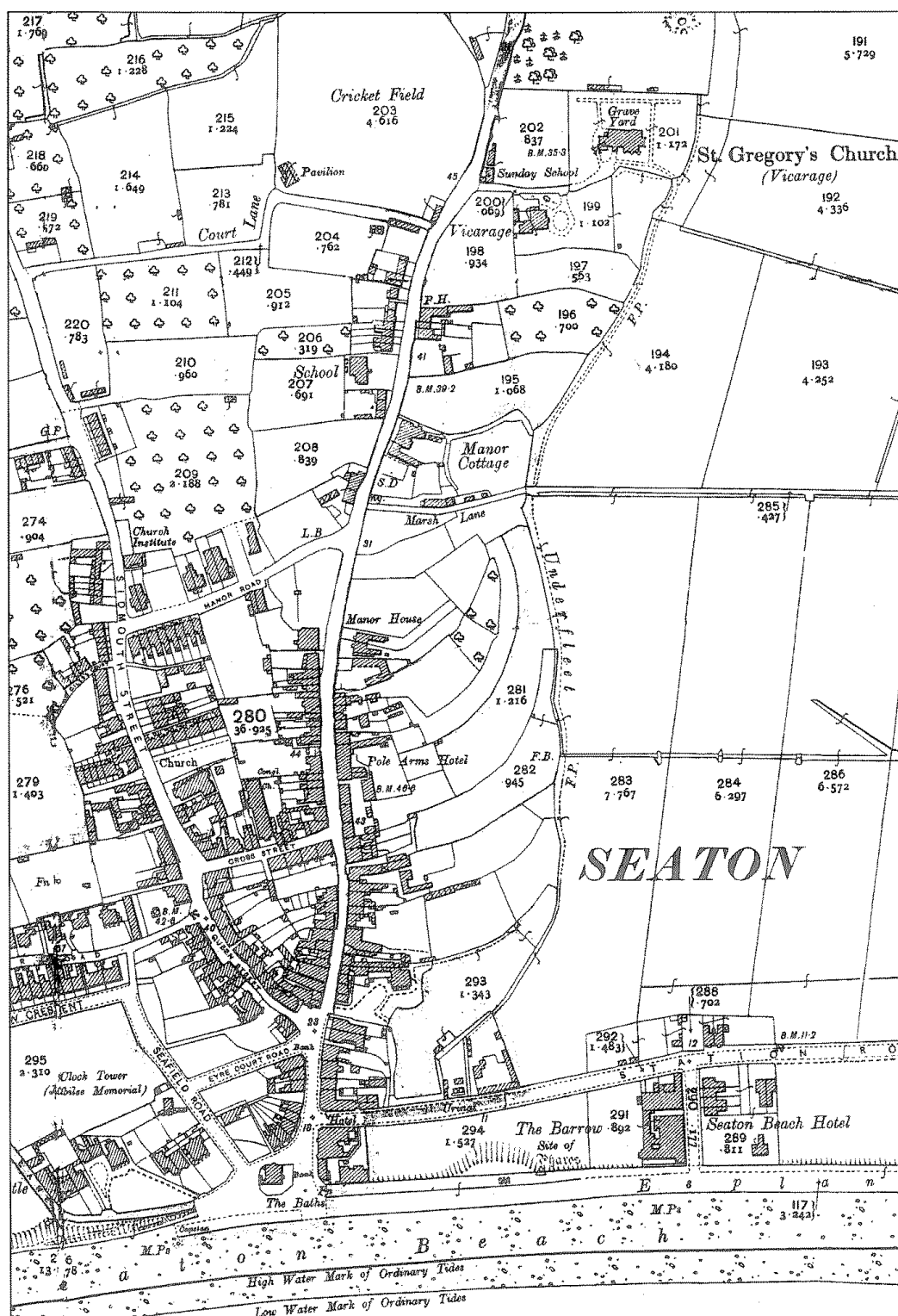


Chimney pots are gradually disappearing to the detriment of the skyline

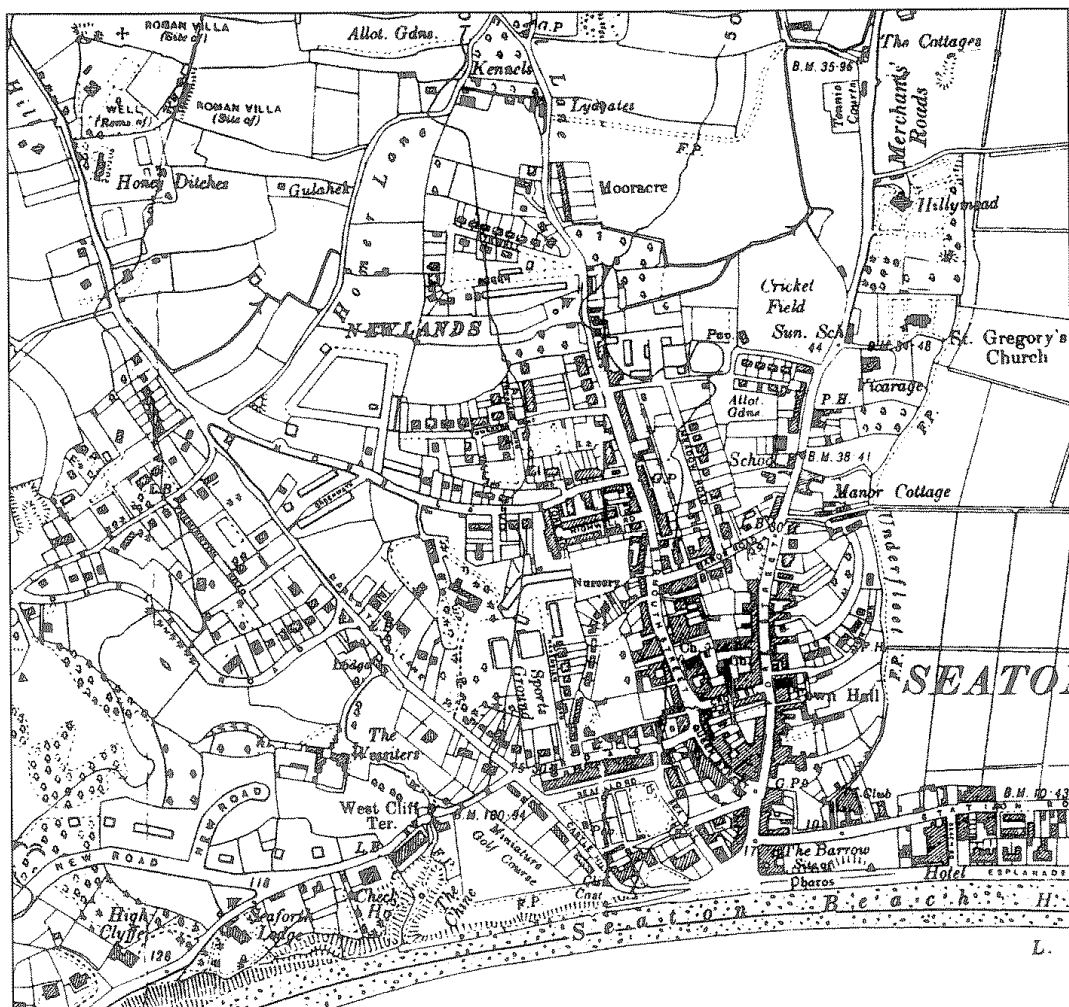
HISTORIC MAPS



1805 Devon County Survey: Scale: originally 3 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of the report)



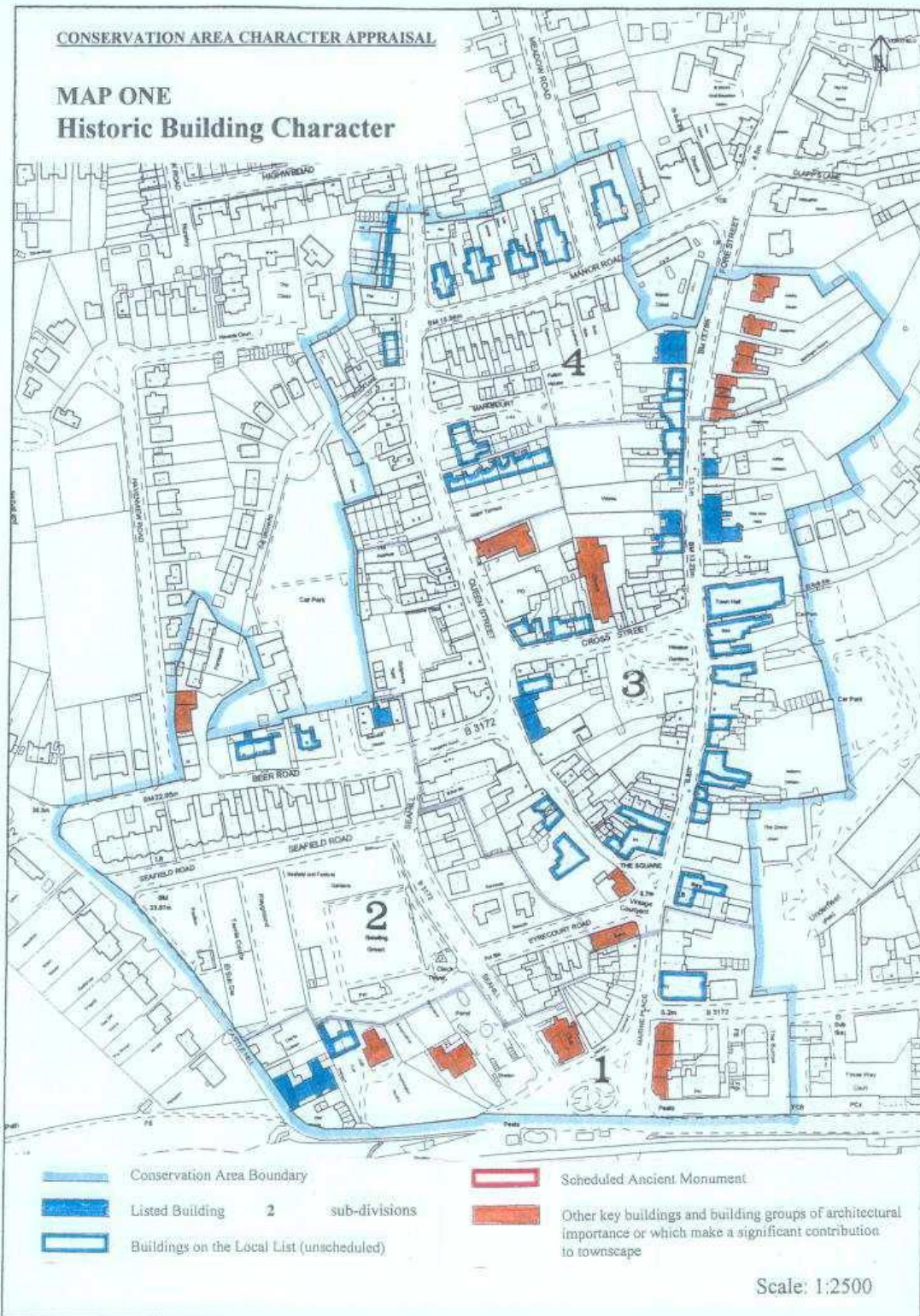
c.1905 Ordnance Survey Second Edition. Scale originally 25 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of fitting the report)



Early 20th Century Ordnance Survey Second Edition or Provisional Edition. Scale originally 6 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of fitting the report)

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP ONE
Historic Building Character



Seaton Conservation Area
East Devon District Council

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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP TWO Important Features



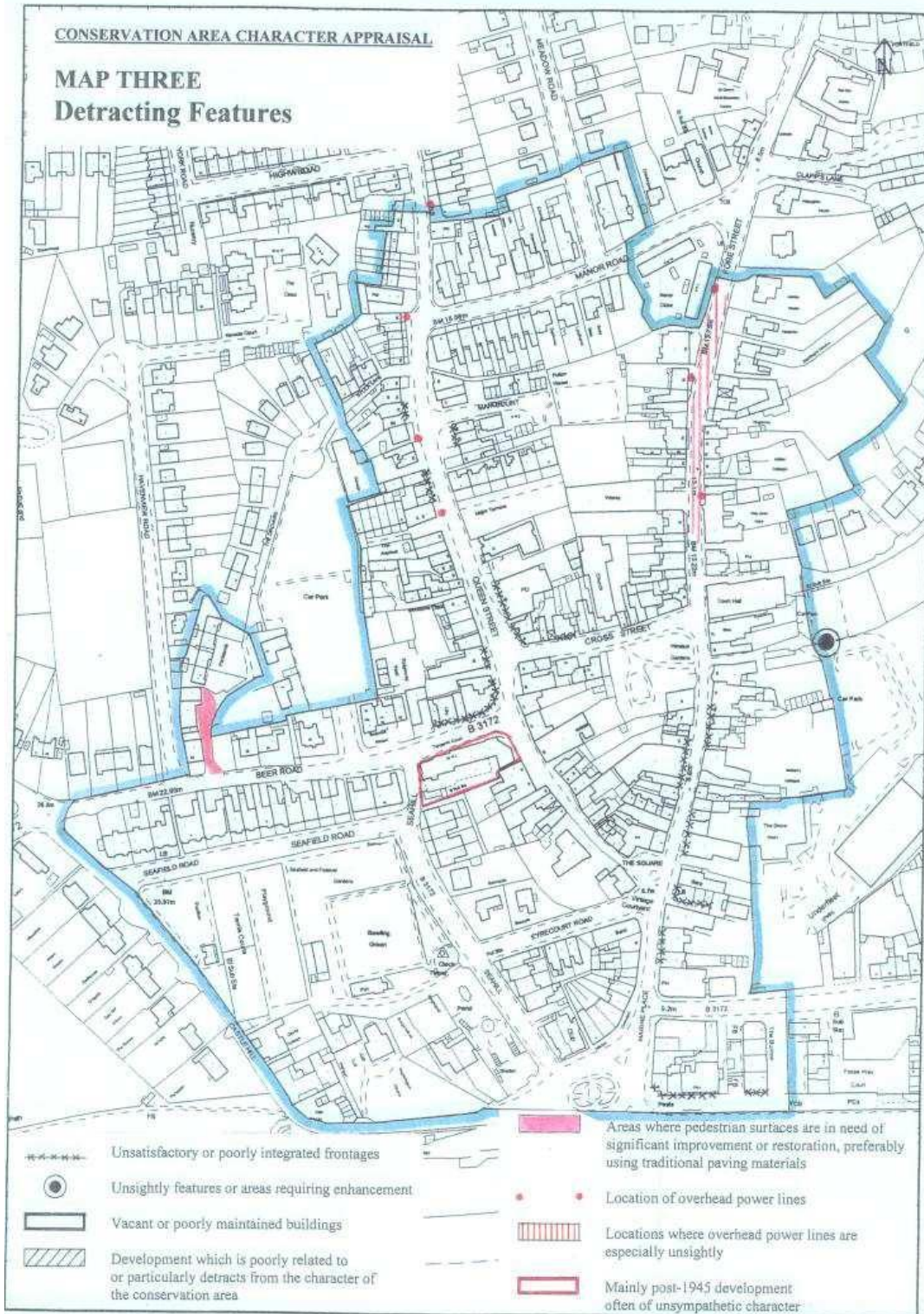
Seaton Conservation Area
East Devon District Council

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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP THREE

Detracting Features



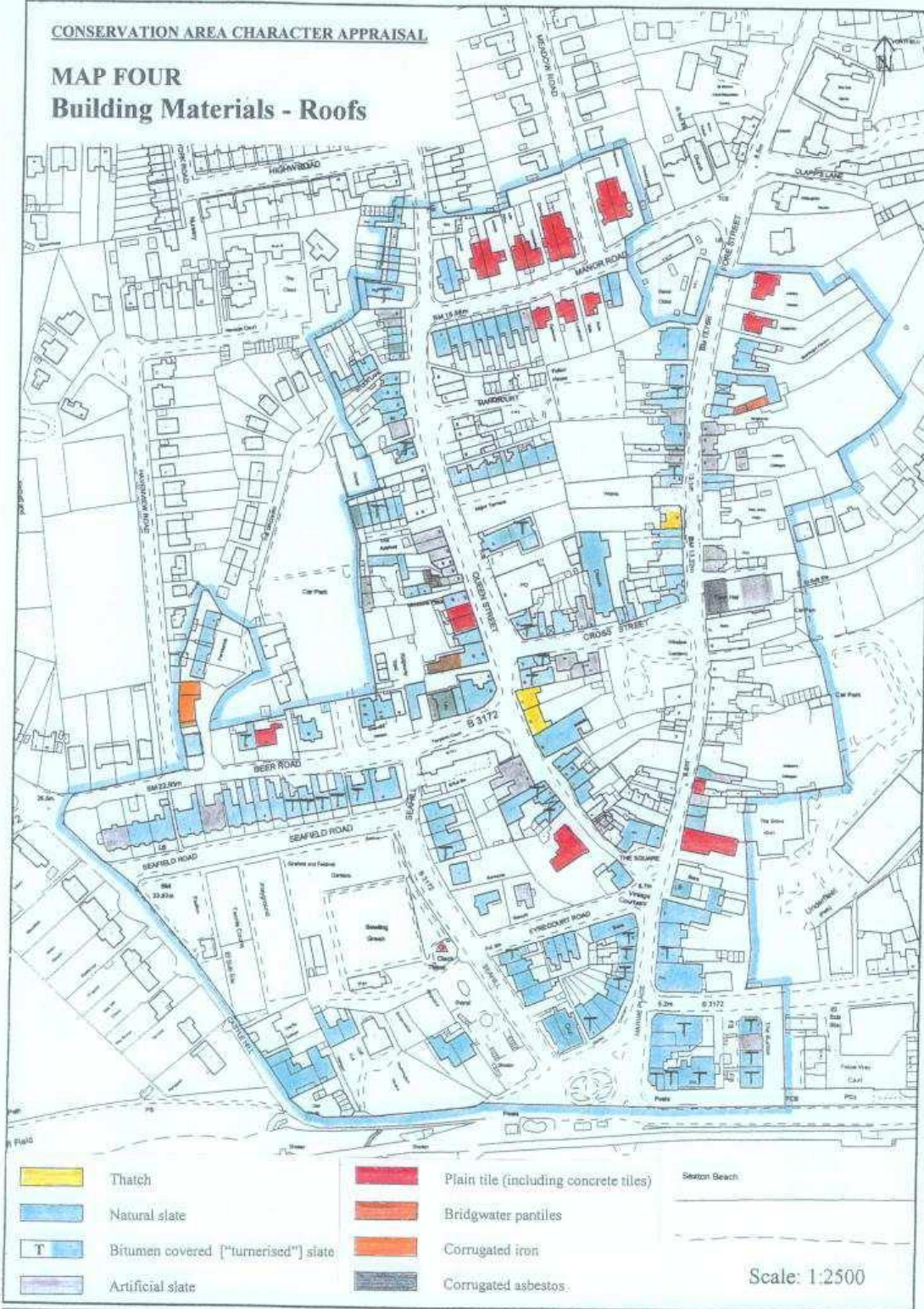
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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP FOUR

Building Materials - Roofs



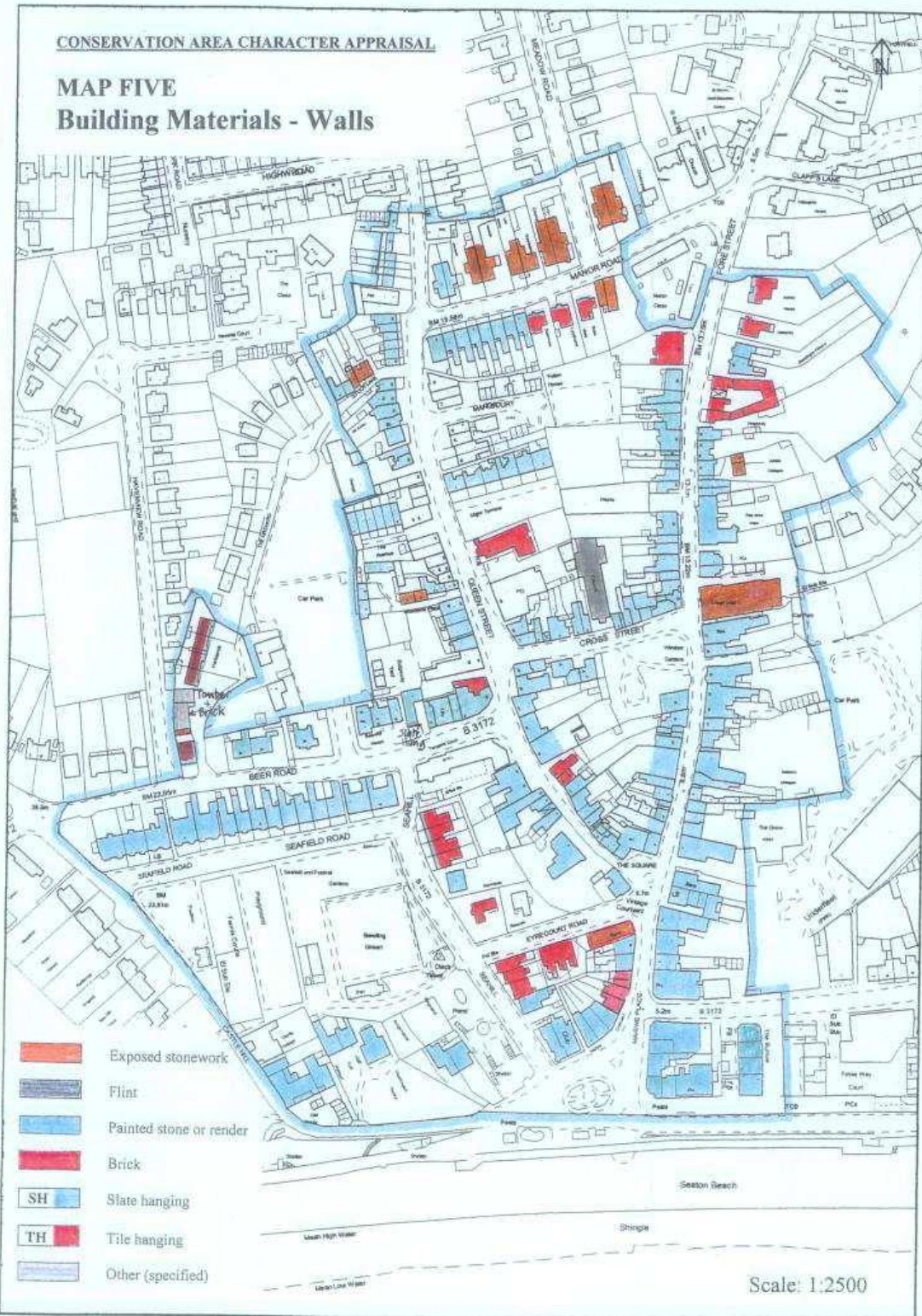
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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP FIVE

Building Materials - Walls



Seaton Conservation Area
East Devon District Council

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Purpose of the Review

There is a requirement under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 of all local authorities to review their conservation areas and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Reviews must be carried out every five years as the character and appearance of a conservation area can change over even small periods of time. The purpose of this interim review is to identify the principal changes since the publication of the Conservation Area Appraisal and to outline potential changes to the conservation area boundary which will form part of a full consultation exercise when the draft Management Plan is produced.

Key recent changes in Seaton Conservation Area.

- There have been a small number of modest infill developments within the conservation area. Two prominent examples include the replacement of a shop unit at 60/62 Queen Street with a three-storey town house divided into apartments and a more modern development at Underfleet Mews which successfully interprets local architectural form with a modern approach to detailing. A number of recent planning approvals have been granted for small-scale residential development on 'backland' sites. This is considered entirely consistent with the traditional evolution of the town.



New residential development in Queen Street.



A contemporary addition to the conservation area at Underfleet Mews.

- A small number of slate roofs have been turnerised over the last ten years. While this is becoming a less common method to repair leaking or loose slates it is hoped that these are temporary measures and that they will be re-clad in slate in the near future. It is hoped that in the case of unlisted buildings where re-roofing is permitted development the owners of such properties will see the advantages in investing in a good quality natural roof slate or tile rather than unsympathetic artificial alternatives.
- Although outside the conservation area boundary it is worth mentioning two significant sheltered housing developments that have been built since the last review. These are located between The Underfleet and the town centre and have had a marked impact upon the town, more specifically views into the conservation area from the east.

- There is an increasing under-use of accommodation above shops with empty store rooms and flats showing signs of neglect and in some cases severe deterioration of the historic fabric with blocked gutters and rotting joinery.
- There appears to be a steady increase in the replacement of traditional timber windows with PVCu units, presumably as a result of exposure to the onshore weather and the promise on no-maintenance products. While these types of windows have their place outside the historic environment the incremental loss of good quality timber windows and their replacement with PVCu units is having a significant detrimental impact upon the character of the conservation area.



Good maintenance and retention of original features can add tremendously to the character of the conservation area.



New street furniture and information banners for the Heritage Coast has given the sea front a more distinct appearance and character

- On a more positive note there has been some careful restoration of some buildings such as 37 Queen Street, an unlisted building that has had its Victorian sash windows overhauled and redecorated. This has much improved a prominent corner building in the conservation area.
- Since the recent designation of the East Devon coast as a World Heritage Site many of the coastal towns have adopted this theme for enhancement schemes to their landscaping and street furniture. Seaton's contribution has been quite successful with the new sculptures in particular providing a distinct addition to the Esplanade.

Potential review of conservation area boundary.

The existing conservation area boundary covers the entire historic core of the settlement. Development outside the boundary is on the whole modern and does not meet the criteria for inclusion within the conservation area. However the pleasure gardens along West Walk, although a relatively modern addition to the townscape contributes to the setting of the existing conservation area and together with West Cliff Terrace and Check House present a cohesive and distinct character. There are also some distinctive and prominent tree groups in this area that could benefit from addition protection. This aspect of conservation area review will be fully considered during the consultation process.



West Cliff Terrace and other nearby listed buildings form an important group, and their setting is considered sufficiently important to consider designation as an extension to the conservation area.

Principle reasons for erosion or changes to conservation area character.

- While there has been some significant development on the periphery of the town in recent years there has been very little in the way of enhancement and improvements within the conservation area itself. The 1999 survey highlighted several aspects that contributed to the loss of character including the neglect of upper floors above shops, unrestrained seaside commercialism, prominent overhead power lines and piecemeal alterations to buildings in multi-occupation. Almost ten years later there has been little inroad into reducing the impact of such detrimental aspects of the conservation area. A future Management Plan will look at the ways in which these matters may be addressed in the future.
- Minor incremental changes can have a significant impact upon the conservation area where the character is very distinctive. Lack of maintenance of historic windows and shop fronts and inappropriate methods of repairs to walls with excessive cement mortar can have a damaging impact.
- While there is no statutory control over replacement windows in many unlisted buildings the pressure to replace traditional timber windows with PVCu alternatives remains. The removal of traditional windows is the single most apparent change to the conservation area in recent years. There is greater awareness of the environmental impact of PVCu production and waste and while it is hoped that timber replacement windows are seen as the more sustainable option the marketing drives of the major PVCu window companies continue. In the light of this it is anticipated that a proposal to serve an Article 4 Direction to control replacement windows would form part of a future public consultation exercise.