

southend central area action plan
heritage - part 3
july 2011

evidence base

southend on sea borough council
local development framework

delivering regeneration and growth





HILL HOUSE 1852

SCAAP Evidence Base - Heritage

Conservation Areas

Introduction

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 69 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. To this end a variety of historic areas in the Borough have been given protection through their designation by the Council as Conservation Areas. Additional planning controls apply to each conservation area and permission is normally only given if proposed development preserves or enhances its character.

Conservation Area Descriptions

Descriptions for Conservation Areas in the Central Area are given below. Their locations are highlighted on Plan 1.

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C1	Cliff town Conservation Area	Milton	1968



Cliff town Conservation Area, Southend's oldest Conservation Area, was designated in 1968 (and later extended twice to its present boundaries). It has an important place in the area's history - the Georgian Royal Terrace and the Victorian Cliff Town Estate mark the first major attempts to develop Southend as a seaside resort and as a residential

town. Its building styles and planned layout overlooking the estuary give the area its own charm and character. 1-15 Royal Terrace and the Royal Hotel were built in the 1790's to be the nucleus of New South End, a fashionable seaside resort to rival Margate, Brighton and Weymouth. The Shrubbery fronting the houses was laid out as a private garden for residents and Royal Mews to the rear provided their stables. The Terrace was named "Royal" following visits by Princess Caroline and for a short time attracted some of the fashionable society. But difficult access from London by road and river and other factors discouraged further development until construction of the railway in 1856. It was, therefore, the only Georgian

terrace to be built in Southend. The London-Tilbury-Southend railway was completed in 1856 and provided the impetus for the next major step in the town's development. The railway developer leased 40 acres from Daniel Scratton for housing development between the new railway and the cliff top to be known as Cliff Town. This area extended from Royal Terrace westwards to Wilson Road and forms the remainder of the Conservation Area.

Scratton imposed strict design controls on the first phase of development which resulted in a unique example of mid-Victorian estate planning. Designed by Banks and Barry and built between 1859-1861, the estate provided five classes of terraced housing, including shops, with unified designs

and materials. Its layout around open spaces, gardens and carefully aligned streets enabled estuary views from every house and many public parts of the estate. Despite later infill development and tree planting, these views remain an important component of the estate's character. The mature trees in streets away from the waterfront play a significant part in the character of the area and create a notable sense of scale. The second phase of the Cliff Town Estate to the west of Prittlewell Square lacked the previous design control. The area was subdivided for piecemeal development on a grid street layout. A variety of Victorian and Edwardian residential architecture resulted which contrasts with the coherence of the planned estate.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=313

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C2	Shorefield Conservation Area	Milton	1981



Shorefields Conservation Area, designated in 1981, is associated with the start of Southend's rapid growth as a seaside resort and residential centre between 1870 and 1900. During these decades, the national rise of holidays and day trip excursions and Southend's easy access from London by rail, and later by boat, made it increasingly popular as a resort and a residential centre.

The Shorefields estate was sold for piecemeal development as the resort expanded westwards from the earlier Cliff Town estate, along the top of the West Cliff.

Architectural features which contribute to the area's interest include the various balcony designs exploiting sea views, the variety of porch and doorway design and decorative detailing to individual frontages, it also has a special relationship with the public gardens along the Cliff, which enhance its setting, with the clifftop position providing it with prominent views across the estuary. There are mature street trees on Trinity Avenue and Marine Avenue. However, some appear to have been lost over time, and the remaining trees are no longer evenly spaced, leaving some areas of the streets feeling more open.

The Conservation Area contains the resort's oldest surviving hotel - the Westcliff Hotel built in 1890 which makes a significant contribution to the streetscene thanks to its prominent location and strong presence. Demand for accommodation also encouraged residents to open their homes to visitors. Some of the housing development in Shorefields was designed for this dual purpose. The west side of Trinity Avenue is a notable example and still retains Guest House uses.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=324

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C3	Milton Conservation Area	Milton	1987



The Milton Conservation Area covers a large area of Westcliff. It contains a range of architectural styles which illustrate the transition in Southend from formal gridded streets and restrained architecture of the mid- Victorian period to freer late Victorian and Edwardian development, from small terraces to large semi-detached houses with gardens, and from yellow London stock brick and slate to red brick and clay tiles as the predominant local building materials. The architectural and urban hierarchy is further reinforced by the pattern of street tree planting in the area. Mid - Victorian properties built between 1870 and 1880 are generally yellow stock brick frontages and slate roofs. Most have bays of either one or two storeys and traditional sliding sash windows. Various architectural details such as curved window heads, arched porches and decorative window and door surrounds are also evident on many of these buildings.

Late Victorian properties, built in the 1880's and 90's are also mainly stock brick, although some have red brick detailing, and the roofs are traditionally slate, often with patterned ridge tiles. Either sliding sash or casement windows are evident in buildings of this period, many with heavy looking surrounds. Two-storey bay windows with gable ends and restrained decorative details were also common feature in late Victorian houses in this area. Edwardian properties supersede the earlier styles. These are mainly red brick, occasionally with stock brick flanks. They usually have one or two-storey bays with prominent gables or Dutch gables. The roofs of these properties are usually clay tiles, and some properties have distinctive corner turrets. Windows are either timber sliding sash or casement, usually with heavy surrounds.

Whilst most of the architectural styles can be found elsewhere in different parts of the town, the Park and Vincent Estate's stand out in that they embody within a small area a cross-section of Southend's typical architecture at the time of its early growth. This helped give the area an attractive and unique character. Most of these estates now form the Milton Conservation Area.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=320

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C4	Prittlewell Conservation Area	Prittlewell/Victoria	1995



Prittlewell Conservation Area was first designated in 1995. The former medieval village on the south slope of the gentle valley formed by Prittle Brook, is centred on St. Mary's Church at the 'T' junction of the ancient roads of East Street, West Street and North Street (now the north section of Victoria

Avenue) which once formed the village's medieval market place.

Prittlewell's special interest remains, including St Mary's Church which, although predominantly 12th Century, is mentioned in the Domesday Book and contains elements of 7th Century masonry. Prittlewell's buildings today display a wide variety of design and materials and have no dominant architectural character. But this variety illustrates to a limited extent the evolution of the village from its Saxon origins, through medieval times to the rapid expansion of Southend in the late 19th century, to present, and shows typical materials and designs.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=322

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C5	Warrior Square Conservation Area	Milton	1990



Warrior Square Conservation Area was designated a Conservation Area in 1990 and is associated with the period of Southend's rapid growth towards the end of the nineteenth century. It is one of only two Victorian residential squares built in Southend (the other being Prittlewell Square).

The south and west sides of the original Square have been largely redeveloped and the houses on the east side are of a later period. The Conservation Area, therefore, is confined to the surviving Victorian terrace on the north side and the central gardens which are now in public use.

Speculative housing around a central private garden was a common form of development in many urban areas in the

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=328

18th and 19th centuries, but not Southend. Warrior Square is a very late example and its failure may have discouraged any further attempt in Southend. The north side of the Square has not been greatly altered and presents an attractive façade of typical late Victorian terraced housing with appropriate detailing and materials. The houses were built in pairs with mirrored designs - central entrance doors, recessed porches and balconies over, on either side of which are two storey bays. Consequently, the terrace has a good degree of design unity. But note the subtle variations in design.

Houses in the older part of the terrace are grouped in fours with square or canted bays, gables or hipped roofs to the bays and with different window designs typical of this period. Detailing such as panelled entrance doors with tiled and leaded lights surrounds, decorative ridge tiles, fish scale slates to some of the bay roofs and balcony ironwork, also provide attractive features. The setting of the conservation area is greatly enhanced by the mature trees in the square itself, which is presently undergoing a significant re-modelling to improve its accessibility and increase usage.

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C6	Kursaal Conservation Area	Kursaal	1989



The Kursaal Conservation Area was designated in 1989. It is a compact area associated both with Southend's origins and its later growth into a major resort. The most notable building is the Grade II listed Kursaal itself. This has a strong architectural character with soft red brick combining with stone detailing. A cast iron colonnade with glazed roof runs along the western elevation of the building which adds to the festive character. However, the most striking feature is the large glazed roof lantern topped with a lead dome. This gives the building its distinctive silhouette and makes it such a significant landmark. Originating as the 'Marine Park', the first pleasure park in the world, laid out in

1894, the 'Kursaal' was designed by George Sherrin in 1896 as the grand entrance to the Park. It was completed in 1901.

The "Kursaal" itself included a circus, ballroom, arcade with amusements, dining hall and billiard room. The Marine Park was soon taken over by amusements and rides, to become the resort's premier attraction. Although the amusement park has been redeveloped for housing, much of the Kursaal building has been restored following many years of dereliction and is one of the Borough's most notable landmarks, bookending the eastern end of what is today known as Southend's 'Golden Mile'.

Also of note within the conservation area is the white building adjacent to the Kursaal, presently occupied as Tiffin's Lounge and Restaurant. This dates from 1792 and was originally built as Minerva House, the home of Abraham Vandervord, the principal local barge owner. It was in the centre of the hamlet at the time of its early development as a small resort.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=325

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C7	Eastern Esplanade Conservation Area	Kursaal	1989



- Recessed raised porches in weatherboarding with some decorative timberwork;
- Timber weatherboarding or yellow stock brick for the front elevations;
- Weatherboarded rear elevations;
- Sliding sash timber windows; and
- Some original doors to the front entrances and side alleys.

Eastern Esplanade Conservation Area, designated in 1989, is associated with the early period of Southend as a resort destination before the major expansion of the late 19th century.

The Conservation Area contains mainly domestic buildings and, in particular, a terrace of early to mid 19th century cottages reputed to have been built for local fishermen. Its main interest relates to the design and materials of this terrace. Important features include:

The conservation area retains a particular appeal in the central part of Southend because it provides a clear sense of the ordinary domestic buildings which preceded the later Victorian development of the area. In this sense it shares key attributes with elements of Old Leigh, but has not been protected in the same way by the alignment of the railway. This means that it is potentially much more vulnerable to the impact of bulky or intrusive adjoining development.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=316

Map Ref	Name	Ward	Date Designated
C8	The Leas Conservation Area	Milton & Chalkwell	1981



The Leas Conservation Area includes the most prominent part of the Westcliff-on-Sea area, facing and close to the seafront. Despite some subsequent redevelopment and alterations, the area retains much of the character of the original residential resort. First designated as a Conservation Area in 1981, it has since been extended.

The area is largely residential in character, but with a strong emphasis towards the seafront. Indeed the buildings along the main front are angled to face south-by-south-west to make best use of the sun and views rather than sitting square on. This, as seen in other seafront conservation areas in the borough, creates a saw-tooth terrace and gives many more opportunities for flamboyant external decoration including balconies and bay windows. They represent one of the most decorative groups of Edwardian

buildings in the borough. Features contributing to this architectural interest include:

- Corner turrets;
- Bays and gables;
- Balconies with varied balustrade designs;
- Period windows ranging from timber sliding sashes to “Georgian” style timber casement windows; and
- Individual detailing to buildings such as terracotta panels, stained glass fanlights and decorative timber to balconies, bays and porches.

The overall effect of the conservation area is slightly marred by the introduction of later developments, not all of which are successful. The newer buildings on the site of the Overcliff hotel (now outside of the Conservation Area) do not relate well to their context. however, other example such as the flats at Homecove House provide a reasonable example of scale, massing and detailing.

Argyll House is another interesting element of the conservation area which, although not adhering to the prevailing Edwardian style, manages to secure landmark status through the quality of its

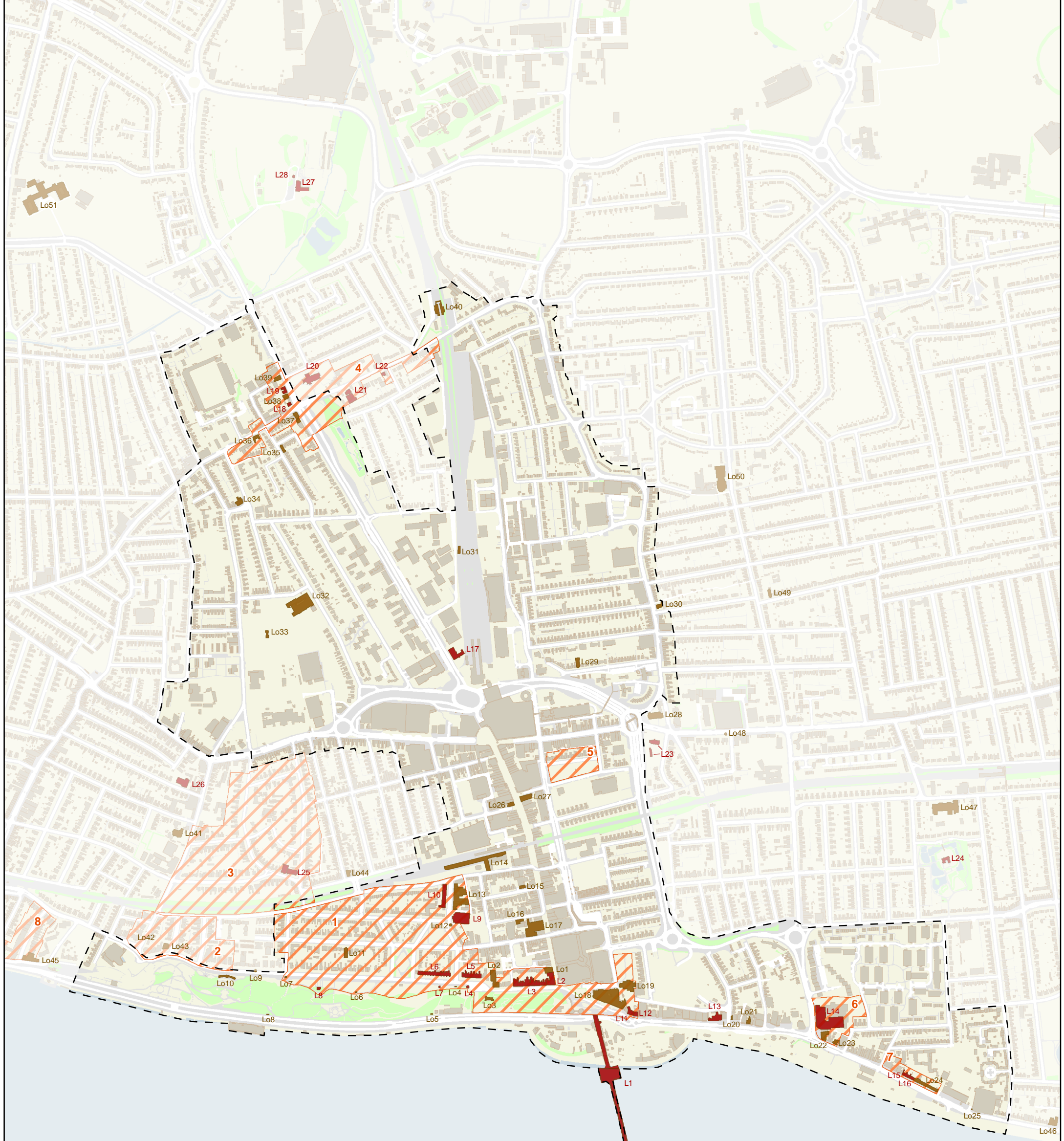
design and detailing, including curved windows and corner balconies.

Palmeira Avenue also merits attention, featuring a particular ebullient variation on the Edwardian town house. The bay windows, porches and dormer windows












are large in scale with bold detailing. The properties are wide, and feature an asymmetric arrangement of rooms on both sides of the front door and hallway. The porches between the bays also provide a small balcony, making the most of the oblique sea views.

For Further Information

http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=511&documentID=326



**Heritage Assessment
Plan 1 - Historic Environment**

-  Southend Central Area Boundary
-  Listed Building
-  Local Listed Building
- Conservation Area**
-  1 Clifftown
-  2 Shorefield
-  3 Milton
-  4 Prittlewell
-  5 Warrior Square
-  6 Kursaal
-  7 Eastern Esplanade
-  8 The Leas

