



Draft Tendring Heritage Strategy: Comments from Essex Society for Archaeology and History

Thank you for consulting the Essex Society for Archaeology and History (ESAH), the Society's comments are set out below.

General Comment

Tendring District Council's decision to prepare a Heritage Strategy is very welcome, and the draft strategy is good. Since the National Planning Policy Framework was first issued in 2012 the requirement for Local Planning Authorities to prepare a positive heritage strategy has tended to be viewed as fulfilled by having appropriate policies in the Local Plan. Whilst that might be considered as fulfilling the letter of the NPPF, it has never seemed to be in the spirit of its requirements, and the opportunity to develop a prominent integrated and constructive approach to the historic environment has been missed. In that context Tendring Council's approach to developing a heritage strategy is farsighted and places the Council at the forefront of Local Authority planning for the conservation, management and promotion of the historic environment.

The draft strategy is attractively presented, clear and wide ranging. However, the current draft does not bring out the full significance and distinctive character of Tendring's archaeology. That point and a number of other suggestions for amendments are set out in the specific comments below.

Specific comment

Page 12: In terms of the questions set out here the Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age archaeology of Tendring is particularly distinctive, that is something well known to professional archaeologists but perhaps not appreciated locally, and is further addressed in comments below. Coastal erosion and agriculture are amongst the greatest threats to Tendring's heritage and are not really dealt with in the draft text, suggestions for their inclusion are given in comments below.

Page 14: First paragraph 5th line delete 'formed of' insert the phrase 'comprises the Tendring plateau fringed by' the Tendring plateau is a key part of the District's character and needs to be mentioned, including it here will make the wording

consistent with descriptions used later in the strategy, for instance the top of page 17 and on page 25.

Page 17: End of second paragraph it is misleading to speak of Flintwork from Clacton in the context of the growth of industry, it was never an industry in the modern sense. However, Clactonian flintwork is one of the things that makes the archaeology of Tendring famous, a better form of words might be something like 'finds from Clacton have given the name Clactonian to a distinctive style of Palaeolithic flintworking'.

Page 18: The St Osyth Causewayed enclosure is hardly circular, delete that wording and replace with something like 'formed of interrupted ditches and banks' This would also be the place to mention that Tendring's Middle Bronze Age cremation cemeteries are highly distinctive (see comment on page 21 below).

Page 20: Caption under the poster of Clacton says that seaside resorts became the fastest growing towns in the first half of the 19th century, is that right? Nationally surely places like Manchester will have been growing faster than seaside towns in the early 19th century, locally Tendring's resorts grew rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Page 21: The Archaeology of Tendring. At present this description does not bring out the most significant and distinctive aspects of the archaeology of Tendring. There are a number of sites and periods which make the archaeology of Tendring nationally, and indeed internationally, famous. Palaeolithic remains from Clacton are famous, and the Neolithic archaeology of the District is well known, particularly through the seminal Warren et al 1936 PPS paper on the submerged landsurface at Clacton, together with more recent excavations at Lawford, Brightlingsea and St Osyth. Clacton has given its name to one of the sub styles of Grooved Ware (and of course Grooved Ware itself was once regarded as part of a Rinyo-Clacton culture). Perhaps the most characteristic aspect of the District's archaeology is the highly decorated Middle Bronze Age pottery Ardleigh style pottery, often found in very distinctive cremation cemeteries formed of dense clusters of ring-ditches.

It is important that the strategy brings out the significance of Tendring's highly characteristic archaeology. As noted above, whilst this is very well known amongst archaeologists; locally its significance, and perhaps even its presence, are not much appreciated. Moreover given that, by its nature, this archaeological evidence is not visible on the ground, it needs to be emphasised in this strategy so that its conservation and management is given due weight.

A way of beginning to address this might be to reword the second and third paragraphs, in fact the second paragraph begins rather oddly with the phrase 'Mesolithic settlement' when movement rather than settlement is generally considered to typify Mesolithic societies. A possible alternative form of words is given in *italic* below

Significant Mesolithic sites, Neolithic enclosures and monuments, and Bronze Age pottery, metalwork and cemeteries are known across the District, along with a network of field systems. The Palaeolithic spear, flint-work and Neolithic settlement on the foreshore at Clacton, together with the District's highly distinctive Middle Bronze Age pottery and cemeteries, named after an example excavated at Ardleigh, make the archaeology of Tendring well known nationally.

In the Roman period Tendring was close to one of the most important towns in Britain: Colchester (Camulodunum). Excavations at Brightlingsea revealed a large Roman trackway, cut through prehistoric field systems, which remained in use until the Anglo-Saxon period. Finds included a leaded-bronze foot in the shape of a Harpy found in one of the Roman trackway ditches.

Pages 22-24: The aerial photographs are clear and well explained but might as easily be from Maldon or Thurrock, but it would be good to replace at least one with an AP of one of the dense clusters of ring-ditches which make the 'Ardleigh' style cemeteries so distinctive and which are highly characteristic of the archaeology of Tendring

Page 27: Not sure of the sense of the 2nd sentence, are there words missing?

Page 30: Mid paragraph delete 'agriculture' and substitute 'grazing' may as well be clear that for hundreds, if not thousands, of years the main importance of the marshes was for grazing.

Pages 31 and 32: Several parks are mentioned in the description of Ancient Woodland but are not noted in the Historic Parks and gardens section. Reword to be consistent or at least explain why they are mentioned in one place and not the other.

Page 33: Given its visual importance in various places in Tendring, it would be worth mentioning weatherboarding somewhere here.

Page 34: The building shown is certainly a fine example of Victorian seaside architecture, but aren't the majority of buildings on the Esplanade Edwardian or later rather than Victorian?

Pages 39 -41: This section deals well with designated assets, but something needs to be said about undesignated assets, in particular the large number of often distinctive archaeological sites in Tendring are undesignated and are always likely to be so, but are nonetheless often of great significance.

Page 42: The Heritage at Risk list is essential, but other more general aspects of risks to the historic environment need to be included.

Coastal erosion is an obvious example, particularly in the context of climate change with its implication of sea level rise and increased storminess.

In the mid '90s the Monuments at Risk Survey identified agriculture as the greatest single risk to archaeological sites that is unlikely to have changed significantly. Given the extent and significance of archaeological sites, particularly cropmark sites, in Tendring and the dominance of arable agriculture, ploughing is likely to be a major long-term threat. In the context of imminent potential changes to agricultural subsidies as a consequence of leaving the EU it is essential to consider agricultural impacts on the historic environment. Adrian Gascoyne, in illustrating the adverse effects of ploughing, has often used some very striking photographs of plough damage to one of Tendring's highly distinctive Middle Bronze Age ring-ditch cemeteries at Little Bentley. Indeed a close up of plough damage to a cremation urn at Little Bentley is one of the photographs on the cover of the paper he prepared for the Planarch 2 project on the conservation of the rural historic environment. It might be useful to cite that paper the reference is:-

Gascoyne, A. 2006, *Conservation Management of the Rural Historic Environment in Essex* Essex County Council report for the Planarch 2 project.

Pages 46-48: At the risk of special pleading, it might be worth including the Essex Society for Archaeology and History in the main list of Societies and Groups. Most of the archaeological work undertaken in Tendring as in the rest of Essex is published in its Transactions; in 2021 the Society will take over publication of Essex Journal, which you use to illustrate page 48, and the Essex Industrial Archaeology Group is part of ESAH. A possible form of words is given in italic below:-

The Essex Society for Archaeology and History publishes most of the results of archaeological work in Tendring in its annual Transactions and from 2021 will assume responsibility for publishing the Essex Journal. Its Library housed in the University of Essex Albert Sloman Library in Colchester is the finest archaeological Library in the East of England outside Cambridge. One of the Society's most active elements is the Essex Industrial Archaeology Group

Pages 52-53: With regard to wider literary and artistic associations you may care to note the Birmingham Museum and Art gallery has a fine painting by Ford Maddox Brown of Walton on the Naze showing the Martello tower, tide mill and windmill. Speaking of the midlands Arnold Bennett, although famously connected to the Staffordshire potteries lived for some years at Thorpe-le Soken, prior to and during the First World War.

Page 60: Risks and Threats it is important to include coastal erosion and agriculture here see comment above relating to page 42

Page 66: Given the sheer number and significance of archaeological sites in Tendring together with the fact that so few are designated they should be specifically included in the list of heritage assets under objective 1Conservation.

Page 75: In view of the importance and distinctive nature of Tendring's archaeology something which is perhaps not well known locally, the specific mention of archaeology under action 2 is very welcome

Page 84: Bibliography Although Essex County Councils Archaeological management guidance for historic towns is included, it is essential to include Essex County Council's individual Historic Town Surveys for Harwich, St Osyth, Manningtree etc they provide fundamental baseline information for the conservation and management of historic towns in Tendring

Given the significance of Tendring's archaeology it would be sensible to include some of the key published sources, three East Anglian Archaeology volumes might be appropriate:-

Brown, N, 1999, *The archaeology of Ardleigh, Essex: Excavations 1955-1980* E. Anglian Archaeol. 90

Clarke, C.P. and Lavender, N. 2008, *An early Neolithic ring-ditch and Middle Bronze age cemetery: excavation and survey at Brightlingsea, Essex* E. Anglian Archaeol.

Germany, M. 2007, *Neolithic and Bronze age Monuments and Middle Iron Age settlement at Lodge Farm, St Osyth, Essex: Excavations 2000-3* E. Anglian Archaeol. 117

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