

**URN:** 22-063

**Subject:** Gorleston Seafront Masterplan

**Report to:** Executive Leadership Team – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022  
Policy & Resources Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Report by:** Kate Blakemore, Strategic Director  
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#### **SUBJECT MATTER**

This paper presents the final Masterplan for Gorleston Seafront

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Policy and Resources Committee :-

(1) Adopt the Gorleston Seafront Masterplan included in Appendix 1.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The aim of creating a seafront masterplan is to set out a commercially realistic and flexible framework for the development for Gorleston's seafront. Its purpose is to guide new investment so that projects are not only individually delivered to a high quality, but also that they add up collectively to more than the sum of their parts. The outcome of the full implementation of this masterplan will be to build confidence and the business case for future inward investment and development, as well as supporting potential funding bids.
- 1.2 Members of the Council's Policy and Resources Committee agreed to the creation of this masterplan and the establishment of a Member Working Group to develop proposals for Gorleston seafront. This paper presents the final masterplan in relation to Gorleston seafront.

## **2. MASTERPLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

- 2.1 Supported by the Gorleston Members Working Group, officers have developed a seafront masterplan for Gorleston. In developing this masterplan, public consultation was undertaken during 2021 on the draft vision and aims, and in 2022 on a complete draft of the masterplan. Nearly 1,300 people have been engaged through the consultation process, generating over 6,000 individual responses.
- 2.2 This masterplan document outlines a clear vision for Gorleston seafront along with objectives which will be considered when decisions are made by the Council. The plan will provide a framework to guide both public and private sector investment, ultimately seeking to enhance all that Gorleston seafront currently has on offer.

### **3. GORLESTON MASTERPLAN OVERVIEW**

3.1 In presenting the vision and objectives within this masterplan, it then considers several themes in which these objectives fall. These themes are:

- Conservation
- Wayfinding & Local Enhancements
- Sustainable Transport & Parking
- Accessibility
- Leisure Attractions
- Environmental Standards
- Events

3.2 Within each theme explored, clear actions are presented to ensure the objectives within this masterplan are taken forwards and delivered against. For ease, a summary of all masterplan actions has been provided in Appendix 2 of this report.

### **4. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

4.1 Whilst this paper requests no additional funding, Members are asked to note that to deliver some of the aspirations of this plan such as undertaking feasibility work in relation to the parking theme within the masterplan, there may be a future requirement for funding to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

4.2 Alongside this any business cases to progress projects will need to consider how investments would be offset in terms of future revenue streams.

### **5. LEGAL MATTERS**

5.1 Whilst the masterplan will have no formal legal status it can be used as a framework for how Gorleston seafront can be improved and conserved in the future and used when making decisions about this area.

### **6. RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 It is recommended that Policy and Resources Committee adopts the Gorleston Seafront Masterplan included as Appendix 1.

*Areas of consideration e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so, how have these issues been considered/mitigated against?*

<b>Areas for consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Through ELT on 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Through ELT on 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
Existing Council Policies:	Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy, Local Plan Part 2, Corporate Plan

Financial Implications (including VAT & tax):	Considered in the report
Risk Implications:	Considered in the report
Equality Issues/EQIA Assessment:	None - considered through the public consultation
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Every Child Matters:	n/a



# GORLESTON

# SEAFRONT

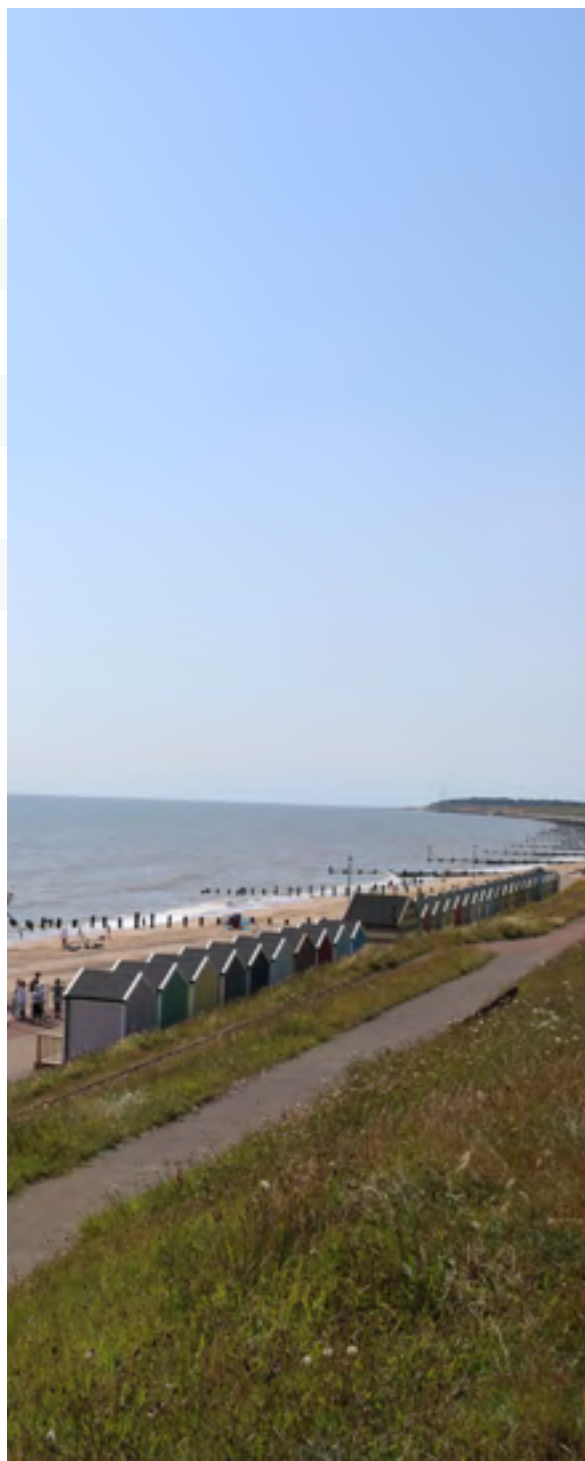
# MASTERPLAN

This masterplan document has been prepared by Great Yarmouth Borough Council to set out an aspirational framework for Gorleston's Seafront, with the purpose of guiding new investment and improvement opportunities that help protect and enhance the uniqueness of the area, now and for the future.

This document, developed in collaboration across the Council's departments and with valuable input from its elected members and the local community, complements the Council's strategic priorities in its corporate and development plans. When completed, it will help guide future decisions that will strengthen the area's tourism, cultural and heritage offer, and provide for a high-quality and sustainable environment shared by visitors and residents alike.

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## Introduction

Gorleston is situated on Norfolk's east coast between Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft and is home to a population of about 26,000 people. Gorleston has a long history of port-related industry, including fishing and shipbuilding, and it is a very popular seaside resort.

The seafront is known for its fine, sandy beach with several facilities which are perfect to support family seaside holidays, with a lesser amount of the flashiness that Great Yarmouth offers. Gorleston has always been a seaside destination, being fashionable and popular in both the Victorian and Edwardian periods, however like most seaside resorts it requires continued nurturing and enhancement to maintain its uniqueness and special quality now and into the future.

Through both the Council's Corporate Plan (The Plan 2020-2025) and Local Plan, we are focused on growing an all-year-round tourism economy at resorts such as Gorleston and recognise the importance of nurturing Gorleston's cultural and heritage offer.

Through our Sustainability Strategy, the Council is committed to understand and address the borough's present environmental challenges, to ensure a thriving and sustainable borough for the future. It is therefore vital that we support the long-term future of the seafront in a manner which embraces reductions in carbon emissions, supports nature recovery, and provide opportunities for local people to make sustainable choices.

This masterplan, therefore, sets out a framework of how Gorleston seafront can be sustainably improved and conserved. It makes recommendations on the possible things that could happen along the seafront, incorporating the feedback the Council received as part of its public consultation of its draft masterplan proposals.

This plan outlines several themes which form part of this framework, these are:

- Conservation
- Wayfinding & Public Realm
- Sustainable Transport & Parking
- Accessibility
- Leisure Attractions
- Environmental Standards
- Events

The study area for the masterplan encompasses the quayside and seafront areas along Brush Quay and the Pier, and extends south along the Lower Esplanade, taking in the Gorleston Cliffs and Marine Parade in parallel. It also includes the historic terraces set behind the seafront area, bounded by Cliff Hill and Pier Walk as these form part of the wider local character of the seafront area. The masterplan study area also partly includes and abuts westwards into the main residential areas of Gorleston, where the streets provide important walking and driving connections between the town and seafront area. A plan denoting the extent of the masterplan is provided in Figure 1.

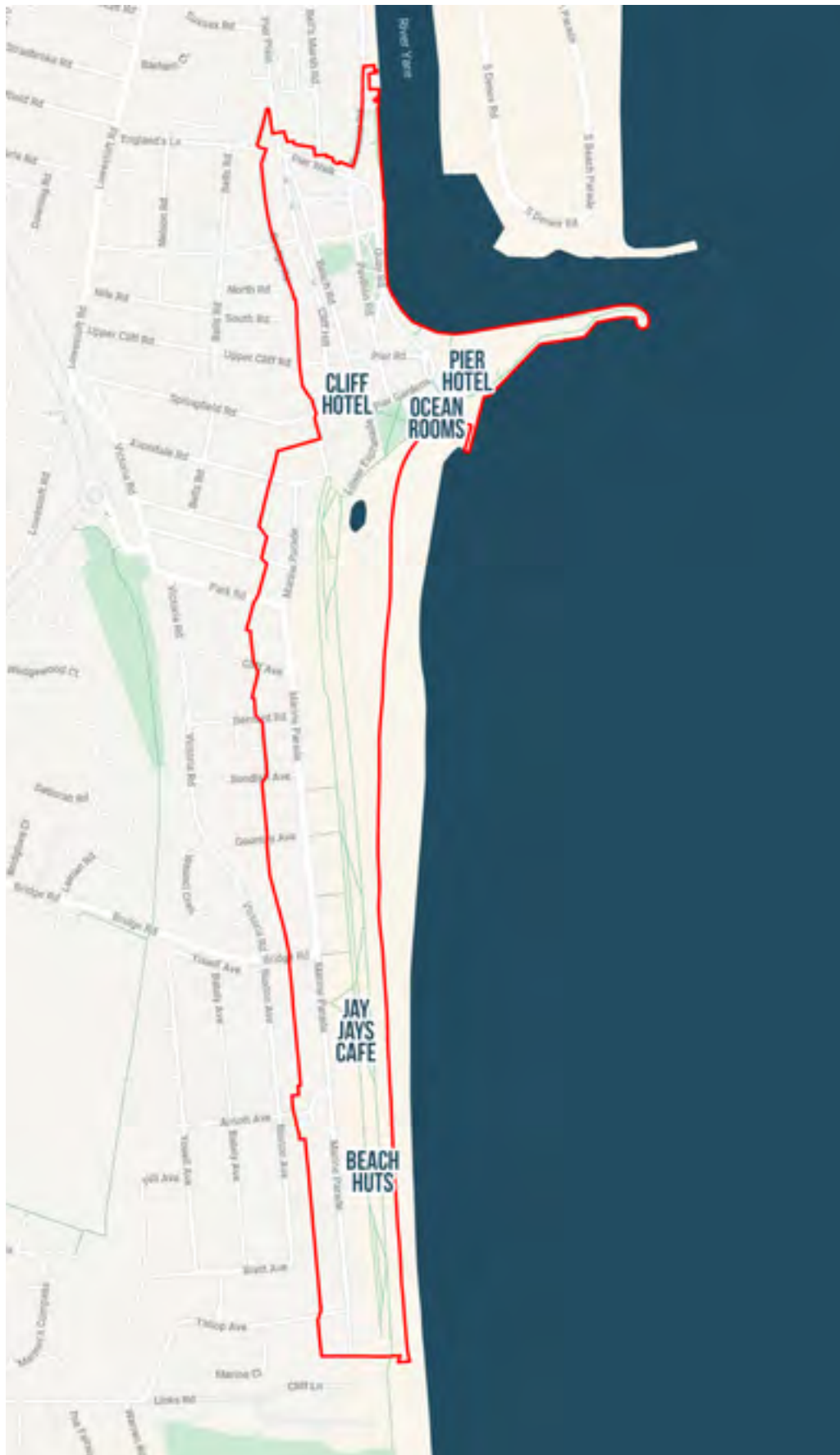


Figure 1 - Master plan study area – outlined in red.



## Vision

Corleston seafront is a place of great natural and architectural beauty, providing residents and visitors alike a place to enjoy, whether it's a quiet evening walk or a livelier day spent on the beach in the summer sun. This masterplan has been developed to protect and enhance this area, from safeguarding the stunning Edwardian architecture to providing the opportunity for additional unique seafront attractions and cultural activities in support of the local economy, with the overall aim of sustaining this distinctive environment whilst providing greater opportunities for people to enjoy this place all year-round.





# Objectives

## Conservation

1. To safeguard the Edwardian character of the area, including key buildings and features such as the Gorleston Pavilion Theatre and promenade.

## Wayfinding & Local Enhancements

2. To review wayfinding and signage to improve access and rationalise street clutter.
3. To improve the public realm around the beach, car parks, pier and nearby streets.

## Sustainable Transport & Parking

4. Ensure that transport routes to and from the seafront areas reduce congestion, support opportunities, and encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport where possible.

## Accessibility

5. To enhance the existing infrastructure to encourage more visitors and residents to the beach, improving beach access for people with disabilities.

## Leisure Attractions

6. To review both provision and management of existing amenities alongside expanding the availability of attractions to animate year-round footfall.

## Environmental Standards

7. To continue to maintain a high standard of cleanliness in the area, whilst considering environmental sustainability opportunities such as encouraging greater biodiversity.

## Events

8. Explore the potential for enhanced arts and culture opportunities.
9. To better utilise the clifftop, building on the success of the cliff top gala and to increase the opportunity for outdoor physical activities within this area, aligning any future offers with the outdoor play and open spaces review currently in progress.

## Public Consultation

The masterplan has been shaped through an iterative process, engaging community stakeholders, local businesses and the general public.

Between August and September 2021, the Council undertook public consultation on the masterplan's draft vision and objectives, in addition to seeking to better understand the seafront's strengths, weaknesses and potential opportunities for development and enhancement.

The consultation generated over 1,500 individual responses and demonstrated significant support for the masterplan's general vision and objectives but also suggested several improvements which were taken into further consideration when finalising the masterplan. The commonly raised points during the consultation are summarised below:

### **What do you like best about Gorleston's Seafront?**

- Beach
- Lack of commercialisation, in contrast to Great Yarmouth Seafront
- Clean, tidy and uncluttered
- Tranquillity, unspoiled, peaceful environment
- Free car parking

### **What do you like least about Gorleston's Seafront?**

- Small number of bins and appearance of waste and litter
- Lack of disabled beach access
- Insufficient number of toilets facilities, particularly at the southern end of the promenade
- More attention needed to maintain the natural and built environment

### **What would you change about Gorleston Seafront if you could?**

- Nothing. Keep it the same.
- Improvements to amenities and facilities e.g. bins, disabled beach access and toilets, water for beach showering and drinking
- Better relationship between parking availability and car parking free area around the shops/pier area
- Improvements to the food variety and extent of offer
- On-going maintenance of the natural and built environments

### **Other commonly raised general comments**

- Recognising the special offer Gorleston has in contrast to Great Yarmouth
- Prioritising natural space over commercialisation
- Making better use/enhancement of the seafront's existing key assets e.g. beach, Edwardian heritage, its tranquillity and simplicity of public realm

Further public consultation was undertaken between August and September 2022 to encourage feedback and help refine each of the final masterplan's proposed actions.

As this masterplan has been prepared at a high-level, the Council may consider undertaking more detailed future engagement with the public and other key stakeholders, as appropriate, to help progress the individual masterplan Objectives, Actions and potential options for future development.

## Masterplan Objectives

### Conservation

Gorleston was a thriving fishing community before the growth of seaside tourism, these combined histories have helped to shape a special character and sense of place.

Its most significant asset and one which dominates the character is the unspoilt beach which together with the urban setting reinforces the sense of an archetypical British seaside town.

The seafronts evolution in terms of the built environment and public realm has been relatively restrained, resulting in an interesting and charming townscape of exceptional quality. This is recognised through its designation as a conservation area and several key listed heritage assets.

The area is important historically and for the mix of interesting buildings, its scale, the materials used in construction, and its fundamental relationship with the sea and how this relationship forged the town and continues to shape it.

Throughout the area there is a spatial quality and strong visual evidence of the historic development which provides an interesting visual layering. The overall character is genteel and with an Edwardian respectability fringed with a strong sense of a fishing and maritime tradition.

Historically the harbour and its activity defined the town and now contribute to a quality and interest especially in terms of its history and historic development, spatial quality and collection of buildings.



Gorleston Beach – photograph taken 1850-1900s. Historic England

There are many interesting buildings, built forms and open spaces, which all contribute to a historic and attractive environment framed by sea and river. The Pavilion Theatre, in brick and terracotta, 1900, by J W Cockrill and the Lighthouse, built 1187, also in brick, are both Grade II listed buildings. The Pier Hotel of 1893 was built on the site of the old public house, the Anchor and Hope, much favoured by the beachmen. In 1896, the Beach Gardens were set out in front of the Pier Hotel, with a bandstand, and a wooden promenade was built between the gardens and the beach. In 1939, the Gardens became the site of the Floral Hall, now the Ocean Room, with its echoes of seaside art deco. The rest of the site became the former swimming pool, now gone, and the site has been restored to gardens, with a new bandstand to be erected in 2008. All four buildings are mentioned in Pevsner's "Buildings of England".

There is boating pond (1926) and terracotta-faced shelters from 1903, and Cliff Hill which is an ensemble of charming houses and cottages, with views across to the harbour that was first inhabited by beachmen and pilots in the early 19th century.

To support and preserve the unusual character of the seafront and its conservation area status there is a need for limited interventions to some of the key historical buildings, for example the Pavilion Theatre, to help reinforce the existing quality such as building repairs and enhancement, and a limited pallet of high-quality materials for landscaping and planting schemes.

Buildings are a key element in creating the distinctive character and although a number have statutory protection through listed building designation others may be vulnerable to inappropriate change. Options to protect character include the potential imposition of Article 4 Directives which remove certain permitted development rights and the greater use of enforcement powers under current legislation. In addition, the creation of area-based grant schemes through seeking external funding and an emphasis on homeowners around routine maintenance and repair are further options for consideration.

**Action:** *The character and significance of Gorleston seafront, together with opportunities for enhancement, and a thorough assessment of the historic built environment is set out in the Gorleston Conservation Area Character Appraisal. The appraisal provides an in depth historic development of the area and analytical survey of heritage assets. It is contained as an appendix to this document.*

*The Gorleston Seafront masterplan should be read in conjunction with emerging design guides being produced by the Borough Council covering aspects of the built environment such as shopfronts, public realm and the appropriate repair of historic buildings.*

*The Council will seek to liaise with the range of landowners and operators of key historical and cultural buildings along the seafront to support their continued restoration or future enhancement.*



# Wayfinding & Local Enhancements

## Wayfinding

Wayfinding often consists of maps, signs and other visual clues which help guide people to their desired destinations. As well as providing directions to tourism and amenities, good wayfinding can also promote health and wellbeing, assist with making dementia-friendly spaces and promote inclusivity and accessibility for all users within those spaces.

Within the seafront area, the common wayfinding methods are reliant upon existing highway signage, rather than being at the pedestrian scale. This leads to some of the seafront destination journeys being taken via the private car as opposed to other more sustainable and healthy modes such as walking and cycling, particularly from Gorleston's high street which provides a range of community and shopping options from a short distance away.

The Council has already undertaken some work which recognises the relationship between Gorleston's high street and the seafront at this pedestrian scale, identifying this general area as a 'walking zone', and highlighting potential improvements to signage within the Great Yarmouth Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 'LC WIP' (2022).

**Action:** Moving forward, it will be necessary to undertake an audit of existing wayfinding and signage between Gorleston's town centre and seafront areas to identify what key community, tourism and leisure attractors are between them, and how best to interpret their walking and cycling legibility both across the masterplan area and further afar. Any new potential wayfinding or signage solution will need to be considered and designed in conjunction with emerging design guides being produced by the Council to ensure any solution responds sensitively and appropriately to the area's unique character.





## Local Enhancements

The Gorleston Pier area is situated eastward of Quay Road and Pier Gardens, comprising a mixture of public and commercial uses including gardens and open space along the southern end of Brush Quay, the Pier Hotel, Doggy Diner café, visitor car parking, Sailing Club and the Gorleston HM Coast Guard lookout at the end of the Pier.

It is a well-used area for casual walkers and anglers along the harbour mouth, and for visitor parking, close to the beach and adjacent to many of the main attractions and seafront amenities including the Ocean Rooms, Pavilion Theatre and Ocean Bay amusement centre. Whilst locally popular, the area would benefit from some targeted improvement to the quality and setting of the built environment, and many of the key buildings within it. However it is recognised that such change can be difficult to co-ordinate due to the mixture of private and public ownerships within the area.

**Action:** *The Council will seek to liaise with the different landowners in the area to facilitate environmental improvements and a revitalised focus in the area. This may include repairs to fencing, hardstanding areas, landscaping improvements around the Pavilion Theatre, and the potential introduction of new lighting and public realm facilities within the area.*





## **Sustainable Transport & Parking**

Supporting the expansion of infrastructure that facilitates low carbon transport and active travel such as cycle paths, bike parking and e-bike charging points will ensure Gorleston seafront areas play an inclusive role in the UK's Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021).

### **Sustainable Transport**

The seafront area is generally well served by access to different modes of sustainable transport. Bus service provision is mostly concentrated along Marine Parade, providing regular services to Gorleston's High Street, the James Paget University Hospital and further on to Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Owing to its historic seafront location the area around the Pier, Lower Esplanade, Pavilion Road and Quay Road is relatively underserved by direct public transport facilities, however the area remains only a short walk to the nearest bus stops along Marine Parade and Avondale Road (via the Gorleston Cliff walkways), and only a 10-minute walk from Gorleston High Street where most of the local public transport facilities interchange. Norfolk County Council are currently undertaking a review of the bus stop facilities and service provision within the area which may lead to an improvement in both facilities and frequency of the local bus services. Additionally, the Borough Council's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) identifies the need for potential footway enhancements within the area to improve better access to these sustainable options.

For cycling, the seafront area is connected to Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft via the Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN) 517. This follows a route through the masterplan area via Riverside Road, Quay Road, Pier Gardens and on to the Lower Esplanade before joining Marine Parade via The Ravine and forms part of the normal road carriageway (excluding the traffic-free segment along the Lower Esplanade). Cycling is permitted along the entire length of the Lower Esplanade (from the north), however there is no cycling access from the south, therefore cyclists must either dismount and wheel their bikes up/down the cliff paths or use The Ravine.

The masterplan area also sits within an area that forms part of the Council's E-scooter trial. This is providing an alternative sustainable transport option for residents and tourists moving around the Great Yarmouth, Gorleston and Bradwell area, helping to replace the car for shorter-distance travel journeys. Locally, the trial has demonstrated that the Gorleston seafront area is highly popular among E-scooter riders with many circular journeys taken between the High Street, Lower Esplanade and Marine Parade. Though the E-scooter trial is due to continue until the end of November 2022, the Council are keen to support the principle of E-scooters in the area on a more permanent basis.

Considering the range of sustainable transport options that help serve the connectivity of the seafront, the area would benefit from the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points, pods or other electronic charging apparatus. This action aligns with the Council's Sustainability Strategy, to reduce carbon emissions and increase sustainable travel choices. It also supports the Government's Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021) aimed at supporting the UK's commitment towards a zero emission cars, vans, motorcycles, and scooters.

**Action:** *By having regard to the conclusions of the LCWIP and outcome of the E-Scooter trial, the Council will consider the prioritisation and implementation of footway and cycling enhancements, and EV charging apparatus within the masterplan area. This will help improve the general inter-connectivity between the seafront and high street areas and increase the availability and options for both residents and visitors to access sustainable transport modes in the seafront area.*



## Parking

The seafront is divided into two distinct areas of Riverside/Quayside and Lower Esplanade with direct access to the beach and the cliff top along Marine Parade which travels the length of the golden sands of the beach, with stunning panoramic views and easy access to the promenade and amenities the seafront has to offer.

The Riverside and Quay Road can be accessed from the main road (A47/A143) and surrounding areas with popular routes via Riverside Road or from the High Street onto Englands Lane/Pier Plain and Pier Walk. There is a high proportion of parking available to residents and visitors to this popular seafront area, with a mixture of free off-street and on-street provision as well as some free on-street time restricted bays. Brush Quay off-street carpark has provision for 115 spaces, with on-street provision, including some time limited bays of over 130 spaces along Quay Road, Pier Gardens.

The on-street provision includes coach bays on Pier Gardens/Quay Road to accommodate visitors arriving and departing from the Hotels in the area, the Pavilion Theatre and the Ocean Rooms.

Lower Esplanade has 90 on-street time limited bays with an additional 4 reserved for disabled use only and provides easy parking close to the seaside amenities and golden sands.

The cliff top, Marine Parade can be accessed by the main A47 taking the popular route of Park Road leading on to Marine Parade. This area again has a high proportion of free off-street and off-street parking available to residents and visitors to the area. The Marine parade off-street car park is located at the Southern end of Marine Parade with 78 bays with additional on-street provision of over 250 spaces.

Whilst parking in both areas of the seafront is noticeably seasonal, it is also a popular destination for residents of the borough and further afield visitors through the off-peak months.

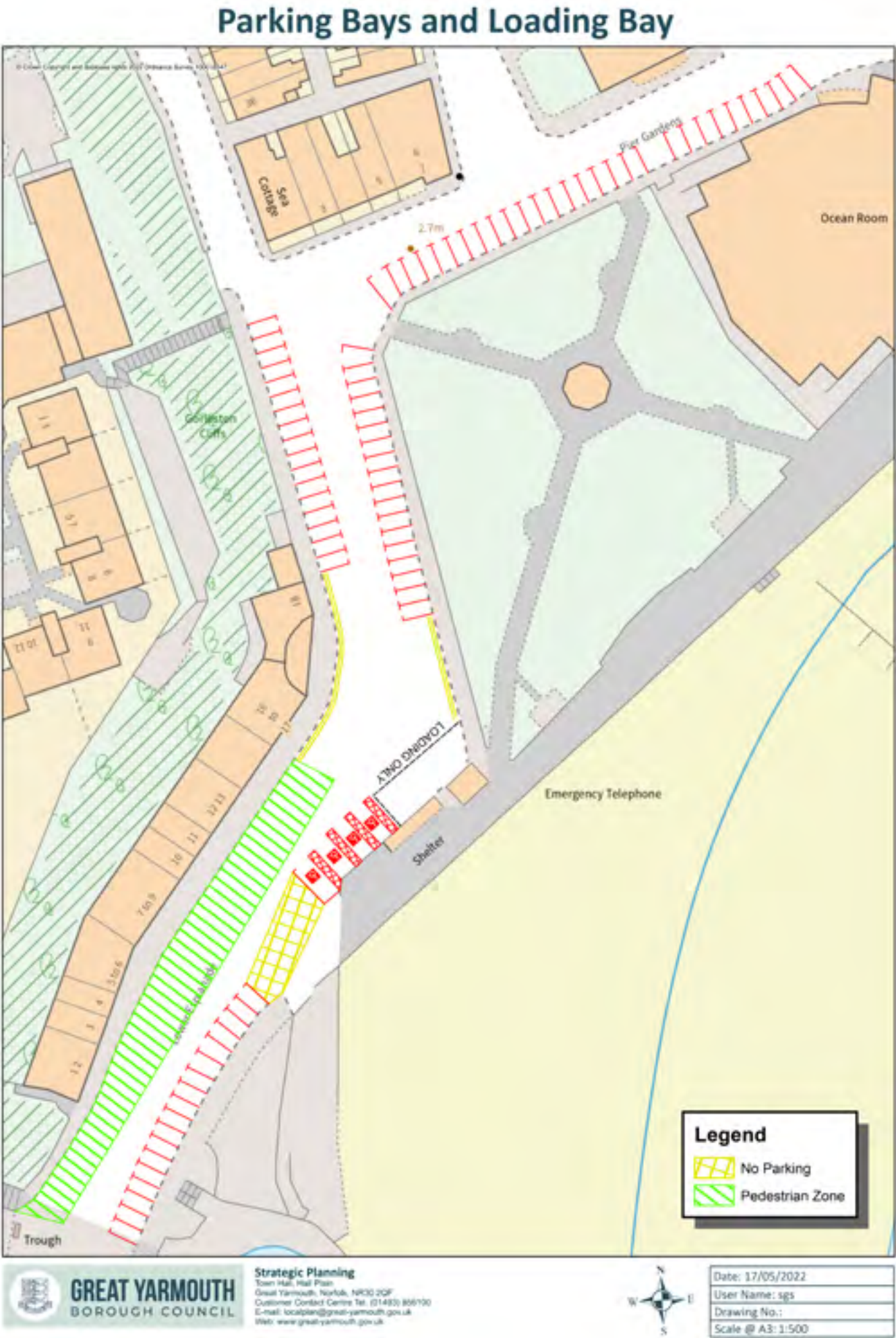
## Promenade & Lower Esplanade

The Lower Esplanade is the gateway to the local amenities, promenade and beach and is a popular location for visitors arriving by car looking for parking with proximity to the area. There is a mixture of restaurants, cafes and shops requiring access for deliveries and utilities. Through the summer period, this area is busy with a high volume of visitors and residents arriving by car and manoeuvring around the area. In addition, the area is also busy with pedestrians walking across the lower esplanade going between visiting the restaurants/café and shops and beach or promenade. There is an opportunity to relieve some congestion experienced through the high peak months which impact both pedestrians and vehicle users.

There is already a substantial amount of parking in the area with 119 spaces in the Lower Esplanade and Pier Gardens, 27 of which have been temporarily out of access with the placing of the planters to create a pedestrianised area. There is an opportunity to expand this area by either extending the current planters or using other types of barriers/demarcation and still retain some availability of parking near the beach and amenities which will be a benefit to residents and visitors and the businesses in the area. By retaining parking bays along the eastern side of the lower esplanade leading to the promenade, the removal of parking bays on the western side can create a pedestrianised area with a safe place for people to be with routes to access all the amenities, beach, and promenade. By removing the current coach bay on the lower esplanade to incorporate additional car park spaces and by the creation of 2 additional spaces on the east side of the Lower Esplanade/Pier Gardens, 84 car park spaces remain in this area.

**Action:** To consider options and feasibility to extend the Public Realm of the seafront and create more open space, extending the playful area of the beach and promenade with attractive landscaping and street furniture enabling safe access for pedestrians to the beach and promenade.





## Accessibility

The Council is committed to making sure that accessibility is considered throughout its operations. As such an accessibility report was commissioned to better understand the potential opportunities and barriers to improving accessibility of Gorleston Seafront. This report has been used to inform the actions presented below.

**Action:** As a result of this work the following actions are recommended:

- Consideration needs to be given to provide additional accessible parking bays in the Lower Esplanade carpark and to improve the existing bays to ensure they meet Part M of the Building regulations and BS8300:2018
- Engagement with existing businesses to provide advice on how access to their venues could be improved in terms of accessibility
- Put in place signage on the pathway slopes highlighting their gradients and potential hazard to wheelchair users
- Review pathways throughout the seafront area to ensure they remain well maintained and where funding allows undertake capital works to ensure they are made safer for all user groups
- Improve signage to existing changing places toilet facility near the Ocean rooms, ensuring that there are processes in place to respond to an alarm if raised by users within this facility. Alongside this investigate additional opportunities to increase accessible toilet provision across the wider seafront area
- Implement the use of independent use beach wheelchairs, like the scheme that operates on Great Yarmouth seafront
- Explore leisure activities that can be hosted on the seafront that support all users, such as adaptive cycling; engagement with disability groups and clubs will help develop such opportunities
- Investigate the installation of a fully accessible boardwalk from the lower promenade stretching toward the sea





## Leisure Attractions

The Great Yarmouth Corporate Plan (The Plan 2020-2025) and the Local Plan (Core Strategy and Local Plan Part 2) set out the drive for an all-year-round tourism economy at resorts such as Gorleston and Great Yarmouth. Recent investments such as the Splashpad facility has proven popular with families as a destination and is an important new facility for the seafront.

Historically, provision of facilities has been focussed on the Summer Season however, with more visitors during the shoulder season the opportunity to develop services to benefit both users and businesses should be considered for Gorleston.

## Concessions

Currently, the concessions (typically kiosks or stands selling goods) offer is very much limited to the lower promenade in Gorleston, with the beach and promenade utilised for a limited number of outlets. Whilst Gorleston is an extremely popular destination, through our consultation it has been identified that some of the offers are limited.

The Council is currently introducing new concession opportunities during 2022 along the Lower Esplanade for small-scale retail and leisure outlets to support the seafront and tourism offer. See Figure 3

In principle, the Council's Local Plan is generally supportive of encouraging new tourism and leisure facilities within the Gorleston seafront area, where these are appropriate in size and to the character of the area. Whilst national planning policy and town centre policies included in the Local Plan seek to direct retail and leisure to town centres, providing such uses are ancillary and complementary to the existing tourism offer which is available at the seafront, such development could be acceptable. The offer at Gorleston's seafront is distinct from that at Gorleston's Town Centre and other local centres within the town therefore further leisure and tourism focussed facilities in this location is unlikely to detract businesses from the town centre.

New, small scale, retail, leisure and food and drink concessions could help bolster the local economy by taking advantage of the large number of visitors who currently visit the seafront. This could also help the resort attract new visitors and day-trippers. Whilst in the town, these visitors could also visit the Town Centre and other

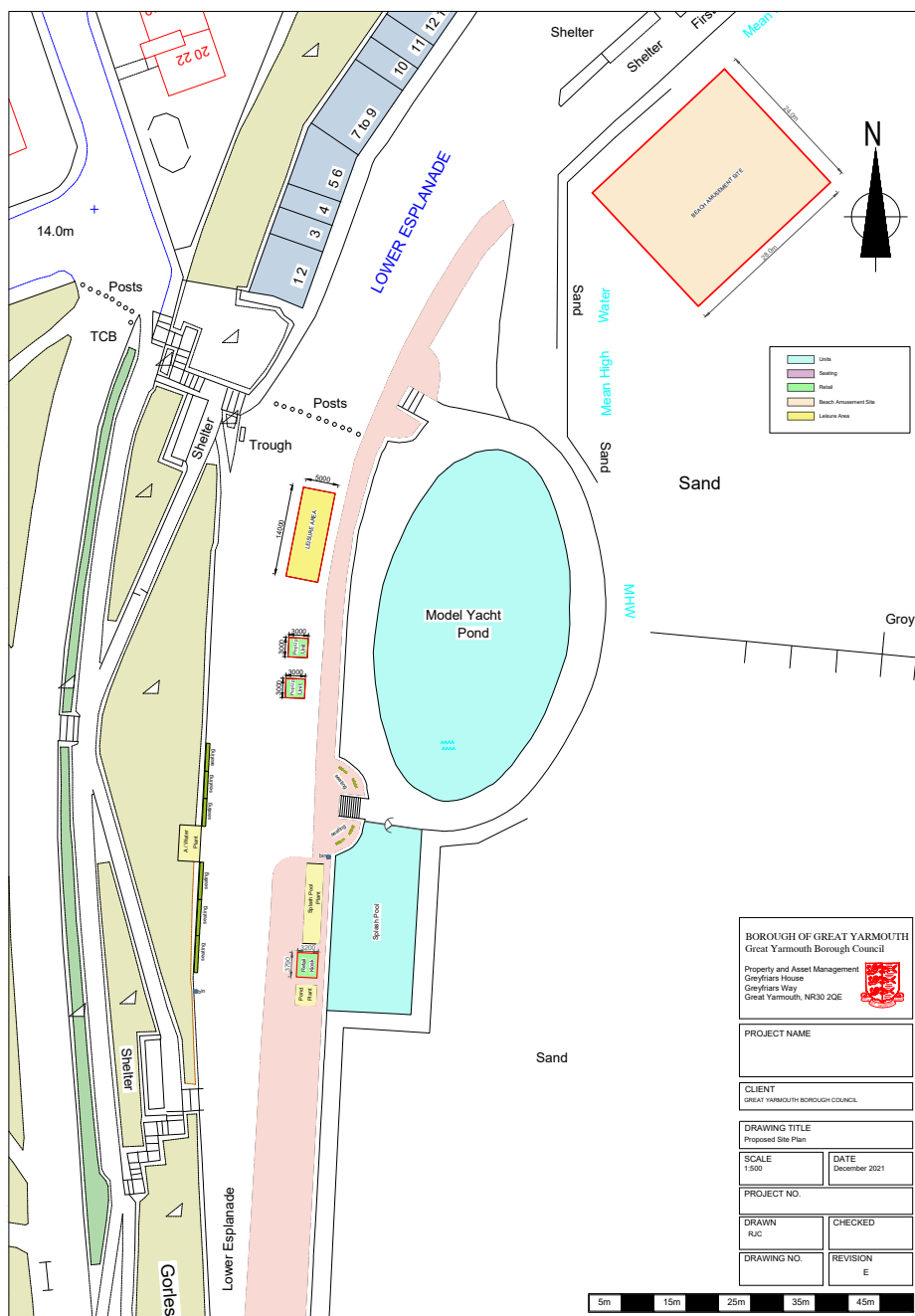


local centres such as shops and cafes on nearby Bells Road. The number of new concessions will be carefully balanced to ensure the unique character of the area is not undermined.

The beach concession could form an important addition to the area and could be complemented by additional bespoke concessions where appropriate to the location and complement the existing service.

Therefore, in principle, and subject to other considerations in the Local Plan, the Council is broadly supportive of new retailing uses along the seafront which are demonstrated as being complementary and ancillary to the tourism offer on Gorleston seafront, and which do not impact the unique character of the area.

Figure 3 - Proposed Beach Concessions on Lower Esplanade



## Cliff Top

Gorleston benefits from a range of facilities both from a built asset perspective and open space. The upper cliffs area offers a range of leisure activities including children's play, trim-trail, tennis, basketball, bowls, putting and general open space provision. The facilities are in many cases in need of refurbishment or modernisation and the development of this area could offer significant opportunities for the wider Gorleston area.

The tennis, basketball, bowls and putting facility covers an area of approximately 4 acres on the upper promenade. The tennis facilities need refurbishment with one of the three courts currently closed and overall, the provision is limited but not fully utilised. The outdoor bowling greens are well utilised by local clubs with an ability for members of the public to also use the greens. The clubhouse facilities for all leisure activities are limited at best with only toilets and a small kitchen facility available. The putting green has limited use; although well maintained, the facility is now dated.

The trim-trail is a popular attraction; having been installed some 15 years ago, the equipment remains relevant and in good condition although could benefit from some refurbishment (this has been identified through the recent Play and Open Space Audit.)

Overall, this area provides an important facility for the borough and visitors but could be enhanced to deliver wider opportunities for wider access to activities and opportunities for community development. It is proposed that a separate review is undertaken of this specific area to consider proposals and consult on options.

**Action:** To undertake a feasibility study based on the area and potential opportunities for the cliff top site including but not limited to the putting green through to the trim trail.



Figure 3 – Cliff Top facilities



## Beach Huts

In recent years beach huts have been introduced to the lower promenade at Gorleston. With one of the widest promenades the facility provides for larger beach huts with glazed doors and a veranda. A total of 70 beach huts have planning permission in the southern stretch of the lower promenade and include the use of a dedicated amenity facility. The introduction of beach huts in Gorleston has regenerated the southern part of the promenade increasing footfall to one of the quieter areas of the beach.

The scheme has proved extremely popular, and the beach huts are available for leasehold purchase or rent. The current location to the far south of the lower promenade has been so popular that a further development of beach huts has been recently approved in a more northerly location. The current beach huts have a private amenity block available only to beach hut occupiers, as part of the consultation a general lack of public toilets in the central beach area was noted. The costs of developing public toilets are a constraint, but a further development of beach huts could consider this issue as part of its business case.

**Action:** *Business case to be developed and considered which will create further beach huts on the lower promenade offering additional toilet facilities for users and public in line with consultation outcomes.*



## Environmental Standards

Gorleston seafront is a big draw to both local people and tourists to the area, so keeping the environment clean to a high standard is essential to make people want to keep coming to Gorleston in the future. Since the pandemic, the number of visitors to Gorleston has increased and this in turn has led to a significant increase in litter needing to be collected in and around the seafront.

Both the lower promenade and cliff tops are serviced with many small capacity, traditional style litter bins which are labour intensive to empty especially during peak season. This has led to additional large, wheeled bins being deployed on the lower promenade just to keep on top of the litter volumes.

During the peak season, the bins are emptied multiple times a day with additional litter picking and cleansing patrols, maintaining high standards of cleanliness. This reduces during the off season.

There is a need to review the bin type and capacity in the seafront area to be able to deal with the high volumes of litter in the peak season ensuring we make the most effective use of the personnel we have on the ground to keep the area clean for all.

Gorleston seafront is mostly in the ownership of the Council however there are some areas and car parks that are in private ownership or owned by Norfolk County Council. As such there is a need to ensure that any work the Council is doing to maintain and enhance the environment in this area needs to involve local landowners and partners so that all areas benefit from any improved plans.



*Bottleships initiative*

Recycling for on-the-go litter is not available currently in the Gorleston seafront location, but there is the potential in the future through the promotion of recycling as part of the FACET project and the bottleship campaign to deploy recycling bins across the seafront areas.

There is a large amount of green open space on the cliff tops and large area of vegetation on the cliff slopes. Historically these have all been maintained by cutting every month. Last year the slopes were managed differently with a 1m strip around each area being cut monthly with the primary areas being left for the season and being cut only at the end. This led to a significant increase in biodiversity with natural flora being allowed to grow for the season and support other wildlife. This worked well and will be continued from now on.

The recreational areas on the cliff top and pier gardens are mostly grass with some herbaceous planting and some small trees. The ravine is planted with a range of herbaceous plants designed for life by the sea. The grass is cut on a monthly rota with general maintenance of the herbaceous plants and annual cutting of hedges. There is the potential as has been done on the cliff slopes to look at increasing biodiversity with reducing cutting and wildflower seeding of some areas in these locations.

**Action:** Undertake review of bin size, location, and capacity to ensure we can effectively deal with seasonal increases in litter and give the opportunity recycle on the go litter. Develop business case for new bins on the location based on the review and lessons learnt from roll out of Great Yarmouth seafront bins, this summer.

**Action:** Scope out other locations within the managed outdoor space and parks in the Seafront location that could be managed differently to enhance biodiversity in line with the Councils Sustainability Strategy.

**Action:** To regularly engage and communicate with partners and local landowners in the area to ensure they are aware of current and future environmental initiatives and plans, and to encourage them to look at their own areas to maintain and improve environmental quality within the location.





## Events

Gorleston already hosts several annual events from the Clifftop Festival in July each year to the weekly Park Run. The wide expanse of the beach lends itself well to future opportunities such as music festivals and outdoor cinema viewings.

There is also an opportunity to use the unique environment Gorleston offers to support outdoor physical activity and wellness opportunities, such as sunset Yoga or more formal paddle boarding opportunities.

**Action:** To promote Gorleston seafront as the perfect space for outdoors cultural and tourism events alongside physical activity and wellness opportunities.



## Next Steps

This masterplan provides a strong vision for Gorleston seafront, with some clear objectives to help guide decisions and investment in this area going forwards. The intention is to protect and enhance the uniqueness of this area for future generations and visitors to the area to enjoy.

As such an action plan will be developed to outline the activity that will be undertaken to deliver against the objectives within this strategy.

If you would like to know more about the masterplan, please email the Council at:  
[enquiries@great-yarmouth.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@great-yarmouth.gov.uk)

## Appendix 2 – Gorleston Seafront Masterplan Actions

Objective	Actions
<b>Conservation</b>	The character and significance of Gorleston seafront, together with opportunities for enhancement, and a thorough assessment of the historic built environment is set out in the Gorleston Conservation Area Character Appraisal. The appraisal provides an in depth historic development of the area and analytical survey of heritage assets. It is contained as an appendix to this document.
	The Gorleston Seafront masterplan should be read in conjunction with emerging design guides being produced by the Borough Council covering aspects of the built environment such as shopfronts, public realm and the appropriate repair of historic buildings.
	The Council will seek to liaise with the range of landowners and operators of key cultural buildings along the seafront to support their continued restoration or future enhancement.
<b>Wayfinding &amp; Local Enhancement</b>	Moving forward, it will be necessary to undertake an audit of existing wayfinding and signage between Gorleston's town centre and seafront areas to identify what key community, tourism and leisure attractors are between them, and how best to interpret their walking and cycling legibility both across the masterplan area and further afar. Any new potential wayfinding or signage solution will need to be considered and designed in conjunction with emerging design guides being produced by the Council to ensure any solution responds sensitively and appropriately to the area's unique character.
	The Council will seek to liaise with the different landowners in the area to facilitate environmental improvements and a revitalised focus in the area. This may include repairs to fencing, hardstanding areas, landscaping improvements around the Pavilion Theatre, and the potential introduction of new lighting and public realm facilities within the area.
<b>Sustainable Transport &amp; Parking</b>	By having regard to the conclusions of the LCWIP and outcome of the E-Scooter trial, the Council will consider the prioritisation and implementation of footway and cycling enhancements, and EV charging apparatus within the masterplan area. This will help improve the general inter-connectivity between the seafront and high street areas and increase the availability and options for both residents and visitors to access sustainable transport modes in the seafront area.
	To consider options and feasibility to extend the public realm of the seafront and create more open space, extending the playful area of the beach and promenade with attractive landscaping and street furniture enabling safe access for pedestrians to the beach and promenade.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Consideration needs to be given to provide additional accessible parking bays in the Lower Esplanade carpark and to improve the existing bays to ensure they meet Part M of the Building regulations and BS8300:2018.
	Engagement with existing businesses to provide advice on how access to their venues could be improved in terms of accessibility.
	Put in place signage on the pathway slopes highlighting their gradients and potential hazard to wheelchair users.

Objective	Actions
	Review pathways throughout the seafront area to ensure they remain well maintained and where funding allows undertake capital works to ensure they are made safer for all user groups.
	Improve signage to existing changing places toilet facility near the Ocean rooms, ensuring that there are processes in place to respond to an alarm if raised by users within this facility. Alongside this investigate additional opportunities to increase accessible toilet provision across the wider seafront area.
	Implement the use of independent use beach wheelchairs, like the scheme that operates on Great Yarmouth seafront.
	Explore leisure activities that can be hosted on the seafront that support all users, such as adaptive cycling; engagement with disability groups and clubs will help develop such opportunities.
	Investigate the installation of a fully accessible boardwalk from the lower promenade stretching toward the sea.
Leisure	To undertake a feasibility study based on the area and potential opportunities for the cliff top site including, but not limited to, the putting green through to the trim trail.
	To undertake a feasibility study based on the area and potential opportunities for the cliff top site including, but not limited to, the putting green through to the trim trail.
Environmental Standards	Undertake review of bin size, location and capacity to ensure we can effectively deal with seasonal increases in litter and give the opportunity to recycle on the go litter. Develop business case for new bins on the location based on the review and lessons learnt from roll out of Great Yarmouth seafront bins, this summer.
	Scope out other locations within the managed outdoor space and parks in the Seafront location that could be managed differently to enhance biodiversity in line with the Councils Sustainability Strategy.
	To regularly engage and communicate with partners and local landowners in the area to ensure they are aware of current and future environmental initiatives and plans, and to encourage them to look at their own areas to maintain and improve environmental quality within the location.
Events	To promote Gorleston seafront as the perfect space for outdoor cultural and tourism events alongside physical activity and wellness opportunities.