INTRODUCTION

Shorefields was designated a Conservation Area in 1981 because it has special architectural and historic interest and a character which needs to be preserved and enhanced.

This leaflet describes the main features that give Shorefields its special interest and outlines additional controls on development that apply specifically to the area. It is one of a series of leaflets forming the Council's Conservation Guide and should be read, in particular, with the Conservation Area Guidance leaflet. Together, these leaflets will help residents make informed decisions about development at their properties and, so, help to preserve and enhance Shorefields' special character.

SHOREFIELDS' SPECIAL INTEREST

Shorefields 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. By the early twentieth century it had become the second largest resort in England.

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. Its special interest is summarised below.

LINK WITH THE GROWING VICTORIAN RESORT

It contains the resort's oldest surviving hotel - the Westcliff Hotel built in 1890 as a temperance hotel and still in hotel use. 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.

LINK WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTCLIFF

Whilst Shorefields originated from Southend's expansion westwards, it was also the first development of what was to become a new resort with its own identity - Westcliff-on-Sea. One notable resident was Frank Matcham, who designed the London Palladium and other late Victorian and Edwardian theatres, who lived at 28 Westcliff Parade.

TRANSITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Shorefields contains a variety of late Victorian architecture and materials. This results from the estates' subdivision into small development plots for speculative building and occupation by owners, and from the changing architectural fashions towards the end of the nineteenth century. Simply, this can be summarised as changing from yellow stock brick to red brick or render, from slate to red clay plane tiles and decorative ridges for roofing, from timber sliding sash windows to side hung casements and fanlights, from roof eaves to gable frontages. Trinity Avenue is a good example of the changing styles, the terrace on the west side being a notable example of the later architecture and having attractive detailing with, for instance, terracotta panels on the front elevation.

There are two notable exceptions. The Westcliff Hotel had a relatively plain classical symmetrical frontage with alternating decoration above window openings. 27 Westcliff Parade, on the corner of Trinity Avenue, was originally a substantial house in an Italianate design. Built in the 1880s, this type of design was fashionable throughout the nineteenth century but rarely used in Southend note the projecting eaves and decoration.

Other architectural features contributing to the area's interest include the various balcony designs exploiting sea views, the variety of porch and doorway designs and various decorative detailing to individual frontages.

SHOREFIELDS' SETTING

The Conservation Area has a fine setting overlooking the Cliffs and Estuary. Whilst making an attractive amenity for residents, it also provides a suitable context for Shorefields' Victorian architecture and a continuing reminder of its association with the resort's history. Although outside the Conservation Area, the Cliffs include features, such as shelters and lighting, and planting that complement Shorefields' character.
PLANNING CONSENTS

All development in Shorefields should follow the advice in the Conservation Area Guidance leaflet and, in particular, respect the features outlined above that contribute to its special character.

Planning permission is needed for development which materially affects the appearance or use of buildings or land. This can include, for example, re-roofing and altering windows, constructing extensions and new buildings.

SHOREFIELDS ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

Some minor forms of development are classed as "permitted development" and are normally exempt. But in Shorefields, this has resulted in unsuitable changes which have harmed its character. The Shorefields Article 4 Direction has, therefore, been made with the support of residents, withdrawing this exemption. Planning Permission from the Council is now needed for the following types of development at properties in the area indicated on the plan:

Dwellinghouses:

- The alteration of any window which fronts a highway.
- The rendering of brickwork which fronts a highway (other forms of cladding already need planning permission).
- Re-roofing with different materials.

(Similar alterations at other types of property already need planning permission from the Council.)

All Buildings:

- Painting over facing brickwork of any part of a building which fronts a highway.

No fee is needed for a planning application required by the Direction. The Direction will be reviewed from time to time.

ADVICE AND CONTACTS

Officers from the Technical Services Department are available to offer practical and technical advice on conservation and the need for consent. Contacts and sources of further information are given in a separate conservation leaflet.

Original Detailing should be retained

TSD March 2000