



HUNSTANTON Conservation Area Character Statement



The Green before 1914

Hunstanton St. Edmund's is 1 mile south of the village of Hunstanton and forms part of the same parish. It is a rising watering place situated at the southern end of the cliff the terminus of the Lynn and Hunstanton Railway and distant 144 miles from London. The land is owned by Hamon Le Strange, who offers it to the public on building leases for a long term of years, and since the opening of the railway in 1862 a number of good houses, first, second and third class, have been erected . . . [and] a church has been built in which Divine service is performed, though the building is not completed.

HARROD'S DIRECTORY 1868

INTRODUCTION

A Conservation Area – “An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

The conservation of the historic environment is part of our quality of life, helping to foster economic prosperity and providing an attractive environment in which to live or work. The Borough Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of West Norfolk’s historic built environment and significant parts of it are designated as conservation areas.

Conservation areas were introduced by the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Local Authorities were required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest, whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate them as conservation areas. This duty is now part of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act which also requires the review of existing conservation areas and, where appropriate, the designation of new ones. The quality and interest of a conservation area depends upon a combination of factors including the relationship and architectural quality of buildings, materials, spaces, trees and other landscape features, together with views into and out of the area.

The Hunstanton Conservation Area was first designated in 1984 and its boundaries were extended in 2009. This document highlights the special qualities which underpin the character of the conservation area, justifying its designation. It also seeks to increase awareness of those qualities so that where changes to the environment occur, they do so in a

sympathetic way without harm to the essential character of the area. This type of assessment has been encouraged by Government Advice (PPG15) and the character statement has been adopted by the Borough Council as policy.

This character statement has been produced with the help of Hunstanton Civic Society. It does not address enhancement proposals. Community led enhancement schemes will be considered as part of a separate process.

SETTING AND LOCATION



Hunstanton is situated on the west coast of Norfolk at the mouth of the Wash. It is an area of particular geological interest, as may be seen in the cliffs which run southwards from St Edmund's Point, just north of the town. A bed of white chalk, sloping down to east and south lies over a thinner bed of red chalk (Hunstanton red rock) on a foundation of carstone (lower greensand). The line of the cliffs, exposed only at Hunstanton, may be seen further south, but now as an inland escarpment, as at Snettisham and Dersingham, leaving the coast protected only by an artificial embankment; while north-eastwards from Old Hunstanton, the sea is slowly

receding as sand is deposited along the shore line, leaving the silted-up harbours, salt marshes and great sand dunes which characterise this stretch of the north Norfolk coast. Hunstanton stands at the highest point on this geological shelf and the land slopes gently downwards to north, east and south giving the town an exposed and bracing situation. Its cliff top setting looking west is unlike anywhere else on the east coast of England and the sight of the setting sun lighting up the coloured cliffs is a unique experience.

The built up area of Hunstanton lies on the west side of the main A 149 coast road, which, after running south to north parallel with the Wash, turns eastwards at Hunstanton and then runs parallel with the north Norfolk coast. King's Lynn is sixteen miles to the south and Wells-next-the-Sea seventeen miles to the east. Immediate neighbours are Heacham, three miles to the south, and Old Hunstanton barely a mile to the north. Part of Old Hunstanton lies within the parish of (New) Hunstanton and the two settlements are in fact separated only by the public open space at St Edmund's Point. There is one main north south route through the town which turns off the A149 at Lighthouse Lane, continues along Cliff Parade, Le Strange Terrace and Southend Road and then rejoins the A149 via Oasis Way. Other minor routes through the town link the A149 to the Promenade on the artificial sea wall which runs southwards from the cliffs at the northern end of the town.

ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Archaeological evidence of the prehistoric settlement of this part of

Norfolk includes the Stone Age track, known as the Icknield Way, which passes through Ringstead, the Bronze Age "Seahenge" discovered at Holme-next-the-Sea and a number of Iron Age finds.

Evidence of a Roman settlement in the area can be seen in the fort at Brancaster, in Peddars Way and in the road patterns of several settlements along the north coast, while other local finds point to the existence of a small Romano-British settlement in the parish.

By AD 500 there was an Anglo-Saxon settlement at what is now called Old Hunstanton. A cemetery in the grounds of the Hall is from this period. The name of the village derives from Old English *Hunstan's tun*, meaning "Hunstan's homestead" or "Hunstan's village" and has changed little over time. In Domesday Book (1086) it is referred to as *Hunestanestuna*. Edmund, King of the East Angles and martyr, is said to have landed at St Edmund's Point in 855 and built a tower hereabouts. The ruins of a chapel built in his honour in 1272 still stands near the Point.



Shortly after the Conquest of 1066 the manor of Hunstanton was granted to Ralph Fitzherluin. His daughter married Roland L'Estrange, who had taken part in the Conquest. The

manor has remained with this family ever since and it is due to the vision of a successor, Henry Styleman Le Strange, that the seaside town of Hunstanton was developed.

In 1840 the only buildings between Old Hunstanton and Heacham were a lighthouse and the ruins of St Edmund's Chapel. The land was used for grazing sheep. But Le Strange saw the potential of this picturesque coastline with its white, red and brown cliffs, its sandy beach and its bracing climate; his vision was nothing less than a seaside resort to rival Brighton. He was a man of abundant energy and wide interests, a devout Christian, a conscientious landlord and an artist and craftsman. But he was also far-sighted and shrewd: he saw that the key to the development of the new town was a railway connecting Hunstanton to King's Lynn and thence to London and the Midlands. In 1861, as the principal landowner, he became a director of the railway company and by 1862 the line had been built. Hunstanton was ready to take off commercially. Sadly in the same year Le Strange suffered a heart attack and died at the age of forty seven, and it was left to his son Hamon to reap the rewards of his efforts.

As a symbol of his intentions, in 1846 Le Strange had moved the ancient village cross from Old Hunstanton to the new site



and in 1848 the first building was erected. This was the Royal Hotel (now the Golden Lion), arguably the work of the renowned Victorian architect, William Butterfield, a friend of Le Strange. Overlooking a sloping green and the sea, and for several years standing alone, it earned the nickname "Le Strange's Folly". In 1850 Le Strange appointed a land agent to survey the site and prepare a layout, while he himself drew and painted a map and a perspective of the scheme, showing shops, a station and a church.



He did not want a conventional scheme of streets laid out on a grid with no open spaces, and turned to William Butterfield for ideas. Their shared passion was for the "Old English" style of architecture for domestic buildings. This owed much to medieval precedent and to the earnestness of the Victorian Gothic Revival, but, in its emphasis on

materials, construction and informality, it looked forward to the subsequent Arts and Crafts movement. Butterfield laid out the central area as a series of triangular greens with buildings arranged "singly or in groups, in masses of irregular form and size, interspersed with gardens and open spaces. The resort exploited fresh air and the big skies of this bracing coast. The tough, unapologetic results can be clearly seen, albeit much overlaid with modern accretions.

Development went ahead fast. In 1864, Whites Directory noted that "since the coming of the railway" Hunstanton "has been rapidly improving "and that there are now "30 commodious lodgings and boarding houses, and 3 first class hotels", that "many villas, shops and private residences are in course of erection" and that "a new church is shortly to be erected near the railway station where the chief increase in buildings and population has taken place". In 1868 Harrod's Directory noted that "a gas works is about to be established and it is in contemplation to erect a pier" and goes on to refer to "pleasure boats and bathing machines"... "pleasant walks"... "donkeys and ponies for hire". . . "hotels and refreshment rooms offering excellent accommodation"... and to the "many thousands of summer visitor brought here from different parts of the kingdom by the excursion and other trains". It lists three schools, day and boarding, nine shops (including a "fancy emporium"), six tradesmen (including, not surprisingly, a high proportion in various building trades), a corn, coal, ale and wine merchant, the station master, an omnibus proprietor, a building surveyor, a doctor and the rector.

The developments of the 1870s

,northwards along Cliff Parade and in Cliff Terrace, were quite different from the earlier scheme by Butterfield and comprised a grid of streets with formal terraces of considerable opulence facing the sea and large green squares.



In 1883, White's Directory noted the building of "whole streets and terraces"; the construction of a pier by the Hunstanton Cliff Company, which had also built a promenade on part of the sea wall; the completion in 1870 of the Union Chapel (unusually for this period, for the use of all Nonconformist denominations) and in 1872 of the Anglican parish church. Then in 1879 came the opening by the Prince and Princess of Wales of the Convalescent Home, a "fine building of carstone with red brick facings and Bath stone cills". Hunstanton was booming.

From 1892 the town was governed by a Local Board until the establishment of the separate parish and Urban District Council of New Hunstanton under the Local Government Act of 1894. In 1896 the fine Town Hall, designed by George Skipper, was built. It stands, fittingly, next door to the Golden Lion - now no longer isolated but at the heart of a thriving resort.

The meteoric rise of Hunstanton and the continuing development of residential areas north and south of

the already established centre were accompanied by an increase in the facilities available to residents and visitors. In 1891 the golf links, in 1895 the Methodist Chapel in Austin Street, in 1904 The Roman Catholic church in Sandringham Road, the Recreation Ground and the establishment of clubs for sports of all kinds. Between 1924 and 1932 came the extension southwards of the sea wall and the creation of a swimming pool, a boating lake, gardens and shelters, in 1937 the bowling greens and a pavilion in the Esplanade Gardens.

Between 1950 and 1954 Smithdon High School was built east of the present A149, to designs by Alison and Peter Smithson. This building, with its innovative steelwork, is listed grade II* though it is outside the conservation area.



In 1969 the closure of the railway line, which had been so instrumental in the development of the town over the previous century, heralded a new era. The station and the Sandringham Hotel south of The Green were demolished, to be replaced by a shopping centre and flats at Harlequin House, while land to the south, on the line of the former railway, was given over to extensive areas of parking to accommodate the fast growing number of visitors arriving by car. At the same time, the public's increasing

preference for foreign holidays demanded a response from traditional English seaside resorts. Extensive low-price leisure facilities under cover against the weather seemed to be the answer: thus the pre-war outdoor family attractions on South Promenade were, in the 1980s, replaced by the present Oasis Leisure Centre and the Sea Life Centre, while other seaside attractions were updated or replaced. The pierhead pavilion was destroyed by fire in 1939 and later replaced by the present amusement arcade, while in 1978 the pier itself was destroyed in a storm.

Changing public habits and tastes and economic changes have caused the number of boarding houses and hotels to decline and a corresponding growth in the provision of holiday flats, whether by conversion of older properties or building anew. Elsewhere the growing number of elderly people in the community has encouraged the conversion of large houses into residential homes. The emphasis on cost in an ever-changing market has meant that many new developments have sacrificed much of the quality associated with the town's Victorian heyday. But some traditions have survived all the changes. The quality of the maintenance of the Esplanade Gardens shows the tradition of public gardening bequeathed by the Victorians to be as strong as it has ever been, while the recently created Sensory Garden in Boston Square is an entirely new and imaginative offshoot of that tradition.

Census figures, for what was still until 1894 one parish, reflect the dramatic expansion of the new town. In 1851 and 1861 the population stood at 490. By 1871 it had risen to 810 and by 1881 to 1,508. It was not until 1901 that separate figures for the two

parishes are available. These show that the population of the old village, at 508, was back to much as it had been in the middle years of the previous century, while the new town, now on its own, had jumped to 1,893. In 1928 parts of the parishes of Old Hunstanton and Heacham were transferred to New Hunstanton, again making it hard to compare like with like. In 1931 the population of the now enlarged area of New Hunstanton stood at 2,627. The estimated figure for the parish in 2007 is 4,716.

So, Hunstanton is a planned seaside town, founded by a remarkable man, Henry Styleman Le Strange, and built on his own land. It possesses style and character – its main buildings are substantial but not over grand; its squares and open spaces are elegant yet informal. It is a comfortable, modest place, small in architectural scale with well-defined boundaries. Its character is spacious, breezy and green, where the effect of the open sea and sky has a strong impact on the light, views and settings of the buildings.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW

For convenience the Conservation Area can be divided into five separate areas, according to the dominant character of each. These comprise: The Town Centre, The Cliffs and Squares to the north, East Hunstanton which adjoins the centre, The Avenues to the north east and South Hunstanton.

THE TOWN CENTRE



This includes the earliest development in Hunstanton dating from the 1860s, much of it now being the commercial core of the town. The area includes several important public buildings and a number of open spaces. The deliberately informal layout was the work of William Butterfield and comprised buildings "singly and in groups, in masses of irregular form and size, interspersed with gardens and open spaces". However, the expansion of the commercial core into areas originally designed for residential use has led to much visual confusion. Or perhaps one could say that those who planned the new town failed to design sufficiently for shops. The 'centre' includes The Green with the Town Hall, the Golden Lion Hotel and the flats at Cliff Court, St Edmund's Church, Le Strange Terrace, St Edmund's Terrace, the High Street, most of Greevegate and most of Westgate.

The Green

Most seaside resorts are laid out parallel to the coast line. Hunstanton is different. Here the triangular Green sets the pattern for the earliest development. The major streets run down to the sea and the lesser streets (including the short High Street) cross along the contours of the slope.

The first building of the new town was to be a hotel overlooking the sea across a large sloping green, and this area remains the natural hub of the town, linking the commercial area (centred on the High Street) to the leisure area running parallel to the shore line (northwards in the Esplanade Gardens and southwards along Le Strange Terrace and South Promenade). The Golden Lion Hotel still dominates the Green, although it now shares pride of place with the adjoining Town Hall. The medieval cross in front of the hotel remains a focal point in the space, which has happily retained its natural open view, without the interruption of trees or other features. Red-brown tarmac paths harmonise with the local materials used in retaining walls. Traditional cast iron "serpent" seats, a modern bandstand of traditional form and a hipped roofed toilet block all make a positive contribution to the scene. Happily, the fountain has been re-erected on The Green.



At the far north end an imaginatively designed curved seating area doubles as the roof of beach huts below. Regrettably, on the south side, the harsh appearance of Harlequin House (just outside the conservation area) detracts with its form, design, colour of brick and unfortunate 'mansard' style to disguise a flat roof.

On the **south east side**, facing the sea, number 21 (Cassie's) is a fine Victorian building of carstone with a timber balcony, but the adjoining Green Lodge, has been spoilt by a flat roofed front extension. Facing The Green, a three storey carstone terrace, probably designed by William Butterfield, with his favourite mix of hipped and gabled dormers. The concept had been diluted by a variety of front extensions in a bid to maximise the value of this prime commercial site. The use of ribbed concrete pantiles in place of the original slate, the removal of chimneys and inappropriate window replacements have down-graded the original design. On the end of this terrace and on the corner of St Edmund's Terrace, the Princess Theatre is a strange building, its heavy details and small corner windows lend it an almost "defensive" character. However, the use of carstone helps it blend with its surroundings and the recent entrance extension, incorporating a glazed roof, seems rather more compatible with an enjoyable evening out. On the opposite corner of St Edmund's Terrace, an opportunity has been missed to develop the site in a creative way. Instead, a modern building in brick has sought unsuccessfully to copy features of older buildings alongside, even to the extent of designed-in front extensions. The corner into Greevegate has another front extension (albeit of some quality in itself), but the appearance is marred by the removal of an important chimney and the use of unsympathetic roof tiles.

On the **north-east side**, The Golden Lion and the Town Hall (both listed buildings) are very different in style, but they are united in the materials of which they are built: carstone, limestone and red pantiles. Cliff Court,

north of the hotel, with its staggered plan, boxy forms and flat roofs, intrudes and jars with surrounding older buildings and the landscaping is disappointing.

Greevegate

(from The Green to Church Street)

From Greevegate there is a fine view looking down hill across The Green to the sea.

The **north side** of the street begins with the lively and varied side elevation of the Town Hall. In front is an attractive small green space with a tree, followed by a flat roof protected by barbed wire. Then, on the corner with Northgate, a modern two storey shopping development, with a staggered layout and assertive flat roofs, bears no relationship with surrounding street lines or roof lines. Its design is poor and it lacks quality. The opposite corner is firmly "held" by the early twentieth century classical style Nat West Bank. St Edmund's Church of 1872 (a listed building) is set back behind an attractive small green on the corner with Church Street. The mix of flint, red chalk and carstone gives an unexpected liveliness to the south aisle. Though one was planned by Le Strange, a tower was never built: it would have given the church more of a presence in the town.



On the **south side** of Greevegate, a

short carstone terrace with simple gables, originally designed for residential use, is now all but lost behind a varied collection of shop fronts extended out to the pavement over former front gardens. This extends to the corner with the High Street. In contrast, on the opposite corner Barclay's Bank of 1872 was clearly designed for its present purpose. It turns the corner with an elaborate gable and a fine Gothic style porch. Elaborate ground floor bay windows on both fronts, cast iron balconies, large upper windows in stone frames keyed into the random carstone walling complete this fine building. The same style is continued up the street, though here it has been compromised by an unsympathetic shop front and the loss of a balcony. From here a modest two storey terrace with first floor dormers, extending to the corner with Church Street, has been overwhelmed by shop fronts and window replacements.

St Edmund's Terrace

There is a good view looking north along St Edmund's Terrace towards The Green, the Town Hall and the Golden Lion.

A terrace of three storeys and basement stretches almost the whole length of the **east side** of the street. By William Butterfield, its materials and details are similar to those of the terrace facing The Green (*see above*): random squared carstone, a mix of hipped and gabled dormers, relieving arches over openings. Here however, because it is the basements which have become commercial premises, the "ground floor" front doors have survived, together with their shallow Gothic canopies. Paved over former front gardens are used for open air eating or for displaying goods. Only at

No 2 has a large ungainly lean-to wrap-round extension been built. Upper floors have their usual quota of unsympathetic window replacements. One of Butterfield's triangular greens marks the junction with Westgate. Known as The Spinney, it is planted with trees and adds much to the attraction of this area.



Around its edge are redundant concrete bollards which detract from its charm and the expanses of tarmac roads, which surround the green, also detract from what could be a pleasant, pedestrian-friendly public space.



On the **west**, the side of the Princess Theatre (*see above*) dominates the north end of the street. From this angle it appears as essentially a large shed, out of scale with its surroundings, but its expressed frame structure infilled with panels of carstone gives it a strong local character. Its dominance

in the street scene is accentuated by the derelict site which adjoins it and beyond that, the poorly designed bus station with its vast expanse of tarmac completes the visual disaster. Redevelopment here would need to respect the Butterfield Terrace across the road, provide a visual complement to the theatre and enhance the setting of The Spinney. The small car park behind is enhanced by trees round its edge.

Westgate

The street follows the north-east to south-west slope of the land and, in doing so, describes a two angled bend: one at the junction with the High Street, the other between Nos 24 and 28. This allows buildings to be seen from different angles. Trees are important in the street. They are seen in The Spinney at the junction with Le Strange Terrace, in the large garden of No 3, and, further up the hill, in the grounds of the Council offices. Surviving front garden walls are important.

On the '**south**' side numbers 2 to 24 comprise two fine terraces of carstone houses. Stepped up the hill, the lower terrace has attic dormers and two storey bays (replaced in timber, to its detriment, mid terrace), the higher terrace is generally simpler though enriched with black and white tiles but it is spoilt by fascias to ground floor shop conversions. Nos 28 to 30 are a grand pair of typical large Victorian semi-detached houses with stone bays to two floors and gables. Nos 32 and 34 are, unusually for Hunstanton, a pair of semidetached houses in a classical style, disrupted at number 34 by a shop front.



Union Church, an attractive building in gothic style of carstone and limestone with timber windows, presents a three sided apse to the street (opposite the bus station), enriched with bands in terracotta and brick and stone dressed buttresses. Similar details may be seen on the side elevations. Concrete paths, a lack of trees and the replacement of part of the carstone boundary wall in an unsympathetic brick make the setting of the church somewhat bleak and especially when viewed across the bus station from St Edmund's Terrace. Moving uphill from the church, numbers 40 to 46 make up another terrace, probably by Butterfield, with hipped and gabled dormers. Shop front extensions, though detracting form the original design, are, happily, not continuous, but the removal of chimneys is particularly noticeable and the use of a weaker" material (brick) as a new retaining plinth to an older building of a "stronger" material (carstone) is unfortunate. The original front boundary wall remains at No 42. Number 52-54 is unusual in being a single house with asymmetric gables. Its quite unrelated extension - an Edwardian shop front with deep bay windows above - is, in itself, attractive and makes a positive contribution to the street scene. Numbers 56 to 70 are dominated by shop front extensions and (62 to 68 only) first floor bays. A modern building and

Sainsbury's supermarket take up most of the block between Homefields Road and Valentine Road. The use of a brown brick, not far off the colour of carstone, and of giant pilasters and arches, goes some way to fit this essentially modern building type into a traditional street, in terms of form and scale. But the two end blocks are only barely related to each other and the eaves look clumsy. No 94 survives isolated at the corner of Valentine Road, its appearance enhanced with a well designed new shop front and railings around the corner.

On the 'north' side, number 3 is a substantial house in large grounds with trees and boundary walls. It could be in a village rather than in the town centre. Its contribution to the character of this part of Hunstanton cannot be over-emphasised: it is important that such "lungs" are retained. Its trees serve to link those in the upper and lower triangles. The Public Library enjoys a backdrop of trees and helps to screen the bus station behind. However the attached cafe and business premises, single storey and flat roofed, does nothing for an area already blighted by the "sea of tarmac" at the entrance to the bus station and by the derelict former garage forecourt to the north (*see above*). Between St Edmund's Terrace and the High Street the frontage is very broken up, with the end of the terrace, back yards and a service lane. This has recently been enlivened by the appearance of outside tables to the café which forms part of the shop which turns the corner into the High Street... Numbers 63 - 65 are single storey, flat roofed and of no visual importance. Numbers 69 and 71 have a heavy shop front extension and have lost chimneys. Number 73 survives as a traditional corner shop with a fine shop front, whilst number 75 has an attractive new shopfront

accommodating a tea room. Further along, two storey terraced and detached houses are overwhelmed by shop front extensions.

High Street



The High Street is the principal shopping street. It contains a jumble of buildings of different heights and types. They are mostly late Victorian, but two are substantial post-war structures, designed as shops. Inevitably these two bear no relation to the older buildings in the street, which are many cases domestic in origin and scale. The view north is stopped by the assertive staggered flat roofs of the modern Northgate shops (see above). There is a lack of harmony, emphasised by the mix of shop fronts, some of which detract and diminish the quality of the street scene...

On the **east side**, The Corner Café and bakers, a modest two storey building, has a traditional moulded fascia, extending over an "arcade" with cast iron columns which, even though it has little relationship with the building above, is an attractive feature in itself. Next to it, on a quite different scale, two modern buildings are undistinguished and typical of the low quality of commercial design of their time. They clash with each other in materials, window proportions and even in roof line. The former Woolworth's store is tawdry in appearance. Number 24 is commercial in origin: of three storeys and well proportioned, with a pediment-like gable to the street and

an equally important long side elevation. Window replacements to the upper floors and the shop front detract. Numbers 26 and 28 are similarly of three storeys, but with the top floor as an attic with dormers cutting the eaves. The consequent rain water plumbing dominates the facade above indifferent shop fronts. Numbers 30 to 36 appear to be the remnant of an earlier two storey development, some with upper bay windows. The use of large squared carstone gives numbers 34 and 36 a markedly local, rural flavour. Number 40 is again three full storeys high, in scale with Barclay's Bank on the corner (see above), but sadly marred by a poor shop fascia and a plastic projecting fascia box sign.

On the **west side**, numbers 1 to 9 are plain two storey buildings with shop front extensions. Numbers 11 to 17 are a mixture of two and three storeys, with typical late Victorian bay windows or dormers cutting the eaves and a jumble of shop fronts unrelated to what is above. The frontage then peters out almost completely, with numbers 21 to 25 (a mixture of flat roofed extensions engulfing a small house), number 27 (in effect a shop front filling a back yard) and a rear view of buildings in Greevegate.

Northgate



The **west side** is taken up by a modern development of staggered shops with flat roofs (*see above*). The change in level between their forecourt and the street is marked only by unattractive railings. The view is bleak and cheap.

The original entrance to the church on the **east side** was by the west door facing Northgate. South of the church, numbers 3 and 4 Church Close are part of a group of bungalows for the elderly. Its concept is pleasing though its design hardly rises to the challenge of this important site. Numbers 2 and 4 Northgate, of carstone and with dormers, are a relic of earlier development, in contrast to the corner bank (*see above*), they have been much altered by shop front insertions.

Le Strange Terrace

This short street, like The Green, is essentially part of the leisure quarter.

On its **east side**, a footpath leads down from the car park by the bus station to Le Strange Terrace, past number 23 The Green (an attractive residential conversion) to emerge beside Bank House. This is a solid looking carstone house with relieving arches over windows and classical details surviving in the central doorway and in part of a shop front. But it has been spoilt by modern shop fronts, plastic windows and the removal of chimneys. Numbers 16 to 20 are an amusement arcade... Number 14 is an odd little carstone building with a terracotta window in a gable facing the street. Numbers 10 to 12 is the Wash and Tope Hotel, with a pleasing simple facade somewhat compromised by window replacements. Numbers 2 to 8 is a terrace, of which number 2 only retains an attractive front of surprisingly varied carstone.



The conservation area has been extended on the west side of the road to include the pleasant 'Art-Deco' style shops (nos 1 to 5) and the 'Coal Shed' gallery behind. This little building is a survivor of the railway complex – a coal depot office which stood in the station yard.

THE CLIFFS and SQUARES

This area is entirely residential. It comprises the slightly later development of the land immediately north of the town centre with its grand, formal layout and its large houses, which include the fine terraces along Cliff Parade and along the north side of Cliff Terrace. A variety of spacious developments, spanning over several decades, are sited around the large formal squares of Boston and Lincoln and along the east side of Northgate. The Arts and Crafts style, from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly the fine work by H.G. Ibberson, is represented in this area. It boasts three substantial public open spaces, the gardens of the two squares, and the Esplanade Gardens.

Cliff Parade



The **Esplanade Gardens** are everything that traditional seaside resort gardens should be. They are much used, but grass, paths and well designed planting remain carefully tended, while all the "furniture" looks just right. Bowls, putting and children's play are all catered for. At the southern end the War Memorial (a mini Cenotaph) is surrounded by colourful bedding plants. Attractive small buildings include the restaurant (pyramid roof), the toilets (half hipped roof) and the attendant's hut (with loggia). The flat roof of the refreshment kiosk is a pity. The design of the roadside railings is unusual and interesting.

On the **east** side of Cliff Parade, the tall buildings have bay windows framed in painted stonework, keyed into the carstone. The layout and the continuous cast iron balconies may be reminiscent of the Regency, but the building style is solidly "Old English", even to the gothic doorways. Enormous chimneys survive, but in many instances concrete tiles have replaced slates. The northern terrace is similar in materials but, instead of the gabled skyline, it has a continuous row of small dormers culminating at each end, in the French style, with a mansard roofed pavilion and a pointed roofed corner turret or 'belvedere'. In this terrace some roofs have been unsympathetically renewed in concrete tiles, some steps have been rebuilt in

concrete and front gardens have been tarmaced over and separated by unattractive dwarf walls.

The conservation area has been extended along Cliff Parade to include the green from the sea wall to the road and from (and including) the pier replacement building up to the lighthouse and the buildings around it. Also included are the former coastguard cottages and the coastguard look-out building of around 1910 and the northern promenade.



When Hunstanton started to be built in the 1850s, green spaces were an important part of the concept. The arrival of the railway in the 1860s brought day-trippers who were able to parade from the station across the green and along the cliff top to the lighthouse. This open space, which follows on from the present Esplanade Gardens, still remains, despite coastal erosion, with its three handsome shelters.



The southernmost of these was built in 1898 as a memorial to Francis Hewitt of Leicester and bears a plaque to that effect. The middle shelter is at risk and will need re-locating soon; the northern and southern shelters are less affected.

This strip of land, now boarded on the east by modern seaside housing, is included in the conservation area. It is part of the original resort and also provides the visual extension to Lincoln Square.

Cliff Terrace

Cliff Terrace (1873) is exactly aligned on the axis of the church. There is a fine view of the church looking up the street, although it is rather obscured by trees.

On its **north side**, the terrace turns the corner and then sets back, to be followed by a further terrace, stepping up the hill, in similar style but without an attic. This frames the church and leads the eye up to it, but on one side only.

In contrast, the **south side** is a visual disaster with poor architecture. Cliff Court is at one end and the backs of the staggered shops at the other (*for both see above*). In between a service

and garage court only further erodes the street frontage. The use of "crazy" concrete paving on the small island at the junction with Cliff Parade gives it a barren character, at odds with the gardens opposite.

Boston Square

The gardens have recently been laid out as a Sensory Garden, with flair and imagination. Features include a pool with a fountain, walls of loose flints in cages, screens and seats, pergolas and decking, varied textures and "dry" planting.



On the **south side** of the square, Connaught House turns the corner of the terrace on Cliff Parade. Numbers 6, 8 and 10 are good examples of the Arts and Crafts style of the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: a good period for English domestic architecture.



They are by H. G. Ibberson, a London architect, who built a number of houses in Hunstanton with a distinctive style.

The terrace on Cliff Parade turns the corner on the **north side**. Numbers 5 and 7 are particularly fine Arts and Crafts style,

Lincoln Square

The square looks onto a pleasant grassed area surrounded by trees, which do battle with the strong prevailing wind.

On the **south** side, the terrace on Cliff Parade turns the corner in style, but is then extended in a clumsy and dull fashion. This is followed by two pairs of modern low rise flats, with jagged monopitch roofs, which visually do nothing for this prime site. Number 8 (with number 35 Northgate) are a pair of turn of the century houses in an Arts and Crafts style.

On the **north** side, Westcliffe Court is part of a larger modern development of flats which continues round the corner along Cliff Parade. Its scale, though right for the Parade, is too high for the Square and its horizontal lines and flat roof, disguised by a "mansard", strike a discordant note beside the older Parade terraces to the south. Numbers 3 to 9, of carstone with bays extending up as parapet dormers, are an interesting group in a mildly Arts and Crafts style. The introduction of plastic windows though carried out fairly sensitively, strikes a discordant note, particularly when "pseudo-sashes" are open. There are surviving carstone front garden walls.

Northgate

Northgate is a major north-south route parallel to Cliff Parade to the west and the main Cromer Road to the east.

Northgate forms the eastern end of both Boston and Lincoln Squares. Its **west side** is therefore largely made up of either side elevations of houses facing the square and entries to back lanes. Larch lap fencing is inappropriate here. The rear wing of No 9 Boston Square has an Arts and Crafts circular turret with bands of carstone and chequerboard carstone and flint balanced by a horizontal band of windows (motifs of the architect H. G. Ibberson). No 47 is a small Arts and Crafts style cottage.

On the **east** side, a typical large-scale bay-windowed Victorian terrace includes the Vicarage (number 10) with a nice onion-domed corner turret. It has an Arts and Crafts style extension towards the church with blind arcading in carstone and a cross in the gable joining first floor and attic windows. Number 24 (with number 28 Austin Street) is a superb Arts and Crafts style building of random carstone with huge overhanging dormers above shallow rendered bay windows in the manner of Voysey. It has an Art Nouveau lead sundial on a chimney (probably originally higher) bearing the text *It is better to have traveled hopefully than to arrive.*



It was the architect H G Ibberson's house. Numbers 30, 32 and 34 together with 2 Lower Lincoln Street are two pairs of imposing semi-detached houses in the Queen Anne style with mansard roofs and tall dormers. Number 2 has a terracotta plaque inscribed 1898. Larch-lap fencing on the Lower Lincoln Street frontage looks out of place. Number 36, a large carstone house with gables and dormers has been converted to flats. This has involved an extension on the corner with Lower Lincoln Street, while five further houses in similar style of one or two storeys and attics complete the side street frontage. Forms and materials are generally in sympathy with the original building, although window replacements in the old house are visually of lesser "weight" than the originals. Numbers 38 to 50 are substantial typical late Victorian houses, detached or semi-detached: half-timbered gables reflect the growing interest in vernacular traditions, though the use of hard red brick combined with carstone is solidly Victorian.

EAST HUNSTANTON

This is a small area immediately east of the Town Centre It includes, in Valentine Road, the former Convalescent Home (now flats) and the former Children's Convalescent Home (now council offices), the mainly residential development of small terraced houses in Church Street and James Street and the more spacious residential development of the eastern end of Greevegate. Most of this area appears to date from much the same period as the 'Cliffs & Greens' area; i.e. the 1870s or 1880s. The street pattern is a regular grid, but the flats and the council offices are built at an

angle within the grid. The council offices stand in substantial grounds, most of it devoted to car parking, but the grounds of the former convalescent home have now been developed.



Greevegate

The eastern end of Greevegate is entirely residential and has retained the air of a prosperous Victorian suburb. Some original stone walls and railings have been lost and some have been replaced in brick or concrete block. Many windows have replacement plastic, though in most cases, they are back from the wall face and have imitated the pattern of glazing bars. This reduces their impact.

On the **north side**, number 33, covered in creeper, has an important position on the corner opposite the church. Numbers 35 to 53 are pairs of very grand semi-detached houses, of carstone with painted stone dressings, in the "Old English" style. Typical are numbers 43-45 with two storey bay windows with pierced stone parapets and paired windows above, surmounted by gables with trefoil openings. Number 45 has its original windows and an attractive side oriel window. The carstone of one has unfortunately been painted over and another shows the effect of new windows being placed too far forward.

Numbers 38-40 on the **south side** are similar in style to those on the north side, but with ornate cast iron cresting to bay parapets. Number 40, which is "double fronted", has retained original windows. Numbers 42 to 46 have red brick dressings, decorative terra cotta panel and curved lead roofs with iron cresting to bays. Numbers 54 to 58 are two storey with attics and gables, in a very rural style.

Valentine Road

From Greevegate to Westgate (on its **east side**), Valentine Road is dominated by two buildings which have played a unique role in the short history of Hunstanton. Both convalescent homes, the northernmost of the two for adults was completed in 1874, the southern one for children, in 1907. Though on square sites in a regular street grid, both are placed diagonally, so as to face south-west, presumably to maximise "green" views from the wards. The first has been converted to flats and much of the grounds built over with houses. The 1874 building, of carstone red brick and slate, is rather sombre but is relieved by gables with white painted timber details and attractive white painted porches. The removal of all chimneys detracts very considerably from its appearance. The loss of open space and trees and the introduction of large areas of tarmac are regrettable, but the design of the new houses, in keeping with that of the original building, is exemplary. The 1907 building, converted to local government offices, is a typical institutional building of its time: formally symmetrical but with an Arts and Crafts flavour. It is more attractive than its older neighbour. Limestone bays and bands relieve the carstone, brick and slate; chimneys survive and the roof is crowned by an ornate

ventilator. Trees and some grass have survived the change of use. A small modern health centre fits in happily in a corner of the grounds.

On the **west side**, the most important building is the school on the corner of James Street. It is a typical late nineteenth century board school, though the use of carstone gives it a more local, vernacular appearance. A master's house is attached at one end. Stone mullioned windows give a nod to the "Old English" style. The original stone boundary walls survive. Numbers 1-3 are similar to houses in James Street, while numbers 9-11 form an attractive pair of small cottages next to the school.

Church Street

This is for the most part a quiet residential street, with walled front gardens. The houses are mostly small, of two storeys and terraced, some with attic dormers, some with bay windows. Many windows have been replaced with plastic, though in most cases an attempt has been made to keep in some sympathy with the originals. Many slate roofs have been replaced with concrete tiles. Chimneys are generally intact. North of the junction with James Street the street rises gently to Greevegate and then levels out past the church.

Built of carstone, most of the houses on the **east side** are of modest scale and could be described as cottages. Numbers 40 to 50 are built hard up to the pavement. Numbers 40 and 42, which share a gable end facing the street, are unusual. Number 68, at the end of the terrace north of the church, has been drastically altered and so breaks the unity of the terrace.

The Witley Press takes up most of the frontage from James Street to

Greevegate on the **west side**. It has three sections: an interesting early twentieth century framed building with a wide-span curved roof, an older small building with its gable to the street and a dull flat roofed building of the 1950s.

James Street

On the **north side**, numbers 1 to 7 are small carstone terraced houses but their bays have pierced parapets like those in more up-market Greevegate (*see below*). No original windows survive. The **south side** is taken up by the school (*see above*).

East of Valentine Road, the street is unmade. On the north side attractive pine trees from the former convalescent home grounds survive in the back gardens of the new houses. On the south side are the health centre (*see above*) and the hedge and trees of the Council offices.

Westgate (east of Valentine Road)

The trees in the grounds of the Council offices are a significant element looking east up Westgate past Sainsbury's supermarket. On the south side, numbers 96-98 (Tabor House) are an original pair of houses of carstone and brick now in commercial use. A flat roofed modern corner extension in matching materials links successfully to an older barn-like carstone building on Valentine Road (outside the Conservation Area). Number 98 is linked to Swain's, a large modern office building, of two storeys and attic, set back from the road behind parking This in turn is linked to number 6 King's Lynn Road, an Arts and Crafts style house with pebble dash render and exaggerated carstone quoins.

Kings Lynn Road (from Greevegate to Westgate)

On the east side stone walls and piers mark the entrance to the Recreation Ground while trees on the verge provide an attractive edge. On the west side an important wall marks the boundary of the former convalescent home.

THE AVENUES

This area extends north-eastwards from St Edmund's Church and appears to date from around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is almost entirely residential and includes the terraced and "semi-terraced" houses of Victoria, York, Glebe and St Edmund's Avenues together with the more spacious developments in Lincoln Street and Austin Street. The street pattern is basically a grid, although the change in alignment of the main A149 makes each road north of Lincoln Street longer than the one before. Most of the houses are built to standard designs and their character depends on their uniformity. But a number, under the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, have individual features of particular interest.

Church Street (from St Edmund's Church Hall to Lower Lincoln Street)

This section of Church Street largely comprises the sides of properties in the streets to either side and is therefore broken up. Number 75 is a small house in the Arts and Crafts style. On the east side are two dissimilar pairs of semi-detached houses.

St Edmund's Avenue (from Lower Lincoln Street to Victoria Avenue)

Most of the **west side** is the back of properties in Northgate.

On the **east side**, number 8 has been

greatly altered. Numbers 10 to 18 are a most attractive carstone terrace with unusual tall Dutch-gabled dormers, though the replacement of slates and windows has in some instances damaged their appearance.

Austin Street

Of medium to large size, detached or semi detached, the houses in Austin Street vary in style and include several of more than usual interest.

On the corner with the King's Lynn Road, on the **north side** of Austin Street stands the Wesley Church of 1886. Built of carstone and limestone in a gothic style, at first sight it appears to be an octagon (like a cathedral chapter house). In fact the "octagon" has only five sides which merge with the body of the church. A porch is attached, rather uncomfortably, at the front.

Nightingale Lodge is asymmetrical in an elaborate Tudor style. The ground floor is of brick with dressings and mullioned windows in white painted stone. The upper floor is half timbered, with timber windows. Bays, linked by balconies, project on the front and on the corners. Number 18 is of red brick with projecting half timbered gables over bays. No 20 appears as a plain carstone house on the corner with Church Street, except for the richly detailed bay windows, balcony and porch of white painted stone "appliqued" on the front in a free classical style. Numbers 22, 24 and 26 are in the Arts and Crafts style.



On the **south side**, number 9, in H G Ibberson's distinctive style, has chequered flint and carstone wailing, a deep bay and a heavy stone arched entrance. Aluminium windows have replaced the original metal Crittal types.

Lincoln Street

On the **north side**, The Retreat is unique. Like adjacent houses, two ranges at right angles to one another sprout huge Arts and Crafts style bay windows and an extraordinary classical doorway in white faience, which must surely have been intended for a completely different building. Numbers 5 to 11 are pairs of conventional well-proportioned semi-detached houses from the turn of the century. They demonstrate clearly the impact of window replacements: No 7 shows the windows as designed; No 9 shows new windows which copy the original configuration. A hedge in front of No 15 continues round into Cromer Road.

The modern bungalows on the **south side** are pleasant but of no special interest.

Lower Lincoln Street

On the **south side**, numbers 4 and 6, a pleasing pair of semi-detached houses of carstone with pebble

dashed gables, show the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Glebe Avenue



The avenue trees are particularly attractive here and on the **north side**, number 1, the corner building, is a large three storey block which has lost quality by the part-blocking of windows and the use of concrete roof tiles. A continuous terrace of smaller houses, numbers 5 to 29, has been much altered. In contrast, numbers 31 and 33 are a fine pair of large semi-detached houses of carstone and brick, with painted stone bays which include decorative cast iron mullions and carved panels of fruit, corn etc., decorative bargeboards to attic gables, an unusual small decorative gable joining the two bays and keystones with grotesque heads. Original windows, with an attractive pattern of glazing bars, all survive.

On the **south side**, numbers 4 to 14 are straight forward semi-detached houses of carstone and brick, remaining more or less of a piece. Numbers 16 and 18 are an unusual pair, with a central joint bay from ground to attic, half timbered on the upper floors. Numbers 20 and 22 are modern bungalows.

York Avenue

Sadly the trees have been removed in the interests of improved parking. Happily, new trees have been planted to restore the avenue. On the **north side**, number 1 is part of a well designed corner building. Number 1A is a plain little building which through alteration has lost original character. Numbers 3, 5 and 7 have the tall Dutch-gabled dormers seen in St Edmund's Avenue (see above). Number 3 has a two storey bay with terracotta ornament. Numbers 5 and 7, with single storey bays and three windows over, have replacement windows. Unexceptional but pleasant terraced and semi-detached houses take up most of the rest of this frontage. Walls are of carstone and red brick or red and gault brick. Features include pebble dash render, bell-mouthed out over windows or in decorative panels, and large half-timbered dormers. Many have been spoilt by inappropriate window replacements. Number 45, on the corner of Cromer Road, must date from the early twentieth century. It has three elevations one to each road frontage, similar but not identical, and a third across the corner. Walls are mainly brick, but flint and red chalk banded with carstone are used for the two extreme end bays and pebble dash for a dominant mansard gable on the corner. Sash windows with exposed frames and thick glazing bars, a Venetian window in the gable, giant pilasters and hipped roofs are typical of the Queen Anne style, but the gable and unusual lead decoration on the capitals are clearly Arts and Crafts.

On the **south side**, is a corner shop with an unsympathetic extension. Numbers 8 and 10 are a fine pair of double-fronted semi-detached houses

of carstone and brick with complex two storey bays and large half-timbered dormers. Numbers 12 to 30 are more ordinary semi-detached houses. Some feature decorative panels of pebble dash. These are followed by three later houses of little interest and finally, on the corner with Cromer Road, Glebe Flats, a large house of carstone and pebble dash featuring grotesque heads as keystones and an upward extension of the porch, apparently supported on lengths of railway line.

Victoria Avenue

On the **north side**, numbers 3, 5 and 7 are of particular interest. Like no other in Hunstanton, this short terrace has a continuous moulded and crenellated parapet hiding the roof. Ground floor bay parapets are also crenellated (though one has been roofed over). Entrance doors to 3 and 7 are in side porches, again with crenellated parapets. 5 has an extra window over the door. Walls are of red brick with gault brick dressings and decoration and arches are of gauged red brick. Windows have all been replaced - slightly differently in each house. What is the origin of these unusual houses? Numbers 9 to 39 and 43 to 69 are standard late Victorian terraced or semi-detached houses with hipped bay windows, some of carstone and brick but most of brick only with decorative panels and roof finials of terra cotta. Window replacements and removal of finials have caused some loss of architectural unity. Number 41, double fronted, has rendered dormer gables in the Arts and Crafts manner. Number 71 turns the corner into Cromer Road with a two storey bay, while its other bays have pebble dashed gables, decorative shafts between windows and terracotta ornament.

Numbers 6 to 64 on the **south side** are all terraced houses, though not all

are the same. Numbers 38 and 40, of carstone and brick, have two storey bays which continue straight up as dormers. Numbers 50 and 52 are double fronted and have pebble dashed upper floors. Number 66, presents to the street a large ungainly gable end.

St Edmund's Avenue

The conservation area has been extended to include the stretch of St Edmund's Avenue between York and Victoria Avenues.



Numbers 20 to 28 (together with number 1 York Avenue and number 2 Victoria Avenue) are all very much of a piece with the adjoining buildings within the conservation area : medium to large semi-detached houses of carstone and brick with white painted stone dressings to bay windows and with big dormers. Detractors include an inserted shop front and some unsympathetic window replacements. The corner is successfully turned into York Avenue, with bays and gables on both fronts, in a smaller-scale version of the corner of Cliff Parade / Cliff Terrace.

Cromer Road

Park View is attached to 66 Victoria Avenue (see above). To the south a single storey commercial building, with flat roof and off-the-peg bay window and "leaded" glazing, detracts from

this otherwise pleasant area. Otherwise hedges predominate, with the playing fields to the east and small gardens to the west.

Outside the Conservation Area, Glebe House School and the trees in its grounds around two main buildings form part of the early town development. The buildings are a major feature at the entrance to the conservation area from the north. They also form a visual stop to views up York and Glebe Avenues.

SOUTH HUNSTANTON

This lies immediately south of the Town Centre and appears to date mostly from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It has a fall from north-east to southwest. Park Road runs straight through the area from east to west, but the layout of other roads is angled (Avenue Road) or curved (Sandringham Road and Homefields Road). The area, while largely residential in properties varying greatly in size and density, also includes the modern Community Centre and the Telephone Exchange on Avenue Road as well as a number of conversions of large detached houses in Sandringham Road and Homefields Road to hotels, homes for the elderly and a club. The Playing Fields, a large public open space in the centre of the "zone", are an important urban amenity. Though there has been some loss due to the subdivision of curtilages, trees in large private gardens in Sandringham Road and Homefields Road contribute greatly to the character of the area.

Chapel Lane

This is a traditional back service lane, with rear entrances, garages and former coach houses and stables,

originally serving Westgate but later serving Avenue Road as well. It is unmade and on a steady incline, resulting inevitably in some erosion of the surface by heavy rain. There is an attractive view looking up the lane from Southend Road. Buildings of interest include, on the "**south**" side, numbers 1 and 3 (a semi-detached pair, with relieving arches over windows, suggesting they are part of the earliest development), Elm Cottage, workshops in former cottages and Lynfield Hall and, on the "**north**" side, Osbourne Cottage and a former coach house behind number 50 Westgate.

Southend Road

This is the principal entrance to the town centre from the south. The former presence of the railway line immediately to the west accounts for the absence of any development on the west side of the road. The **east side** comprises numbers 1 to 21, a terrace of carstone cottages, mostly two storied, with small front gardens. Many alterations have been made: bays and porches added, windows replaced in a conflicting variety of sizes and patterns and slates replaced by a variety of different tiles. But the carstone walls, with typical relieving arches over openings, help to hold the whole together and harmonise with the grander buildings of the town centre beyond. At the southern end a used car lot badly erodes the townscape on the corner of Park Road.

Park Road

On the **north side**, nos.3 to 7, the playing field and the twentieth century blocks of flats are within the conservation area which has been extended here. The flats are of a modern design though sit well on the edge of the open space created by the playing field, which is otherwise surrounded by Sandringham Road and

the Community Centre. It provides a modern version of the greens found elsewhere in the development of Hunstanton.

On the **south side**, nos. 6 to 22 are a group of semi-detached properties and then Hill Street (see below) and nos 28 to 42, a row of more substantial properties culminating in the stylish 'Skopios' (see below) formerly Beechwood House.

Hill Street

Numbers 1 and 3 have exceptionally large blocks of carstone in the rubble walling, are reminiscent of rural Arts and Crafts cottages of the early twentieth century.

Avenue Road

A smooth double curved alignment, a gentle fall and trees (in the larger private gardens and in the grounds of the Youth Centre and the Telephone Exchange (both outside the Conservation Area) combine to enhance what would otherwise be an unremarkable late Victorian suburban road. The houses, on both sides, are typically of red and gault brick, with terracotta ridges, finials and decorative panels, half timbered gables to double height bays, slate roofs and sash windows. Gate piers and garden walls have survived to a remarkable extent. Most are semi-detached and two storied, a few are detached and some are three storied. Numbers 8 to 14 are different, with tall dormers in moulded brick or stone. Many windows have been replaced. Nos 2 and 2A are modern bungalows. Number 33 and 35 with number 2 Sandringham Road is an unusual large house (now flats). It has an 1893 date stone, bays across two corners, decorative cast iron shafts between windows and an amazing variety of terracotta ornament (a basket of fruit, a lighthouse etc), but

window, tile replacements and external plumbing damage it.

Homefields Road

Numbers 2 to 8 are small terraced houses similar to those in Church Street (*see above*). Number 10, though attached to the terrace, is at right angles to the road and faces over a garden remarkably large for such a central site. Its trees are important in the townscape. Number 20, an Edwardian house, has a two storey fully glazed corner turret with leaded onion dome and finial. Its extension as a residential home has been designed in harmony with the older building.

The road sweeps round in a curve, allowing ever-changing viewpoints to be enjoyed of the large older houses and trees in this area. Some gardens have been subdivided and smaller houses built on them. This makes it all the more important that the remaining large gardens with their trees are conserved.

On the north side, number 24 (Oriol Lodge) is a carstone house with bays and an attractive front porch which swells out to incorporate the bays on either side. Number 26 is also of note.

The United Services Club on the south side, is a very large carstone house, with a timber porch, large mullioned stair window and other fine details.

Sandringham Road

This road has two sweeping curves. Part of its length is shared with Homefields Road, where it is open to the Playing Field on one side. Like Homefields Road it has a number of fine late Victorian or Edwardian houses in large grounds with trees.



On the west side, immediately south of Park Road, 'Skopios' (formerly Birchwood House) is a very large Edwardian house in the Queen Anne style, of brick with carstone details, with a fine domed corner turret, attractive former coach house and splendid gate piers on the corner. High carstone walls line boundaries along both roads. South of the junction with Collingwood Road, the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Edmund is in an Arts and Crafts style with a gothic flavour, typical of many smaller churches and chapels around the turn of the century. Its grounds are well planted with trees.



The Convent of St Teresa and 29, on the east side, are a continuous group of turn of the century carstone houses in substantial gardens with important trees and front walls.

Homefields Lane

The conservation area has been extended to include the properties on the south side of the road running along the rear of properties facing Sandringham Road.

POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT

Hunstanton has continued to grow since 1945. While most of the new commercial and leisure developments have been outside the conservation area, the expansion of the town coupled with new patterns of shopping have led to a number of major commercial developments in the town centre, either within the conservation area or just outside its boundaries. Within the conservation area are Sainsbury's supermarket in Westgate, the shopping precinct in Northgate and the redevelopment of part of one side of the High Street.



On its boundary is Harlequin House immediately south of The Green. A number of houses have been converted to commercial use. A couple of small new shops have been built in Westgate and many shops have been extended or two or more converted into one.

The only large office developments within the conservation area comprise the conversion of the former children's convalescent home in Valentine Road

and Swain's new offices in Westgate.

New residential development has mostly taken place on the edges of the town and has been relatively limited within the conservation area. Large developments include two flats on the south side of Cliff Terrace and on the north side of Lincoln Square. Smaller developments of flats include groups in Park Road and Lincoln Square and the conversion of the former convalescent home in Valentine Road and of a number of larger houses (e.g. in Cliff Parade). Individual or grouped houses have been built in Valentine Court (in the grounds of the former convalescent home), Church Close (beside the Parish Church), Lower Lincoln Street, York Avenue, Glebe Avenue, Lincoln Street, Lower Lincoln Street, Homefields Road, Park Road and Avenue Road. A number of large houses have been converted, and in some cases extended, for use as residential homes for the elderly (e.g. in Homefields Road and Sandringham Road). For a town which owes its existence to the coming of the railway in the nineteenth century, the closing of the line, which came right into the town centre, together with the massive post-war increase in the use of the motor car, has had a major impact on Hunstanton. The demolition of the station and of Sandringham Hotel (the railway hotel) and the redevelopment of their site, the use for parking of the former railway land alongside Southend Road and of land off St Edmund's Terrace and the development of the bus station all arise directly from these changes.

Other post-war developments include the Health Centre in Valentine Road, the Youth Centre and the Telephone Exchange in Avenue Road, the Pier Centre amusement arcade in place of the pier head (destroyed by fire), new

beach huts with terrace over at the north end of The Green, the Public Library and adjoining cafe in Westgate, the garage and car lot on either side of the junction of Park Road and Southend Road, a small office in Cromer Road (behind No 66 Victoria Avenue) and the conversion to retail use of the former garage in St Edmund's Terrace.



LISTED BUILDINGS

There are four listed structures in the conservation area. The statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest was published in 1951 and added to in 1984.

Listed Grade II

- **Cross**, The Green. Comprises base and shaft of medieval cross. Formerly in Old Hunstanton and moved here by Henry Le Strange when he founded the new town.
- **Church of St Edmund**, Greevegate. 1865-9, by Frederick Preedy, cousin of Henry Le Strange. West porch, now blocked, 1874, north aisle 1879, south porch 1934. No tower. Victorian Gothic style, with plate tracery in C13 manner. Carstone, limestone, flint, red chalk. Stained glass includes windows by Kempe and Comper.
- **Golden Lion Hotel**, The Green. 1846, perhaps by William

Butterfield, friend of Henry Le Strange. Formerly the Royal Hotel. The first building on the site of the new town. Victorian Tudor Gothic style (or, as Le Strange called it, "Old English"). Squared carstone in random courses. Limestone mullion and transom windows and gable copings. Asymmetrical composition with gothic arched porch.

- **Town Hall**, The Green. 1896, by G J and F W Skipper of Norwich. Victorian Jacobean style, but very free. Carstone rubble with squared dressings. Limestone architectural details and copings. Limestone mullion and transom windows, but wood cruciform casements to ground floor. Two storey tripartite front facade to The Green and single storey hall to rear. Central gable to front, with, on first floor, windows in a-b-a arrangement with Ionic pilasters between; in gable over, clock with strapwork surround and, on ground floor, central flattened arched doorway. To either side elevation set back. Side elevation to Greevegate, more free style, includes five-sided two storey porch with conical roof and wood cupola.

IMPORTANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS

The special quality of Hunstanton conservation area, while greatly enhanced by its listed buildings, also owes much to a large number of important unlisted buildings. These contribute to the character or historic interest of the town, by their position or group value in relation to other buildings or as part of a larger whole (e.g. a terrace of houses) or by their use of local materials. They may also be good examples of a particular building type or period or of the work of a named architect. 438 such buildings

have been identified, representing 82% of a total of 530 unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area. (For this purpose each property in a continuous frontage or terrace is counted as one building and each block of flats as one building).

TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

The materials so clearly seen in the cliffs at Hunstanton are all to be found in buildings here: white and red chalk and carstone, but of the three only carstone is commonly found in the new town and it is used with exuberance, in a variety of sizes and coursing detail – all with fine joints.. No doubt the Victorians, who built to last for ever, considered chalk too friable for general building purposes. Exceptions are the red chalk, used decoratively, in the parish church and in low retaining walls in the Esplanade Gardens. The predominance of reddish-brown carstone lends a somewhat sombre appearance to parts of the town, particularly in north facing buildings. But in many places it is relieved by limestone (often painted white) for window openings, bays, copings etc. Flint is used for the church, but can also be seen, used decoratively, on a number of houses in the Arts and Crafts style. Local materials include:

- Carstone (usually squared and crudely coursed, but also as rubble)
- White chalk
- Red chalk (rose chalk or Hunstanton red rock)
- Flint (knapped)
- Red brick
- Gault brick (cream colour but weather to grey)
- Red clay pintiles

To these local materials should be

added Welsh slates. Some buildings are rendered or painted not always with visual success.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

There are no scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Conservation Area.

DETRACTORS

The special character of Conservation Areas can easily be eroded by insensitive new developments or by seemingly minor alterations such as ill considered or uncoordinated window replacements, the use of unsympathetic materials for buildings or external works, the removal of walls, railings, trees or hedges or the use of inappropriate front boundary features.

Particular attention is drawn to the following:

- The visually chaotic and architecturally damaging effects of uncoordinated commercial developments in the central area. These include extensions out to the pavement and unsympathetic shop fronts and signs. They are widespread on the frontage facing The Green and in Greevegate, Westgate, High Street and Le Strange Terrace. In order to redress this, the Borough Council has introduced a Shopfront Guide (*see below*)
- Ill considered and uncoordinated window replacements. These may be seen on the upper floors of shops in the commercial area and are widespread throughout the residential areas. Replacement windows are less intrusive visually if they replicate the original and are set back in a reveal.

- The removal of chimneys in the commercial area
- Modern developments which pay little regard to existing street patterns or to the scale, form or materials of existing buildings. Notable among these are Cliff Court flats, Northgate shopping precinct, Harlequin House (outside the Conservation Area), the bus station cafe adjoining the Library, infill buildings at the junction of St Edmund's Terrace and Greevegate, flats on both sides of Lincoln Square and the 'Pier' amusement centre on The Green, with its blank end wall pointing to the beach, detracting from the views back, into the Conservation Area.

Particular attention is drawn to the following:

- The "sea" of tarmac by the entrance to the bus station and the derelict former garage site next to it.
- The exposed side view of the Princess Theatre as seen from St Edmund's Terrace.
- The obtrusive flat roofed shelters at the north end of The Green.
- Flat roof and barbed wire east of the Town Hall in Greevegate.
- The removal of the balcony to No 14 Greevegate (part of a fine terrace).
- The use of tarmac or concrete and modern brick dwarf walls on forecourts of properties in fine terrace on Cliff Parade (between

Lincoln and Boston Squares).

- The redundant concrete bollards around The Spinney.
- The proliferation of poles and overhead cables (some areas ugly).

SHOPFRONT GUIDE



The appearance of town centre shopping streets is shaped by the design and quality of the shopfronts and advertisements as much as the variety and style of the buildings themselves. The character of Hunstanton town centre is no exception. It has a number of shopfronts of distinction.

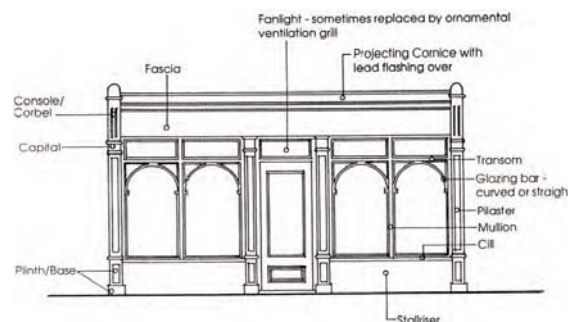


Yet the original design of the town did not envisage a shopping centre of any great size and comparatively few shops were provided. As a result shops and shopfronts have grown as

additions to existing buildings, often attached as single storey extensions to the front. Not all of these have been achieved with visual success; indeed the majority lack both quality and a pleasing appearance. The result can often be a jumble of mixed designs, with over-large fascias and little respect to the original building behind the shopfront. This detracts from the character of the conservation area.

In order to redress this and preserve the special quality of the conservation area, a shopfront and advertisement policy has been produced.

Where existing shopfronts do not make a positive contribution to the street scene, or actually detract from it, a substantial visual improvement will be required when proposals for replacements are made. A simple 'like for like' replacement will not be acceptable. A shopfront in sympathy with its host building and the character of the conservation area will be required and enforcement action will be taken, where necessary, to ensure this.



The Borough Council is able to provide grant aid to local retailers and businesses (though not national 'chain' companies) to encourage substantial improvements to the street scene.

Copies of the Shopfront Guide can be downloaded from the Borough Council's website, www.west-

norfolk.gov.uk or from the
Conservation Section, in the
Development Services Department,

where details of grants may be
obtained.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

The overall conservation objective is to protect and reinforce the established special character of conservation areas and their setting.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the retention and maintenance of buildings which contribute to the overall character of each conservation area.
- Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to the special qualities and character of each conservation area.
- Protecting the setting of the conservation area from development which adversely affects views into or out of the area.
- The retention, maintenance and locally appropriate new planting of trees.
- Maintaining and enhancing local features and details which contribute towards an area's local distinctiveness.
- Working with the community to prepare schemes of enhancement.
- Encouraging the removal of detractors to the special character of each conservation area.

CONTACTS AND ADVICE

Within conservation areas, a number of special controls apply and it is advisable that anyone proposing to carry out new development, alteration, extensions, installations or demolition should seek the advice from the Borough Council's Conservation Section at an early stage. Special controls also apply to trees and some may be subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Anyone wishing to carry out work to trees within a conservation area should seek advice from the Borough Council's Development Services Department.

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



HUNSTANTON CONSERVATION AREA

NOTATION



EXISTING CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY



LISTED BUILDINGS



IMPORTANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS

