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2155

Date	Rev.	Ву	Chk	Comments
05.08.2020	P01	DP	LF	Initial draft
18.09.2020	P02	DP	LF	Amendments to headers and font size

# **Background to Study and Consultation**

#### 1.1. The Brief

- 1.1.1. In 2019 East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish Council in partnership with Chichester District Council decided to jointly fund a project to try and pull together ideas for the regeneration of the area. Various issues had been identified as requiring attention in order to maintain and improve the area for residents and visitors alike, to assist economic, social and environmental sustainability. It was felt that this should be fully consultative process and would be best served by forming a cohesive vision that could form a catalyst to regeneration and from which individual projects could then emanate.
- 1.1.2. The terra firma Consultancy were appointed in July 2020, by East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish Council in partnership with Chichester District Council, to provide conceptual ideas, that through a process of consultation over the next year, would culminate in a vision document to be finalised in summer 2021. In turn, this is to suggest feasible projects that could then be actioned or seek funds for action in the years that follow.

#### 1.2. The Process

1.2.1. The commission commenced Thursday July 23rd 2020 with a thorough briefing by representatives of the client parties and West Sussex Highways at Bracklesham Barn before walking the area and discussing the issues to be addressed. Following this, the terra firma team have prepared this initial report for client comment before preparing material for public consultation. This is envisaged to be a working document that can be continually added to as the consultations go through each phase and in its final form, constitute the agreed Vision Masterplan.

#### 1.3. The Programme

1.3.1. With the onset of COVID-19 measures soon after the selection of terra firma to undertake the work, the initial programme of undertaking the project through the course of summer 2020 was abandoned and a new programme set out and agreed as follows:

#### August/September 2020: Assessment and Initial Consultation Material

- Following the briefing and site immersion, our team would formulate the initial assessment material, first thoughts and consultation material for the workshops and then website that would include key questions, some suggestions of strategy and options from precedents and initial evidence gathered.
- Review Meeting 1 with Council Officers.

#### April/May 2021: Workshops and Consultations

Allow for attendance at 2 public consultation workshops (inc Easter period) and summer half term event at East Wittering Beach, nature as outlined in brief; (anticipating EWB/CDC enabling venue, identifying/inviting stakeholders but terra firma taking a lead in proceedings).

#### June/July 2021: Develop Sketch Designs and Produce Vision Document

- Review Meeting 2 with Council Officers to discuss findings from consultations (inc website).
- Agreement on nature of projects to take forward and costings required from team (ie the QS)
- Develop sketch plans and visualisations for areas concerned along with text and precedents.
- · Final presentation mid July followed by finalisation of Vision Document.

The terra firma Consultancy Ltd. www.terrafirmaconsultancy.com

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# East Wittering and Bracklesham

#### Wikipedia states;

East Wittering and Bracklesham is a civil parish in the Chichester district of West Sussex, England. The parish lies on the coast of the Manhood Peninsula, approximately six miles (9.6 km) southwest of Chichester. It comprises the built up areas of Bracklesham and the eastern half of East Wittering, the western half of which lies within the boundary of West Wittering civil parish. To the east of Bracklesham used to be East Thorney, a detached portion of East Wittering separated from the body of the parish by a very narrow strip of Earnley. East Thorney is now under the sea off Bracklesham.

#### In the original brief to consultants;

#### Setting the scene

The Parish of East Wittering & Bracklesham is located on the Manhood Peninsula in the south western corner of Chichester District, West Sussex. The village of East Wittering is approximately 7 miles south of the city of Chichester and 17 miles east of Portsmouth, both of which represent the closest major centres of employment, shops and services.

A small parish in terms of land area, it contains two settlements; East Wittering and Bracklesham, with the vast majority of housing and development located in its southern third adjacent to the coast. This includes the Parish church, Primary school, and most of the shops and services.

Due to its location on the extremity of the Manhood peninsula, combined with a lack of an A road or rail line, the settlements of the parish are relatively isolated and this tends to make the area popular with retirees or those seeking quiet lifestyles, rather than commuters. Those seeking to commute out of the area or access shops and services in nearby settlements are largely forced to rely on their own means of transport.

The beaches of the Manhood Peninsula, particularly those adjacent to East Wittering and Bracklesham, are extremely popular amongst the surfing fraternity. Businesses servicing the needs of this group and others using the local coast and landscape are an essential part of the local economy in East Wittering. The Bracklesham Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest exists within the Parish, making up its full southern boundary adjacent to the English Channel.

The local population more than doubles during the holiday season due to the influx of visitors. The increase in the visitor population is essential to many local shops and businesses, but leads to increased pressure on the infrastructure of the parish and beyond e.g. roads and sewage. The commercial centre of East Wittering and Bracklesham also serves the holiday makers from adjoining parishes

There are likely to be increases in population in the area over the next decade. This will add an additional burden to facilities and open spaces, and means it is becoming increasingly necessary to consider place shaping and public realm activities.



Location of Bracklesham Bay and East Wittering within the South East. - Google map



Location of Bracklesham Bay and East Wittering within the South East. - from parish council

### A Little History

Bracklesham & East Wittering is a small parish of irregular outline residing on a windswept coastal plain approximately seven miles south west of Chichester, and derives its name "Wittering" from the settlement of the Winthere's People, and the prefix "East" to distinguish this parish from West Wittering.

Bracklesham is derived from the personal name "Braccol", plus the suffix "Ham" – meaning homestead of enclosure. Bracklesham was once a prebendal manor in its own right with its own ancient chapel. The chapel was annexed to East Wittering by Bishop Sherbourne in 1518.

At the time of the compilation of the Domesday Survey, the manors of Sidlesham, Selsey and East Wittering were all held by the Bishop of Chichester, within the Hundred of Somerley. This later combined with the Hundred of Wittering (Birdham, Itchenor and West Wittering) to form the Hundred of Manhood.

During the mid-nineteenth century, the population was around 200; by 1900 this had dropped by about 50, with a total of 41 houses in the parish. The interwar period saw a large amount of development on the coastal strip, with the emphasis being mainly on holiday traffic - a valuable local industry. This sustained period of suburbanisation contributed to an ever-changing village aesthetic as old, familiar landmarks and institutions were either replaced by new buildings or outright demolished owing to their decrepitness. The growth was also due to the cheap cost of land, and without any form of planning regulations numerous varieties of homes were built for use either as permanent residences or holiday homes.

The major turning point was to be the development of holiday camps across the parishes in the 1930s, which marketed themselves to a less exclusive audience than the more expensive holiday home market attracted. New Beach Holiday Camp in neighbouring Earnley was a typical example of such, whose owner, Joe Lyndhurst, noted in his 1962 brochure that "It was only after the effects of the depression began to wear off that the real development began. The number of campers was nearly 200 during July and August of 1933 in a season that started in Easter".

The evacuation of Dunkirk and the Fall of France in the spring of 1940 prompted the realisation that the threat of bombing raids in the area were now real, and there was a renewed fear of invasion as many residents abandoned their seaside holiday homes to retreat to the sanctity of the inlands.

The end of the Phoney War also brought with it the coming of the military into the Witterings, with The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry being the first to arrive in a desperate state following their withdrawal from Dunkirk. Many of the holiday camps in the area were requisitioned by the military, the most prominent of which was HMS Sea Serpent established at Gibson's Holiday Camp; a base of Naval operations throughout the war.

The villages played host to a number of British, Canadian and American regiments for the rest of the war, with the soldiery often occupying the deserted houses as makeshift billets. Living amongst the locals as a part of village life inspired a sense of comradery and familiarity between the two parties; indeed, when it came time for the Canadian Black Watch to depart the village in May 1943, the diarist noted, with a hint of wistfulness, that "Many strong friendships have been formed in this part of the country and the general feeling on our forthcoming departure is one of deep regret".

Bracklesham and East Wittering played an important role in hosting several large-scale amphibious landing rehearsals prior to the Dieppe Raid in August 1942, and D-Day in June 1944.

On May 4 1944, Exercise Fabius III was launched on the beaches between East Bracklesham Drive and Marine Drive West. This was one of six exercises that took place simultaneously as the final full-scale rehearsal before the invasion of continental Europe 33-days later. At the time this exercise constituted the largest amphibious military operation in History, as the men of the Canadian 3rd Division (along with Royal Navy support) descended upon our shores in their thousands, observed by Dwight D. Eisenhower, Winston Churchill and Bernard Montgomery in person.

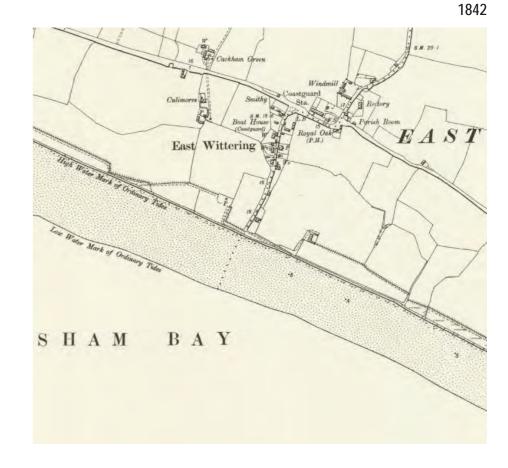
Since the end of the Second World War, further development has taken place, almost giving Bracklesham a renewed sense of individual identity once again. By 1961, the population of the parish had increased to 1,798 and presently this figure reached a staggering 5,117 (ONS 2011 Census). Bracklesham & East Wittering remains a favourite of beach lovers, holidaymakers, surfers and peace seekers to this day. The words of a 1935 holiday pamphlet of the area remain true today:

"If you are enabled to make your home "amid scenes that are brightest" then read this brochure, for it will describe to you East Wittering ... This radiant spot: a golden coastline rejoicing in a tonic air and offering the gayest pageant of the sea in all our island shore".









1935



#### Planning Policy

An extract from the Local Plan:

#### Manhood Peninsula

East Wittering and Bracklesham sit within West Sussex County and Chichester District Council areas. Under the Chichester District Local Plan Review 2035 preferred approach set out in December 2018 policies on development strategy (S3), strategic housing (SA8), local centres (S10), integrated coastal zone management (S18) natural environment (S26), flood risk management (S27), green infrastructure (S29) are all specifically relevant to the task in hand.

The Manhood Peninsula, located at the south of the plan area, is rich in coastal landscapes with the majority of the area covered by environmental designations. It also includes some of the area's larger settlements which rely heavily on limited road accessibility north towards Chichester city.

East Wittering and Bracklesham have a population around 5,200 (2016). It is known for its beaches and as a holiday destination.

There are distinct offers from West Wittering's beach and from Selsey with its caravan parks, horticulture, fishing and related businesses and the wildlife interests of Pagham harbour and Medmerry, UK's largest exposed coast managed realignment scheme.

An extract pertaining to the Spatial Planning Vision for the peninsula can be seen in the three paragraphs below.

#### 3.11-3.13

- 3.11 The emphasis will be mainly upon protecting and enhancing the special qualities of the coast and its rural hinterland, which attract residents, visitors and businesses to the area. The provision of new dwellings and workplaces will help make the area more self-contained and reduce the area's dependence on Chichester City. In recognition of the semi-rural nature of some settlements and the proximity to internationally important wildlife habitats such as Pagham Harbour and Medmerry Realignment, a selective and sensitive approach to development will be taken.
- 3.12 The coastal settlements of Selsey and East Wittering and Bracklesham will thrive as centres for commercial and social activities that meet the needs of local residents, businesses and visitors alike. Opportunities for regeneration that arise in these settlements will support their role as tourist resorts. The local visitor economy will develop niche markets including green tourism, reflecting the area's natural assets and shift from a day trip destination to one which encourages short stay breaks. In particular, places such as the Medmerry Realignment and Pagham Harbour will serve to extend the tourism season.
- 3.13 Local industries such as horticulture, agriculture, fishing and tourism will flourish with a particular focus on local food production. An 'enterprise' culture, building on high levels of entrepreneurship and self-employment, will be developed further by, for example, improving links with academic institutions in Chichester.

#### East Wittering & Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2038

A neighbourhood plan has been in process since 2013 and is currently at pre-submission stage. This acknowledges this project and it is hoped that the two can be progressed in tandem in 2020, with the vision informing the proposals. The draft vision for East Wittering & Bracklesham Parish in 2035 is:

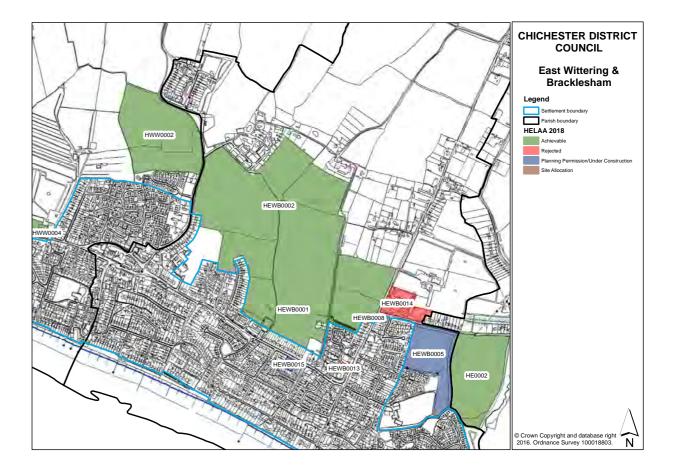
"The settlement will have retained its distinctive character with the quality of the landscape and the seafront continuing to define its identity.

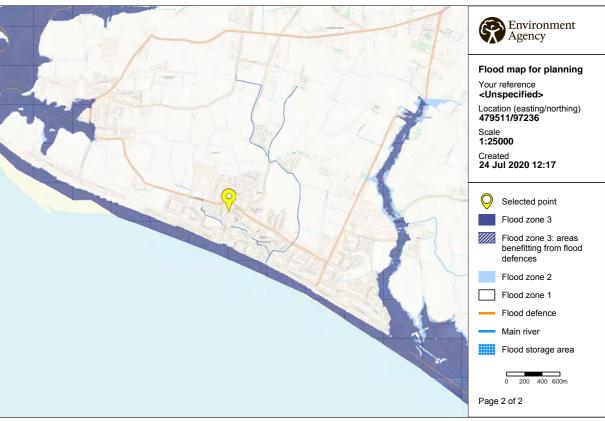
Housing growth in East Wittering & Bracklesham will have been contained by clearly defined settlement boundaries that have preserved the quality of the setting.

A new mixed use hub will have been established in the East Wittering village centre to support local employment. The improved access to the Medmerry Realignment and the rest of the Manhood Peninsula will have also led to an increase in visitors and tourism.

Community facilities will have expanded to meet the growth needs of tourists and the local community.

Whilst having retained its rural character and setting the parish will have accommodated growth in housing numbers to meet the needs of its residents, and to provide a balance of dwelling types to serve the community over the long term Accessibility to and connectivity between the existing network of footpaths, bridleways, cycle ways, public open spaces and other outdoor recreational and leisure assets will have been improved across the parish."





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Bracklesham Bay is designated as a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), not only because of the extensive fossil presence, but also because of the important saltmarsh areas for birds.

#### Initial Observations from Consultant Team

From the initial immersion day where the team walked the length and breadth of East Wittering and Bracklesham centres to shoreline and much of the routes between, some early observations were made and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis made.

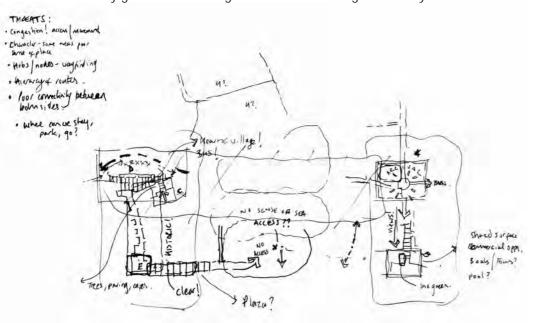
The common feeling was that the villages are generally quiet, in places quaint and once by the sea spectacular and that the qualities of light and air uplifting. However, there is a lack of identity and feeling that there is something of an opportunity lost in making something more celebratory about the sense of place. There are issues around parking, legibility of access and lack of visual interest. These are all problems that can be seen as opportunities and to start the process of generating ideas the team identified 8 Initial observations;

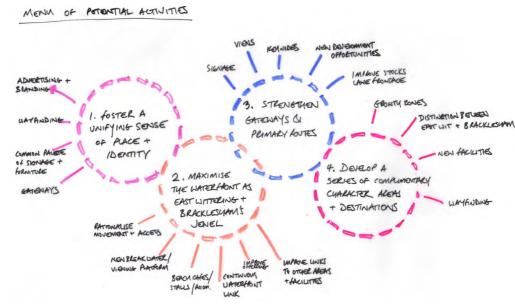
- Foster a unifying sense of place and identity. Maximise the immense value of the sea front as East Wittering and Bracklesham's jewel.
- Strengthen gateways and primary routes.
- Develop a series of complementary character areas and destinations.

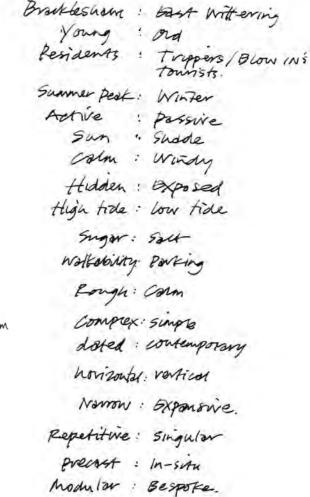
  Improve movement and connectivity with new links to reduce congestion along Stocks Lane.

  Enhance the local centre to provide a diverse offering for residents and visitors alike.

- Establish an underlying landscape strategy that is connected to the wider Green Infrastructure network. Ensure that any growth is well integrated with the existing community and enhances landscape links and circulation.







Some dustities to consider

























# **SWOT Analysis**

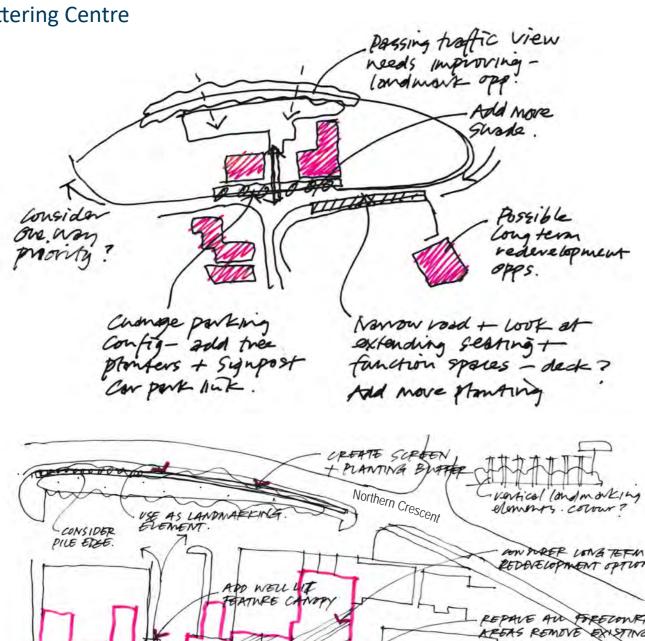
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul> <li>Established tourist destination</li> <li>Existing provision of watersports within study area, including Shore Watersports retail outlet (East Wittering)</li> <li>Activity tourism is a growth marketplace</li> <li>Existing supply of accommodation stock, albeit mainly in a certain category (holiday parks)</li> <li>Availability of car parking with large car parking areas with established mechanism for charging</li> <li>Existing funds held by Parish Council (circa £250,000?) to act as initial match funding</li> <li>Wider Peninsula offers opportunities for watersports, angling and nature-based tourism.</li> <li>Relatively flat topography lends itself well to walking and cycling</li> <li>Proximity to 'soft underbelly' of South London (and the mainline rail link from Chichester into London)</li> <li>Mini-boom associated with domestic tourism (coastal and rural areas)</li> <li>Hidden character</li> <li>2 points of intensity</li> <li>Double level beach - Tamarisk</li> <li>Compact core to East Wittering</li> <li>Parking provision and possible overflow sites</li> <li>Cafe on the beach 'Billy's'.</li> <li>Foreshore team.</li> <li>Shore road.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Seasonal nature of visitor economy</li> <li>Market driven by day visitors</li> <li>Lack of "identity"</li> <li>Limited number of potential development sites owned by the two Councils</li> <li>Pockets of the community are struggling</li> <li>Limited provision of welcome and directional signage when entering study area or in East Wittering and Bracklesham</li> <li>Level of access to the beach (key points to access the beach)</li> <li>Main road linkage between Bracklesham and East Wittering is uninspiring (also no pathway along beach)</li> <li>Heritage features are hidden away</li> <li>Access to Manhood Peninsula – roads can become gridlocked on peak days (impact on local communities)</li> <li>Limited provision of public transport</li> <li>Limited wet weather facilities available for visitors</li> <li>Reported high levels of second home ownership</li> <li>Not memorable</li> <li>No walking or cycling map or facilities</li> <li>Key areas are hidden.</li> <li>No sense of arrival</li> <li>No unique identity or character.</li> <li>No real central core for Bracklesham</li> <li>Grass areas underused- left over space feels unloved, lacks investment and maintenance.</li> <li>All feels back of house. Lacks a coherent identity.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Encouraging more overnight stays in the area (currently driven by day visitor marketplace)</li> <li>Evening economy (encouraging visitors / community to eat out) – perhaps with focus on local produce</li> <li>Partnership working between different hubs in the Peninsula</li> <li>With new housing development an increasing residential population (available size of market and potential for CIL to help part fund projects in the future)</li> <li>Establish a strong identity(ies)/brand for Bracklesham and East Wittering (also linked to need for effective marketing)</li> <li>Opportunity to maximise income generated from main car parks (and introduction of ANPR to minimise leakage)</li> <li>Introduce gateway signage to highlight you are entering 'somewhere special'</li> <li>Introduce branded wayfinding signage within Bracklesham and East Wittering to improve visitor flows</li> <li>Build on destination partnership to ensure joint working with other opportunities among different hubs</li> <li>Bookers Green – create a 'mini-hub' toilet facility with integrated seasonal catering kiosk (potentially hold architectural competition)</li> <li>Green space opposite Billy's on the Beach Café (although currently used by kite surfers to set up equipment)</li> <li>Increase provision of wet weather facilities</li> <li>Creating an accessible destination e.g. introduce Changing Places toilet - http://www.changing-places.org/</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Bracklesham / East Wittering could become overshadowed by West Wittering or Selsey (may already be overshadowed?)</li> <li>Increase in number of unemployed residents impacting on local businesses outside of main tourist season</li> <li>Second wave of COVID-19 with associated 'lock down'</li> <li>Introduction of watersports centre outside of Bracklesham / East Wittering could impact on watersports marketplace within study area</li> <li>Lack of joint working with up 'hubs' on Manhood Peninsula</li> <li>Impact of climate change / rising sea level</li> <li>Funding</li> <li>Flooding</li> <li>Over-subscription and grid lock.</li> <li>Planning and covenants.</li> <li>Ownership issues</li> <li>B2179/A286 Road capacity.</li> <li>No planting maintenance.</li> </ul>

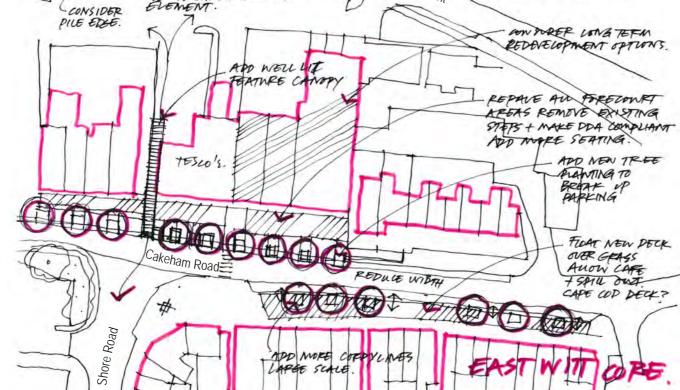
#### Areas to Prioritise



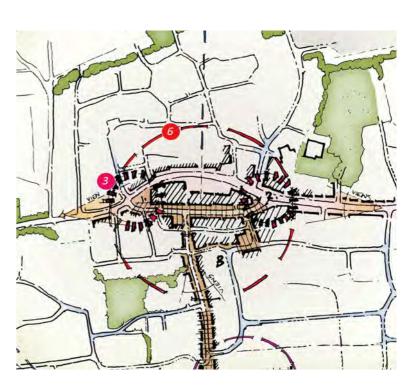
Bringing forward the plan and 8 initial observations, it was felt that there could be benefit if concentrating an initial focus on 4 specific areas; East Wittering centre (B on plan), East Wittering foreshore (A), Bracklesham Centre (D), and Bracklesham foreshore (E). The access and connections outside and in between (eg. F and C) could then be considered in the future, along with ideas for bringing it all together as a common entity.

# **East Wittering Centre**







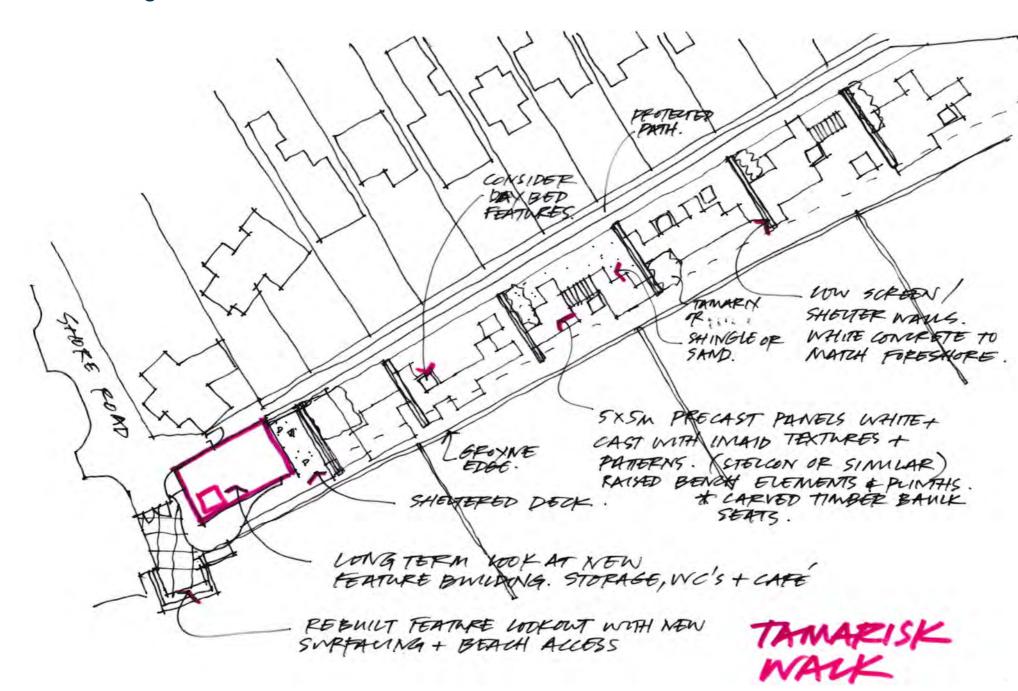


- Screen parking at rear of Tescos from Northern Crescent develop this boundary to landmark. Develop the cut through pedestrian access further and signpost it.
- · Reduce road width through core and use the gain to increase and .... paving and seating areas. Add more tree planting - Quercus ilex?

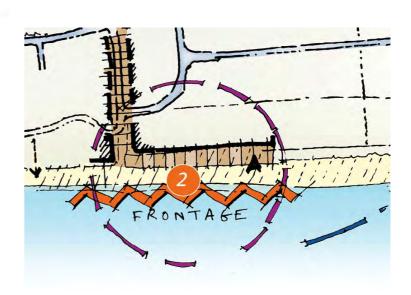
# **East Wittering Centre**



## **East Wittering Foreshore**













Tamarisk - an evergreen coastal shrub

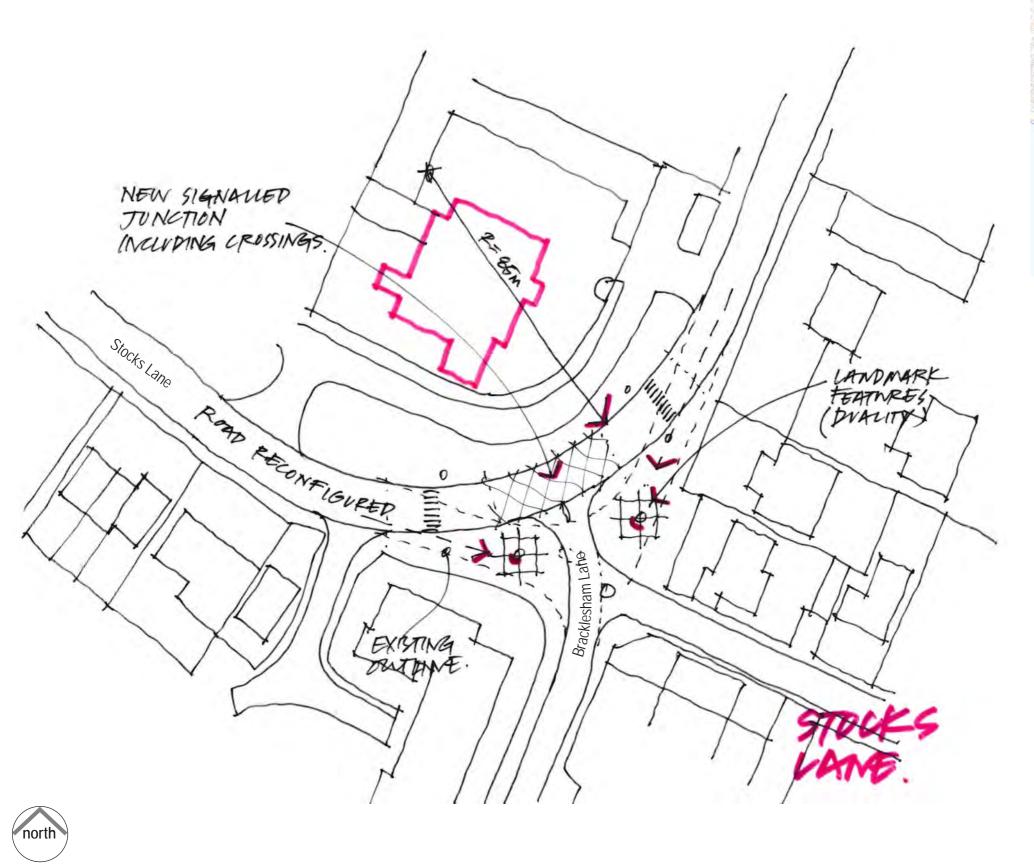
- Shore road end viewpoint needs investment. Make more of cafe and seating deck and outlook. Add toilets.
- Look at joint venture development to provide real facilities here to match foreshore provision.
- Tamarisk walk Double height beach frontage grass and picnics. Easy to develop as a contemporary sun deck with shade and plinth seatin - White concrete etc.
- Limited by any view covenants on houses.
- Great easy development opportunity. 100m and needs bike racks.

# East Wittering Foreshore

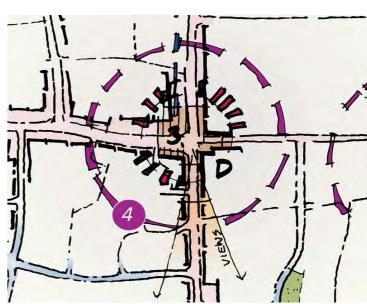


Sketched visualisation of East Wittering Foreshore

## **Bracklesham Centre**

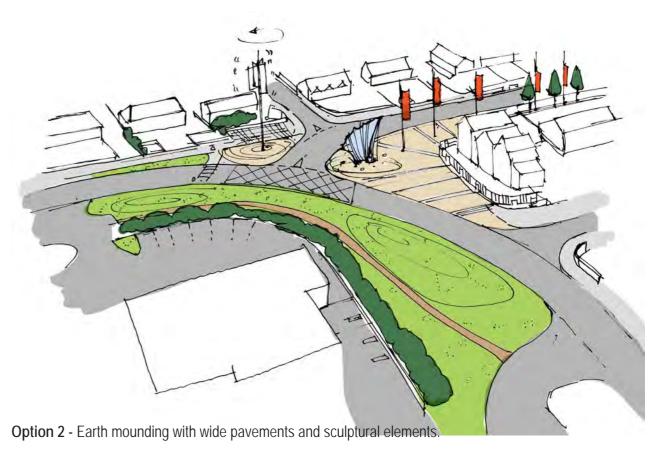






- Look at changing priority and reconfiguring Stocks lane/ Bracklesham Lane junction.
- Possible to tighten curve and change to signalled junction?
- Space for landmark feature.
- Stocks lane lawns/ entrance to recreation ground- This needs a planted grove to give some identity. Develop filter paths down to the beach. Community planting scheme?
- Look at changing the character of the southern part of Bracklesham Lane to Foreshore, try to reinvigorate shops and foreshore cafe.

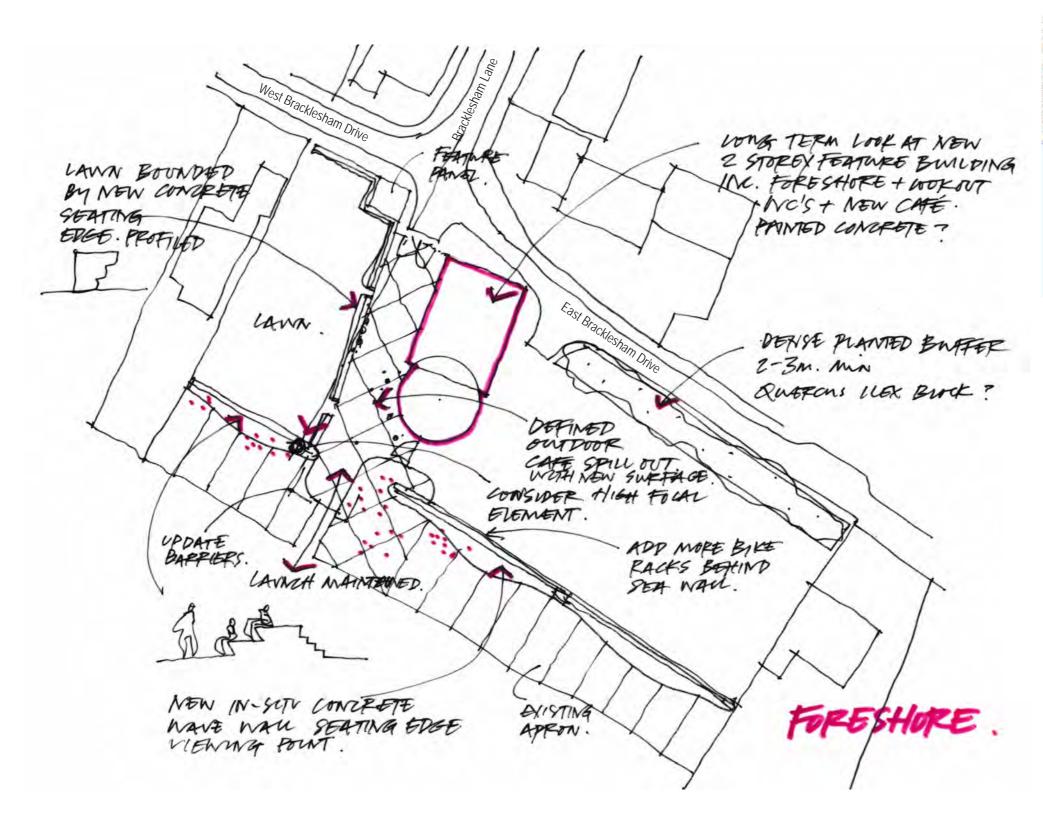




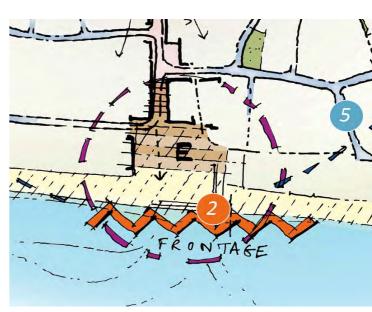




#### **Bracklesham Foreshore**







- Bracklesham foreshore is a development opportunity and a key vision component to balance with Shore Road.
- The whole site lacks vegetation. 'Tamarisk walk' contains no tamarix. Easy interventions but rely on land ownership.
- Toilets, cycling provision, shade and shelter are seriously under developed, needs more throught especially for young family demographics.
- Key areas/ spaces are under developed and often have little function.



# **Bracklesham Foreshore**



Axonometric





Perspective

## **Identity and Connections**

Linkages between shore road and Bracklesham foreshore underdeveloped and difficult to follow.

Needs a clear named footpath and walkability map that links from Bus stops on Stocks lane to the beach and access from A-B, and into the car parks. Follow the markers - easy repetitive brand reinforcement. Develop bus stops brand destinations and focal points. Develop planting palette to add spatial definition. Add shade structures and Wisteria, maybe easy provision? Add vertical landmarking forms. Develop materials palette.

Memorable features are lacking. Develop two clearly differnet identities for the foreshore and tamarisk walk but link with materiality.

Interactive and quirky? Elegant and contemporary? Focussed to provide family based supportive facility.

Having concentrated on four prime areas, it is important to be able to roll out the improvements in some way in between to aid connections, accessibility and identity. Signage, wayfinding, street furniture and plantings could adopt a common language that raise the perception and awareness of resident and visitors alike. Clarity in locating destinations, creating a real sense of approach and arrival, where to park and where to walk through. Much more could be made of the locally named twittens that provide cut throughs between housing to the sea. The library could be better connected to the centre. Bracklesham Barn and its amenities made more evident.

Themes that could underlie this sense of identity could consider building from the fossil beaches or beach holiday heritage.







Littlehampton, West Sussex





Milton road, Waterlooville



Wayfinding examples



Pavilion, University of Stuttgart. Biomimicry. Taking inspiration from fossils and natural structures.





Seaton Jurassic, Seaton, Devon



Nature/ Sea inspired Detailing



Seating example



Colwyn Bay, North Wales



# Now your ideas

Questions to be developed with the team:

For instance:

Do you support the approach of the study?

Do you agree with the priority areas?

What comments do you have on the initial ideas?

What have we missed?

Do you have ideas for themes that could be explored for the identity of the 2 villages?

Should they be different?

Contact Details and Deadlines to be inserted.

## About Us - The terra firma Consultancy Ltd

Based in Petersfield, Hampshire, within the South Downs National Park, the terra firma Consultancy is a Hampshire based practice of Chartered Landscape Architects with a 35 year history that has involved projects in every sector: housing, health, education, infrastructure, heritage and leisure; and every scale from large scale regional masterplans, capacity studies and character assessments down to small-scale bespoke gardens and courtyards. With offshoot offices in London, Dubai and Vilnius, the firm has worked on projects in over 30 countries across 6 continents.

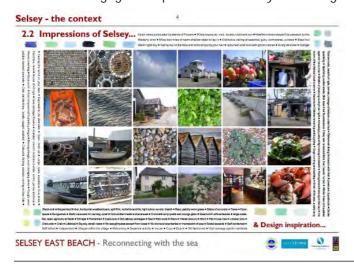
over the years, we have won many awards and this year we have just been awarded the 2020 Winner in the 'Landscape Architect Company Over 10 Staff' category in the Pro Landscaper Business Awards; last year were the first firm ever to be outright winner of two of the five categories of the Local Government News Street Design Awards: the Muslim Cemetery Peace Garden, with Woking Borough Council, and the i360 Plaza, with Brighton and Hove City Council. Additionally, we assisted in projects that were highly commended in no less than 4 of the South Downs National Park Design Awards and one 1 of the New Forest's.

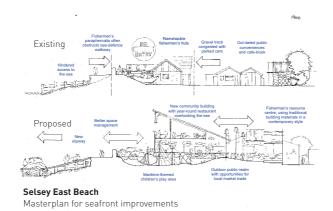
We are a Landscape Institute registered practice, Law Society Expert Witness and members of the Urban Design Group. Sustainability is at the forefront of our agenda and we are also members of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and ISO 140001 certified. A huge part of the practice's workload has always been with local authorities and the public realm. These have included regeneration vision strategies (such as this project requires) for whole areas such as The Hayling and Selsey Waterfront masterplans produced for Havant and Chichester respectively, Basing View for Basingstoke and Deane and overseas, such as the Beirut Waterfront Masterplan for Solidere and current masterplanning work in southern China.

We have put numerous public realm schemes on the ground over the years including the award winning Lion Square at the University of Portsmouth and the Cumberland Street homezone in Portsea. In Brighton, the i360 plaza was completed two years ago and the Brighton Met Pelham Street campus development completes early next year.



Our approach has always been to first listen and learn, digging deep for a locality's inherent sense of place and using cultural heritage to build the narrative (wherever we are in the world). We are natural team workers and true client and stakeholder engagement permeates our way of working.





# terrafirma

# LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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