

# Crowstone Conservation Area Appraisal



# Southend-on-Sea: Crowstone Conservation Area Appraisal

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# Section 1.0

## Introduction

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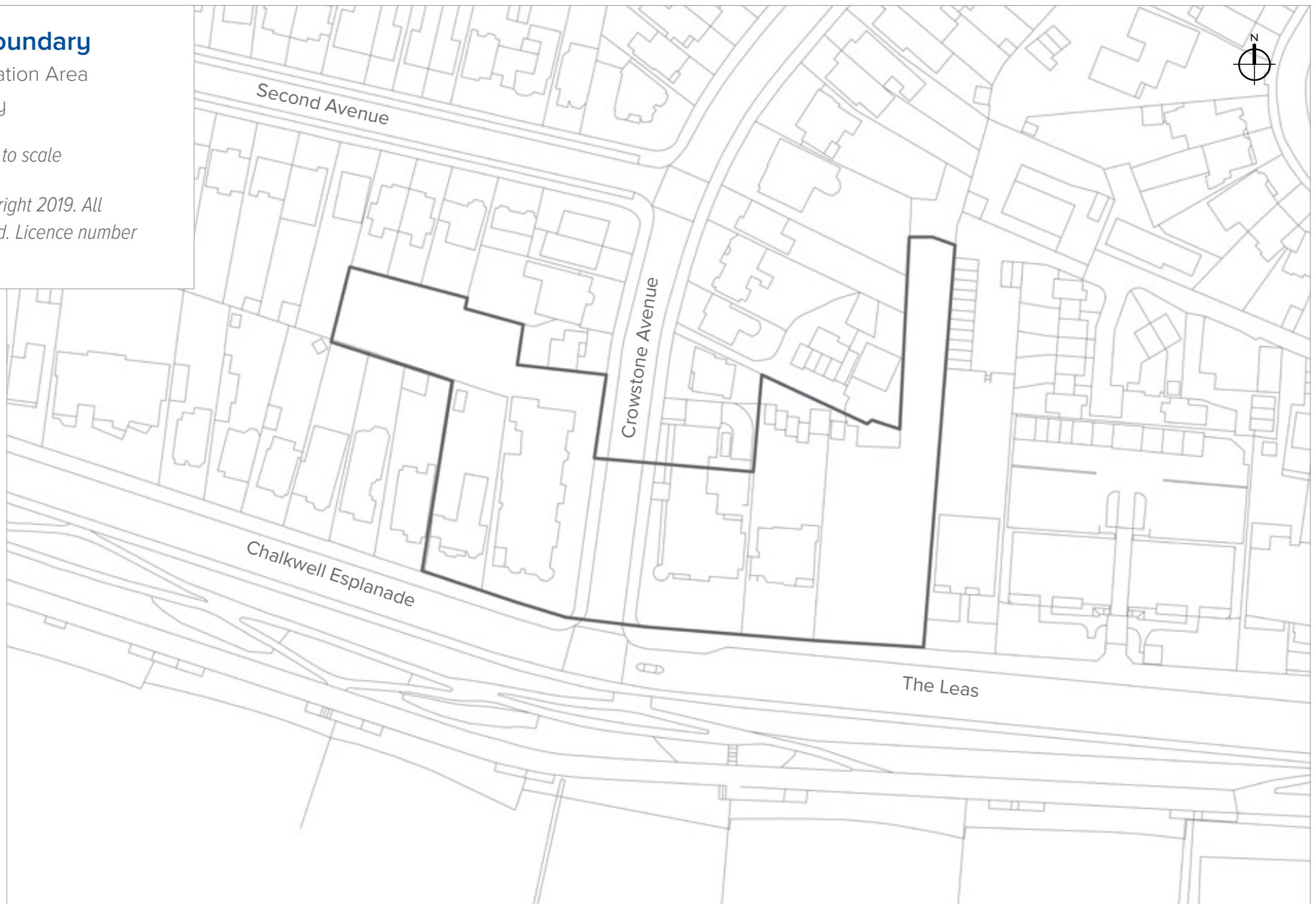
# Introduction

## Map A: Boundary

- Conservation Area Boundary

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# Introduction

## 1.1 What is a Conservation Area?

**Conservation Areas** are ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’, which is defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

1.1.1 The designation of a Conservation Area recognises the unique qualities of an historic place which make it special in terms of its architecture and history, as well as its role in defining local distinctiveness. Contributing to this are individual or groups of buildings, streetscape and public realm, scale and massing, open spaces and street pattern, and landscaping.

1.1.2 As the aim is to conserve and enhance the significant qualities of a Conservation Area so that owners, occupiers and visitors to the place can experience a high-quality historic environment, designation extends planning controls over certain types of development, principally the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees, although an area’s status as a Conservation Area is a material consideration for all planning applications. Southend City Council, as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), also has policies within its *Core Strategy* (December 2007) and *Development Management Document*

(July 2015) that seek to conserve the character of its Conservation Areas. The emerging Local Plan, which will review the *Core Strategy* and *Development Management Document*, will set out a policy approach to managing the historic environment.

1.1.3 However, it should be recognised that designation does not prevent change from occurring within Conservation Areas, and they will over time be subject to many different pressures (both positive and negative) that could impact upon their character and appearance. LPAs have a duty to conserve and enhance their Conservation Areas and will consider this when determining planning applications.

1.1.4 Southend City Council (SCC) will also review each Conservation Area from time to time to monitor its condition and ensure that it has an up to date Conservation Area Appraisal which sets out its special architectural or historic interest.

# Introduction

## 1.2 Aims of the Conservation Area Appraisal

### 1.2.1 This Conservation Area Appraisal:

- Identifies the area's special interest;
- Reviews existing Conservation Area boundaries;
- Assists preparation of the emerging new Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans, if these are brought forward, and forms part of their evidence base; and
- Provides a basis for implementing policies, making informed development management decisions, and preparing management proposals for the area.

### 1.2.2 The character analysis in Section 5.0 will inform a management plan for the area (see Section 6.0), which will:

- Assess the need for enhancements to public spaces, highways and private property;
- Review the need for Article 4 Directions to limit permitted development rights;
- Assess buildings at risk;
- Assess the need for enforcement action; and
- Establish a programme and procedures for implementing and monitoring proposals.

## 1.3 Background and Methodology

1.3.1 The Crowstone Conservation Area was originally designated in 1990 and currently consists of Crowstone House, No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade, Hamilton Grange, and No.33 The Leas, an extensively altered historic building. Nos.30-32 The Leas were all destroyed by fire and their former location within the Conservation Area boundary is now a vacant plot. Planning permission was granted for nine flats on the site (20/00737/FUL). The decision recognised the importance of the site's location within the Conservation Area, particularly in terms of materials and detailing, including balconies, and hard and soft landscaping, ensuring these safeguard the visual amenities of the Conservation Area.

1.3.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal for Crowstone updates the former document from 2009. It has been prepared by Purcell, a firm of specialist heritage consultants, on behalf of Southend-on-Sea City Council. The research and fieldwork for the Appraisal was carried out in October 2019 and a further photographic survey was carried out by SCC in early 2023. The methodology for the work was based on Historic England's *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (second edition)*, February 2019 and also references *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (second edition)*, December 2017.

1.3.3 All photographs within this report were taken in 2019 or 2023 unless otherwise stated.



# Introduction

## 1.4 Overview and Location

- 1.4.1 Crowstone Conservation Area consists of a group of buildings located on either side of the junction of Crowstone Avenue and Chalkwell Esplanade.
- 1.4.2 The Conservation Area is situated on a low-lying stretch of shoreline, at the bottom of a long, gentle incline on the edge of the northern shore of the Thames estuary. It is located on the north side of Chalkwell Esplanade, which runs along a foreshore consisting of a narrow garden area and pathway, with sand and mud beach with groynes. Expansive views to the south are dominated by sea and sky, with distant views of the south shore of the estuary.
- 1.4.3 The Conservation Area is located in Chalkwell, in an area of predominantly suburban housing and visitor accommodation which was developed when Southend-on-Sea expanded westward along the railway line, at the beginning of the 20th century. It is located a short distance from both Westcliff and Chalkwell railway stations. Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade are the key historic buildings within the Conservation Area, which are contemporary with The Leas, which is situated further along the esplanade to the east, which is also a Conservation Area, and they generally have similar, but not identical, architectural character. Hamilton Grange, a more contemporary block of flats with a corner feature, sits opposite Crowstone House, while No.33 The Leas is an historic building which has undergone alterations and modernisation, diluting its historic character. There is a vacant plot at the east end of the Conservation Area where three historic houses (30-32 The Leas) formerly stood, though they have been lost by fire.

## Section 2.0

### **Summary of Special Interest**





# Summary of Special Interest

- 2.1 Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade show characteristics typical of the late-Victorian and Edwardian period of Southend's rapid expansion in this period: red brickwork, half-timbering on rough cast render, slate roofs, asymmetrical form, corner turrets, decorative gables, bay windows, grand entrances and white ornamentation. These two buildings have retained their front gardens surrounded by brick wall boundary enclosures.
- 2.2 It is Crowstone House which is the defining feature of the Conservation Area, a familiar and well-loved landmark on the esplanade because of its greater height and exuberant Neo-Baroque corner tower. No.7 Chalkwell Avenue is more typically late-Victorian, with sash windows and a distinctive double height timber balcony. Both properties demonstrate features typical of seaside architecture, such as balconies and turrets, making the most of views out to the water. Within this stretch of the esplanade they are buildings which demonstrate the historic character of the seafront, where much else has been lost.
- 2.3 No.33 The Leas dates from the early 20th century, retaining some original features, including the corner turret, mouldings above the windows, and dentilation a round a frieze above them. It has, however, undergone modernisation more widely.
- 2.4 Beyond this, the loss of Nos.30-32 The Leas to fire has left a vacant plot within the Conservation Area, although there is planning permission for a flatted development on the site. The Conservation Area location has provided an important focus, with conditions relating to detailing, balconies, and landscaping to ensure such elements of the design are appropriately considered so that they safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and wider streetscene.

## Section 3.0

# Planning Framework

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# Planning Framework

## 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1.1 The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) came into effect in March 2012 and was most recently updated in July 2021. It establishes the planning principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking, including that these: *‘assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’*.<sup>01</sup>
- 3.1.2 Section 16 of the NPPF sets the policy framework for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 186 of the NPPF stipulates that, *‘When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.’*
- 3.1.3 Further guidance regarding the implementation of the policies in the NPPF can be found in the chapter on ‘Historic Environment’ in the *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPG), July 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>.

### Definitions

In the context of the NPPF for heritage policy, a **‘Heritage asset’** is defined as: *‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’*

**‘Significance’** is defined as: *‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.*

**‘Setting’** is defined as: *‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’* Further advice on the assessment of setting can be found in *Historic England, The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (second edition)*, December 2017.

**‘Historic environment’** is defined as: *‘All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.’*

<sup>01</sup> NPPF, 2021, para.189, p.55



# Planning Framework

## 3.2 Local Planning Policies and Guidance

3.2.1 On a local level, the planning policy which SCC use to determine planning and listed building consents is contained within the **Core Strategy** (2007), **Development Management Document** (2015) and **Southend Central Area Action Plan** (2018). Proposals for development within the Conservation Area or within its setting will need to adhere to the criteria set out in these policies to ensure the conservation of the special interest of the Area. Policies specifically related to the historic environment are listed below and should be referenced when planning change.

### 3.2.2 Core Strategy (2007)

- Strategic Objective SO14: Deliver high quality, well designed and attractive urban and natural environments which are safe, people friendly and distinctive, and which respect and enhance existing character and local amenity
- Policy KP2: Development Principles
- Policy CP4: The Environment and Urban Renaissance

### 3.2.3 Development Management Document (2015)

- Policy DM1: Design Quality
- Policy DM4: Tall and Large Buildings
- Policy DM5: Southend-on-Sea's Historic Environment
- Policy DM6: The Seafront

3.2.4 The production of the Southend new Local Plan will provide an opportunity to review the Core Strategy, Development Management Document and SCAAP, and will set out a new suite of planning policies for the City, including for the management of the historic environment.

3.2.5 Further supplementary planning guidance is contained within the Council's:

- Design and Townscape Guide (SPD 1) (2009), which sets out guidance on creating high-quality urban design and includes advice on the historic environment in Section 9;
- Planning Obligations: A Guide to S106 & Developer Contributions (SPD 2) (2015), which gives guidance on Section 106 Agreements which can be made to balance out negative impacts of development through other enhancements, such as conserving or enhancing the historic environment; and
- Streetscape Manual (SPD 3) (June 2015), provides guidance about creating high-quality streetscapes, including within Conservation Areas.

3.2.6 All of these documents can be found on SCC's website, [www.southend.gov.uk/planning](http://www.southend.gov.uk/planning), and will be reviewed as part of the production of the Southend New Local Plan.

# Planning Framework

## **3.3 Designations**

- 3.3.1 As a Conservation Area, Crowstone is a designated heritage asset in its own right. It contains no nationally Listed Buildings (designated heritage assets) but one Locally Listed Building (a non-designated heritage asset), Crowstone House. This is shown on Map B: Designations.
- 3.3.2 Further information on Southend's locally listed buildings and Article 4 directions can be found on the Council's website [www.southend.gov.uk/planning](http://www.southend.gov.uk/planning).

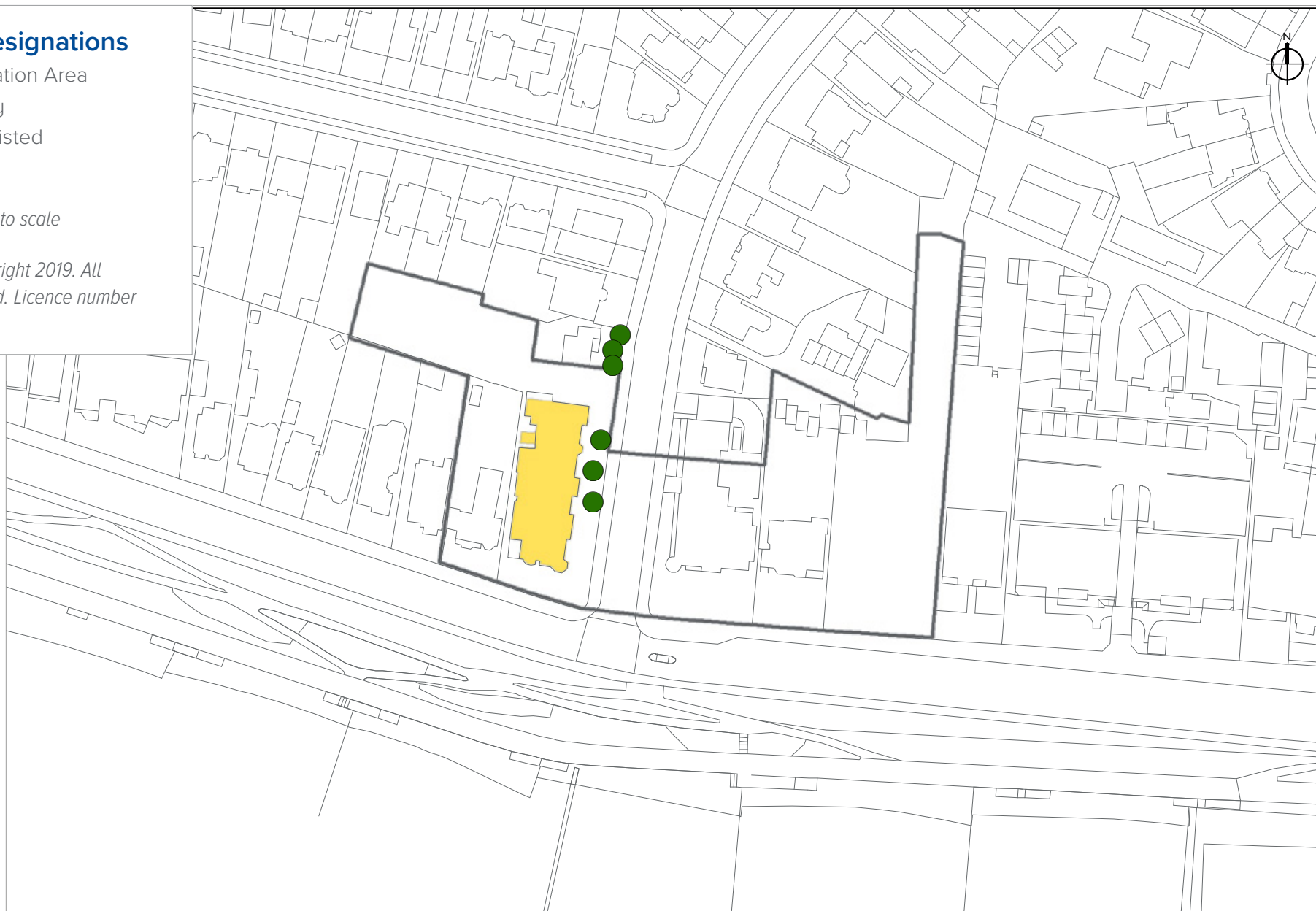
# Planning Framework

## Map B: Designations

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Locally Listed
- TPOs

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# Planning Framework

## Locally Listed Buildings

- 3.3.3 There is one Locally Listed Building within the Conservation Area, Crowstone House, which is shown on Map B.
- 3.3.4 Southend has a wide range of historic buildings and structures. For those who do not meet the criteria for national listing, the Council can identify them as 'Locally Listed'. These are non-designated heritage assets. The purpose of the Local List is to identify buildings, structures and monuments of local architectural or historic importance and to take action as far as possible to conserve them.
- 3.3.5 SCC's criteria for the designation of Locally Listed Buildings requires buildings to:
- Demonstrate the City's history, particularly during its main period of growth. This includes buildings important for its social history such as schools, churches, public buildings, leisure, entertainment and commercial buildings.
  - Have architectural interest - be designed by a well-known architect, be a good example of a particular style or period, contain good architectural features or be important for the townscape.
- 3.3.6 Change to Locally Listed Buildings needs to be carried out in a sympathetic manner. A building's Locally Listed status will be a material consideration for all planning applications affecting it and, as with Listed Buildings, applications involving loss or harm to a Locally Listed Building will normally be resisted although a balanced judgement will be made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss, the significance of the asset and any public benefits.

## Article 4 Directions

- 3.3.7 An Article 4 Direction removes the right of householders to undertake some minor forms of development, such as alterations to windows or the installation of hardstandings, which would normally be classed as permitted development under the planning legislation and therefore would not require planning permission. The Article 4 Direction is needed to ensure that minor alterations to the appearance of the houses are not made in a way which would be out of character and harmful to the Conservation Area.
- 3.3.8 There is currently no Article 4 Direction covering buildings within the Crowstone Conservation Area but one is proposed as part of this Conservation Area Appraisal. See Sections 6.3.39-6.3.42.

## Other Designations

- 3.3.7 Map B also shows tree protection orders (TPOs) in dark green, which are placed to prohibit works to cut down, lop, uproot or damage important trees. All trees within Conservation Areas, whether they have a TPO or not, are protected and consent must be given by SCC prior to works being carried out so that the Council have sufficient time to decide whether the designation of a TPO is needed.

## Section 4.0

# History and Archaeology

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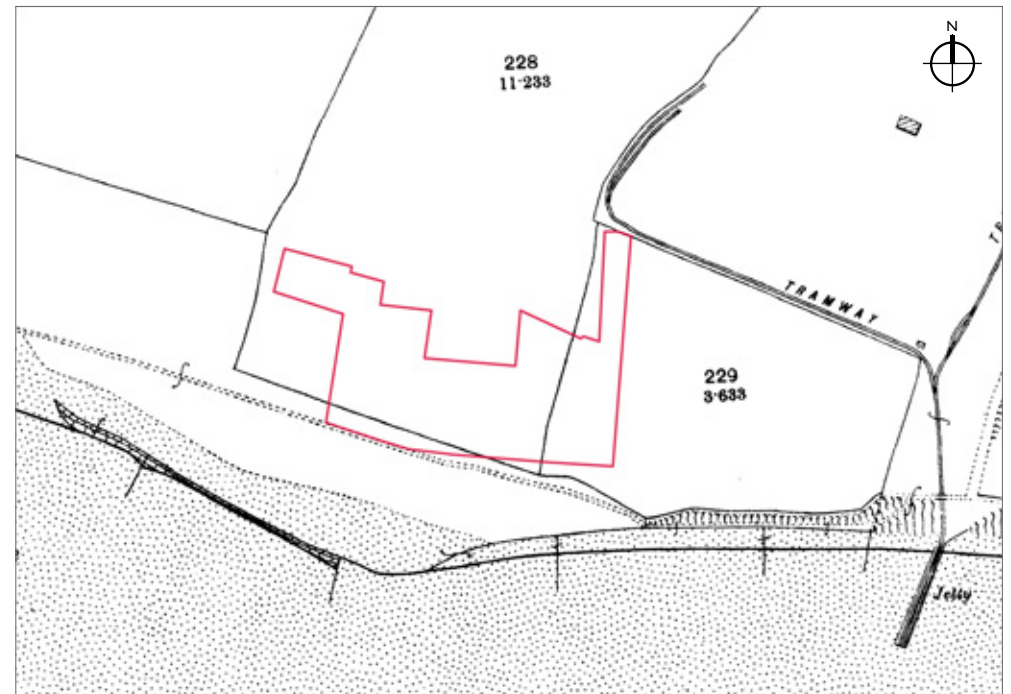
# History and Archaeology

## 4.1 Archaeological Interest

- 4.1.1 There are no known ancient archaeological sites within the Conservation Area. The land was open fields before development in the late-19th century and early-20th century. The Sites and Monuments Record does record one World War II road barrier (SMR 20348) on Crowstone Avenue and a pill box (SMR 20345) and military hut (SMR 20346) on the Western Esplanade just to the south of the Conservation Area, now all destroyed.

## 4.2 History of Crowstone

- 4.2.1 The ages of buildings within the Crowstone Conservation Area are shown on Map F: Building Ages.
- 4.2.2 The Crowstone area and Crowstone Avenue took their name from the Crowstone, a large block of stone which marked the limit of the City of London's jurisdiction in the Thames estuary, which stands on the foreshore. It was erected in 1836 and replaced a stone of 1755.<sup>01</sup> On the evidence of the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897 (Map C), which shows open fields and brickworks, and of planning applications in the Essex Record Office, this part of Westcliff began to be developed from about 1900, having previously been part of the Chalkwell Hall estate. The construction of the railway, with stations at Chalkwell and Westcliff, played a significant role in opening up the area to development, which spread down the seafront from the east. This followed the pattern of development in Southend at the time, which was one of rapid development of residential and leisure facilities as the town became a popular resort destination.



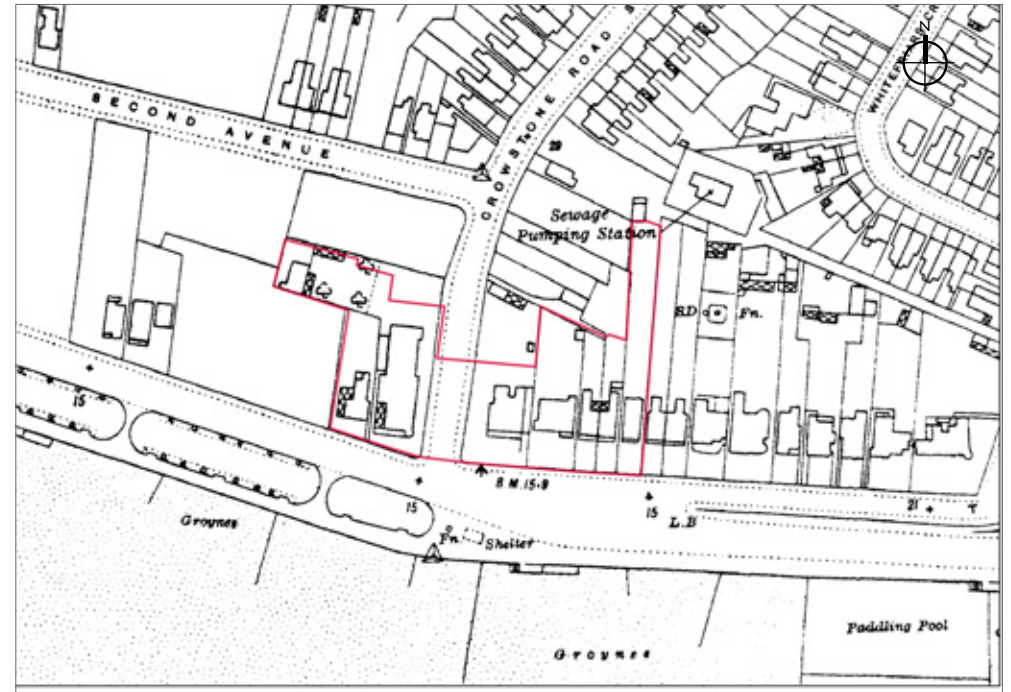
**Map C: 1897 Ordnance Survey map showing approximate location of the Conservation Area** © Crown Copyright 2023. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100019680

<sup>01</sup> <https://www.southendtimeline.com/crowstone.htm>, accessed 18.11.19



# History and Archaeology

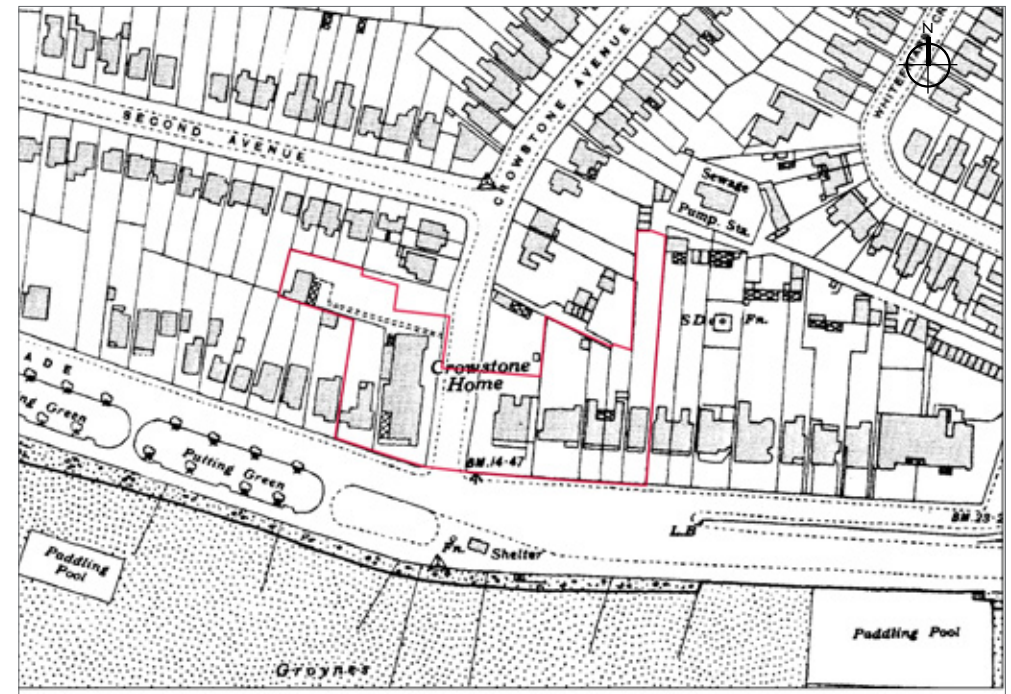
4.2.3 Crowstone Avenue, originally Crowstone Road, leading from the seafront north to the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway line, was largely built up by the time war broke out in 1914. Crowstone House must have been one of the first properties to be built; a large residence clearly designed to benefit from the seaward views. In 1913, Miss H.M. O'Meara applied for planning permission to erect an extension in the large rear garden to provide accommodation for Southend College, a girls' school.<sup>02</sup> The architect was Charles Fleming Williams of No.13 Fitzroy Square, London. Helen O'Meara had previously had a ladies' school at Nos.54-56 Avenue Road. The plans show that the new building provided a hall, gymnasium and bedrooms. O'Meara is listed at Crowstone House in the 1926 Kelly's trade directory but not in the one for 1929.



Map D: 1922 Ordnance Survey map © Crown Copyright 2023. All Rights Reserved.  
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# History and Archaeology

- 4.2.4 The 1922 OS map (Map D) also shows No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade to the west of Crowstone House and five houses (one a semi-detached pair) to the east side of Crowstone Avenue. By the 1939 OS map (Map E) the undeveloped plots seen on the 1922 map to the west of the Conservation Area had also been developed with detached houses and Second Avenue to the north had also been completed.



Map E: 1939 Ordnance Survey map © Crown Copyright 2023. All Rights Reserved.  
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# History and Archaeology

- 4.2.5 In the 21st century the five-storey house opposite Crowstone House was redeveloped with a large block of flats: Hamilton Grange. Adjacent to this No.33 the Leas, an early-20th century house, was remodelled and, while more modern in appearance, some original features remain including the corner turret and mouldings above windows. Nos.31-32 The Leas, all also early-20th century houses, were lost to fire. There is now a vacant gap site in this location, which has planning permission. Crowstone House is currently used as a residential care home.



No.30 The Leas in 2009, before it was lost in a fire



Nos.31-32 The Leas in 2009, before it was lost in a fire



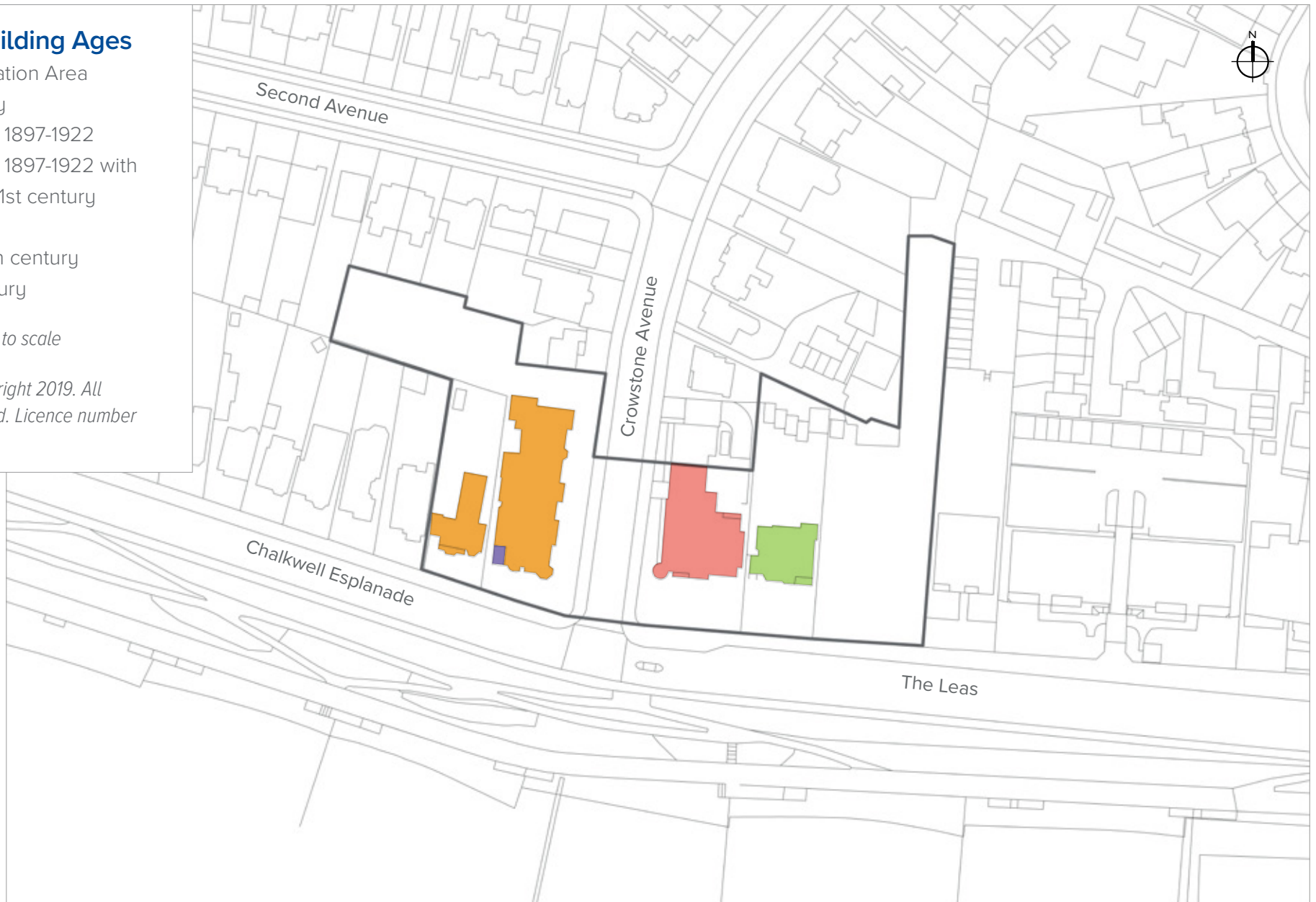
# History and Archaeology

## Map F: Building Ages

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Between 1897-1922
- Between 1897-1922 with substantial 21st century alterations
- Late 20th century
- 21st century

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# Section 5.0

## Character Analysis

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# Character Analysis

## 5.1 Architecture

- 5.1.1 The Conservation Area was built up at a time when late Victorian and Edwardian architecture was under the sway of the Arts and Crafts Movement, as well as being subject to other influences. Something of this eclecticism can be seen in Crowstone House in the juxtaposition of false half timbering of the gable and the baroque character of the belvedere tower.
- 5.1.2 The school building added to Crowstone House is more formal in contrast, with a symmetrical façade to Crowstone Avenue. Its materiality of red brick and rough cast render links it in appearance to the original building.
- 5.1.3 No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade also displays typical features of seaside architecture of the time, with a white painted wooden balcony and veranda, and a double height bay window with hipped roof.
- 5.1.4 Windows on these two buildings are typically sashes, with small panes in the top sash on Crowstone House. There are also some casement windows, oval windows in the tower and a curved oriel window featuring stained glass on Crowstone House. Doors are timber with glazed upper panels. The main door on Crowstone House features a distinctive doorcase with rusticated columns and a sharply pointed pediment above.
- 5.1.5 Brickwork of the better quality is in soft reds, elsewhere of the more economic but nevertheless attractive yellow stocks. Crowstone House also has areas of rough cast render and half-timbering. Being of relatively steep pitch, the roofs are slate.



No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade and Crowstone House



# Character Analysis

## *Materials and Details of Historic Buildings*





# Character Analysis

5.1.6 No.33 The Leas is an early 20th century building, with some of its original features remaining. The corner turret remains on the south east elevation, which is part of the local seafront vernacular. Window mouldings remain in places. However, the building is otherwise very modern in character, having been rendered and painted white, with windows enlarged with large panes of glazing and glazed balconies. The red clay tile roof has been painted grey.



No.33 The Leas

5.1.7 Hamilton Grange on the corner opposite Crowstone House is contemporary in appearance, also with white painted render, large panes of glazing and glazed balconies. Timber columns are also used to support balconies and the corner tower roof. The circular corner turret mirrors the tower of Crowstone House.



Hamilton Grange

# Character Analysis

## 5.2 Uses

5.2.1 Crowstone House is in use as a residential care home. All other buildings within the Conservation Area are in use as flats, while the sites of the former Nos.30-32 is vacant.

### Map G: Building Uses

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Residential – Flats
- Care home

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# Character Analysis

## 5.3 Townscape

- 5.3.1 The Leas/Chalkwell Esplanade is a wide, busy road fronting the Conservation Area. The traffic detracts from the character of the area. The openness of the street coupled with the landscaping to the south does, however, provide wide open vistas out to the water, particularly from the south side of the street. From this point there are good views north of Crowstone House. The tower of Crowstone House is a landmark in views approaching east and west along the Esplanade.



Views of the Conservation Area from the esplanade



The tower of Crowstone House seen on the approach from the east



# Character Analysis

- 5.3.2 The surface treatments within the Conservation Area are ordinary, with tarmac, paving stones (some cracked) and some good granite kerbs. There are the usual road markings.
- 5.3.3 There are good two-tone brick walls and gate posts around Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade; both modern but appropriate as low brick walls would have been the original. There is a good metal fence to the Hamilton Grange flats which is modern in character. There is a low rendered and painted wall to No.33 but the refurbishment has meant it has lost much of its historic character.
- 5.3.4 The mature trees and planting to the main and return frontages of Crowstone House (some of which are subject to TPOs), No.7 and Hamilton Grange contribute to the character of the area. The expansive hard landscaping for parking in front of No.33 creates a harsh appearance, though a small area of soft landscaping has been added behind the boundary walls and a bin store has been constructed to conceal the bins.



**Two tone brick wall to Crowstone House**



**Mature trees adjacent to the east of Crowstone House**



**Modern railings to Hamilton Grange**



**Hoarding to vacant site**



# Character Analysis

## Map H: Townscape

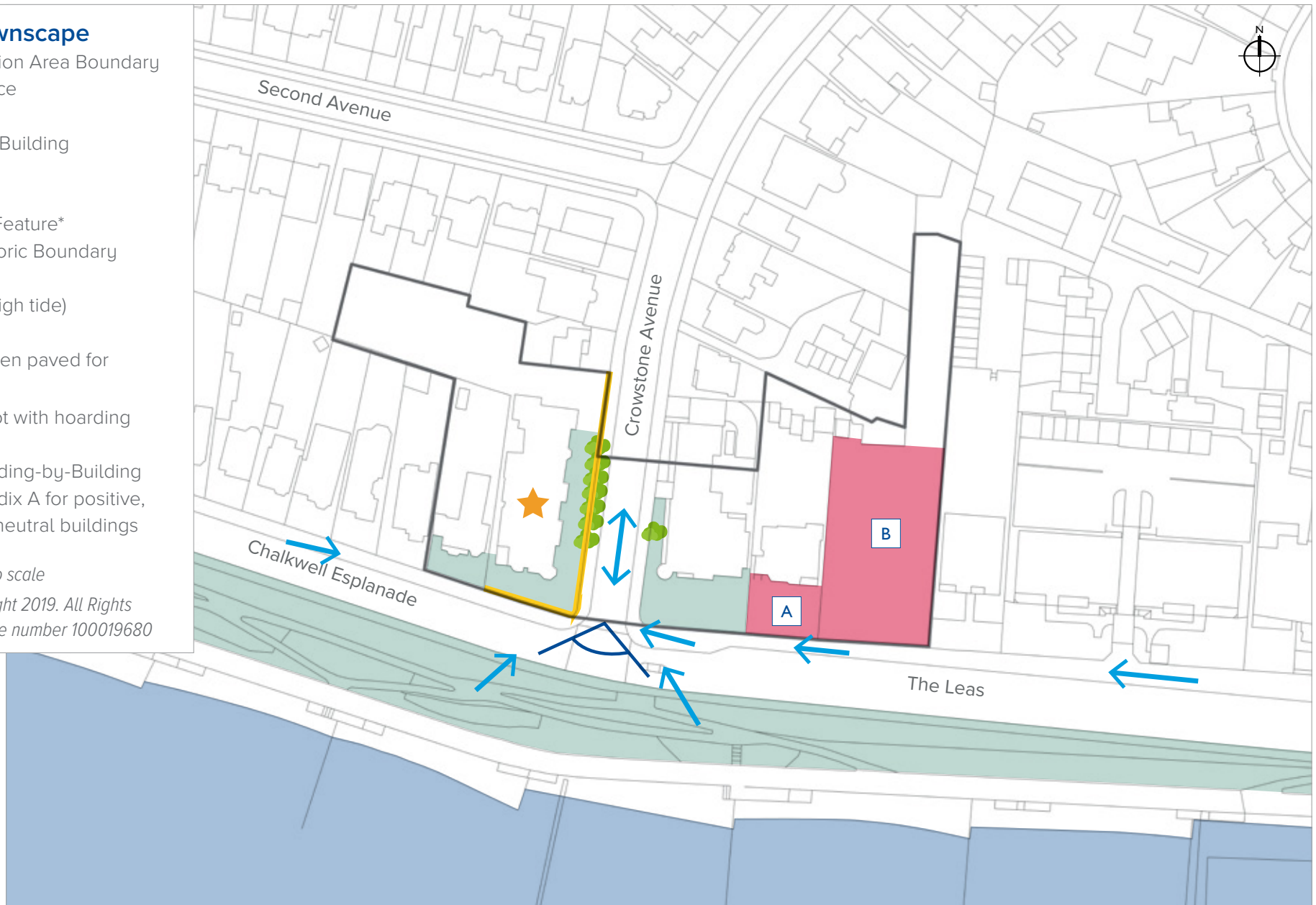
- Conservation Area Boundary
- Open Space
- Trees
- ★ Landmark Building
- Views
- Vista
- Negative Feature\*
- Good Historic Boundary Treatment
- Water (at high tide)

- A Front garden paved for parking
- B Vacant plot with hoarding

\*See also Building-by-Building map in Appendix A for positive, negative and neutral buildings

*This map is not to scale*

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# Character Analysis

## 5.4 Setting

5.4.1 The key element of the wider setting of the Conservation Area is the waterfront, with the wide esplanade and views out to the water, west to Leigh and east to the centre of Southend. The esplanade has pleasant landscaping and pathways which are well used for leisure. It is separated from the Conservation Area by a main road.

5.4.2 To the east along The Leas, there are several other large modern blocks of flats which separate Crowstone from The Leas Conservation Area. To the west along Chalkwell Esplanade are several other detached houses, predominantly two storeys, some with rooms in the roof, and three to five storey flatted developments beyond this. Although there are some interesting design features, there is not the same historic interest as Crowstone House and 7 Chalkwell Esplanade, to which they sit adjacent. Modernisations include replacement and enlarged windows, glazed balconies added, solar panels, inset garage doors and large parking areas in front, replacing the front gardens and boundary treatments.

5.4.3 To the north are more dwellings on Crowstone Avenue and Second Avenue. These are a mix of detached and semi-detached houses which range in date from the early-20th to late-20th century. There are a few fairly plain modern houses directly north of the Conservation Area. At the junction between Crowstone and Second Avenues there are some more interesting buildings, which are detached and preserve the historic features well, such as timber windows and doors, turrets, gables and half-timbering. Although attractive, these are not in immediate context with the Conservation Area.



View out to the water from the esplanade



Esplanade looking west towards Leigh



Houses to the west



Late-20th century housing directly north of the Conservation Area

# Section 6.0

## Management Plan

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# Management Plan

## 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section highlights where there are issues and threats within the Crowstone Conservation Area, as well as where there are opportunities to enhance its special historic and architectural interest. It begins with a Conservation Vision, summarising the aims for the future of the Conservation Area. Issues and opportunities are described, and recommendations provided for the reduction or removal of threats to the Area's special interest. The section concludes with guidance on how to go about the sensitive repair and alteration of materials, details and features characteristic of the Conservation Area. Alterations, repairs or new development should follow this guidance to help preserve the special interest of individual properties and the Conservation Area.

## 6.2 Conservation Vision

6.2.1 Crowstone House will remain a key landmark on Southend's seafront.

6.2.2 The historic seaside character and special interest of the Crowstone Conservation Area will be conserved and enhanced, making it an appealing and attractive place for people to live and work and will provide an attractive setting to the promenade to the south.

6.2.3 The buildings will be in good condition, with inappropriate alterations reversed and traditional materials and details used for features such as walls, roofs, windows and doors.

6.2.4 Front gardens will be retained and attractively planted and/or landscaped. Boundary walls will be retained where they still exist and reinstated where they do not. Off-street parking, where permissible, will be set to the rear of buildings or sensitively incorporated into front gardens with planting to soften the effect of cars.

6.2.5 New development within the setting of the Conservation Area will be of a scale and form, with materials and details, which are sensitive to its characteristics.



# Management Plan

## 6.3 Issues, Opportunities and Recommendations

### Condition

- 6.3.1 Within the Conservation Area the buildings are generally in good condition. Some paintwork to windows, plastered dormers to the west elevation and cornices on Crowstone House would benefit from repainting and repair. Parts of the boundary wall to the east of Crowstone House have spalling brickwork and are leaning due to the impact of tree roots. Bird spikes on window cills also indicate that birds nesting and guano has been an issue. The roof covering to the turret on Crowstone House appears to have been replaced in recent years. Otherwise the new or newly refurbished buildings, plus No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade, are in good condition.

### Recommendations

- 6.3.2 Keeping buildings in good condition will ensure the area is an attractive and desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 6.3.3 Undertake regular maintenance and checks to prevent problems from occurring and protect original features. This will also ensure small problems do not become bigger, more costly issues to fix.
- 6.3.4 Follow guidance in Section 6.4 to ensure repairs and alterations are carried out in an appropriate manner.



Joinery in need of repainting and bird spikes



Boundary wall to Crowstone House which is leaning due to impact from tree roots

# Management Plan

## Inappropriate Alterations

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- 6.3.5 Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade are well preserved and have had little inappropriate alteration. The integrity of these buildings and their historic materials should be preserved. A uPVC conservatory to the west side of Crowstone House is not appropriate in material terms but is subserviently set to the side of the building and does not intrude on key views of the turret.
- 6.3.6 No.33 The Leas has had many alterations which have eroded its historic character. Windows have been widened and timber sash windows have been replaced with large panes of glass for French doors, glazed balconies have been added, grey paint has been added to the tiles of the roof, and brickwork has been rendered.
- 6.3.7 As well as affecting the historic character of buildings, modern materials such as uPVC or cement render, can negatively affect the condition of historic buildings as it affects their breathability. This is an important trait of historic buildings, where original materials are more permeable than modern materials, ensuring that moisture does not get trapped within walls, which would cause issues with damp.

## Recommendations

- 6.3.8 Retain and sensitively repair historic features where they survive.
- 6.3.9 Take opportunities to enhance properties when considering alterations, for example by restoring any missing historic features and improving poorly designed alterations of the past.
- 6.3.10 Follow guidance in Section 6.4 to ensure repairs and alterations are carried out in an appropriate manner.
- 6.3.11 The Council will not approve applications for alterations which detract from the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3.12 The Council will use enforcement powers where necessary to prevent or reverse inappropriate alterations.



uPVC conservatory to the side of Crowstone House

# Management Plan

## New Development

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6.3.13 The attractive views and location have put the seafront under intense pressure for redevelopment. This can be seen to the east of the Conservation Area where there are modern apartment blocks and within the Conservation Area itself. Where these adjoin older housing, they overwhelm it because of their greater scale and the failure to evolve a sympathetic and relatively uniform architectural style means that little of this new development is visually satisfactory. The Conservation Area has already seen new development on the corner opposite Crowstone House with the construction of Hamilton Grange and together with modernisation works undertaken to No.33 The Leas, dilutes the historic character of the area. Where opportunities arise to reinstate original features, this would be encouraged, together with the retention/repair of existing historic features.

6.3.14 The test used in appraisals of Conservation Areas to determine whether buildings are suitable for redevelopment is the assessment of contribution to character. Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade both contribute positively to the historic character of the Conservation Area and would therefore not be suitable for redevelopment.

6.3.15 The vacant plot where Nos.30, 31 and 32 The Leas formerly stood is now a potential development site with planning permission. A high quality scheme would be beneficial to fill in this gap site on the seafront. Any design would have to be sympathetic to the scale, massing, materials and details of the historic buildings in its setting, particularly to the Locally Listed Crowstone House. It would also need

to accord with Development Management Policy DM6: The Seafront, which states that:

*“Existing buildings along the Seafront that form a cohesive frontage, have a historic context or are recognised as key landmarks and/or contribute to a distinctive Southend sense of place will be retained and protected from development that would adversely affect their character, appearance, setting and the importance of the Seafront.”*

6.3.16 And that on the stretch from Chalkwell Esplanade to San Remo principles of development include to:

*“(iv) Resist inappropriate development fronting the Seafront to ensure that established seafront architectural style and form is maintained in this location.*

*(v) The total or partial demolition of a heritage asset will be resisted, in accordance with Policy DM5, where there is no clear and convincing justification for this.*

*(vi) In all areas the vernacular form and fine urban grain of the seafront that defines this character zone will be preserved. Further amalgamation of existing plots and large format bulky buildings are not considered appropriate and will be resisted.*

*(vii) The low rise height of existing buildings should also be maintained in future development. Development will only be allowed where it is appropriate to context and where it adds to the overall quality of the area.”*

# Management Plan

## Recommendations

- 6.3.17 New buildings within or in the setting of the Conservation Area should be appropriate in scale, detail, materials and massing to the street on which it is located and should conserve important views. Buildings which are significantly taller than those in their setting or proposals for upper floors with inappropriately large massing would be unsuitable within and in the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3.18 New buildings should reflect the character, scale, massing and finer grain of the street on which they are located. A bespoke approach should be taken to development as an appropriate design for one street may not be on another. A high level of detail, articulation and variety in massing is likely to be appropriate for new buildings within the Conservation Area and its setting.
- 6.3.19 The design of new buildings set within or in the setting of the Conservation Area should be of a high standard and be well articulated, including refined detailing and high quality appropriate materials.
- 6.3.20 Forecourt parking and undercroft or basement parking within new development needs to be low key and sensitive to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3.21 The design of flood risk measures needs to be considered carefully in any new development. The potential need for buildings to be elevated should be considered in terms of the building's relationship with neighbouring buildings. Any ramps required to access raised buildings will need to be carefully integrated into a landscaped frontage. Consultation with the Environment Agency is encouraged.
- 6.3.22 Any new buildings in this location, including within or in the setting of the Conservation Area, will accord with policy DM6: The Seafront and any other relevant policies within the current and emerging development plan.
- 6.3.23 The Council will not approve applications for new developments which detract from the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3.24 The Council will use enforcement powers where necessary to prevent or reverse inappropriate new development, including changes to historic properties.
- 6.3.25 Heritage Impact Assessments should be undertaken for new development in the Conservation Area.



# Management Plan

## What is a Heritage Impact Assessment?

**Heritage Impact Assessment** (HIA) is a process used when proposals are put forward for change to the historic environment. It is usually a requirement of listed building consent or planning consent for proposals within a Conservation Area. It identifies what is historically and architecturally important about a heritage asset, in order to be able to assess whether proposed changes will have a positive, negative or no impact on the heritage values of the place. Advice is usually given by a specialist heritage consultant and the resulting conclusions presented in a report, which should include:

- Identification and description of the proposals site and its setting;
- Identification of any designations, such as listing, which the site is subject to or which are within the setting of the site;
- Description of the history of the property;
- Identification of the 'significance' of the site, i.e. its historic and architectural interest;
- Assessment of the impact the proposals will have on the significance of the site, as well as recommendations for any changes to the scheme that will reduce any negative impacts that are identified.

# Management Plan

## Public Realm and Greenery

- 6.3.26 Although outside the Conservation Area, the wide road of Chalkwell Esplanade and The Leas affects its setting as a busy road with lots of traffic. The roads adjacent to and within the Conservation Area have prominent diagonal markings down the centre, and white and yellow lines at the side. Black painted lampposts in a pared back traditional style are located on Crowstone Avenue, which are in keeping with the historic buildings of the Conservation Area. Lampposts on Chalkwell Esplanade/The Leas are taller and of a more utilitarian design. More sympathetic road markings and street furniture could help improve the road's appearance.
- 6.3.27 Pavement surfaces are a variety of tarmac and paving slabs, some of which are not in particularly good condition. Where feasible, a co-ordinated resurfacing scheme would benefit the setting of the historic buildings.
- 6.3.28 The planted beds on the seafront are pleasant and provide a good setting on the opposite side of the road from the Conservation Area and the private gardens within the Conservation Area contribute to its character.

## Recommendations

- 6.3.29 Maintain public realm features in good condition.
- 6.3.30 Where possible, replace utilitarian or out-of-keeping public realm features with better quality versions more in keeping with the historic character of the area.
- 6.3.31 If the opportunity arises, renew the pavement surfacing within the Conservation Area and its setting in a co-ordinated high-quality scheme.
- 6.3.32 The retention and maintenance of the private green spaces within the Conservation Area is encouraged. Introduce more soft planting into frontages with little or no greenery.
- 6.3.33 Green landscaping should be included in new development.
- 6.3.34 Those trees subject to TPOs should be retained and maintained in good condition.



Trees at Crowstone House subject to TPOs

# Management Plan

## Boundary Treatments and Driveways

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- 6.3.35 The front gardens to Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade, as well as that to Hamilton Grange, add character to the area and serve to soften the street-scene. Trees on Crowstone Avenue also contribute to its character.
- 6.3.36 However, the front garden to No.33 The Leas has been entirely lost to parking. The large expanse of hard surfacing is stark, though it is good that the boundary enclosure has been retained. Some planting would, however, help to soften the appearance and contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.



Parking area to the front of No.33 The Leas, with boundary wall

## Recommendations

- 6.3.37 Off-street parking should be carefully considered and of limited size if deemed appropriate to the front of buildings. If this is the case most of the front garden should be retained, boundary treatments should be mostly retained and planting should be used to enhance and contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3.38 Any new development should include a suitable and significant boundary enclosure and planting to reduce the impact of any parking and accessibility ramps. Where feasible, parking could be located to the rear of the building to further reduce its impact on the street scene.



# Management Plan

## Article 4 Directions

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6.3.39 An Article 4 Direction removes rights to undertake some minor forms of development, such as alterations to windows, or the installation of hardstanding, it can also require planning permission for the demolition of a building. An Article 4 Direction is required to ensure that alterations to a property are not made in a way which would be out of character and harmful to the Conservation Area.

6.3.40 Crowstone House and No. 7 Chalkwell Esplanade are well preserved and an Article 4 Direction on these two buildings would assist in continued preservation of the historic finishes, fixtures and details.

## Recommendations

6.3.41 An Article 4 Direction should therefore be considered for Crowstone House and No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade to control inappropriate development (see Map I).

6.3.42 It is recommended that the removal of permitted development rights should include:

### *All buildings:*

- *The demolition, in whole or in part, of a building.*
- *Painting over facing brickwork of any part of a building which fronts a highway.*
- *Alteration, demolition or construction of a means of enclosure which fronts a highway (including walls, gates and fences).*

### *Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse:*

- *Rendering of any brickwork which fronts a highway.*
- *Alteration of any window or door which fronts a highway.*
- *Re-roofing with different materials.*
- *Installation of hardstanding for vehicles.*
- *Removal or alteration of a chimney.*
- *Installation of a porch.*

6.3.43 These Article 4 Directions are recommended but their designation lies outside the scope of this appraisal.

# Management Plan

## Boundary Review

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- 6.3.44 During surveys for the preparation of this Appraisal, the surrounding streets were reviewed. The buildings to the east and west on the esplanade are either not of historic interest or have been significantly altered. While there are some good quality historic houses further north on Crowstone Avenue, these are separated from the Conservation Area by a group of modern houses of no historic interest and are not in its immediate setting or context. While the landscaped area along the seafront promenade is pleasant it is separated from the Conservation Area by the wide, utilitarian and busy road. It also represents a modern landscape scheme, certainly carried out later than the 1964 OS map which shows a different arrangement and it is therefore not appropriate to include the road, pathways and garden in the Conservation Area boundary. As the beach adjacent is a natural feature which shifts and changes over time Conservation Area designation would not be appropriate. Crow Stone, (London Boundary Stone) (a stone obelisk) south of Chalkwell Esplanade in the intertidal zone and some 200m to the south-west of the Conservation Area, is Grade II Listed and is therefore protected through this designation. Therefore it would not be appropriate to extend the Conservation Area designation.
- 6.3.45 The current Conservation Area boundary should remain so that there are effective parameters in place to guide future development and ensure that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the Locally Listed Crowstone House is enhanced.

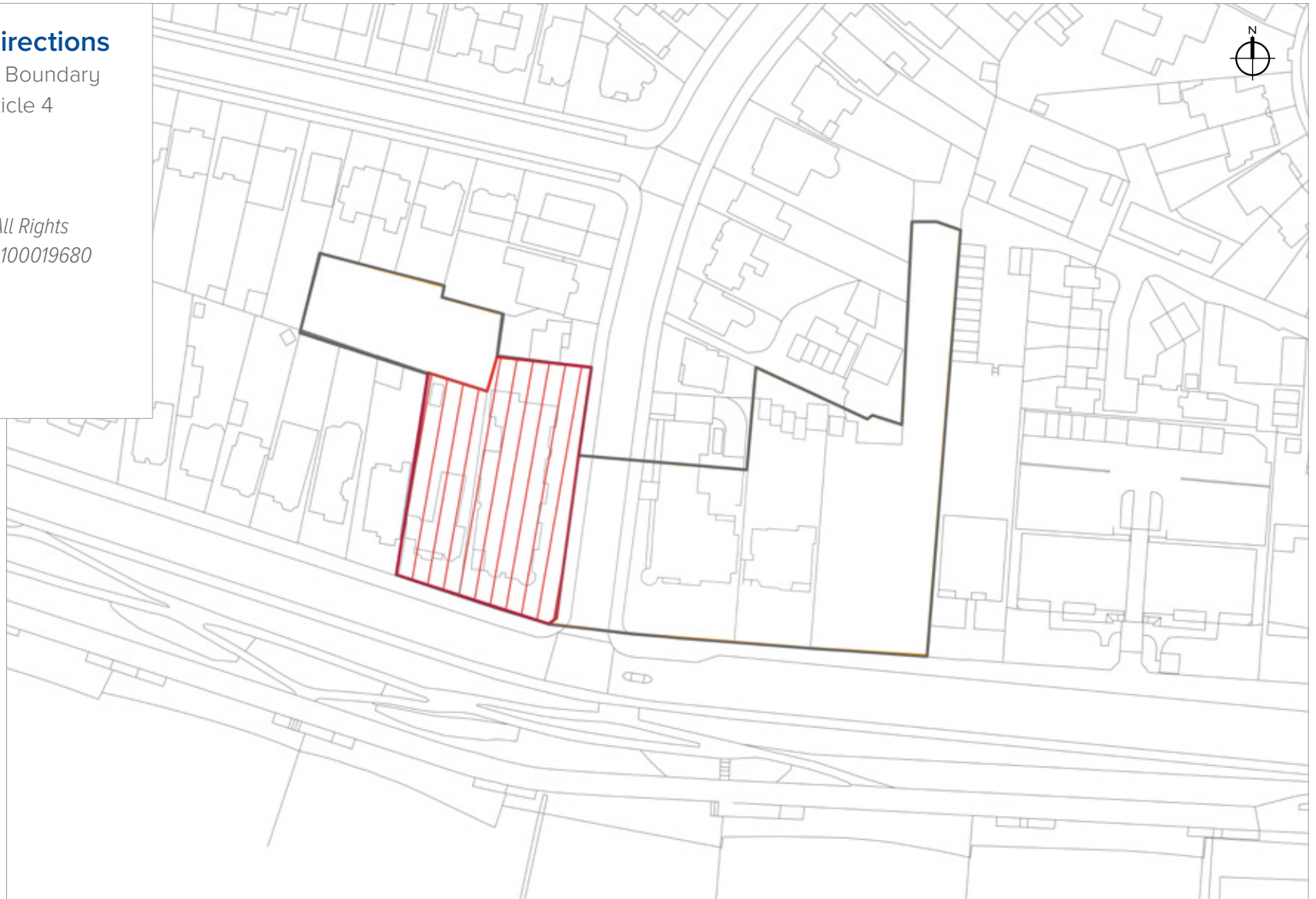
# Management Plan

## Map I: Article 4 Directions

- Conservation Area Boundary
- ▨ Recommended Article 4 Direction

*This map is not to scale*

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# Management Plan

## 6.4 Guidance on Alteration and Repair

6.4.1 The following advice applies to the features of particular importance to the character of the Crowstone Conservation Area, where they are visible to the public. Those with properties in the Conservation Area should follow this guidance when considering changes to help keep individual properties and the area special.

### Key Principles for Guiding Change

6.4.2 **Maintenance:** regular maintenance is needed to protect original features. But if more extensive work is found necessary, repair rather than replacement should be the first option and will often be better value.

6.4.3 **Materials and Designs:** when considering alterations or repairs to the property, original materials and designs should be respected.

6.4.4 **Enhancement:** take the opportunity to enhance properties when considering alterations, by restoring any missing features and improving poorly designed alterations of the past.

# Management Plan

## Windows

6.4.5 Traditional windows, especially timber sliding sashes on Victorian and Edwardian buildings, are vital for the character of the Conservation Area. The sash windows on Crowstone House feature a multi-light top panel and one large lower panel. Others on that building are timber casements and there is one distinctive stained-glass oriel window on the east elevation. This variety of windows adds great character to the building. The sash windows on No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade have single large panes top and bottom. Window joinery is generally painted white, which is typical of seaside architecture. Window mouldings remain in place on No.33 The Leas which should be retained.

6.4.6 Original windows can be given a new lease of life by overhauling them and installing draft proofing brushes in the sash rebates. Secondary glazing may also be acceptable if it is unobtrusive. Advice should be sought from the Council's Planning Department. If replacement or reinstatement is necessary, purpose-made windows to match the original materials and external appearance should normally be installed and advice sought from the Council's Planning Department before undertaking any works, should planning permission be required. For most buildings, double glazing within timber frames is acceptable if the external appearance is unaltered, and the metal frames and seals are not visible. This will need to be demonstrated in planning application drawings including existing and proposed large scale sections of key elements. Non-traditional materials, especially plastic, cannot match traditional timber windows and are normally not acceptable.

6.4.7 To safeguard the building's character, new windows should normally:

- Be of good quality softwood;
- Be painted cream or white (not stained);
- Copy the original pattern of glazing bars and horns, if any;
- Glazing bars should be built into the sash and not stuck on to the glass;
- Use the original method of opening;
- Retain or restore the dimensions of the original window opening and the position of the frame within the opening. Most openings are well-proportioned and most frames in older brick buildings are well set back from the face of the wall to give weather-protection, shadow and character;
- Give adequate ventilation which is not visible (e.g. trickle vents should be concealed);
- Retain historic leaded/stained glass; and
- Retain decorative and/or moulded surrounds.

# Management Plan

## Doors and Porches

- 6.4.8 Original front doors of Victorian and Edwardian buildings are well proportioned and have good detailing. In this Conservation Area, they tend to be larger than standardised modern doors, are double doors, sometimes have a fanlight and help to give a property distinction. Original timber doors feature panelling and glazing in the upper half. Original front doors should normally be retained and repaired when necessary. If this proves impossible, the new door should be solid timber, painted not stained, similar in design, materials and dimensions to the original. Original decorative stained glass and surrounds to porches and doors should be retained.
- 6.4.9 Doors should not normally be enclosed with new porches. New porches will only be acceptable where they complement the original design of the façade and use traditional materials. Where a house is being converted to flats, the original entrance door should be retained or restored. Entrance doors to individual flats should be contained within the building behind the original entrance.

## Balconies and Turrets

- 6.4.10 Traditional white painted timber balconies are attractive features of the Conservation Area and should not be altered. Removal or replacement with modern versions, especially if comprising insensitive materials, alters the character of the property and the reinstatement of more appropriate designs and materials would enhance the Conservation Area. Repair not replacement should be the first option when a balcony is in poor condition. Where repair is not possible replacement should be in a matching design to the original style of balcony.
- 6.4.11 The corner turret of Crowstone House is one of its most recognisable features, which should be retained. A turret in a modern style has successfully been used on Hamilton Grange which provides a balancing feature at the junction of Crowstone Avenue and Chalkwell Esplanade/The Leas. Turrets are a common feature of seaside architecture and it may be possible to utilise these in any future new development. Gables are also a feature of Crowstone House and No.33 The Leas which would be appropriate architectural features for use on new developments to provide articulation.



# Management Plan

## Outside Walls and Decoration

- 6.4.12 Originally red brick was the main material used, this typical local material gives an attractive 'warm' tone and texture to façades. Pebbledash is also used on Crowstone House. Its natural colouring is important and should not be painted.
- 6.4.13 Facing brickwork and original render should, therefore, not normally be rendered or painted. If it suffers from damp, dirt or deterioration, alternatives should first be considered, such as cleaning with an appropriate solvent and repointing. Cement-based render and non-porous masonry paints might increase problems of damp by trapping moisture within the brickwork. If brickwork has already been painted, it may be possible to clean it off and in such instances discussion should be had with the Council's Conservation Officer in the first instance before works are undertaken to ensure that the proposed method will not damage the face of the bricks.
- 6.4.14 Repointing also needs care. It should match the colour and style of the original and not extend over the face of bricks or make joints appear wider. To achieve this, it may need to be slightly recessed. The mortar mix needs to include lime and be the right strength for the bricks. Too strong a mix will force damp into the bricks and damage their surface.
- 6.4.15 Decorative features, like brick arches to openings, mouldings to window and door surrounds, string courses, friezes, cornices add interest to the buildings and should be retained.

## Roofs

- 6.4.16 Roofs are natural Welsh slate, with lead on the roofs of the tower to Crowstone House. These are natural materials, which weather well to produce attractive roof surfaces. They give unity to terraces and semi-detached buildings and help establish the character of the Area. Decorative red clay crest tiles are also an important feature of No.7 Chalkwell Esplanade.
- 6.4.17 Re-roofing should put back the original materials and designs. For slate roofs, it may be possible to re-use some of the existing slates to help keep costs down. Spanish slate may be a possible cheaper alternative to Welsh slate. Roof slates or tiles should not be painted.
- 6.4.18 Stacks and pots usually emphasise the roofline and in most cases should not be removed. Some stacks have simple detailing, which adds to the character of the property and should be retained. Chimneys are an important part of the character of the buildings and should not be removed.

# Management Plan

## **Hardstandings and Boundaries**

6.4.19 Front gardens should be maintained as planted areas wherever possible. Hardstandings in front gardens or forecourts harm the appearance of individual properties and the Area's character if badly designed or too prevalent. They will only be acceptable if there is adequate space in the garden or forecourt to allow a good design incorporating a suitable surface, landscaping and significant enclosure of the frontage with a traditional boundary wall or hedge (such as a low brick wall) and no reasonable alternative to parking is possible. Changes to boundary enclosures should not involve the loss of or harm to the roots of mature trees. Planning permission is required for the installation of driveways.

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# Appendices

## A: Building by Building Descriptions



# Appendix A

## Building-by-Building Descriptions

Descriptions of streets and buildings relate to the situation at the time of survey in 2023. They are intended to guide decisions on conservation area boundaries, on future development control, and on the need for enhancement. They relate to buildings and other structures adjacent or close to the named streets. They are not necessarily comprehensive and other features not mentioned may nevertheless have value for the character of the area.

Properties are assessed according to their value to the area's character. Values are:

- positive – it contributes to the area's character
- positive\* – the building is potentially positive but needs improvement or restoration. For example, it could be in poor condition or it could have later alterations which are inappropriate to the Conservation Area in terms of materials, design or scale (this list is not exhaustive). Often the rating is given because of the cumulative impact of several inappropriate changes.
- neutral – it neither harms nor contributes to the area
- negative – it harms the area's character.

These values are shown on Map J on the following page.

Buildings can be negative by reasons such as mass, design, materials or siting. Unsympathetic alterations can have the effect of moving a building down a grade. Similarly, reversal of such alterations could restore its original character and move it up a grade.

# Building-by-Building Descriptions



# Building-by-Building Descriptions

Address	Value	Designation
7 Chalkwell Esplanade	Positive	N/A

## Description

This is an attractive two-storey building with a lively appearance, typical of its seaside location, and exhibiting many of the characteristics of the local building style of its period. It has a red brick frontage, yellow stock flank walls and a slate roof with decorative red clay ridge tiles.

The front elevation is of asymmetrical design; the right hand third has a two-storey, three-sided projecting bay with a hipped roof, while the rest of the elevation is fronted by a two-storey white painted veranda and balcony with square posts, arches and railings. Timber sash windows. Timber double doors to ground floor and to balcony on the first floor, timber with glazed upper panels and fanlights.

Vehicle access is down a drive on the west side. The front garden is intact and enclosed with a low wall with brick piers built from over burnt and misshapen reject bricks in the 'rustic' style also used at The Leas.





# Building-by-Building Descriptions

Address	Value	Designation
Crowstone House	Positive Conservatory: Neutral	Locally Listed Building

## Description

Crowstone House is of considerable local importance as a building of architectural interest and quality and this has been recognised by its status as a Locally Listed Building. It is large, two storey, and of asymmetrical appearance. It was built in two distinct phases; the part of the building fronting Chalkwell Esplanade was built first, in c.1905; the rear range, which runs along Crowstone Avenue, was designed in 1913 as an 'addition to Southend College', which accounts for its rather formal institutional appearance.

The building displays many of the characteristic features of seaside buildings of the era: the east elevation of the earlier range is of red brick, with projecting bays, gables and gabled dormers, and balconies with timber railings. The large gable on the south elevation has false timber framing in the Arts and Crafts and style. In contrast, its most significant feature, the ornate three storey corner belvedere tower, with decorative stucco render, oval windows and lead dome, is Edwardian Baroque. This makes the building a prominent and well-known landmark on the Esplanade which may be seen from some considerable distance from several directions. Its appearance is typical of the more prestigious seaside architecture of the early 1900s and the tower is similar to, but more ornate than, that on Palmeira Mansions in

the Leas Conservation Area. There is a highly ornate doorway on Crowstone Avenue with rusticated pilasters and timber double doors with upper halves glazed. A variety of timber sash and casement windows, most of which are later replacements. Stained glass to oriel window on east elevation. The building is surrounded by a wall of yellow stock brick with a red brick base and piers and attractive planting of shrubs and bushes. A uPVC conservatory on the west elevation is not in keeping.

On Crowstone Avenue, the later school building is now screened by mature trees (subject to TPOs). It is of red brick with pebbledash at the second floor. The roadside elevation is symmetrical, with gables at each end, the entrance in the left hand one.

# Building-by-Building Descriptions





# Building-by-Building Descriptions

Address	Value	Designation
Hamilton Grange Flats	Neutral	N/A

## Description

On the opposite side of Crowstone Avenue from Crowstone House is a modern, five storey development in a contemporary style, very different in character to its immediate neighbours. It is finished in white painted render and has a low almost flat roof. It has grey framed windows, a feature corner turret and glazed balconies supported on timber columns, in a stripped back modern style. The site is bounded by low metal railings and good planting which makes an important and positive contribution to its setting and that of the wider Conservation Area.



# Building-by-Building Descriptions

Address	Value	Designation
33 The Leas	Neutral	N/A

## Description

The building dates from the early-20th century but has been substantially remodelled. It retains a corner turret at the eastern end with mouldings above the windows and dentillation around a frieze above them. The building displays other typical features of local character: bays, balconies and railings, although in a simplified, modern style, with all the windows replaced and many enlarged. The balcony is glazed. The front garden boundary is a low brick wall in the local manner but the garden is given over to hard landscaping for car parking.



Address	Value	Designation
30, 31, 32 The Leas	Negative	N/A

## Description

Now all demolished following a fire and the plot is a vacant site surrounded by blue painted timber hoarding.





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