

CLEETHORPES Masterplan

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01

INTRODUCTION

As this Masterplan for Cleethorpes seafront and town centre is being prepared in early 2022, there are greater opportunities for British coastal resorts than there have been for over 50 years. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic there were clear signs of a positive shift in the fortunes of coastal towns, a result of investment in coastal locations, sustainable travel choices, and a result of a re-appreciation of Britain’s magnificent assets. The pandemic has accelerated this societal direction of travel. Cleethorpes has a wealth of assets that can enable it to be at the forefront of this renaissance of the British coastal resort. Cleethorpes is blessed by natural assets, a history of impactful human investment and a progressive community. Undoubtedly, Cleethorpes’ magnificent waterfront contributes significantly to the town’s proud history and continued success. The Vision and Masterplan divide this waterfront into three distinct areas, each with distinguishing characteristics that provide leisure and business opportunities for a wide breadth of society.

Central to the three seafront character areas is Central Promenade, offering a reasonably well-preserved Victorian seaside experience - a wonderfully long promenade, sandy beaches, pier, associated seafront cafes, shops and arcades, and the generous Pier Gardens public park. Proposals are to enhance Central Promenade’s Victorian character with public realm improvements; seating, lighting, wayfinding and public art, increasing opportunities to relax, play, and socialise along the seafront. The Vision proposes for Pier Gardens to receive a mini-Masterplan of its own to create a series of ‘rooms’ that

provide opportunity for events, play, exercise, relaxation and wellbeing.

Every town needs an area that provides opportunity for a new generation to make its mark, and to leave a new positive legacy that adds to the wonderful legacy left by the Victorians. From the engagement, and existing plans, it’s clear that North Promenade can provide a progressive, sustainable, youthful, alternative yet complementary offer for the town. To achieve the ideas that have emerged from substantial engagement will take bravery and a ‘roll up the sleeves’ mentality but the North Promenade can, and should be, the catalyst to retain younger generations and attract a new generation of entrepreneurs to put down roots in the town, helping to build Cleethorpes’‘brand’ as a future facing, go-to destination for new a generation of visitors.



The third distinct seafront character area is South Beach, stretching from the leisure centre, south to the iconic ‘Fitties’, incorporating the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) marshland, beautiful and somewhat secluded world class beaches, iconic historic assets such as the ‘Fitties’ seaside retreat and Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, events space/showgrounds, and fringed by a beautifully maintained country park. Proposals are for this southern stretch of Cleethorpes seafront to benefit from unobtrusive public realm improvements, infrastructure, and interventions that respect and enhance the natural beauty of the SSSI, and help the town become increasingly known as a place for health, wellbeing, and exploration.

At a time of continued change for our town centres it is vital that they are given all the support possible. We are not seeing our town centres and high streets in terminal decline but rather as evolving, and Cleethorpes with its dominant independent retail and food and drink community is well set to enjoy the societal shift towards an increasing appreciation of local business. Simply put, Cleethorpes’ town centre has ‘fine bones’ to build upon. The Masterplan has strong ideas of how to make the town flow, encouraging exploration, creating the desire to linger, providing socialising opportunities, and the associated spend that comes with this. Proposals can improve connectivity from the seafront to Market Place, St Peter’s Avenue, Sea View Quarter, and Alexandra Road, encouraging a circular route for people to explore the town’s varied independent shops, eateries, bars. All of this thinking is borne out and has been ratified by what we believe is the largest survey ever undertaken in the town

with a representative demographic of over 2700 residents, business owners, and visitors who have collectively spent over 1000 hours explaining their understanding of the town’s assets and desires for its future. The positivity shown and the clarity of understanding of the opportunities available to Cleethorpes is clear as is the fact that there is an entrepreneurial and economic dynamism that can be further unleashed by this Masterplan. Opportunities for Cleethorpes are extensive. The societal direction of travel the growth in water-based leisure, the health and wellbeing movement, the pandemic accelerated staycation boom, the re-appreciation of the British Victorian seaside resort, and the desire to find new places to celebrate are all co-aligning to present Cleethorpes with a bright future. However, these factors are also available to many other towns in the coastal resort-rich nation and there will be “winners and losers”.

This Masterplan mustn’t sit in a drawer and thus has stated “early wins”, borne out of the engagement that should be embarked on to set things in motion and demonstrate intent.



North East Lincolnshire Council (the Council) have commissioned HemingwayDesign and GL Hearn to produce a Masterplan for Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire, which sets out a clear vision for the future development and regeneration of the resort and main town centre area over the short, medium and long term.

The design team, consisting of Masterplanners, Landscape Architects, Planners, Graphic Designers, Quantity Surveyors and Economic Consultants have worked in partnership with the community and stakeholders to produce a long term strategy for Cleethorpes. The Masterplan is set within the context of Cleethorpes’ ambition to develop and grow the tourism offer including increasing footfall, creating sustainable jobs, encouraging more overnight stays, and extending the traditional tourism season. It also supports the creation of a green economy and environment which maximises low carbon and healthy initiatives.

The second part of the commission which follows on from the Masterplan work will provide a comprehensive delivery strategy with clear economic evidence for key priority projects that will be included in a future Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid to Government in 2022.

Any successful Masterplan requires a robust methodology that is strictly adhered to throughout the life of the project. This agreed approach helps to create a Masterplan that meets the needs of the clients, community and key stakeholders.

The Masterplanning process was delivered over 2 key stages:

Stage 1:

Understanding the Site:

Once all the baseline information was assembled the design team carried out a series of site visits and consultations to improve their understanding of how the area operates. Analysing plans and reports was valuable and provided a practical insight into the area, but speaking with the community and spending time in the area was invaluable to our understanding of the issues and identifying possible solutions. With the baseline information gathered, the team then carried out an intense study of the area to identify all the constraints and opportunities.

Confirming the Vision:

The results from the first stage, including all Consultation responses were evaluated and, in combination with the Council’s initial brief and adopted policies and initiatives, used to confirm a vision for the Masterplan. Design principles were defined that, when applied, will ensure the project objectives are achieved.

The framework was cross referenced for every design decision during the design process. In this phase we explored the methods and prepared a range of outline proposals that will

achieve the project objectives. These option testing presentations were a condensed version of the final Masterplan.

The Vision

The Vision chapter contains a set of robust proposals that are based on the findings from the previous stages and the stakeholder’s needs and aspirations. The proposals have been shaped through rigorous testing and consultation. The framework principals defined within the Vision will have informed all design decisions and led to a set of plans, diagrams and images that combined met the objectives.

Note that the Masterplan is an evolving document that needs to respond to a variety of external factors. The Masterplan may go through a series of updates in order to make the interventions viable.

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CONTEXT

North East Lincolnshire (NEL) is a small unitary authority covering an area of 192km2. The majority of the resident population live in the towns of Grimsby and Cleethorpes with the remainder living in the smaller town of Immingham, or in surrounding rural villages.

NEL is accessible by road by the M180/A180 to the west, the A46 from Lincoln to the south-west, and the A18 and A16 from the south. A rail line terminates at Cleethorpes with stations at Grimsby Town and Grimsby Docks, running to Manchester, Doncaster, Lincoln, Newark, Barton-on-Humber and Scunthorpe. Humberside and Doncaster Sheffield Airports are located nearby which all offer direct flights to destinations across Europe.

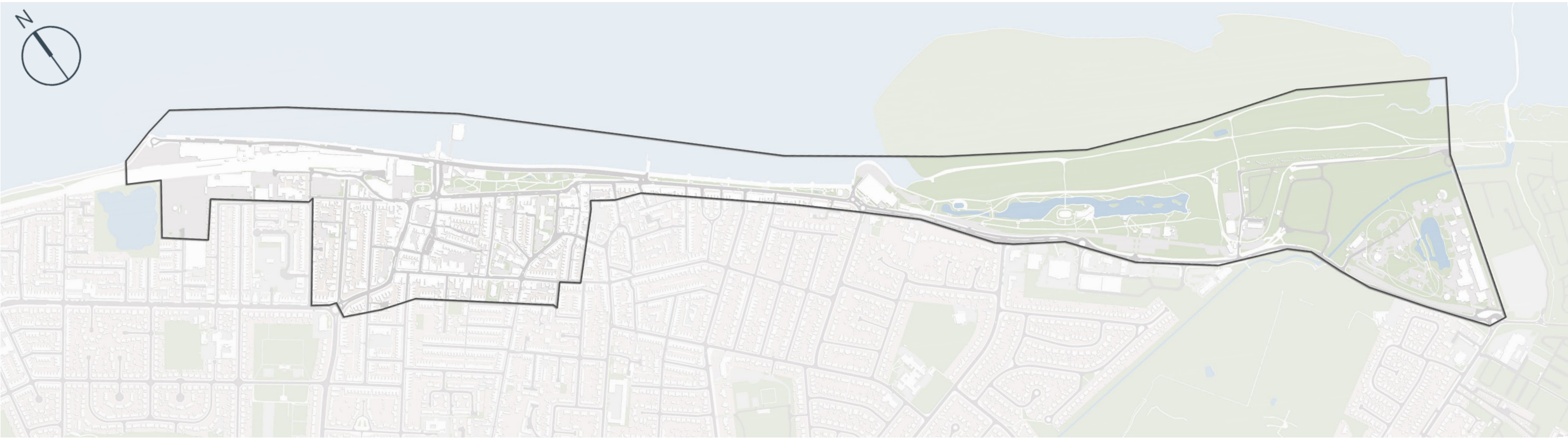
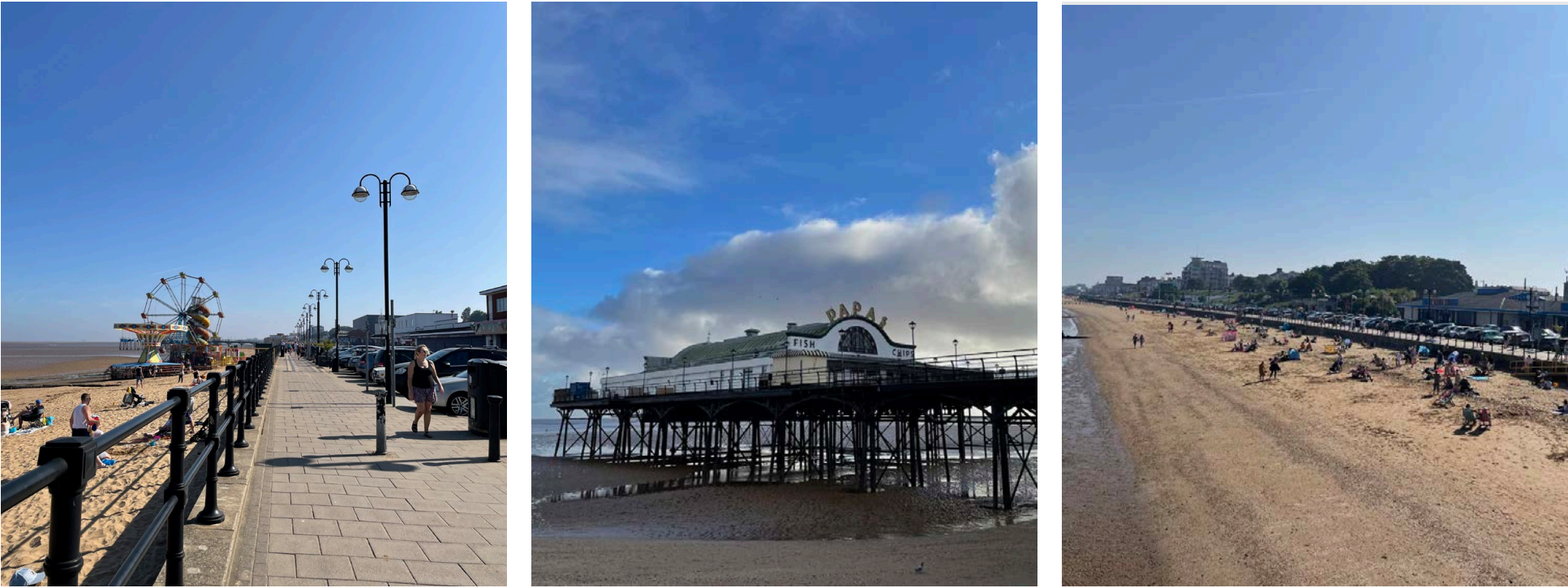
Census figures classify 90.1% of the population of NEL as living in an urban environment. However NEL has a wide variety of parks and open spaces. On the Northern border the Humber estuary has been designated as a SSSI and to the South, the Lincolnshire Wolds is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Cleethorpes gained 3 Seaside Awards in 2018 for its beaches and gained Blue Flag status in 2021.

The total population of NEL is estimated at 159,563. The percentage of the local population who are of working age, (16 to 64), is estimated at 59.9% (97,004). 20.6% (31,898) of the local population are of pensionable age. The percentage of children and young people, (0 to 15), is around 19.5% (30,924).



The plan below indicates the geographical focus area of the Masterplan. The focus area includes: the resort and beachfront and their immediate hinterland including the promenades (North and Central promenades and the Lower Kingsway); the railway station which is an arrival point for tourists by train: Isaacs Hill as an arrival point for visitors by car; the retail centre of the town including High Street, St Peter’s Avenue, Alexandra Road, Sea Road, Sea View Street and Cambridge Road); the Leisure Centre and Boating Lake through to the Meridian Showground; and the Pleasure Island site.

For the purpose of the Masterplan, we have extended the scope of the works to include the “South Beach” area on the Estuary side of the Fitties.



03

BASELINE

HISTORY

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Cleethorpes has been permanently occupied since the 6th Century, with substantial communities established from the 9th Century, following the arrival of the Danes. Its location adjacent to the River Humber, and the associated fishing benefits, enabled the community to sustain itself until a change of its identity in the early 19th Century, to a health focused holiday resort.

Further growth was enabled with the arrival of the railway in the 1863, and expansion of the port at Grimsby. Cleethorpes began its transformation from a small scale society retreat with the merging of the hamlets, Thrunscoe, Itterby and Oole, into a major resort accommodating thousands of visitors each year. By 1873 the Pier was built, followed by the promenade in 1885, and Cleethorpes’ population had grown to 4000. Cleethorpes continued to grow and established itself a leading national holiday resort.

During the 20th Century, to accommodate the population growth and increasing visitor numbers, Cleethorpes invested in its social infrastructure and built a number of churches, schools, colleges, the Town Hall and housing, and transformed the town into a settlement similar to the one we see today.

Key Dates:

- 1820: the emergence of Cleethorpes as a tourist resort
- 1856: Cleethorpes’ National School
- 1863: Arrival of the Railway
- 1873: Completion of the Pier
- 1877: Declared a Local Board of Health
- 1890: Greenwich Meridian Line established

